

The
Collectors' Digest Annual

TWELFTH YEAR CHRISTMAS 1958 TWELFTH YEAR

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

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Foreword

Dear Fellow Collectors,

Here it is once again; now we have a round dozen, with well over a million words altogether - all on the same subject, a most impressive achievement, as you will all agree.

As I have read the contributions as they have come along, once again I have marvelled at the devotion of those who have compiled them. Just think of the time they must have spent in swotting up the material, just for example, the feature of Bill Lofts and Derek Adley in the Sexton Blake Circle section. Mark the care they have taken to get their statements correct. The same applies to the rest of our loyal band.

There are several new names in the "Who's Who". I shall particularly appreciate their comments in due course. Nor must I forget to express my regrets to those contributors whose articles have had to be unavoidably held over.

Now the old, old wish. "A Very Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year to all at home and overseas."

Yours gratefully,

Herbert Leckenby

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On Hearing the Greyfriars Chimes at Midnight

by LESLIE V. ROWLEY

* * * * *

ALTHOUGH I have long passed the age when 'hearing the chimes at midnight' ceased to be a novelty, the fascination to be found in reading of the nocturnal happenings at Greyfriars School is as fresh today as it was in the far-off days of innocent youth.

For others there is the call of the closely-contested sports events on Little Side; the feud between the Famous Five and the 'knuts' of Highcliffe; the ragging of Coker; the pilfering activities of W.G. Bunter or the japing in the French set and the many other activities that took place - and still take place - twixt rising bell and dorm. But for me there is the excitement of the darkened shadows, the sigh of the sea and the boom of the late hour struck in reverberating tones from the old clock tower.

1,287 Gerald Assheton Loder in the story "Harry Wharton Declares War" provides the excitement of the type I have in mind. The bully of the Sixth has returned after a night with his sporting cronies at 'The Cross Keys' - leaving most of his cash and the last remnants of his temper behind him. He finds the lobby door barred, the window of his study fastened and the face of Harry Wharton grinning out at him. One can well imagine the feelings of Loder. The junior he has so often persecuted has the whiphand. Expulsion stares the prefect in the face. But it transpires that Wharton (in a mood more in character with that of the 'Boulder'), will allow Loder admission providing the bully writes a document stating that he will get Quelch to let Wharton off a detention in return for being let in after a midnight spree at the 'Cross Keys'.

Well, no-one sheds any tears for dear Gerald or pities him for the anxiety he must suffer for the rest of the story. Greyfriars could have done without its Loder, perhaps. Arthur Woodhead Carne could have worn the blackguard's cloak with ease. Herbert Vernon-Smith - another doughty contender for the pub-haunting stakes, is a different proposition. Greyfriars without its 'Boulder' would have been a much duller place indeed.

Late hours and Smithy were constant companions and there are many instances on record of excursions to 'The Three Fishers' and 'The Cross Keys'. On just as many occasions have I shared an anxious vigil in the silent dormitory with Tom Redwing, sighing with relief at the following dialogue

"Is that you, Smithy?"

"Shut up, you ass. Do you want the whole school to know that I've been breaking bounds?"

1,615 Now and then a note of irony would prevail when the 'Boulder' - absent on other business - would have the crimes of others laid to his charge. In "Loder Looks for Trouble", Loder is attacked and left unconscious in the doorway of the headmaster's

study. Smithy, returning to the dormitory, finds himself destined for 'punny' and an early train home the following day. But of course, the worst never happens - thanks to the loyalty of Redwing and the unmasking of the real culprit Randolph Crocker.

1.299 et seq Jim (Dick the Penman) Valentine was typical of a number of crooked youths who underwent almost miraculous reformation at the school and who brought in their train a number of ex-colleagues who would have them return to less legal but more profitable occupation. In the case of Valentine we have characters like Nosey Clark and Nutty Nixon. In this series there is an excellent example of Mr. Richards' gift for blending drama with comic relief. Messrs. Clark and Nixon are adrift in the House - and so is Horace James Coker. The disturbance brings Prout and Quelch to the Remove dormitory at two in the morning to indulge in typical cross-talk as to which members of which form are responsible.

1.541 William George Bunter having purloined a pie from Study 13, and the owner of that pie, Wun Lung, having inferred that the pie contained a cat, snails and slugs, the stage is set for another midnight drama. The 'sinister Dr. Syn' arrives to abduct the Chinese junior and for once the fat Owl comes in useful. Unable to sleep because of cat, nails and slugs (real or imagined), Bunter heaves a pillow at the doctor and rouses the rest of the form, who put the disturbance down to nightmare caused by the pie. This is but one of the many nocturnal disturbances in which Bunter has been involved. Dig for your treasure and you will find them.

1.547 I have it on sound legal authority that Dr. H.H. Locke, Mr. H.S. Quelch and Horace James Coker were guilty of being accessories to crime in giving shelter to the pick-pocket, 'Skip'. Richard Bullivant, as he turns out to be, should have been handed over immediately to Inspector Grimes. Fortunately this exercise of author's license allows us to enjoy the prospect of a willing young rogue, having being inveigled into the school by the fathead Coker, roaming the deserted (?) corridors of the House at midnight. But the influence of the school is already upon the young rascal and instead of robbing Prout he saves Coker from a brutal attack from the inevitable ex-crony (see under Valentine).

These former associates (of ex-crook schoolboys) who sought to coerce by bribe or bludgeon, the wanderer to return to the fold, got short shift at Greyfriars. Waiting outside the cloister wall for the last light to be extinguished, they were vulnerable for a clump on the head as some scholar bound for 'The Cross Keys' jumped over the crumbling masonry. If the crook(s) got as far as the quad they might well crash into the padded form of Prout or the bony form of Quelch, as those dutiful beaks prowled on the look-out of bound breakers. Inside the House itself would lie unforseen impediments to crooked enterprise - a booby trap prepared for Loder, a grub-hunting Owl or a Hoskins coming out of his study after finishing one of the lesser known 'unfinished' symphonies. Really, it seemed that it was safer to contemplate breaking into the Bank of England.

1.666. 1.667 The crooked temporary master was another form of gentry well calculated to come to grief in the early hours. The 'Pet Lamb' was an example in the later chronicles and there were many precedents. Mr. Lamb (alias 'Slim Jim') had the great fortune of being watched at midnight by both Herbert Vernon-Smith and Ferrers Locke. The next week, Lamb was waylaid by the Famous Five and the Bounder under the impression that they were collaring a departing Loder set for you know where. You may hate Mr. Lamb for the bullying hypocrite he was, but be grateful to him for pepping up the dark night watches.

The shadowy verges of Friardale Lane have carried the stealthy and cautious tread of as diverse (and treacherous) selection of characters as one could hope to meet in the annals of a public school. The misdeeds of many went undiscovered - Mr. Prout remained

in blissful ignorance of the erring ways of Hilton and Price of his form; Aubrey Angel has looked much upon the wine when it was red and the billiard table when it was green; Loder, Carne and Walker have suffered little further for their sins than the loss of cash on a long string of 'dead certs' that wasn't. They were fools more than rogues and utter villainy was usually left to characters whose appearance on the Greyfriars stage was but for a fleeting moment. But how delicious those fleeting moments could be! The name of Gideon Gooch comes readily to the mind.

1,561 to 1,572 In the early spring of 1938, the 'Bunter's Rich Relation' series brought to a close the notorious scheming of Arthur Carter and his lawyer cousin Gideon Gooch. Contrary to general belief, Bunter did have (and for all we know, still has) a rich relation - a distant relation, and one who seems to have kept his distance until this series. Arthur Carter is the discarded heir; William George Bunter, the heir-presumptive as it were. The Carter/Gooch combine spare nothing to discredit the fat Owl in the eyes of the elderly and rich Joe Carter. The Famous Five, the Bounder and William Wibley all play their part in saving the Ananias of the Remove from disgrace. In the penultimate story of this series, "Billy Bunter's Twin", Wibley disguised as Bunter, encourages Gooch in thinking that W.G.B. is ready to tread the downward path. Gooch is in the Cloisters at eleven o'clock at night to take Bunter out of bounds. The Famous Five, the Bounder and Wibley are there to take Mr. Gooch to Gosling's woodshed. And so the unscrupulous lawyer, knowing that he is illegally on enclosed premises, is made to suffer for his sins. His appreciation of Greyfriars at night must certainly have been different to my own.

1,500 The character of Harry Wharton must, to some of us, have seemed at times too good to be true. Fifty years at school without telling a single fib is a lot to swallow. True, the impetuous captain of the Remove had his moments of rebellion and the feuds with Quelch made realistic and exciting reading; but not once did Harry tell a lie. So it was that having assured his formmaster that he would not visit a recently discovered smuggler's cave 'that day' Wharton had to wait to the passing of midnight and the early hours of the morrow before he could visit the cave. In the interim he had to suffer the jibes of the Bounder who claimed that Wharton had funked the trip earlier on. The story "They Called him a Funk" was the best in a disappointing series about smuggling at Christmas. In this particular escapade Wharton rouses Vernon-Smith and compels the Bounder to accompany him. Smithy has good cause for regretting his earlier jibes as Wharton leads the way down Masters' corridor (with Prout still up), and through the sleeping house with little or no regard for caution. This is the midnight Greyfriars at its very best and one of my favourite stories.

I am not a great lover of statistics, but for your ease of reference I have annotated the paragraphs with Magnet numbers of the stories I have quoted. In case you are in search of further instances of Greyfriars night life I suggest you look up the following issues:- 1321; 1327; 1430; 1433; 1478; 1496; 1513; 1515; 1517; 1531; 1607; 1613; 1616; 1617; 1624; 1625; 1638; 1660; 1669; 1671; 1675.

There are many others I know. My 'Magnet' collection in Kuwait has its limits, so if I have omitted any favourite example of a midnight excursion I hope you will understand.

Oh that we could take our train from Charing Cross to the leafy by-ways of Friar-dale and Courtfield. To put up for the night at the infamous hostelries "The Cross Keys" or "The Three Fishers". To wander from the bar with our glass of ale and look in at the billiard room.....and there witness the flushed faces of Angel and the Bounder; Hilton and Price or Loder, Carne and Walker. To follow them back to the deeper shadows of the school and watch with excitement and anxiety the stealthy entrances into the House by way of lobby door or box-room window. To witness a crook breaking in or a boy

WANTED URGENTLY the following Boys' Friend Libraries, 1st series, Nos. 670, 721 (Haygarth School stories by Jack North), also Nos. 745, 753, 757, and 761.

W.H. BROSTER, PRIMROSE COTTAGE, STONEHANE, KINVER, STOURBRIDGE, WORCS.

FOR EXCHANGE: 100 Magnets, mostly pre-1934. Also 40 S.O.Ls. (1937-8) and 50 Gems (1937-8). WANTED IN EXCHANGE: Magnets prior to No. 517 and Populars (New Series) 101 to 568, especially Nos. 380 and 381. Please state exchanges available and send S.A.E. for lists to:-

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F.V. LAY, 167 WATFORD ROAD, HARROW, MIDDLESEX.

WANTED: Bound vols. Magnets, 1930 to end. Bound vols. of books in Group 8. Chums Annuals for members of Canadian Club. Details to:-

JOHN DAVIS, 5212 CLARENDON STREET, VANCOUVER, 16, CANADA.

WANTED: Runs of Magnets particularly 1930-1940; Holiday Annuals; C.D. Annuals and S.O.Ls. Any stories and novels by Gunby Hadath particularly those on Claybury School. I have choice Cricket library to exchange if required, including rare and beautiful bound volumes.

R. GUEST, 5 RALEIGH GARDENS, BRIXTON HILL, LONDON, S.W.2.

Buffalo Bill

and his Rivals

By GEOFF HOCKLEY

* * * * *

So near to fifty years ago that it doesn't matter, an eight-year-old boy stood outside a newsagent's shop gazing fixedly at one of the medley of gaily-covered periodicals suspended in entrancing array from pavement to ceiling on each side of the door. Too many years have flown since then for him to recall more than a few of the titles of those papers which rustled so enticingly in the gentle breeze on that summer day so long ago, but the one on which his eyes were fixed, and with which he presently emerged, clutched in his hot and rather grimy hand, he can recall as clearly as if it was only yesterday — that entrancing cover of red, blue and yellow, in one top corner of which appeared the shoulder-length likeness of a man of commanding mien, whose flowing locks swept down to his shoulders from under his wide-brimmed hat, and whose piercing eyes seemed to be gazing across illimitable distances, while alongside this imposing portrait ran the legend, BUFFALO BILL LIBRARY. But it was the cover itself which thrilled the heart of the eight-year-old, depicting as it did the individual of the portrait, he of the flowing locks and eagle eye, locked in mortal combat with a war-bonneted redskin of ferocious aspect, while across the top of the picture ran the title which hastened the boy homewards with anticipation of thrills in store — THE FIGHT WITH YELLOW HAND!

Well, that one-time eight-year-old (who, no doubt, readers will by now have identified as the author of this modest monograph) in the intervening half-century since the day when he first made the acquaintance of the King of Scouts through the medium of that old Aldine Buffalo Bill Library, has, he must confess, retained much of his youthful interest in the doings, both factual and fictional, of his boyhood idol. In fact, he has sometimes been accused, half-despairingly, half affectionately, of never quite growing up! However, in the supposition that many other members of our old boys' book fraternity suffer from that same amiable eccentricity, and also in the hope that they may be interested in a sketch of Buffalo Bill as the hero of literally thousands of pages of boys' fiction, I will endeavour to outline the career of this fabulous character, and also those of some of his contemporaries — mainly those who like Buffalo Bill himself, were real, living persons, whose doings, heroic and otherwise, were immortalised (and, needless to say, colossally embroidered!) by their chroniclers.

It would be safe to assert that few persons have had so many words written of their doings than has William Frederick Cody, the scout, buffalo hunter, and showman who has been immortalised as "Buffalo Bill". It has always been a source of wonder to me that considering Cody died as comparatively recently as 1917, it is almost impossible to separate fact from legend as regards his early life, though his career subsequent to his organising of his famous Wild West Show presents a tolerably clear picture. So many "life histories" of this legendary figure have appeared during the last six or seven decades that there must be few who are not familiar with at least some portion of his career, and in any case, this article is mainly concerned with his fictional doings

as a hero of juvenile literature. While it is generally conceded that as a showman he was supreme, historians have said a lot of unkind things regarding his alleged prowess as an Indian fighter. For example, it is doubtful if his much-written-of duel with the Cheyenne chief Yellow Hand (that very episode portrayed on the cover of the old Aldine Library which I have referred to as my first introduction to Buffalo Bill) ever took place at all, except in the imaginations of dime novel writers and publicity agents, although it is related as one of the highlights of Cody's career in most of his "life histories". It was claimed to have occurred soon after the fateful battle of the Little Big Horn, where General Custer and his entire command was annihilated by a vastly superior Indian force under the famous chiefs Crazy Horse and Sitting Bull. On July 17, 1876, General Merritt and his troops intercepted a band of 800 Cheyennes on their way to join forces with Sitting Bull and his victorious tribesmen, and Buffalo Bill, attached to Merritt's force as a scout, accepted a challenge by the Cheyenne chief to meet him in personal combat - a duel which, according to popular belief, ended with the slaying and scalping of Yellow Hand by Cody, who waved his gory trophy aloft and yelled "The first scalp for Custer!"

Unfortunately, this heroic episode doesn't stand up too well in the light of investigation, and it is a fact that Cody himself stated at least once that he did not kill Yellow Hand. Mr. M.I. McCreight, in his interesting and illuminating little monograph, "Buffalo Bill as I knew Him", states that Cody told him definitely that he did not kill Yellow Hand, and "said earnestly that he had never knowingly killed any Indian". Mr. McCreight first met Cody in 1887, and became an intimate friend of the showman, whose Wild West Show was at that time firmly established, and became a firm admirer of Cody. "He was a kindly man who always had a kind word for everyone". Mr. McCreight's last meeting with Cody was in 1916, and he feelingly describes his last parting with the aged and ailing showman. "I was shocked and saddened to observe how feeble he was, as I helped him to his berth in his private car on the show train, and shook hands with him for the last time. Less than a year later, Buffalo Bill went to his last long sleep."

An extremely caustic critic of what he called "professional Wild West heroes" and "long-haired buckskinners" was Colonel Frank Mayer, whose adventurous life extended from the Civil War to the Atomic Age, and who died on February 12, 1954, three months short of his 104th birthday. His death marked the passing of the last of that fabulous breed of men, the buffalo hunters. As a youth, he hunted buffalo in the 1870's, when the slaughter of the great beasts was at its height, and had many thrilling adventures and close calls, for the Indians, knowing that their very existence was threatened by the ever-increasing hordes of white hunters, fiercely resisted the invasion of their hunting grounds. When in the course of an interview a few years before his death Colonel Mayer was asked for his comments on Buffalo Bill's "duel" with Yellow Hand, he snorted, "All a damned cock-and-bull story! A friend of mine, Alex Vimy, shot Yellow Hand and sold his clothes and scalp to Buffalo Bill for five dollars. That's how Cody "killed" Yellow Hand!"

Well, the truth about Buffalo Bill probably lies somewhere between the lurid efforts of the fiction writers who portrayed him as a sort of Superman of the plains, and the perhaps envy-inspired comments of some of his contemporaries. But who cares very much anyway, if some of our boyhood idols diminish in stature under the glare of the researcher's spotlight, or even if history's verdict endows them with feet of clay? We remember them with affection for those hours of thrilling entertainment which they provided for us in our boyhood. So, readers, let us saddle up and gallop off on a refresher course through the pages of the old Aldine Buffalo Bill Libraries and Street & Smith's Buffalo Bill Weeklies, into that land of romance and adventure in the days when

the ground trembled under the hoofs of the enormous buffalo herds, and the mighty Sioux were lords of the plains. We shall follow the gallant riders of the Pony Express as they speed across half a continent on their perilous errands. Scalping-knives shall flash; tomahawks shall glitter; the twang of bow-strings will mingle with the crack of Winchesters; we shall hear the roar of gunfire in the streets of the lawless frontier towns, and thrill to the blare of bugles sounding "charge" as Uncle Sam's blue-jacketed cavalymen race to a last-minute rescue.

In actual fact, those stirring days of the Last Frontier, in which William Frederick Cody grew to manhood, were as thrilling as fiction writers have depicted. But how did Cody rise from the status of a comparatively obscure scout and buffalo hunter to such eminence that his name was a household word in hamlet and city both in the Old World and the New? His latter-day fame, of course, was inseparable from his famous Wild West Show, which in its palmy days toured two continents and performed before the crowned heads of Europe; but even before this the name of "Buffalo Bill" was known far and wide, and in the minds of thousands was associated with but one setting - the American "Wild West". To trace the commencement of Cody's career as "Public Hero Number One", we must take you back to the period soon after the conclusion of the Civil War and introduce you to a colourful character by the name of Edward Zane Carroll Judson, whose own adventurous career would fill this entire Annual. Space precludes us from taking more than a fleeting glance at his career prior to the ending of the War, and in any case it is outside the scope of this article - suffice it to say that he was a born adventurer, served with distinction in the Union Army, and upon his discharge went to the West, where in the course of his wanderings he met many celebrities, both famous and notorious, of the period, including James Butler Hickok ("Wild Bill"), Texas Jack Omohundro, and many others, including a twenty-three-year-old hunter named William Frederick Cody, who at this period was under contract to supply the Kansas Pacific Railroad with buffalo meat to feed the army of men engaged in laying the rails as the K.P. pushed farther and farther into the Far West. Judson and Cody became close friends, and the long-haired, picturesque young buffalo slayer regaled Judson with many lurid yarns of his life on the plains. Incidentally, Judson's own life, up to this period, had probably been far more eventful than that of the man to whom he listened so eagerly, for Cody was by no means adverse to embroidering the details of his career. In our present parlance he would probably have been considered a bit of a line-shooter. But Judson didn't greatly care if his friend added an extra few thousand buffalo to the tally of what he had slaughtered, or if the number of Indians who had departed for the happy hunting grounds as a result of his unerring marksmanship seemed excessively high. For the germ of an idea had entered Judson's fertile brain - an idea which was soon to materialise and bring fame and fortune to both parties in the process.

At one stage of his chequered career, Judson had achieved some success as a writer of sensational adventure stories, under the pen-name of "Ned Buntline", and he now conceived the idea of writing a series of stories based on Cody's real or imaginary adventures - a project which met with the latter's enthusiastic approval. Cody's tales of the thousands of buffalo he claimed to have slaughtered led Judson to bestow on him the name of "Buffalo Bill", and on returning to the East he wrote the first story of the character who was soon to be known far and wide as the result of what would now be called the "build-up" treatment. Judson succeeded in selling his story to a New York publishing firm, and on December 23, 1869, in Street & Smith's "New York Weekly", his hero made his debut in "Buffalo Bill - King of the Border Men", complete with an illustration of the scout with his flowing tresses, wide-brimmed hat, fringed buckskins and trusty rifle. Thus commenced the amazing literary saga of Buffalo Bill.

I have been unable to ascertain exactly how many years Buffalo Bill pursued his

Prentiss Ingraham, another adventurer of Judson's stamp, who had also been a hero of the West, and who was almost as prolific a writer as his predecessor. His style was so similar to "Ned Buntline's" that he carried on the tradition with the enthusiastic approval of his readers.

When the "N.Y. Weekly" was finally laid to rest, after many years, "Buffalo Bill" wasn't deposited in the grave with the venerable publication which had published millions of words dealing with his adventures. The real "Buffalo Bill", William Frederick Cody, was also going very strongly indeed, and had won world-wide fame with the establishment of his sensational "Wild West Show And Congress Of Rough Riders", which continued to perform to packed audiences both in its native United States and in Europe. And though only a small proportion of the populations might be lucky enough to see the hero in the flesh as he galloped into the ring of the Big Show on his curvetting white steed, they could at least read of his doings, so it was little wonder that soon after the turn of the century, under the banner of Street & Smith, the publishers who had pioneered the chronicling of the daredevil doings of the "King of the Border Men", appeared a new weekly to appease the demand - "Buffalo Bill Stories; A Publication Devoted To Border Life".

I have a copy of "Buffalo Bill Stories" before me as I write this. The date is August 14, 1909, and the title of this issue, No. 431, is "Buffalo Bill's Whirlwind Finish". Despite the passing of nearly half a century since it left the presses of Street & Smith, the brightly-coloured cover retains its pristine freshness. It depicts Buffalo Bill and Wild Bill Hickok "forted up" behind their dead horses, standing off a war party of Cheyennes, the carcasses of the steeds and the ground around the besieged pair being liberally pin-cushioned with arrows. Under the title heading on page one appears the following exhortation to readers:

"Beware of Wild West imitations of the Buffalo Bill Stories. They are about fictitious characters. The Buffalo Bill Weekly is the only weekly containing the adventures of Buffalo Bill (Col. W.F. Cody), who is known all over the world as the King of Scouts."

Perhaps the publishers were finding competition a little keen, for many other publishing firms had also jumped aboard the Wild West bandwagon to exploit the remunerative "another-redskin-bit-the-dust" theme. But be that as it may, "Buffalo Bill Stories" continued on its winning way for no less than eighteen years, policy changes dictating its discontinuation about 1920. Although I am unable to state with any authority that the "Buffalo Bill Stories" were reprints, I should say that a goodly proportion were re-issues of the early stories by Judson and Ingraham.

Better known in England and the Dominions, perhaps, than the Street & Smith Buffalo Bill publications, were the Aldine Publishing Co's Buffalo Bill Libraries, which continued in the steady tenor of their ways from the 'nineties until well after the first world war. The Aldines were if anything more lurid than even the Street & Smith's, and many were the hours I spent as a boy perusing with bated breath the details of scalping, tortures at the stake, bowie-knife duels and other gory doings. The Aldine "B.B.'s." were about half the size of their Street & Smith rivals - a handy

format which facilitated reading them under one's desk in school, or tucking under one's mattress to bring forth to gloat over by candle-light after the family had retired. I was recently able to renew old acquaintance by the acquisition of a few very early specimens - even earlier than the issues with which I once regaled myself as a boy - and spent some interesting and amusing evenings going through them. In one number, "Buffalo Bill on the Overland Trail", our hero, after undergoing even more than the usual number of vicissitudes, is captured by the bloodthirsty Apache chief, Red Hand, and tied to the stake for roasting, but through the efforts of an Apache maiden with the picturesque name of Evening Flower, he is able to make a break for liberty. Fortunately, a transcontinental balloonist has descended nearby to replenish his gas-bag with "inflammable air" (apparently an easily-obtained commodity in the vicinity) and in less time than it takes to cock a six-shooter, Buffalo Bill and his aeronautical friend in need soar up into the blue, to the shrieks and imprecations of the disappointed redskins. The villainous Red Hand, however, determined not to let his candidate for grilling escape without making things as awkward as possible, has swarmed up the balloon's grapnel rope and is climbing into the basket, but a rap over the knuckles from Buffalo Bill's trusty six-gun forces him to relinquish his hold, and he slides down the rope to dangle in mid-air, hooked like a trout on the steel grapnel. "By gosh, it serves him right", observes the balloonist. But Buffalo Bill is not the type to hold grudges, so with a slash of his hunting-knife he cuts the rope, gaining some extra altitude in the process. "The bloodthirsty Apache went hurtling down, and struck the earth, simply a crushed and shapeless mass". However, probably in consideration for his more squeamish readers, the author remarks that the redskin was probably dead long before he hit the ground.

After spending an exciting hour or two in the company of such hairy-chested hemen, it was with a rather let-down feeling that I noticed on the back cover an advertisement extolling the merits of Dr. Macqueen's Vegetine Pills ("Beauty in a Box") containing, among others, the following testimonial from a gentleman residing in Shandon Road, Clapham Park, S.W. :

"After taking your pills, my complexion has become most beautiful and clear, and though I am not vain, I find it difficult to abstain from seeing myself in every mirror I come across."

Another young gentleman, who requested the proprietors to refrain from publishing his name and address, stated that, thanks to Vegetine Pills, his friends and acquaintances were continually commenting upon his charming complexion. I was almost afraid to read further for fear of coming across a testimonial from Buffalo Bill himself, which would have been the last straw!

The stories in the issues referred to, vintage 1902, were written by Singleton Pound, Stanley Moxon, and Escott Lynn, and perhaps one of our fraternity, of greater erudition than myself, may be able to state whether these were British or American authors - I am inclined to think the former, because of a certain lack of authenticity in the settings which is not noticeable in the genuine (or genuwine) Ned Buntline and Prentiss Ingraham Buffalo Bill yarns. It may be that the London office of the Aldine Publishing Co., which issued these papers in England, commissioned domestic authors to write Buffalo Bill stories for home consumption, which may account for the writers being a trifle shaky on geographical locations and the localities of the various Indian tribes - one author blithely transports Hurons from the Great Lakes to the Texas Panhandle.

All Aldine publications were noted for their striking coloured covers, and these old Buffalo Bill Libraries are no exception. However, the artist's work is not com-

parable with that of the later Aldine B.B. covers, which were executed by Robert Prowse. Until our Editor once enlightened me, the identity of "R.P." intrigued me for years. Some of R.P.'s covers for the Aldine Buffalo Bills were really artistic, and I would give untold gold (if I possessed it) for a few of "R.P.'s" original cover paintings. His Indians, in particular, really looked as if they had stepped on to the covers straight from the plains of the 'seventies, and were reminiscent of the work of the famous Western artist Frederick Remington.

Now let's take a glance at some of the other characters who rode, slogged, hewed, or shot their way through the Wild West fiction of our boyhood, and as in the case of Buffalo Bill, we will deal only with personages who really existed and were not merely fictional creations of the authors. And while their doings, as recorded by the purveyors of the "Bang-bang" type of literature, would have probably amazed them in the unlikely event of their ever having perused a sample, their actual careers were sensational enough in all truth, without being further embroidered by the authors who wrote of them. Some of them, like Jesse James and Deadwood Dick, achieved the status of appearing regularly in their own exclusive weekly "libraries", while others appeared as subsidiary characters in these and other papers of a similar type. In the latter category was "Wild Bill" Hickok, who is portrayed in many Buffalo Bill yarns as being a true-till-death pard of the latter. Such, however, was not really the case. The characters of the two men differed largely. In contrast with Cody, for whom perhaps the worst that can be said is that he fell far short of being the superman as which the dime-novel authors delighted in portraying him, the dandified but deadly Hickok emerges as little else than a cold-blooded killer. Like Buffalo Bill, Hickok was also a scout and buffalo hunter in the earlier stages of his career, and his reputation, tarnished even then, was not enhanced by his wanton killing of old Whistler, a friendly Sioux chief, for no other reason than the old Indian, who had a craze for sweetened coffee, had helped himself to a swig from Hickok's pannikin. Hickok's chief claim to notoriety was his term as marshal of the rip-roaring trail town of Abilene, one of the wildest and woolliest of the Kansas cattle towns, when the city fathers, despairing of finding anyone capable of policing their tough and turbulent township, engaged Wild Bill, probably on the principle of fighting fire with fire, but his term of office was marked by more than one unsavoury incident. Hickok met his end in the boom-camp of Deadwood in 1876, when, sitting at a table playing cards, he was shot in the back by a gambler named Jack McCall.

The romantic element wasn't entirely lacking in the Buffalo Bill stories. As well as beautiful Indian maidens with such charming and picturesque names as Evening Flower or Little Fawn, a spice of "heart interest" was added by Calamity Jane, who in fetching Western attire galloped over many a league of boundless prairie on her richly-accountered steed, ever ready to avenge a wrong or to protect the weak, or to settle any scores with bandit or redskin which Cody, Hickok & Co. might have overlooked. A saucy and glamorous lass was Calamity as portrayed by the Buntlines and Ingrahams, in contrast to the rough, tough, and flint-hard Amazon who was the real Calamity Jane - Martha Jane Canary, an unpolished and uncouth daughter of the trail towns and mining camps who dressed in male attire and who cussed, drank, and shot as well as most of her male contemporaries, and better than some. In real life, as well as in the flights of fancy of the dime novelists, Jane was for some time in her chequered career an associate of Wild Bill Hickok of dubious repute, and, more than a quarter of a century after an assassin's bullet ended the life of the notorious gunfighter, Calamity Jane was laid to rest beside his grave in Deadwood City, the one-time wide-open boom camp of the Black Hills.

Street & Smith had plenty of competition in the Wild West field. One of their

deadliest rivals was the firm of Beadle & Adams, whose star author, Edward L. Wheeler, produced a formidable rival to Buffalo Bill in Deadwood Dick, the Black Rider of the Black Hills, who, heavily masked and garbed in black from top to toe, galloped furiously always a couple of jumps ahead of the law through hundreds of issues of Beadle's Half-Dime Pocket Library. I possess a curiosity in the shape of the first "Deadwood Dick" ever issued, dated January 16, 1884. The garish cover depicts the Black Rider on his wildly-rearing steed, amusedly contemplating a reward notice which reads \$1500 REWARD FOR DEADWOOD DICK. "Ha, ha, ha, ! Isn't that rich, now! Arrest Deadwood Dick if you can!" reads the caption running across the bottom of the cover.

Wheeler is supposed to have patterned his fictional hero on one Richard Clarke, another frontier character whose career, though far removed from the lurid happenings with which the author regaled his readers each week, was eventful enough in all account, including a spell as a Pony Express rider in the 1860's. Clarke came unscathed through an adventurous life and lived to the ripe old age of 83. In 1927, three years before his death, Clarke rode with President Coolidge in a Frontier Day's pageant in Deadwood City, when the President was initiated with many picturesque ceremonies as a member of the Sioux tribe. At his death in 1930, "Deadwood Dick" was buried, like two of his famous contemporaries, Wild Bill Hickok and Calamity Jane, in the town whose name Edward Wheeler had adopted as the nickname of his fictional hero so many years before.

An interesting sidelight on Richard Clarke is that there is good evidence for the claim that he was not American by birth, but was a member of a prominent Yorkshire family and was brought to the United States at a very early age.

The "Diamond Dick" Library, published by Street & Smith, always appeared to me to be aimed at stealing some of the thunder from Beadle's "Deadwood Dick" series, which was a formidable rival even to the "Buffalo Bill" weekly. The "Diamond Dick" was a weekly of the same size and format as "Buffalo Bill", and although, alas, the few specimens which I once possessed have long ago vanished or disintegrated with the passing of the years, I well recall their particularly vivid covers, which invoked such paternal disapproval that in the interests of peace and harmony I formed the habit of carefully removing them before venturing to produce the papers in the family circle. I am unable to recall the author, or authors, of the "Diamond Dick" stories. Perhaps they were from the pen of the indefatigable "Ned Buntline" or Prentiss Ingraham in the intervals when one or the other of these writers was not engaged in producing the weekly Buffalo Bill epic. Certainly either of them was prolific enough to accomplish such a feat - it was done easily enough in later years, wasn't it, by someone who is so well known to us that his name needs no mention here.

Like his rival, "Deadwood Dick", Diamond Dick is also said to have been based on a real-life character, one Richard Tanner. There certainly was a frontier character of this name, who, like his more celebrated contemporary, Buffalo Bill, was a scout and Indian fighter and later displayed his marksmanship in a Wild West show, but whether Tanner actually was the original of "Diamond Dick" I cannot state with any certainty.

With the exception, perhaps, of "Wild Bill" Hickok, whose reputation, as we have said, was at the least dubious, although he never achieved the distinction of having a price put on his head, the real-life prototypes of the fictional heroes we have so far dealt with were, in the main, law-abiding persons whose doings were of course vastly embroidered by the authors. In a very different category, however, was another man who achieved the status of having his name displayed on the cover of yet another weekly "library", in which he was portrayed as a kind of Robin Hood of the West, though in reality, Jesse James was probably the most callous and cold-blooded killer in the annals of western outlawry, with hardly a single redeeming feature in his make-up. Reading of the doings of Jesse James and his brother Frank in the few ancient

and dog-eared copies of "Jesse James Stories - A Weekly Dealing With The Detection Of Crime", which I still possess, brought to mind a remark said to have been made by a descendant of the notorious outlaw's family after witnessing a motion picture dealing with James' career - "the only resemblance to the real Jesse with his movie counterpart is that they both rode horses". This certainly applies to these old specimens, of 1902 vintage, in which the James gang are portrayed as romantic and heroic figures forced into outlawry against their will, and robbing the rich and befriending the poor in the best Sherwood Forest tradition.

Perhaps the most authentic and detailed account of the real Jesse James and his crimson career is James D. Horan's remarkable study of the James gang, "Desperate Men", which traces in enthralling fashion the depredations of this train-robbing and bank-looting desperado from his youth up to that fateful day in August 1876, when the James gang descended upon the little town of Northfield, Minnesota, to rob the local bank, and instead were routed by the bullets of the outraged citizens. Jesse escaped, and although he managed to elude capture for six more desperate years, the writing was on the wall and the sands were running out. On the morning of April 3, 1882, he was caught in one of the rare occasions when he was not wearing his formidable armament of no less than four guns, and fell to the bullet of one Robert Ford, an acquaintance of James who was tempted by the reward offered for the notorious outlaw.

I had often wondered if the old "Jesse James Stories" in my possession were the first to have been published, or whether, like the Buffalo Bill Libraries of about the same vintage, they were perhaps reprints from an earlier series, until recently, when idly reading (of all things!) a women's magazine, I was amazed to find, in an article dealing with the career of our old friends Street & Smith, the publishers, a replica of the cover of a paper which I had never heard of before - the "Log Cabin Library", dated April 11, 1889, and featuring "Jesse, The Outlaw - A Narrative Of The James Gang", by "Captain Jake Shackelford, the Western Detective". Evidently the Jesse James saga had been going strong long before the turn of the century!

It is said that the publishers discontinued the "Jesse James Stories" after a year or two because of complaints that the stories tended to glorify crime. I am unable to vouch for the truth of this, but if so, one can only wish that the perpetrators of some of our modern "comics" were half as conscientious!

Well, they have long ago passed on - the men, and the authors who wrote of them. And even of the countless boys' papers wherein their adventures were recorded, for which we so eagerly paid our humble penny in days long past, few still survive - as treasured items in the collections of those who, like myself, regard them with nostalgic affection as links with boyhood days. And Buffalo Bill himself, who perhaps inspired more words of clean and exciting fiction than any individual of his time, has been sleeping in his rock-bound grave in Colorado, on the heights of Lookout Mountain, for these forty years and more. Yet, even in our atomic age, his fame has not faded, and his legend will linger on as long as history still records that most thrilling and adventurous of all eras - the OLD WEST.

WANTED: Magnets, S.O.L's. (Greyfriars) (coverless ones welcomed if complete story and clear, Early B.F.L. etc. Usually some items for exchange.
ASHLEY, 23 MOUNTJOY, BRIDPORT, DORSET.

WANTED: Schoolboys' Own Library 9,40,58,157. Boys' Friend (Green 'un) 762,764,780, 1042,1257,1261,1264,1294 to 1298.
PORTER, OLDFIELDS, CRADLEY HEATH, STAFFS.

Rookwood School was first mentioned in Magnet No. 357 (December 12th, 1914) when Bob Cherry stated that he had seen the junior football team practising when he was on a bike-ride. The first story appeared in Boys' Friend No. 715 (February 20th, 1915) and the series continued until No. 1298 (April 24th, 1926) - 584 stories in all. Many were reprinted in the Popular, and some in the Gem, where a few entirely new stories also appeared.

The Rookwood stories were much shorter than the Greyfriars and Saint Jim's stories, usually running to only five, six, or seven chapters and they lacked much of the "patter" that helped to create atmosphere and to spread out the other stories, so that the Rookwood yarns tended to move more rapidly. They were very readable tales, nearly all by Charles Hamilton himself, and many of the plots were subsequently used again as the basis of Magnet or Gem stories. Further, nearly all the stories dealt with Rookwood characters only; few extraneous characters appeared - as happened all too frequently at Greyfriars - and, apart from one fantastically long vacation in Canada - holidays were spent in England, and the holiday series, like the school stories, had a homely air about them and dealt with boyish pranks and adventures.

THE FOURTH FORM AT ROOKWOOD

BY

J. BREEZE BENTLEY

Like St. Jim's, Rookwood is divided into two houses. The Classical Side dates from the foundation of the School in the dim and distant past, but (according to the 1921 Holiday Annual) the Modern Side is just twenty years old. As befits such a modern building, it is "supplied with all the most modern fitments, including electric light and hot-water heating". It is perhaps fitting that it should have been presided over by Mr. Herbert Manders, M.A., a man of most antiquated ideas on the training of school-boys, who wears elastic-sided boots.

A Classical education is said to possess at least snob value, and it is a fact that Rookwood possesses far more snobs than either Greyfriars or St. Jim's (there are nine or ten in the Fourth and Shell)* and they are all on the Classical Side - "the gentlemanly side" as Townsend described it in Boys' Friend No. 769, when addressing a meeting held to protest against the coming of Rawson - "a fellow whose father actually works for his livin'!"

As at Greyfriars, the stories of Rookwood are largely about the Fourth Form, and it is of the boys of that Form that I am going to speak. At the beginning of the stories, the Modern Side was said to be slightly the larger, but only one new boy (Clarence Cuffy) became a permanent member of the Modern Fourth, while the Classical Fourth gradually expanded, like the Greyfriars Remove, and of the twenty-four boys listed in Boys' Friend No. 1270, no less than twelve had arrived as new boys.

There was a disconcerting movement of boys from study to study - probably fostered by the Rookwood custom of 'first come, first served' at the beginning of each term. The list I have used was that of the last days - Boys' Friend No. 1270 - and was given on the occasion of a Headmaster's Visitation, a dreadful affair when Dr. Chisholm

*Gower, Muffin, Peele, Townsend, Topham (and at times Mornington) of the Fourth Form Chesney, Howard, Smythe, Tracy major of the Shell Form.

paid a surprise visit to each Fourth Form study in turn, with dire consequences to the untidy or shady. The list given in the Holiday Annual for 1921 is, by the way, very misleading, as the number of studies is wrongly given, and several characters had not then arrived.

CLASSICAL SIDE

There are eight studies in the Classical Fourth. The last of them, No. 8, is always called the End Study and is the largest of all, having two windows, one of which overlooks the quadrangle. It also has a fire-grate though why this fact should be recorded is beyond me: all the studies have fire-grates, lack of one would be a serious handicap to the more wayward juniors.

STUDY No. 8 (The End Study) James Silver, Arthur Edward Lovell, George Raby, Arthur Newcome.

The four boys who share the End Study are Jimmy Silver, Arthur Edward Lovell, George Raby, and Arthur Newcome - the Fistical Four* - who are the acknowledged leaders of the Classical Fourth.

Jimmy Silver, whose arrival is described most realistically in the first Rookwood story, is one of Charles Hamilton's best characters. Unlike Harry Wharton and Tom Merry he is not an orphan, but lives with his parents at The Priory, Hadley Priors (B.F. 1125) or Lexham (B.F. 810). He has also two cousins of school age - Algernon, who joined the Rookwood Third, and Phyllis, who appeared in some of the stories.

As usually befalls new boys, Jimmy was successfully ragged by other members of the Fourth, but he soon achieved fame as a strategist, when he turned the tables on a raiding party in the dormitory. He had a hard struggle to find favour with his study-mates, who resented the 'planting' of a new boy on them, but his pluck in rescuing Lovell from a chalk pit won them over and he soon became their leader. Jimmy was not long in challenging the Moderns claim to be the 'top side' at Rookwood and his resource and energy re-invigorated the Classics. Within nine months he ousted the foppish and inefficient Adolphus Smythe of the Shell, from the Junior Captaincy and his position has never been successfully challenged.

There is no doubt that Jimmy Silver is the main character of the Rookwood stories; he appears in them all, and plays the leading role in most. His motto "Keep smiling" sums up his philosophy of life, and though he has on occasion suffered a reverse, no one has kept him down. He is the life and soul of rags against the Moderns or against the 'Bagshot Bounders', can tackle anybody in the Fourth or Shell, has an instinctive dislike of bullying, and so comes up against prefects such as Carthew and Knowles, and he has no time for dingy pursuits and in consequence falls foul of the Giddy Goats. He is generous to a rival, and fellows such as Mornington have found him a good friend in time of need.

Finally, it may be hinted that there is a soft spot in his heart for Dorothy, the Headmaster's daughter, who is a few months younger than he, but this is not often mentioned in the stories.

Arthur Edward Lovell is another mainstay of the stories. Apart possibly from George Herries of the St. Jim's Fourth, Lovell has far fewer brains than any leading character at a Hamilton School and it was an act of courage to make him a member of the Fistical Four, yet it proved a huge success. He was actually the leading light in the Classical Fourth's ragging against the Moderns, till Jimmy Silver turned up, so that there is little wonder that the Moderns were on top. Lovell was the chief opponent of Jimmy's entry to the End Study, but after the Chalk Pit episode, he backed Jimmy

*The Fistical Three became the Fistical Four in B.F. No. 718
He edits the Fourth Form paper "Jimmy Silver's Journal" (B.F. No. 931)

through thick and thin. Lovell is a good cricketer and footballer, and is treasurer of the Junior Sports Club, but as his arithmetic is deplorably weak, the accounts give him a lot of trouble.

Though a woolly-head, Arthur Edward is cursed with a firm conviction that he knows best, and once having made a decision, he sticks to it: argument or opposition simply makes him more obstinate. Obstinacy, as we know so well, is a characteristic of Johnny Bull, but Bull and Lovell are quite different characters. Johnny has sound commonsense and his pals get infuriated when he says repeatedly "I told you so" when disregard of his warnings has landed them in trouble. Arthur Edward's pals, on the other hand, get infuriated when letting him have his way lands them in trouble.

George Raby and Arthur Newcome are a couple of hard-hitting sportsmen, with a philosophy of 'live and let live' who are usually quite content to let Jimmy be the leader. Although not so well delineated as Lovell and Silver, they are real characters and one feels that they make a real contribution to the stories. There was one series (B.F. 1134-1136) in which George Raby was thought to have run away instead of coming up to help his chums against Pankley & Co., but it turned out to be a mistake.* So far as I know, Newcome has not taken the lead in any story.

STUDY No. 7: Sidney Dickinson (minor) and Peter Cuthbert Gunner.

Peter Cuthbert Gunner arrived in Boys' Friend No. 1088 and was the last permanent member of the Fourth to come to the school. He is a big fellow, well endowed with brawn but badly with brain. He was formerly in the Fourth Form at Saint Bede's and was confident that the Head would place him in the Fifth or at worst the Shell at Rookwood. Actually, he only just scraped into the Fourth. He has plenty of courage and when walking up to the School on his first day, saw Jimmy Silver in the river, jumped to the conclusion that he was in difficulty, and dived in to save him. As Gunner was fully clothed and an indifferent swimmer, while Jimmy Silver is an expert swimmer, it was Jimmy who hauled Gunner out, though Gunner thought otherwise.

Gunner is a good fellow at heart, but his over-bearing manner, ill-placed self-confidence and general incompetence make him unpopular with the Form. He rules his study-mate with an iron will, backed up by a pair of ham fists, but provides a generous table out of his ample allowance, his father being the owner of "Gunner's Hardware Ltd."

Gunner is, in many ways, a replica of Grundy of the St. Jim's Shell, and although he was the central figure in a few amusing stories when he first arrived, he is not really an asset as a permanent character.

Sidney Dickinson, who has a brother in the Sixth Form, arrived in Boys' Friend No. 766. At first, he had a passion for reading "blood and thunders" and let them turn his head, but the Rookwood Fourth soon cured him. Thereafter he has been a mild and inoffensive fellow, with little pocket money. His seclusion in Study No. 7 was rudely shattered by the arrival of Gunner, whose unwilling satellite he has become.

STUDY NO. 6: Richard Oswald, Patrick O'Donovan Flynn and James Hooker.

The three members of Study No. 6 are Dick Oswald, Patrick O'Donovan Flynn and James Hooker. All have been at Rookwood since the stories began, but none has ever taken a prominent part in the Form. Dick Oswald is a reserve for the cricket and football teams, Flynn often passes an amusing comment and is always ready for a bit of fun, while Hooker is like the other two in being a supporter of Jimmy Silver.

* He had turned back to pull Pankley's younger brother out of the river.

STUDY No. 5: Cecil Townsend, Harold Topham and Tom Rawson

Cecil Townsend and Harold Topham, who live in Study No. 5 have similar tastes and may be considered together. They come from homes that are much too comfortable, and have parents who allow them far too much pocket-money. Unfortunately they have little commonsense. In consequence, they have been drawn into the orbit of Adolphus Smythe and Tracy major of the Shell, are affected in dress and speech and are a couple thoroughly unpleasant snobs. They think it "sportin'" to smoke a cigarette, bet on a gee-gee, and to have a little game of nap or banker, but they are not really a vicious pair - just too vacant to see the foolishness of their behaviour.

Tom Rawson came to Rookwood in Boys' Friend No. 769, as a Foundation Scholar. He comes from a very poor home, his father being a jobbing carpenter, but he is a very likeable fellow, of cheerful disposition, able in class, good at games, and handy with his fists. Townsend and Topham were appalled that a fellow whose father actually worked for his living should be admitted to Rookwood, and absolutely aghast when he was put into their study. Indeed Topham nearly asked his people to take him away from Rookwood, but thought better of it. As a result, Rawson had a rough time when he first came, as the other snobbish juniors backed up Townsend and Topham in their attempts to make him uncomfortable, but Jimmy Silver and the better set soon shewed him that Rookwood is by no means a snob-school.

Life in Study No. 5 is still hectic at times, because Tom Rawson kicks up a shindy whenever he finds Townsend and Topham smoking in it, but as they have no pluck they offer but feeble resistance to him.

STUDY NO. 4: Valentine Mornington and Kit Erroll

Valentine Mornington is undoubtedly one of the greatest characters drawn by Charles Hamilton, and only Jimmy Silver takes a more prominent part in the Rookwood stories. He arrived in Boys' Friend No. 774 as the heir to the vast Mornington fortune and the lucky possessor of unlimited pocket-money. Unfortunately, wealth had spoiled him: he was a dreadful snob, he had extravagant and vicious habits, a violent and un-governed temper which was revealed whenever his slightest whim was thwarted, and a disinclination to work except when the spirit moved him. His wealth enabled him to furnish his study in the manner of Lord Mauleverer*, and at once attracted all the worse fellows at Rookwood, who battened on him. Cuthbert Gower made a steady income from him at cards, and Peele quickly introduced him to Joey Hook at the Bird in Hand, who relieved him of spare cash by betting and gambling. Adolphus Smythe welcomed him to his study. All the Giddy Goats were ready to go for motor-car rides in cars hired by Morny, and to live off the fat of the land at his study feeds, but they writhed under the flail of his bitter tongue, and ran him down behind his back.

In Boys' Friend No. 809, Mornington took Peele, Gower, Townsend and Topham for a motor-car ride and came across a poor waif, trudging wearily on the road. Mornington picked him up, brought him to Rookwood, and prevailed upon Sir Rupert Stacpoole, his uncle and guardian, to let him become a Second-Form junior at the School. It was not pure philanthropy: Mornington did it partly to scandalize his nobby friends, and partly to see the Head's reaction, because on the previous Sunday Dr. Chisholm had preached about caring for the hungry and the sick. Somewhat to Morny's astonishment, the Head approved of this practical application of what he had said.

Mornington staunchly defended his protégé - not always wisely, as when he tried to compel the Second to accept him, - and young 'Erbert worshipped the ground on which he walked. Then, in Boys' Friend No. 844, 'Erbert was rescued from drowning by his protector, who was horrified to discover on the younger boy's shoulder the birthmark

* Actually he was called Lord Mornington in the first few stories.

peculiar to the Morningsons. And after several powerful stories, in which good and evil strove for the mastery of Val. Mornington, it was established that 'Erbert was Morny's long lost cousin Cecil and the true heir of Mornington.

Mornington was bitter about the loss of his fortune. His "friends" turned against him, and he flayed them with his bitter tongue. He also shewed them up publicly by the pretence that 'Erbert was not proved to be Cecil Mornington, which made them rush to curry his favour once more, much to his sardonic satisfaction. He kicked Peele and Gower out of Study No. 4 and Kit Erroll became his studymate. Reckless betting with Joey Hook and card-playing with Lattrey stripped Mornington of his last few pounds and reduced him to the ignominy of selling up the magnificent furnishings of the study. Higgs was the auctioneer. Kit Erroll bought the lot, so that the furniture stayed where it was, but under new ownership.

Under Erroll's influence, Mornington recovered his balance, reformed in some measure - not because he wanted to, but because 'a pauper can't have expensive tastes' - and he became a prominent member of the Junior teams. But he remained unpredictable, wayward, and obstinate. When friendly towards Jimmy Silver, his keen wits proved themselves, as when he recovered the Rembrandt picture stolen from the Priory, and when he was up against Jimmy, many good stories resulted, as when he ousted him from the Junior Captaincy, only to find that being captain was a 'troublesome bore'.

Valentine Mornington's wilful recklessness has often brought him into conflict with authority and he has been expelled from Rookwood on several occasions, yet he always gets back by dint of some act of daring, as when he plunged into the Roke to save Dr. Chisholm from drowning.

Kit Erroll, the other occupant of Study No. 4 is a boy of quite different calibre. He arrived at Rookwood in Boys' Friend No. 831, and was brought by his "Father" who had a fine record in the Indian Army. But young 'Erbert recognized this man as "Gentleman Jim", a swell mobster whom he had seen in the bad old days at a doss-house off the Euston Road. Mornington was incredulous, but when Erroll turned down his invitation to tea, he turned on Erroll, and denounced him. Erroll threw him out of the study. Then Mornington, always made the more obstinate by opposition, got hold of a photograph of Captain Erroll and was amazed by the resemblance to Kit Erroll. 'Erbert pointed out, however, that the man who brought Kit to Rookwood bore no resemblance to him. Then Mornington overheard a conversation between Erroll and his reputed father, which confirmed 'Erbert's allegation. Gentleman Jim entrapped Morny and held him prisoner in the old quarries near Combe. Erroll effected his rescue, and when Gentleman Jim tried to burgle Rookwood it was Erroll who caused his capture. Fortunately, Peele had inveigled the real Captain Erroll into visiting the School and he identified Gentleman Jim as James Stanton, formerly of his regiment, and recognized Kit as his long-lost son. The whole series makes very good reading.

Kit Erroll's coming was reminiscent of that of Talbot of St. Jim's. His friendship with Mornington was akin to that of Redwing with Vernon-Smith, but there were differences, notably Erroll's affluence, and his much greater prowess at cricket and football.

STUDY No. 3: Richard van Ryn, Charles Pons and Kit Conroy

The three members of Study No. 3 - Richard van Ryn of South Africa, Charles Pons of Canada, and Kit Conroy of Australia, are known as the Colonial Co.

Dick van Ryn is half-English, half-Dutch (very tactful parentage) and arrived from Cape Colony in Boys' Friend No. 798. He is a very straightforward lad - all Hamilton's Empire characters are - and when met at the station by Townsend and Topham

refused to help them have an afternoon off, linked arms with them, and marched them back to Rookwood. He has a sense of humour and when expected as a "Dutchie" to speak broken English, obligingly did so. He is a good sportsman, and can hold his own against Higgs at boxing - no mean feat. He is also a ventriloquist - but does not often practise this art.

Charles Pons arrived (presumably from Quebec) in Boys' Friend No. 812 and had the misfortune to run into Pankley and Co. who took him to Bagshot and made him think that was Rookwood. That took a lot of living down, but van Ryn helped by asking him to Study No. 3. When Higgs tried to bully him, Pons proved his power as a wrestler, and made Higgs move out to Study No. 2. Pons got his own back on the Bagshot Bounders by gravely accepting a challenge to duel with pistols and falling down apparently dead with red ink oozing from under his collar - which made Pankley get hot under his! After this Pons played up the idea that he was a duffer by some fooling on the football field then by a trick made Jimmy Silver play him in a match and proved himself a good inside forward.

Kit Conroy arrived in Boys' Friend No. 819 and was the object of some very touching attention by the Giddy Goats who thought that he was the son of a millionaire. Townsend and Topham got him into Study No. 5. But Conroy soon indicated that their tastes were not his and denied being wealthy. Some hard words followed and the nobs tried to throw him out, and suffered badly in the process. After this Conroy transferred to No. 3, which is much more congenial.

The three Colonials do not play prominent parts in the later stories, and the tales of their arrival, though good yarns, came rather too close together.

STUDY No. 2: Reginald Muffin, Alfred Higgs, Sidney Herbert Jones and Edward Grace

Reginald Muffin - "Tubby Muffin" - is the fat boy of Rookwood School. True to type, he is impecunious, a tireless hunter for grub, always listening to other people's conversation and an incessant tattler of information. He is a duffer at games, and no use as a fighting man, but dearly wants to figure as a hero in the public eye. He lacks the cunning of Bunter and the odious greasiness of Trimble. He often appears in the stories, but seldom takes a big part in them.

