

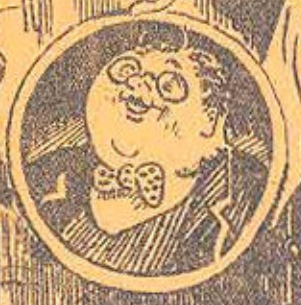
COLLECTORS DIGEST

1962

ANNUAL

1962

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• • • ANNUAL • • •

Christmas 1962 • Sixteenth Year

Editor:

ERIC FAYNE

EXCELSIOR HOUSE, GROVE ROAD, SURBITON, SURREY, ENGLAND

My dear Chums,

A few lines from me at this stage are, perhaps, superfluous. You want to get on and sample the good things which this volume contains, and I feel rather like the well-meaning person who buttonholes you for a chat when you are on the way to the theatre. So, while I am anxious to put my spoke in, I'll try to make it short and snappy.

Here, then, is the 16th edition of Collectors' Digest Annual. If it brings you the joy in reading it that has been my lot in preparing it - then every bit of it will be worth while.

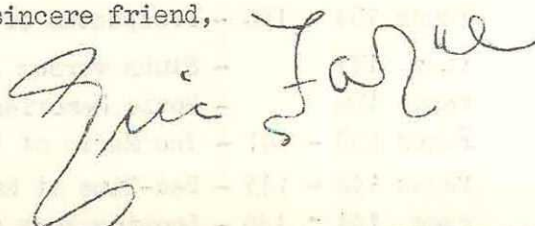
During this year I have received well over three thousand letters from Collectors' Digest readers living all over the world. Those letters have been filled with kind thoughts and encouragement. At times I have been most deeply moved by the sentiments which those letters conveyed, and if I have avoided the risk of a swollen head it is only because I realise that, as editor, I am merely a cog in a vast machine. A skipper is important, no doubt, but he is nothing without a loyal and skilful team.

Any success which Collectors' Digest or Collectors' Digest Annual attains is due to the skill, loyalty, and love of its contributors - the people who unselfishly, with no thought of gain or renown, write the articles and draw the pictures month after month, year after year. An editor who is supported by a wonderful band of contributors like mine is indeed a lucky man.

I am lucky also that the production side of the Annual and the Digest is in the capable hands of York Duplicating Services. We owe this fine firm a great debt of gratitude for the superlative work that its staff puts into our publications.

Finally, my thanks go to the nicest people in the world - our wonderful band of readers. I wish you all a splendid Christmas, the best of everything in 1963 - and now I ring off to leave you to enjoy the Annual. HAPPY READING, EVERYONE.

Yours sincere friend,



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By
W.O.G. Lofts

The Next-Best Thing

By
W.O.G. Lofts

AUTHORS OF THE "SUBSTITUTE" STORIES WHICH
APPEARED IN "THE MAGNET"

This list is the most up-to-date and most comprehensive which has ever appeared, and I feel that it will be of use to those who only collect genuine stories, and also to those who collect the writings of, for instance, John Nix Pentelow and Edwy Searles Brooks.

The compiling, with the great co-operation of Derek Adley, is the result of endless hours of research and much expense, plus a good deal of disheartenment, often ending on the sad note that a certain substitute writer died years ago.

Our methods of gleaning data for the following list were as follows:

1. Authorship of many of the stories has been given through official records of the Amalgamated Press, now held by Fleetway Publications. Unfortunately, many of the old records, written in ink, were severely damaged by flooding some time ago. Otherwise a complete list of the authorship of all stories would have been possible.
2. Many substitute writers contacted have in their possession documents to prove that they wrote certain stories.
3. Mr. G. R. Samways, who was chief sub-editor during the First World War has examined nearly all the stories written during his period of office, and he can confirm that our lists are accurate.
4. Mr. C. M. Down, who was sub-editor of the Magnet from the very first issue, and was editor from 1920 - 1940, has also examined our lists and finds them as accurate as he can remember.

A few points should be borne in mind. Francis Warwick has written in Collectors' Digest of the short notice he was at times given to write his Gem stories, and I know that several Greyfriars yarns were written in the front line trenches during the 1914-18 war. Mr. Samways can clearly remember one occasion, while on leave from the R.F.C., he visited Fleetway House and was told there was no copy on hand for next week's story. Being asked to write a story and present it by nine o'clock the next morning, he obliged. It is little wonder that under such conditions some of the worst of the substitute stories appeared.

Eric Fayne so rightly wrote, in "Let's Be Controversial," some time ago: "At one time the substitute writers received something less than justice. They were condemned, not so much for what they wrote in the Magnet, but because they wrote at all in the Hamilton papers."