Alfred Higgs arrived in Boys' Friend No. 785. He came from St. Wode's School, where he had lorded it over the Fourth Form and he tried to do the same at Rookwood. When met at the station by Jimmy Silver and Co. he ordered Jimmy to carry his bag, and knocked him out when he refused to do so. At Rookwood, he was at first put into Study No. 4 with Peele and Gower, whom he ruled with a rod of iron, but when Mornington returned after an absence, he quickly put an end to it. At Higgs' first attempt to bully him, Morny lost his temper, grabbed the fire tongs, felled Higgs by a blow on the shoulder, and kept him down while Peele thrashed him with a cricket stump. On rising, Higgs again went for Mornington who whipped up the teapot and smashed it - tea and all - over Higgs' head. That ended it: Higgs treated Morny with respect lest his life be endangered. But he caused a lot of trouble in the Fourth until Jimmy Silver went into strict training and knocked him out in a boxing match; since that time Higgs has been a better fellow, though he still has outbursts.

Sidney Herbert Jones, (Jones minor), is an inoffensive but spirited laddie who has no chance against Higgs in the ring, yet who gives as much as he receives in an argument and is not frightened of telling Higgs off.

Edward Grace ("Teddy" Grace) arrived in Boys' Friend No. 929 and astounded the school by coming on an elephant! He ingeniously explained to Dr. Chisholm that to walk would have made him late, there was no cab or horse available, a bicycle would not

carry his luggage, but there chanced to be a circus in Combe: hence the elephant. He is well provided with cash, his father being a colliery owner, he has an air of charming simplicity and takes an impish delight in practical jokes. Also, he is shrewdly capable of covering his tracks, so that anyone who tries to take a rise out of him usually regrets it. His nickname is "Putty" given, so he says, because he is so soft. Putty is a footballer and cricketer, and an adept at sleight of hand, which causes trouble from time to time.

STUDY No. 1: Cyril Peele, Cuthbert Gower and Mark Lattrey

The members of Study No. 1 are Cyril Peele, Cuthbert Gower and Mark Lattrey - three very shady customers, who never shew signs of mending their ways.

Cyril Peele is a mean and spiteful rogue who is on the fringe of the "Sporting Set", tolerated by Adolphus Smythe and Co. but rather despised by them. He is addicted to smoking, gambling, and visits to the Bird-in-Hand or the race-course, but is rather a scrounger and is always willing to let somebody else "stand treat". He was overjoyed when Mornington arrived and was put into his study (then No. 4). Peele has appeared in many of the stories, causing much trouble by his vengeful actions which, however, usually recoil on his own head.

Cuthbert Gower is another rogue who aids and abets Peele but seldom is the originator of mischief. In Mornny's palmy days, Gower made a steady income from him at banker.

Mark Lattrey arrived in Boys' Friend No. 838, and was assigned to Study No. 1, which was at that time unoccupied, its two former tenants having left. He is slim, has a hard, thin face and very keen eyes of uncertain colour. He quickly took up with Peele, Gower and Leggett; and Jimmy Silver observed that "he has a kind of instinct for the worst kind of fellow...an out and out blackguard." And so he is. Lattrey is the worst fellow at Rookwood: clever, unprincipled and utterly selfish. Aubrey Angel at Greyfriars and Aubrey Racke at St. Jim's are babes in comparison. Yet there is a certain fascination in his very corruptness. Lattrey is incapable of true friendship with anyone and even rascals like Cyril Peele find him repulsive. His sole aim in life is the furthering of his own ends and he does this without scruple.

Not only does Lattrey gamble, bet, smoke and drink, he tries to get other fellows to do the same, and he ran up against Jimmy Silver when he made Tubby Muffin smoke a cigarette and when he introduced Patrick Flynn to the mysteries of card-playing for money. Being thoroughly dishonest, he cheats at cards. Mornington shrewdly observed that Lattrey never lost when it was his deal. Lattrey can pick a lock with ease and is adept at imitating other people's writing. Both these arts have been used on occasion.

Valentine Mornington tolerated Lattrey when the whim moved him, but always with a fine disregard for his feelings that infuriated Lattrey and made a bitter enemy of him. Thus, when approached by Lattrey to learn how to play poker, Mornington said disdainfully 'as I'll be payin' to learn, I'll learn when I want to' and went off to cricket. Lattrey tried to bribe 'Erbert - who carried notes from Mornny to Joey Hook - to let him have one of these 'bits of writing'. The loyal fag reported this to his mentor, and Lattrey got a fearful thrashing. Now Lattrey's father was a private inquiry agent, employed to search for the missing Cecil Mornington and Lattrey knew this, so that when Valentine discovered the birthmark on young 'Erbert, and became estranged from him in consequence, Lattrey ferreted out the reason and tried to blackmail Mornington as the price of silence.* For a time he succeeded, but Mornington's better nature rebelled against Lattrey's evil ways and he told 'Erbert the truth and dismissed Lattrey

*Not for money, but to be his friend and go with him to the Bird in Hand. The break came when Lattrey laid big bets against Rookwood and tried to get Mornington to "sell the match".

with the taunt "your estimable father will not finger the reward....I have wired my uncle that Cecil is found." Even that did not finish Lattrey's efforts. He subsequently had the effrontery to suggest that he and Valentine join forces to cheat 'Erbert at banker and share the proceeds! You can guess what happened.

MODERN SIDE

It was perhaps inevitable that the Modern Side which, like the New House at St. Jim's, was destined only to provide a source for stories of inter-House rivalry, should be drawn sketchily. In fact, it lacked well-drawn characters even more than the New House Fourth, and many of the boys were merely "names".

Tommy Dodd, the leader of the Moderns, is a good-natured lad, resourceful and of ready wit, ever ready for a jape and a good strategist. He excels at cricket and football and can box nearly as well as Jimmy Silver. He is let down by the dearth of talent among his followers.

Tommy Doyle and Tommy Cook are Dodd's studymates in Study No. 5. They are good-hearted boys, who play in the teams, but have no outstanding characteristics.

James Frederick Towle, of Study No. 2 earns fame as the only other Modern who plays regularly in teams.

Albert Leggett, of Study No. 7 is the one bad hat of the Modern Fourth. He is mean, untruthful, and caddish, lending money at high interest to the unwary who are hard up, and always willing to do a dirty trick if he can make money from it. When Lattrey arrived, Lovell sagely remarked that "Leggett ought to be glad that Lattrey has come to Rockwood as he was not now the biggest blackguard in the School." Tommy Dodd wages continual war against Leggett and many are the times that his knavery have earned a salutary ragging or bumping, but to no effect; Albert is incorrigible.

Clarence Cuffy arrived in Boys' Friend No. 829. He lives at Gander's Green a beautiful and charming eden where everybody is kind and thoughtful and no one imposes on any one else. Cuffy is a guileless youth, with a trusting nature, little common-sense and is a hopeless duffer at games, so that he is completely at sea in a boarding school. At first he was placed in Leggett's study - a most uncongenial abode - but later moved to Study No. 1.

Classical Study List from B.F. No. 838

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Lattrey, Muffin | 5. Townsend, Topham, Rawson |
| 2. Erroll, Higgs, Jones minor | 6. Flynn, Oswald, Hooker |
| 3. The Colonial Co. | 7. Vacant |
| 4. Mornington, Peele, Gower | 8. The Fistical Four |

WANTED: Schoolboys' Own Library 9,40,58,157. Boys' Friend (Green 'un) 762,764,780, 1042,1257,1261,1264,1294 to 1298 .

PORTER, OLDFIELDS, CRADLEY HEATH, STAFFS.

EXCHANGE: Magnets, Numbers 116,229,243,249,302,369,389. All complete with covers and in good condition. For: Gems, Series 334-337, Series 351-353, 355,356,358,359,361, 362,363,364,375,376,377,378,393,399,416, 988-991. Must be in good condition. Also ½d and 1d Gems in exchange for Gem numbers as above.

S.G.J. WENHAM, D.O., M.R.O., 5 MUSEUM ST., MAIDSTONE, KENT.

A

QUESTION of ORIGINS

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE "BULLSEYE"

By E.V. COPEMAN

(With Assistance from Robert Copeman, Aged 6)

* * * * *

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS are duly made to Syd Smyth who so kindly put at our disposal his entire bound set of BULLSEYES and his still-growing collection of FUN & FICTIONS and indicated that comparison between the two publications would prove interesting.

Young Robert was the first to notice that illustrations in some of the earlier BULLSEYES were almost duplications of illustrations in FUN & FICTION and that began the search.

We've had nights and nights of it; and we've discovered plenty

Despite the big gap of years between, in the BULLSEYE and FUN & FICTION the Amalgamated Press has produced two blue-jacketed weeklies that certainly have more than a little in common.

FUN & FICTION, first on the scene, ran for 124 issues from 12/10/1911 to 21/2/1914.

BULLSEYE ran for 183 issues from 24/1/1931 to 21/7/1934.

I bought the BULLSEYE myself when it was originally issued and it appealed to me then because, being in my early teens, I found it startlingly different to its contemporaries, and it was a novelty to be able to read yarns that were largely dramatic, fantastic, and sometimes bloodcurdlingly gruesome yarns that featured adult heroes.

I thought when I first saw the BULLSEYE in 1931 that the A.P. was adopting quite a new and revolutionary approach. I didn't know then that it had all happened before twenty years before ...

History now records that neither publication was exactly a riotous success, but while they lasted they were very interesting, more so possibly because the BULLSEYE was actually the "literary reincarnation" of FUN & FICTION! Obviously someone on the A.P. staff had decided that it wouldn't be bad policy to serve up "the mixture as before" to a new generation!

For those of you who have access to both the BULLSEYE and FUN & FICTION, I would suggest that you check back on to your copies as you follow the rest of this article, because there are a lot of comparisons that can be made, comparisons that prove beyond any doubt that the BULLSEYE grew from the faded remains of FUN & FICTION and represented a lot of old material in new guise.

ILLUSTRATIONS -- THEN AND NOW

"Then" means 1911/1914. "Now" means 1931/1934. Watch how the A.P. bridged the twenty-year gap by the following comparisons:

1. Compare BULLSEYE No. 1 (24/1/1931) with FUN & FICTION No. 12 (30/12/1911)

The front cover picture on BULLSEYE No. 1, drawn by G.W. Wakefield shows a man imprisoned in an electric bulb above a roaring furnace tended by two natives. It illustrates a scene from the "House of Thrills" story, THE CRYSTAL TOMB.

Now turn to FUN & FICTION No. 12 and once again on the front cover you see the man in the electric bulb over the furnace, only this time the incident is from one of the series of yarns about "The Woman With the Black Heart", and (remarkable coincidence!) the sub-title is again THE CRYSTAL TOMB.

More remarkable are the captions beneath the pictures:

BULLSEYE: The vapour formed into the shape of an enormous electric bulb, which shimmered in the red glow of the roaring furnace. Within its gleaming outlines, dazed by the suffocating fumes, the imprisoned man battled helplessly.

FUN & FICTION: Now the vapour formed the shape of an enormous electric bulb which shimmered in the red glow of the roaring furnace, and imprisoned within its gleaming outlines, stupefied by the suffocating fumes, the man who battled hopelessly for the breath of life.

Just one further comment: the FUN & FICTION cover drawn in 1911, was also by G.W. Wakefield.

2. Compare BULLSEYE No. 1 (24/1/1931) with FUN & FICTION No. 15 (20/1/1912)

On page 9 of BULLSEYE No. 1 is a picture showing one of the times when the Royal Mail did NOT go through! In fact it took a distinct nosedive into the waters of the Thames when it tried to cross the Tower Bridge while the bascules were rising. The BULLSEYE picture shows a modern motor-van and illustrates the first story of "The Night Patrol" series, THE TONG OF THE RED SHADOW.

Its counterpart in FUN & FICTION No. 15 appears on Page 11, but this time the van is drawn by two horses. This picture comes from a story of "Adam Daunt, the Millionaire Detective" called THE MAIL ROBBERS.

Captions for comparison:

BULLSEYE: There came a terrific crash as the bottom of the van hit the road's edge. Then it bucked high and tilted forward. Nick Kennedy saw the policeman flung out, then he himself was shot from his seat. He grabbed wildly at the side of the van, but felt it falling with him.

FUN & FICTION: The heavy bascule rose slowly, and the horses dashed at full speed up the slope, dragging the swaying van after them. Snorting with fright, the terrified animals reached the top of the bascule and plunged over the end.

3. Compare BULLSEYE No. 1 (24/1/1931) with FUN & FICTION No. 5 (11/11/1911)

The G.W. Wakefield illustration on Page 13 of BULLSEYE No. 1 shows Harry Dangerfield blindfolded standing on a floor consisting mainly of gaping holes. This is from the first "Danger & Co." story, entitled THE HALL OF A HUNDRED TERRORS.

Now turn to the front cover of FUN & FICTION No. 5 (also a Wakefield drawing --

1911 vintage!), which depicts a scene from another "Woman With the Black Heart" yarn, THE ROOM WITH THE TWO DOORS.

As with Comparisons Nos. 1 and 2, one drawing has quite obviously been deliberately based on the other.

Captions are:

BULLSEYE: "I am standing by the door at the far side of the hall," the voice went on, and a door was banged as though in proof of his words. "If you have pluck enough to make the attempt, and the luck to succeed in getting safely across, the diamond star and all that it means is yours."

FUN & FICTION: "There are two doors to this room," said Jasper Starkley suavely. "One leads to freedom, the other to death. I give you the sporting chance to discover which is which. I stand between the two ways out. My voice will guide you. Now step this way, and try your luck."

4. Compare BULLSEYE No. 1 (24/1/1931) with FUN & FICTION No. 4 (4/11/1911)

The picture on Page 17 of BULLSEYE No. 1 is almost identical to the front cover of FUN & FICTION No. 4. The BULLSEYE illustration is for the "Sign of the Crimson Dagger" story, ENEMIES OF SOCIETY, while the FUN & FICTION illustration is for one of the "Fire Fighters" series, entitled THE BOMB-THROWERS.

Both books show a man in a dress suit caught in the beam from a searchlight as he hangs suspended from overhead telegraph wires between two high buildings, supporting his weight with one hand and holding a spluttering bomb in the other as he faces a fireman with an axe who is also clinging to the wires. In both cases a girl is shown leaning from a window that belches flames and smoke.

Captions are quite differently worded.

5. Compare BULLSEYE No. 1 (24/1/1931) with FUN & FICTION No. 4 (4/11/1911)

Once again there are Wakefield drawings in both books; similar but not identical. BULLSEYE drawing this time is on Page 21 and is for the "Man With a Thousand Faces" story, THE CASTLE OF FEAR. FUN & FICTION picture is on Page 15 and is for another "Woman With the Black Heart" tale, THE MOVING WALLS. In the BULLSEYE it is a man who is imprisoned between two closing walls; in FUN & FICTION a woman is the prisoner.

Captions:

BULLSEYE: The closing walls were so near now that Phil Flash could brace his hands against them. Thrusting out an arm at each side, he exerted every last ounce of his strength to keep them apart.

FUN & FICTION: The noise of the cranks being turned reached her, as the pitiless Oriental serfs worked the machinery which drove the cell walls closer upon the beautiful prisoner within. In an agony of horror her snow-white arms attempted to force back the terrible death that pressed cruelly upon her.

6. Compare BULLSEYE No. 2 (31/1/1931) with FUN & FICTION No. 2 (21/10/1911)

Wakefield again in both cases, with a male hero being substituted for a female in the later illustration. The BULLSEYE picture is on Page 29, showing Mortimer Hood bound to a special contraption which is scheduled to send him to a watery grave in the

Thames. This is from the "Mortimer Hood, Millionaire Detective" story, WHEN MIDNIGHT CHIMES.

The FUN & FICTION illustration is on the front cover and once again comes from a "Woman With the Black Heart" tale. (Evidently this series proved a popular source for ideas!). This one was called ON THE STROKE OF MIDNIGHT.

Final sentences of each caption are similar:

BULLSEYE: Then silence reigned, save for the eerie lapping of the black waters below. The moonbeams glinted upon the gleaming steel of the upraised knife, and Mortimer Hood waited --- waited for the chimes of the midnight hour to sound!

FUN & FICTION: Then silence reigned save for the ominous ticking of the clock in front and the lapping of the surging river below. Instinctively the doomed prisoner found herself counting the ticks, and she knew that only ten seconds separated her from death.

7. Compare BULLSEYE No. 4 (14/2/1931) with FUN & FICTION No. 18 (10/2/1912)

The BULLSEYE picture is on Page 13 and, without variation, has been redrawn from the FUN & FICTION drawing on Page 31. Captions are different but both show a man tied to the single mast of a canoe that is plunging over a huge waterfall.

BULLSEYE is for the "Danger & Co." story, THE SECRET OF THE SEVEN CATARACTS. FUN & FICTION is for "Behind the Scenes", with sub-title of IN PROOF OF GRATITUDE.

An interesting feature worth noting is that, though the stories themselves are quite different, in BOTH CASES the name of the hero is "HARRY DANGERFIELD".

8. Compare BULLSEYE No. 5 (21/2/1931) with FUN & FICTION Vol. 2, No. 18 (5/10/1912)

The illustration on Page 21 of BULLSEYE No. 5 shows a man leaning over the battlements of an old castle aiming a rifle at another man who is descending by means of a rope from the shattered window of the tower.

It is copied from the picture on Page 761 of FUN & FICTION Vol. 2, No. 18, even to the extent of the man and woman watching from above; though there are other minor differences.

BULLSEYE illustrates the "Man With a Thousand Faces" story, THE HERMIT OF KROOM CASTLE. FUN & FICTION is for another "Woman With the Black Heart" yarn, THE SHOT IN THE NIGHT.

Captions are different.

9. Compare BULLSEYE No. 6 (28/2/1931) with FUN & FICTION No. 8 (2/12/1911)

The BULLSEYE picture is on Page 21, FUN & FICTION pic is on Page 15. Hero being substituted once more for heroine, both sketches are the work of G.W. Wakefield and both show the use of a human arm in place of a wooden bar to hold a door being battered upon by warders who are in pursuit of an escaped convict.

BULLSEYE is for "The Man With a Thousand Faces", sub-titled THE HUMAN BOLT, while FUN & FICTION is for "The Woman With the Black Heart", sub-titled AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR.

Both captions commence with the sentence, "Open in the King's name!" but are otherwise differently worded.

10. Compare BULLSEYE No. 6 (28/2/1931) with FUN & FICTION No. 18 (10/2/1912)

The BULLSEYE illustration on Page 29 of No. 6 is a redrawn version of the front cover of FUN & FICTION No. 18. Both show the hero hanging over a gorge from the remnants of a torn railway track, with an oncoming train heading towards him ... and towards the gap ...

The BULLSEYE pic is for the "Mortimer Hood, Millionaire Detective" story, entitled AT THE ELEVENTH HOUR. (Familiar ring about that sub-title, isn't there? See FUN & FICTION sub-title in Comparison No. 9 above).

The FUN & FICTION picture is from an "Adam Daunt, the Millionaire Detective" story called A PLOT FOR REVENGE.

Captions are worded differently.

11. Compare BULLSEYE No. 9 (21/3/1931) with FUN & FICTION No. 19 (17/2/1912)

Similarity here is not quite so marked, but the Wakefield sketch on Page 9 of BULLSEYE No. 9 for the "Night Patrol" yarn, THE BRONZE BELL OF SAN FOO, does seem to owe something of its inspiration to the front cover of FUN & FICTION No. 19 which illustrates a scene from the "Behind the Scenes" yarn, CAUGHT IN HIS OWN TRAP.

Both pictures show a man swinging by his hands from the iron tongue of a huge bell.

In both case a watery fate awaits them below.

12. Compare BULLSEYE No. 12 (11/4/1931) with FUN & FICTION Vol. 2. No. 8. (27/7/1912)

The "human bat" in the pic on Page 20 of BULLSEYE No. 12 may have been a descendant of a similar creature on the front cover of FUN & FICTION Vol. 2. No. 8. While the drawings are quite different, the idea seems to be the same; a flying man with startled watchers below.

BULLSEYE is for a "Mortimer Hood, Millionaire Detective" yarn called THE FLYING ROBBER, while FUN & FICTION is for an "Adam Daunt, the Millionaire Detective" tale called THE SPY.

Note that Mortimer Hood and Adam Daunt were each described as "The Millionaire Detective"!

13. Compare BULLSEYE No. 15 (2/5/1931) with FUN & FICTION Vol. 2. No. 11 (17/8/1912)

Identical situations in both books this time. Take the picture on Page 5 of BULLSEYE No. 15 and the one on Page 543 of FUN & FICTION Vol. 2. No. 11; both show a blindfolded man balancing on a tightrope high up inside a big circus tent as he pushes a wheelbarrow containing a girl with, ahead of them, coiled round the rope, a huge cobra, ready to strike! Down below, in both cases, is an awestruck crowd.

BULLSEYE pic is for "The House of Thrills", sub-titled THE TRAIL OF HATE. FUN & FICTION is for "Behind the Scenes", sub-titled A LOVER'S TREACHERY.

Captions differ.

14. Compare BULLSEYE No. 19 (30/5/1931) with FUN & FICTION Vol. 2. No. 57 (9/11/1912)

Compare the Wakefield drawing on Page 9 of BULLSEYE No. 19 with the one on Page 917 of FUN & FICTION Vol. 2. No. 57. Both show someone walking a plank that projects from the door of a Thames-side warehouse and hangs out over the water. The later

version has substituted male for female and has provided rescue in the form of a policeman coming down from above on the end of a crane chain.

BULLSEYE pic is from the "Night Patrol" yarn, THE BATTLE OF CHINATOWN CREEK. FUN & FICTION pic is from "Dora Courage, Typist", sub-titled WALKING THE PLANK.

Background and warehouse detail in both sketches is identical. It is obvious that Wakefield copied directly from the earlier sketch.

15. Compare BULLSEYE No. 25 (11/7/1931) with FUN & FICTION No. 16 (27/1/1912)

There are fairly big differences in the pictures this time, yet the BULLSEYE one would appear to have definitely had its origin in the one in FUN & FICTION.

The Wakefield illustration on Page 9 of BULLSEYE No. 25 is from a "Night Patrol" story called THE UNDERSEA STRONGHOLD. The pic on Page 11 of FUN & FICTION No. 16 is from an "Adam Daunt, the Millionaire Detective" story called SUNKEN GOLD.

Both deal with wealth hidden below the sea; both show views of above and below the water; both have a small boat and moonlight but there all resemblance ends.....

16. Compare BULLSEYE No. 32 (29/8/1931) with FUN & FICTION No. 14 (13/1/1912)

Front covers of both these books show the hero in similar predicament. The BULLSEYE pic shows Mortimer Hood, a prisoner in a lidless box that is lashed to the minute hand of Big Ben, doomed again for a watery grave when the hand descends from the horizontal!

The FUN & FICTION pic shows Geoffrey Temple bound to the hour hand of a clock, the bottom half of which is immersed in a cauldron of boiling liquid.

The BULLSEYE sketch from "Mortimer Hood, Millionaire Detective" is called THE CHIMES OF FATE, while the FUN & FICTION sketch is from "Adam Daunt, the Millionaire Detective" and is called THE FATAL CAULDRON.

It would seem obvious that the idea for one sprang from the other.

17. Compare BULLSEYE No. 76 (2/7/1932) with FUN & FICTION Vol. 2, No. 6 (13/7/1912)

Slight similarity only in the picture on Page 13 of BULLSEYE No. 76 and the one on Page 377 of FUN & FICTION Vol. 2, No. 6. Both however do show a small child in imminent danger from a huge snake, though the set-up differs.

The BULLSEYE sketch is by J.H. Valda and is for one of the "Uncanny Stories" series, called THE WRATH OF THE SNAKE IDOL. The FUN & FICTION pic by G.W. Wakefield is once again from a "Woman With the Black Heart" tale called THE HATRED OF JASPER LUCAS.

18. Compare BULLSEYE No. 182 (14/7/1934) with FUN & FICTION Vol. 2, No. 19 (12/10/1912)

Perhaps there is nothing really unusual in an illustration showing a car crashing over the edge of a mountain road at a sharp turn while fleeing from another car behind, but if the two sketches indicated are put side by side I think you will probably feel as I do that one inspired the other.

Drawing on Page 5 of BULLSEYE No. 182 is from the "Missing" tale called THE AFFAIR OF THE VANISHED INVENTOR, while the one on Page 784 of FUN & FICTION Vol. 2, No. 19 is from an "Adam Daunt, the Millionaire Detective" story called THE MOTOR BANDITS.

19. Compare BULLSEYE No. 166 (24/3/1934) with FUN & FICTION No. 3 (28/10/1911)

On Page 21 of BULLSEYE No. 166 is a picture showing a man lashed to a tree-trunk facing a firing party of Arabs ... and a woman in between, interceding on his behalf and pleading for his life. This is from the "House of Thrills" story, THE LEGIONNAIRE'S SACRIFICE.

Now put it beside the Wakefield drawing on Page 15 of FUN & FICTION No. 3 from the "Woman With the Black Heart" tale, UNDER MARTIAL LAW. This time the man isn't lashed to a trunk but is blindfolded, and the firing party is made up of soldiers instead of Arabs ... but once more the woman intercedes on the captive's behalf.

Captions bear comparison too:

BULLSEYE: Clive's heart was pounding against his ribs; he knew that nothing could save him now. Even as he assured himself of this fact, a figure ran towards the firing party, placing herself between the men and their intended victim.

FUN & FICTION: As if from the very earth itself, a graceful form had sprung between the rifles and their human target.

20. Compare BULLSEYE No. 169 (14/4/1934) with FUN & FICTION No. 12 (30/12/1911)

There is similarity of idea again here, though no effort has been made to copy the earlier sketch. In both cases there is a man bound to the stake surrounded by wild savages intent on burning him alive.

The BULLSEYE pic is on Page 13 of No. 169 and illustrates the "House of Thrills" story, NATIVE JUSTICE, while the FUN & FICTION pic on Page 9 of No. 12 is for "Adam Daunt, the Millionaire Detective", sub-titled THE WHITE CHIEF'S LEGACY.

THE REPRINTED SERIAL

The twenty comparisons I have given must show that there was more than a mere similarity of policy with the two papers. I am still wondering if the artists dictated the trend of many of the stories; did the BULLSEYE artist, for example, copy a sketch from FUN & FICTION and submit it as an idea upon which the Editor could get some writer to base a story? It would be interesting to find out.

There must be hosts of other picture-links between the two papers, ideas used first in FUN & FICTION just before World War I and later used again with greater (or lesser?) effect in the BULLSEYE just before World War II. A few I have quoted are admittedly only obscurely related; but others are obviously blood-brothers.

Just to round off the record, however, and to finally establish that one paper did actually owe much to the other, I quote from an announcement in BULLSEYE No. 71 dated 28/5/1932:

"Next week brings to you the first chapters of a grand NEW serial entitled FETTERS OF FATE. This is a grand dramatic yarn that you are sure to like."

The serial duly commenced in the next issue, No. 72, and ran until No. 121. It was illustrated mainly by Wakefield and he did some excellent work for it. But if you look at the pictures of "The Count", the villainous dwarf with his fabulous outstanding sidewhiskers, you might have stirrings of memory that prompt you to think the Editor wasn't quite accurate in describing FETTERS OF FATE as "Our Gripping NEW Serial"!

Yes, FETTERS OF FATE appeared originally as a serial in FUN & FICTION, but then it was known as HIS CONVICT BRIDE. It began in FUN & FICTION No. 1 (12/10/1911) and finished in Vol. 2. No. 19 (12/10/1912) ... exactly a year later! The final instalment

bore the heading: "A Serial Story as old as FUN & FICTION"!

Yet the Editor of the BULLSEYE referred to the same story, over twenty years later, as a grand and gripping NEW serial!

From first to last, nothing in it was changed except the illustrations.

It was written by "The Author of DRIVEN FROM HOME, THE GIRL OUTCAST, THE LIGHTS OF HOME, THE SMART GIRL OF THE FAMILY, etc." Does any reader of the C.D. know his name?

Describing his next story, which began in FUN & FICTION Vol. 2. No. 19 (12/10/1912) and was called MOTHER LOVE, this writer said modestly: "Undoubtedly the greatest idea I have ever conceived; the best writing that has ever flowed from my pen, and the strongest dramatic situations I ever imagined, are contained in my new serial, MOTHER LOVE, which starts next week."

OTHER SIMILARITIES

Maybe there are other instances of illustrations, ideas and even actual stories being used both in the BULLSEYE and FUN & FICTION. However, sufficient has been quoted to remove any doubts that the BULLSEYE'S policy was to bring again to a different public the same sort of material that FUN & FICTION had served up twenty years before.

It is interesting to note that G.W. Wakefield worked for both papers, and that his work features in many of the comparisons I have listed. There could easily be a special reason for this. His drawings in the BULLSEYE were certainly excellent and there was plenty of it until shortly before the paper died.

But we are still interested primarily in origins.

The BULLSEYE ran long series of tales with the same title and illustration for a heading week after week, and a small sub-title quoted underneath. So did FUN & FICTION.

In the BULLSEYE there was a regular page devoted to the antics of Willie and Wally, THE BULLSEYE BACKCHAT BOYS. In FUN & FICTION they had a couple of ancestors known as Clarence and Claude, THE FUN & FICTION COMEDIANS.

And, when the BULLSEYE Editor gave a full-size presentation of "NEXT WEEK'S FRONT" each week, surely he was treading the same path as the Editor of FUN & FICTION who used to prefer to call it "NEXT WEEK'S FRONT-PAGE PICTURE"?

Still any doubts?

Well, how about the subtle sub-heading to the Editor's page in later BULLSEYES: "Chat, Chuckles and Chaff. On This Page Your Editor Awaits You with FUN & FICTION Which Will Elate You"?

(Note: When Eric wrote his article he was unaware that Bill Lofts had stated in the 'Story Paper Collector' sometime earlier that he had met an A.P. editor who frankly revealed that many of the Bullseye stories were inspired by those in 'Fun and Fiction'. Well Eric's article does certainly confirm this, and judging by the examples he gives the policy seems to have been well worthwhile. Another interesting circumstance is that Sir Frederick Bowman, frequent visitor to the Merseyside O.B.B.C. wrote several of the stories in 'Fun and Fiction'. - H.L.)

* * * * *

"Hail and Farewell"

By ERIC FAYNE

* * * * *

"Of one thing I am quite convinced. The reprints continued far too long. They should have ceased at least a year before they did."

Those three sentences do not belong to this article. They are lifted from "Turn Back the Clock", in which last year I reviewed the eight years of reprints in the Gem. In the early months of 1931, when I was campaigning insistently for the reprint policy to be adopted, I had no doubts at all but that I was doing right. Three years, and longer, of nothing but stories by substitute writers left no question in my mind. I believe that I was right, and I shall never regret that the old masterpieces came back.

But by mid-1938, and throughout the months until the end of that year, my mind was filled with doubt. Gem editorial policy had, to use a poor metaphor, taken the bit between its teeth and was running wild. The odd miscellany of stories reprinted in 1938 and the opening months of 1939 proved it. True, there was a scattering of good stories, but there were also many substitute efforts as well as a number of unimpressive little pot-boilers. They were selected indiscriminately from the years 1915 to 1920, and the lack of any real policy in presentation can be gauged from the fact that one story at least was a run-of-the-mill yarn from the middle twenties.

Though I could see clearly what was happening, I hesitated to do anything about it, solely because I feared that a campaign for new stories might bring the substitute writers on the scene again, and almost anything was better than a return to the Twilight Years of 1928 - mid 1931. Eventually, as I have already related, I took the plunge, and in a surprisingly short time I was notified that "Mr. Martin Clifford has agreed to write new stories for the Gem, and they will be starting shortly".

Even then I was uneasy, and I was scarcely happier when I was told that the opening story of the new series would be entitled "The Flying Schoolboys". It was a title which smacked of the type of story which had been published often in the Twilight Years. But my fears were groundless, as I knew as soon as I had read the opening lines of the first new story. The genuine Martin Clifford had written it, and he wrote every story that appeared from then until the end.

Roger Jenkins has asked me, and the question is apt, why, instead of asking for new stories with the attendant risk that they might be substitute writers, I did not ask for the reprinting of the stories of the years 1921 - 1924, a period which Roger has delightfully and imaginatively called the "Indian Summer" of the Gem. To be perfectly honest, I cannot say for certain whether the idea occurred to me. It may be that it did and I discarded it because so many of the stories of that period had been reprinted fairly recently in the Schoolboy's Own Library. More likely, I think, I was yearning for new tales of Tom Merry from his creator - so I asked for them, and hoped for the best.

AFTER ELEVEN YEARS

Martin Clifford had not written a St. Jim's series since the summer of 1928, when he made his only contribution to the Gem in that Twilight Year - the very fine Victor Cleeve series of four tales.

It was amazing the way he took up the threads in the Spring of 1939 with all his old competence and verve. One feels that he was delighted to be tapping out St. Jim's again, that the words poured in a stream from his typewriter, that he never found it necessary to look up any item to refresh his memory on the past history of Tom Merry. In fact, he made only one slip, of which more anon.

The first of the new stories appeared at the beginning of April, and they continued until this last chapter in the Gem's glorious history ended at the turn of the year. When it is realised that only four separate series were published during these nine months, it is clear how long the series must have been. It was an era of very long series — too long. Throughout the troubled thirties, the Magnet had presented long series, but from 1935 onwards they were the rule rather than the exception. I have always thought these giant-length series a mistake, though I greatly enjoyed plenty of them. But if one did not care for the theme on the central character, then the series overstayed its welcome by many weeks, which was a pity.

The new Tom Merry stories were, in rough round figures, of 20,000 words — the perfect length for the St. Jim's tale. Reading all these new stories again in preparation for this article, I have been surprised to find that I have enjoyed them very much more in 1958 than I did in 1939, though they pleased me then. I wonder why this should be so. The only explanation I can offer is that the Gem had changed to a pocket-sized paper, and nothing in it seemed quite so attractive any more.

To-day, we are accustomed to reading Billy Bunter and Tom Merry in stiff-covered books; the change from the old format of the Gem and Magnet means little or nothing to us now. In 1958 one can read the Gem offerings of 1939 without the old feeling that "the Gem could never be the same again". Maybe it is a flimsy reason to give as to why those new stories of 1939 are so attractive to me in 1958, but it is the only one that occurs to me.

And this brings me to another point. I find myself inclining to the opinion that the new Gem stories of 1939 were superior to the Magnet stories of the same period as it was in the beginning. The Blue Cover era had been the Golden Age of the Gem. Most people agree that Charles Hamilton gave to the Gem his very best work of the years 1907 — 1914. The stories of the Blue Gem, generally speaking, were superior to the stories of the Red Magnet. In my view, Charles Hamilton, once again, gave his best work in 1939 to the Gem.

The Magnet in 1939 was presenting cover-to-cover stories of 35,000 words length. Frank Richards has assured us that he never "padded" a story, and I think that he is right. At the same time, it can scarcely be denied that these very long Magnet stories contained some irrelevant episodes, entertaining enough in their own way, which were really contrivances to spin out a yarn.

The actual Magnet series running at this time were (a) The Bertie Vernon series (b) The Water-Lily series (c) The Coker-expelled series (d) Some stories of the Mr. Lambe series. Though there is much to be said in favour of each of these series, some of the very long stories tended to drag, and I find the shorter, more compact yarns in the 1939 Gem make the better reading.

THIS REMARKABLE MAN

Let us pause for a moment to think of the author, and to consider what this remarkable man was achieving during nine months of 1939. No longer very young — at any rate, at an age when most people decide they have earned the right to take things easy — he turned out every week, without a break, a 35,000-word Greyfriars story and a 20,000-word St. Jim's story. 55,000 words every week, with two settings, two sets of

characters, two involved plots to keep in mind all the time. The very thought of it would bring most authors out into a hot sweat. We can appreciate his output all the more when we realise that he was producing, every single week, very little short of the equivalent length of the average Agatha Christie novel.

SWAN SONG

THE LAST NINE MONTHS OF THE GEM

The following is a review of the new series which appeared in the Gem before the final curtain.

THE BLACK BOX SERIES

This commenced at the beginning of April, and ran for ten weeks. The Gem was never strong on foreign travel series, by which I mean that series of this type were not prolific. I think that in all probability this was the best travel series that the paper ever presented.

In two ways it was written to the type of the Magnet series of recent years: it was episodic, each story, apart from the connecting link, being complete in itself; also, like many Magnet holiday series, it had the bold, bad villain trailing our heroes all the way through. If these little characteristics did not spoil things for you, and I don't see why they should, it was an extremely entertaining series.

In part, the author's style carried an old reader back very pleasantly to Blue Cover days. In many delicious little situations concerning Gussy and Lowther we had the facetious dialogue and the inconsequential approach, so reminiscent of "Tom Merry at the Zoo" (1909) and "Tom Merry & Co in Ireland" (1912), to mention but two, while the adventures in Venice inevitably brought to mind the previous Venetian adventures in "Tom Merry's Discovery" and its sequel (1913).

But although there was much that was so pleasantly reminiscent, there were many original twists. The story, set in the Dead City of the Cevennes had a splendid, convincing atmosphere, and in his pen pictures of Venice, the author was clearly drawing on his own vivid memories of that picturesque city.

Apart from the rascally Italian who was after the Black Box, there was also Pawson, Lord Eastwood's man, who had designs upon it. Pawson was an extremely well conceived piece of character work, rather on the lines of Soames, that outstanding Magnet personality. The series is especially noteworthy for the subtle development of Manners - shrewd, observant, and a trifle cynical - a cleverly devised and most pleasant character.

Altogether a first-class set of stories, ranging from Paris to the Cevennes, and thence to Italy.

THE SECRET PASSAGE SERIES

This series of six stories commenced in mid-June. Telling of the rivalry between the Houses of St. Jim's, it was largely the mixture as before - but it was a very jolly and welcome mixture. Here, again, there were novel twists which avoided any impression of sameness, and the reader was kept on his toes.

Fatty Wynn, for the first time since the Blue Cover stories, was prominent, and delightfully sketched by the author. It was Fatty, of course, who discovered the Secret Passage and gave Figgins & Co their unsuspected means of ingress of the rival House. There were hilarious chapters in which a tramp also stumbled on the secret entry, and in the final story a scene between Mr. Railton and Mr. Ratcliff was in the

author's inimitable style for this type of clash between masters.

It was in this story, too, that Martin Clifford made the "slip" to which I referred earlier. He introduced Sefton, the shady New House prefect - evidently forgetting that he had expelled Sefton, long, long ago. Yet again, it was with this story that the Gem (and the Magnet did the same thing at this time) abandoned the system, after 32 years, of numbering the chapters. It may seem a minor point over which to be aggrieved, but I did not like the change. Somehow, with the chapter numbers missing, it did not seem that one could follow the progress of the story so well - which is an absurd reason to give to account for my irritation at the change.

Speaking of latter-day changes, it was about this time that the Magnet introduced a new style of print - one that was not nearly so pleasing to the eye as hitherto, though it was supposed to obviate any eye-strain. Fortunately, this "improvement" never reached the Gem.

THE BRAZIL SERIES

This 6-story series began at the end of July. Competently written, it set out unashamedly to thrill. I did not care for it in 1939, and I find it but little more attractive in 1958. It was a feast of thrills - an indigestible feast, for the thrills came thick and fast. There were hairbreadth escapes from the bandit who dogged the party throughout the series, from other bandits, from a jaguar, a puma, an alligator, an anaconda, and from various perils of the South American jungle.

It was the type of story that one might have found in "Pluck" or the "Marvel" before the first world war, or, possibly, in "Modern Boy" in later times. It was an adventure tale, pure and simple, and it was out of its element in the Gem. The most significant thing about it was the re-introduction of Lord Conway, who, like Patty Wynn, had faded from the St. Jim's picture after Blue Cover days.

In its favour was its restrained length, and the fact that its main characters were the Star Seven - the Terrible Three and Jack Blake & Co.

THE SILVERSON SERIES

This series which commenced at the beginning of September and ran for seventeen issues until the end of the year, was the last and the longest that ever appeared in the Gem. It was, in addition, the most paradoxical series that the Gem or the Magnet ever published. Strangely disappointing, it was yet remarkably satisfying; far too long, yet it held the reader's interest from the first line till the last; repetitive in episodic theme, yet it never became tedious.

Though, reading it now in its entirety, there is a sense of disappointment that the author did not seize the opportunity which the plot offered for strong development and a powerful climax, it is an extremely attractive set of stories with never a dull moment, and it is a series that must certainly be classed among the Gem's greatest.

To older Hamilton fans, it was clearly loosely based on the Smedley series which had been a star attraction in the Magnet during 1933, but there are many points of difference between the two series, and these differences are interesting to consider. For one thing, Tom Merry was an entirely different character from the Bounder. Smedley had only to exploit the existing blackguardly traits of his victim; Silverson had to fake entirely false evidence in his efforts to bring about the disgrace of Tom Merry.

Again, Mr. Vernon-Smith was as unlike Miss Priscilla Fawcett as chalk is unlike cheese. At the opening of the Smedley series, Mr. Vernon-Smith threatened his son with disinheritance, and obviously meant it. In this he was acting rather out of character;

apart from the fact that he had always indulged the Bounder and, to some extent, encouraged his shady traits, it was scarcely credible that the millionaire would have dealt so drastically with his beloved only son. This was a minor weakness of the Smedley story, if one had been so carping as to look for weaknesses in so fine a series.

In the case of Miss Fawcett, the reader felt assured that, no matter what disgrace might befall her darling Tommy, her affection for him was so deep and great that she would never have disowned him, that she would have loved him as much in his failures and weaknesses as she idolised him in his virtues. And Tom Merry knew it, though Silverson did not.

True, the shrewd Manners pointed out that Miss Fawcett's principles were so high that there might be a limit to her indulgence, but this did not shake the reader's faith in the charming old lady's love for her Tommy - and Tom Merry instinctively knew where the truth lay.

Tom Merry was aware, from the outset, that Silverson was plotting to disgrace him, and he knew the reason. The Bounder did not know till the very end of the Smedley series that the scheming master was his relative, anxious to step into his shoes as the heir to a fortune.

The Silverson series was purely a school story. Apart from brief episodes at the very beginning and extreme end of the series, the whole drama was played out at St. Jim's. The Smedley series had several changes of locale, and much of it was played out away from Greyfriars.

Many plots were conveyed from one school to another, and repeated almost lock, stock, and barrel. The Silverson series is almost unique as a repeated theme with a difference.

The Silverson series suffered from the episodic manner of handling the stories which was prevalent at that time in both the Gem and the Magnet - a system which made every story almost complete in itself. It prevented the development of the plot to what it might have been; it left us with just an excellent set of tales, instead of a magnificent series of the class which came right out of the top drawer.

How much better it might have been had Silverson succeeded for a time, half way through the series - if Tom Merry had been expelled and on the run for a while, as Frank Richards once fled from his uncle's home in the Cedar Creek series - if we had been privileged to see Miss Priscilla's actual reactions when her darling was turfed out of St. Jim's.

I point out evidence, later in this article, to show that the Gem's end was decided as early as the close of October. It could be that the impending final curtain for the paper brought about the prolongation of the Silverson series, yet prevented the full development that the author would normally have accorded it. Certainly it never ripened to the really smashing climax which such a fine set of stories merited.

With those thoughts out of my system, I will add that the Silverson series is one of the precious gems in my memory. I rejoice that the last series of all brought Tom Merry into his own again, and the Gem curtain came down for the last time with the scene set at Laurel Villa, Huckleberry Heath, on which it had risen nearly 33 years before. I cherish the hope that the author felt the same sentiments.

MUSINGS ON THE LAST NINE MONTHS OF THE GEM

There are certain significant conclusions to be drawn from the new stories written for the closing months of the Gem. Much of the vast cast at St. Jim's was jettisoned. No longer did the spotlight sweep from one minor character to another.

The Terrible Three and Gussy were the leading players, closely supported by Blake & Co. The holiday parties comprised this intimate little group of seven. No longer were there to be the giant parties of the twenties. The dead wood, the super-abundance of characters, was swept away, as it had been swept away at Greyfriars a decade earlier. In future the lesser characters would not steal the limelight from the stars, as they had done so much in the past. The result was that the St. Jim's story now had an intimate quality which had been missing since Blue Cover days, and there is little doubt that, had the Gem continued, this new policy would have been pursued.

Gussy figured prominently in every story, and it seems clear that he was now intended to be the backbone of the St. Jim's framework as Billy Bunter was at Greyfriars. Gussy, of course, had always been well to the fore down the years, but he seemed to be groomed now for the Bunter type of stardom.

The most striking development was in the characterisation of Manners. In the new order of things, he was one of the most interesting people at St. Jim's. As I have mentioned earlier, the cameos of the long-neglected Fatty Wynn were delightful. In a skilful piece of by-play in the Silverson series, the petty tyrant ordered him to go and wash himself, and Fatty, to whom personal cleanliness was nearly a fetish, refused - and appealed to the Head for judgment. Mr. Linton, from being scarcely more than a name for so long, emerged as a living character - dry, sarcastic, scrupulously just - a perfect picture of a schoolmaster.

The temporary characters were often clever etchings, too. I have already mentioned this in connection with Pawson. My fondest memory of Silverson comes in the penultimate story of the series when the beaten schemer, detested and despised by the boys, ignored by the masters, still refuses to leave St. Jim's though his class has been taken from his hands.

These new stories are precious to the Gem student as pointing to what might have been. Reading them again now, I wish more than ever that the reprints had ceased a year before they did. I wish that the Gem could have gone on after 1939. But I cannot help wondering whether, if this had happened, it was not certain that stories by substitute writers must have featured again, possibly in both the Magnet and the Gem. It is difficult to think that Charles Hamilton could have gone on indefinitely churning out 55,000 words of Greyfriars and St. Jim's, week in, week out. The same problem with which the Editor had to cope many years earlier would surely have presented itself afresh.

THE SUPPORTING PROGRAMME

For several months, the new Tom Merry stories were supported by the Cedar Creek tales and the stories of the Benbow. This meant that the Gem at this time was entirely a Hamilton-story paper.

The Benbow yarns had originally appeared in the Greyfriars Herald when that paper was issued as a separate entity and re-appeared (after being suspended during the war) in November 1919. The first three dozen or so of these Benbow stories had charm, due to the originality of the setting of a school conducted on an old sailing ship moored at the river bank. They were pleasant reading, though the plots were on hackneyed lines. The theme of the wealthy boy (Jack Drake) whose father lost his money, a fact which the boy tried to hide from his snob friends, and of the quiet, studious, poor lad (Dick Rodney) who now became Drake's close pal, was typical of the school stories of the day when they were originally written. There was, too, the inevitable fat boy (Tuckey Toodles) on very, very familiar lines, and the wealthy scamp (Daubeny), who afterwards reformed, was another whom we had met before under other names.

I liked the early tales in this series well enough, but after the ship was fitted out and sailed off to the West Indies, with adventures in Trinidad and elsewhere, I found little to interest me. After the Benbow returned from its voyage, Jack Drake and Rodney went to Greyfriars, and special Greyfriars stories, featuring Drake, appeared for some time in the Boy's Herald, which the former Greyfriars Herald had now become.

These stories were reprinted in the Gem, and by the time the new Tom Merry tales began, the cruise to the West Indies was taking place. These were followed in due course by the Drake-Greyfriars tales which, in the last few weeks of the Gem, appeared intermittently, and died with the last issue of the Gem.

An editorial page was headed "Blake Answers Back", and purported to consist of answers which Jack Blake gave to readers' queries. The authority of many of the replies seemed to be the Who's Who which had been published in both the Gem and the Magnet at the end of 1917. Some of the information which "Blake" dished out was not too accurate. Here is a selection:- (a) Redfern of the New House and Barbara Redfern are brother and sister. (b) There is not a single copy of Gem No. 1 now in existence. (c) Archie Howell is a member of the Greyfriars Remove. (d) Bulstrode is the Greyfriars wicket-keeper.

Many of the Editor's readers would have been far better qualified to answer questions accurately than "Blake" was. As Bulstrode had not been mentioned in a Magnet story for twelve years, it was very unlikely that he was the Greyfriars wicket-keeper. But evidently "Blake" didn't read the Magnet.

During the last two months of the Gem's existence, it carried every week a quarter-page advertisement of the Triumph. The discontinuing of the Cedar Creek tales was another pointer. Every one of these stories was first-class, and must have been right up the street of the Gem reader. Their sudden cessation came as a great surprise.

They were replaced in the Gem by a short Biggles serial, probably intended to acclimatise the Gem reader to the type of fare he would receive in the Triumph when the time came. This was followed by a story of a wartime-flying-ace, Mad Carew, who was featuring every week in the Triumph. The Jack Drake-Greyfriars stories alternated with "Told in the Tuckshop", a series by George Rochester, and yet another taste of what Triumph held in store.

AFTERMATH

Those of us who love the Gem like to feel that the grand old paper was a casualty of the war, as, in fact, it was. There is no reason to believe that the popularity of the Gem had decreased or that a falling circulation had hastened its end. But we have to bite on the bullet over the certainty that the Gem was amalgamated with the Triumph, not the Triumph with the Gem. The Gem finished, the Triumph went on.

It was an odd amalgamation. There could have been little in common between the tastes of Gem readers and the readers of the Triumph. I, personally, should have been happier if the Gem had combined with the Magnet. Probably the Magnet needed no shot in the arm from an influx of Gem readers, while the Triumph did. At any rate, the minor tragedy had to be faced - the Gem was finished.

Looking over the issues of the Triumph which followed, it is difficult for a Gem lover to discern what attractions the Triumph possessed that the Gem did not have twenty times over. The programme offered in Triumph comprised a number of short adventure stories, supported by scrappy little stories of St. Jim's. These sorry shadows of Tom Merry & Co were reprints of sections of stories with a war flavour which had

It was the final mystery of St. Jim's, and the most amazing of the lot.

HIGHLIGHTS OF GEM HISTORY

In the closing pages of this article, I pinpoint certain types of story, and make some comparisons between the Gem's and the Magnet's contributions.

The history of the Gem falls into no less than nine divisions:-

1907 - 1909.....	THE RISE OF THE GEM
1910 - 1914.....	THE GOLDEN AGE OF THE GEM
1915 - 1920.....	THE DECLINE OF THE GEM
1921 - 1925.....	THE INDIAN SUMMER
1926.....	THE TIME OF GATHERING CLOUDS
1927 - June 1931.....	THE TWILIGHT YEARS
July 1931 - 1937.....	THE GOLDEN RE-PRINT YEARS
1938 - March 1939.....	TWILIGHT OVER THE RE-PRINTS
April - December 1939.....	THE GLORIOUS SWANSONG OF THE GEM

No other paper within my knowledge has such well-defined divisions. They add a strange interest to the history of the Gem.

No other paper suffered from the substitute blight to anything approaching the extent the Gem suffered. No other paper had re-printed in it more than 400 of the stories which it had published in earlier years.

No other author - not even Frank Richards - can compare with Martin Clifford in having his stories re-printed over and over again.

THE AMAZING MR. CLIFFORD

One of the most astonishing qualities of Charles Hamilton's work is the difference in style between the offerings of Martin Clifford and those of Frank Richards - a difference which has lasted from 1907 till 1958.

It may be an extravagant claim, but I believe that if I were handed a fairly lengthy passage, with no names or anything at all to hint from whence it came, I could state correctly whether it was an extract from the work of Martin Clifford or from a story by Frank. Even when Gussy appeared in a Magnet story, or Bunter or Coker in a St. Jim's story, there was a very subtle difference in the presentation of the character. All this, no doubt, helped to preserve the illusion, so carefully fostered by the Editor, that different authors were at work.

All the same, it is remarkable that more readers did not realise before 1945 that the same amazing hand was responsible for the two schools. There were certain literary idiosyncrasies or whimsicalities which showed occasionally in all Charles Hamilton's work (except the Rio Kid stories which were unique in this respect), and I think that any reader of keen perception should have realised that all the best stories

in both papers came from the same source. This does not mean that Charles Hamilton was ever guilty of literary mannerism, that bugbear that makes so many writers irritating. It is his completely natural style and lack of mannerism that has always made Charles Hamilton so readable.

It should, too, have occurred to any reader that, assuming a busy author had the time to read the work of a rival writer, there was blatant plagiarism in the air, unless one man was common to both papers.

It has been suggested that, broadly speaking, the Gem stories were lighter than those of the Magnet; that there was more fun and games, more knockabout humour; in effect, perhaps, that the Gem catered for a rather younger age group than the Magnet.

I do not subscribe to this view in any way. The background of St. Jim's with its two Houses, together with the proximity of the Grammar School, gave natural scope for stories of schoolboy rivalry, which were inevitably in light vein, and stories of this type appeared regularly down the years. But the House rivalry at St. Jim's had its counterpart in form rivalry at Greyfriars, while the clashes with the Grammar School were balanced in the Magnet by rivalry with Courtfield County School, Cliff House, and Highcliffe. Stories of Glyn's inventions and Gussy's love affairs can be placed beside the countless stories of Fishy, Coker, Wun Lung, and Wibley's impersonations, and, if anything, I tend to think that when the light type of story is weighed, the scales bump heavily on the side of Greyfriars.

Martin Clifford was certainly unsurpassed in the inconsequential type of story. He had two perfect foils for this sort of thing - Gussy and Monty Lowther - and he made his brilliant best of these two characters who had no counterparts elsewhere. In last year's Annual, I referred to a Blue Cover story which I described as "wispy as gossamer, and delightful in its spontaneous hilarity". This description could apply to many a Gem story, and I can recall none of quite the same nature in the Magnet.

In my opinion, the difference in the stories of the two papers lay chiefly in this - the St. Jim's tales were mainly stories of School life, the Greyfriars yarns were stories of schoolboy adventure. This may sound Irish - a difference with no diversity, as it were - but it is not really so. Many of the Magnet's greatest were played out either totally or in part away from the school; the Gem's greatest were almost entirely school stories.

HOLIDAY SERIES

Tom Merry did not travel anything like so widely as Harry Wharton. The era of long travel series commenced in the Magnet in the mid-twenties, and while the Magnet was presenting its long series of adventure abroad, the Gem was either in the hands of a substitute writer or was offering reprints. All the same, the Gem was first in this field, for Tom Merry went to America in a 6-story series in 1908. There were a South Seas series and a Congo series during the Golden Age, both absolutely first-class but too short to bear comparison with similar adventures in the later Magnet.

In 1920, Tom Merry & Co, the Levison brothers, and Mr. Levison went to America, pursued by a madman, Dirk Power. Fantastic and melodramatic, it was too unconvincing to have been very entertaining to any but the very young. Like the Brazil series of 1939, which was far better written, it was out of place in the Gem.

In stories of European travel, however - and there were a number of short series set in France and on the Mediterranean, as well as the Black Box series of 1939 - the Gem was in advance of the Magnet. I regard, too, the Gem's Canadian series of 1927 as superior to the Magnet's Texas series of ten years later.

In English summer series, I consider the Gem completely supreme. They had a charm and brilliant simplicity which Frank Richards never quite captured. In my view the Magnet had, of their type, nothing to touch the Gem's "Solomon" stories (equalled, perhaps, in the Rookwood story), and the "Old Bus" series which stands second to none.

BARRING-OUT SERIES

These would come under the heading of light reading, and the Magnet had many. In the Gem there was only one big barring-out series - the Tom Merry Christmas barring-out of 1922-23. This did not reach the high level of the Brander series in the Magnet, but it is notable for a brilliant opening story with an ensuing series which was marked by restraint and thoughtful development. It did not degenerate into a riot of slapstick like, for instance, the Hacker series in the Magnet.

MYSTERY STORIES

Here the Gem was supreme, though it offered little of this class of story. "Baffled" and "Caught Redhanded", in the Golden Age, were never surpassed, and remain original. The theft of the Head's Rembrandt, accomplished by Captain Mellish while he was actually on guard over the picture with a number of other men, was described with such skill that the memory of the mounting suspense of the tale lingers ever.

I regard, too, the Gem's "Rogue Rackstraw" kidnapping series of 1922 as the best of their class that Charles Hamilton ever wrote. The Rookwood kidnapping series, outstanding for a remarkable eerie quality, came near, but the limitation of action puts the Rookwood series behind the Gem series. In the latter, the reason for the kidnapping, the method of carrying it out, and the people responsible for it were kept shrouded in mystery for some time - and in this alone the series is unique. The stories were taut and tense, characterisation was first-class, and the climax was thrilling and original. With never a trace of artifice to prolong the series, which ran its natural length at spanking pace, these stories, in my view at any rate, stand entirely alone of their type. The only fly in the ointment, perhaps, was that the star was Wildrake - a newly-introduced character who was uninspired and quite unnecessary.

In 1925, the kidnapping of Lowther's uncle provided two stories which, though not particularly original, are memorable for some outstanding character work.

CHRISTMAS STORIES

In this sphere, the Gem could not hold a candle to the Magnet. The Christmas stories of Tom Merry up till and including 1913 have a quaint festive flavour which was probably never recaptured afterwards, and they are precious to the Gem enthusiast. But after the fine Painted Room story of 1913, there was no Christmas story in the Gem which lingers much in the memory. Far too many were, of course, by substitute writers, but those by the genuine Clifford had little magic about them. The early charm of Eastwood House was lost in a lavish display of wealth, and the host of characters who turned up at the parties not only banished any sense of intimacy but was also beyond the bounds of reason. The intimate, homely atmosphere of Wharton Lodge was always endearing, but such atmosphere was rare in the Gem, except perhaps in the very few stories staged at Laurel Villa.

CIRCUS STORIES

The Magnet had many, the finest being the famous Whiffles series. The Gem had a few pairs about Tomsonio's and Chungum's circus, but there is nothing memorable about them.

DRAMA

The Gem never presented a story of such depth and power as the Harry Wharton, Rebel series in the 1925 Magnet, but this, in many ways, was an adult study of boyhood.

Stress has been laid so often - and deservedly - on the superb characterisation in the Golden Age of the Magnet from 1925 onwards, that the Gem has tended to become over-shadowed. But there is no reason why the Gem should play second fiddle to any paper, for it had its own moments of greatness, its own perfect etchings of character, its own outstanding stories which are second to none.

Representing tense drama in the Gem we have the Tom Merry adrift in London series and "Bought Honours" from the Golden Age, the Outram series and the Manners "His Brother's Keeper" series from the white cover period, plus, from the Indian Summer era, the incomparable "Schoolboy Pug" series, at least two of the Levison-Cardew series, and the Victor Cleeve series. I claim that nothing in the Magnet, apart from the Rebel series, surpasses them.

STORIES OF DOUBLES

My prime favourite in the Magnet is the "Stacey" series, of Harry Wharton's double. A great favourite in the Gem is the series of Reggie Clavering, Tom Merry's double. Billy Bunter's double is common to both. Need I say more.

CONCERNING THE GEM ALONEJACK BLAKE

The St. Jim's stories, with Jack Blake & Co as the main characters, appeared originally in Pluck. Tom Merry did not arrive at St. Jim's until the Gem was 11 weeks old. Would the St. Jim's stories have continued for 33 years in the Gem had Tom Merry never taken over the lead of the St. Jim's juniors?

This is purely a hypothetical question, and there can be no answer, but it is interesting to theorise on the subject. It is my opinion that without Tom Merry the St. Jim's stories would have disappeared long before the first Great War. For Jack Blake & Co carried little of the characterisation of the Terrible Three.

Gussy, certainly, was a great pen painting down the years; he was, perhaps, the Gem's greatest pillar. But Gussy was not in the leader class; like Billy Bunter, he was the larger-than-life character, of infinite use to the author for a variety of purposes in connection with his stories. In a changed world, Bunter sells the Bunter books to-day, but I have never believed that he was the foundation stone for the success of the Magnet. In the same way I regard Gussy, whom I love dearly, as a pillar of strength but not the foundation stone of the Gem.

As for Blake, Herries, and Digby, they figured probably in every story of St. Jim's that was ever written, but what is to be said of them as character sketches? Blake was good-tempered, loyal, and, above everything, more or less patient with Gussy; Herries was a lover of animals; Digby was -- well, just Dig. Though each has reserved for him a very warm spot in our hearts, I cannot recall one outstanding story in which Blake, Herries, or Dig played a leading part.

In fact, they were normal, ordinary boys, just like the boys we sat next to in class, or, perhaps, much the same as we ourselves were in our schooldays. Their very naturalness enhanced the St. Jim's stories, they could never have carried the Gem for 33 years.

joined in Tom's enthusiasm for football and cricket, though not to the same extent—and bore cheerfully with the rest. But it sometimes happened that different tastes led different ways".

It was to a world of idealism that Tom Merry, Charles Hamilton's first great schoolboy leader, was introduced in 1907. His description caught the imagination at once — sturdy, curly-haired, blue-eyed, always smiling. His characteristics, too, were full of appeal — straight as a die, brave, manly, a giant at sport, a great pal, full of mischief, and kind as only the simple at heart can be. Tom Merry was every schoolboy's ideal in those days preceding the first World War, before values became distorted and mankind became cynical. He was what every boy would have liked to have been, but knew that he was not. The foundation of the greatness of the Gem was laid on this ideal schoolboy leader, and the magnificent series of stories between the blue covers made the Gem the most popular boys' paper in the kingdom in those golden years.

Manners, in contrast, was quieter, shrewder, a fellow who never allowed his heart to control his head. Where Tom was a little too easy-going, Manners had just that bit of extra ballast that his leader lacked. His only weakness was his camera — and his minor. It is difficult to determine whether the coming of Manners Minor upset the balance a little. At any rate, it showed Manners in a new light, from his family background. The younger son was spoiled and indulged by foolish parents who bestowed less affection than his due on the elder son. Looking back on it now I think that here the author used too much the brush he had handled when sketching the character of Frank Nugent, who, fundamentally, was quite different from Manners. Be that as it may, one of the very finest series of White Cover days was the "His Brother's Keeper" series, one of the most powerful and touching that the Gem ever presented.

As I commented earlier, Manners really came into his own in the last nine months of the Gem, when the salient points of his character were strongly emphasised.

Monty Lowther was, again, a complete contrast to Tom Merry and Manners. Happy-go-lucky, full of high spirits and bad puns, irresponsible to a degree, he was still capable of deep feeling as was shown in "Stage Struck", in the series when his uncle was kidnapped, and on many occasions during his life at school. He was the perfect complement to the other two members of the Terrible Three.

Tom Merry, Manners, and Lowther were strong character studies; Blake, Herries, and Dig were not. But, with Gussy, we had seven juniors who made the perfect combination for magnificent school stories.

THE PREFECTS OF ST. JIM'S

For some reason, I always prefer Kildare to Wingate. Perhaps Kildare seemed to have less pomposity and sense of dignity, to be more the human, older boy. In early days there were many splendid stories introducing the rivalry between Kildare and Monteith, the captain of the New House, — a rivalry which was cleverly reflected in the emotions of junior school.

Monteith was a grand character study. A restless, jealous type, thin-skinned

and querulous, he was not without a sense of decency. A fine contrast to Kildare, he featured in stories of strife between older boys - stories which were mature and worthwhile. Why Monteith was dropped from the scene with the Blue Covers is something I have never understood and have always regretted. The Sixth Form never held much interest again, and readers will recall that Roger Jenkins has observed that, in the same way, the glory went from the Sixth Form at Greyfriars with the killing off of Courtney.

Knox was just the stereotyped bullying prefect, chiefly serving as a reason for fun and games among the juniors in lighter tales. Langton was weak, and also dropped out with the Blue Covers. Darrell was pleasant enough, but featured too seldom to be worth consideration. The rest were merely names among many.

COUSIN ETHEL

I have always been somewhat puzzled as to what Cousin Ethel's age was intended to be, but I thought of her as being rather older than the boys. Her manner of speech and her general conduct seemed far more mature and sober than that of the Cliff House girls, and this was an advantage in the roles she played.

Probably the impression that she was about seventeen was fostered by the fact that there was never any mention in Martin Clifford's St. Jim's tales about Ethel being at school. A girl of Ethel's class, at the age of fifteen, would surely have been at school, but she appeared to drop in at St. Jim's for brief visits like a young lady of leisure. True, a serial story, "Cousin Ethel's Schooldays", by Martin Clifford, was published in the Empire Library about 1912, and was reprinted as a serial in the Gem a couple of years later, but even here one had the impression that Ethel was at a finishing school, a course which ended at the close of the story.

However, whatever Ethel's age may have been, she embellished every yarn in which she featured.

THE DECLINE OF THE GEM

I have made a very close and comprehensive study of the Gem in recent years, and I have no doubt at all that the decline of the Gem in White Cover Days was a result of the change in story policy which first became evident towards the end of 1914 and was intensified during the next year or two. It seems odd that fine characters, built up to enjoy tremendous popularity during the Golden Age of the Gem, should have been relegated to the background or, in many cases, dropped entirely from the story. If dispensing with certain characters had meant a higher development of a smaller cast, there would have been no grounds for criticism, but as it was, a great many new characters were introduced who altered the whole aspect of the St. Jim's story.

TALBOT

The coming of Talbot marked the start of the change of policy. The first two Talbot series were first-class, but for the next year or more, he monopolised the St. Jim's stage, and the Gem became, for too long, largely the story of Talbot. However well-written these yarns were - and most of them are excellent - this overplaying of a new character was surely a mistake.

Roger Jenkins has recently, in a thoughtful and discriminating article, pointed out that the coming of Talbot, with the resultant close friendship and understanding between the Toff and Tom Merry struck a blow at the unity of the Terrible Three. It is an accurate observation. It was the first change in the balance of the St. Jim's stories. It was by no means the last.

THE REFORMATION OF LEVISON

Whether one prefers Levison as the bad lad or as the reformed character is a matter of taste, but it is certain that his reform caused many changes at St. Jim's. The reformed Levison needed his own friends, so Clive and Cardew were introduced to make up the new set, Levison & Co.

One would have thought that, even with Levison reformed, the Black Sheep were sufficiently represented by the grey Cardew, the black Crooke, and the yellow Mellish. But it was evidently felt that Crooke and Mellish were now left without an evil genius, so Racke came along to fill the place, and, in case he were not enough, Clampe, Chowle, and Scrope were added to the cast.

To bring about the reform of Levison, his minor had to come to St. Jim's, and this altered the balance of the Third Form. Where, previously, the Third, in its infrequent appearances, had been represented by Wally, Curly Gibson, Jameson, and Joe Frayne, the advent of Manners Minor (with his consequent impact on his brother) and of Frank Levison, changed the Third's heroes to the Three Minors. And as the Third Form was now to feature more prominently in the general scheme, the unpleasant Piggott was added to the scene.

TYPES FROM GREYFRIARS

In a way it is curious that copies of Bunter and Coker should have been introduced at this time, for I should imagine that by 1916 neither had reached the zenith of his popularity in the Magnet. However, it is clear that the possibilities of both had been proved, so Trimble came along as the St. Jim's version of Bunter, though entirely lacking the Bunter magic. Mellish was attached to him, with Scrope and Clampe, and these birds of a feather made another new Co.

Grundy turned up as something of a Coker, and Wilkins and Gunn were invented as his Potter and Greene. Yet another Co!

Unreasonably, perhaps, I resented their intrusion, for I considered St. Jim's as far from needing ornamentation from Greyfriars. At any rate, I never cared for poor Baggy and Grundy.

INFERENCE

It is a feasible inference that the decline of the Gem after 1915 was due to these changes, plus a diffusion of the limelight over an ever-increasing cast. It is my opinion that of all the new characters introduced after 1912, only two exalted St. Jim's and, in the course of time, became indispensable. Those two are Talbot and Cardew.

The Gem rallied again --- it still had many years to live after the white covers passed into history --- though it seems certain that it never fully recovered the lost ground. New readers, and old readers who remained loyal, had a wonderful treat during the few years of the Gem's Indian Summer, when Martin Clifford once again poured all his greatest gifts into the old paper.

The Gem always rewarded loyalty. The often drab period of White Cover days emerged into the golden glow of the Indian Summer; the Twilight Years gave place to the luscious time when the mellow masterpieces came into their own again; and, as twilight settled over the reprints, Martin Clifford took up his pen once more and, in the closing months before the final curtain, gave us new stories to rank with the Gem's finest.

R.J. MACDONALD

This history would be sadly incomplete without a tribute to the artist who first illustrated the Gem in 1909 (No. 91 - "Tom Merry & Co Abroad"). From that issue till the very end, with the exception of the period from August 1916 till July 1919, during which time Warwick Reynolds deputised for him, there were very few issues of the Gem that Mac did not illustrate.

He was not very strong on character details (except that nobody else could ever portray Gussy as he did), but there was no artist who could touch him in the field of depicting schoolboys in Etons. Only Shields and Chapman could equal him in drawing schoolboys who were really natural and attractive always. Occasionally he seemed to produce his pictures without referring carefully to the incident described by the author. Four examples of this come to mind, but there were others. He showed Skimpole as taking part in a football match in France, when Skimmy was not even a member of the holiday party; he showed Tom Merry & Co, spick and span in Etons, when they were roughing it in the breathless heat of the Congo; again, he dressed them in those unlikely Etons when they were on their flying holiday in 1939; and in the Silverson series, when a stranger recognized Gussy as being a St. Jim's boy by his cap, Mac drew him with a topper.

But these were very minor faults. Macdonald's work, over the years, gave the Gem the most distinctive covers on the bookstalls. He can never be forgotten while St. Jim's is remembered.

HAIL & FAREWELL

Wonderful, wonderful Gem. The first great school story paper, the school story paper that lived longer than any other, the paper that set a pattern which was often imitated but seldom equalled, the paper that inspired Britain's boyhood for 33 years and still inspires and cheers so many of Britain's men.

Incomparable Gem, with its remarkable history of ups and downs, sunshine and shadow, joys and disappointments. We shall never see its like again.

Charles Hamilton's Gem stories, early or late, are as fresh and entertaining to-day as when they were first written. None is dated by technique; a few, from theme alone, have become precious period pieces.

We shall never again see the Gem's type of weekly story, for the simple reason that there will never be another Charles Hamilton. It is obvious to anyone that he could have become famous in almost any literary field - that his gifts were far beyond those necessary for the class of work he was doing. He made permanent, stories which were, at the time he wrote them, considered impermanent.

If we wonder sometimes why he did not carry his great gifts of writing to other spheres, the answer is plain. He loved the work he was doing. And, even more important, his unique talents enabled him to combine a phenomenal output with his inimitable consistency of high quality. Were it not so, there would be no histories of the Gem and Magnet of which to write to-day.

The Story of the Gem is now told. Roger Jenkins began it five years ago, and in the succeeding years I have tried, to the best of my ability, to follow in his footsteps and complete the work he started so well. We have praised, we have criticised, and I can only hope that we have not done too much of either. In sincerity and affection, we have done our best to produce a worthy monument to a wonderful paper.

The Gem is finished, this work of mine is finished - but one thing is certain.

We shall go on discussing, praising, criticising different aspects of the paper that was "Published every Wednesday-- Every Story a Gem". Tom Merry, Gussy, and St. Jim's will never die while we remain who loved the Gem so much.

As, with a sigh, I turn the last page of the last Gem, dated the last day of the year 1939, only three words are still to be added here---

A V E A T Q U A V A L E

SEXTON BLAKE

1 9 5 8

By FRANK UNWIN

* * * * *

"Who is Sexton Blake?"

Sacrilege? Or just plain ignorance?

Perhaps the question could have been pardoned during the immediate post-war years of rations, restrictions, and frustrations. Sexton Blake, the once-famous Baker Street criminologist, was but a pale shadow of his former self. The war had played havoc with the Sexton Blake Library, and the old-time authors like Gwyn Evans, Anthony Skene, Gilbert Chester, and G.H. Teed were but happy memories.

Sexton Blake still lived, but only just. Stories varied from the mediocre to the utterly bad: the old readers were falling off in their hundreds, and the name of Sexton Blake was unknown to the younger generation, whose literary tastes had changed so startlingly since 1939. In a word, Sexton Blake was dying, and the Amalgamated Press, who cannot run their business on sentiment, must have been sorely tempted to finish him off, and bury him.

Providence, in the person of Mr. W. Howard Baker, decreed otherwise. Taking over the editorship of the Library, then at its very lowest ebb, Mr. Baker realised that action, and only drastic action, could save the once-famous detective from total extinction.

I have not yet been fortunate enough to meet Mr. Baker, but I know that he is not a man of half-measures. The patient, critically ill, needed, not medicine, but a major operation. Dynamism was needed to save Blake, and the new editor possessed that in abundance. The new dynamic editor decided to create a new, dynamic Blake, - and how we hated him at first! Ignorant of the dire distress into which the Library had fallen, we almost cursed the startling changes that were brought about: the changing of the cover, the renting of a suite of offices in Berkeley Square, the engagement (horrors!) of a beautiful young secretary, Paula Dane, a pretty young typist, Marion Lang, and even a receptionist, Miss Louise Pringle. The great man was now surrounded by three dotting females, and the faithful and popular Tinker was cast into almost complete obscurity. Could anything have been more dismaying? To make matters worse, the old authors were discarded, and a completely new and modern team of writers stepped quickly into their shoes. How on earth could these people know our Sexton Blake?

Mr. Baker must have been overwhelmed by letters of criticism, some rude, many, I am sure, abusive. I myself wrote a severe letter criticising the drastic changes, (cont'd on page 55)...

HI FAG!!

By DONALD WEBSTER

* * *

From the days of Tom Brown's Schooldays to the latest Bunter Book this cry has echoed through the corridors of the majority of Public Schools, fictitious and otherwise, which makes it rather odd that this subject has so far seemed to have been overlooked in the columns of The Collectors' Digest and The Collectors' Digest Annual. (Cries of "Shame" from Wally D'Arcy, Dicky Nugent & Co.)

In most school stories the opening of a Senior study door followed by a shout of "Hi Fag!" results in a scurry in all directions by the junior fraternity, or, alternatively, the immediate haste to his master's study by some hapless youth, to prepare tea. If there are not sufficient supplies it is often his task to scrounge them from elsewhere. On the other hand it may be to perform one of the many other duties which fall to the lot of a fag, thus making his leisure time very limited indeed.

Space does not permit me to describe a day in a fag's life, but many famous public men have been "fags" in their time and are not ashamed to admit it. I am not going to give instances in this article, but many readers would be surprised at some of their names. Even Sexton Blake had a fag at school (though which one he attended perhaps some U.J. enthusiast will enlighten the writer) whose name was Ralph Forbes, and incidentally he clashed with the famous detective only to die in the arms of the man he once attended.

Fags come in all denominations. Some are servile, others are docile, whilst quite a few are grubby, cheeky and supremely confident. Some give yeoman service, but the majority I fear are conspicuous by their absence at the sound of "their master's voice".

Some fag-masters are easy-going, some are kind, but some are cruel. I could quote many examples of this latter type, but one case in point comes to my mind in this category. It was described by the late R.H. Goodyear in one of his stories of St. Johns' in the Nugget Library, in which the hero - as a new boy - fags for the school bully who is the possessor of a very vindictive nature. On one occasion he ties the fag to a chair and proceeds to act as a dentist by pulling out the poor lad's teeth. Fortunately the Captain of the school catches him in the act and intervenes, so the fag has a change of master, and is able to repay his benefactor later in the story.

Luckily, Charles Hamilton did not write in that strain, though occasionally pre-fects such as Loder, Carthew and Knox, and seniors like Cutts of the Fifth at St. Jim's over-exercised their authority and administered a more severe "whopping" than was necessary, thus proving that power in the wrong hands can be abused rather than properly used.

On the other hand Horace Coker of the Greyfriars Fifth "had a short way with fags" only to find to his cost that they had a shorter way with him. I think few would envy the position of the master of the Second or Third Forms. No wonder Messrs. Selby and Twigg were usually irritable and lines and lickings were a daily occurrence in the Form Room.

Let us for a moment have a look at the leading lights of the "fag world". By a strange coincidence both Frank Richards and Edwy Searles Brooks apparently agree here. Willy Handforth of St. Franks seems to be imbued with the same characteristics as his counterparts at Greyfriars and St. Jim's - Dicky Nugent and Wally D'Arcy respectively. All three have this much in common, in that they are born organisers, cheeky, full of fun, and possess elder brothers in higher forms, whom they all treat with scant respect, resent interference or guidance, but when in serious trouble it is their majors who usually have to shoulder the burden.

At times it is exasperating to read to what lengths Frank Nugent will go to for his minor Dicky, and in a lesser degree, Gussy and Handy. It makes one wonder what would happen to other unfortunate youths in the Second and Third Forms if they had no major to rely on, like Joe Frayne or George Tubb for example. Of course in reality all the three recognised leaders of the fag world are sincerely devoted to their "elders" but perhaps not quite as closely as the Levisons at St. Jim's. Frank Levison seems to be the ideal fag; unselfish, honest, a good mixer, keen on sport, ready to enter into a jape and a staunch follower of his leader, Wally D'Arcy, but nevertheless is just as grubby as that worthy individual on occasions.

Fags form an essential part of the school scene. George Tubb of the Third Form at Greyfriars is always optimistic in lowering the colours of the Remove on Little Side, a feat which he has yet to accomplish and Wally Handforth played a prominent role in St. Franks Stories in the Nelson Lee Library.

What a fascinating study these fags are! I like Charles Hamilton's definition of them as "a swarm of fags".

To enumerate the many fag characters would take up far too much space, as would the compilation of a Who's Who containing the details and descriptions of say, George Tubb, Sammy Bunter, Jack Wingate, Algy Silver, "Curly" Gibson, Reggie Manners, Hop Hi, Joe Frayne, "Juicy" Lemon, etc., but perhaps the writer may be forgiven if in reminiscent mood he brings back the memories of some outstanding stories and incidents concerning fags - and that you, dear reader, will overlook any omissions and errors.

How many of you remember in "Tom Brown's Schooldays" the incident when Bully Flashman yells "Hi Fag!" and all the junior element seem to disappear leaving poor Tom gazing in bewilderment until his ear is suddenly seized and his lordly master proceeds to educate him into the meaning of "Hi Fag!" Tom Brown, in his turn, elucidated the duties of a fag to some other new boy, but in a far different manner.

Charles Hamilton has written so many fine yarns dealing with the younger generation that it would be impossible here to refer to as many as one would like. Perhaps one of his best concerned the arrival at Greyfriars of Nugent Minor (Magnet No. 100 and repeated in The Holiday Annual for 1927). Strong-willed, defiant, spoiled, he found the going very tough and came very near to expulsion after throwing a stone at Wingate. The Captain of Greyfriars must have been a bit of a psychologist for his handling of the situation changed young Dicky's outlook on life at a Public School and he turned out to be one of the most lovable (if not the most cheeky) and popular characters in the long run of The Magnet. Quite a few yarns dealt with Gussy and Frank Nugent avenging or defending their minors.

The Gem series dealing with Ernest Levison's "reformation" showed the quiet but devoted strength of the younger brother, although some readers would have preferred the leopard not to have changed his spots, whilst the early Gem stories dealing with Joe Frayne and his subsequent arrival at St. Jim's and occasional appearances in "The Toff" series stamped this little waif as a most outstanding fag. What a pity he more or less slipped into oblivion in the later years of The Gem.

One of the finest set of stories in the Blue and White Gem (and later reprinted) dealt with the arrival at St. Jim's of Reggie Manners. Here we had the mixture as before plus a later theme of Harry Manners' vendetta with Roy Lance. We also have had young Jack Wingate kicking over the traces occasionally, the sad story of Bolsover Minor and the fine series dealing with "Flip" the waif who became a member of the Second Form at Greyfriars, whilst in the Boy's Friend, Mornington's protégé - 'Erbert Murphy - provided an excellent Rookwood "fag" series.

There have also been tales concerning fags who came to the schools for a shorter period and left the scene, such as Sylvester, etc. In The Nelson Lee, one of the most humorous series was that in which Chambers of the Fifth Form at St. Franks was relegated to a Junior Form and mixed with the fags.

Of course there have been occasions when stories dealing with fags bordered on the fantastic, such as Wally D'Arcy as the masked boxer, and also his performing the hat-trick for Tom Merry's Eleven vs. Greyfriars (but not the Remove XI as we know it to-day), whilst Willy Handforth took part in a Schoolboy Test Match (Young England against Young Australia,) due to the sagacity of William Napoleon Browne who persuaded Fenton to include Willy in the side much against his will. Was Willy a success? - I'll leave you to guess! Fortunately these stupendous feats were few and far between, but young readers probably revelled in these rare occurrences.

One always expected a series in The Gem dealing with a Barring-out by the fags of the Third Form at St. Jim's against tyrannical treatment by Mr. Selby, but I think even Martin Clifford thought this beyond the realms of possibility.

Fagging was not always confined to the Second and Third Forms, however, - oh dear no! - There was a time when the Remove Form at Greyfriars rebelled at being called upon to fag for the Sixth Form, and the issue finally resulted in the Head exempting the Lower Fourth from performing such arduous and onerous duties.

To sum up - what is a fag? A fag is a youth of about twelve years of age, usually untidy, seldom seen with a clean face or a clean collar. He has dirty hands, no crease in his bags, cooks kippers with a penholder in the Form-room, possessing no study of his own; but he does possess a carefree outlook, a defiant attitude, a great sense of fun, is critical, irresponsible, but capable of sincere devotion and loyalty. If treated properly is a good servant to his master, if not, it might have quite a bearing on his outlook in later life. Fags usually get more kicks than happen, yet in later years agree that this experience was perhaps the happiest time of their lives. Remember they are only youngsters and deserve our sympathetic consideration. Finally, the O.B.B.C. motto describes its members as seekers of 'Eternal Youth'. Well, didn't we as fags begin to read The Magnet, Gem, Nelson Lee, etc. Why, we're still fags at heart after all!

WANTED URGENTLY: Sexton Blake Libraries, 1st series, Nos. 17,105,109,197,198,201,202. Sexton Blake Libraries, 2nd series, Nos. 8,25,102,111,129,213,236,243,272,293,296,306,422,474,495,520,667. Boys' Friend Libraries, 1st series, Nos. 10,68,102,105,107,165,229,246,669. Boys' Friend Libraries, 2nd series, Nos. 392,396. Union Jacks, Nos. 881,1041,1098.

MRS. J. PACKMAN, 27 ARCHDALE ROAD, EAST DULWICH, LONDON, S.E.22.

The Packsaddle Bunch

(Gems: 1405-1434. S.O.L.'s. 305, 323-329)

By RONALD HODGSON

By the beginning of 1935, though no doubt they were unaware of it at the time, Gem readers had been reading a long succession of substitute stories and for about the previous 3½ years reprints of the original St. Jim's yarns and it looked as if the Gem was turning into a purely reprint paper.

But in Gem No. 1403 dated 5th January, 1935 appeared the following announcement:-

"Coming in a fortnight,

The 'Gem's' great scoop.

Smashing new series of Wild West School and Adventure stories, specially written by Frank Richards.

Full details next week."

Turning to the Editor's Chat we find the editor saying there will be a newcomer to the pages of the Gem in that popular author Frank Richards.

The following weeks issue gave further details with much emphasis on the word "new". The Wild West Series was to be a wonderful new series, a smashing new series and a new five page yarn. And in Gem No. 1405 it arrived - "The Tenderfoot of Packsaddle School".

I think I am right in saying that the Packsaddle stories were original - they certainly were according to the editor - and I cannot trace them in any other paper apart from one story in a Holiday Annual and reprints in the S.O.L.

Packsaddle was in Santanta County in the Lone Star State of Texas, near to Squaw Mountain and to the banks of the Rio Frio.

The nearest township, which was about twenty miles away was Hard Tack.

Approached from Hard Tack by way of Andy Butt's one horse hack, which seemed to be the only public transport in the district, Packsaddle appeared as a collection of wooden buildings. The main street was named appropriately enough, Main Street. Along this stood the Town Marshal's office where reposed Ezra Lick, Town Marshal of Packsaddle. To serve the drinking members of the community stood the Red Dog Saloon where Two Gun Carson the gambler and bad man of the section was usually to be found. The biggest store in the town was run by Job Wash who was, in the words of the author, "the fattest guy in Santanta County". We are told that the biggest building in Packsaddle was Hanson's Store and this stood next to the Red Dog Saloon. As Packsaddle did not boast a newspaper, local publicity was secured by a notice stuck on Hanson's door as everyone in Packsaddle sooner or later, was sure to see it or hear about it. Somewhere in the town was a drinking house run by a Mexican - Jose Gomez.

About ten miles from Packsaddle was the Kicking Mule Ranch owned by Rancher Dunwoody who had as his foreman, Barney Bailey.

Leaving the town we ride the trail to the School which we find enclosed in a large wooden fence. The school appears to consist of the schoolhouse which contains the Headmaster's quarters, cookhouse, bunkhouse, chuckhouse, masters cabin and corral.

Nearby runs the Rio Frio with its treacherous mud swamps and behind rise the slopes of Squaw Mountain.

Though both Packsaddle and Cedar Creek are set in the American continent they are entirely different in character. Frank Richards could have spent his schooldays at Cedar Creek but I doubt very much if he could have spent them at Packsaddle. The Cedar Creek stories had a charm that is lacking in the Packsaddle stories but the latter were full of action and excitement and were really very good and enjoyable to read. No girl ever made an appearance at Packsaddle nor was one ever mentioned in the town so it seems that the area was real he man country.

Moving now to the school characters, we find as Headmaster, Bill Sampson, one of the fastest men on the draw in Texas and one time cowpuncher of Rancher Dunwoody of the Kicking Mule Ranch. Bill still carries his guns and has to use them on quite a number of occasions on some of the strange characters who move across the Packsaddle stage. His favourite weapon which gets quite a large amount of use on the Packsaddle Bunch is his cowman's quirt. Bill Sampson was a unique headmaster in that his scholastic ability was practically nil, but what he lacked in brains he made up in brawn and he ruled the rough cow town school with a rod of iron - or rather with a cowpuncher's quirt. Needless to say, Bill was obeyed and admired.

While Bill supplied the authority, knowledge was imparted by Mr. Brown, commonly known as Small Brown. Small Brown was a graduate of a college in an eastern state. He wore horn-rimmed spectacles and a tail coat.

When Bill was present in the classroom Small Brown's life was fairly comfortable as the bunch had to listen to him but when Bill was unavoidably absent Small Brown must have been one of the unhappiest men in Texas. Fights took place, boys walked out, told Small Brown to shut up and on one occasion strung the unfortunate gentleman up from the ceiling by a lariat.

The inevitable Chinese was present at Packsaddle, by name - Tin Tung, by occupation - cook. He also was very wary of the bunch as their displeasure at his cooking was rewarded at times by plates of beans being thrown at his head - only of course in the absence of Bill. However, nothing worse befell him.

As no games seemed to be played at Packsaddle there were no playing fields nor at the other extreme can I recall anyone sneaking away to have a gay old time smoking. Possibly because there was nowhere convenient as the school only boasted a playground. This contained a pump though, under which various members were held until their tempers cooled down.

There were no forms at the school, only one class, which, we are told contained about 30 scholars whose ages varied from 12 to 15 or 16. I have only come across ten mentioned by name though there may be more as I am five Gems missing from the complete series.

The main schoolboy character is Dick Carr the young Britisher who comes out to Texas to join his father who is manager of a store in Hard Tack. Dick was one of the boarders at the school. He arrives in the first story and is kidnapped on the way to the school by Slick Poindexter and Mick Kavanagh and on telling his story when released earns the name of "Tenderfoot" which lasts him throughout the series. He soon manages to get his own back on the two pals and the three form up to form Dick Carr and Co.

The opposing trio is led by Steve Carson who is the biggest fellow in Packsaddle and of course a bully. He is the son of Two Gun Carson previously mentioned. His two

pals are Poker Parker and Slim Dixon. Steve Carson, for some reason was allowed to carry a gun and was not slow in using it. He once drew it on Bill Sampson with disastrous results to himself from Bill's quirt. He tried it on again later, this time on Dick Carr and received a thrashing for his pains.

The other four named characters are Pie Sanders, a sort of fat boy of the school; Domingo Duque, the Mexican boy; Hunky Tutt and Bud Dunn.

The pages of the stories teem with such strange people as Snort Jenkins, the sharpest horse dealer in Texas who meets his match at the hands of Dick Carr, from which encounter Dick gains the finest horse in the district. Chief Seven Horses, the Navajo indian, after being helped by Dick Carr, in return saves Dick from the Judson gang who are cattle thieves, hold up men and so forth. Needless to say, the gang who have defied countless sheriffs are soon rounded up when the Packsaddle bunch hit their trail.

Now that we have met the main characters a brief resume of a few of the stories will I hope be of interest to those who have never read any and encourage them to sample some and to those who have read them to read them again.

The series started with Bill Sampson standing in the doorway of the wooden schoolhouse and firing a revolver into the air as the signal that school was due to start. Bill was a bit hot under the collar as someone had taken away the school bell. The inimitable Charles Hamilton touch is still there, but with a difference as the following extract will show.

"Mosey in, you 'uns!" barked Bill.

Bill herded them into the big timber school room as if they had been a bunch of steers.

They took their places at the bare, unpainted pinewood desks. Bill shoved his revolver back into its holster, and slipped the quirt from under his left arm into his right hand.

He stood surveying his class grimly.

He looked like trouble. The Packsaddle bunch could guess what was on his mind. Bill was worried about that missing bell. He had something to say before morning class started.

"You. Poindexter!" he rapped.

"Yep!" answered Slick Poindexter.

"Where's that bell?"

"Search me!" answered Poindexter.

Bill grunted.

"You. Kavanagh!" he snapped. "Where's that pesky bell?"

Mick Kavanagh grinned.

"You can search me, Bill!" he replied.

"I guess," said Bill, "that it was one of you two that cinched that pesky bell. Ain't you the gol-darnedest, all firedest pair of scallywags in this here school? I'll tell a man! You ain't letting on?"

"Not so's you'd notice it!" answered Slick.

Bill glared over the class.

"Any other guy got anything to uncork about that pesky bell?" he demanded.

No reply.

Bill Sampson swished the quirt.

"Stand up!" he barked.

The boys stood up.

"Lean over them desks."

Thirty boys leaned over their desks.

One can hardly imagine the St. Jim's or Greyfriars fellows talking to their headmaster in such a manner.

Before long Dick Carr falls foul of Steve Carson and in the resulting fight Dick gives Big Steve the licking of his life. From then onwards the term Tenderfoot is used more as a nickname than as a term of ridicule.

We nearly lose Bill at the very beginning as he rides after and is captured by Red Ike the rustler. With his hands tied together Bill is pushed into the mud swamp where he begins to sink and is practically under when Dick Carr who is playing truant from school finds and rescues him.

Other shady characters pass across the scene and are speedily settled by the bunch and then along comes Hawk Walker the kidnapper. When Slick Poindexter falls into the kidnappers hands it is Dick Carr who is accused of betraying him. Hawk pretends to be Mustang Dave from the Poindexter Ranch and unwittingly Dick sends Slick along to meet him. When a letter is thrown into the school asking for five hundred dollars ransom Dick Carr is accused by Steve Carson of betraying Slick to the kidnapper for a reward. When a ten dollar bill is found in Dick's pocket he is run out of school on a rail, but just at that moment Bill Sampson arrives back and the whole bunch are driven back into school knocking over Small Brown in the process. He is soon helped up by Bill though not in the way Dr. Locke would be likely to help up any member of his staff. As Frank Richards puts it:-

"Small Brown stood in the porch goggling out at the scene through his horn-rimmed spectacles. He jumped away as the bunch came streaming in - but he did not jump quick enough.

Steve Carson crashed into him, and he staggered - Slim Dixon and Poker Parker rushed him over and he fell. Pie Sanders stepped on his chest, Domingo Duque on his neck, Mick Kavanagh on his legs. They had no time to go round Mr. Brown with Bill behind.

Fearful howls and squeals came from the hapless Mr. Brown as he was trodden on. The bunch passed over him and rushed into the schoolroom. Small Brown sat up, spluttering. He clutched his spectacles with one hand and dabbed a damaged nose with the other. He howled and squealed. Bill, halting in the porch as the bunch bolted into the schoolroom, roared to him.

"Say, you, Brown! You want to look after that bunch! I'm telling you!"

"Urrrrggh!" gurgled Small Brown.

"Git on your hind laigs!" roared Bill.

"Urrggh! I - I have been tut - tut - trodden on! Urrrrggh!"

Bill stooped to give Mr. Brown a hand up. He grabbed him by his skinny neck, and set him up like a ninepin. Small Brown stood tottering.

Dick Carr protests that the \$10 bill has been planted on him and Bill Sampson's vague suspicions are soon turned into certainties as he checks with Two Gun Carson that the numbers on the bill coincide with those on a bill given to Steve. Once more Bill's quirt comes into play and Steve receives another of his innumerable beatings.

Meanwhile, taunted by his school-fellows and unaware of Bill's activities, Dick Carr rides off into the mountains on the trail of Slick. He is followed by Mick Kavanagh and as the result of a fight between the two pals Dick falls into a mountain stream and the torrent whirls him into an opening in the rocky walls of the mountain face and into the interior of Squaw Mountain. Beyond the towering wall of rock was the Squaw River, a tributary of the Frio into which the mountain stream emptied itself.

Blackness and choking water overwhelmed Dick and his lungs seemed to be bursting as he was rushed on into the deep, unknown underground recess into which the torrent

flowed. Then suddenly his head was clear of the water and he found himself in a dimly lit underground cavern, and to his great astonishment as he clambered out of the water he came across the pal he had set out to find - Slick Poindexter. Hawk Walker's secret hiding place was now discovered, but how could the two pals escape as the cave entrance into the open had been blocked by Hawk and it was impossible for the boys to move the heavy stones from the inside? There was only one way of escape - by continuing on the way Dick arrived and the two decided to take this desperate course. Fastening themselves together they took the plunge and were swept helplessly away in the grip of the torrent and out into Squaw River.

Mick, by this time, had enlisted the help of Bill Sampson and the two rode to the spot on Squaw River where the swirling torrent gurgled from a gap in the canyon side and were just in time to see the two boys whirling out into the open. A throw of Bill's lariat and all was over apart from the capture of Hawk Walker which Bill proceeded to do. Hawk had ridden his last kidnapping trail and his last ride was to the Packsaddle calaboose.

No Hamilton series would be complete without a barring-out and in Gem No. 1424 the seed was planted to show that Packsaddle was no exception to the rule. As the Packsaddle rebellion took up eleven issues of the Gem out of a total of thirty it can be seen how popular this type of yarn was.

The trouble started when the school committee decided the time was ripe for a change of Headmaster - Bill to receive the sack and Packsaddle to receive Elias Scadder - a man with certain scholastic qualifications. Bill refused to leave at first, but then realising he was setting a bad example to the bunch quietly packed his bags and went back to cowpunching at the Kicking Mule Ranch - and from then on the trouble started. Book knowledge is useful in a headmaster, but something more than that was needed to run the rough and touch bunch at Packsaddle as Scadder was soon to discover. It was not long before the bunch rebelled and barricaded themselves in the schoolhouse and more strange characters such as Hair-Trigger Pete, Yuma Dave and Tanglefoot along with Job Wash and Scadder try to break the rebellion but with no success.

As the bunch have no food, even Small Brown showed that he was not without courage and that he was in sympathy with Bill's unjust dismissal as he tried once to get food to the hungry rebels.

However, thanks to Dick Carr they were soon well supplied with eats but in the process Dick was captured by the roughnecks. Not long after Scadder was unfortunate to be captured by the rebels, and in his rage when they will not release Scadder, Job Wash brings Dick to the front of the schoolhouse where he is held down and Hair-Trigger Pete gets busy with a quirt. Not to be outdone the rebels take Scadder on to the parapet of the schoolhouse where Slick Poindexter tries his hand with a quirt on the headmaster. As a result Job has to climb down and an exchange of prisoner takes place.

Finally the besieged bunch capture Job Wash and at last are in a position to call the tune and the chairman of the school committee is only too thankful to bring back headmaster Bill Sampson to "ride herd" again.

Just before I close I would like to say that it is impossible for me to do justice to the yarns and I can only recommend you to get hold of some of the Gems or S.O.Ls. and read them when I can assure you of a real treat.

I cannot do better now than close with Frank Richards' own words:-

"There was no doubt that Bill was a man - and the man the Packsaddle bunch

needed to handle them. Job Wash, packed with eats, rolled down to the gate and looked back - to see the whole bunch toiling away like one man under Bill's eye, jumping to orders almost before they were uttered. It was a startling change after what had been going on at Packsaddle, and even Job realised that Bill was the right man in the right place.

It was a tired bunch that turned into the bunkhouse that night. But the schoolroom was in order, ready for Small Brown to resume teaching in the morning. The rebellion at Packsaddle was over - and there was never likely to be another so long as Bill was riding herd."

(cont'd from page 46)...

and received a courteous, reasoned reply. Entirely without enthusiasm, I decided to give the new Blake a trial, and how I winced when I read about Paula Dane, Marion Lang, and Miss Pringle!

For sentimental reasons only, I read the yarns month by month, until I suddenly realised that the new editor was playing fair with us older readers. The beloved Tinker came more and more into the scheme of things: Detective Inspector Coutts came back in a small way: Dr. Huxton Rymer, even though a very disappointing Rymer, made a welcome return. I realised that I was beginning to look forward to the first Tuesday in the month. The stories, written by this talented new team, were, on the whole, excellently told, and were full of action, and topical action at that. And, during all this change, Sexton Blake had remained essentially British. More modern in his approach to crime, more up-to-date in his conversation and mannerisms, but definitely a most appealing character.

I decided that I liked this new Blake, and, what is more, I liked the "new-look" of the Library itself. I believe that countless other readers shared my feelings, and my conversion. And now, the rejuvenated Sexton Blake appears to be going from strength to strength, and Mr. Howard Baker's policy has been vindicated without the slightest doubt.

I would call 1958 the year of consolidation for the new Blake. Glancing back, it is interesting to note that the 24 novels were written by no less than nine different authors: five by Jack Trevor Story, four by W. Howard Baker, three each by Arthur Maclean and Peter Saxon, and one solitary contribution by Desmond Reid. Most were excellent reading, several were good, and not one of them was bad.

What were the highlights of 1958?

Well, it is only my opinion but I believe that Peter Saxon's "The Sea Tigers" stood out above all others, and was one of the finest Blake yarns ever written. This was indeed an epic, and one of which this talented writer should be justly proud. Incidentally, this story introduced us to a grand new character, - Hazel, the gentle giant, whose greatest hobby was collecting old copies of the Magnet. Saxon's two other efforts, "The Naked Blade", with Blake following a trail of murder from London to a lost city of the Mayas, and "The Voodoo Drum", a thrilling yarn of murder and vice in Jamaica, made 1958, in my opinion, Saxon's year.

The unorthodox Jack Trevor Story contributed five novels. His flippant, leg-pulling style is not everybody's cup of tea, as I well know, but who can deny the excellence of his work? Perhaps the pick of his stories was "She Ain't Got No Body",
(cont'd on page 64)...

EXACTLY a year after the Boys' Friend had assumed the dignity of a penny paper ($\frac{1}{2}$ d. ones were common in its day) it was given a brother The Boys' Realm. It proved to be a big success from the start with the result that after another 15 months had elapsed they were joined by the Boys' Herald. This trio under the editorship of that most famous of boys' editors Robert Hamilton Edwards in the first decade of the present century feared no rivals. Frequently Richmonds did venture to enter the field, but soon bit the dust. On such occasions the benign looking Hamilton Edwards got all his guns to work and when the last rites had been read over the fallen rival he would sit back in his editorial chair, stroke that moustache so familiar to tens of thousands of faithful readers and smile sardonically. Sometimes in his editorial chat there would appear an epitaph to the dead paper.

However, to the Boys' Realm. Here's how it ran:

1st series:	June 6, 1902 - March 25, 1916	717 numbers
2nd series:	April 5, 1919 - July 16, 1927	432 "
3rd (small) series:	July 2, 1927 - February 9, 1929	82 "
		<u>1231</u> numbers

As a reader from the very beginning I regret I have to record that third series. If I had had anything to do with it the Boys' Realm would have finished with the last

THE CAREER OF THE BOYS' REALM

By HERBERT LECKENBY

large pink page on the 16th July, 1927. To me the attempt to keep it going was like unto a once famous music hall star who refuses to leave the footlights long after her voice and her sprightly tread has gone, and no grease paint can hide the wrinkles on her ageing face. But more of that anon.

The coming of the Boys' Realm was heralded by a great amount of publicity, large displays appearing in the numerous publications of all types owned by Alfred Harmsworth and issued from Carmelite House. That was one of the great advantages of his growing empire, publicity that was really free.

I remember, as a regular reader of the Boys' Friend and an occasional one of the Marvel, Pluck, Union Jack etc., looking forward to the new paper with keen anticipation, and early on that Saturday morning over 55 years ago, I set off to buy a copy. I turned the pages eagerly and the verdict was 'Jolly good. Its really the Boys' Friend twice a week'. And that's what it really was except the pages were pink instead of green.

The page size was about 14 inches by 10 inches which made it rather unwieldy and difficult to keep immaculate when one remembers one had to hide it beneath the waistcoat or doubled up in the trousers pocket. That's one reason why there are so few mint copies about to-day. No doubt the reason for the size was that the Realm and the Friend were printed on the same machines as the comics.

The contents of that No. 1. Well, there's no need for me to look at a copy for I can recall them as easily as if I had bought it just yesterday.

Pride of place, the front page was given to 'The Muff of Melthorpe College' by Allan Blair and illustrated by T.W. Holmes. There were two others, serials; 'The Quest of the Scarlet Star', author Reginald Wray, artist H.M. Lewis; and 'The Black Galley' by John Finnemore with pictures by G.M. Dodshon. Other fiction consisted of a long complete story 'Dollo, the Gipsy Boy' and a one page complete, the first of a long series concerning Captain Handyman, a Captain Kettle type of character. In addition there were articles on 'When I was a Boy' and 'From Weakness to Strength', and, of course, Hamilton Edwards' chat, complete with photo. 'Neath the title of the paper there was a slogan "A Popular Paper for British Boys and Young Men". Well, the paper was destined to prove popular for many years.

The Captain Handyman stories (illustrated by R.J. Macdonald) ran for just a year. They appeared anonymously but, years later, Hamilton Edwards in announcing a revival, said they were written by a Captain Shand, an old sea-dog himself. This may or may not have been a flight of fancy in the manner of stories about the authors we could mention.

Anyway the "Realm" pleased my younger brother as well as myself, for he agreed to buy it whilst I weighed in with the Boys' Friend. By the time he had tired of boys' papers (much sooner than I did for, of course, I never have) I was able to afford the Realm myself.

The front page of No. 2 depicted an exciting scene from 'The Muff of Melthorpe College' with one of the boys in the nick of time getting his foot free from the points with the roaring express a yard or two away. One can imagine the boys of 1902 gazing at that scene with their noses pressed to the newsagents window pane. Oft in those days of yore did the 'iron way' provide the setting for hair-raising scenes in boys' stories. Come to think of it they would provide ample material for an article 'The Passing of Puffing Billy' for with the coming of the diesel train things will never be the same.

The "Realm" settled down and its first volume of fifty-two numbers served up a real variety of serials. As with the "Friend" there was ever a school story. "The Muff of Melthorpe College" was followed by "The Bully of St. Simons" by T.G. Dowling-Maitland. C.J. Mansford's "The Five Hundredth Boy" took its place and then came "Paddy Leary's Schooldays", author, T.C. Bridges. Paddy Leary became a very popular character for later there were stories when he had left school. C.J. Mansford was a schoolmaster but I don't think his school stories ranked very high in the esteem of boys. They hadn't enough 'go' in them.

Hamilton Edwards always boosted Henry St. John as his star school story writer. Personally I preferred him when he was writing about something else and there were two good examples in this volume; "Harry the Horseman", a story of circus life; and "In Nelson's Day". This latter was a really stirring yarn.

That amazingly prolific writer W. Murray Graydon also had two serials "The Jungle King" and "Across Siberia". All these years afterwards I can recall reading "The Jungle King" on returning from a holiday by train and a burly great bearded old farmer roaring with laughter as he plauged me about reading 'them penny 'orribles'. It just shows you.

Maxwell Scott contributed a Nelson Lee story "Nelson Lee's Rival" (illustrated by Fred Bennett) and Allan Blair had one of his yarns of industrial life "True Grit", which proved one of his last. Allan Blair (William J. Bayfield, of course) was really good at times, but there were other occasions when, like Topsy, he was, well, just the opposite.

Just as the volume was closing Reginald Wray's "A World at Stake" started. It was illustrated by R.J. Macdonald, which gave him the job of picturing what to-day appear some weird looking aircraft.

Altogether it was a jolly good volume, well-worth looking through to-day.

During the run of the second volume an intriguing little war developed. It concerned one of those rivals referred to in my opening paragraph.

In July 1903, the "Boys' Herald" joined the "Boys' Friend" and the "Boys' Realm", and shortly afterwards the House of Pearson got busy. They announced the coming of the "Boys' Leader" in September and they went about it in a big way. Not only did they advertise its advent in their own papers but also went right into the enemy's camp. For two weeks half page displays appeared in the "Boys' Realm" and its companions telling in huge type the contents of the "Boys' Leader". One week even leaflets were inserted.

It was to be a real rival for the serials were to be by authors already popular with the Harmsworth papers, and whereas the "Boys' Herald" had produced G. Manville Fenn, the "Boys' Leader" retaliated with Jules Verne.

All this seemed to get Hamilton Edwards all hot and bothered, not to say infuriated. In the "Boys' Realm" dated September 5th he started off his chat in this fashion, in black type:

"So many confusing advertisements of boys' papers have been appearing lately that I am not surprised at receiving numerous requests from my friends to clearly indicate which are the boys' papers under my control. Let me say here explicitly and emphatically that there are only three boys' papers under my editorship and they are:

1. The Boys' Friend, green paper - every Tuesday
2. The Boys' Realm, pink paper - every Saturday
3. The Boys' Herald, white paper - every Friday

Imitation, it is said, is the sincerest form of flattery, but when imitation is carried so far as to mislead, it is not fair fighting. I don't mind how many other boys' papers there are in existence, - the more the merrier, say I - but it isn't quite playing the game to endeavour to win readers by issuing a paper and allowing boys to think that I am the editor of it."

There was a lot more of it on the same lines, and for months afterwards he splashed all over his pages notices like "Three Leaders - 'The Boys' Friend, etc. etc."

Well now, if there was confusion whose fault was it? Surely that of the business side for accepting the adverts. H.E. should have kicked up a row with the advertising manager. It all seemed a little unkind for Pearsons must have paid a handsome sum into the coffers of Carmelite House.

However, just short of two years later the "Boys' Leader" and Hamilton Edwards could not resist reminding his boys that the "unfortunate paper" had never been under his control.

Well, let's see what this quixotic editor was giving his "Realm" readers whilst all this was going on. Three school stories made their appearance in Vol. 2: "Dick Downtree's Schooldays", author Captain Harry Anthondyke; "The School in the Backwoods" by Allan Blair, not one of his best; and "Dormitory Chums", a typical Sidney Drew slapstick yarn. Maxwell Scott contributed "The Hidden Will", another Nelson Lee story, and Reginald Wray weighed in with "The Iron Way". In this there were railway smashes

galore, engines, carriages and waggons being piled up all over the place, vividly portrayed by H.M. Lewis. That master of his craft, David Goodwin, had three stories of entirely different types, "Gunfleet Jim", "Jack O' the Fens", and as the volume closed "A Lancashire Lad", a yarn of mill life. Henry St. John came again with "Not Guilty" and T.C. Bridges with "Paddy Leary, Millionaire". A sequel to "A World at Stake" was "A Fight for Empire", and there was an off the beaten track story in "The Radium Seekers", by a new author, Fenton Ash. There was the long complete story every week also a new series of Captain Handyman stories.

Well, seeing that the popular "Boys' Realm" ran to about twenty-four volumes altogether it would never do to set down all the serials during its life so having given it a good start I'll be content to just mention stories of special interest, incidents of note and changes in its long career. I have by no means a complete set, anyway, and though I can rely upon my memory for much that happened in its early days, a lot that happened later I have forgotten. A funny thing, memory.

For instance, there was an incident concerning a serial called "Heir to a Million", a school story by Allan Blair, which appeared in volume three, which had always stuck in my mind. I was always convinced that Hamilton Edwards had made an adverse comment about it but had never been able to confirm it. However, some time ago I came across a copy which proved I was right, for in announcing a new school story "The Rockhampton Boys" he said he had "not been wholly satisfied with the present story." That story was "Heir to a Million" and it's the only occasion I know of where an editor of a boys' paper admitted a story had not been a success. It was really poor stuff and seemed to come to a sudden end.

There was another curiosity about the same time. It concerned a serial "A Boy's Cross Roads" by Ernest Treeton, which dealt with the boyhood of Charles Peace. Well you know what happened to the notorious Charlie way back in the nineteenth century. Yet in this story of 1904, all the characters in the illustrations by E.E. Briscoe were shown in Edwardian dress! Real 'Teddy Boys' some of them looked.

As time went on the "Realm" began to concentrate more and more on sport, with serials, complete stories and articles. Football, naturally, predominated, but cricket was given a good show in its shorter season. Boxing, racing and athletics got their share, even tennis and golf. This policy continued to the end of the pink paged days. Hundreds of front pages showed stirring scenes from the fields of play, a large proportion being drawn by E.E. Briscoe.