Here, then, is the list of the stories in the Magnet which were written by the substitute writers.

A VERY GALLANT GENTLEMAN!



SAVING VALENCE!

Here we have the most famous, though not necessarily the best, substitute story of them all. Controversy has long raged about it, on account of author Pentelow killing off Courtney of the Sixth, a character in the stories for many years. Our expert Hamiltonian, Roger Jenkins, has never wavered from his condemnation of Pentelow's action of killing off a well-loved, long-established character for the sake of a bit of melodrama. In Roger's opinion, the Greyfriars Sixth was never quite the same again. Eric Fayne has described it as "a dreary tale which has received attention far beyond its merits on account of its controversial theme."

Whether you agree with them or not, you may be pleased to have the above reproduction of the cover of that story of over forty years ago.

87	1909	Billy Bunter's Windfall	H.A. Hinton	549	1918	The Second Form Mystery	J.N. Pentelow
99	"	Billy Bunter's Resolutions	H.A. Hinton	550	"	Put to the Test	J.N. Pentelow
116	1910	Billy Bunter's Vote	H.A. Hinton	552	"	The Greyfriars Tree Dwellings	J.N. Pentelow
165	1911	The New Page	H.C. Hook	562	"	Walker of the Sixth	J.N. Pentelow
260	1913	Harry Wharton & Co's Rescue	E.S. Brooks	564	"	Spring's Brother	J.N. Pentelow
287	"	Self-denial week at Greyfriars	E.S. Brooks	565	"	Sacked!	J.N. Pentelow
291	"	Up against it!	E.S. Brooks	566	"	The Wiles of) Samuel Wibley) Benson	J.N. Pentelow
313	1914	The Factory Rebels	E.S. Brooks	567	"	Samuel and) new boy Sammy) series	J.N. Pentelow
317	"	Blundell's Prize	E.S. Brooks	573	1919	The Amazing Bunter	J.N. Pentelow
321	"	April Fools All	E.S. Brooks	581	"	Giants at Grips	G.R. Samways
347	"	Changed by Adversity	E.S. Brooks	588	"	His Majesty the Major	G.R. Samways
349	"	Won by Pluck	E.S. Brooks	591	"	Weggie of the Remove	F.G. Cook
351	"	The Photo Prize	E.S. Brooks	592	"	Billy Bunter's Bank Holiday	G.R. Samways
353	"	The Reign of Terror	G.R. Samways	594	"	The Greyfriars Swimming Sports	G.R. Samways
361	1915	The Rival Ventriloquist	G.R. Samways	595	"	Bessie versus Billy	G.R. Samways
377	"	The Mystic Circle	E.S. Brooks	596	"	Linley's Legacy	W.L. Catchpole
385	"	The Old Boys' Challenge	G.R. Samways	598	"	The Great Bunter Mystery	J.N. Pentelow
388	"	The Mystery of the Gables	E.S. Brooks	599	"	Bunter's Aunt Sally	F.G. Cook
390	"	Sportsmen All	G.R. Samways	601	"	The Greyfriars) The Tourists) Famous	J.N. Pentelow
394	"	The Fellow who Won	G.R. Samways	602	"	Schoolboys) Five's Abroad) Tour of Belgium series	J.N. Pentelow
400	"	The Sunday Crusaders	G.R. Samways	603	"	Bunter's Typing Agency	G.R. Samways
405	"	The Remove Eleven on Tour	G.R. Samways	604	"	The Twelve Stamps	J.N. Pentelow
411	"	The Bounder's Relapse	G.R. Samways	605	"	The Golden Clue	G.R. Samways
414	1916	Bob Cherry's Challenge	G.R. Samways	606	"	Sports Day at Greyfriars	G.R. Samways
417	"	Foes of the Sixth	J.N. Pentelow	607	"	The Schoolboy Barber	F.G. Cook
421	"	Skinner the Skipper	G.R. Samways	608	"	The Secret of the Wires)	Presumed sub-
424	"	The Mailed Fist at Greyfriars	G.R. Samways	609	"	The Greyfriars) Detectives)	stitutes. Authors unknown
426	"	The Terrible Two	J.N. Pentelow	610	"	The Mystery of Mr. Quelch	F. G. Cook
427	"	False Evidence	E.S. Brooks	611	"	Hurree Singh's Surprise Packet	Reginald S. Kirkham
430	"	The Forbidden Match	G.R. Samways	616	"	Cast out by his Chums	S.E. Austin
432	"	The Boy from South Africa	J.N. Pentelow	618	"	Alonzo's Agency	F.G. Cook
436	"	Called to the Colours	J.N. Pentelow	619	"	Bunter on the Boards)	Presumed sub-
440	"	The Giant of Greyfriars	G.R. Samways	620	"	Bunter's Christmas) Portrait)	stitutes. Authors unknown
448	"	The Great Bat Mystery	E.S. Brooks	621	1920	The Terror in Black	J.N. Pentelow
449	"	Billy Bunter's Bolt	J.N. Pentelow	622	"	The Bounder's) Farewell)	Smithy G.R. Samways
451	"	The Mystery of Mauly	E.S. Brooks	623	"	Exiled from School)	in G.R. Samways
454	"	Fishy's Latest	J.N. Pentelow	624	"	Vernon-Smith's) Exile return) Series	G.R. Samways
464	"	Victims and Victors	J.N. Pentelow	625	"	Vernon-Smith's) Victory)	
466	1917	In Hot Water	J.N. Pentelow	626	"	The Jape of the Term	F.G. Cook
468	"	Linley Minor	J.N. Pentelow	627	"	Squandering Fires	G.R. Samways
472	"	The Great Fat-Cure	Reginald S. Kirkham	628	"	Phyllis Howell's Brother	G.R. Samways
476	"	The Greyfriars Flying Corps	G.R. Samways	629	"	Squiff's Secret	J.N. Pentelow
477	"	Harry Wharton's Rivals	J.N. Pentelow	630	"	The Hold-up at) Greyfriars)	stitutes. Authors unknown
478	"	The Rebel	J.N. Pentelow	631	"	The Silent Strike)	Authors unknown
479	"	Colonial Chums	J.N. Pentelow	632	"	Mauleverer's Mission)	
480	"	The Remove Election Campaign	J.N. Pentelow	633	"	Bob Cherry's Secret	G.R. Samways
481	"	Head of the Poll	J.N. Pentelow	634	"	The Blindness of Bunter	F.G. Cook
484	"	His Father's Honour	E.S. Brooks	635	"	The Feud with Friardale	G.R. Samways
486	"	Peter Todd's Vengeance	J.N. Pentelow	636	"	The Circus Hero	Julius Herman
495	"	On the wrong Track	E.S. Brooks	637	"	Cup-tie Champions)	Presumed sub-
499	"	On the Make	J.N. Pentelow	638	"	The Prefect's)	stitutes. Author unknown
500	"	The Schoolboy Inventor	Reginald S. Kirkham	639	"	The Prefect's) Predicament	F.G. Cook
506	"	Rivals of the Chase	G.R. Samways			The Scholarship Company	S.E. Austin
509	"	A Gentleman Ranker	G.R. Samways				
513	"	The Greyfriars Xmas Party	J.N. Pentelow				
514	"	Four from the East	J.N. Pentelow				
520	1918	A Very Gallant Gentleman	J.N. Pentelow				
523	"	Hunting for Treasure	E.S. Brooks				
524	"	Loyal Sir Jimmy	J.N. Pentelow				
527	"	A Bird of Passage	G.R. Samways				
529	"	The Fighting Fifth	G.R. Samways				
535	"	A Soldier's Son	G.R. Samways				
538	"	Billy Bunter's Birthright	G.R. Samways				
544	"	William the Warlike	G.R. Samways				
545	"	The Shylock of the Second	J.N. Pentelow				