Historic was a story which started in No. 193, "The Blue Crusaders" by Arthur S. Hardy. The title referred to a works team which fought its way to the First Division of the Football League. It was historic because of all the hundreds of fictitious football teams which followed the Blue Crusaders became the most famous and are still remembered to-day. Time and time they re-appeared in the "Boys' Realm", and in connection with them there is a story which is worth relating.

In 1925 A.S. Hardy wrote a series of articles entitled "My Sporting Reminiscences". They dealt mainly with famous sporting events, but he also had something to say about his own career as a writer of stories. This is partly what he said:

"The first football serial story ever published was written by me - "The Blue Crusaders" - and its success was instantaneous. It ran for ten instalments, and its sequel dealing with the same characters, ran for a year and a half."

Now it would appear that A.S. Hardy was writing from memory, and his memory let him down in no uncertain fashion, for he was wrong in several respects. Most important error was that "The Blue Crusaders" was not his first football serial. It started

March 16th, 1906, but some months earlier he had written one called "Playing to Win" and it actually appeared in the very same paper. Moreover, further back still his "Football Foes" started in the Boys' Herald, September, 1904. And, I find on checking up further that the "Blue Crusaders" ran thirteen weeks, not ten. He was much more out of it where "For League and Cup" was concerned for its total was thirty-six weeks, a very good run, but much less than Hardy's claim of a year and a half.

What's still more he was wrong in saying he wrote the very first football serial, for even "Football Foes" wasn't that. In the Boys' Realm a few months before the "Blue Crusaders" there was Charles Hamilton's "Football Fortune" and some years earlier, round about 1900, Maxwell Scott wrote a long serial called "Hard Pressed" for the Big Budget, which could most certainly claim to be a football serial. There was also "The Football Kings" by Henry T. Johnson, in the "Jester". I feel sure that appeared too, before any of Hardy's.

It is true that by the time A.S. Hardy wrote these reminiscences he had written scores of serials, so he could be forgiven if his memory let him down on certain points, but one would have thought he would have had clear recollections of such an important event, to him, as his first football serial.

Anyway, in view of that, I am sure that those of us who write reminiscently of stories we had read in the long ago, but not written, can be excused if occasionally our memories lead us astray.

Turning to cricket, undoubtedly the finest story on the great summer game in the years before the First World War was Charles Hamilton's "King Cricket". It ran from April 13th, 1907 (No. 254) to September 28th (No. 278) twenty-five instalments, and long ones, too. It was illustrated by E.E. Briscoe. It was a story of County Cricket, the fictitious one being Loamshire who played every first-class county of the time. Men who have become cricket immortals like C.B. Fry, 'Ranji' Frank Woolley, Palairret, Lord Hawke, Hirst and Gilbert Jessop, were introduced, making it fascinating reading to-day for those cricket lovers old enough to have had the luck to watch them in cricket's golden days.

Of interest to Hamilton fans generally are the names of some of the characters in the story. Among them were Arthur Lovell, the hero, Kit Valence, his chum, Ponsonby, an unpleasant character and snob, Tunstall, and a Colonel Hilton.

The story, of course, later appeared in the "Boys' Friend Library" but there it inevitably suffered through drastic cutting for, in the original, I estimate that it ran to well over 100,000 words. Charles Hamilton has written millions of words since, but, in my opinion nothing better than those he tapped out on his Remington fifty years ago.

Outstanding in the first series were the John Finnemore Slapton School stories both serial and complete. Finnemore was a sheer delight in describing an exciting game of cricket and, as a change from soccer he was equally expert when dealing with a Rugby Union game, something rather neglected in sport stories.

The Slapton School stories were, of course, published in stiff cover book form, six of them, by Latimer House a few years ago. They stand the test of time equally with those by Talbot Baines Reed, and that's saying something.

Talking of these stories in book form reminds me of something else. Many years ago I had the pleasure of receiving several letters from David Goodwin who wrote scores of serials and complete stories for the boys' papers of the Amalgamated Press, and, in my opinion, never a poor one. With one of his letters he sent me an

autographed copy of one of his books "The House of Marney" written under his real name, Sydney Gowing. He said, with a chuckle, that it was really his Boys' Realm serial "Dave the Barge Boy", polished up a bit for the dignity of stiff covers. "Dave the Barge Boy" appeared in Volume 3.

In the Christmas week number of 1905 there appeared an account of a party which had taken place at Hamilton Edwards' "own ancestral home" said to be within twenty miles of London. It was written by "the sub-editor" under the title "How H.E. and his Staff Spend Yuletide". It would appear to have been not a very large party for only A.S. Hardy, Harry Belbin (H.J. Garrish, of course) and Henry Turville of the boys' papers were mentioned, and in addition the Editress of "The Woman's World" and Miss Nancy Price, a writer for that paper. There was no mention of the regular authors like Henry St. John, Maxwell Scott, David Goodwin, Charles Hamilton and Allan Blair, or any of the numerous artists. I wonder if Charles Hamilton can remember if he was actually there.

The great majority of the stories which appeared in the "Realm" greatly appealed to me, but there were some in Vol. 3 and onward for some time for which I give Hamilton Edwards a heavy black mark. They were written by E. Harcourt Burrage and some of them were reprints of stories which had appeared in Victorian papers years before, papers which Hamilton Edwards had justly or unjustly termed as "penny dreadfuls". They included "Tom Tartar at School", "Tom Tartar Abroad" and a series of complete stories concerning Handsome Harry, Ching Ching, and the rest of the crew of the Fighting Belvedere. The editor for a time gave these stories great prominence. To me it was a retrograde step. I couldn't read any of them, and I was jolly glad when they appeared no more.

Some outstanding serials I remember apart from those already mentioned were:- "Fighting for Promotion"; "Captain Jack"; "The Trials of Manager Wilson"; "A Lad of the League" all by A.S. Hardy; "The Factory Footballers" and "The Schoolboy Manager" by Robert Murray, (the author who later became so popular as a writer of Sexton Blake yarns); and "The Rise of Tynegate" by Andrew Gray; "Fred Reckless, Amateur", by Jack North and "Well Cleared" by Maxwell Scott.

Cricket was featured in "The New Bowler" and "Bowled Out" by Maxwell Scott and A.S. Hardy's "Master Batsman". Two fine yarns about boxing were "The Masked Boxer" by Captain Malcolm Arnold; and "Peter Jackson of Manchester" by Innis Wood.

Captain Malcolm Arnold also wrote some splendid stories of army life in which sport was strongly featured. Three of these were "Pride of the Regiment"; "The Army Champions" and "The Blue Hussars".

Early on appeared David Goodwin's first school serial "Barred!", one of the very best. Others by him were "Forester of St. Osyth's" and "The Sneak of St. Simeons". Charles Hamilton was to the fore with "Redfern Minor". The veteran Henry St. John contributed "Not Guilty"; "Imprisoned for Life" and "King of the Road".

Another fine military yarn was Beverley Kent's "Officer and Trooper". He also had a series of short completes "On Guard and Off". No one has ever found out who Beverley Kent really was. I wonder if he and Captain Malcolm Arnold were one and the same; there was a similarity in the style. But that's only a surmise on my part.

Reginald Wray wrote "Railway Bob" and L.J. Beeston "Red Lights and Green". Out of the ordinary was Martin Shaw's "Young Strongbow" a story of a kind of youthful Samson.

Well, that's just a few; to give a full list would take many pages.

Among the artists whose work one could tell at a glance were: H.M. Lewis, T.W. Holmes, Fred Holmes, Val Reading, Fred Bennett, A.H. Clarke, Harry Lane, Leonard Shields, and, as already mentioned E.E. Briscoe.

Yes, indeed, a grand paper in what, to me, was the Golden Age of boys' weeklies. However, like many more it became a casualty of the Kaiser war. The blow fell on March 26th, 1916, and the familiar pink pages disappeared from the bookstalls for just over three years.

The Second Series

It was a tribute to the "Boys' Realm" that it was one of the first papers to be revived when that First World War was over for the new No. 1 was dated April 5th, 1919. What a pleasant sight to the loyal reader who had reluctantly said au revoir to it three years before. There were the same sized pink pages; true only twelve of them instead of the old sixteen, and the price 1½d. Smaller type, however, almost made up the old value. Type faces were changed, but all in all it was the paper of pre-war days. What's more the serial story which was given the front page did bring back memories of old times for it was entitled "Blake of the Blue Crusaders" by, of course, A.S. Hardy. No better choice could possibly have been made to herald the new era.

Henry St. John was also back, and his offering was, to old-timers at any rate, a quaint idea; the first of a series called "Henry St. John's Schooldays". Twenty years earlier he had written his first serial, set at St. Basil's School for the Boys' Friend. In the intervening years several others had appeared in Hamilton Edwards' papers. Now the creator of the school told of his adventures there as a fag long after Bob Redding, Harry Belton, John Watt and all the other heroes of the various stories had departed. A trick with time, but the yarns were in his best school story style so the lads of a new generation would enjoy them. Other story series concerned Sexton Blake by W. Murray Graydon, the boys of St. Frank's by Edwy Searles Brooks, and boxing yarns "From Chopping Block to Champion", the author being Captain Malcolm Arnold. In addition articles on various sports.

As the new "Realm" settled down it concentrated more and more on sport as in the old days. This was not surprising with John Nix Pentelow in the editorial chair. I am not sure if he was from the very beginning but he certainly was very early on. And, like his predecessor, Hamilton Edwards, John Nix Pentelow was not content with being editor only, he revelled in being an author, too. Hamiltonians will smile wryly at that statement with certain happenings in the Magnet and Gem in mind. But, where the "Realm" was concerned it was a very different pair of shoes, the characters in his stories were all of his own creating, and the stories, or most of them, concerned summer's great game - cricket. Here as has been said so often before Pentelow, or Richard Randolph (the pen name he invariably used on such occasions) was in his element, which, added to the fact that he was an unsurpassed authority on the game, made them among the finest in that sphere ever written, before or since. Coincident with the start of each cricket season a Richard Randolph was launched, and ran until football took over. The interest of the stories was added to because real players of the period figured prominently with vivid descriptions of Test matches being played in any particular season, though, of course, Richard Randolph's version did not tally with the one history tells. These stories I can still read again and again. Some of them were "Carden of Cardenshire", "Young Yardley", "Boy Bayley, Professional", "Smith of Rocklandshire" and "A Son of South Africa".

J.N.P. also wrote some really remarkable articles on cricket, history of the various first-class counties, biographies of visiting Test players, intimate and packed

with statistics in the manner of to-day's Roy Webber.

In addition to himself Pentelow kept busy a fine band of sport story writers. Among them A.S. Hardy, Robert Murray, John Hunter, John Gabriel, Trevor C. Wignall (who also wrote as Alan Dene and David Rees), Norman Taylor, Alfred Edgar, C. Malcolm Hincks, John W. Wheway and Howard Grant.

Examples of serials they wrote were: "Rise of the Rangers", "The Ace Star Team", "The Blue Streak", "Rally of the Rovers", "Rivals of the River", all by A.S. Hardy; Robert Murray contributed "The Scapegrace Footballer" and "The Football Deserter"; John Gabriel had racing stories in "Whip and Spur", "Gentleman Jim", "First Past the Post" and "The White-Winged Bat". "Full-O'-Fight Fern" was written by Alfred Edgar, and "The Lindsay Nine" by John W. Wheway. Howard Grant wrote "The Football Bankrupts" and "The Drudge of the Team", and "Champion of the Clouds" on an unusual theme, pigeon racing was from the pen of John Hunter.

Apart from sports stories that popular author of Sexton Blake stories, Gilbert Chester wrote "Round on Nothing" and "Long Odds". Eric W. Townsend was kept employed on serials and complete stories of exciting adventure, as was H. Wedgwood Belfield.

Famous Edwy Searles Brooks wrote many complete stories of St. Frank's and one of his serials concerning Nipper & Co. was "The Crusoe Scouts". It was in the number in which this story started that the editor admitted that not all the stories which had appeared were written by E.S. Brooks, and inferred that those which were the work of others were inferior. It is worth recording for such a confession by an editor was rather unusual.

This second series went contentedly on for seven years or more, then came ominous changes. By the spring of 1927 many of the popular authors like Hardy and Murray had gone, and John Nix Pentelow had vacated the editorial chair, which meant there were no more Richard Randolph stories. His successor had other ideas. One was to revive Jack, Sam & Pete, famous and popular characters who had in pre-war days been, for years, the mainstay of the Marvel. Those stories had been written by S. Clarke Hook but the new ones were by a mysterious Gordon Maxwell. As so often happens he failed in the task of taking over characters made popular by the original author, even though they were given great prominence and were illustrated by J. Abney Cummings, who had worked on them in their "Marvel" days. Even though they had a fair run they did not save the Realm in its old familiar form for July 16th, 1927 brought the last of the pink pages and the announcement of a new series the following week in an extremely different format.

The Third Series

Well, my comments on this series will be very brief, for one reason I have not the heart to say much, for to me, the dear old Boys' Realm died with the end of the second series. For another reason I have no copies to guide me, and I shall have to rely upon my memory. It does not need my memory, however, to remind me that its new appearance came as a shock. Its page size was that of the Magnet, with a cover of white paper, printed in red and blue. What would a Magnet lover have thought if his favourite paper had suddenly changed its page size to what had been that of the Boys' Realm? The stories of Greyfriars may have remained as good, yet the paper to the loyal reader, I contend, would never have seemed the same.

Of the contents all I can remember is that for a goodly period the new Boys' Realm contained stories of the famous "Blue Crusaders", stories which had played such a great part in the success of the Realm in its pink paged days. But, alas! these new stories were not written by A.S. Hardy, but by E.S. Brooks, and, really, only the name

of the famous club remained the same. This is no reflection on the art of the creator of the St. Frank's stories, for, of course, Brooks fans would not have thought him the same if the position had been reversed, and they had been taken over by A.S. Hardy. That kind of thing never works when an author has a style all his own.

Anyway, the Boys' Realm struggled on for eighteen months or so, and then came the announcement that its title was to be changed to the "Boys' Realm of Fun and Fiction". The "Boys' Realm" part of it was in smaller type than the rest of it, a sure sign that it was soon to be dropped altogether.

Yes, the "Boys' Realm" was dead, but to me who had known it since its birth way back in 1902 it really died with the last fluttering page in July 1927.

(cont'd from page 55)...

a very light-hearted and amusing yarn of loves and hatreds in a picturesque little village in the Thames Valley. Blake even buys a cottage there, he is so entranced by the place. I must confess that I am not exactly enamoured of Story's presentation of Blake, but I also know that he gives much pleasure to countless other readers who enjoy his humorous style.

W. Howard Baker's four novels were well up to his usual high standard, and the quality of his writing cannot be denied. He writes with punch, and he never fails to thrill. I liked particularly his thriller of the French Resistance and the Dieppe Raid, "No Time To Live", in which Louise, the brave, young British agent, distinguished herself. Who would have believed that the courageous Louise, and the quiet, efficient Miss Pringle were one and the same? A nice touch, this! That other gripping yarn of Howard Baker's, "Crime Is My Business", is notable because the newly-released Blake film is based on it, and it promises to be a big success with the box-office. Watch out for it, you Blake fans!

I was particularly impressed with Martin Thomas's two stories, "Lady In Distress", and "The Evil Eye". The latter especially was full of suspense and excitement, and was a most entertaining yarn of witchcraft near Loch Lomond. Martin Thomas has a nice touch of the macabre, which always goes down well, and he promises to make a big hit with readers. If he does not become one of the most popular of the modern Blake writers, then I'm no judge of first-rate thrillers.

Edwin Harrison also possesses a most pleasing style, and I thoroughly enjoyed his gripping yarn, "The Fatal Hour", which takes Blake and Paula to Barcelona in order to solve a murder by poisoning in the bull-ring. Arthur Kent's "Stairway to Murder" and "Wake Up Screaming", based on the Norfolk Broads, lacked nothing in interest and excitement, whilst James Stagg's account of murder in a pretty little village in the Cotswolds appealed to me immensely. The title of this was "Crime of Violence", and featured our old favourite, Coutts. Stagg's previous novel, "Murder Down Below", staged in North Devon, was unusual and good in that it portrayed the human side of Blake in his obvious sympathy for the murderer, and such a good story at the beginning of 1958 augured well for the remainder of the year. We have not been disappointed.

Last, but by no means least, Arthur Maclean is one of the most outstanding of the present Blake team, and can always be relied upon for a good, meaty story, as witness his "Redhead for Danger", featuring Tinker and Coutts, and the Great Chalice of Antioch, and "Final Curtain", in which that popular character, Splash Kirby plays an important part. His latest effort, "The House On The Bay", in which that enigmatic
(cont'd on page 74)...

1935 - 1937:

Autumn Years of the Magnet

By ROGER M. JENKINS

"Soon ripe - soon rotten" is an old country maxim that does not apply to the Magnet, which took nearly two decades to reach its maturity. But, although the Magnet never actually decayed, its autumnal years were marked with the aura of mists and mellow fruitfulness which Keats so magically evoked. The golden summer years had passed, but they had at least left behind them the mellow fruitfulness of their technique. The divine spark burnt a little less fiercely than before, the days were drawing in, and mists were beginning to cloud the memories of old splendours. There was as yet no real cause for anxiety, but to those who were tearing off the pages of the calendar on the wall a perceptible diminution of the life span could scarcely have failed to escape notice. Time was soon to lay its icy hand upon the Magnet.

1935 - Echoes of Past Greatness

There is much to admire in the Caffyn series which ran from Nos. 1404-1412. It was agreeable to have a long series featuring Coker, even though his rascally cousin in the Remove, Edgar Caffyn (who was nicknamed "The Snipe"), was perhaps a little too unpleasant to be true. Nevertheless, despite the many novel incidents it is possible to detect in this series the reason why the Magnet had passed its zenith. A comparison with the Secret Society series of the previous term reveals that in place of a series with entertaining twists and turns in each number we now had a series in which each number was virtually a repetition of the last: each week Caffyn tried to get Coker disgraced, and each week he failed. In 1928, when da Costa had tried to get Wharton expelled, the theme was cleverly handled to avoid any sense of repetition, whereas the Caffyn series completely failed to develop in the same convincing manner. One would have to be looking for faults to cavil at any single number in the Caffyn series, but, taking the series as a whole, it is apparent that it did not quite succeed in ringing the bell.

Marjorie Hazeldene was, perhaps, the sort of person who would have been very pleasant to know but was rather dull to read about. There was, however, nothing dull about the series featuring Hazeldene's uncle in Nos. 1413-1417. John James Hazeldene was on the run, suspected of embezzlement but afraid to face the police despite the fact that he was innocent. The differing personalities of the various members of the Hazeldene series were well displayed in this readable series.

1935, like 1934, could boast only one single story. This was "Quelch's Easter Egg" in No. 1418, an entertaining little tale about a rude message which the Remove master received in the guise of a seasonable present. Equally entertaining was the Jimmy the Fox series in Nos. 1419-1421, a holiday adventure featuring Jack Drake and Ferrers Locke, which was notable for being located mainly at Cherry Place, though the movement of the plot finished up in London where a Sherlock Holmes theme was utilised against the background of the Jubilee celebrations.

The Stacey series in Magnets 1422-1433 has long been a favourite with collectors, and there can be little doubt that it was one of the greatest series of them all,

despite the fact that it was published when the paper had really passed its peak. Ralph Stacey, a distant relative of Wharton's and looking like his twin brother, was befriended by Colonel Wharton and sent to Greyfriars. Wharton, with very good reason, instantly took a deep dislike to his relative, and this dislike deepened to a bitter hatred when he found that all Stacey's misdeeds were being visited on his head as a result of their mutual likeness in appearance.

Of course, there were faults on both sides - it would not have been a good Hamiltonian drama had it been otherwise. From the very beginning, when Wharton took offence at Stacey's presumptuousness, to the end, when Mr. Quelch discovered the truth almost by accident, there were always times when Wharton was in the wrong and there were indeed some occasions when Stacey repented - for a while. Some years ago Charles Hamilton wrote to me as follows: "No doubt, as you have read it over in more mature years, you have discerned the pill in the jam: the idea being to impress upon the youthful mind the lesson that even an attractive fellow with considerable physical and mental gifts must come to grief if he cannot keep straight. Harry Wharton in the same series has many faults of temper which often place him at a disadvantage, but he is decent at heart and that pulls him through all his troubles in the end."

Superficially the Stacey series was not so exciting as the two earlier series in which Wharton featured as a rebel. In these two Wharton alienated all his friends and became an outcast in the form, whereas in the Stacey series he kept the friendship of the other members of the Famous Five and some other Removites. The fact that this series was more restrained meant that it was more realistic, though possibly not quite so entertaining. Nevertheless it had many highlights, perhaps the best of which was when the Bounder dramatically saved Wharton from being expelled in No. 1431.

Mr. Quelch showed up rather badly in this series. Whilst he never intended to be unjust, he placed full reliance in Stacey, his new Head Boy, and was not disposed to entertain any suspicions against him. It is interesting to note that he began to lose faith in Stacey in the penultimate number, and the process was a gradual one - a very realistic touch, which could not have been effected if the denouement had not been gradual.

Another realistic touch was the manner in which both protagonists in the drama had their hours of triumph and tragedy all the way through. This was especially noticeable in relation to Stacey's prowess at cricket. Although he was by far and away the best junior cricketer at the school, he let the side down on two occasions: once when news of a gambling loss overwhelmed him in the middle of a match, and once when Loder blackmailed him into playing badly.

The test of a really great series is whether it can stand being read over and over again. The Stacey series passes this test with flying colours: there are dramatic situations to be relished in every number, which are so well written that no amount of familiarity can destroy their fascination. This was a truly magnificent series.

The pleasing aspect of the Portercliffe Hall series in Nos. 1434-1439 was the large number of juniors who were featured in this holiday series. Not only were there the Famous Five and Bunter, but Vernon-Smith, Kipps, Wibley, and Alonzo Todd were also guests of Fisher T. Fish and his father, who had rented the mansion with a view to discovering a hidden hoard of sovereigns. The hoard was eventually discovered, but Mr. Fish did not succeed in netting the proceeds.

This was a jolly little series. Despite the mystery which pervaded every number, there was plenty of gaiety centring mainly around Bunter, of course, who came across

some of the sovereigns and began passing gold coin in Margate. This series also constituted Alonzo Todd's swan-song. He has never been heard of again from that day to this, but he was at his very best at this time, and his farewell performance was superb. Incidentally, those who know well their geography of the Isle of Thanet will probably be able to spot the actual mansion on which Portercliffe Hall was based.

The Warren series in Nos. 1440-1451 broke fresh ground in that it featured a new boy in the Fifth Form, as a result of which there was a more adult air about the stories. This made a welcome change, and there is no denying that the series went off to a promising start with Harry Wharton, who knew the real James Warren, realising in the first number that the new boy was an impostor.

The technique used in the Lancaster series was tried out again in the Warren series: the new boy was suspected in turn by various boys in the school - in this case, Coker, Price, and Loder. Like so many repeated themes, the second version was inferior to the first. Not only was the brilliant sparkle of the earlier series missing, but the plot failed to develop satisfactorily, and there was a good deal of repetition. Nevertheless it would be unfair to suggest that the Warren series was a failure. It had some very amusing moments, and contained some convincing little character sketches, but, taken as a whole and measured by Charles Hamilton's own standards, it did not quite succeed in making the grade.

The year was rounded off with the Polpelly series in Nos. 1452-1455, which did not perhaps succeed in rivalling some of the more famous Christmas series of earlier years, but it was nonetheless a very readable story of a companionable Christmas spent in a ruined mansion in Devonshire. There were in particular some fine descriptive passages, and the search for buried treasure was told against a fitting background of ghosts and mysteries.

1936 - A Year of Encores

"Bunter's Bid for a Fortune" in No. 1456 was a gamble on the football pools. He won a prize, but it turned out to be only one shilling! This was followed by the first part of the tale of Mr. Hacker's nephew in Nos. 1457-1460, which constituted the best series of the year. The picture of the irritable Shell master trying to believe in the innocence of his nephew, Eric Wilmot, who had been expelled from Topham on a charge of theft, and the re-action of the Removites to the new boy who was afraid to make friends in a new school he had no wish to attend all added up to a noteworthy series of the latter day period.

Foreign holiday series worked up to a peak with the China series, after which nothing was quite so effective. The Brazil series in Nos. 1461-1468 was never less than entertaining, but it could not succeed in competing with the splendours of the past. Jim Valentine, the host, was also a pale ghost of his former self - which perhaps goes to prove that characters who have a special part to play in one series can often outlive their usefulness.

The Brazil series was for some reason published earlier than intended, before the Wilmot series was completed. At all events, the mystery of Hacker's nephew was finally cleared up in Nos. 1469-1470, after which the decks were cleared for the van Duck series in Nos. 1471-1478. Putnam van Duck, the son of a Chicago millionaire, had already been introduced to the readers (together with his gunman guardian, Poker Pike) at the end of the Brazil series. There was plenty of amusement in the van Duck series, and the highspot, in which Mr. Quelch routed an armed kidnapper with a walking stick, was a veritable treasure. Nevertheless there was more than a suspicion of unadulterated farce about some scenes, and the series as a whole could not compare with the kidnapping of Fisher T. Fish series of 1930.

"Billy Bunter's Burglar" and "The Popper Court Tea Party" in Nos. 1479 and 1480 were an amusing pair of stories which were followed by the Muccolini Circus series in Nos. 1481-1490. There is no doubt that the story of how Bunter ran away from school near the end of term to join a circus is a very readable one, and the span of the summer holidays spent in Sussex and Kent comprised all the necessary ingredients for a very successful holiday. But - and there is unfortunately a "but" - the series cannot hold a candle to the delightful Whiffles Circus series of 1928, and the clue to the mystery lies in the way in which the character of Bunter was handled. For all his presumption, Bunter of the Whiffles Circus series was a likeable, engaging character - Billy Bunter in his very best period. By the time of Muccolini's Circus Bunter had deteriorated into a detestable young rascal, and the reader could feel no sympathy for him whatsoever. Yet the plot itself was strong and fascinating enough, and the series cannot be considered a failure by any means. Nevertheless it is sad to record the decline in the presentation of Bunter's character.

During the 1934 summer holiday series the Magnet had presented cover to cover tales of Greyfriars, but the practice of carrying a serial at the end was resumed when the autumn term commenced in that year. With No. 1484, however, cover to cover tales returned. The omission of the serial was an undoubted tribute to Charles Hamilton's popularity with the readers, but there do seem to be grounds for considering that the additional five chapters made the Greyfriars stories just a little too long. Be this as it may, the readers must have felt quite satisfied, for the serials never returned to the Magnet again.

"Johnny Bull on the Run" in No. 1491 concluded the summer holidays. It made a distinct change to have a story featuring the Yorkshire member of the Famous Five, but it was a welcome change nonetheless. "Schemers of Study No. 7" the next week was a most amusing description of how Bunter contrived to turn awry Peter Todd's plans of vengeance against Loder. Loder also featured in a series in Nos. 1493-1496 which related how his cousin escaped from prison and came to Greyfriars as a master under the name of Lagden (a favourite name for masters with a dubious background). Two more single stories followed: "His Scapegrace Brother" in No. 1497, featuring Dicky Nugent and his new found friend Price of the Fifth, and "Harry Wharton's Amazing Relation" in No. 1498, an unhappy story of how Wibley disguised himself as a Jew in order to embarrass the Captain of the Remove: it may be that the readers were embarrassed also.

If the Warren series had been an echo of the Lancaster series, the Compton series in Nos. 1499-1509 was in its turn an echo of the Warren series. There was a new senior in the Fifth with a guilty secret, who was suspected in turn by various members of the school. Valentine Compton was a smuggler whose uncle ran a yacht called "The Firefly", and once the juniors boarded that vessel in No. 1506 for the Christmas holidays the series brightened up considerably: as with a number of other holiday series, the transference of the scene to foreign parts considerably heightened the drama, for what might seem exaggerated in England was credible enough abroad. No reader could have found fault with the dramatic climax to the series.

1937 - The Magnet Looks Back

The first series of the new term was the famous Tuckshop Rebellion series of Nos. 1510-1515. On the face of it, it was a good idea to star the ill-tempered Mr. Hacker as headmaster for a while, and the development of the resistance to his tyranny was both logical and interesting. But the series cannot rank as one of the great Magnet barrings-out. One has only to compare it with the Brander rebellion to realise that it was on an infinitely lower plane, and the vein of sheer farce which was often apparent in the van Duck series re-appeared in the Tuckshop Rebellion series, culminating in the scene in which Mr. Hacker was caught by the rebels and forced to do

Darke who was a hypnotist and was wanted by the police. This unusual story was probably based upon an actual case at the time.

A series connected with Highcliffe was usually well above average, and the story of Quelch's gold chain in Nos. 1518-1521 was exceptionally well contrived and very amusing. Bunter played a trick with a gold chain belonging to his form-master which then passed into the possession of Ponsonby who lost no opportunity to make mischief between the two schools. This was one of the brightest periods of the autumnal years of the Magnet.

Years ago - in 1931, to be precise - Mr. Vernon-Smith had taken a party of Removites to Kenya. In the series in Nos. 1522-1525 it transpired that he had then obtained a concession so valuable that it now resulted in attempts on his life by an Italian. What made this series so amusing was the description of Bunter's stay at the Vernon-Smiths' country mansion at Seahill, and the novel manner in which his fellow guests from Highcliffe attempted to rid themselves of him. The holiday was rounded off with the delightful Coronation story in No. 1516, in which Bunter pretended to know Lord Trant - and then found to his amazement that he was his honoured guest at the Coronation Party.

A single story in No. 1527 entitled "Coker the Conqueror" was followed by the Cliff House feud series in Nos. 1528-1530. Once again Ponsonby played an ignoble part, but it could not compare with his two previous performances. A pair of stories featuring Bunter and an unexpected windfall of £50 came next, and then attention was focused on Cliff House again in Nos. 1533-1535 in which Bob Cherry mistakenly suspected Marjorie Hazeldene of stealing Nauly's tenner.

A certain amount of suspension of belief is a necessary prerequisite of enjoying a story about Wibley, and the theme of Nos. 1536-1540 undoubtedly required a good deal of believing. Wibley was expelled for guying Monsieur Charpentier, and he returned to Greyfriars disguised as a new boy, Archibald Popper, in the hopes of obtaining Mossoc's forgiveness. The theme was treated in a most hilarious fashion, and may definitely be considered a marked success.

The China series sprang to life when the juniors first reached the Far East at Singapore. It is not surprising therefore that the series featuring Wun Lung in Nos. 1541-1544 should have failed to blossom out in the same way, having regard to the fact that the action took place entirely in Europe. There was a good deal of excitement and well contrived drama, but the series could not match the famous one of earlier days.

The tale of Skip in Nos. 1545-1554 was a variant on a very old theme - that of the befriended waif who subsequently discovered his long-lost relative. Skip was a pickpocket who was taken under Coker's wing and - with the aid of the indomitable Aunt Judy - entered for the Remove. This was a readable series, but one which was in no way outstanding, and one which lacked the dramatic twists and turns of the Flip series of 1932. What is noteworthy about the Skip series is that No. 1552 was the last of the coloured-cover Magnets. According to the editor, readers had been continuously writing in to request a return to the original type of cover in order that the Magnet could be

distinctively picked out on the bookstalls. This is a statement which can be taken with a pinch of salt, since it is very doubtful whether many readers in 1937 had ever seen a red-covered Magnet, and there is no reason to suppose that the few who had seen one should have wanted a return to the old cover after such a lapse of time. Mr. Chapman has stated, however, that the change was not effected by reason of falling circulation or in an attempt to economise, and one can surmise only that an editorial decision was taken in the hopes of achieving some of the old originality of appearance, and the readers were then told that it was in answer to their requests. The original covers had been red, and the editor promised a return to the orange-coloured cover, but No. 1553 was definitely a salmon pink, and so the colour remained until the end of the paper in 1940.

The remainder of the year's stories revolved around Bunter. "Bunter's Orders" in No. 1555 related how he blackmailed his way into the team in order to earn a tip from his uncle, whilst Nos. 1556-1559 were devoted to the famous Reynham Castle series, in which Bunter played the part of Lord Reynham in order to draw the attention of kid-nappers. Charles Hamilton's Christmas series were never less than entertaining, and this particular one was one of the best of the latter day years - perhaps because most of us enjoy the spectacle of seeing a pig in clover.

Conclusion

The autumn years were marred chiefly by a sense of repetition. Themes that were so fresh and successful in the golden age of the Magnet were refurbished and presented once again in many entertaining guises, but even the most tasty hash on a Monday can never quite equal the succulent flavour of Sunday's roast. Quite apart from the repetition of general themes, each series itself became more static: instead of there being developments in plot and characterisation, each weekly episode tended to be a thinly disguised repetition of the previous one - a feature which first became apparent in the Caffyn series. Finally that intangible asset of the early 'thirties - the delightful, bubbling, humorous style of writing which cast such a sheen of glory over the stories - was gradually disappearing.

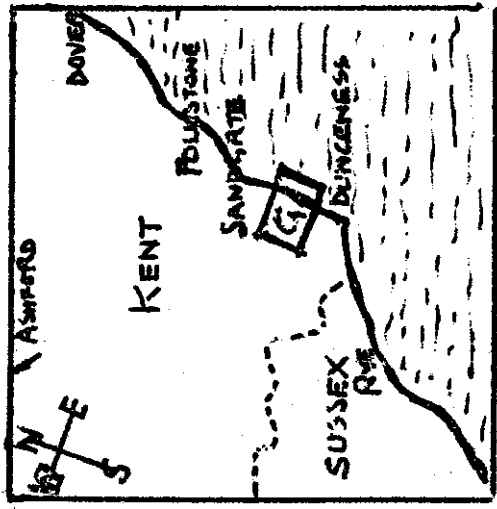
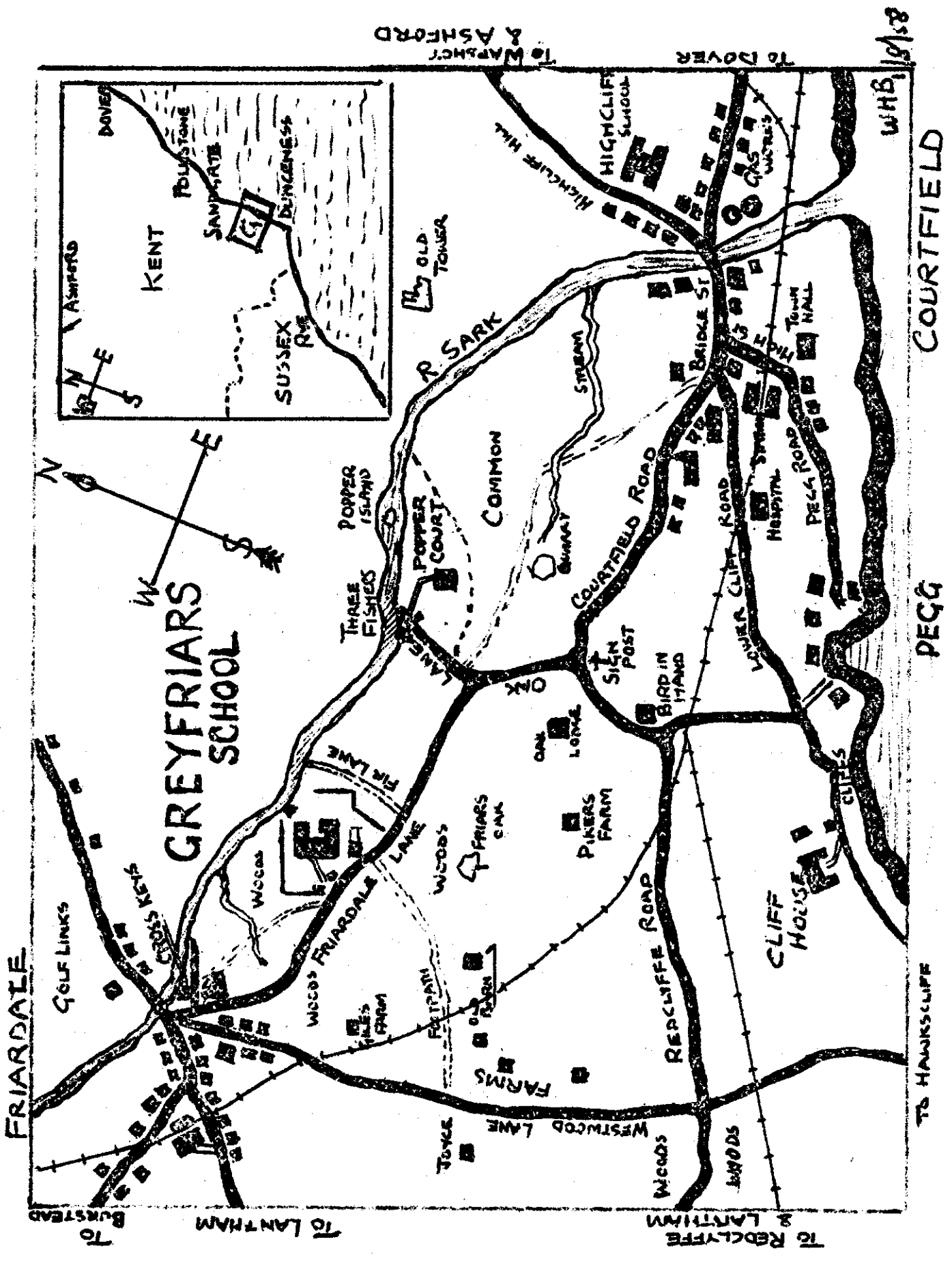
It must be remembered that this criticism rests solely upon a comparison with Charles Hamilton's own extremely high standards, and it is not intended to imply that nothing in the Magnet after 1934 was worth the reading. The Stacey series bears comparison with anything that had previously appeared, whilst the Portercliffe Hall series was as diverting as many other holidays of yore, and the Wilmot series was as striking a character study as some of the best of old. It would have been impossible for the standards of the golden age to have been maintained indefinitely and we may feel glad that, with the stories of 1935-1937, the Magnet revealed that it did at least possess the valuable ability to grow old gracefully.

WANTED in really good condition, Holiday Annual, 1920, 1921; Pluck, 106, 112; Gem 302, 334-337, 351-353, 393; Magnet, 186, 879-888, 1016, 1206; S.O.L. 19, 245, 247; B.F.L. (1st series) 46, 47, 288, 328; Union Jack, 1210, 1313, 1417, 1467, 1521.

A.G. POUND, ST. PAUL'S VICARAGE, 68 FINNEMORE ROAD, BIRMINGHAM, 9.

WANTED: Modern Boys' Annual, 1933; also Modern Boys' Book of Aircraft, Engineering, Motors, Ships and Engines, also Pilots and Rangers.

C. WALLIS, 64 OAKWOOD PARK ROAD, SOUTHGATE, LONDON, N.14.



FRIARDALE

GREYFRIARS SCHOOL

COURTFIELD

PEGG

TO HAWKSLIFE

WHB 1958

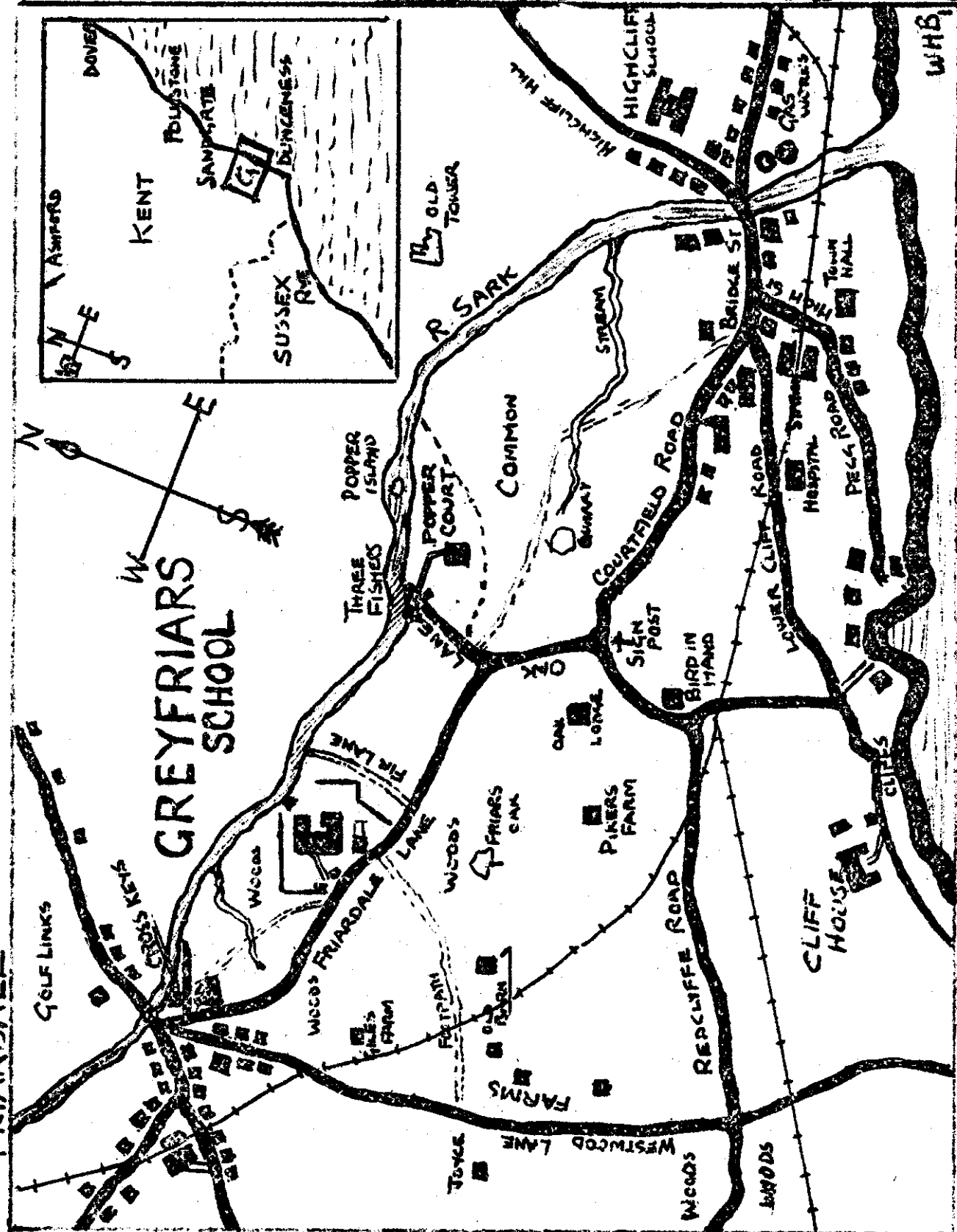
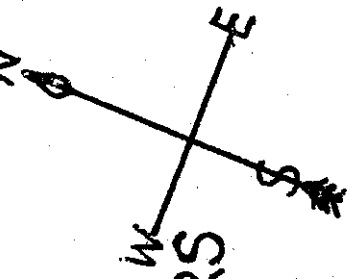
TO BUNSTED

TO LANTHAM

TO REDCLIFFE & LANTHAM

TO WAPSHOTT & ASHFORD

TO DOVER



JUST WHERE IS GREYFRIARS?

By W.H. BROSTER

* * * * *

The 1956 C.D. Annual contained a very good article concerning Wharton Lodge, describing in no small detail the neighbouring countryside accompanied by an extremely authentic map. So good was the article and the map and so much in keeping with the general run of stories of Wharton Lodge that it was suggested by the Editor of the C.D. that a similar map of Greyfriars and district on the same lines would be appreciated by all readers of the "Magnet". In due course St. Jim's and Rookwood would be in demand. Several efforts to produce maps of each district have been attempted but the best of Greyfriars district was the one printed in the C.D. Annual of a few years ago. This actually was a copy of one published in Magnet No. 1672 dated March 2nd, 1940, and seems to have been drawn by a reader of the Magnet who was also a very clever artist. The Editor of that day commented on it as being the most authentic to date and Frank Richards' own words were:- "This map is astonishingly like my own idea of the vicinity of Greyfriars School". So much for the Editor and the Author. However, there are several discrepancies which must be sorted out before we could put this map, good as it is, as the official map of Greyfriars and district. Discrepancies regarding directions, distances and layouts. Not so many but just enough to baffle the reader. What I regard as the principal discrepancy would be Greyfriars proximity to the sea. Ninety-nine stories would put Greyfriars a few miles from the coast but the hundredth yarn brings the sea within hearing distance of the school.

Most of us have read so many of these Greyfriars stories that to us the countryside around the school is as familiar as that of our own immediate neighbourhood. So a general review of the principal landmarks, roads, places etc., would help us to spot the few discrepancies and decide if Greyfriars is so very near to the shore. Using a map of England we know the locality we want is in the S.W. corner of Kent, that is the part nearest to Sussex. As it must be very near the sea that means Hythe district or if you like (and some stories corroborate this) not so far from Folkestone. The Romney Marshes would be a good all round location. Lantham Junction is the place mentioned most in joint Greyfriars and St. Jim's yarns so we take it that town is between Courtfield and Wayland, that is in Kent but very near to Sussex. The train coming down from London via Ashford comes into Courtfield Junction mostly. There we get the local train to Friardale. But the puzzling thing is that quite a good many yarns give Lantham Junction as the junction before Courtfield; that is, coming from the London direction. Keep in mind that Frank Richards (and Martin Clifford) tells us Lantham is between Courtfield and Sussex. That is to the west of Courtfield and for our purpose Dover and Folkestone are eastwards. Therefore, as you will see from my idea of how the map should be, that you could come into Courtfield Junction from the Folkestone direction that is via Ashford or into Lantham Junction from the Hastings direction via Reigate, and then on to Courtfield. I think this is about the right thing. It does put the River Sark running the right direction as rivers run flowing down to the sea. In this case the Sark would enter the English Channel to the South East of Courtfield, bringing Courtfield about one to two miles inland from Pegg Bay. Also this would put Friardale village about four miles from Courtfield but to the North West.

We are told that Lantham is roughly ten miles from Greyfriars, with Redcliffe

in between. This leaves us wondering how far Friardale is from Lantham and why there is no branch line from there to the village. Let us take a general view of the district immediately round the school and forget Lantham for a bit.

Friardale lies four miles from Courtfield and the school is a mile before you reach Friardale village. Therefore Greyfriars is three from the town as the crow flies, we take it, but if you take the local train from Courtfield you have to walk back a mile along the lane. So it might be quicker to get the Redcliffe-Lantham bus outside the Bridge Hotel and get off at the sign post. This is at the junction of the Redcliffe road and Oak Lane. We turn to our right along Oak Lane till it meets the Friardale Lane. Turn left again along Friardale Lane and the school is a distance down the lane. Oak Lane, by the way, follows on to the right across the Common and eventually reaches the River Sark. There is no bridge across the river but here you will find the infamous Three Fishers Inn on your left and the Popper Court estate on your right. There is a short cut from Courtfield across the Common. This comes out at the stile at the junction of Friardale Lane and Oak Lane. This is according to most of the yarns but this map leaves us in doubt as the wisdom of coming across the Common, not much being saved. Anyway we can assume the road from Courtfield to Friardale running as the centre line of a fairly elongated oval with the Sark on the right forming one arc and the railway branch line on the left forming the other long arc. We know the river runs at the back of the school; we know the Common is between the road and the river so are the Friardale woods, so it follows the local line runs along the other side of the road. Therefore you have the railway between Greyfriars and the sea all the way from Friardale to Courtfield.

The many stories that give a short cut along the cliffs from Greyfriars to Cliff House girls' school seem to overlook this local railway and if my facts are right, also the main line to Lantham which has got to be between Friardale and Pegg. Pegg and Pegg Bay are very near to Courtfield and we are left in no doubt that Cliff House is very close to Pegg fishing village. This would put Greyfriars school some four or five miles away from Pegg, in my mind the nearest spot on the sea coast to Greyfriars. We cannot have Greyfriars anywhere near the sea shore otherwise as I see it, you will have the railway line where the river is and the River Sark will have the distinction of being the only known river to run along the top of sea cliffs and maybe I am wrong but perhaps the only one I know to run away from the sea instead of into it.

Anyway, the map is a good one and to endorse Frank Richards' own opinion of it, gives the details of the immediate surrounding countryside of Greyfriars School true in almost every point. Only in its vagueness as to the school's proximity to the sea is there any real grounds for criticism. Except that the artist responsible for it has drawn it upside down. Put it the right way up and all is well. In my idea of what Greyfriars district looks like I cannot alter this previous map except as I have pointed out. Everything conforms to 90° of the Greyfriars stories but you cannot have Greyfriars nearer to the sea than the four or so miles I have stated. Pegg has got to be the nearest point on the coast.

This map of mine is an attempt to finalize on one which would be 100% authentic, one which tallies almost perfectly with the idea of what we all imagine Courtfield and Friardale to be like. The countryside which we associate with the bulk of the Greyfriars yarns. The very early ones of Red Magnet days we can leave out of it so can we a few which chop and change indiscriminately, so I am looking for criticisms and hints, suggestions and corrections to get the matter right. A series of yarns which have lasted so long as these of Frank Richards, and which describing a beauty of countryside which is well nigh perfect, needs a proper map. Some to the contrary may say, (as they have done before), what's it matter anyway? Why bother about a few

contradictions? What's it matter to a mile or so where the school is, where the sea shore lies? Well, to a tidy mind it does matter and we have more of those than otherwise. We want to know where Greyfriars is, what it is like, what the district around it is like so here is the chance to get a mutual idea of it all.

In this article certain unchallengeable facts have been pointed out and I would ask those to be kept in mind. Greyfriars district must be in South Kent and very near to the Sussex border. Near the coast. The River Sark flows down from Friardale to Courtfield, it runs at the back of the school. Greyfriars is in Friardale Lane one mile from the village and three from Courtfield. The branch line serving Friardale must be further over and beyond that has got to be the main Lantham line. Pegg is without argument near to Courtfield so where can the nearest point to the sea be but Pegg, at least four miles away. Two things I am not happy about. Which side of Pegg does Cliff House lie? I cannot bring in this short cut along the cliffs that the girls' visitors always take. Where too does the Sark run into the English Channel. There is never any mention of an estuary. There's got to be one somewhere and it must be near Courtfield.

So I leave it at that, the river and the Friardale branch line forming the two arcs of an elongated oval, the road joining Courtfield and the village the centre line. Now, how do you get to the sea and the cliffs without crossing through Friardale woods and over the branch line. Then you have to do something about Westwood Lane, the Redcliffe Woods and the main railway to Lantham.

(cont'd from page 64)...

character, Craille, sends Blake on a perilous end-of-war mission to track down Japanese war criminals in the Far East, completes a very fine series of yarns. If 1959 proves as good, we shall have every reason to be satisfied.

To sum up: The Sexton Blake of 1958 is a most attractive character. Tinker has been restored to his rightful place. Paula, Marion, and Miss Pringle are portrayed so sympathetically that most of us have come to accept them, and, indeed, even to like them. And even though the Coutts of today is only a lukewarm reflection of the former ebullient and pugnacious Scotland Yard man, and the homely Mrs. Bardell is seldom, alas, mentioned, we have a lot to be thankful for.

Blake is known and respected throughout the land again, and we are likely to read about and share his thrilling adventures for many years to come.

What more could we ask for?

WANTED: Copies of the "Popular" from year 1924 until the end. Also "Lot-O'-Fun" for period 1910 to 1915.

W. WESTWATER, 4 BUCKLEY STREET, GLASGOW, N.2.

WANTED: Single copies or Bound Volumes of the following:- "Champion" from No. 130 to 340; "Triumph" from No. 1 to 190; "Pluck" from No. 78 to 97 (last series); "Rocket" from No. 78 to 87; "Triumph Annual" 1938. Please write stating prices wanted to:-

R.J. McCARTHY, WETLANDS, AUGATHELLA, QUEENSLAND, AUSTRALIA.

100 QUESTIONS

(Note: Here, for your amusement, and brow-wrinkling, before a cheery Christmas fire are 100 Questions put by our four English O.B.B. Clubs, in equal proportions. The answers will appear in the February 1959, Collectors' Digest - H.L.)

L O N D O N

1. What was the title of the last S.O.L. No. 411?
2. Who was Falcon Swift's assistant?
3. What was Ponsonby trying to get possession of during the summer of 1933?
4. What is Dr. Stafford's Christian name?
5. Who was the Wizard of St. Frank's?
6. Where did the Famous Five spend Christmas 1937?
7. Who wrote "The Lone Texan"?
8. Who was the creator of the Master Mummer?
9. Who is the Headmaster of Carcroft?
10. What is the name of Gussy's tailor in Wayland?
11. What is the nickname of Lord Tallboys?
12. What would have been the title of the story in Magnet No. 1684?
13. What was Ragged Dick's real name?
14. What was the companion paper to the "Daily Radio"?
15. What was the title of S.O.L. No. 1?
16. Where did the Famous Five spend Christmas 1934?
17. Who is the King of the Island's mate?
18. With whom did the Famous Five stay when they came up to London for King George V's Jubilee?
19. Who was the owner of the "Blue Mauritius"?
20. What was the title of the first St. Frank's story in the Holiday Annual?
21. Who was the editor of Charles Buchan's, "School Cap"?
22. Who was the creator of the Boys of the Bombay Castle?
23. Who is the occupant of Study No. 8 in the Greyfriars Remove?
24. In what intellectual weekly magazine did a Bunter short story appear last Christmas?
25. "Mascot Ted" by Rupert Hall appeared in what magazine?

N O R T H E R N

1. Who was 'Mister Fairfax' of Packsaddle?
2. At which school was Pierce Raik?
3. Which school in England did Frank Richards attend?
4. Who was the daughter of Jenny Greenteeth?
5. In what year was Sidney Drew born?
6. Under what title was B.F.L. 494 (1st series) reprinted in the Schoolboy's Own Library?
7. Who said 'Stand up, new boy'?
8. To whom was he speaking?
9. What was 'Bonnie Bluebell's' surname?

10. Which Magnet was apparently written by Thomas Hardy?
11. Who was Len Lex's uncle?
12. Where did 'Bird Cay' by H. de Vere Stacpoole appear as a serial?
13. Who was a studymate of Fatty Babbage and Sir Digby Valence?
14. Who was the Captain of Highcliffe?
15. Who was the girl sweetheart of Joc Peters?
16. What are the surnames of The Three Macs?
17. Who was Sir Rupert Stacpoole?
18. Which artist first drew Tiger Tim?
19. What is the St. Jim's equivalent to Bunter Court?
20. At what number in Shaker Street did Herlock Sholmes live?
21. Who were the publishers of 'The Prize'?
22. Who was Neddy Welsh?
23. At which school was Mr. Scroop the temporary Head?
24. Who was Jolly Jack Johnson?
25. Who wrote the biography of G.A. Henty?

M I D L A N D

1. Gaunt was a junior schoolboy in one of Charles Hamilton's early stories.
Which school and what form?
2. Where is Seven Elms?
3. "The Founder of the Feast" was an early Greyfriars story. What paper did it appear in? Give date and number.
4. What are the (cap) colours of Bagshot?
5. Who is the porter at Rylcombe Grammar School?
6. What paper was absorbed by the Boys Friend in 1915?
7. What is Baggy Trimble's home town?
8. Where is Denewood and what would you connect with it?
9. Who is (or was) Joey Pye?
10. Sir Hilton Popper owns the island in the Sark, who owns the one in the River Rhyl?
11. Which substitute writer wrote "Weggie of the Remove"?
12. A junior at Greyfriars and the head mistress of a famous girls school have the same surname. What is this - and the girls school?
13. What was the "Lord of the Deep"?
14. Explain "Kids" and "Rats"?
15. The "Blackbird" is a notorious public house give its address?
16. Who is the school doctor at Rookwood?
17. Who was Hedley O'Mant?
18. Jack Drake was not the only boy 'tec used by Ferrars Locke. Who was another (not Tom Merry)?
19. The first two or three numbers of the B.F.L. commenced life under another title. What was it?
20. Who was Lord Mauleverer's cousin and double and what school did he attend?
21. Charles Hamilton uses the name of the "Red Cow" for two of his public houses. Where are they?
22. In what story did Coker get his remove?
23. Where is Fir Lane?
24. Who shares the End study in the Shell passage at St. Jim's? What is the official number?
25. What is remarkable about the Magnet story "In Borrowed Plumes"?

M E R S E Y S I D E

1. Who was the Mysterious 'X' at St. Frank's?
2. What are the opening lines of The Greyfriars School Song?
3. Who plays the title role in the current Sexton Blake film?
4. Name the previous schools of (a) Cardew, (b) Grundy?
5. What is the name of the Cliff House Page-boy?
6. In which comic did Tom Bowline, the Jolly Jack Tar, appear?
7. Which St. Frank's master was found drunk in his study?
8. Who was "Gentleman Jim" in a Rookwood series?
9. Which master was ragged on his arrival at Greyfriars?
10. Who once cut off Wun Lung's pigtail?
11. "Young Yardley" played in a Test series. (B. Realm). What year?
12. Who was the archaeologist who kidnapped Tom Merry?
13. Which comic featured "Susie and her Pet Poms"?
14. Which Rookwood junior temporarily lost his sight?
15. What had Dr. Howard Ponsonby and Professor Zingrave in common?
16. Who gave "The Bounder" of Greyfriars his nickname?
17. Under what name did Frank Courtenay arrive at Highcliffe?
18. Surnames please - U.J. characters: Roxane, Max, Yvonne.
19. Who was the author of "Tom, Dick & Harry"?
20. Who was the first Junior Captain of St. Frank's?
21. Which comic featured "Martin Steel and his 12 Lady Detectives"?
22. St. Frank's played Greyfriars once at soccer. What was the score?
23. In a Magnet Xmas series a supposed ghost was sacked. Where and why?
24. The "Blue Crusaders" F.C. - what was the name of their home ground.
a. Boys Realm, b. N. Lee Library?
25. Frank Richards wrote of Slick Dexter and 'Kicker' for a Western comic.
Which one?

(cont'd from page 144)..

- WEBSTER, PETER B., 11 Neville Rd., Liverpool, 22. (Mer.) (Age 17). Groups 5 (all); 9. Sixth Former at Merchant Taylors School, Crosby. Interested in all Hamilton periodicals. Has an excellent collection of pre-war comics.
- WERNHAM, S.C.J., 5 Museum St., Maidstone, Kent. (L). (Age 51). Osteopath. Group 5 (b), (a), (e). Is collecting bound vols. early Gems.
- WESTWATER, 4 Buckley St., Glasgow, N.2. Engineering Draughtsman. Groups 5 (a), (c); 9.
- WHITEHEAD, STUART BUCKLEY, "Borrisokane," 12 Wells Rd., Fakenham, Norfolk. (Age 31). Groups 5 (a), (b), (c), (d); 8; 4; 6 (all); 9; 3; 2; 1. Requires Magnets 1-266, 268, 273, 275-279, 283, 285-289, 292, 293, 295-297, 302, 303, 306, 309, 310, 312, 317-319, 325, 330, 338-1351. Preferably bound. Gems, 1d. No. 20 and/or No. 1 to end of 1d. Gems. 2nd Gems 1142-1193, 1244-1478, Preferably bound. Populars wanted for years 1920-1922, 1927, 1928, 1929, 1930.
- WHITER, BENJAMIN GEORGE, 36 Newcourt House, Horwood Estate, Bethnal Green, London, E.2. (L). (Age 53). Storeman, Printers' Completioners. Groups 5 (all); 6 (all); 7 (a), (b); 4; 9; 10; 3. Says our hobby is still a great help in others on philately, railways, amateur magazines, Sherlock Holmes, Antarctica.
- WHITER, ROBERT H., 706 Lordship Lane, Wood Green, London, N.22. (L). (Age 34). Cycle Dealer. Groups 5 (all); 8; 4.

(cont'd on page 112)...

MEN AT WORK

H.W. TWYMAN

(Editor, Union Jack and Detective Weekly, 1921-1937)

* * *

IN the nature of things the editor of a paper or magazine seldom sees the men who write for him actually writing. His concern is only with their finished product; his anxiety only to get his hands on it while there is still time to get the raw material through the press in time for it to appear in the promised issue.

But just the same there were times, during the years in which I was responsible for the weekly re-emergence of Sexton Blake and Tinker, when this non-routine sight did occur. At this date long afterwards I am happy to be able to say that all my regular contributors and I were on very friendly, familiar terms - and to say it in the most literal and truthful sense. There was of course the close association of our work and interest, but, beyond that, there were no duds among them; even the most exasperating or unaccommodating of their number - and I'm naming no names - was a warm and likeable human personality and as different from all the other as his stories were different from theirs. To the world-wide thousands who thrilled to their work they were of course just names, bylines; but to me they were equally real people with ways of their own. Thus it was that various circumstances sometimes permitted me to glimpse them in the midst of their literary toil - an invitation to their homes, a chance call at an office - or at other times to be given by the authors themselves an account of those men at work.

I recall distinctly one such visit today, more than thirty years afterwards. William Murray Graydon - 'Old Man' Graydon to his fellow workers, to distinguish him from his son Robert Graydon - had probably passed the zenith of his achievement at this time, but was still of enough importance to have qualified for the exclusive occupation of a room in the Fleetway House in which to write. I found him there in company with what was then a comparative rarity among workaday authors in the periodical field, a dictaphone.

My tap at the door must have interrupted him in mid-sentence, and Sexton Blake waited awhile as we discussed our business. The portrait of Graydon comes back to me very clearly and I can see his face now - his clipped grey moustache, his grey-blue eyes and healthy, rubicund complexion.

As he got up he carefully removed from his knees a couple of dusters which he shook into the fireplace. 'Old Man' Graydon was evidently a fluent worker and couldn't afford to be interrupted while words were coming. He made his preparations before he began, and then was 'off'. The dusters draped over his legs were to prevent stray sparks from his pipe burning holes in his trousers as he spoke into the machine's mouthpiece; alongside him in a wire letter-basket were about five pipes in reserve, ready filled.

Yes, he was a non-stop performer, and pipe-tobacco was his fuel; judging by the number of his stories, detective and otherwise, it served him well.

Also a dictating-machine user, by the way, was another Murray - Andrew - who

rented an office in the Strand and likewise produced plenty.

I once paid a visit to one of my writers and was rather surprised to find him too using a "talkie", a lesser-known make now probably long off the market called a Parlophone. This was Alfred Edgar, better known to readers as Barre Lyndon. My surprise arose from the fact that when I first knew his work it was typed by himself in beautifully immaculate pages, obviously as a last fair copy, on impressively expensive paper . . . but that was in his prentice days before he became so productive.

In the beginning he was a clerk in an engineer's office situated at Queen Anne's Gate by St. James' Park. I have often wondered what caused one or other of my contributors to pick on the adventures of Sexton Blake as an outlet for their literary ambitions, but anyhow it was so in the case of this engineer's clerk, and when he sent me the result of his first effort there was so little wrong with it that after a few agreed alterations I found it quite fit to publish. As a matter of interest, the story was The Saracen's Ring (U.J. No. 925, July 2, 1921).

Alfred has gone quite a way since then. He wrote a very successful play called The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse which was staged at the Haymarket Theatre, transferred after a long run to the Savoy, appeared later in New York, and made into a film under the same title. About this time he vanished from Fleetway House and reappeared in Hollywood, whence have come his scripts for other cinematic titles, notably Mrs. Belloc Lowndes' The Lodger.

Unfortunately I was too far away to see him at work on them, but have always been pleased to recall that his first literary bullseye was the one for which I sent him a cheque 'way back in 1921.

I once saw Edwy Searles Brooks at his home at Thornton Heath, Surrey, where he was then living, and have never forgotten his writing system. He took me into the garden and showed me what he called an iron tent. It was apparently an item of Army surplus after World War I and consisted of a large circular construction, much larger than a canvas bell-tent, with high corrugated walls giving plenty of head-room, and a conical roof.

In the Nelson Lee office I have heard it said that his work was sometimes too mechanical; however much that may be questioned, it would seem that Edwy's mind certainly had a mechanical bent. My recollection of his work-place - the term 'fiction factory' inevitably sprang to mind - was of organisation and efficiency. The iron tent's interior reminded one somewhat of a conveyor belt, which in those days was in its infancy and had never, to my knowledge, been applied to literary production.

On the right of the door as one entered was a typist's desk and, alongside, the transcribing machine of a Dictaphone set, with a foot-button so that the operator could stop and start the wax cylinder as required. The typewriter itself was fitted with a wire arrangement so that the typist could tell at a glance, without stopping to turn back the paper in the machine, whether the bottom of the page had been reached.

At successive positions around the wall were other gadgets or equipment appropriate to the handling of each stage in the production of a Blake or Nelson Lee story, such as a record-shaving machine, and finally including stationery and other oddments necessary for getting the job into the post. Mr. Brooks' own dictating section of the Dictaphone I do not remember to have seen in the iron tent; perhaps it was somewhere in the house, where he could work at a distance from the distracting sounds of the 'fiction factory'.

Stated in such bald terms, it may seem to the reader that such a place was anything but the right one for imaginative fiction to be born. But the truth is that its

mechanical efficiency did not seem to affect the result. In fact, O.B.B.C. members have before now objected that it was too imaginative.

Be that as it may, it is also true that Edwy's manuscripts, all on paper varied in colour from week to week, were of a neatness and regularity - perhaps due to that wire gadget on the typewriter - as neat as print and deserving of a frame.

Not all U.J. authors dictated their stuff, but there was only one who dictated, not to a machine, but to an amanuensis. This was Anthony Skene, who dreamed up the fantastic exploits of Zenith the Albino. Skene's first and official way of winning bread was as a quantity surveyor in H.M. Office of Works - a job which necessitated much travel around the country to supervise Government buildings under construction, and whenever he could he went by motor-coach. With his secretary and her shorthand notebook alongside him, and in a low voice drowned by their passage across the landscape, he would narrate the stirring events of some such story as The Affair of the Were-Wolf that would have chilled the other passengers' spines could they have heard them as distinctly as did the secretary. As it was, some of them must have wondered what the devil this young man could have had to say for himself at such length.

There was at least one night-hawk among my variegated gang of yarn-spinners. Naturally I never saw him at work, but he told me his nocturnal habit of working right through the night-hours gave better results that way; the etheric vibrations of people's daytime thoughts and mental activities were absent and he could get along twice as fast in consequence. He was a fast worker, too. As he tapped out each type-written sheet he would pull it out of the machine and throw it on the floor behind him. With the morn came his dutiful wife and a cup of tea, and as he staggered up to bed her's was the job of gathering up the scattered pages and getting them into proper order.

An exceptional method this, but it seemed to bring results, as witness the swift-moving stories of - Gilbert Chester, otherwise H.H. Clifford Gibbons.

The only representative of the handwriting technique among exponents of Blake was that ebullient and bohemian spirit Gwyn Evans, and I have often thought it unfortunate that I never chanced to see him actually and literally penning his top-ranking fantasies. His demeanour while doing so might have given some clue to the high-spirited gusto of the yarns themselves; one can hardly imagine him doing anything so static as just sitting calmly and merely writing them. There must have been a sort of irrepressible restlessness; the constant pausing to look up, bright-eyed and eager, with some incidental comment or irreverent aside too pungent to print; or the sharp exclamation prompted by some new inspiration as he bent afresh to his task.

But his manuscripts themselves gave a better clue. Gwyn's handwriting was tiny but always legible. His stories poured out of him in a molten state, at white heat. His was no meticulous mind to check fact against fact for errors as he went. That was the editor's job. The story - the breathless, living story - was the thing. The lines got shorter and shorter as they went, as if he could not delay reaching the bottom and the next page, eager to begin the process all over again. Corrections, alterations, were few.

But they were many by the time the manuscript got to the printer. Nevertheless, the blithe, carefree spirit of Gwyn Evans was still intact upon those pages.

I regret, too, that I never saw George Teed in the act of literary creation. This was because he was abroad for much of the time or, when he was in England, worked from some rented house or cottage far in the depths of the country. He was another typewriter practitioner, and all I recall is that he once told me he turned out an

average of 2,000 words an hour - which means really fast going.

No, I never had a ringside seat to watch the great G.H.T. in the act and article of literary creation, but I did on one unforgettable occasion assist him at the birth of an idea for one of them. This was in 1923, when I made a special trip over to Paris - firm's expenses - where Teed was then living in the rue d'Assas, hard by the Luxembourg Gardens in Montparnasse.

The first day we sat for hours in an hotel lounge talking plots while the saucers mounted before us - and very productive that discussion was - but later in the trip we tried the stimulation of the city itself for ideas as he took me round and showed me the sights.

When we explored Notre Dame we found ourselves in that part of the cathedral where the relics of saints are on exhibition, and joined a party which was being shown round by a cassocked guide. The relics, usually fragments of bones, are displayed each in its glass-topped box of about nine inches or a foot square - and most of the boxes, or reliquaries, are of solid gold.

Of course, their sacred character makes these reliquaries objects without price and nobody would think of stealing any of them. Perhaps this is why they are displayed so accessibly on a sort of waist-high counter, with no attempt at any kind of protection such as glass cases or metal grilles. The only precaution is that each priceless specimen of the goldsmith's art is fastened in place with a few screweyes and screwed to the wood of the bench or counter.

Teed and I weren't there to steal, but we were on the lookout for ideas; fictitious thieves could profit where honest men would recoil in horror at the mere thought of loot from such a place, and here was a hoard of gold, accumulated through the centuries, ready for the taking.

Maybe the notion struck us simultaneously; anyway, we were soon deep in an enthusiastic discussion of how it could be done - escape routes, how to deal with the conducted party and the guide. The gold reliquaries would be the simplest part of the scheme - just a strong screwdriver or small jemmy, a quick jerk and out would come the screweyes. A made to measure job for someone like Huxton Rymer or George Marsden Plummer. I acted out the part eagerly, wrenching out the screws.

It was only gradually that we became aware that the droning voice of the guide had ceased. We turned and looked and the whole of the conducted party were gazing at us silently, awesomely shocked; dreading what they were about to see.

Abruptly we adjourned the plot session and slunk out, probably looking as guilty as if we had actually burgled those gold gew-gaws. We felt as guilty, anyway.

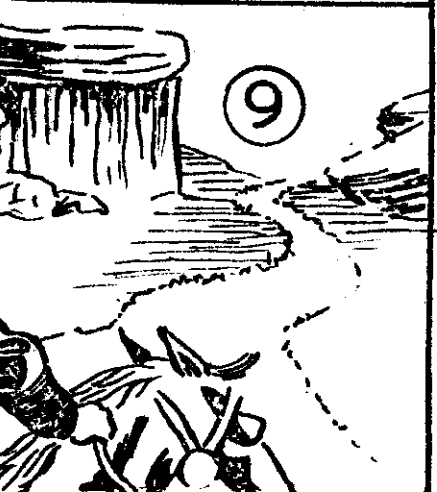
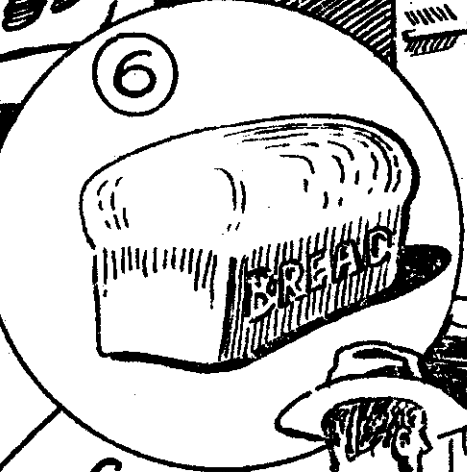
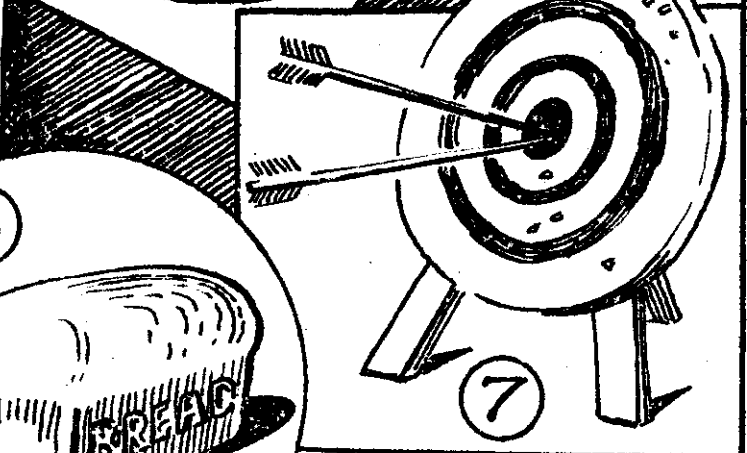
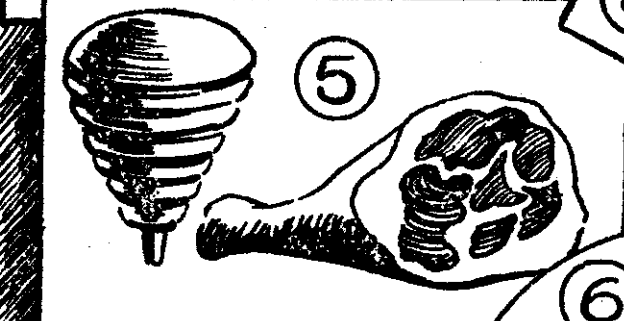
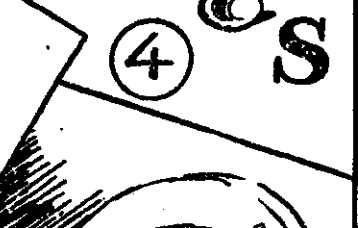
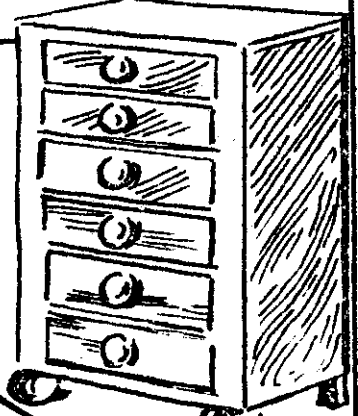
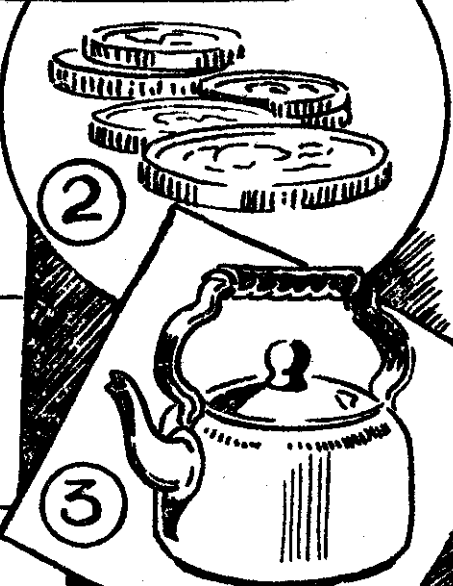
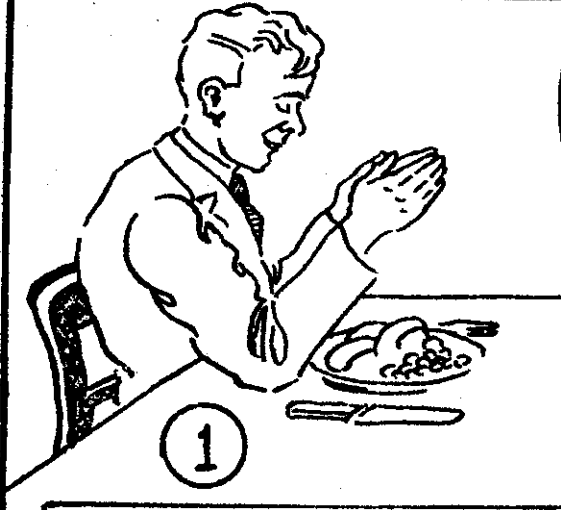
This incident was not without result. It was the germ of a manuscript which Teed sent me when I had returned to London. Many a year has passed since I read the story, and I don't recall after all this time whether there is anything in it about saintly relics or not. But the title was 'The Case of the Crippled Monk', appearing as No. 1042 of Union Jack, 29th September, 1923.

Collectors who have that issue may care to check.

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By Bob Whiter

PICTURE QUIZ



of
**Hookwood
Characters**

Kalahari Secret

A stirring adventure story featuring
Nelson Lee and the boys of St. Frank's

by

JIM COOK

(Author of I Travelled for the St. Frank's League, etc., etc.)

* * * * *

South-east of Gobabis, and roughly two hundred miles, lies Tsane, in the Kalahari Desert, South Africa. I have never heard of Tsane but it was whispered into the ear of Nelson Lee by an old shrivelled-up native, and from that moment the rescue of Lord Dorrimore and his party began in earnest.

Lee had been very busy before we had set out from London, and by the time we had reached the private airport at Walvis Bay and assembled at the Atlantic Hotel, the results of the famous schoolmaster detective's activity had appeared in the shape of two ten-ton trucks each with 100 h.p. engines and ten gears. They also had special bumpers for crashing the undergrowth.

These huge trucks, with their balloon tyres were soon on the move and passing through Karibib, Okahandja, Windhoek, we did the last 130 miles to Gobabis in very mountainous country.

The juniors and Phipps had gone by train, but the journey by rail, although perhaps more comfortable, could not have been as interesting. We did not speak much on that run. Lee was anxious to the point of endangering the safety which up to now had favoured us. He took over from the native driver after we had passed Okahandja, about two hundred miles out from Walvis Bay, and the other truck was soon left behind. But hazardous as Lee's driving seemed, there was the knowledge that behind that wheel sat an expert, a master, whose capable hands would bring us safely to Gobabis. Chances were certainly taken for these places we were driving through had high elevations.

But we were hurrying because somewhere out in the Kalahari Lord Dorrimore was in trouble, and with a man like Nelson Lee to rescue him. Now it is all over I do not think anyone other than Lee could have effected the saving of Dorrie from that terrible nightmare that will live with me for all time. Lee was the man for the job. No other would have done. No other could have done. The human race will always produce that equation...the man for the job.

And we reached the prosperous township of Gobabis such a long time before the other truck that we thought it had got lost or that its native driver had run it over a precipice. By the time we had met Mr. Ridgeway, the novelist from dear old Bellton, Lee was in possession of some more facts, and the picture he gave us was only slightly clearer than it was before.

For an atmosphere of mystery had unaccountably surrounded the party that had set out to find a lost city that someone named Farini had claimed to discover in 1885. Dorrie had given the novelist very little in the way of facts, but it appeared that when Dorrie was in Leopoldville he had met up with Lady Dexter, wife of Sir Lucien

Dexter, a member of the Board of Governors of St. Frank's. Now Lady Dexter is also the sister of Dr. Stafford and the meeting was all the more surprising. That famous yacht, the Wanderer, was undergoing some repairs and Lord Dorrimore had been kicking his heels in the Belgium Congo capital in the meantime. Dr. Stafford's sister, Honoria, had mentioned she was forming a party to uncover this lost city from the sands in the Kalahari Desert.

Dorrie, having time on his hands, accepted gladly Lady Dexter's invitation to join her in the hunt. The upshot was a very much bigger party had left Leopoldville for the Kalahari Desert, for besides the original members, Lord Dorrimore's crew of officers and men of the Wanderer had, at Dorrie's insistence, attached themselves to him and formed in effect two separate forces.

As was usual on expeditions of this nature, the sporting peer had a very efficient supply of arms aboard the Wanderer on all occasions and these were brought ashore and packed into a truck belonging to Lady Dexter.

Eventually, a formidable force departed from Leopoldville to search for the lost city, which, according to our host, lay somewhere east of the River Nasop in the Kalahari. But, when this same party turned up at Gobabis after crossing the Desert from north to south and had left hurriedly towards the Desert again a very puzzled Mr. Ridgeway was left to frown over what seemed a very mysterious event!

For nothing was said about the crossing of the Kalahari, and certainly nobody appeared any the worse for the journey. Besides Lord Dorrimore, there were Captain Burton, Umlosi, Mr. Hudson, first officer of the Wanderer, a chap named Green who was a radio mechanic, and two other members of the crew of the Wanderer. Dorrie had supplied these names to Mr. Ridgeway by way of introductions and the novelist had made a note of them.

Of Lady Dexter's party nothing much had been said, but of the dozen gentlemen who were mostly made up of archaeologists and scholars of ancient arts, Ridgeway could give us no information that may have thrown some light on this second penetration in the desert.

Nelson Lee then suggested seeing the native who had staggered in to Mr. Ridgeway with a note from Dorrie. This had requested the Bellton novelist to get in touch with Lee at St. Frank's and to use the words "in the soup". Lee knew that was Dorrie's favourite expression when there was trouble about, and after a speedy two day's preparation we flew from London Airport to Oran, changed planes for Dakar on the French West African coast, thence on to Kano, Nigeria, where Lee chartered another plane for Entebbe, Uganda. It seemed such a roundabout way of getting to South West Africa that I mentioned it to Mr. Lee. He explained there is no direct route by air to Walvis Bay except by chartered planes, and those are not always available. He said in a follow-up cable from Mr. Ridgeway we had to make for Walvis Bay private airport where instructions would be found waiting for us. It appeared Lord Dorrimore had arranged all this previously with our host at Gobabis, but at the time Mr. Ridgeway had received the instructions only as a matter of course.

Somehow, it didn't seem to fit in with common sense, and we were all mystified about collecting two heavy trucks and equipment for delivery to Ridgeway at Gobabis. But with Lee at the helm it was to act first and ask questions afterwards. So, we arrived at Gobabis only a little before Phipps and the juniors where Archie Glen-thorn's man had taken his party to the novelist's spacious residence.

As usual, and to make it look like old times, Handforth and Co. were having an argument. Willy, Handy's minor, was probably the cause as he had such a benign look

on his face that Nipper accused him forthwith of starting an argument with his major and making Church and McClure unwilling participants. This, Nipper explained, was a very favourite pastime of Willy's. He would create a little difference of opinion with his major and contrive to involve Handy's chums in such a way that by the time he had sidled away the argument would reach undue proportions.

As soon as Lee had interviewed the poor native and had managed to hear the name Tsane from the lips of the dying man he immediately got us together and explained what he intended doing. Those of us who wanted to come to Dorrie's rescue would ride in the massive trucks through the desert. And it was going to be a very rough ride, too. There was danger in that we were going to an unknown part where the greatest curse was the lack of water.

But none of us wanted to stay behind at Mr. Ridgeway's house, and the famous schoolmaster-detective could paint the picture no blacker, whereupon the next move was to fit us all out with suitable clothing. This was done, and Lee had been busy stacking other things in the trucks that Nipper suspected were firearms.

Nelson Lee dismissed the two drivers whom we had found with the trucks at Walvis Bay, so we were now entirely on our own. In the first wagon Mr. Lee would drive and I would act as mate. In the back there were Jack Grey, Handy & Co., Vivian Travers, Ralph Leslie Fullwood, Browne and Stevens, of the Fifth, and the second truck was going to be driven by Nipper with Phipps beside him. The passengers were Reggie Pitt, Fatty Little, Edgar Fenton, the school captain, Archie Glenthorne, Tommy Watson, Montie Tregellis-West and Timothy Tucker.

My thoughts as we set out from the town on the edge of the Kalahari Desert were a little mixed. The juniors were very excited and although there was a nebulous reason for this expedition that had no signs of resolving itself we were nevertheless looking forward to something that, according to a piece of paper and a whispered word from a dying native, Dorrie and a lot of other people were in trouble. And only Nelson Lee had been asked to go to their aid. No official assistance had been ordered, which suggested that it was an affair for St. Frank's only!!

We soon settled down once we left Gobabis, for the country was as yet, flat and uninteresting. The desert was not evident yet, for considerable parts of the Kalahari, chiefly in West and North are covered with dense scrub and there are occasional patches of forest. Nelson Lee, who knew a great deal more about it than I explained the chief characteristics of the Desert were the tuberous and herbaceous plants that can be found in it and the large number of big game.

The Kalahari was first crossed by David Livingstone in 1849. In 1878-79 a party of Boers with about 300 wagons trekked from the Transvaal across the Kalahari to a spot called Ngami and thence to the hinterland of Angola. According to the records, Lee said, nearly all of them perished and 9,000 cattle died.

The landscape soon began to change, and the soil was showing a sort of red sand. Tough sun-bleached grass in tufts were now dotted about and these were giving a new colour to our view through the windscreens. The other truck kept close behind and was only seconds out of our reflector mirrors. The going was easy and uninterrupted, but whether it would continue like this even Lee was unable to say.

We had to reach Tsane, and quickly, for although Dorrie and his party were there at the time the old native left with the message it did not promise he was still there. It was a great pity Lee was not able to get more out of him. But taking everything into consideration it was lucky we were able to pick up that small clue, ambiguous as it was. It meant that Dorrie was indeed very secretive about this dot on the

map that he could not put it in writing but trust it to old native getting it through to Lee alone.

I don't think, personally, that Mr. Lee knew any more than that, but the way he clutched at this straw of information and the brisk actions that followed suggested a very healthy outlook, a comfortable feeling that it was not a wild goose chase. The boys' faith in the schoolmaster-detective was sufficient to warrant we would come back safe, and there was a pleasant vitality among us as we drove on.

The boys were well covered by the canvas roofs of the trucks, but after we had gone about a hundred miles the tropical heat began to make itself felt, and the hoods were soon rolled back to give more air. The trucks with their ribbed roofs now appeared less formidable, but large boxes and cases were exposed to reveal Nelson Lee's efficient attention to stores and equipment for the journey.

We had halted while the canvas was being uncovered and water being the first thought in all our minds we were soon sipping cups of it from a barrel under the supervision of Phipps. The tepid liquid was soon to be severely rationed and for the moment Phipps was a tiny bit less cautious with it. We had an extra mouthful!

I asked Lee how long he thought we would take to get to this Tsane.

"Well, it is about two hundred miles from Gobabis as the crow flies, but I am allowing for another hundred or so for the journey by these trucks".

"What are you hoping to find, sir?" asked Nipper.

"Frankly, my boy, you know as much as I. All we know is that Dorrie wants us to go and rescue him from some trouble that has cropped up in their attempt at finding the lost city."

"But surely, there's no danger, as it were, in this part of the jolly old Union?" put in Archie Glenthorne.

"There shouldn't be, Archie," replied Lee. "But look around you. How safe do you think you actually are. There are no policemen or soldiers in sight, and if a marauding band of Bushmen suddenly appeared and wiped us out who is to know?"

Archie began looking in all directions at once.

"What, but I mean to say, how poisonous, how absolutely under the edge, don't you know?"

"It's alright, Archie. I think Mr. Lee is pulling your leg!" said Handforth, with a grin.

"Excuse me, brother Handforth, but I think brother Lee was being extremely serious," remarked Browne, quietly.

"How long did you say, sir, it's going to take us?" I repeated.

"I didn't, but I should think from the state of the ground which is getting more sandy each mile we shall at least take ten hours."

"As we are only a hundred or so miles from the nearest civilised township surely there cannot be any danger, my dear sir?" enquired Timothy Tucker.

"Frankly, boys, I do not know." replied the famous detective.

"I am extremely puzzled about this whole business, for as you remarked, Tucker, we are only a short distance from Gobabis where there are every modern aspects of a civilised community, yet, not far from here, a mere couple of hundred miles or so, something has occurred that prevents Lord Dorrimore and many other people together with Dr. Stafford's sister from resuming their efforts to find a lost city, a very mundane affair." Lee added drily.

"Unless by uncovering some sacred idols they have incurred the wrath of the local natives and met trouble that way, Mr. Lee." said Phipps.

"Well, we shall see. And now boys, if you have finished, we had better get going. If possible, I want to get to Tsane before nightfall and I suggest we all keep a

constant watch in all directions from now on."

And so, after the very welcome break the trucks began to move again, leaving great clouds of dust in their wake. The sun overhead was almost vertical, it beat down with an intensity that made everything dance in the dazzling strong light.

To watch the quivering track ahead was agonizing, and although we were the leading wagon I remember envying the others in the truck behind, for they just followed us and were spared to some extent that dreary vista of shimmering, blinding front that glared at us. And with every mile it became even hotter. We were running into a furnace and the cabin in the truck was like an oven. Perspiration ran from my head to my ears and cascaded down my neck. I was limp and weary. Nelson Lee, strong and rock-like, sat there behind the wheel tight-lipped and keen. The appalling heat in that cabin, the uncertain bush-track, and the tense atmosphere that was building up with each mile we covered made no difference to Lee. Nothing, I am sure, would have stopped this famous man from achieving his object -- especially when it was rescuing a very dear friend in peril.

Presently the undulating, yet attractive, country was giving way to a land of sand. The small rocky hills were no longer dotted about and it was fast becoming a world of sand. Gone were the bush and grass which gave a friendly contact with the outside world. Now had come the Desert proper. A vast sandy expanse of loneliness, that must have made our motor trucks insignificant.

Our speed was now considerably reduced, and I wondered how we were going to reach our destination under these conditions.

"We're slowing up, Mr. Lee." I remarked.

"Yes, I expected this delay, but these trucks are specially designed to travel in deserts. Sir Crawford Grey made all the arrangements for them to be ready at Walvis Bay when we reached there. And I am sure Sir Crawford would have ordered the best." explained Lee.

"When I saw you with him at London Airport I thought he was coming out with us."

"No, I had arranged that he meet me there in the hope I could persuade him to accompany us to Africa, for he was in the party when we went to the Sahara and found that ancient Roman city."

"Wasn't he disappointed at not being able to come this time?"

"Yes, very. Last minute changes made it impossible for him to join us. When he asked if he could be of any assistance any other way, I suggested he order these two heavy trucks so that when we arrived at Walvis Bay we would waste no time. Sir Crawford certainly got for us the right kind, especially with the aircraft type of wheels."

"But why the bumpers.?" I asked.

"Well, there are many patches of forest in the Kalahari, and I was advised that it is usual to have this type of adjunct to the lorries. Yes, you may raise your eyebrows. Forests in the desert. This Kalahari Desert has everything. But most of it is unknown, for great many parts of it is unexplored, even today."

We had now stopped, and we jumped down into the sand as Phipps drove up behind us.

The intense heat in the sand burned my feet through my boots, and I was reminded of that old saying about escaping the frying pan and landing in the fire. For after the sweltering in the cabin I was now roasting out of it! And how quiet it had become! Now that the roar from the engines had ceased the silence was oppressive and hurtful. It was complete silence, and we stood in a bunch alongside the trucks as Phipps and Fatty Little prepared a welcome refreshment. Mrs. Ridgeway had made up some very delightful sandwiches and Mr. Lee had assured us the food problem was only temporary as

the deeper we penetrated into the desert the more plentiful would be the game. The most abundant were the springbok. In addition there are hartebeest, tsessebe, duiker, stembok, kudu, wildebeest and eland. Most of the juniors were familiar with a rifle, and both Lee and Phipps were crack shots.

But with the summer season just beginning the water supply was going to be the main difficulty. We were told we could expect no rain to fill the pans which lie all over the Kalahari. But no doubt, the weather would change before long. The sun, which up to now had been glaring pitilessly from a blue sky was gradually assuming a coppery appearance, and the hard silence everywhere were ominous signs of a break-up in the weather.

And it was not long in coming. For after about twenty miles a small gale was blowing. Then came a roaring noise like thunder, and several whirlwinds were careering over the country at the same time. They were columns of circular winds carrying dust, fine sand, pieces of grass and bits of stick, and they struck against the wind-screen blotting out the view. We had to stop, for it was impossible to see, and it would have been dangerous to proceed blindly into the unknown.

But it was soon all over. The wind dropped and the sun was blazingly hot again. It was very shortly after this that we saw our first animals. Nelson Lee pointed out a small herd of springbok gazelle but as yet, because we were in no urgent need of food, he drove on. They were some distance away and there were signs of other game from the dust clouds that suddenly appeared in the distance caused by the noise of our approach.

It was definitely changing now for a party of natives were seen a mile or so to our left. They seemed to be hunting animals, but we carried on in spite of their friendly appearance. At least, they were apparently not hostile, for as we passed them we caught up with some other members of their party a little way further on, and the childish welcome which they gave us by clapping their hands over their heads and grinning hugely suggested they did not resent travellers.

As we saw two ostriches being cut up no doubt we could have interpreted the gesture as an invitation to the feast. But we were in a great hurry. Nelson Lee at no time forgot the object of this trip. When he did speak, and it was only occasionally, he often wondered what was happening to Dorrie and the rest. What would he find when we reached Tsane? Supposing we were on a wild goose chase and that when we got there there was no sign of Lord Dorrimore?

Another thing that had puzzled me was the method we were using to locate a party of people. Surely a plane would have been quicker and easier for finding lost expeditions? And several of the boys agreed with me. But it was gently pointed out to me and them that you do not use a plane for searching in the desert. Lee told us of the difficulties you meet by this way, and it was then only too obvious why we were attacking the problem by the use of the motor trucks. For while a plane is extremely suitable for getting from one place to another you would hardly use one for searching the sand dunes of a desert expecting to pick out a small party of people.

Manifestly Nelson Lee would have used a plane if it were the better way to get to Tsane and get to the bottom of the mystery. Such was the personality of the man you did not question his plans; you did not hesitate at accepting his moves. You instinctively knew he would be right. To be with him was an honour, to be his friend was to inherit some of the qualities of this great man. Strong, lean and clear cut, alert and watchful, Nelson Lee was the type of man to be by your side when you hit trouble. Fearless, courageous, a born fighter, we were very proud to have such a man as our leader.

And so we drove on, over the Kalahari Desert; sometimes the going was so difficult that the wheels of the trucks threatened to stay embedded in the sand, but always we managed to pull them out. Other times we were doing something like thirty miles an hour over the hard baked sand.

Space does not permit me to describe fully that journey to Tsane. It was not entirely uneventful. Several times Lee pulled up to await the arrival of the other truck which, at times, got so far behind as to disappear from the driving mirror attached to our cabin. Then we would all jump down into the sandy track and look around for those wild melons that sometimes appeared growing like a large bottle. Inside these is a cool liquid and is a very good substitute for water.

Handforth and Co., who up to now had been causing no concern, wandered off at one of these rests for refreshments, and it was some time before Nipper and Co., found them hopelessly lost in a sand dune. These sandy hills that we had from time to time to avoid by making a detour completely hid from view what lay beyond. In spite of strict orders not to roam over these hills of sand, Handforth, as usual, had to disobey, landing himself and Church and McClure in trouble. Luckily for them Nipper's party soon found them. Nelson Lee and Phipps were examining the engines of the trucks at the time, otherwise the juniors would have not ventured so far.

Eventually we got to Tsane, and I will now let this part of the narrative finish. Nelson Lee himself has promised to record the events leading up to our arrival at Tsane, and the subsequent finding of Lord Dorrimore. So by the more capable hand of Nelson Lee the rest of our trip to the Kalahari Desert will be faithfully written down.

PART TWO

by

NELSON LEE

* * *

I do not want to dwell too long on our journey to Tsane. Uppermost in my thoughts was the fate of Lord Dorrimore and his party. I had so little to go on. What would I find at this place in the desert when I reached there that may throw some light on the mystery? And how would I begin? It was a slender lead that Dorrie had sent me, but first it was imperative to get to the spot which that dying native had whispered.

I had made some enquiries before we left Gobabis and if I kept to the route I had mapped out I reckoned to reach Tsane within ten hours, which would, roughly speaking, time our arrival around nightfall. I intended halting outside the town and entering on foot. I thought it inadvisable to descend on Tsane in a crowd. Better to leave the two trucks on the outskirts and investigate with less publicity.

It was a terrible journey through the desert. But those huge motor wagons were just the type for the job. The Kalahari is indeed a land of surprises. I suppose not many people know there is a Camel Corps which keep watch and are responsible for many things. They are the sign of authority, the mounted police, who maintain law and order in the desert. It is a tiny body of some thirty European officers and N.C.Os. with about three hundred native police. And this represents the might of the British Empire in a country more than twice the size of Britain.

We met this police force just before Tsane. It was a small patrol roaming the desert, cut off from the amenities of civilisation, only the desert and its mysteries

to occupy their time and attention and collecting taxes from native villages and watching for the coming of the locust. Without this police force I doubt if this part of Africa would live at all.

I made enquiries about Dorrie but learned nothing. These hard, tough men of the camel army had seen no white people for weeks. But I was very glad to know we were on the right track for Tsane. And their estimation of three more hours of reaching it was right. Those last three hours were a nightmare. The burning heat and the sand were responsible for many stops which were so irritating, for there was no escaping the oven-like atmosphere. There was no escaping the gritty sand which got into our clothes, in our hair, ears and eyes. It penetrated the smallest crack in the cabin of the trucks. We had all been through these troubles before, but they are always worse than last time.

Eventually we could see the sun-baked huts that go to make up the desert town of Tsane. We could see them getting fainter as the sun rather hurriedly set behind us. So we came to a halt about a mile from the town, and as soon as Phipps drew up in the other truck we all collected and partook of a very welcome refreshment before I decided on my next plan of action.

It was not quite dark when I had reached a decision. It seemed so cruel to ask anybody to accompany me to the village that I would have gladly gone alone but Nipper would not have it. We were all just about done up after that very tiresome journey and a few of the juniors were already fast asleep in the trucks. But I could not waste time, I could not delay my enquiries. I certainly would not wait for sun-up to search for some clue that would help me to find my dear friend.

So with Nipper we started out for Tsane. I had every faith in Phipps to safeguard the boys in my absence. This brave man had proved his ability and courage when once we were marooned on a South Sea island. In fact, I owe my life to his foresight and medical knowledge, for on that occasion I was so badly injured after being washed up on to some rocks that Nipper had almost given me up for dead.*

We easily reached the huts for the sandy ground was very hard, making walking pleasantly attractive in the cool evening air. The present native inhabitants of the Kalahari are the Bushmen, commonly called Masarwas, some few Hottentots, and a number of other tribes, all of whom in one way or another are refugees from other parts of South Africa, so I was prepared for any type of native at Tsane.

As we approached deeper into the town the scene took on the appearance of one of those cowboy villages of the films, with wooden shanty houses and saloons. It was reminiscent of the American 'Far West' settlers except that the people were black.

I was looking for some place that could start me off with my enquiries, and presently I found it, a ramshackle building that had the word Hotel at the entrance.

From the proprietor we learned very little. Nobody answering the description of the expedition had ever been seen in Tsane, in fact, we were assured the only white man in the place was now lying dead drunk in his room upstairs. It was his usual condition the owner told us, and the smirk on his face suggested his attitude to all white people. But I had little time to argue with him and instead demanded to be shown to the room where the white man lived.

If anybody could help me in this wooden oasis of the desert it would be somebody of our own race. It would surely be a white man who could assist us in our attempt to locate Dorrie.

At an infuriatingly slow pace we were taken up some gloomy stairs, past a short

* The South Sea Series.

passage which was so dim it was difficult to see, and turning a bend stopped at a door, on which the man rapped sharply and entered.

The room was lit by an oil lamp that rested in the centre of a round table. In the corner stood an iron bedstead that must have been manufactured a hundred years before. Lying wrapped up in blankets was the figure of a man, his fair hair contrasting strongly with his sun-browned face. He was sleeping.

"All right." I told the man who had brought us up. "I'll see if I can get any sense out of him. How long has he been staying here?"

"'Bout a week, boss. He drinks lot whiskey. He drunk when first day he come." replied the hotel owner.

I waved the man away, and he left us still smirking. Whether there were any other residents occupying the rooms seemed unlikely, as there were no sounds to suggest it. In fact, there was a general silence all over this place that made it a ghost town.

That we had seen nobody as we entered, or noticed any fires from the native huts suddenly struck me as strange. But I put it out of my mind at once. I studied the man on the bed; he was of more interest to me at the moment. I was hoping that a white man would know if other white people had been here.

Nipper stepped nearer and stared at the drunk's face. A bottle of whiskey stood on a table by the bedside. And judging from its meagre contents he had imbibed very freely.

Suddenly Nipper stiffened.

"Guv'nor, we know this man!" he exclaimed.

"What?"

"We know this man!" repeated Nipper. And he placed his hand on the man's head and stared at it. The movement made no difference to the figure in the bed. He must have been dead drunk.

"By James, yes, of course," I said, looking intently at him.

Nipper nodded.

"It's Morgan, of the Wanderer!" he stated.

I recognised the man as Morgan, one of Lord Dorrimore's officers on his famous steam yacht The Wanderer. This man had accompanied us on more than one occasion to different parts of the world and had suffered and fought with us.

"But what can he be doing here, in this state?"

I would have liked to know the answer to that one myself. But I was determined to find out. And quickly. So I examined Morgan, slapping his face and roughly thrusting his shoulders.

"Wake up, Morgan! Wake up, man, it is I, Nelson Lee!" I shouted, rubbing his cheeks with my hand. His face was very hot, so hot that I suspected he was in a fever.

He groaned faintly then opened his eyes. I studied him, impatiently. I was feeling more confident now that I had met someone connected with Dorrie and his party. But I was extremely puzzled. Where were the rest of the expedition?

(The narrative resumed by J. Cook)

Soon after Nelson Lee and Nipper had set out to investigate Tsane for a clue to Dorrie's disappearance we agreed to take a two hour watch until their return. It had

turned very cold as the night deepened. The moon had not yet risen, but from the myriad of stars that seemed suspended just over our heads one could see sufficiently clear enough from the diffused light anybody approaching us. Edgar Fenton, the school captain, and myself were on watch when three figures loomed up and came towards us. A hail from Nipper however, soon assured us everything was alright. We were expecting only two, and a third for the moment had put us on the alert.

But we were soon in possession of the facts. And Lee thought it inadvisable to wake the rest; so the officer Morgan was placed in blankets and put in one of the cabins of the trucks.

The watch continued through the rest of the night but Nelson Lee and Nipper turned in immediately Morgan was made comfortable. They had taken about four hours to visit Tsane and return, so that it wouldn't be long before the very welcome rays of the morning sun came out of the east. The sudden drop in temperature during the night in the Kalahari Desert is a thing I won't easily forget. These drastic changes in the climate is indeed remarkable.

We were very surprised to find the water in the barrel slightly frozen when we awoke in the morning. But it did not prevent Fatty Little preparing coffee and tea. Strangely enough we had had no water shortage during our journey across the great desert for on two occasions we had collected water from pans that had received water by recent rainfalls. Nelson Lee had special chemicals for purifying it so we were not unduly worried by its colour.

With the oil stoves going Fatty Little, who had now complete charge of cooking and who had dismissed Phipps a long way back, was soon creating a pleasant smell of bacon.

Nelson Lee had examined Morgan and found he had been suffering malaria. The whiskey had been freely used in an effort to combat the fever and the officer from the Wanderer, although weak, was sufficiently well enough to accompany Lee back to our improvised camp.

And we were soon in possession of the whole story. Morgan was able to tell us everything. The deserted appearance of the shanty town of Tsane could now be explained. For the whole population, men, women and children, had been transported to a place in the desert. They had been forced to leave their huts and homes under the threat of death and to march into the desert. Their destination had been a spot north of this place towards the centre of the Kalahari. Morgan told us how Dorrie and the party who had failed to find the lost city had come across a strange mining town hidden in a valley. Having explored the site that Farini had claimed was a lost city, Dorrie and Lady Dexter then moved on with no particular place to go although there was promise of plenty of game for the sporting peer. The whole project had been a wash out from the archaeologists point of view and it was decided to return to Leopoldville and seek more information concerning this dead city that seemed more elusive than ever.

But, Morgan explained, the party saw the wisdom of Lady Dexter's suggestion of trekking to South West of the Bechuanaland Protectorate and making for Gobabis, where arrangements could be made for shipping the enormous amount of gear via Walvis Bay. This suited Lord Dorrimore as well as he was advised the route to Gobabis was abounding with wild game of all kinds.

Well, they had got to a point that lay a little north of Tsane, a place that was not characteristic of the general contours familiar to the Kalahari Desert, for this area was very hilly. The sandy waste had given way to hard scrub land which suited the tractor motors, and the party very quickly covered this attractive and pleasant distance

towards Gobabis. Then suddenly they had seen a collection of tiny huts down in a valley, with little dots of people moving about.

The party, at Dorrie's suggestion, had then driven down and made a few enquiries, for, Dorrie had spotted through his binoculars men with rifles.

But by the time they had twisted and turned to reach the bottom the place had suddenly become empty. Then two men in uniform put in an appearance from a hut. They said they were prospecting for gold under government licence, but Dorrie and Lady Dexter became very suspicious when a faint scream was heard coming from one of the sheds.

The two men who reminded Lord Dorrimore very much of German officers from their military bearing and very hard, brutal faces, were constantly on the alert, and passed the cry off as one coming from an animal. But the party were not satisfied. And when a couple of the archaeologists began to be interested in the rock formation they were told to get back and leave the camp.

So they returned to the heights above and made for Gobabis where it was Dorrie's intention to get fresh supplies and return to this mysterious region. It was agreed to say nothing in Gobabis in case the whole affair caused official intervention, and surprisingly enough Lady Dexter and her very learned party of professors and doctors wanted to take part and visit the spot again.

It was then that Dorrie had met Mr. Ridgeway, and both were very astonished coming across each other in this part of the world. Afterwards it was agreed that Ridgeway's house would be an excellent focal point for the purpose of replenishing the outfit. Outwardly they were going to explore the area east of the river Nasop for the lost city, actually Dr. Stafford's sister had given up any hope of finding Farini's nebulous city and this strange mining encampment had started a new interest.

The whole world now knows what happened to them when they made the return visit. They were all captured and placed many feet below. Morgan had managed to escape by killing one of the guards with a piece of rock; and after climbing to the top had made his way to Tsane. But Tsane was a place of the dead. It was deserted, and had no facilities for telephone or telegraph arrangements. Then Morgan had gone down with malaria and stayed in what once had been an hotel. Here the owner had returned shortly after and had grudgingly nursed him. When Nelson Lee came upon the scene the hotel proprietor little knew it was the beginning of the end, for this greasy half-caste had vanished when Lee brought Morgan down the stairs. This filthy room was quite unfit for a sick man, and Lee brought him back to us. When asked about the old native who had reached Mr. Ridgeway with a message from Lord Dorrimore, Morgan explained that when he broke away from the underground prison the old native had come with him. They had both come to Tsane but the man had not stayed, and Morgan had given him Dorrie's message to take to Gobabis. Morgan did not expect him to reach there, but it was the only chance he could take. The old man was promised so much that it spurred him to make the fantastic journey across the Kalahari. Two hundred miles of burning sand! Yet he made it, and for the record he recovered from that arduous journey and Dorrie made him a rich man, and even Umlosi, to whom honours like that bestowed on the old native by Dorrie were usually reserved for the giant Kutana chief, was in complete agreement.

Of how Nelson Lee took us to the encampment in the valley, and how we rescued Lord Dorrimore, Lady Dexter and her party, together with the entire native population of Tsane from that underground hell will be left to the chroniclers to describe. That an entire village of some five hundred men, women and children had been forcibly made to work the mines run by former Nazi officers of the German Army could happen made startling news. The Nazis, a dozen altogether, had long been thought to have died in

the ruins of Berlin. But they had escaped and set up an illegal gold mining industry in the remote areas of the Kalahari Desert.

Secrecy had later become imperative to the Germans, for a rich lode of gold had been found which necessitated a strict silence. The arrival of Lord Dorrimore on the scene had brought out the ruthless efficiency that had been practised before in Poland and other countries, and the Germans promptly captured the lot. And rather than chance being discovered the Nazis were going to finish the working of the mine after taking sufficient gold from it and seal it up by exploding the entrances.

But they had reckoned without Nelson Lee. For Lee had arrived in the nick of time and prevented a terrible tragedy. We were well supplied with explosives for Lee had obtained arms and dynamite at Walvis Bay. The bravery of the juniors as they entered that camp was indeed splendid, for on Lee's suggestion they had to advance while he made a detour to attack from the rear. The huge trucks came in very handy for they shielded us as we reversed them in the direction of the huts. It was a miracle none of us were killed, for firing broke out from the huts and the trucks were immediately stopped. Nipper, who had charge of one truck released the brakes and the great motor wagon began to descend towards the huts gaining speed with every second. And as it crashed into the flimsy wood several men ran out to face Nelson Lee's sten gun.

After that things moved swiftly. The rest of the Germans gave themselves up, for Handforth and Browne had managed to lob some sticks of dynamite on to the roof of the hut where they were firing.

Lord Dorrimore and all the others were brought up from their underground prison. When Dorrie saw Lee it was a moment I shall never forget. They just stood there looking into each other's eyes and then shook hands.

"I knew you would come." said Dorrie quietly.

Men, women and children filled the air with their talk. The reek of explosive was everywhere, and the thick, sandy dust clouded the sunlight. The eyes of the natives glowed with happiness as they looked at their saviours. The slaves had been released from their underground cells, and were free to return to their village.

But they had to be restrained from attacking their former masters. Captain Burton, Umlosi, Mr. Hudson and two other men of the Wanderer had great difficulty in keeping the natives from lynching the Germans on the spot. Then Lee got the ex-Nazis into a truck and lashed them together.

There is little left to tell. The German officers from Hitler's defunct army were all top ranking names that had long been sought by the Allied War Crimes Commission. The St. Frank's crowd had done the freedom loving world a magnificent service by capturing these men. The juniors and men did not go exactly unscathed. Yet they made light of their wounds. They were not serious, but they were lucky. Lucky, indeed. Desperate men armed with machine guns can create havoc, but it seemed the luck of the German thugs had deserted them at last.

The discovery of the gold was made known to the South African Government who expressed their gratitude by handsome rewards all round. The town of Tsane will benefit greatly.

And so we returned to St. Frank's, and to Bellton. It will be a very long time before I forget that attack on the German camp, and each time I picture the scene of the truck smashing into the wooden hut and the Germans running out, their guns blazing, each time I shiver, for had not Nelson Lee been there at the precise moment and held them up we would have been massacred. But they hesitated, and when they found, like their infamous fuhrer before them, that they were fighting on two fronts, they crumpled.

INTRODUCTION

School stories are the main standby of collectors, other old boys books of adventure are not very popular. There is a demand for detective yarns, but nothing comes up to school stories. It is a source of regret that the famous stories by Henty, Ballantyne, Gordon Stables and such writers are out of favour with collectors. Such periodicals as the "Boys Own Paper", "The Captain", "Chums" and their like are passed by without a thought when the better known papers like the "Magnet", "Gem", "Boys Friend" and their fellows are in reach. Many views have been put forward to account for this love of boys school stories. Whatever the reason it is certain there is something about a good school yarn which attracts the collector. We all know what particular books of our youth are now most in demand. The names are so well known, they all contain stories by one author whose genius for writing has kept alive the interest of the public for fifty years. Keeping the same characters and never letting them grow any older but keeping pace with the ever-changing years, varying the themes in countless ways, all the time writing with a light heartedness which never fails to appeal, this one author is even now giving his admiring public stories of these Peter Pan creatures of his. After fifty years he still holds sway. His favourite characters of a funny fat boy, the dandified schoolboy with the lisp, the scapegrace who reformed and yet never reformed, the form bully, the stern form-master with the heart of gold, all these have been imitated.

PENTELOW'S OTHER SCHOOLS

By W.H. BROSTER

So with all the prodigious amount of material this master writer of school stories turned out week by week, added to by the very considerable proportion published by his imitators, we find ourselves today with a fairly large market of these sort of school stories. Though the themes varied, they had to, on the whole the pattern followed each other. The age of the schoolboy characters never varied from the set standard of fourteen to sixteen years, never was it anything but Middle School. This never varied week by week, year after year. Also for some unknown reason it had to be a public school. One author did write one or two really refreshing series of school stories about the boys and girls of an ordinary county council school. We had schools on ships, a school in the Rocky Mountains of Canada, one in the Wild West; interesting variations no doubt but these had to have the inevitable fat boy, the scapegoat who reformed and the other too familiar types. Quite a change, but these schools did not last long. One famous author merged his very popular detective tales with school yarns and this idea became very popular and proved themselves by lasting for many years. But even this was the usual pattern of Fourth formers, Removeites, fat boys, reformed bad lads, dandified freaks and all the too familiar appliances.

How nice it was, with all this surfeit of similarity to suddenly happen on to a school story which was different, where the boys grew up in a natural way, where the masters were human beings and not just types; schools set in beautiful surroundings, Fags, middle school and seniors all doing the things you would expect them to do plus, of course, that little bit extra needed by the author to make up his story. You associate a yarn of that sort, one which is jolly interesting, full of adventure but

not far-fetched, with such writers as Talbot Baines Reed, Desmond Coke, Fletcher and Rhodes and you are sure to think first of all of the forerunner of them all, "Tom Brown's Schooldays". Stories rich with humour, schoolboy pranks, the sins and sorrows of the average boy, in some cases pathos but mostly all full of sport and adventure. Nothing too far-fetched in these yarns, just enough of that little bit of extra to make a good plot. Such stories were those written by that very versatile author John Nix Pentelow. Versatility was John Nix Pentelow's main asset. He could write a good adventure story, pirates, scouting, detective yarns, tales of Robin Hood and the Wild West, footer and cricket tales; well anything you liked. But I think he excelled with his school stories. One can fault him that he introduced too much sadness, he was wont to "kill" off a central character. Perhaps for this reason it has been argued that his tales were for the more adult youngster, that idea may be helped that he introduced a love interest most times. Nothing overdone but a trifle more than the average boy and girl friendship. I feel myself that he too could be criticised for bringing in too much fighting. Unsurpassed, however, were his descriptions of the cricket matches, the football games, the boat races and the athletic events which took place at these schools of his. All true to life and nothing left to the imagination. He made much of team spirit did Pentelow as he did the love of "Alma Mater". School against school, school against neighbouring villages, houses against house, dormitory against dormitory; these last for a cup or shield put up for competition. The "House Cup" or "Dormitory Cup" was a favourite theme of his and he was practically alone amongst authors for this. This brought in boys of different ages, from fags to prefects all taking part in the same team. Often and this is unusual too, we had the boys playing against the masters. Yes, Pentelow used his knowledge of sport to good purpose in his various school yarns. And, let it be said, he knew his subject be it cricket, footer, boxing or athletics. Who better than he for instance was qualified to talk of cricket or rather write of cricket.

But on to his schools and schoolboys. I have written elsewhere of his two most famous schools - Haygarth and Wycliffe. So now lets have a look at some of his other schools.

WELSTEAD

This was a school which through the slackness of its headmaster had gone down. A school with ancient traditions and which had produced great men but unlike Haygarth was unlucky in having a weak type of man as Head. The story tells us of the arrival at Welstead of Paul Delaware. Now Pentelow went one better than any of his rival authors in this yarn. These other writers bring into their stories boys from overseas, of different colours, different races. Pentelow himself as a substitute for one of them introduced quite a few Colonials and such. But this time - I do not recollect a similar happening, he brought in a Red Indian boy. Well anyway he was half Indian - if his father was an English emigrant his mother was an Iroquois princess. Paul Delaware was a Delaware though we are subsequently told that his father was rightly named Ware and for obvious reasons adopted the name of Delaware. We read of this boy of fifteen who looked much older being pitchforked - strange thing this for a school story - into the Sixth Form. His first friend was an old pugalist turned cab-driver "Honest Chawley" Arbor who taught him how to use his fists in the approved English manner and how well it helped him in his struggle against the worst set at Welstead. His pluck and steadfastness won for him the friendship of that strange but sterling character George Erasmus Baythorne, he of the terrible fists and the sarcastic tongue. A friend hard to win but when won, who never failed him. Nina James, daughter of the Headmaster soon became his friend (perhaps more later) and so did that misunderstood man Mr. Moss the second master. In time others rallied to Delaware's side, he became Captain of Welstead and helped to revive the footer team, made Welstead a great

cricketing school once again.

The plot of the story is how his main enemy James Chivers is secretly his cousin and a contender for the favour and fortune of their grandfather, old General Ware. The plottings of Chivers and his henchman Leah - what an utter rotter this last one was - and the friendship of Baythorne and Nina are interposed with the winning of some who sided with Chivers at the start - principally Lowdell and Stanhope, who died in the end. This yarn of Welstead, a great public school near Ancester in the South of England and one of the more serious writings of Pentelow, it is not conspicuous for its light moments, goes on to tell us of how old General Ware found his long-lost grandson; how the Headmaster was saved from financial ruin by Paul and his friends; how in the end Chivers repented and found his true level. Yes, a more serious tale than usual but realistic in everyway. Perhaps the best part of the entire Welstead saga is the celebration (at Wycliffe) after the historic match with that famous school. The scene in the great Hall of Wycliffe. Well perhaps we could not do better than give it in Pentelow's own words -

"Meanwhile in the dining-hall at the School House, hot tea ran down thirsty throats, and the Wycliffe fellows vied with one another in keeping the plates of their visitors replenished.

There was not much time to spare, but it was impossible to leave without some acknowledgement of the hospitality they had received. Morton said that speechifying wasn't in his line: Lowdell grunted when asked to get up and speak: Paul suggested that Baythorne could do it better than he and so, as everyone had expected from the first, it was Baythorne who rose. A moment before talk had been going on all around. Now silence fell.

Baythorne's clear well modulated voice broke it. He made no attempt at eloquence; but his words were hearty and to the point.

"Gentlemen of Wycliffe" he said "my comrades and I feel that we can't leave without some expression of the pleasure that this visit has given us all. We were royally welcomed, we have been royally entertained and - we haven't been beaten. I ought not perhaps to set the last fact alongside the other two because I am quite sure that a part of the hospitality intended for us was a good thrashing. This is not a time for toasts but if it were I should drink to Wycliffe, coupling with the toasts the names of Wycliffe's honoured Head, of Mr. Harris, captain of the school and of Mr. Merry, captain of the footer eleven."

He sat down amid the applause of his comrades.

Then Mr. Whiteman the Head of Wycliffe spoke a few genial words saying he was glad to have witnessed the inauguration of matches between the two schools and that they would long continue.

After Merry major had said a few words everybody looked at Harris.

He rose, squared his great shoulders and spoke.

"Merry major says he's no orator. I don't know. Put him alongside me an' I guess he's a regular Semosthenes. But it's up to me to say a few words and I suppose I've got to. So here goes. Jolly good fellows, jolly good game, jolly good result - though there's another I'd have liked better. Here's the best of good fortune to Welstead and to Delaware, her captain."

That let Paul in.

"There isn't much for me to say - after Baythorne. But I heartily endorse all he has said and I should like to add, on my own behalf, that I shall never forget my first visit to Wycliffe. A year ago I had never set foot on English soil and I suppose no one would have called me anything but an American. But my father was English and I have liked to think myself so, and Welstead has made me an Englishman as

Wycliffe would have done if it had been my good fortune to have come here. For that's the great thing about our public schools - so my father told me - they make Englishmen. Eton or Harrow, Marlborough or Malvern, Wycliffe or Welstead - they all have that, at least in common they make Englishmen."

They cheered him to the echo, Wycliffe and Welstead alike joining in the din. Harris came round to pat him on the back, Lowdell growled with pleasure. Baythorne said "Well done, Paul."

But perhaps it was to Morton that the words went home most for when Welstead was at its worst Morton had always kept alive a spark of the public school spirit.

These were Pentelow's words and give some illustration of his idea of a public school. That ends for now the story of Paul Delaware and Welstead School. A pity for we should have liked to have heard more of Welstead and how it maintained its place alongside the other great public schools which Delaware quoted in his speech, after the historic match at Wycliffe.

FRANKLINGHAM

John Nix Pentelow as Jack North wrote in some length of Wycliffe, Haygarth and Welstead, but it was under the pen name of Richard Randolph that he wrote more well known yarns of two other schools, Franklingham and Thirlestane. The tale of Johnny Goggs at Franklingham School is a direct contrast to the more serious epic of Welstead. Here you have an abundance of lighthearted schoolboy fun and as they say, never a dull moment. The school of Franklingham is one and a half miles from the village of that name. On the map you will find it very near the towns of Earlisham and Howlisham. There are five houses at Franklingham. Grayston's, Hayters, Waymarks, Bultritruedes and the Head's House. To Grayston's went Johnny Goggs on his arrival at Franklingham. John Goggs was a boy of fifteen with unusual gifts and certainly far from the usual in looks. To say he was freakish looking would not be at all exaggerating, but behind those big spectacles of his were in the words of his creator "the bluest eyes any boy ever had". And certainly an intellect far in advance of his years. Yes, Johnny was an inveterate "spoofer". "Spoof" was a favourite diversion of schoolboys of his day and age. They nicknamed him "Goggles". Let it stand that his comical name suggested that because those big glasses of his were no small part of his "spoofer". Eyes as keen and observant as his did not need any aid. Lanky and thin in appearance, his frame too belied the wiry strength and agility he displayed on the sports field and running track. "Spoof", yes he spoofed them all along the line. He talked like a college professor; people wondered when meeting him first if he was quite normal. His conduct seemed to be on a pattern set by his "dear grandmother". That "dear old lady" popped up all the while. Just more of his "spoofer". "She" was in reality a very prominent private detective and certainly not old or ladylike come to that. On the day Goggs arrived at Franklingham many strange events occurred. Animals appeared to talk, people said things (or appeared to say) which caused much diversion and all the time it was Goggs who was a very clever ventriloquist.

Franklingham was reached by the Southern railway and it was at the railway station and on the journey from there to the school that the first funny episodes occurred. Amongst others it was here that Goggs first met his chums to be, those widely different characters, the three from Grayson's House, Blount, Tricketts and Waters. Nicknames are characteristic of schoolboys and this school of Franklingham was a bit more than fond of using nicknames. These three had theirs "Bagshaw", "Tricks" and "Wagtail". Through the first story of Johnny Goggs runs the theme of the enmity of Cardenden for his cousin the school Captain, Harry Granville. How Goggs got mixed up in all this, how his "grandmother" was able to prove that this Cardenden was a "bad egg", this was the serious part of the yarn. But amongst all this, the drama and

the amusing antics of Goggs we are treated to realistic football matches, not where one form plays another only but where one house against another, when the teams contain seniors and juniors. Goggs turns out to be a first rate centreforward, not what you would expect from his looks but anyway good enough for Graysons House.

The sports day at Franklingham was a great occasion and apart from the athletic events and the author of these series of stories of Johnny Goggs gave us many different kinds of events, more than you get by large from the usual school story, most of the dramatic incidents happened. On this especial day Johnny's "dear grandmother" came along with all the other guardians, parents - mothers and fathers with the usual complement of pretty sisters to bring in a little of feminine interest. You have everything in this yarn of Johnny Goggs and Franklingham School. Sport, schoolboy fun, intrigue and plotting and quite a different sort of detective work from the usual. Yes, quite a bit different from the usual school story. Again as in "Jack North's" yarns you have masters who are more than just masters, men of wide understanding and who are not adverse to turning out in a match against their pupils. You have a school captain who is not automatically captain of football. You have form prefects to each house and in some cases not even Sixth Formers. You read of a "Games Secretary". Quite a change that. Prefects meetings when the only punishment, to call corporal punishment, is meted out. In fact the "cane" is hardly mentioned in this unique yarn. Everything else is there, everything needed to make a school tale which sounds normal and life like. Johnny Goggs is a fine type of English schoolboy apart from his apparent eccentric ways and unusual looks. Anyway who wants the heroes always one of the curly haired "handsome" type, shining examples of virtue but apt to go off the other way in their bad moments. "The Fourth Form at Franklingham" with Johnny Goggs in the leading role was one of Richard Randolph's finest school yarns and it had a sequel "Goggs Grammarian". In this Johnny Goggs transferred himself to Rylcombe Grammar School. Old favourites in Gordon Gay, the two Wooton brothers, Frank Monk and Carboy, not to mention the French boy Mont Blanc, all came into this fine yarn. All the characteristics of Goggs were given full vent in this worthy sequel to the Franklingham yarn and more was revealed of the fine grammar school and its inmates, once the feature of a very old boys magazine now almost forgotten. The same author was not responsible for these early Rylcombe stories but the creator of Goggs knew all about it as the story "Goggs Grammarian" proves.

Johnny Goggs of Franklingham school - if his creator had lived long enough we might have read more about him. As an afterthought, one remarkable thing about this main Franklingham yarn and I fancy I am right in saying the others I have mentioned also, is that there is not a funny fat boy in the story at all.

THIRLESTANE

Versatility was John Nix Pentelow's strong point and the stories he wrote under the pen name of "Richard Randolph" were examples of that versatility. Stories of film stars are not very often dove-tailed in with those of schoolboys but in his famous "Ferrars of the Sixth" Richard Randolph wove a very intricate pattern of a Sixth Form boy who became a film star while still at school. The school was Thirlestane. Like Welstead and Haygarth, Thirlestane was very near Wycliffe and almost as wellknown as a nursery of famous politicians, great soldiers and even greater athletes. John Alston Ferrars was a name which will be ever on the "Roll of Honour" at Thirlestane School. Great film star and even greater cricketer - Ferrars of Worcestershire and England - great batsman and even greater fast bowler - the records will show how many times he turned out for England. Not so well known as a footballer though he was the Corinthian centreforward after his school days were over. The story of Jack Ferrars and his struggle against Weldon Barcherd and his set at Thirlestane brings in the usual intrigue

we expect from Pentelow. How Ferrars' father was ruined by Barcherd's rascally half brother Jasper Walkreth and committed suicide. How Ferrars to help support himself at Thirlestane took on film work. Great characters like Charles Crocker Houlston; "Colorado Charley" the Cowboy; John Gordon; William Warke were only a few we meet in the members of this film company Ferrars worked with. The usual "black sheep" we can expect to find in any great organization like this film company worked against our hero, worked in harness with his enemies at the school. The story tells of how Ferrars came out on top in the end though many were the near escapes he had to death and ruination. We have our fill of cricket, football, boxing, athletics, plenty of school-boy fun and frolics. Plenty of thrills and adventures. As in his other yarns, Pentelow introduces some fine examples of schoolmasters; his schoolboys are the usual life-like sort we expect from him. Seniors and juniors all mixing together, come sport come war. The feminine interest is a trifle more than the "boy and girl friendships" of the "Jack North" yarns. That is why I say this saga of Jack Ferrars was more for the adult reader than the very young. We find interest in the love affair of Jack Ferrars and young Vera Gordon and are saddened somewhat by the un-retuned love of "Colorado Charley" for Nina, Jack Ferrars' sister. Sentiment is more developed in this yarn than others and a certain pathos is brought in in the death of Gawaine Grant-Smith. A fine character Grant-Smith. Against Ferrars primarily but in the end he did Ferrars a good turn. In fact Jack had to thank him for a considerable rise in wealth in the later stages. The deaths of Leeman and Lewin were an inevitable part of the story so was the demise of Jasper Walkreth but Weldon Barcherd escapes and the story ends leaving us wondering if he will ever cross the path of Ferrars again. Well, he did as we read in another story of Richard Randolph's. To wit, the story of the 1921 Australia test visit to England - the adventures of "Young Yardley". Yardley was a Thirlestane boy but it is to be said that he was never mentioned in "Ferrars of the Sixth". Perhaps we shall tell of the remarkable experiences of Gilbert Yardley another time. There is the story of Jack Ferrars of Thirlestane school, we cannot find space for much to say about those other fine fellows - Brooke the school Captain (Ferrars was only sports Captain); Patrick Flannigan, that sterling Irishman; the three inseparable chums of the Fourth - Jimmy Wynward, "Jammy Chivers" and Musgrave; Conrad Wales, true to his chum Grant-Smith to the very end. Just another school of Pentelow's and what a story. A story of life at school, a good glimpse into the ever interesting world of film-making, in this case the old silent films, a story bringing in many outside characters apart from those at the school. The school held an enormous galaxy of human characters. The Head, the Reverend Philip Warrender - The three Housemasters, Pater, Weston and Kennarth; great men in more ways than one. The story of John Alston Ferrars had everything a great author could give it. Its only fault, like the others, it finished too soon.

WINDLESTHORPE

In search of lost treasure. How often has that been the theme of an adventure yarn. But mix it with school life, cricket and you have a decided change from the usual run of school stories. Secret underground passages which open by way of hidden panels in a Lower Fifth Form study. Two schoolboys on the quest of the monk's treasure. No wonder Gawlor, the bully of the Upper Fifth wanted this particular study in the Lower Fifth passage. It was quite a coincidence that Quentin Quinthred the other seeker after hidden wealth was allotted or rather claimed this room. Quinthred had been sent to Windlesthorne School by the man who he thought was his father to track down this treasure trove. So had Gawlor been sent by his cousin on the same errand, but the difference lay in the fact that Quinthred hated the job while anything underhand was just in Gawlor's line. The startling adventures and hairbreadth escapes which befell the hero of this tale of Windlesthorne School in the mysterious under-

ground passage which had its other exit on the moor near the school, are only a part of the story. How he fought against the prejudices of his school mates who suspected him of foul play against the popular captain of Windlesthorne, Highbrow is another part. The loyalty of his particular chum "Hurricane" Gale never falters whatever the evidence against Quintred. Firm friends of the two are the other two inmates of their dormitory Bill Brown and Hollis-Brown. Quintred has friends outside the school and useful friends they prove too. Caesar Jenkins the county cricketer; his servant John Williams; that queer Irishman Denis O'Hagan who knew where the treasure chamber was. Well, no one gets the treasure because it has been recovered years before by no less than the lord of the manor. In other words, Highbrow the captain of Windlesthorne. That was the surprise for us in the last chapter of this unusual school yarn "Quintred's Quest" by Harry Huntingdon? Just another pen-name for John Nix Pentelow. You can guess from that we have our fill of cricket, plenty of "scrapping", some good pen portraits of masters and scholars. Mr. Flamank the house master was a different type from what we expect of a master but one with a heart of gold. Some of the boys too are interesting studies and intriguing too is the nicknames they have. Schoolboys have a liking for nicknames and Pentelow makes good use of that liking. Windlesthorne was a great public school; its colours of green, gold and silver had been worn by many well-known personalities; it had produced many great athletes and in Highbrow, Quintred, Gale, Hollis-Brown and Brown Secundus to mention only a few had good material in her two Houses, Old and New as they were called, to keep up that tradition. Another great school and one more great yarn by Pentelow.

HARDEN

"The Troublesome Twins" by Jack North is described as a "very laughable school tale". It has its dramatic moments but generally this is one of the lightest of Pentelow's school yarns. The title gives some indication of the theme of the story. Twins, that is identical twins, and doubles have been a popular standby for authors. The periodicals we are most familiar with have featured many instances of twins and doubles, their subsequent complications have made many an intriguing story. Maybe we could say the idea has worn a trifle threadbare and excuse could be found for Pentelow to try to do full justice to the theme now and again. Perhaps he is best known for his effort in this direction which we know as the "Twins from Tasmania" by "Richard Randolph". A story of Highcliffe and Cliff House with a good slice of Greyfriars to give good measure. Not dealing with that story as they were not Pentelow Schools, we pass on to Haygarth. Here many spicy plots were woven round the likeness of Jimmy Markworth and Claude Ferringe. You have to read the saga of Haygarth to appreciate all the implications of that likeness. They were not related which made the similarity in features so remarkable. Haygarth School has been dealt with so on to another great public school of Pentelow's - Harden. Maybe not so well-known as some of the others but still a top ranker as public schools go. Indeed, its Headmaster, Dr. Marston was without a peer as Headmasters. Maybe only Dr. Anderson of Wycliffe and the Rev. Arthur Dalton of Haygarth were his equals.

The school was situated in the village of Harden and very near to the towns of Deveney, Ampleton and Wavenhoe. There were three Houses at Hardew, Wrightsons, Lakes and Olivers, from which we get the names of "Wrong 'uns" - "Fish" and "Ironsides" by which epithets the various inmates of these houses styled themselves. Two prefects to each House was the rule at Harden and the competition was very keen for the honour. Coverdale was the school Captain and his fellow prefect in Wrightsons was Francis Mandrell. The enmity of Mandrell and Clowten, the rotter of the Harden Sixth is a feature of this yarn. Indeed this hatred was hereditary for their fathers once very firm friends were at loggerheads and the story has its sad note at the finish when

these two men died under dramatic circumstances. Bill Barcoe was not a prefect but still a very good friend of Mandrell's and Coverdale's. Apart from these few seniors, the upper school of Harden takes second place in the tale of the "Troublesome Twins". Jim and Joe Telford are Lower Fourth boys and to say they were mischievous is an understatement. Both great sportsmen, they soon made themselves felt and found kindred spirits in Featherstone, Fowle, Waller, Thompson, Kenny and Harrison minor. Much fun is caused by the number of times the twins are mistaken for one another. This also causes consternation of another kind. Anyway, you have to read the story to find out all that happens. But the "Troublesome Twins" by Jack North is a little bit different from most school yarns and I think that it is unique in the fact that the school has a secret society and as the qualification for membership is that you must be a son or grandson of a former Harden boy, it is conclusive that it has its members in Lower, Middle and Senior School. The "Hereditaries" it was called and held its meetings in true ceremonial costume and rites in the big gym. The captain of the school was of course, High Hereditary. Quite a novel turn this and though it had its serious note, much fun also. Truly, a "very laughable school yarn" this story of the twins who came to Harden from Davenby Grammar School.

Where to read the stories:-

B.F.L. No. 562	"Captain of Welstead"	}	WELSTEAD
B.F.L. No. 141	"The School Conspiracy"		
B.F.L. No. 393	"Fourth Form at Franklingham"		
B.F.L. No. 639	"Ferrars of the Sixth"	}	THIRLESTANE
B.F.L. No. 640	"Ferrars of the Films"		
B.F.L. No. 510	"Quinthred's Quest"		WINDLESTHORPE
B.F.L. No. 430	"Troublesome Twins"		HARDEN

Answers to Rookwood picture quiz

- No. 1. Teddy "Putty" Grace
- No. 2. Jimmy Silver
- No. 3. Segt. Ben Kettle
- No. 4. Cecil Talboys
- No. 5. Harold Topham
- No. 6. Laurence Neville
- No. 7. Mr. Harold Bull, B.A. Maths Master
- No. 8. Tommy Cook
- No. 9. Dr. Henry Chisholm, D.D., M.A.
(The Chisholm Trail) famous Western trail



skinner, snoop and stott

By GERALD ALLISON

* * * * *

Amongst the many hundreds of characters of all kinds created by Charles Hamilton, none are more remarkable than his slackers, or cads, or rotters. Their variety is almost unbelievable, and quite amazing. A complete series of talks could be given upon them. Every school had its members of the dingy fraternity, and no two are quite alike, whilst there are others who are poles apart.

Compare, say, a dandified slacker like Adolphus Smythe of Rookwood, with a rogue such as Kern Gunten of Cedar Creek. Or the villainy of Cecil Ponsonby of Highcliffe with that of Cutts of St. Jim's? Both real desperate characters, evil to the core, but entirely different.

Or again, contrast Cardew with Vernon-Smith. They have both a mixture of good and bad in their make up, but what completely different fellows they are. How interesting it would be to have them both in the same story, and see how they would re-act upon each other.

That of course is the genius of Hamilton - all his characters are alive, and develop all the time.

However, whilst it would be interesting to pursue this general review further; at present I wish to confine myself to considering three of the best known of all the many shady characters created by Frank Richards viz:- Skinner, Snoop and Stott of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, a trio who, much more justly than Tom Merry & Co. deserve the title "The Terrible Three".

How real to me, and I am sure to you all, are Skinner & Co. And how dull the Remove would be without them! Come for a walk with me during morning break. We will cross the Quad in the direction of the Big Gates. To our left is Gosling's lodge, with old Gossy on duty to see no one slips out into the sunny road which leads to Friardale. We pass Gossy and tell him how young he looks for 96, and then make as if handing for the tuckshop. Before reaching that famous establishment, ably presided over by Mrs. Jessie Mumble however, we cut through a gap in the privet hedge, behind which is the famous woodshed. The door is locked but never mind - we will turn the next corner and peep behind into the little recess where Gossy keeps his wheel-barrow, and other precious objects. There is a murmur of voices, which suddenly ceases as our footsteps are heard. We turn the corner, and, yes! Here they are! The three we have been looking for. Harold Skinner, Sidney James Snoop, and William Frederick Stott. All three have their right hands hidden behind them, but when they see that it is not a master or prefect who has come upon them, they resume the cigarettes they were smoking, and ask us what the dickens we want. At least Skinner does. Snoop has not quite got over his scare, and Stott rarely speaks at all. A stolid lad Stott.

The details given in Magnet 1659 about the three occupants of Study No. 11 will perhaps be appropriate here, now that we have them in front of us as it were.

Harold Skinner	Age 15y. 6m.	Height 5' 4½"	Weight 7st. 3lbs.
S.J. Snoop	15y. 5m.	5' 3"	7st. 13lbs.
W. Stott	15y. 7m.	5' 4½"	8st. 4lbs.

So the order in which they are usually referred to, whilst being correctly alphabetical, is the reverse of their weight. The weedy Skinner is the lightest at 7st. 3lbs. and the silent Stott the heaviest at 8st. 4lbs.

All three have been at Greyfriars since the early days, Skinner being mentioned for the first time in Magnet No. 1. Stott is stated by Bill Gander to have arrived in No. 35; J.B.B. in 47, whilst Snoop appeared on the scene in No. 47 - (both Mr. Gander and Mr. Bentley agree here). The years have added little to their attractiveness, although they have changed a little. However let us now consider them separately, and see what we can make of them.

First, therefore, I call Harold Skinner into the witness box; and, reluctantly, the pale youth, with narrow chest, a spotty face, and with his thin lips pressed tightly together, steps up. He looks at us out of his sharp eyes, and there is a sneer upon his countenance. Not a very attractive character apparently, but we shall see if we can find anything in his favour as we go on.

Skinner is known as the Cad of the Remove, and I am afraid it cannot be denied that the title is well bestowed. He has never been known to do a generous action; and is something of a coward, a snob, and definitely a smoky rotter - that most opprobrious of characters. He has played an important part in the Greyfriars story especially when one of the scholarship boys, such as Penfold, Redwing, or Linley arrived. Skinner was inevitably down on such interlopers. Why this should be so is not easy to see, as his own father is in business. On the occasion when Skinner was expelled and was away for 18 months, he had to go to work in his father's office at Wapford.

At first however, Skinner must have shown some promise as a cricketer. In a very early Magnet he was actually selected by Harry Wharton to play for the Remove in a very hard match against St. Jim's. The team was certainly an odd one, and consisted of the following - Wharton, Cherry, Nugent, Hurree Singh, Desmond, Ogilvy, Morgan, Hazeldene, Skinner, Linley and Bulstrode.

The game resulted in a tie, and we are not told how many runs Skinner scored.

Since then, however, Harold's bad habits have taken a firm hold of him, and he would never be chosen to represent the Remove nowadays, unless it was at billiards.

Despite everything which can be said against Skinner however - and that is a lot - he is always interesting to read about, principally because of his sense of humour. This, to a limited extent, redeems him in my eyes. A sense of humour is such a saving grace.

Of course, Skinner's humour is mostly unkind, and of a sardonic and satiric nature. His usual target is Harry Wharton, and time after time he gets Harry on the raw and causes him to lose his temper. Here is a typical example from an early Magnet (446).

The Captain of the Greyfriars Remove had just come in from the cricket field. He had his bat under his arm, and his face was ruddy and good-humoured.

A number of juniors were gathered before the notice-board in the hall. They were evidently in a state of great merriment.

Here he comes!

Ha! Ha! Ha!

Shut up you chaps!

Rot! Ha! Ha! Ha!

Skinner was chuckling, Snoop was cackling, a dozen other fellows were grinning as if over a particularly good joke. Billy Bunter, the fattest junior in the Remove seemed in danger of apoplexy.

Wharton looked at the juniors and they looked at him. Some of the fellows left off laughing, but not Skinner & Co. Some of them looked sheepish as Wharton came up but Skinner & Co. did not look sheepish. They cackled more loudly than ever. Frank Nugent, who was in the crowd turned a little red. He had been grinning like the rest.

"Hallo! What's the joke?" asked Wharton.

It was pretty obvious the laughter was connected with himself - that he was in point of fact - the joke.

The good humoured expression faded from Wharton's face. He did not enjoy being laughed at.

"Nothing!" said Nugent hastily. "There's nothing to cackle at. Tea's ready in the study, Harry."

"No hurry" Wharton said quietly. "If there's such a ripping joke on I may as well share it. What is it Skinner?"

"Oh nothing!" said Skinner airily.

Wharton did not heed. He pushed his way through the crowd of juniors to the notice-board. Then he saw what had excited the merriment of the Removites.

There was a sheet of paper pinned in the board among the school notices. But it was not a notice. It was a caricature. Wharton's brow darkened as he looked at it. It was evidently meant to represent himself, and there was no doubt that it came from Skinner's skilled hand.

It was a pen and ink sketch of Wharton, and the amateur artist had hit off the likeness very cleverly.

But, while retaining the likeness to Wharton's handsome features, he had imbued the countenance with an expression of lofty pride and disdain. The lip was curling, the nose was elevated, and the whole expression was that of a person who did not consider the earth quite good enough for him to walk on. The figure, very cleverly drawn, represented the junior strutting amid a crowd of fellows who were bowing down till their foreheads touched the ground. Under the picture was scrawled

MR. MAGNIFICENT WHARTON

Wharton did not laugh.

His eyes gleamed as he looked at the caricature, and the juniors, noting the gathering signs of wrath, grinned the more. It was immensely amusing, especially to Skinner & Co, to get Wharton's rag out. Wharton was not easy to draw as a rule. But he had been drawn quite easily this time. He looked round with glinting eyes at the grinning circle.

"So that's meant for me?" he said quietly.

"He! He! He! cackled Bunter. "Isn't it a good likeness?"

"Oh wad some power the giftie gie us.

To see ourselfs as others see us" quoted Ogilvy and there was a fresh roar.

Wharton looked directly at the Scottish junior.

"So that's what you think of me, Ogilvy?"

"Well - not exactly," grinned Ogilvy. "But there's a likeness you know. Anyway, it is funny!"

"A really good likeness, roared Bolsover major, and it's dashed funny!"

"I don't call it funny!"

"You wouldn't! Ha ha ha!"

I think it's rather caddish" said Wharton, "and I think the fellow who did it is a rotten cad".

"Thanks!" yawned Skinner.

"So it was you?"

"I felt called upon to pay my tribute to the Great One and Only," explained Skinner humourously, while the juniors chuckled. "I hope you don't see anything to be offended at, Wharton. I did my very best to catch the likeness. These chaps seem to think it's a good portrait. But if you can suggest any improvements I'm willing to make any alterations."

"Ha! ha, ha!"

"If you don't think the nose turns up enough," - suggested Skinner, "or perhaps" he added thoughtfully, "I should have put a halo around the noble brow! of course. I oughtn't to have left that out. Lend me a pencil, Browney, and I'll put in a halo."

The juniors yelled as Skinner stepped up to the board, and began to pencil in a halo. Nugent grinned; he couldn't help it. If Wharton had taken the absurd joke in good part it would have fallen flat. But the anger in his face was the cream of the joke. Skinner & Co. congratulated themselves on having 'drawn blood' as it were.

"Come up to the study, Harry" said Nugent, a little alarmed by his chum's black brow.

"Oh, don't be in a hurry!" said Wharton sarcastically. "You haven't enjoyed your laugh out yet, Nugent. I don't want to spoil your fun!"

Nugent's face changed.

"Don't be an ass Harry" he said sharply. "The thing's ridiculous - but it's funny. I suppose you can take a joke like the rest of us."

"A joke about the Magnificent One is practically sacrilege" chuckled Snoop.

"Ha! ha! ha!"

"There!" said Skinner, stepping back to survey his improvement. "The halo improves it. Thanks for the suggestion, Wharton! Any more you can think of?"

Wharton did not reply, but with a flushed face he reached up to tear the offending paper from the board.

Skinner started forward.

"Let that alone. It's my property."

Wharton did not heed, but tore the paper down. Skinner caught his arm.

"Give it to me."

"I'll give you something else, you cheeky cad!" exclaimed Wharton, his temper breaking out. "Take that".

'That' was a drive with his right, and it caught Skinner on his pointed nose. Skinner crashed backwards on to the floor, and a red stream ran down over his mouth. In his anger Wharton had hit really hard, and Skinner was hurt. The athletic captain of the Remove would never have used his strength against the weedy, unfit Skinner if he had been cool.

There was a murmur from the crowd of juniors. They were not laughing now.

"Shame!" hooted Snoop.

Wharton turned fiercely round, and Snoop backed behind Bolsover Major."

Well that little scene illustrates most of the salient points in Skinner's character. His skill at enraging Wharton and putting him in the wrong. His mordant humour really clever, although malicious. His weedy slackness which makes him unfit to defend himself. I could give hundreds of such instances, and they would all be interesting, but time forbids. You will have a good notion of the kind of youth Harold Skinner is now, so I will pass along to his friend Sydney James Snoop.

Snoop was No. 30 of the famous Greyfriars Gallery written by J.N. Pentelow when he edited the Magnet. This is how he begins.

"Let us say first what good can be said of Snoop. _____

It only took one line you see. What? The line is blank, you say? Oh, yes!!

But that is only because there was nothing to go into it!

On the other hand ----- But, well! - would it be worth while to give up the rest of our pages in order to chronicle all of Snoop's iniquities?

There is nothing at all dashing or attractive about them. Skinner is a sordid enough figure, but there are times when Skinner would simply shine out by the side of Snoop. He has done things worse, maybe - than Snoop ever did; there is little good in him, but there is more than in SNOOP!

Skinner is mean enough, cowardly enough; but SNOOP is meaner than he, and far more craven.

To Skinner has sometimes, though but rarely, come a gleam of better things. For a few moments, if only for a few - he has felt a glow of gratitude, or shame; has taken courage; has shown himself not wholly vile.

That gleam has never fallen upon SNOOP!

In some fellows there is a yellow streak. Skinner's is a wide yellow streak. Stott's somewhat narrower. Fish has one, also Bunter - pretty wide too in both cases. It is in Hazeldene.

SNOOP is dyed yellow. There is not an inch of him outside the streak! Y-----"

Well, how do you like that? Pretty strong eh? And it gets stronger as it goes on. Here are a few more extracts.

"If Snoop were bolder he might do more harm than he does, but he would be a less repulsive object.

The snake is the reptile one thinks of in connection with Snoop, but that is hardly fair to the snake.

Could Skinner and Stott depend upon Snoop in an emergency? They had better depend on any fellow they regard as an enemy. Snoop never fights. He would run from Bunter or Fish. More than that it would be hard to say!"

That, in part, is what the Editor of the Magnet thought of Snoop!

I am rather of the opinion that he laid it on a bit too strong. And perhaps the author thought so too. It was about the time that J.N. Pentelow wrote "A Very Gallant Gentleman" and the feud between the two must have been very much alive.

At all events shortly afterwards a number of Magnets appeared - all written by Frank Richards himself, which put Snoop in a much better light. The first of these was No. 537 "His Father's Son" in which Snoop's father - who was a soldier - was supposed to have deserted, after being wounded on The Somme. A Scotland Yard Officer calls at Greyfriars, and Snoop is interviewed in Dr. Locke's study. Here are two sentences from that scene.

'Snoop, nervous and irresolute as he was, was not selfish and cowardly all through. Unconsciously, the junior stood more erect than usual, and his eyes met the Head's glance with unusual steadiness. It was borne in upon Snoop's mind that he was the son of a soldier, and that he was called upon not to disgrace his father's uniform.'

Eventually Snoop's father is cleared, and an act of great heroism receives the King's Pardon. He returns to France to fight once more as a Soldier of the King, and Snoop of the Remove held his head higher than of old.

M.563. Later the same year Snoop is again the star-part. This time Aubrey Angel and Kenney of the Upper IVth take up Skinner and Stott. The wealthy Aubrey sneers at Snoop as a pauper and son of a deserter. The four are playing banker in

Angel's study and Stott speaks up for the absent Snoop.

"Oh, Snoop ain't a bad sort in his way" said Stott tolerantly. "I'd let him alone if I were you, Angel. He's got a nasty temper.

Angel laughed contemptuously.

But his cruel sneers at last rouse Snoop to fury, and for the sake of his soldier father he summons up enough pluck to challenge Angel to a fight - and Angel is much bigger and a year older than Sydney James. The story is a rather surprising one, but here are the last two paragraphs.

Snoop was almost at the end of his tether, but he held his head up as he left Angel's study. In the passage the Famous Five seized him, and hoisted him shoulder-high to carry him home to the Remove quarters.

Sydney James Snoop looked very tired and rather damaged that evening, but he was very happy. He had succeeded in getting the better of his own weakness, and had proved himself his father's son.

And in Magnet 578 "Standing by Snoop" we find that once again Snoop proves that he is not without better instincts. This story involves Loder and Wally Bunter.

So I think we can say, that there is a bit of good in Snoop - as some rhymster says -

There is so much good in the worst of us
And so much bad in the best of us
It ill behoves any of us
To speak ill of the rest of us.

In later years Snoop hardly maintained the high standard he managed to attain during the days of the First World War when he was so proud of his father - The Man on the Somme. His promise of becoming a decent character was not fulfilled - but I for one am not sorry. What poor fish Charles Hamilton's rotters become when they reform. Think of Levison, Lumley Lumley, Talbot, and even Bulstrode and Bolsover Major. How dreary it would have been if the Terrible Three in study 11 had become as colourless as, say, Treluce, Trevor, and Smith Minor!

The third member of study No. 11 is William Stott. He is a rather silent youth, taciturn and dull. His conversation resembles that of Dabney of the Upper Fourth or Vavasour of Highcliffe. You will remember that the former says little more than "Oh, rather!" whenever Cecil Reginald Temple speaks, and of course 'Vav' only says one word - "Absolutely!"

Breeze Bentley has this to say of Stott in his review of the Remove Form.

"He is a dull, unthinking fellow, who would rather follow another's lead. Marjorie Hazeldene once referred to him as 'that stupid boy Stott'.

He is however not quite so blackly tarred as his study-mates, for on rare occasions Skinner's villainy has been too much for Stott, and he has stood out from it."

Harry Wharton has now and then tried to bring William Stott away from Skinner's influence. One of the most interesting of these occasions was when Wharton himself was rebelling against authority, and playing the giddy goat. I would like to read chapter 10 of Magnet 884. The title of the story is "SLACKER & CAPTAIN", and it tells how Wharton - at odds with his friends, plays upon the trusting nature of Lord Maul-everer, and selects a footer team to play against Rookwood. Mauly has been elected Captain of the Remove, and Wharton unscrupulously picks the eleven - the best team possible, after he has dropped the other members of The Famous Five and anyone else who criticises him. This is the chapter which is entitled "The Voice of Jacob".

"Polonius behind the giddy arras!" growled Skinner.

Skinner was referring to the late Captain of the Remove. Snoop and Stott nodded assent. Literary allusions, as a rule, were quite lost on Snoop and Stott; but "Hamlet" had been 'done' that week in the English class, and so they knew who Polonius was.

"The hands are the hands of Esau, but the voice is the voice of Jacob!" went on Skinner, evidently in a mood for quotations to illustrate his meaning, and quoting this time from "Sunday prep".

"Might have guessed it, you know!" said Snoop. "Wharton put Mauly up for the job, and intended all the time making a stalking-horse of him, as Bull called it. Mauly in name, and Wharton in fact, what? And Quelch can go and eat coke! Deep of Wharton!"

"Not that I really care," added Skinner. "I never really wanted to play against Rookwood."

Sydney James Snoop closed one eye at Stott, who grinned. Skinner caught the wink and the grin, and scowled.

"Well; you're out of the team, too, Snoopey", he sneered.

"I don't mind much," said Snoop - "not so much as you do old man. Lot of fag, anyhow, just to brag that a chap's played for School. I was really pulling Mauly's leg more than anything else."

"Well, now Wharton's pulled our leg," growled Skinner. "I'm told I'm not wanted after all. Not that I care, as I said. But it's a bit thick for Wharton to be turned out of the Captaincy, and to keep on the job with Mauly as a screen. I wonder what Mr. Quelch would say if he knew?"

"Well, he wouldn't butt into football matters," said Stott. "He doesn't know or care much about our matches."

"Mauly's told me that if I stick to games practice for a few weeks, he'll think it over again," said Skinner. "Mauly tellin' a chap not to slack! Satan rebukin' sin, you know!"

"Of course, it's Wharton all the time" said Snoop. "He's got Mauly right under his thumb!"

"All the better, if you ask me," said Stott in his slow way.

Frederick Stott was much under Skinner's influence, but he had a way sometimes, of coming out with remarks like this. Without the valuable friendship of Harold Skinner, Stott would have been a much better fellow.

His two comrades glared at him.

"Better, is it?" snarled Skinner.

"Well, Mauly would have lost us the match, if he'd been given his head," said Stott. "Wharton will pick out a winning team for him."

"A fat lot we care about that," said Skinner.

"Well, I do. I haven't a chance of figuring in the eleven, I know, but I'd like to see the Remove beat Rookwood."

"I'd like to see 'em get the licking of their lives, to pay Mauly out for dropping me," snarled Skinner.

"You said you didn't care."

"Oh, don't be a fool!"

"You mean you do care?" asked Stott.

"I mean that I'll jolly well punch your silly nose if you don't stop talking piffle!" growled Skinner.

"You needn't get your rag out," said Stott. "You wouldn't like other fellows to hear you say you want the Remove licked. I jolly well wish Mauly would put me in as back. I know I'd do my level best. Wharton gave me a chance once, in his time, and you made me chuck it, Skinner. I wouldn't let that happen again, I can tell you."

"Wouldn't you?" sneered Skinner. "Well, you've got no chance now - not a ghost

of one. If Mauly put you in, Wharton would pull the strings and drop you out again - see?"

"I suppose he would," said Stott moodily. "Bit rotten, though, loafing all through the football season, and never getting a game, except in pickups."

"You won't get a game while Wharton's pulling the strings, anyhow," said Skinner. "So you can put that in your pipe and smoke it. I think ----."

Skinner broke off as he sighted Harry Wharton. The three black sheep of the Remove were lounging under the elms while they talked, and they had not observed the late Captain of the Remove leaning against one of the old trees with his hands in his pockets. Skinner started, and felt a little uneasy as he realised that all he had been saying had been said in Wharton's hearing.

Wharton smiled mockingly as he met Skinner's glance.

"So that's how you've figured it out, Skinner?" he said, with sarcasm.

"Well, yes, I have," said Skinner sulkily. "You're making Mauly into a sort of dummy, working him just as if you worked him with a wire, and you know you are."

"The hands are the hands of Esau, but the voice is the voice of Jacob - what?" said Wharton, laughing.

"You can't deny it!" snapped Skinner. "All the Remove will see it soon - even Mauly himself, I fancy. And Mr. Quelch too" added Skinner.

"The sooner the better!" said Wharton, coolly. He snapped his fingers. "That much for Mr. Quelch, and what he thinks about it! I was going to speak to you Stott. You can play back when you choose to buck up a little. Do you feel up to playing Rookwood on Saturday?"

Stott jumped.

"Mc!" he exclaimed breathlessly.

"You," said Wharton with a nod. "I'm keeping in Bolsover Major at right back; he's a good man when he chooses - What about you for left?"

"You mean it?"

"Right as rain."

"I'm your man, of course!" exclaimed Stott eagerly. "But - but I say, Wharton, what about Johnny Bull? I don't pretend to be as good a back as Bull. No good if I did."

Wharton's brow darkened.

"I'm not asking your advice, Stott. I'm offering you a place in the eleven for Saturday, if you choose to take it."

"Taken, of course," said Stott.

Skinner breathed hard.

"What about me?" he asked.

"You're no good," answered Wharton unceremoniously. "Too many cigarettes. You'd crack up in ten minutes."

"Stott smokes," said Skinner sullenly.

"I jolly well shan't touch a fag again this week!" exclaimed Stott. "Rely on that, Wharton."

"I do," said Harry. "That's understood, of course."

Skinner gave him a bitter look.

"You say you're keeping Bolsover Major in?"

"Yes. I've told him so."

"And who the deuce are you, to keep a chap in or turn him out?" demanded Skinner savagely. "Have we only dreamed that you were kicked out of the captaincy, after all?"

Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"Mauleverer's good enough to take my advice," he said.

"You mean you're still Captain of the Remove in your own estimation, with Mauly

as a mask?"

"Anything you like," said Wharton; and he walked away with his hands in his pockets, whistling.

"Well," said Snoop, with a deep breath, "that beats it!"

"Of course, you won't play on Saturday, Stott?" said Skinner in a casual sort of way.

Stott looked at him.

"Shan't I, just!" he answered, with emphasis.

"So you're going back on your friends, and sucking up to that cheeky cad?" said Skinner.

"You asked him for a place yourself."

"Don't give me any back-chat, you sneak!" said Skinner savagely. "If you back up Wharton you needn't speak to me again."

"I'd rather speak to Wharton, if you come to that."

"Wha - a - at?"

"So you can put that in your pipe and smoke it," said Stott, defiantly. "I'm going to play, if they'll have me, that's a dead cert; and if you don't like it, Skinner, you can lump it, so that's that."

Harold Skinner clenched his hands; and Stott, with a sullen glare, followed his example. Skinner thought better of it. Stott was rather a burly fellow, and when he had his back up - as sometimes he did - it was Skinner's cue to treat him with tact.

"Well?" growled Stott, eyeing him a good deal like a bulldog.

"Oh, go and eat coke!" said Skinner.

And he turned his back on Stott and walked away with Sydney James Snoop. Stott stared after him, sniffed, and then walked off towards Little Side, where some football practice was going on."

That chapter gives an excellent illustration of the character of William Stott. It also reveals most clearly the danger of choosing the wrong type of friend. How many a chap has been ruined for life because in his schooldays or early manhood he was unfortunate enough to come under the influence of the wrong type of fellow, and not strong enough to resist such influence.

Stott could have been another Johnny Bull if he had had chums like Bob Cherry, Wharton and Nugent, instead of Skinner and Snoop. He was the best of the three.

As for the Rookwood match - well that comes off in the next story "Harry Wharton's Downfall" M. 885. To quote:- "Stott did his best. He seemed to have dropped all his slacking ways, under Wharton's influence, conscious too, that the sneering looks of Skinner and Snoop were upon him from behind the goal. He and Bolsover Major tried hard, but the Rookwooders handled them with ease!"

At half time Rookwood were one up - from a goal by Mornington.

Then Smithy scored an equaliser! Wharton now fought hard for a draw, but it was not to be. The final score was Rookwood seven, Greyfriars one!

Well there you are Ladies and Gentlemen. Three finely drawn characters, all quite different from each other Skinner, Snoop and Stott. One wonders what they would turn out to be in later years if they were subject to TIME as we are. Skinner would probably be clever enough to dodge prison. Snoop would be too cowardly to commit any criminal offence. But Stott? Stupid and an obvious catspaw. I fear that William Stott would be just the type to end up in gaol, and all because he was a member of the wrong study in the Greyfriars Remove.

Fortunately, however, we need not worry about such things. Time has no hold over that particular part of Kent. The Greyfriars Remove will always be as we found it

in 1908 and as we find it today - fifty years later. A wonderful Form of some thirty odd boys, each with his own distinct personality.

And I think you will agree that not the least interesting amongst them are the three members of Study No. 11. Skinner, Snoop and Stott!

T W E L V E Q U E S T I O N S

By the Golden Hours Club, Sydney, Australia

1. Who was the artist, active for 30 years with "Chums", whose artist father was associated with one of England's greatest novelists?
2. Which schoolboy character was featured in two separate school careers, and who was his famous creator?
3. What picture was first featured as a story illustration in a famous periodical for boys, and thereafter became a trade mark for the publication?
4. Not many authors wrote for all three publications "The Boys' Own Paper", "Chums" and "The Captain". Name one who did.
5. Which famous boys' Annual changed its cover format and size after two issues?
6. How many "Betty's" appeared in "Young Folks Tales" as the main character?
7. Who was the author of the Betty stories in "Young Folks Tales"?
8. A famous Australian Annual appeared with a coloured rainbow on the cover. Can you name it?
9. Who was the character, "Bathurst" and in which publication did he usually appear?
10. Who was the author of the stories featuring "Wee-Wee", Blake's Chinese assistant?
11. Which author, apart from W.W. Sayers (Pierre Quiroule) wrote of Granite Grant and M'selle Julie?
12. Which 2nd and 3rd series S.B.L. author almost always commenced his stories with the spoken word?

(cont'd from page 77)...

*WILDE, GEOFFREY H., Wensley Drive, Leeds, 7. (N). Schoolmaster. Groups 5 (a),(b); 7 (a); 6 (all); 5 (e). Main interests Hamilton papers, Lees, Sexton Blakes. Collection of Magnets and Gems substantially complete from 1934. Is anxious to obtain pre-1934 Magnets.

WHORWELL, RICHARD, 29 Aspinden Rd., Rotherhithe, London, S.E.16. (Age 61). Street Orderly. Groups 2; 3; 5 (b),(a),(d),(c); 6 (a),(b); 7 (a),(b).

WILLET, E.P.K., Church Cottage, Laleham-on-Thames, Staines, Middlesex. (L). Groups 5 (all); 4 (Captains and B.O.P. Annuals only); 8.

WILLIAMSON, WILLIAM L., 410 Oakwood Lane, Roundhay, Leeds, 8. (N). (Age 57). Warehouseman. Groups 5 (all); 6 (all); 2.

(cont'd on page 133)...

THE MAN FROM BAKER STREET

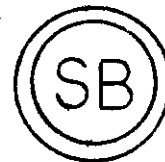


THE SEVENTH ANNUAL FEATURE

compiled and contributed

by

MEMBERS OF THE SEXTON BLAKE CIRCLE



INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY THE CHAIRMAN

THE SEXTON BLAKE AUTHORS WHO'S WHO by Bill Lofts & Derek Adley

THE SINCEREST FORM OF FLATTERY by Victor Colby

THE NEW ORDER by Walter Webb

THE BLACK EAGLE by Josie Packman

* * * * *

Once again it is my pleasure to present the Sexton Blake Circle feature - THE MAN FROM BAKER STREET - for your entertainment.

It is now seven years since Harry Homer founded the Sexton Blake Circle, during which time many new members have been enrolled, and I can honestly say that if every member was to write something - as indeed they would if I asked them - a whole C.D. Annual could be produced. I am in fact considering producing such a yearly volume myself, and would welcome opinions and suggestions on the matter.

As usual I have been faced with the problem of getting a quart into a pint pot. This, of course, is impossible, and as a result I have had to disappoint several contributors. In this connection I must say a word about one of our Australian members - Bette Pate. Bette, who, as you all know, has already written some fine material for Blakiana and last year's Annual, is a very enthusiastic member of the Circle, so that when I heard she was sending me an article for this year's feature I knew that something good would arrive. It arrived all right - 19 closely packed quarto-sized pages of it! Alas, I cannot condense or abridge it, so I have arranged with Josie to do the next best thing, to serialise it as from next January in Blakiana. Thus, Bette's efforts will not go unrewarded and readers of Blakiana will have something good to look forward to.

And now a brief word about this year's contributors.

Bill Lofts and Derek Adley - the latter member appearing in our feature for the first time - have put in months of real hard word in order to make their contribution positively accurate in data.

Victor Colby - another member to appear in the Annual for the first time - tackles a facet of Blake lore on which much more could be written. Indeed, the subject is one that the Blake Circle intend to deal with during the coming year.

Walter Webb needs no introduction, and his article this year throws much light on Blake and - "The New Order".

Finally, at the request of many of her Blakiana readers, my wife has tackled

another of G.H. Teed's characters - and one on whom very little has ever before been written.

It now only remains for me, on behalf of all members of the Sexton Blake Circle, to wish all our readers a Merry Christmas and a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year.

LEN PACKMAN, Chairman,
The Sexton Blake Circle,
East Dulwich, London, S.E.22.

* * * * *

THE SEXTON BLAKE AUTHORS WHO'S WHO

by

W.O.G. LOFTS and D.J. ADLEY

* * *

Foreword:

In compiling this article we wish to express our most grateful thanks for the co-operation of the following Blake enthusiasts - Len Packman and Walter Webb - whose interest has made this work possible. Our thanks are also given to Mr. W. Howard Baker, editor of the "Sexton Blake Library", for his information on the modern Blake writers; and to Mr. H.W. Twyman, editor of the former "Union Jack", for data on authors writing during his period of office.

- - - - -

"What name shall I call my detective, Harry?" said a father to his teenage son one day in mid-1893. "Shall I call him Gideon Barr, or Sexton Blake?"

"I think I like Sexton Blake best" said young Harry. And so the famous name of Sexton Blake was born. It was sixty-five years later that this story was related by "Young Harry" - now an elderly gentleman living in retirement in Broadstairs.

Harry Blyth - for that was the father's name, wrote that detective story in No. 6 of Alfred Harmsworth's new venture "The Halfpenny Marvel" entitled "The Missing Millionaire". He received £9.9.0. for the story (which included the copyright of the character's name) and was completely satisfied; though, if he had known what a money-spinner Sexton Blake was to become, probably he would have retained the copyright.

Since that day, now over sixty-five years ago, the name of Sexton Blake has become almost a household word, and it is impossible to compute the thousands of pounds that Harmsworth Brothers - later the Amalgamated Press, have made out of this character.

Only four years after he had created Sexton Blake, Harry Blyth died of typhoid fever, and the stories thereafter were written by a whole army of writers. The following "Who's Who" gives a full list as far as possible of these authors, firstly showing the names penned to the stories, followed by the real name of the author; and also showing the paper or papers in which they have written Blake yarns.

Compiling this list has certainly been no easy task, and in order to get it as complete and accurate as possible, over nine months has been spent in research, in writing to various authors and editors who have in return given valuable information and new facts.

Even now we cannot safely assert that the names of every Blake author, and pen

names, are known; we do however claim that this is by far the most accurate list published up to the present day, and any queries or doubts arising from the list can be explained readily by either of us on request.

One of the most difficult parts of our research has been the fact that for many years the stories in the "Sexton Blake Library" and the "Union Jack" were anonymous, and it is quite possible that if a full official list of Blake authors ever came to light, many new names would be found hitherto unconnected with the Blake field. To give an example, some years ago we were fortunate enough to peruse Mr. H.W. Twyman's official list of "Union Jack" authors Nos. 906 to 1347, when the names of authors such as "Tom Stenner", "W. Jago", "Anthony Baron", "Young", "J.W. Wheway" and "Tyler" were revealed for the very first time - for the simple fact that with no names given to the stories and the style of writing impossible to identify in many of these cases, one just did not know who the author was.

Another collector, not now connected with the hobby, was fortunate enough to obtain from the Amalgamated Press a list of authors of about 200 of the first series of Sexton Blake Libraries. As this list included the names of "Alais", "Reynolds" and "J.G. Jones" of which little if anything is known, the reader can see what difficulties we have had to face in compiling this article.

For the record it is interesting to list the actual periods in which the name of the author was given to the stories in the S.B.L. and U.J.

- S.B.L. 1st series. No authors names given at all.
- S.B.L. 2nd series. No authors names given from Nos. 1 to 240.
From No. 241 dated 5.6.1930 authors given.
- S.B.L. 3rd series. Authors names given throughout series to date.
- U.J. 1st series. Authors given occasionally.
- U.J. 2nd series. No authors given up to No. 1359 (906 to 1347 authors are known officially). From 1360 to end of series authors names were given.

Unfortunately we have been hampered at times in our research by faulty information in articles about Blake authors in the past - and certainly things were not improved by the authors of the articles in question either not bothering to answer our letters, or being unable to explain how they came to write of such and such an author writing a Blake yarn. To give a classic example a writer wrote some years ago of "Richard Essex" writing only one Blake yarn, in S.B.L. 2nd series No. 256 - but on looking up the S.B.L. in question we were astonished to find that it was written by "Lewis Essex" and not "Richard Essex".

Now it was still possible that "Lewis" may have been "Richard", but on contacting Mr. Richard Starr, which is the real name of "Richard Essex" - now over eighty and living in happy semi-retirement - he confessed that he had never heard of, or written under the name of "Lewis Essex" and had never written a Blake yarn. This little point just goes to show the reader that no pains have been spared to get this list of Blake writers as accurate as possible.

After a great deal of thought, it was felt by both of us that we should give first the name penned to the story, followed by the author's real name. However, in some cases - as marked by an asterisk - no author's name was given (although it is known that the author definitely wrote the story), therefore the name as submitted to the Amalgamated Press on the original manuscript has been shown first.

In order that the facts are quite clear to all Blake enthusiasts, we have prepared a separate list of all the authors known to have written Blake stories but whose names have not actually been shown on the story when published. An explanation is given

against each name as to where the information originated, and in so doing we hope to make the position clear as regards fact and theory etc.

One interesting thing to note is that the name of Sexton Blake himself appears in the list of pen names. The two stories in "Union Jack" 1st series, Nos. 43 and 62, were shown to be "by Sexton Blake"; therefore we feel the name warrants a place in the pen names, at least, of the "Who's Who". Maybe the author or authors behind this pen name will one day be positively identified.

We would also like to mention the fact that although Walter Webb has very good reason to think that the identity of W. Shaw Rae was in fact William Stanhope Sprigg we have shown the real name as Ernest Treeton. The reason for this is because Mr. H.J. Garrish stated himself that Treeton was W. Shaw Rae, and although we agree that this could well have been a mistake due to time and the memory, until definitely proved otherwise we have to accept Mr. Garrish's statement as fact.

Regarding the unidentified Blake authors, that is to say those where we have been unable to find out whether it is the author's real name or merely another pen name, we would be very pleased to hear from any reader who can shed any light on the identity of any of these elusive names.

In conclusion we would draw the reader's attention to the fact that we have found it necessary to omit from our list certain authors who have previously been named as writers of Blake yarns. The authors in question are as follows; Richard Poole, E.H. Burrage, D.L. Huddleston and Franklyn Wright. The reason for the omission is that although many Sexton Blake enthusiasts have been contacted, there is not one discoverable person who can give the slightest clue as to why these names have previously been included in lists of Blake authors.

This is not to say that these authors definitely did not write a Blake yarn; but without even the slightest indication that they did, then they must be left out. Certainly if all Blake authors were known there would probably be many surprises. Among the names might possibly be found the following: Hugh Tuite, Arthur Applin, S. Clark Hook and Sidney Warwick, all of whom were very prolific authors in their day. Two names have figured in official lists that we have seen, these being Eric W. Maclean (known to many as Eric W. Townsend) and Gillian or Gillan, but positive proof has yet to be obtained.

Here, then, are the lists.

<u>Name Penned to Story, etc.</u>	<u>True Identity</u>	<u>Papers and issues pertaining to Author's work. (In full if author - so far as known - only wrote 3 or less stories</u>
* Alais, E.	probably real name	Dreadnought. S.B.L.1st. U.J. 2nd.
Ames, D.L.	Delano Ames	S.B.L.3rd/29.
Andrews, John	editorial stock name	B.F.L./2nd.
Arthur, William	William Arthur Howard Baker	S.B.L.3rd/387
Ascott, John	John William Bobin	S.B.L.3rd/288
Baker, W. Howard	William Arthur Howard Baker	S.B.L.3rd
* Barnard, Alfred	Alfred Barnard	Walter Webb has a theory that he wrote Blake yarns for U.J. 2nd.
* Baron, Anthony	Augustus Baker	U.J.2nd/1107
Baron, John	Augustus Baker	D.W.266 reprint of U.J.2nd/1107
Bidston, Lester	Lester Bidston	S.B.L.2nd
Black, Ladbrooke	Ladbrooke Lionel Day Black	S.B.L.2nd. U.J.2nd. D.W.

<u>Name Penned to Story, etc.</u>	<u>True Identity</u>	<u>Papers and issues pertaining to Author's work. (In full if author - so far as known - only wrote 3 or less stories</u>
Blair, Allan	William J. Bayfield	S.B.L.1st/2nd. U.J.2nd.
Blakesley, Stephen	Identity unknown	S.B.L.3rd/253
Blake, Sexton	Author unknown	U.J.1st/43.62.
Blake, Stacey	Stacey Blake	S.B.L.2nd/202.257.410. U.J.2nd.
Blyth, Harry	Harry Blyth	U.J.1st. Marvel 1st.
* Bobin, Donald	Donald E.M. Bobin	D.W.344
Bowman, G.M.	Gerald M. Bowman	S.B.L.2nd/584. D.W.
Brandon, John G.	John G. Brandon	S.B.L.2nd. D.W.
Brearley, John	John Garbutt	B.F.L.2nd/655.671. Pilot. New Zealand Chums. D.W.116.
Brent, Francis	Identity unknown	D.W.116.
Bridges, T.C.	Thomas Charles Bridges	U.J.2nd. S.B.L.2nd/487. B.F.L.1st.
Brisbane, Coutts	R. Coutts Armour	S.B.L.1st/2nd. U.J.2nd. D.W.
Brittany, Louis	George Heber Teed	D.W.63.84.
Brooks, E.S.	Edwy Searles Brooks	S.B.L.1st/2nd/3rd. D.W. U.J.2nd.
* Brooks, L.H.	Leonard H. Brooks	S.B.L.1st. U.J.2nd.
Brown, Campbell	Identity unknown	U.J.1st/285.
Burke, Jonathan	Jonathan Burke	S.B.L.3rd/385.
Carlton, Lewis	Lewis Carlton	S.B.L.2nd. U.J.2nd. Pluck
Chaverton, Bruce	Fred Gordon Cook	D.W.67.
Chester, Gilbert	H.H. Clifford Gibbons	S.B.L.1st/2nd/3rd. D.W. U.J.2nd.
Clevely, Hugh	Hugh Clevely	S.B.L.3rd.
Cooke, Percival	Percy C. Bishop	U.J.1st/396
Creasey, John	John Creasey	S.B.L.2nd/3rd.
* Danesford, Earle	F. Addington Symonds	S.B.L.1st.
Davis, Arnold	editorial stock name	U.J.2nd.
Darran, Mark	Norman Goddard	S.B.L.1st. U.J.1st/2nd. B.F.L.1st.
Dilnot, George	George Dilnot	S.B.L.2nd/598.613.642. D.W.
Dix, Maurice B.	Maurice Buxton Dix	S.B.L.2nd/3rd.
Douthwaite, L.C.	Louis Charles Douthwaite	S.B.L.2nd/3rd.
Drew, Sidney	Edgar Joyce Murray	S.B.L.1st/2nd. U.J.2nd. Det. Lib. N.L.L. old.
Drummond, John	John Newton Chance	S.B.L.3rd.
Dudley, Ernest	Ernest Dudley	D.W.318/325.
Edgar, Alfred	Alfred Edgar	S.B.L.1st. U.J.2nd.
Edwards, Walter	Walter Shute	Boys Realm 2nd. U.J.2nd. S.B.L.2nd.
Elliott, R.C.	Identity unknown	S.B.L.2nd/244.
Elliott, William J.	William James Elliott	S.B.L.2nd/244. U.J.2nd/1470
Essex, Lewis	Identity unknown	S.B.L.2nd/256.
Evans, Gwyn	Gwinfil Arthur Evans	S.B. Annual. S.B.L.2nd. U.J.2nd.
Ford, Anthony	Anthony Ford	D.W.114.122.125.130.
Ford, Quentin	Raymond Potheary	Knockout Fun Book 1953.
* Foster, R.F.	Revd. Reginald Frank Foster	S.B.L.2nd/189.
Frazer, Martin	Percy A. Clarke	S.B.L.2nd/3rd.
Fremlin, Victor	George Norman Philips	U.J.2nd/1348.1363.
Frost, C. Vernon	Identity unknown	S.B.L.2nd/574.
Gates, Clifford	Clifford Gates	S.B.L.2nd/736.
Gordon, Stanley S.	Stanley Gordon Shaw	U.J.2nd. S.B.L.2nd.
Goyne, Richard	Richard Goyne	S.B.L.2nd/392.460. U.J.2nd/1034/1058.

<u>Name Penned to Story, etc.</u>	<u>True Identity</u>	<u>Papers and issues pertaining to Author's work. (In full if author - so far as known - only wrote 3 or less stories</u>
Grahame, Arnold	Identity unknown	U.J.1st/72.
Gray, Berkeley	Edwy Searles Brookes	S.B.L.2nd/641. D.W.312 to 321 serial.
Graydon, W. Murray	William Murray Graydon	B.F.W. B.F.L.1st. Boys Herald. U.J. 2nd. S.B.L.1st/2nd.
Gregory, Hylton	Harry Egbert Hill (but not in every instance)	S.B.L.1st/2nd.
Hadfield, R.L.	Robert L. Hadfield	U.J.2nd.
Hamilton, George	George Heber Teed	D.W.329.338.
* Hamilton, Max	Cecily Hamilton	Up to now this is purely a theory that Sexton Blake yarns were written by this author; there is no actual proof.
Hardinge, Rex	Rex Hardinge	U.J.2nd. D.W. S.B.L.2nd/3rd.
Hardy, Arthur S.	Arthur Steffans Hardy	Champion No.1. U.J.2nd. S.B.L.1st.2nd. D.W.
Harrison, Edwin	Eric Allen Ballard	S.B.L.3rd/406.
Hayter, Cecil	Cecil Hayter	S.B.L.1st. U.J.2nd. B.F.L.1st. Boys Herald. Boys Realm 2nd.
Herring, Paul	Paul Herring	U.J.1st/2nd.
Hill, H. Gregory	Harry Egbert Hill	S.B.L.1st/2nd. U.J.2nd.
Hincks, C.M.	Cyril Malcolm Hincks	U.J.2nd. D.W.
Holmes, Edward	believed real name Edward Holmes	D.W.361, also serial starting 371.
* Home Gall W.B.	William B. Home Gall	U.J. 1355
Hood, Stephen	Jack Lewis	S.B.L.2nd/292.
Hope, Stanton	W.E. Stanton Hope	S.B.L. 2nd/3rd. D.W.
Howard, Roland	Identity unknown	D.W.58.89.109.
Hunter, John	Alfred John Hunter	S.B. Annual. D.W. S.B.L. 2nd/3rd.
Jackson, Lewis	Jack Lewis	D.W. U.J.2nd. S.B.L.1st/2nd/3rd.
* Jago W.H.	Dr. William H. Jago	U.J.2nd/1055
Jardine, Warwick	Francis Warwick	S.B.L.2nd/3rd. D.W.
* Jones, J.G.	J.G. Jones	S.B.L.1st/345
Kent, Arthur	Arthur Kent	S.B.L.3rd.
* Kent, Beverley	Identity unknown	U.J.2nd. B.F.L.1st.
King, Hilary	Identity unknown	S.B.L.3rd.
Lelland, Frank	Alfred McLelland Burrage	D.W.34.106.
* Lomax, M.	M. Lomax	U.J.1060
Long, Derek	Identity unknown	S.B.L.3rd/133.224.
* Lyndon, Barre	Alfred Edgar	S.B.L.2nd/90.
Maclean, Arthur	Arthur George Maclean	S.B.L.3rd.
Macluire, David	Identity unknown	U.J.2nd/1408.1429. D.W./23.
* Maitland T.G. Dowling	T.D. Maitland (as shown in the official records of the A.P. although it is known that he used other initials such as S. Dowling Maitland.	It is believed that he wrote U.J. 2nd/59.77.
Malcolm, Charles	Cyril Malcolm Hincks	Sports Budget
Maxwell, Allen	probably an editorial stock name	S.B.L.2nd/555.

<u>Name Penned to Story, etc.</u>	<u>True Identity</u>	<u>Papers and issues pertaining to Author's work. (In full if author - so far as known - only wrote 3 or less stories</u>
Maxwell, Herbert	Herbert Lomax	U.J.2nd/1st. B.F.L.1st. B.F.W.2nd - serial. B.R.236. S.B. on the railway
Meredith, Hal	Harry Blyth	Marvel.1st. U.J.1st.
Meriton, Peter	Alfred John Hunter	S.B.L.3rd/57.116.
* Merland, Oliver	Oliver Merland	S.B.L.1st.
* Miln, H. Crichton	H. Crichton Miln	S.B.L.1st/349.
Morris, Patrick	Viscount Mount Morres	Chips. B.F.W.(1902)
* Murray, Andrew	Geoffrey Andrew Murray	U.J.2nd. S.B.L.1st/2nd.
* Murray, Edgar, Joyce	Edgar Joyce Murray	S.B.L.1st.
Murray, Robert	Robert Murray Graydon	S.B.L.1st. U.J.2nd. D.W.
Osborne, Mark	John William Bobin	Boys Journal. Dreadnought. D.W.
Palk, Arthur J.	Identity unknown	S.B.L.1st/2nd. U.J.2nd.
* Parry, D.H.	David Harry Parry	U.J.2nd/1525.
Parsons, Anthony	Anthony Parsons	U.J.2nd/268.309.317.
Passingham, W.J.	William John Passingham	S.B. Annual. S.B.L.2nd/3rd.
* Paterson, Arthur	Arthur Henry Paterson	S.B.L.3rd/288.298.
Pearson, Alec G.	Alec G. Pearson	U.J.2nd.
* Pentelow, J.N.	John Nix Pentelow	U.J.1st/2nd.
Perowne, Barry	Identity unknown	S.B.L.1st/2nd. U.J.2nd.
Poole, Michael	Reginald Heber Poole	S.B.L.2nd/577.601.669.
Purley, John	Identity unknown	S.B.L.1st/2nd. U.J.2nd.
Quiroule, Pierre	W.W. Sayer	S.B.L.3rd/43.
Rae William Shaw	Ernest Treeton	D.W. S.B.L.1st/2nd. U.J.2nd.
Rees, George	George Rees	U.J.1st.
Reid, Desmond	stories submitted by minor authors and rewritten by Arthur Maclean	S.B.L.3rd/302.324.
* Reynolds	Identity unknown	S.B.L.3rd.
Rochester, George E.	George E. Rochester	S.B.L.1st/316.
* St. John, Henry	Henry St. John Cooper	S.B.L.3rd/104. D.W.
* Sapt.	----- Sapt.	believed to have written U.J.2nd/109.
Saxon, Peter	William Arthur Howard Baker	U.J.2nd/988.
* Sayer, W.W.	W.W. Sayer	S.B.L.3rd.
Scott, Hedley	Hedley O'Mant	U.J.993.
Scott, Maxwell	Dr. John William Staniforth	S.B.L.2nd/648.695.
* Shaw, S. Gordon	Stanley Gordon Shaw	Boys Herald. U.J.2nd. Jester.
* Shute, Walter	Walter Shute	Detective Lib. S.B.L.2nd/132.
Skene, Anthony	George Norman Philips	U.J.2nd/1068.1079.1093.
* Sprigg, Stanhope	William Stanhope Sprigg	S.B.L.1st/2nd/3rd. D.W. U.J.2nd.
Stagg, James	James Stagg	believed to have written U.J.2nd/69.
Stamper, Joseph	Joseph Stamper	S.B.L.3rd.
Standish, Richard	Identity unknown	S.B.L.3rd/51.
* Stenner, Tom	Tom Stenner	S.B.L.3rd/85.
Stevens, Christopher	Identity unknown	U.J.2nd/1223.1232.
		U.J.1st. serial 356 to 373.

<u>Name Penned to Story, etc.</u>	<u>True Identity</u>	<u>Papers and issues pertaining to Author's work. (In full if author - so far as known - only wrote 3 or less stories</u>
* Storm, Michael	Michael Storm	U.J.2nd. B.F.L.1st.
Story, Jack Trevor	Jack Trevor Story	S.B.L.3rd.
Stuart, Donald	Gerald Verner	S.B.L.2nd. U.J.2nd. D.W.
Sylvester, John	Hector Hawton	S.B.L.3rd/47.
* Symonds, F. Addington	F. Addington Symonds	S.B.L.1st/2nd. U.J.2nd.
Taylor, Norman	Noel Wood-Smith	U.J.2nd/1439.
Teed, G.H.	George Heber Teed	S.B. Annual. S.B.L.1st/2nd. D.W. B.F.L.1st. U.J.2nd.
Thomas, Martin	Thomas Martin	S.B.L.3rd/392.404.
* Townley, H.	Houghton Townley	S.B.L.2nd/91.
Tremayne, Hartley	possibly R.Coutts Armour	Champion No. 7
Tremellen, Wilfred	possibly Strawford Webster	U.J.2nd.1351.
* Twyman, H.W.	Harold W. Twyman	U.J.2nd/1073.1484.
* Tyler.	possibly Charles W. Tyler	U.J.2nd/1095.
Tyrer, Walter	Walter Tyrer	S.B.L.3rd.
Urquhart, Paul	Ladbroke Lionel Day Black	S.B.L.2nd. D.W.
Vickery, William P.	Identity unknown	S.B.L.2nd/324.
Wallace, Edgar	Edgar Wallace	D.W./342.
Warwick, Francis	Francis Warwick	U.J.2nd
Webber, Stawford	Stawford Webber	D.W./90. U.J.2nd/1502.1514.
* Wheway, John W.	John W. Wheway	U.J.2nd.
Whitley, Reid	R. Coutts Armour	U.J.2nd. D.W.
Whyte, Melton	G.J.B. Anderson	U.J.1st/75.172.
* Wignall, Trevor C.	Trevor C. Wignall	S.B.L.1st/119.143.
* Wolfe, Cedric	Identity unknown	U.J.2nd/803.
Woodman, George D.	Identity unknown	D.W./79.103. S.B. Annual
* Wood-Smith, Noel	Noel Wood-Smith	U.J.2nd/1124.1253.
* Wray, Reginald	W.B. Home Gall	U.J.2nd. S.B.L.1st.
* Young	----- Young	U.J.2nd/1146.1330.

It will be noted that G.H. Teed's real name is given as George Heber Teed instead of George Hamilton Teed. The reason for this is that Teed substituted the name of Hamilton for Heber for personal reasons.

Sexton Blake Authors still to be Identified

Alais, E.	Probably real name.
Blakesley, Stephen	
Blake, Sexton	See foreword
Brent, Francis	
Brown, Campbell	Believed by Walter Webb to be W. Shaw Rae (Ernest Treeton)
Elliott, R.C.	Probably real name
Essex, Lewis	Believed to be real name
Ford, Anthony	
Frost, C. Vernon	Walter Webb thinks there is a possibility that this was H.R. Clifford Gibbons
Grahame, Arnold	
Holmes, Edward	Believed to be real name
Howard, Roland	

Sexton Blake Authors still to be Identified (cont'd)

Kent, Beverley	
King, Hilary	
Long, Derek	
Macluire, David	Probably real name
Maxwell, Allen	Probably an editorial stock name
Palk, Arthur J.	Probably Arthur Paterson
Perowne, Barry	
Purley, John	
Reynolds	Probably correct Surname but Christian names unknown
Sapt.	Definitely correct Surname " " " "
Standish, Richard	
Stevens, Christopher	
Tremayne, Hartley	Possibly R. Coutts Armour
Tremellin, Wilfred	Possibly Stawford Webber
Tyler	Definitely correct Surname. Possibly Charles W. Tyler
Vickery, William P.	Probably William Paul Vickery
Wolfe, Cedric	
Woodman, George D.	Probably real name
Young	Definitely correct Surname but Christian names unknown

/ Note: Readers may query how a story by Arthur Paterson could appear in 1933 when he died in 1927. The explanation is this: there were a considerable number of U.J.'s held in reserve by the publishers, and this tale was used after being in storage for years. Arthur Paterson - though not an Australian as claimed by the editor - most certainly knew about that country as he lived there for a considerable number of years.

Authors whose Blake yarns have appeared anonymously

Alais, E.	Name supplied to A.J. Southway and/or John Gocher.
Barnard, Alfred	Based on a theory of Walter Webb's.
Baron, Anthony	This name is shown on Mr. Twyman's official list. The use of a pen name instead of the real name was due to the author's business connections with other companies.
Bobin, Donald	This information was supplied by the author himself.
Brooks, L.H.	Name supplied to A.J. Southway and/or John Gocher and confirmed by Mr. H.W. Twyman.
Danesford, Earl	This information was supplied by Mr. F. Addington Symonds who was Earl Danesford. The stories were definitely submitted under this pen name.
Foster, R.F. (Rev'd.)	Name supplied to A.J. Southway and/or John Gocher.
Hamilton, Max	This is purely a theory of many collectors, but no positive proof has as yet been obtained.
Home Gall, W.B.	Believed by Mr. Twyman to have written U.J.1355 "The Mermaid Mystery".
Jago, W.H.	This name is shown on Mr. Twyman's official list.
Jones, J.G.	Name supplied to A.J. Southway and/or John Gocher.
Kent, Beverley	Theory of several collectors.
Lomax, M.	This name is shown on Mr. Twyman's official list.
Lyndon, Barre	Name supplied to A.J. Southway and/or John Gocher.
Maitland, T.D.	Based on a theory of Walter Webb's.

Authors whose Blake yarns have appeared anonymously (cont'd)

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|------------------------|---|---|--|
| Merland, Oliver | } | Names supplied to A.J. Southway and/or John Gocher. | |
| Miln, H. Crichton | | | |
| Murray, Andrew | | | |
| Murray, Edgar Joyce | | | |
| Parry, D.H. | | | |
| Paterson, Arthur Henry | } | Name supplied to Len Packman by Miss Parry (this late author's daughter). | |
| Pentelow, John Nix | | This name is shown on Mr. Twyman's official list. | |
| Reynolds | } | This name is shown on Mr. Twyman's official list. | |
| St. John, Henry | | Name supplied to A.J. Southway and/or John Gocher. | |
| Sapt. | | Based on a theory of Walter Webb's. | |
| Sayer, W.W. | | } | These names are shown on Mr. Twyman's official list. |
| Shaw, S. Gordon | | | |
| Shute, Walter | | | |
| Sprigg, Stanhope | | | |
| Stenner, Tom | | } | Based on a theory of Walter Webb's. |
| Storm, Michael | | | This name is shown on Mr. Twyman's official list. |
| Symonds, F. Addington | | } | Names supplied to A.J. Southway and/or John Gocher. |
| Townley, H. | | | |
| Twyman, H.W. | This information supplied by the author himself. Mr. Twyman also wrote a story (U.J.No.1484) under the name of Robert Murray. | | |
| * Tyler | } | | |
| Wheway, J.W. | | | |
| Wignal, Trevor C. | | | |
| Wolfe, Cedric | | Name supplied to A.J. Southway and/or John Gocher. | |
| Wood-Smith, Noel | } | This is a theory based on the fact that Cedric Wolfe's characters, Kit and Cora Twyford, were featured. | |
| Wray, Reginald | | This name is shown on Mr. Twyman's official list. | |
| Young | | Name supplied to A.J. Southway and/or John Gocher. | |
| | | This name is shown on Mr. Twyman's official list. | |

* (Note by Len Packman: I think this was Walter Tyler who was writing for the U.J. Detective Magazine Supplement at that time.)

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THE SINCEREST FORM OF FLATTERY
(IMITATION)

By VICTOR COLBY
* * * * *

I invariably get a kick out of seeing a Sexton Blake story appearing as a reprint in a modern, hard-covered bound volume, despite the fact that Blake's name does not appear. I feel that the publishers are paying a nice compliment to the Blake stories we loved so well, in bringing them out in this dignified form, and obviously for adult consumption (and charging them a price only an adult could pay!).

Just recently I purchased the latest John G. Brandon novel, "Murder in Pimlico", and having opened it and perused the first few lines I felt a flush of pleasure, for here indeed was the resurrection of one of my favourite Brandon Sexton Blake stories, "Fatal Forgery" (S.B.L. No. 664, published in 1939).

Here, after almost twenty years, was a nice hard-covered volume with colourful

dust wrapper, giving us again almost verbatim, those exciting experiences of Blake, Purvale, Coutts, Wibley and Withers, except that now Blake had become Det. Inspector McCarthy; the Hon. R.S.V.P. had become the Hon. A.S.P. (Arthur Stukely Pennington), still sired by that eminent statesman Viscount Ebdale, K.G., etc., and still grandson to that remarkable octogenarian lady, the Dowager Duchess of Faulkside. Coutts was now Area Superintendent Burman, but Wibley and Withers appeared with their own names unchanged.

Over a period, I had been collecting bound volumes of the works of John G. Brandon, and decided that now would be a good time to identify the corresponding Blake stories.

The following list, obviously far from complete, gives the S.B.L. and corresponding reprint, and I hope that this list will prompt readers to supply details of the remainder.

They are all R.S.V.P. - A.S.P. stories.
Sexton Blake - Ins. McCarthy

<u>S.B.L. (2nd S.)</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Year reprinted</u>	<u>Reprint Title</u>
421	The Chink's Victim	1951	The Riverside Mystery
498	By Order of the Tong	1946	Death in Jermyn Street
535	The Girl Who Knew Too Much	1944	Death in 'D' Division
558	The Mystery of X20	1958	The Corpse from the City
579	The Tattooed Triangle	1957	Death of a Socialite
664	Fatal Forgery	1958	Murder in Pimlico
670	The Man from Singapore	1941	Mr. Pennington Barges In

The order of reprinting appears to be completely haphazard.

I understand from an early C. Digest that S.B.L. 636 "The Mystery of the Ice Cream Man" was reprinted as "Mr. Pennington Goes Nap", and this reprint as far as I can see would have been round about 1941.

Now for a problem. I have three bound volumes of John G. Brandon entitled respectively "The Corpse Rode On" (1951), "Call Girl Murders" (1954) and "Murder on the Beam" (1956), and each of these books feature - besides A.S.P. - one Marcus Gilliver (the Wallflower) and an oriental femme fatale M'selle Osaki du Channe. Now these two characters appeared once only in the Sexton Blake Library, to wit: "The Mystery of Dead Man's Wallet", S.B.L. No. 647, and the above three bound volumes containing these characters are definitely not reprints of this S.B.L. Are they originals, then? If so, who wrote them? John G. Brandon died in 1940. Were the two characters in question featured in the "Thriller"? That, of course, could have been the source of these stories, if they are indeed reprints. Who can help?

Also, for the record, there have been reprints in recent years of some of the Sexton Blake Library stories of Rex Hardinge and Anthony Parsons, the publisher being Wright & Brown Ltd, as with the Brandon books.

In the first two books listed below, Rex Hardinge has replaced Blake and Tinker with a Major Moffatt and his son, Dan, while in the third one he has used Foreign Office investigators McTavish and Murphy, between whom a good deal of antagonism existed.

Anthony Parsons has, in each of his books listed below, substituted Ruston Carr and George Mansell, both previously of Scotland Yard and now private investigators, in place of Blake and Tinker.

REX HARDINGE

- S.B.L. (2nd S.) 518 "The Mystery of the African Mine", reprinted 1954 as "The Secret of Sheba".
 S.B.L. (3rd S.) 137 "The Secret of the Veldt", reprinted 1954 as "Murder on the Veldt".
 S.B.L. (3rd S.) 176 "The Riddle of the Sealed Room", reprinted (prior to 1954) as "The Problem in Ciphers".

ANTHONY PARSONS

S.B.L. 3rd Series

- No. 12 "The Clue of the Stolen Rupees" - 1954 "Death of a Governor"
 No. 40 "Riddle of the Disguised Greek" - 1955 "Death by the Nile"
 No. 111 "Riddle of the Indian Alibi" - 1951 "No Alibi for Murder"
 No. 167 "Mystery of the Red Cockatoo" - 1955 "Murder at the Red Cockatoo"

According to an early C. Digest, Parsons' S.B.L. 87 "Loot of France" was reprinted in 1947 as "Death on the Mall".

Finally, there is at least one reprint of John Hunter under the name of Peter Meriton in a paper-backed edition of the Readers Library Publishing Co. Ltd. The story is entitled "Captain Dack" and is a rehash of S.B.L. No. 662 "The Riddle of the Lost Ship", in which Blake is replaced by an individual with the imposing name of - William Hazelden Thorp Langley!

I think it's lots of fun tracing reprints, and I hope to hear from anyone who can provide additional information, not only in respect of the authors dealt with above but all authors who have had Blake stories reprinted at any time.

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(Note by Len Packman:) Quite a few articles have appeared from time to time in the C. Digest on these reprinted Blake stories. A large number of Gwyn Evans stories were put out before the last war by Wright and Brown. Josie and myself also possess a number of Teed stories reprinted by Stanley Smith Ltd and The Columbine Publishing Co. Ltd. They are as follows:

- "Bottom of Suez" - reprint of "The Great Canal Plot" (S.B.L.)
 "Crooks' Vendetta" - " " "Rogues of Ransom" (S.B.L.)
 "Voodoo Island" - " " "The Isle of Horror" (S.B.L.)
 "Five in Fear" - rehash of "The Island of the Guilty" (S.B.L.)
 "The Shadow Crook" - reprint of a Detective Weekly story
 "Murder Ship" - " " an S.B.L. story.

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THE NEW ORDER

A brief Summary of the Events leading to the New Order,
 and including also those which have now become a
 vital part of it

By WALTER WEBB

In 1955 the SEXTON BLAKE LIBRARY was in the doldrums. No metamorphosis this, which, descending suddenly and unexpectedly, had plunged the little magazine into the depths of depression, but due to a gradual declination embracing, chiefly, treatment of story matter and cover illustrations.

The decline can be traced back to the middle thirties when Blake, after a

successful run, was dropped entirely from the pages of the DETECTIVE WEEKLY. Naturally, there was a reason for this, and those who were Blake readers at that particular time could not have been very surprised at the eclipse of their favourite character; for, without doubt, the stories being circulated around his adventures in that purple period were uninspired and almost wholly uninteresting. The SEXTON BLAKE LIBRARY went on as usual, of course, although, in many cases, the fine cover drawings of E.R. Parker belied the standard of the story. Yet, before very long, even E.R.P.'s work was to deteriorate and sink to a standard more in keeping with the average story matter.

Taken as a whole the war-time Blakes were quite good. Anthony Parsons and Gilbert Chester put in some very acceptable work, and, despite some strong criticism from various quarters to the contrary, John Hunter gave them excellent support. At his best, this veteran author could put over a story better than any of the Blake team, but, advancing years, dulling inspiration in their wake, has apparently dimmed the writer's one-time zest for the printed word to such an extent that the desire to continue narrating further adventures of Blake has now completely disappeared. Today there is a market for his work in the New Order SEXTON BLAKE LIBRARY, and, were he available, also, to contribute, room would almost certainly be found for the work of Gilbert Chester, whose crisp, straightforward writing would suit most admirably the demands of editor W. Howard Baker.

The period following the end of the war up to 1955 makes a somewhat depressing survey. There were some good stories, admittedly, but they were offset by a greater number of poor ones, and in one case, at least, a certain author, lacking inspiration, turned to some of his old material published years previously in the UNION JACK and used it as original work. With no attempt being made to brighten up the contents of the magazine by the introduction of small illustrations, editorial comments, readers' views, criticisms, etc., the S.B.L. was entirely dependent upon the quality of the story to keep it going - as it always had been, of course. A run of unsuccessful tales was therefore likely to result in circulation figures showing a marked decrease. From my own reactions to the stories published in the early fifties, I feel sure that those figures must have had a very unhealthy appearance, and that the old paper, born as long ago as 1915, was in a rut - a very deep rut - with its future in the balance.

A drastic change of policy was inevitable if the Library was to be saved - times had changed much more rapidly than the present team of Blake writers had been able to readjust their technique to meet it, and so they had to be replaced. As an illustration of outdated literary style, the case of W. Murray Graydon is a fitting example. Make no mistake, the elder Graydon was a very good writer whose work richly deserved the praise bestowed upon it by editors and discerning readers alike; but even in the year 1923 his style was essentially Victorian, and it was for the reason of his outmoded approach that undoubtedly swayed editor H.W. Twyman in his decision not to commission him for further stories in the UNION JACK. That the editor of the S.B.L. continued to use Graydon as one of his regular contributors gives some idea of the lack of editorial imagination which eventually nearly brought the paper to extinction. It is no criticism of Murray Graydon's writing ability to say that he simply could not adapt his style to the needs of the day; there were signs of a belated attempt to quicken the tempo a little in the months prior to his retirement, but even in his last year - 1930 - he was still a very much dated author. As with Graydon so in the case of Allan Blair and Sidney Drew. Mr. Twyman terminated the appearance of both these authors in the UNION JACK when he took over control, but like Graydon they both found a market for their work in the S.B.L. Neither quite so dated as Graydon perhaps, but both were far from up-to-date. Again, there is no decrying of their ability as writers, and, in common with many others, I welcomed their appearances in those old issues, and, in Allan Blair's stories particularly, got quite a pleasant kick out

of the quiet homely atmosphere of the Baker Street apartments he could so well convey. At the same time, his style was that of an era passed on and not calculated to attract the new and more restlessly critical generation, towards which the editor should have given his consideration, but which he obviously did not.

After the war, in response to a public demand for an altogether new and original style of story presentation, the S.B.L. continued, not only in the old familiar way, but with a marked deterioration in both literary and artistic departments. E.R. Parker's work fell off badly, turning out several covers well below his usual standard, and some of the stories published in the late '40's and early '50's were unbelievably bad. In the presentation of the contents of the magazine, the lack of any sort of editorial comment, the unchanging supporting items, an atmosphere was born - an atmosphere of disinterest and neglect. It was as if those in the editorial sanctum had resigned themselves to the paper's fate, and, unable to rouse themselves from their lethargy, were watching helplessly its slide into the depths of eternity.

That was the position of affairs in 1955. In November of that year a new name - that of W. Howard Baker - appeared on the cover of the S.B.L. for the first time. Of paramount importance was the fact that this author had just taken over office as editor of the Library. The end of the year, however, saw no signs of the big changes which were even then being planned for 1956, nor of the bombshell which was soon to be dropped, to give rise to controversy and wrath never before experienced in the history of the magazine - or, come to that, of any other periodical published by the Amalgamated Press. Neither did the two Howard Baker stories which ended the year give any indication of the speed-up which was to be a hallmark of future Blake stories; in fact, they did not differ to any great extent from the stories which had preceded them, being little more than average matter.

By this time E.R. Parker had gone, and the covers were being designed by new and unknown artists who succeeded only in completely destroying that intimately friendly atmosphere which E.R.P. had built up around the Baker Street precincts during the many years he had been commissioned to do the covers. Exonerated from the criticism is that particular artist who drew the cover of issue No. 348 depicting a sinister looking individual on the step of Blake's modest-fronted house in Baker Street. That cover besides being very well drawn had a breath of old-time atmosphere about it that brought back memories of certain incidents which had taken place on that very doorstep in earlier chronicled adventures of Sexton Blake and Tinker.

Alas! that illusion was soon to be shattered - completely and for all time, in a matter of a few months, when suddenly and without warning, Blake was moved from Baker Street into spacious and luxurious offices in Berkeley Square. In these palatial surroundings he was not alone, for, besides Tinker, there was a lovely secretary, a demure and pretty receptionist, and a cool, efficient, middle-aged typist, who brewed excellent tea at the appointed intervals and looked after the firm generally. It was a drastic change in policy, the suddenness of which had quite a demoralising effect on those who desired nothing so much as to remember with affection the Blake and Tinker of their initiation period, not to mention the devoted and motherly housekeeper, Mrs. Bardell, who roamed contentedly the confines of the Baker Street apartments, serenely happy in the task of looking after the requirements of her celebrated employers.

Anger and resentment at the violent break in tradition over-ruled everything else, little pause was given to reflect if and why such a change was necessary, and an unfortunate and well-meaning editor was kept dodging the missiles of wrath for many weeks, as feelings ran high and bitter through the ranks of the Blake colony. But, obviously, no such change-over would have been contemplated had Blake in his old character and the S.B.L. in its previous form been cruising harmoniously in untroubled

waters. But, most definitely, they were not; in fact, both were drifting perilously close to the rocks and skilled navigation was essential if both were to survive. That Mr. Howard Baker steered clear of disaster is justification of his policy for a new order in the publication of the investigations of Sexton Blake, Detective. To argue that it would be better if the S.B.L. ceased altogether rather than continue to portray him as a modern private-eye is an altogether wrong attitude to adopt towards the last of our popular papers, which had its genesis way back in 1915. To have survived two wars and then to be pushed into oblivion by lack of support and through the agency of those who had helped to make the magazine the success it was would have been ironical indeed.

Much has already been written - in terms of denunciation, chiefly - of those little sexy situations which were introduced into some of the early novels of the new order. Objections were also obviously directed against certain words used in connection with the description of certain parts of the female form divine, for these words have ceased now to appear for several months, words in common use in both British and American crime novels. Between covers more dignified and expensive but in jackets no more attractive than the present day S.B.L. covers, one or two old-time Blake writers, working in other fields, use them freely, without protest from their admirers or restraint from their publishers. One writer, in particular, deservedly popular for his school and detective stories, is now presenting the exploits of a character clearly based on that of a creation he introduced and featured for many years before the war. But there is a noticeable difference in the treatment of his present stories. The plots have a familiar ring, perhaps, but, with shrewd appreciation of present day values, the author has completely rewritten the story from that which sprang from inspiration years previously. In those old stories sex was taboo; there was not even a feminine character in the whole narrative of some of them; but in all the writer's modern work a feminine character or two is always brought in. With them there invariably creeps in a sex element, not very pronounced, to be sure, but an element of it, nevertheless. The success of these stories justify the editor's policy in introducing a similar element into the S.B.L. It depends on how far you go, of course, but I consider he kept well within the bounds of what is judged decent to publish and what is not. The same cannot be said of other periodicals of a more flamboyant nature, whose stories are saturated with sex and brutality and are - amazingly enough! - highly successful, presenting an excellent insight of the modern generation's tastes in present day literature.

It is an editor's job to give the public what it wants - within reason, naturally; and this is what the new editor endeavoured to do. But his efforts to keep the S.B.L. flourishing met with repeated setbacks from a minority of established readers, who steadfastly refused to accept the new order and entirely failed or would not recognise the fact that in choosing between generations he had to consider, primarily, that which was still growing and not that which was dying out fast. Obviously the Library could not be kept going on the support of the dying remnants of the latter alone - the moderns in their growing numbers had to be given priority of service.

To those who know their Rookwood, a battle between Classicals and Moderns invariably ended in victory for the Classicals. Another victory was scored here, for there is no doubt that feelings ran so high that vigorous protests were made to the higher-ups on the A.P. This is only surmise, of course; but it seems obvious that it was so, because an emergency alteration was made in one story and one withdrawn altogether, after having previously been advertised as due for publication in the issues which appeared a month beforehand.

It was a situation without parallel in the long history of the magazine and

resulted thereafter in a general toning down of all future story matter. For a time, the enforced changes resulted in a string of moderate stories; that in which George Marsden Plummer was due to appear was obviously one of the banned issues, for, unlike Dr. Huxton Rymer, he never returned to the scenes of his previous disastrous attempts to outwit Sexton Blake. Perhaps this was just as well, for with the displeasing reaction suffered on reading the second Rymer story still fresh in mind, I think it would be just as well if the old characters were allowed to stay where they are - in the memory of those who still enjoy their memories of them.

To agree on present policy is not to suggest that the new order is above criticism. There have been changes which were not absolutely necessary, chiefly in the make-up of that old and affectionately remembered character, Detective-Inspector Coutts, of the C.I.D., New Scotland Yard, which I condemn most emphatically as being quite uncalled for. The old Coutts was a typical example of the British police official, dogmatic, courageous, human, his friendship and obvious affection for Sexton Blake, whose methods he professed to belittle and scoff at but whose assistance he was continually angling for, was one of the highlights of both UNION JACK and SEXTON BLAKE LIBRARY stories. With his bulldog tenacity of purpose, his scrubby red moustache, his jerky, impatient manner, he was an outstanding personality, and gave to the stories of Robert Murray (who created him) and Gwyn Evans (with whom he seemed a great favourite) a glitter that would not have been there had he been left out of them. And who has taken his place in the stories today? It is a Coutts who has been described as "tall" and with a "long, gloomy face". To generations both old and new he inspires no feelings of interest whatever in his new character; in fact, he resembles Grimwald of the Yard to the extent that it is unnecessary to feature both. I agree that Blake had to be modernised, that Tinker's character had to be readjusted somewhat to fit the modern setting, but am in total opposition to the change in Coutts' set-up, which has transformed him into a shadow of the character he once was. A little toning down in characterisation was all that was needed to fit him admirably into the modern orbit.

The total elimination of the old-time atmosphere of the Baker Street residence would be as equally regrettable as unnecessary, I feel. When Blake has, perforce, to seek solitude away from the hustle and bustle of London's busy streets, in order to wrestle with some knotty problem requiring much quiet reflection, the soothing calm of the old Baker Street house would be the ideal place in which to seek the necessary relaxation of mind and body to cope with it. With Mrs. Bardell alone to look after the house, Pedro would be the ideal companion to act as sort of watchdog over her.

To minds which have become saturated with all the modern things of life, the appliances we use, the entertainments we enjoy, sight of the new flats, houses and various buildings sprouting like mushrooms everywhere, there is a periodic urge in most of us to get away from it all, to flee to some old-world country village, or town, where time has stood still for many years, so to pause and drink in the tranquil beauty and peace of unfamiliar surroundings, in order that, for once in a while, at least, we can refresh our minds in a spasm of reminiscences. Something akin to that feeling strikes the modern reader occasionally when he, or she, comes across a reference to a certain old-time character, brought from the mists of the past, of a place where incidents of a previous old-time story occurred. Then the pleasant warmth of nostalgia acts as an acceleration to the interest, and that particular story assumes unexpected heights of merit. Therefore, I feel that it would be bad policy to completely destroy the old-world atmosphere which still lurks elusively about the precincts of Baker Street, and to which, maybe a few old-time readers are still clinging desperately, perhaps vainly, in the hopes that Blake will return to his former status.

Equally important is the margin of difference in the styles of the various

writers who comprise the Blake team of authors today. Jack Trevor Story and Martin Thomas are widely varied in their individual ways of presenting Blake, but the others follow too closely the same pattern to be easily identifiable as separate writers. We know that W. Howard Baker and Peter Saxon are one and the same, but Arthur Maclean, Edwin Harrison and Arthur Kent would too easily be suspected of being all the same writer were their stories published anonymously. To the discerning reader there is a difference, of course; but there is no gainsaying the fact that the modern style does lend itself to misinterpretation of this sort. An occasional interpolation by a Blake author of the old school, whatever his style, would infuse much needed variety into the stories, and well-tried writers, whose work has met with the appreciation of readers in the past, and which can by no means be termed as outdated, are Anthony Parsons, Geo. E. Rochester and Warwick Jardine. If George E. Rochester still retains that zest he conveyed in the stories of Blake he wrote for DETECTIVE WEEKLY, I would be pleased to see him as a regular contributor.

That recent inauguration, the Portrait Gallery, was an excellent idea, though one could be forgiven for doubting the wisdom of such a feature, when the alleged likeness to Sexton Blake was published as No. 1 in the series. One did expect a certain resemblance, however slight, to the old Blake, but Marc Stone's conception of the modern character could have coincided with but very few, if any, readers' mind picture of him. The editorial department must have been alive to this, too, for a second and much better illustration of Blake appeared a few months later, automatically cancelling out the first one.

In concluding this brief and by no means complete record of the birth of the New Order, the Blake critic has to face the all-important fact that the Service being of greater importance than the individual who is honoured to represent it, it must follow that the Library must come before Blake, even though his name on the cover obviously made it what it was. In a world totally different to the one in which it was born, the S.B.L. battles for survival, not yet, one feels, so firmly established as to allow a conscientious editor the luxury of sitting back relaxed in the comforting knowledge that so far as his paper is concerned he has nothing at all to worry about. But, there is evidence of a determined effort to achieve that happy circumstance, for new features are being planned for the New Year, including one on the lines of the old Round Table - in short, a reader's page for those who might feel inclined to air their views.

The old, lean, ascetic, briar-smoking Blake was a truly great character, killed off by the denizens of an unappreciative, atomic, rocket-soaring age; the new, rather more solid, somewhat satanic-looking Blake, a very likeable offspring, is left to carry on into 1959, in the very attractive set-up of the New Order.

The S.B.L. is now in its 44th year of issue, and never before in its long history has it been presented so attractively. It should be the earnest desire of all those who find in Blake a happy relaxation from the day's toil to see him, at the very least, into his half century of years.

Then in volume No. 19, in the 225th issue of the COLLECTOR'S DIGEST for the month of September 1965, the splendid accomplishment of a little magazine in recording unbrokenly, through fair weather and foul, the adventures of one particular character, can be given the recognition it so well and truly deserves!

* * * * *

THE BLACK EAGLE

By JOSIE PACKMAN

* * *

Throughout all the many years during which G.H. Teed wrote his wonderful stories for the U.J. and S.B.L., chiefly about his most famous characters Yvonne, Rymer, Plummer, Wu Ling etc., he also created some personalities the stories about whom one can only describe as "Gems of Characterisation".

One of these personalities was that mysterious individual known as "The Black Eagle". So far as I am aware there were only eight stories of the Black Eagle, two of which also featured that 'galaxy of stars' from the criminal world: Wu Ling, Prince Menes, Plummer and the Three Musketeers, with whom the Black Eagle joined forces to further his own ends.

The opening story of this short series appeared in Union Jack No. 1048 dated 10 November, 1923, under the title of "The Black Eagle".

.....A little more than twenty years previously a young English art student, John Hasford, arrived in Paris and soon became mixed up with a crowd of dissipated young people. During one of their wild parties something happened which hurled John Hasford from the happy-go-lucky life of the Latin Quarter into the worst living hell on earth - Devil's Island, the French penal settlement off the coast of French Guiana and truly one of the worst places in the world, both for prisoners and guards.

A terrible row had broken out during this last wild party, in the course of which one of the girls, Helen Merchardier, was murdered. This girl had been John Hasford's model and they had planned to be married shortly; instead of which he was accused of murdering her and, on the evidence offered at the trial, was found guilty and sentenced to life imprisonment on Devil's Island.

It was many years later that Sexton Blake uncovered the plot hatched by the Black Eagle's so-called friends, but only after he had discovered that the Black Eagle had escaped from French Guiana and returned to England under the name of David Stone, thence to commence exacting vengeance on the men who had sent him to that hell.

During those terrible years the Black Eagle had acquired many strange accomplishments, one of which being the ability to break a man's neck with his own bare hands - hands that were so strong they could tear three packs of cards in half with one movement. It was in fact this very thing that first brought him to the notice of Sexton Blake.

In the course of his work, it was Blake's habit to visit many of the secret haunts of the City. His knowledge of these places was a great help to him, for these haunts were a link between himself and criminal night life. A secret gaming club in Dover Street was one such, and on this particular night when David Stone was present he was observed by Blake to absent-mindedly tear in half several packs of cards. At that time Blake was only mildly interested, but on leaving the club that night he saw this strange man just ahead of him, and being rather intrigued he followed and saw the man turn into a narrow passage leading to Curzon Street. It occurred to Blake that in all probability the stranger lived either in Curzon Street or one of the many streets in that area, so he dismissed the matter from his mind and made his way home.

But he would have been vastly interested had he seen what happened after David Stone reached Curzon Street.

On arriving at a block of flats, he entered and waited in the darkened hall

until he heard the sound of approaching footsteps. A moment later a man entered the hall and began to feel for the light switch, but before his groping fingers could reach it a pair of strong hands gripped him round the throat. A sharp twist to the left, another to the right, an almost imperceptible click, a faint sobbing sigh, and the man who had entered last fell to the floor - his neck broken as clean as if a gallows had been sprung beneath him.

The Black Eagle had exacted vengeance on one of his betrayers!

When, that following morning, Sexton Blake read of a man found dead at the foot of the stairs with his neck broken, he was no more interested than many other readers. Later that morning, however, he received a visitor, a Mr. Bramwell Chester, who turned out to be one of the men whose evidence had helped to send John Hasford to Devil's Island. The man who had been killed the previous night was Geoffrey Howland, another of the wild crowd at that tragic party of long ago. Chester, now fearing for his own life, had come to Blake for protection and to ask him to find the killer who was hunting them down. He related to Blake his version of what had happened those many years ago. But during his story Blake had the impression that something was wrong, and having promised Chester to look into the matter he decided to seek out the truth.

The first step was a visit to Paris where, of course, he was well known to the French Surete, having been instrumental in helping them many times in the past. Thus, it was an easy matter for his request to read all the papers on John Hasford's trial to be complied with. A close perusal of the reports gave Blake the information he sought - the names of all those present at the time of the murder; and, as the French police keep full dossiers, he learned everything that was known about those young art students.

One name in particular arrested Blake's attention, the other girl mentioned at the trial - Camille Desmoulins. It appeared that this girl too had been a model for John Hasford, and also bitterly jealous of the murdered girl.

Blake decided to investigate this angle and see what had happened to Camille, and on enquiring of the police as to her whereabouts he soon obtained that information. It appeared that Camille Desmoulins had sunk to the lowest dregs a human being can reach - a cocaine addict - living in an indescribably filthy hovel and existing only for the white powder known as "snow". Thus, amongst the hovels of the worst slums in Paris, Blake found her, and using the only means he could - a supply of cocaine - forced the truth from this poor remnant of a once beautiful woman. She, and she alone, had fired the gun and killed Helen Merchardier, but it was the other five men present that night who had rigged the evidence which sent John Hasford to that twenty years of living hell. And now, under the guise of David Stone the artist, the man also known as the Black Eagle had returned to London to exact vengeance.

Already, on his journey from South America, he had killed two of his betrayers, and in London retribution had speedily overtaken another.

Blake, however, knew the truth, and he returned to London determined to stop any further killings. He had no idea where the man known as David Stone was living, so, accompanied by Tinker, he again visited the gaming club where he had first seen Stone. They find him there, and Tinker is put on the job of tracking the man to his lair.

But Tinker is caught napping, and on Blake's return to Baker Street he finds the Black Eagle calmly awaiting him. Blake tells him the whole story of his investigations and the name of the actual killer of Geoffrey Howland, adding that there must be no more killings, as none of these men were actually guilty of the murder of the model.

He also goes on to say that he is not a watch-dog for the police - they must find their own criminals - but that the Black Eagle, although a much wronged man, must kill no more.

The two men then walk to a house in a quiet crescent off the Edgware Road, where Tinker is being detained.

That same night, David Stone the artist dropped from sight.....

But in the near future the Black Eagle was to cross Blake's path again.....

Although the Black Eagle had received good advice and great leniency from his first encounter with Sexton Blake, he obviously found it very hard to forego his revenge. Twenty years of hell are not easily forgotten, and in addition to those who had sent him to Devil's Island there was one other, the man who had increased the misery of his life there - one Jules Vabour - who for many years had been in charge of the penal settlement. But Vabour had fled from France with the money he had embezzled, accompanied by the woman who was eventually to bleed him of every penny - the infamous Madame Goupolis, associate of Prince Menes the head of the White Flag Society in Egypt.

It was, therefore, Madame Goupolis whom the Black Eagle had first to track down and then, in some way, force to tell him where Jules Vabour was and the name under which he was masquerading. Thus it came about, that through his connection with Madame Goupolis the Black Eagle was incited to join forces with some renegade Englishmen known to be plotting with Prince Menes for the overthrow of the British in Egypt. The Black Eagle had no patriotism left, and hating France as he now did he welcomed the opportunity of joining these criminals. This adventure is related in S.B.L. (2nd series) No. 19, dated 31 October, 1925, entitled "The Great Canal Plot" (subsequently reprinted in No. 590). As this story must be very well known, it is unnecessary for me to recount it. Needless to say the plot was foiled by Sexton Blake and Tinker, working in collaboration with Lawrence Malone, an old friend of Blake, Malone being a famous explorer and at times a most trusted agent of the British Government.

After this failure the Black Eagle returned secretly to London and allowed his house, in a secluded crescent off the Edgware Road, to become the headquarters - for the time being - of that ruthless gang of criminals which included Prince Menes, Wu Ling, George Marsden Plummer and The Three Musketeers, working on behalf of the mystery millionaire Mathew Cardolak. The further machinations of these criminals are related in S.B.L. (2nd series) No. 35, dated 27 February, 1926, "The Case of the Mummified Hand", in which war is actually declared against Sexton Blake. The Black Eagle has no real hatred of Blake as a man, only for what he represents - a staunch upholder of the law, against which the "Man from Devil's Island" has decided to fight, having allowed his desire for vengeance to overcome his better instincts. The only person for whom the Black Eagle had any affection was his brother, Stephen Hasford, that poor, hideously-shapen creature with the voice of a pure-sounding bell, who worshipped the Black Eagle. Never were two brothers so unlike in their outward appearance; but both had been bitterly hurt by their experiences in the past.

As a boy Stephen had run away to sea, and his ill-treatment by bullying seamen had changed what had been simple deformity into the grotesque, ape-like creature John Hasford had found on his return to England. It was, in fact, the sufferings of his brother on top of his own bitter experiences that made the Black Eagle's desire for vengeance over-ride his better self.

The remaining clashes between the Black Eagle and Sexton Blake are related in the following stories: "The Case of the Pink Macaw", S.B.L. (1st series) No. 371, dated 31 March, 1925; "Under the Eagle's Wing", S.B.L. (2nd series) No. 21, dated 30 November,

1925; "The Secret of the Bottle", U.J. No. 1092, dated 13 September, 1924, which tells of Sexton Blake's second meeting with John Hasford; "The Monte Carlo Mystery", U.J. No. 1122, dated 11 April, 1925, in which John Hasford meets Madame Goupolis; and finally "The Adventure of the Bowery Tar Baby", U.J. No. 1170, dated 13 March, 1926, a story with a setting in that fabulous city of New York where Blake and Tinker track down the Black Eagle from the scene of his crime in Wall Street to the notorious Hell's Kitchen, home of the New York gangsters.

With this story the Black Eagle passes from the scene, and one is left wondering why the creator of such a wonderful character did not continue to write of his exploits.

Such, then, is the story of the Black Eagle.

Although the series is short - merely eight adventures - the characterisation is so powerful that one is left with no uncertainty that G.H. Teed was the "Master of them All".

* * * * *

(Note: The stories as published in the S.B.L. and U.J. were not put out datively in chronological sequence. Correctly in their order they are as follows: U.J. 1048; U.J. 1092; S.B.L. (1st S.) 371; U.J. 1122; S.B.L. (2nd S.) 21; S.B.L. (2nd S.) 19; S.B.L. (2nd S.) 35; U.J. 1170.)

(cont'd from page 112)...

WILLIAMS, JOSEPH SCOTT, 99 Smyth Rd., Bristol, 3. (Age 42). Technical College Lecturer.
Groups 5 (a),(d),(e),(b),(c); 7 (a),(b); 6 (a),(c),(b); 4; 9; 8; 10.

WILLISON, FRANK A., 49 Longmoor Rd., Halesowen, Worcs. (Age 57). Tool Progress Chaser.
Groups 2; 4; 6 (b).

WILSON, ROBERT, 100 Broomfield Rd., Glasgow, N.1. (Age 59). Medical Practitioner.
Groups 5 (a),(b),(d),(e),(c); 6 (a); 8.

WOOD, JOHN PETER, Nostaw, 328 Stockton Lane, York. (N). (Age 44). Journalist.
Groups 7 (a); 6 (b); 5 (a).

*WORSELL, EBENEZER, J., 39 Footshill Rd., Hanham, Bristol. (L). (Age 42). Salesman, Cinephotography. Group 5 (a),(d),(e),(b). Has been reading Hamilton papers since 1928. Started collecting Holiday Annuals 1938. Requires 1920 and 1930 to complete set. In 1953 started collecting S.O.Ls. (164 to date) - Magnets (500 approximately), Gems 50. Thinks it a most absorbing hobby.

WRIGHT, CHARLES, 12 Ashburnham Place, Greenwich, London, S.E.10. (L). (Age 53).
Hospital Attendant. Groups 5 (b); 6 (a); 3; 2; 7 (a); 9.

WRIGHT, OLIVE, 12 Ashburnham Place, Greenwich, London, S.E.10. (L). Group 6 (all).

FOR EXCHANGE: 100 Magnets, mostly pre-1934. Also 40 S.O.Ls. (1937-8) and 50 Gems 1937-8).

WANTED IN EXCHANGE: Magnets prior to No. 517 and Populars (New Series) 101 to 568, especially Nos. 380 and 381. Please state exchanges available and send S.A.E. for lists to:-

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The Collectors' Who's Who?

Compiled by HERBERT LECKENBY

Old Boys' Book Club Branches: London (L); Northern (N); Midland (M); Merseyside (Mer.); Sydney, Australia (Aust.).

Groups: 1. Victorian Papers; 2. Early 20th Century; 3. Aldines; 4. Captain, Boys' Own Paper, Chums and similar papers; 5. "Hamilton" Papers, (a) Magnet, (b) Gem, (c) Penny Popular, (d) Schoolboys' Own Library, (e) Holiday Annual; 6. (a) Union Jack, (b) Sexton Blake Library, (c) Detective Weekly; 7. (a) Nelson Lee Library, (b) Monster Library; 8. Between Two Wars (Champion, Thriller, Ranger, etc.); 9. Comics; 10. School-girls' Own Library, School Friend, Schoolgirls' Weekly, etc.

Collectors' favourites appear in order of preference.

* Denotes new member.

ADAM, BASIL, 28, Derwent St., Newcastle-on-Tyne, 5. Laboratory Assistant.

Group 5 (a),(d).

ADLEY, DEREK JOHN, 100 Coles Crescent, South Harrow, Middlesex. (L). (Age 31).

Accounts Stock Controller. Groups 5(a),(b); 7(a); 6(b); 5(d),(c); 6(a); 5(e); 10; 7(b).

ALLEN, LEONARD M., 13 Viking Rd., Southbourne, Bournemouth, Hants. (Age 52). Groups 4;

7 (a); 9.

ALLISON, GERALD, 3, Bingley Rd., Menston, Nr. Ilkley, Yorks.(N).(Age 53).Groups 5 (d),

(a), (b); 9. The Northern Section O.B.B.C. Library still requires some Magnets between 900 and 1300. Also Greyfriars S.O.Ls. Best prices paid. Please help!

ALLISON, MARY, 29, Eden Crescent, Leeds, 4. (N). (Age 41). Bank Clerk. Groups 5 (a),

(d), (e), (b); 10.

AUCKLAND, CHARLES K., 20, Chiltern Rd., Sheffield, 6. (N). Groups 7 (a); 5 (a), (b),

(d), (e); 10.

BAKER, ANTHONY P., The Vicarage, Reigate, Surrey. (L). (Age 20). Groups 4; 5 (a).

BAKER, CHARLES, 7 Marine Drive, Waterloo Port, Caernarvon, North Wales. Groups 5 (b),

(a), (c); 2; 3. Is anxious to obtain Boys' Herald, Vol. 6.

BANKS, CYRIL DUDLEY, 14, Felcote Ave., Dalton, Huddersfield, Yorks. (N). (Age 49).

Wages Clerk. Groups 7 (a); 5 (b),(a); 6 (b),(a).

BANKS, GERTRUDE, 14 Felcote Ave., Dalton, Huddersfield, Yorks. Housewife. Group

6 (b), (a).

BARLOW, HARRY, 37 Crestfield Crescent, Elland, Halifax, Yorks. (N). (Age 48). Printer.

Group 5 (a).

BEARDSSELL, FREDERICK CLIFFORD, "Plymstock," Ross Ave., Davenport, Stockport, Cheshire.

(N). (Age 54). Master Window Cleaner. Group 5 (a),(d),(b).

- BELLFIELD, J.F., 24, Graingers Lane, Cradley Heath, Staffs. (Mid.) Groups 5 (all); 7 (a),(b).
- BENTLEY, J. BREEZE, "Wyvern," Hawkesworth Lane, Guiseley, Leeds. (N). Group 5 (a),(b), (d).
- BENNETT, RAYMOND V., 64 Dudley Rd., Tipton, Staffs. (L). (Mid.) (Age 42). Chief Clerk. Groups 5 (a); 7 (a); 6 (a); 5 (b).
- BILHAM, WILFRED, 20 Appleby Place, Halton Moor, Leeds, 15. (N). (Age 44). Machinist. Groups 5 (a),(b),(e),(d); 4; 6 (b); 7 (a); 9.
- BLIGHT, EDWARD, "Treneglos," 12, Trevarthian Rd., St. Austell, Cornwall. (L), (Age 57). Engineer, Retired. Groups 3; 5 (a),(b),(e); 6 (a),(c); 7; 8 (Thriller).
- BLYTHE, Rbt. 2 Oxford Pl. Press Rd., Neasden, London, N.W.10. (L). (Age 44). Storekeeper. Groups 7 (a); 5 (a); 6 (E.S. Brook's stories only).
- BRADSHAW, W.H., 1204, W. 94th St., Los Angeles, 44, Calif., U.S.A. Group 6 (all). Particularly interested in early pink cover U.Js.
- BRANTON, W. LESLIE, 63, Thoresby St., Hull. (L). Commercial Artist. Group 5 (a),(e).
- BRETHERTON, T.P., Heskin, Chorley, Lancs. Groups 2; 1; 9.
- BRIGGS, GODFREY, Public Hospital, Rotorua, New Zealand. (Age 64). Hospital Dispenser. Interested in all groups, but particularly the Amalgamated Press papers of early 20th Century.
- BRIMMELL, RONALD ARTHUR, "The Garden House," Saxonbury, St. Mary's Rd., Long Ditton, Surrey. (Age 41). Antiquarian Bookseller. Groups 1; 4.
- BROMLEY, GEORGE, "Holeywell," Estoria Ave., Wigston Magna, Leicester. (Age 37). Trade Union Officer. Groups 5 (all?); 7 (a),(b).
- BROWN, RAYMOND E., 54, Longreach Rd., Liverpool, 14. (Age 30). Groups 5 (all); 6 (all); 8; 9.
- BROYD, DENNIS, 10 Bean Rd., Bexley Heath, Kent. (Age 32). Economist. Group 5 (a),(b), (d).
- *BRUETON, ARTHUR FREDERICK, 20 Warwick Ave., Staines, Middlesex. (L). (N). Groups 7 (a); 6 (a),(b); 5 (d).
- *BUGLASS, LESLIE J., 18 Esmond Place, Tenafly, New Jersey, U.S.A. (Age 41). Average Adjuster (Marine Insurance). Group 5 (a),(b),(d). Is the author of "General Average and Marine Insurance in the United States" (Witherby & Co., Ltd., London). New collector primarily interested in obtaining a basic collection of Magnets. Formerly of Newcastle-on-Tyne.
- BURROW, RONALD, "Burrowmede," 164 High St., Yeadon, Leeds. (Age 48). Market Gardener. Groups 7 (a); 8; 5 (b); 2.
- BUSH, JOHN W.A., 32 Walden Ave., Chislehurst, Kent. (Age 47). G.P.O. Technician. Groups 6 (a); 5 (a); 7 (a); 8 (Champion). Is still anxious to obtain 'Champions' Nos. 14,15,38 to 52. Also Union Jacks, years 1924 to 1933. Correspondence requested. All letters answered.
- BYRNE, F.G., 33 Roles Grove, Chadwell Heath, Romford, Essex. (Age 33). Schoolmaster. Groups 5 (a),(d),(e),(b),(c); 4; 6 (c),(b),(a); 7 (a),(b); 8. Requires Collectors' Digest 3A; S.P.C. 1 to 40; Magnets, bound vols. 1507-1558. Also 1458,1469,1470,1475, 1476,1478. Boys' Own between 1935 and 1940. Also interested in Holiday and Sexton Blake Annuals.
- CARBIN, ARTHUR, 22 Wentworth Rd., Overslade Estate, Rugby, Warwicks. (Age 38). Machine Tool Setter. Groups 5 (a),(b),(d),(e); 6 (b); 8; 7 (a); 5 (c); 10; 6 (a),(c).
- CAREY, JOHN ROBERT, 41, Aberdeen Rd., West Hartlepool, Co. Durham. (L). Joiner. Groups 5(a),(b),(d),(c),(e).
- CARTER, ERNEST CHARLES, 2 Cooper St., Kingsford, N.S.W., Australia. (Aust.) (Age 47). Clerk, Dept. of Army. Groups 7 (a),(b),(c. Nugget Lib.); 6 (all); 5 (all); 4 (Captain). Still requires Nelson Lee Libs. old series Nos. 1 - 100, years 1915-16. (cont'd)...

- To complete set will pay very good prices.
- CASE, FRANK, 4, Dee St., Liverpool, 6. (Mer.) (Age 52). Groups 5 (a); 1; 5 (b),(c); 2; 3.
- CHAMBERS, W.E., 83 Orme Rd., Bangor, North Wales. Porter. Groups - All.
- CHAMPION, WILLIAM, 13 Drayton Rd., Reading, Berks. (Age 49). Manager Engineering Works. Groups 5 (b); 7 (a); 5 (a).
- CHECKLEY, PETER J., 18, Tarlington Rd., Coundon, Coventry. (Age 24). Group 8 (Bullseye, Surprise); 5 (b),(d),(c); 6 (a); 7 (a).
- CHURCHILL, CHARLES H., 103 Sidwell St., Exeter. (Age 49). Tobacconist and Confectioner. Groups 7 (a),(b); 6 (a). Would appreciate offers of Nelson Lee Libs. old series, Nos. 12,15,16,17,31-33,73,76,77,80,81,84-86,88,90,92-95,98,102,113.
- CLOUGH, WILLIAM H., 3 Fonthill Grove, Sale, Cheshire. (Age 57). Telephone Engineer. Groups 3; 2; 6 (a); 4; 9.
- *COHEN, CECIL H., 21 Highclere Rd., Crumpsall, Manchester, 8. (Age 36). Groups 5 (all); 8. Has about 100 assorted magazines. Been collecting about 12 months. Would like to obtain any copies of "Bullseye".
- COLBY, VICTOR EDWARD, 8 Beresford Ave., Beverly Hills, N.S.W., Australia. (Aust.) (Age 42). Chartered Engineer. Group 6 (all). Needs S.B. Annual, No. 4; S.P.C. 3,8, 10,23; D.W. 218; Penny Popular (1st) 69; Penny Pictorial 428-9,522,524-5,530-3; Pluck 592-9; Early Dreadnoughts; U.J. 856.
- COOK, JAMES W., 32 Pilgrim's Way, Wembley, Middlesex. (Age 50). Films Records Clerk. Group 7 (a),(b).
- COOK, JOHN R., 178 Maria St., Benwell, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 4. Groups 7 (a); 5 (d),(a); 7 (b); 9.
- COOKE, MARGARET, A., 10 Ashdene Rd., Withington, Manchester, 20. (N). Group 6 (b),(a).
- COOK, RONALD, 190 Crowborough Rd., London, S.W.17. (Age 36). Groups 5 (all); 8 (Ranger, Bullseye, Surprise).
- COPEMAN, ERIC VICTOR, 50 Ruby St., Marrickville, N.S.W., Australia. (Age 41). Groups 6 (b),(a),(c); 8 (Thriller); 7 (a); 5 (a),(c),(b),(e),(d).
- COPPING, GEORGE, 104 Mayfield Rd., Swaythling, Southampton. Groups 2; 5 (b),(c). Specially interested in Jack, Sam and Pete stories.
- CORBETT, JACK, 49 Glyn Farm Rd., Quinton, Birmingham, 32. (Mid.) Group 5 (a),(b),(e).
- CORBETT, MADGE, 49 Glyn Farm Rd., Quinton, Birmingham, 32. (Mid.) Groups 5 (a),(b),(e); 6 (b).
- COX, EDMUND W., 29 Carisbrooke Drive, Bitterne, Southampton. (L). (Age 30). Insurance Clerk. Groups 5 (a),(b),(d),(e); 9; 10; 7 (a),(b); 4; 6 (all).
- CROLLIE, RONALD J., 17 Osborne Rd., Hornchurch, Essex. (L). (Age 41). Company Director (Engineering). Groups 5 (a),(b); 7 (a); 5 (e),(c); 6 (a).
- DAINES, COLIN, 209 Mile Cross Lane, Norwich, Norfolk. (Age 48). Electrical Draughtsman. Groups 7 (a); 5 (a),(b).
- DARWIN, WILFRED, 70 Western Rd., East Dene, Rotherham, Yorks. Gardener. Groups 6 (a); 8 (Hulton's Boys' Magazine).
- DAVEY, EDWARD JOHN, 26 Bourton Rd., Olton, Solihull, Warwicks. (Mid.) (Age 57). Company Registrar (Assistant). Groups 5 (a); 4.
- *DAVIS, JOHN P., 5212 Clarendon St., Vancouver 16, B.C., Canada. (Age 38). Commercial Printing Plant Owner. Groups 4 (Chums); 5 (a),(e); 8; 5 (d); 6 (a). Is anxious to obtain "Chums" Vols. 2,3,4,5,6, and 1911, all in good condition, as replacements. Bound vols. of any mags. in Group 8. Bound vols. of Magnets, 1930 to end. Collection at present contains about 500 odd and ends from 1930 - 1940 period. Chums collection complete except for three 'new' ones and four or five replacements for battered copies. Special pride a 3½ years run of Modern Boy in seven vols. mint. Considers hobby wonderful, truly relaxing in these days of tension and crises.

- DAWKINS, CHARLES DERRICK, 5 Kingsbury Drive, Aspley Park, Nottingham. (Age 34). Clerk. Group 5 (a).
- DEASY, JAMES C., 11 Sallymount Gardens, Ranelagh, Dublin, Ireland. (Age 26). Clerk in Aer Lingus. Group 5 (a),(b).
- DE SOYSA, A.C.H., 4 Boyd Place, Colombo, 3, Ceylon. (L). (Age 41). Company Director. Group 5 (a),(e).
- DICKENS, RONALD, 10 Petersfield Drive, Whiteheath, Blackheath, Birmingham. (Mid.) (L). (Age 46). Groups 5 (all); 6 (b).
- DOBSON, TOM A., P.O. Staff, Brighton, Victoria, Australia. (Age 52). Federal Public Servant. (P.M.G. Dept.) Groups 5 (b),(a),(d),(e),(c); 6 (all); 7 (a),(b); 3; 4. Offers Magnet Double No. 461 "House on the Heath" and 10/- for Gem Double No. 359 "Talbot's Christmas". Will also pay 20/- for Gem No. 460 "In the Seats of the Mighty".
- DOWLER, HARRY, 86 Hamilton Rd., Longsight, Manchester, 13. (Age 66). Commercial Teacher. Groups 2; 4; 6.
- DOW, JAMES, "Romba," Kingswell, Aberdeenshire. (Age 44). Shopkeeper. Groups 5 (all); 7 (a),(b).
- EAMES, ELIZABETH PAMELA, 14 Stonehouse Lane, Combe Down, Bath. (L). (Age 29). Civil Servant. Groups 5 (a),(b),(d),(e); 10; 8 (Champion).
- EVERETT, C.A., P.O. Box 7, Brinkworth, South Australia. (Age 54). Farmer. Groups 5 (a),(c),(d); 7 (a).
- FARISH, ROBERT, 24 English St., Longtown, Cumberland. (Age 57). Groups 5 (b),(c),(a),(d),(e).
- FAYNE, ERIC, Excelsior House, 23 Grove Rd., Surbiton, Surrey. (L). Groups 5 (all); 6; 8.
- FLEMING, WALTER, 58 Boardman Ave., Chingford, London, E.4. (L). (Age 41). Shoe Cutter. Groups 7 (a); 5 (a); 6 (a); 5 (b); 6 (b).
- FLINDERS, (Miss) E.B., 18 Conquest Close, Stevenage Rd., Hitchin, Herts. (L). Illustrator. Group 5 (a),(b),(d),(c),(e).
- GANDER, WILLIAM H., 317 Bond St., Transcona, Manitoba, Canada. (L). (Age 60). Groups 2 (Boys' Friend); 5 (a).
- GEAL, JOHN W., 277 Kings Rd., Kingston-on-Thames, Surrey. (Age 37). Civil Servant. Groups 5 (a); 8 (4d. B.F.L. Capt. Justice stories); 7 (a). Wants particularly B.F.L. 4d Libs. Nos. 446,457,465,485,505,541,697. All Capt. Justice yarns.
- GILES, F. VICTOR, 6 St. Paul's Rd., Barking, Essex. (Age 35). Bookseller. (Mail Order). Group 5 (all).
- GOCHER, JOHN WOODWARD, Bevenagh, Abbey Rd., Sudbury, Suffolk. (Age 37). Ironmonger. Groups 8; 6 (all); 5 (all); 4; 3; 2; 9; 1.
- GODSAVE, RUEBEN JAMES, 35 Woodhouse Rd., Leytonstone, London, E.11. (L). (Age 48). Commercial Traveller. Groups 7 (a),(b); 5 (a).
- GOODHEAD, WILLIAM HENRY, 50 Porter Rd., Derby. (Age 41). Postal Worker. Groups 5 (a),(d); 6 (a),(b),(c).
- GOURLAY, NEIL C., 54 Grosvenor Drive, Whitley Bay, Northumberland. (Age 32). Groups 5 (a),(b),(d); 7 (a); 6 (a),(c).
- GRAY, BOB, "Pennsylvania," Church Stretton, Salop. (Age 54). Nurseryman. Groups 5 (a),(c),(b),(e),(d); 6 (b),(a); 7 (a).
- *GREAVES, JACK, 29 Lindsay Ave., Blackpool, Lancs. Group 7 (a). Has been collecting Nelson Lees for about twelve months. At present is specialising in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd New Series. Would be glad of help from other collectors. Is also a keen physical culturist.

- GREENWOOD, ROLAND RICHARD, 63 Griffith's Drive, Ashmore Estate, Wednesfield, Staffs. (Age 32). Fitter and Machinist. Groups 5 (a),(b),(d); 6 (c); 8; 9.
- GREGORY, NORMAN, 11 Emerson Rd., Harborne, Birmingham, 17. (Mid.) (Age 42). Accountant and Auctioneer. Groups - All.
- GRIFFIN, FRED, 2558 Grand Concourse, Bronx, 58, New York, U.S.A. (L). (N). Grocery Store Manager. Groups 8 (Boys' Friend 1917-1922); 7 (a); 5 (b). Wishes to obtain Boys' Friend Library, 1st series, No. 525 "The Sports of St. Clive's" and No. 473 "The Parting of the Ways".
- *GUEST, REGINALD, 5 Raleigh Gardens, Brixton Hill, London, S.W.2. (Age 33). Musician. Groups 4 (Captain, Chums); 5 (a),(e),(d); 6 (b),(c); 8; 5 (b); 6(a); 10; 7 (a); 5 (c); 9; 3; 2; 1. Is also anxious to obtain S.P.C. No. 33, and stories by Gunby Hadath and John Mowbray. Can exchange valuable cricket books for any of above if preferable.
- GUNN, JOHN, A.M.H.C.I., B/M Jaygee, London, W.C.1. Groups - All.
- HALL, WILLIAM, 46 Walder Rd., Hammondville, via Liverpool, N.S.W., Australia. (Aust.) (Age 53). Carpenter. Groups 3; 9; 5 (a),(b),(d),(e); 7 (a). Wishes to obtain Young Folks Tales, 1914 onwards. Lot 0' Funs to 1916. Any Christmas Double Numbers. Member of Golden Hours Club, Sydney.
- HALL, ALFRED L., 34 Compton Cres., Leeds, 9. (N). Clerk. Groups 3; 2; 6 (a),(b).
- HALL, LESLIE, 4 Valley Rise, Pollard Lane, Bramley, Leeds, 13. (N). Clerk. Groups 5 (a),(b),(d),(e); 7 (a); 6 (a).
- HARRIS, ARTHUR, "Caynton," Llanrhos Rd., Penrhyn Bay, Llandudno. Group 9 (1890 to 1914). Particularly wanted comics 1901-2-3.
- HARRISON, DAVID, Flat 6, 6 Pembroke Gardens, London, W.8. (L). (Age 29). Economist. Groups 5 (a),(d),(e); 4.
- HARRISON, WILLIAM, 24 Ebberston Terr., Leeds, 6. (N). (Age 55). Groups 5 (a),(b),(c), (d); 9.
- HOCKLEY, GEOFFREY, 308 Keyes Rd., New Brighton, Christchurch, New Zealand. Motor Cycle Dealer. Though not actually collecting interested in everything.
- HODGSON, RONALD, 5 Silver St., Newton Hill, Wakefield, Yorks. (N). (Age 33). Chief Clerk. Group 5 (b),(a),(d).
- HOLMES, HERBERT, 13 St. Luke's St., Barrow-in-Furness, Lancs. (Age 53). Clerk. Group 5 (a),(b). Has been a keen collector of coins for 20 years; has a big collection from 450 B.C. to present day. But about two years ago read a Gem story. It brought back happy boyhood memories and book collecting now takes first place. Now has 100 Gems and numerous Magnets, Nelson Lees, S.O.Ls., Boys' Friends etc.
- HOLT, BRIAN D., British Legation, Reykjavik, Iceland. (L). (Age 37). H.B.M. Vice Consul. Groups 5 (d); 7 (a); 5 (b),(a).
- HOPKINS, RAYMOND H., 725 Tenth Ave. North, Apt. B2, Seattle, 2, Washington, U.S.A. (L). (Age 39). Clerk. Groups 5 (all); 10.
- HUBBARD, ERNEST ALEXANDER, 58 South Bank Cres., Sheffield, 7. (N). (Age 52). Groups - All.
- HUBBARD, WILLIAM JOSEPH ALFRED, c/o Ministry of Agriculture, Private Bag, Kisumu, Kenya Colony, B.E.A. (L). (Age 38). Groups 7 (a); 5 (b),(a); 7 (b).
- HUGHES, E.V., 2 East Front Rd., Pagham Beach, Bognor Regis, Sussex. (Age 54). Provincial Newspaper Reporter. Groups 2; 5 (a),(b),(c); 6 (a),(b); 9.
- HUGHES, JACK SHERWOOD, 22 Herbert St., Gladstone, Queensland, Australia. (Age 35). Minister of Religion. Groups 5 (all); 7.
- HUMPHREYS, ERIC, "Oakdene" Boat Lane, Higher Irlam, Manchester. (N). (Age 44). Clerk. Group 5 (all). Is anxious to obtain Magnet No. 1174 of the Otto Van Tromp series. Will swcp S.O.Ls. Nos. 245 and 247 for this, or pay for it if desired.
- HUNTER, J.V.B. STEWART, 4 Lulworth Rd., Mottingham, London, S.E. 9. (Age 59). Groups 1; 2; 3.

- HUNTER, RONALD HENRY, c/o Royal Mail Agencies (Brazil) Ltd., Caixa Postal No. 366, Santos, Brazil. (L). Assistant Manager, Shipping Agency. Group 5 (a),(e),(d),(c),(b).
- HURRELL, JAMES W., "Glenisle," 10 Ilfracombe Gardens, Chadwell Heath, Romford, Essex. Progress Clerk. Groups 7 (a); 5 (a),(c),(e); 7 (b); 5 (d),(b); 6 (all).
- IMPSON, STANLEY, "Stanfield," Jerningham Rd., New Costessey, Norwich, Norfolk. (Age 61). Master Upholsterer. Groups 5 (a),(b),(e),(d); 4; 5 (c); 7 (a); 8; 6 (all); 2; 7 (b); 1; 3; 9; 10.
- INGRAM, ARTHUR JOHN, 93 Tettenhall Rd., Wolverhampton. (Mid.) (Age 51). Headmaster. Group 5 (all).
- IRALDI, JAMES C. 33/65 14th St., Long Island City, 6, New York, U.S.A. (L). (Age 51). Group 5 (all).
- JACK, JOHN, "Greyfriars," 5A Union Ave., Ayr, Scotland. (Age 37). Clerk. Group 5 (a),(b),(d).
- *JACOB, JOHN W., 32 Parchment St., Winchester, Hants. (Age 38). Shop Manager. Groups 7 (a),(b); 5 (d),(a). Is particularly interested in Nelson Lees, old and new series; Magnets 517-519,521,522,533-6,556 and any others. All Schoolboys' Own Libraries. Will pay reasonable prices. Is confident Magnets, Gems, Nelson Lees, etc., would find an excellent market if reprinted. Has no time for present day publications.
- JAMISON, WILLIAM, Lisnacree, Newry, Co. Down, Northern Ireland. (Age 56). Gardener. Groups 5 (all); 4 (Captain).
- JARDINE, WILLIAM W., 20 Spencer Rd., Caterham, Surrey. (L). (Age 43). Civil Servant. Groups 5 (all); 7 (a),(b); 6 (Gwyn Evans' stories only).
- JENKINS, ROGER MICHAEL, "The Firs," Eastern Rd., Havant, Hants. (L). (Age 33). Teacher. Group 5 (all).
- JEYES, JAMES A., 108 Adnitt Rd., Northampton. (Age 62). Group 2.
- JOHNSON, MARCUS, 164 Amesbury Ave., Streatham Hill, London, S.W.2. (L). (Age 51). Accountancy. Groups 8 (Boys' Friend); 7 (a); 5 (a),(b),(e),(d).
- JUKES, JOHN LESLIE, 3 Stafford Lodge, Crosby Rd., Westbourne, Bournemouth, Hants. (Age 57). Black and White Artist. Groups 5 (b),(b),(c); 6 (a); 9 (all kinds).
- KEENA, ARNOLD, 11 Pearl Ave., Epping, N.S.W., Australia. (Aust.) (Age 42). P.M.G. Senior Technician. Groups 9; 7 (a); 5 (a); 6 (b); 8; 3.
- KINGSTON, JACK, 3 Gaven Terr., Torpoint, Cornwall. (Age 39). Electrical Fitter. Group 5 (a),(a),(b),(e).
- KIRBY, GORDON J., c/o Public Library, Swanston St., Melbourne, Victoria, Australia. Groups 5 (all); 10.
- KNIGHT, FREDERICK STANLEY, c/o Halon & Co. Ltd., 288 High St., Cheltenham, Glos. (Age 44). Shop Manager. Groups 7 (a); 5 (a),(b). Requires Nelson Lees, 3rd series, 1,7,20. Magnets 1553,1554,1556,1609,1611,1613-16. Gems 1331,1332,1335-7,1340,1342-3. Boys' Friend Lib. (4d) 43,45,81. Also Capt. Justice, Ken King and Jack, Sam & Pete stories.
- KUPNER, MAURICE, 56 Newick Rd., Clapton, London, E.C.2. (L). (Age 51). Wood Carver. Group 5 (b),(a),(c). Greatly interested in the illustrations.
- LACK, HAROLD H., 4 Rushmere Rd., Northampton. 'Phone Northampton 4792. (Age 46). Local Government Officer. Groups 10; 5 (a),(b),(e),(c),(d); 4. Requires School Friends 1919-20; early School Friend Annuals; Schoolgirls' Own Libraries, any period. Holiday Annuals 1922,1929,1931-41 inclusive. Any books/magazines on early days of the cinema (pre 1925).
- *LANCAKE, DAVID, 104 Heathcote Rd., Manchester, 18. (N). (Age 43). Milling Machine Operator. Group 5 (a),(b),(d),(e). Has no collection. Only recently (cont'd)...

- discovered hobby and says he is content with anything Gerry Allison sends him from Northern O.B.B.C. Library. Also a keen Wodehouse fan (like Ted Davey and Jack Ingram of Midland O.B.B.C.)
- LANDY, ERIC R., 4 Nuneaton Rd., Dagenham, Essex. (Age 55). Commercial Traveller. Group 3. Still requires certain Jack Sheppards and Red Rovers.
- LAWRENCE, ERIC S., 10 Claremont Ave., Sunbury-on-Thames, Middlesex. (L). (Age 36). Development Engineer. Group 5 (a),(d),(b).
- LAY, FRANK VERNON, 167 Watford Rd., Harrow, Middlesex. (L). (Age 45). Co. Director Clothing Manufacturers. Groups 7 (a); 6 (a); 2; 1; 5 (a),(b); 4; 6 (c); 7 (b); 6 (b).
- LAY, CHRISTOPHER JAMES, 167 Watford Rd., Harrow, Middlesex. (Age 16). College Student. Group 5 (a),(b).
- LE BLANC, EDWARD T., 87 School St., Fall River, Mass., U.S.A. (Age 38). Position Classifier, Navy Dept. Group 1; 3; 2; 6 (a).
- LECKENBY, HERBERT, 12 Herbert St., Hull Rd., York. (Age 69). Retired Civil Servant. Groups - All.
- LETTEY, CLIFFORD, 27 Heather Close, Kingswood, Bristol. (L). Group 5 (all). Exchanges welcomed. Wanted Monster Libraries and S.O.Ls. Also Holiday Annuals, 1923-28-41. St. Jim's S.O.Ls. wanted numbers 152,172. Also Rookwood S.O.Ls. wanted.
- LITVAK, I.B., 58 Stanwell Rd., Ashford, Middlesex. (L). (Age 55). Tailor. Groups 5 (a),(b).
- LOFTS, W.O.G., 56 Sheringham House, Lisson St., London, N.W.1. (L). (Age 35). Engineering. Groups - All. Knows personally and meets on social occasions many editors, authors and artists of the past and present boys' papers. Is only too pleased to give any information to other collectors. Only requires six No. 1's to complete his collection of juvenile first issue.
- MACHIN, HUBERT F., 38 St. Thomas Rd., Moor Park, Preston, Lancs. School Teacher. Groups 5 (a); 8 (Boys' Friend); 5 (b),(c),(d); 6 (a),(b); 3; 7 (a),(b); 9; 4.
- MAGOVENY, EDITH, 65 Bentham St., Belfast. (Age 48). Groups 5 (a),(d),(c),(e); 7 (a),(b); 6 (b).
- MARTIN, BILL, 93 Hillside, Stonebridge Park, London, N.W.10. Dairyman. Groups 5 (all). Always has books to offer.
- MCCABE, ROBERT JACKSON, 16 St. Boswell's Terr., Dundee, Scotland. (Age 40). Reed Maker. Groups 5 (a),(b),(d),(e),(c); 6 (all). Would like to obtain some Football & Sports Libraries.
- MCCARTHY, RICHARD J., Wetlands, Augathella, Queensland, Australia. (Age 40). Grazier. Groups 8; 5 (a),(b). Is very anxious to obtain Champions from No. 130 to 340. Triumph No. 1 to 190. Also the last numbers of Pluck (1920's) Young Britain and Rocket.
- McFARLANE, JAMES, 102 Beith St., Glasgow, W.1. (Age 56). Groups 5 (a),(b),(d); 6 (a),(b); 5 (d); 10.
- McKIM, WILLIAM, Coxwold, York. Medical Practitioner. Groups 1; 2; 3; 4.
- McPHERSON, E., 1, St. John's Street, Wells, Somerset. (Age 42). Groups 7 (a),(b); 5 (a),(d).
- McROBERTS, GEORGE, 31 Ardenlee Drive, Cregagh, Belfast, Northern Ireland. (Age 57). Health Officer. Groups 5 (all); 7 (a).
- MORGAN, JOHN K., 58 Moorfield Rd., Great Crosby, Liverpool. (Mer.) (Age 49). Groups 5 (all); 7 (a),(b); 9.
- MORLEY, LAWRENCE, 147 Nr. Mills, Leabrooks, Alfreton, Derbyshire. (Age 32). Machine Plant Operator. Groups 5 (a),(b),(e); 8 (Pilots); 6 (b). Would like to obtain Double Numbers Magnets and Gems. Would like to obtain the Will Hay and Houdini stories in the Pilot.

- MORTIMER, ROBERT, 115 Walton Rd., East Molesey, Surrey. (L). (Age 57). Commercial Artist. Group 5 (a),(b),(d).
- *MOYSE, ARTHUR, 39 Minford Gardens, West Kensington, London, W.14. (L). (Age 44). Manual Worker. Groups 5 (a); 8; 9; 10; 6 (a); 7 (a); 3; 4; 1; 2. First bought a Magnet No. 1 for purely nostalgic reasons. Then the Gem. Gradually got together No. 1 copies of various boys' books. Has now about 200 first numbers and no regrets.
- MURTAGH, JOHN R., 509 Selwood Rd., Hastings, New Zealand. (Age 45). Entertainer and Theatre Projectionist. Groups 7 (a),(b); 5 (all); 6 (all).
- *NEILL, WILLIAM DAVAN, 258 Hornchurch Rd., Hornchurch, Essex. (L). Medical Practitioner. Groups 5 (a),(b); 7 (a). Main 'collecting interest' is the collection of Magnets. Possesses a complete run of them from 1220 to the end. Has also a considerable number below these (including some duplicates) and there are considerable gaps he is anxious to fill.
- NICHOLLS, VERA, 44 Grosvenor Place, Leeds, 7. Groups 10; 5 (a); 6 (a); 7 (a). Would like to obtain copies of Schoolgirls' Own between No. 1 to 400. Also Schoolgirls' Own Libraries featuring Morcove School stories.
- NICHOLLS, RONALD ALICK, The Grey House, Staunton Lane, Whitchurch, Bristol, 4. (Age 43). Groups 5 (a),(b),(d); 4 (Chums, B.O.P.). Wishes to obtain Magnets 1924-40. Good condition essential. Correspondence welcomed.
- *NICHOLLS, STANLEY, 7 Rome St., Canterbury, N.S.W., Australia. (Aust.) (Age 55). Groups 4; 6; 5 (b); 7 (a); 9; 6 (all). Collection contains almost complete run of 'Chums' from the first vol. to 1924. Almost complete run B.O.P. vols. from 1910 to 1922. Also odd earlier vols. Odd vols. Captain, Herbert Strang's Annual; The Australian Boys' Annual, etc. Specimen copies of many boys' papers. Would like to obtain 'Chums' 1914;1915;1916. Captains, 1914-1919 and 1922. Is a second hand bookseller and finds that very few old boys' books come to hand these days.
- O'HERLIHY, D.P., 17220 Gresham St., Northridge, Calif., U.S.A. Film Actor. Group 5 (a),(b),(d),(e),(c).
- O'SHEA, R.J., 8 Eve Rd., Leytonstone, London, E.11. (Age 43). Turf Accountant. Group 5 (a),(b),(d).
- *PARSONS, ROY, 10 Oaklands Ave., Totton, Nr. Southampton. (L). (Age 26). Statistician. Groups 7 (a); 5 (b),(a),(d). Wants particularly Nelson Lees (1st new series) Nos. 152,154,160-169,188,189. Gems 1437-1501. Has about 200 Gems and Magnets spread over years 1923-1940. Approx. 100 Nelson Lees, mostly 1st new series. Has only been collecting about a year and finds it a fascinating hobby. Would welcome correspondence with collectors with similar interests.
- PACKMAN, JOSEPHINE, 27 Archdale Rd., East Dulwich, London, S.E.22. (L). Civil Servant. Groups 6 (a),(b); 5 (b),(e). Particularly requires 1917 issues of Union Jack.
- PACKMAN, LEONARD, 27 Archdale Rd., East Dulwich, London, S.E.22. (L). (Age 53). Civil Servant. Groups 9; 7 (a); 5 (b); 6 (a); 7 (b) and all other groups. Still seeking any issues of "Chips" between 1st Jan. 1916 (No. 1322) and 28th Oct. (No. 1365). Will pay 10/- per copy.
- PARRATT, C. JAMES, 188 Compton Buildings, Goswell Rd., London, E.C.1. (L). Groups 7 (a),(b); 5 (all); 8 (Thriller).
- PATE (Miss) ELIZABETH JEAN, 8 Day St., Drummoyne, N.S.W., Australia. (Aust.) Life Insurance Clerk. Group 6 (b),(a),(c).
- PAYNE, RONALD WILLIAM, 3 Britain Cottages, Gayton, Northants. (L): (Age 38). Clock and Instrument Mechanician. Groups 7 (a),(b); 5 (a).
- PORTER, T.W., Old Fields, Corngreaves Rd., Cradley Heath, Staffs. (Mid.) Groups 7 (a),(b); 5 (all).

- POUND, A.G., St. Paul's Vicarage, 68 Finmore Rd., Birmingham, 9. (Age 56). Minister of Religion. Groups 5 (a),(b),(e),(d); 1; 2.
- PRAGNELL, NORMAN, 33 Brae St., Liverpool, 7. (Mer.) (Age 43). Groups 7 (a),(b); 5 (d), (St. Frank's stories only); 8 (Boys' Magazine, Boys' Realm).
- PRICE, H.C. NORTON, 22 Northdown Rd., Margate, Kent. (L). Master Grocer. Group 6 (b). Still requires many Boys' Friend Libraries.
- PRIME, BERNARD, 43 Mayfield Rd., Sanderstead, Surrey. (Age 57). Group 5 (a),(b).
- RANSOM, G.H., 207 Basingstoke Rd., Reading, Berks. (Age 55). Independent. Groups 5 (a),(b); 6 (a); 7 (a). Wants Double Numbers before 1920 Magnet, Gem, Union Jack, Nelson Lee, Popular, etc.
- *RAYBOULD, NORMAN WILLIAM, 248B Castlecroft Rd., Castlecroft, Wightwick, Compton, Nr. Wolverhampton, Staffs. (Age 40). Priest in the Church of England. Groups 5 (a),(b), (d),(e); 6 (c),(a), 7 (a), 8; 4; 3. Regrets disposing of a large collection of Magnets and Gems over 20 years ago. Has at present only three Magnets and two Gems. Says he never contemplated we should become so 'uncivilised' as to allow such magazines to cease publication.
- RAYNER, WILLIAM JOHN, Bank House, Clare, Suffolk. (Age 46). General Manager, Cinema Company. Group 5 (a),(b),(d),(c),(e). Requires Holiday Annual 1920.
- RICHARDSON, L.H.S., White House, 58 Southborough Rd., Bickley, Kent. (N). Group 5 (b), (a),(d).
- RILEY, GEORGE JAMES, 18 Adelaide St., Poulton, Wallasey, Cheshire. (Mer.) (Age 21). Junior Clerk. Group 5 (a),(b),(e),(d),(c). Is still trying to get a complete set of Holiday Annuals. At present needs those for 1920,1922,1923,1925,1929,1930,1933, 1936,1938.
- ROBERT, HORACE VICTOR, 12 Clairview Rd., Streatham, London, S.W.16. (L). Secretary L.C.C. Evening Institutes. Group 5 (all).
- RHODES, A.W., Chancery, British Embassy, Bonn, Fredrich-Ebert-Allee, Germany. (Age 44). Diplomat. Groups 5 (all); 6 (all).
- ROBINSON, J. Yorke, Cliff Pavilion Camp Site, Glenbervie Drive, Beltinge, Herne Bay, Kent. (Age 52). Caravan Site Proprietor. Groups 5 (e),(a),(b),(c),(d); 10. To complete collection of Holiday Annuals for daughter still requires those for 1925, 1926,1927,1931,1932,1935,1936,1937. Any reasonable price paid.
- ROUSE, RONALD E.J., 3 St. Leonard's Terr., Gas Hill, Norwich, Norfolk. (Age 36). Groups 6 (b); 1; 7 (1915-18 only); 6 (a),(c); 8; 2. Always has all kinds of books for sale and exchange. 12/6 each paid for the following Boys' Friend Lib. 3d. Nos. 10,199; Sexton Blake Lib. 21,24,27,35,43, 1st series and No. 69 2nd series.
- ROWLEY, LESLIE VICTOR, H.M. Political Agency, P.O. Box 2, Kuwait, Persian Gulf. (L). (Age 41). Foreign Service Officer. Group 5 (a),(b),(d),(e),(c). Is always pleased to hear from any member with similar interests. Returning to U.K. April 1959. Thanks London Club for keeping in touch.
- RUSSELL, BERYL, 4 Ashgrove Rd., Off Shady Lane, Great Barr, Birmingham, 22A. (Mid.) Groups 5 (all); 6 (b); 7 (a),(b).
- RUTHERFORD, FREDERICK G., Herbert Lodge, 3 Cotham Park North, Bristol, 6. (L). (Age 54). Company Director and Engineer. Groups 5 (a),(b),(d),(e); 7 (a),(b).
- SALMON, HAYDN EDWARD, 38 Warwick Rd., Ipswich, Suffolk. (Age 53). Civil Servant. Groups 7 (a); 9; 5 (a),(b). Is also interested in magazines 1915-35, Strand, Story-teller, Pearson's, Happy Royal and similar. Would like representative copy or two of each.
- SATCHELL, T.G., 63 Cantwell Rd., Plumstead, London, S.E.18. (Age 55). Butcher's Manager. Group 5 (a),(b).

- SELLARS, GEORGE, 1 Hesley Rd., Shiregreen, Sheffield, 5. (Age 57). Group 5 (a),(b),(c). Is interested in the Blue and White Gem Portrait Gallery (back page) also the Penny Popular Portrait Gallery. Would appreciate help in adding to his collection.
- SHARPE, HOWARD, P.O. Box 81, Box Hill, E.11., Victoria, Australia. Buyer. Groups 5 (a),(b),(d),(e),(c). A Greyfriars enthusiast, always interested and anxious to buy stories of the Hamilton schools.
- SHAW, JOHN R., 4 Brunswick Park, Camberwell, London, S.E.5. Assistant Works Manager. Groups 5 (b),(a),(e); 6 (a),(b); 7 (a). Is interested in all periods of Charles Hamilton's work. Desires to obtain certain Plucks dated 1909-10 containing stories of Tomsonio's Circus by Harry Dorrian.
- *SHELDON, MAX, 74 Oakfield Rd., Southgate, London, N.14. (Age 46). Life Assurance Underwriter. Groups 5 (a),(b),(e),(d); 7 (a),(b); 6 (a). Does not actually collect, but would like to see copies of the above, as they recall so many happy days.
- SHEPHERD, JIM, 43 Station Rd., Killamarsh, Sheffield. Group 5 (b),(a). Particularly interested in early issues.
- SMITH, CLIFFORD, 104 Headroomgate Rd., St. Anne's on Sea, Lancs. (Age 41). Groups 5 (a),(d),(e).
- SMITH, DEREK, 14 Crescent Lane, Clapham Park, London, S.W.4. (Age 32). Writer. Groups 5 (a),(b); 7 (a); 5 (d),(e).
- SMITH, JOSEPH, 36 Langham Rd., Newcastle-on-Tyne, 5. Group 5 (a),(b),(d),(e).
- SMITH, PERCY, The Stores, Mumby, Alford, Lincs. (Age 57). Groups 3; 2; 5 (b); 7 (a),(b); 5 (c).
- SMITH, STANLEY, 13 Percy St., Bootham, York. (N). Groups 5 (all); 7 (a); 10; 8.
- SMITH, T.G., 10 Darley Dale Ave., Great Barr, Birmingham, 22A. (Mid.) (Age 39). Salesman. Group 5 (a),(d).
- SMYTH, SYDNEY, 1 Brandon St., Clovelly, N.S.W., Australia. (Aust.) Groups 5 (all); 8; 7 (a),(b).
- SNELL, FRANK, 24 The Strand, Bideford, Devon. Group 5 (all).
- *SOUTHERN, J., 58 Regent Rd., Salford, Lancs. (Age 39). Baker & Confectioner. Groups 6 (a); 5 (a); 7 (a). Is always eager to purchase Union Jacks, Magnets and early C.Ds. Has only been collecting about one year.
- SOUTHWAY, ARTHUR JAMES, Box 4, Beaconsfield, Cape Province, South Africa. (L). (Age 49). Asst. Secretary (Mineral Water Factory). Groups - All.
- SOYSA, A.C.H. DE, 4 Boyd Place, Colombo, 3, Ceylon. (L). (Age 41). Company Director. Group 5 (a),(e).
- STACEY, ROGER FRAYN, 60 Esmond Rd., London, W.4. (L). (Age 31). Groups 5 (a),(d),(b),(e); 8.
- STANDEN, ALEXANDER GEORGE, 33 Grasmere Ave., Heaton Chapel, Stockport, Cheshire. Groups 6 (all); 7 (a); 4.
- STEVENS, SHEILA, 783 Rathdown St., North Carlton, N.4., Victoria, Australia. (Age 44). Group 5 (d),(e),(c),(a),(b).
- STEWART, ALAN, 290 Archway Rd., London, N.6. (L). (Age 48). Dance Musician. Groups 7 (a); 5 (a),(b).
- STOKES, JOHN C., 6 Temple Gardens, Rathmines, Dublin, Eire. Group 5 (all).
- STONE, LEON, 28 Elgin St., Gordon, N.S.W., Australia. Journalist. Groups 5 (a),(b),(c); 1; 3; 2.
- STOREY, ROWLAND M., 59 Albert St., Shieldfield, Newcastle-on-Tyne, 2. Store Keeper. Groups 2; 4.
- STURDY, F., 8 Watson St., Middlesbrough, Yorks. (N). Group 5 (all).
- SUTCLIFFE, HERBERT JAMES, 38 Victoria Ave., Wickford, Essex. (L). (Age 41). Estimating Clerk, Builders' Merchants. Groups 7 (a),(b); 6 (all E.S. Brooks stories only); 5 (a),(c),(b),(d); 8 (Modern Boy only). Requires S.B.L. 1st series No. 33; B.F.L. 1st series, No. 704.

- SUTTON, LAURIE, 112 Repton Rd., Orpington, Kent. (L). (Age 36). Group 5 (b),(a),(d).
 SWAN, JAMES R., 3 Fifth Ave., Paddington, London, W.10. (Age 42). Welder. Groups 5
 (a),(b); 7 (a); 8; 4; 6 (all); 9.
- SWITZER, H.W., 27 St. Paul's Rd., Wallasey, Cheshire. (Mer.) (Age 77). Groups 3; 4;
 6 (b); 7 (a).
- TAYLOR, RAYMOND, 22 Pembroke Ave., Etingshall, Wolverhampton. (Age 63). Stoker..
 Groups 2; 8; 4; 1.
- THOMPSON, GORDON, 53 Wallasey Park, Old Park, Belfast, Northern Ireland. Groups 5 (a);
 7 (a).
- *THOMSON, EDWARD, 6 Ritchie Place, Edinburgh, 11. (Age 50). Asst. Storekeeper. P.O.
 Supplies Dept. Group 5 (a),(b),(d),(e),(c).
- THORNE, BERNARD ROBERT and BERENICE, 220 Galloway Rd., West Hill, Ontario, Canada. (L).
 (Ages 44 and 18). Federal Government Aircraft Inspector. High School Student.
 Groups 7 (a); 5 (a),(b); 7 (b); 5 (d),(e).
- THROCKMORTON, NICHOLAS, 230 Latymer Court, London, W.6. (L). (Age 44). Civil Servant.
 Groups 5 (a),(e). Wishes to purchase Magnets between 1920-30. Must be in perfect
 condition.
- *THURBON, ALBERT FREDERICK, 29 Strawberry Hill Rd., Twickenham, Middlesex. (Age 37).
 Local Government Officer. Groups 5 (all); 7 (a),(b); 8. Has been collecting about
 10 years and has every Holiday Annual except the first one. Has also a large number
 of Magnets, Gems and Nelson Lees. Would like to start collecting Rangers. Has also
 four bound vols. of Modern Boy, several of Chums and Champion Annuals. Main hobby
 Amateur drama and acting.
- THURBON, WILLIAM THOMAS, 47 Cromwell Rd., Cambridge. (N). (Age 55). Bursar's Clerk.
 Groups 2; 4; 6 (a); 5 (c); 3; 9. Requires some Union Jacks (Lobangu stories). Plucks
 385-400. Early Marvels. Some B.F.Ls. mainly Jack, Sam and Pete tales.
- TOMLINSON, JOHN, 58 Scalpcliffe Rd., Burton-on-Trent, Staffs. (Mid.) (Age 50). Store-
 man, Rubber Factory. Groups 4; 7 (a); 5 (b),(a),(d),(c),(e).
- TWELLS, J., 39 Rosewood Ave., Rugby, Warwicks. (Age 50). Group 7 (a).
- UNWIN, FRANK, 5 Thorndale Rd., Waterloo, Liverpool, 22. (Mer.) (Age 41). Schoolmaster.
 Groups 7 (a); 5 (a),(b).
- VAN RENEN, CHARLES GERARD, "Retreat," 41 Alberti Circle, Uitenhage, South Africa.
 (Age 46). Bank Official. Group 5 (all). No. 1194 required to complete set of
 original Magnets from 1916 to the end. Desirous of replacing two dozen inferior
 numbers to make it a near mint set.
- VENNIMORE, CHARLES E.F., 25 Byron Ave., West Hounslow, Middlesex. Still has a big
 stock of periodicals of all types.
- WAIN, GRANVILLE T., 4 Site Police Houses, Overtown, Wroughton, Wilts. Groups 5 (all);
 6 (all); 7 (a),(b). Particularly interested in Christmas numbers of all papers.
- WALKER, PETER A., 16 Thorncliffe Rd., Mapperley Park, Nottingham. Group 5 (b), (a).
- WALLIS, CLIFFORD, 64 Oakwood Park Rd., Southgate, London, N.14. (L). (Age 39). Civil
 Servant. Groups 5 (all); 8; 7 (a).
- WEBB, WALTER, 84 Park Rd., Sparkhill, Birmingham, 11. (Age 49). Traffic Office, B.C.T.
 Group 6 (a),(b). Is anxious to obtain S.B.Ls. 1st series, No. 11 The Two Mysteries
 (July 1916) No. 23 Traitor & Spy (Jan. 1917) and No. 37 The Diamond Sunburst (Nov.
 1917). Also first Yvonne story 'Beyond Reach of the Law' U.J. No. 485.
- WEBSTER, DONALD B., 11 Neville Rd., Liverpool, 22. and 23 West Park Rd., Kew, Surrey.
 (Mer.) (L). Group 5 (b),(a),(e),(d),(c). Chairman, Merseyside O.B.B.C. since inaugu-
 ration in 1951. Also member of London O.B.B.C. whose meetings he attends regularly.

(cont'd on page 77)..