641	1920	The Invasion of Greyfriars	G.R. Samways	712	1921	The Island Raiders	G.R. Samways
		Greyfriars) under re-		713	"	The Remove Exam Mystery	F.G. Cook
642	"	Chums Awheel) pair	G.R. Samways	714	"	Skinner's Revenge	J.N. Pentelow
		series		716	"	The Plot against the	
644	"	Bunter, the Farmer	Reginald S. Kirkham			School	G.R. Samways
645	"	The Greyfriars Minstrels	Hedley O'Mant	717	"	The Stolen Guy	J.N. Pentelow
646	"	Fun in the Fifth) Phyllis &	G.R. Samways	718	"	The Slacker's Spasm	G.R. Samways
647	"	The Remove's) Archie		719	"	Mark Linley's Trial	J.N. Pentelow
		Recruit) Howell	G.R. Samways	720	"	Penfold Cuts)	
648	"	Her Brother's) series				Loose) Penfold	W.E. Stanton Hope
		Honour)		721	"	Penfold the) in	
650	"	A Third-Form Mystery	J.N. Pentelow			Blade) disgrace	W.E. Stanton Hope
652	"	Bunter's Baby (original	H.A. Hinton	722	"	Back to the) series	
		story by Charles Hamilton,				Fold)	W.E. Stanton Hope
		Magnet 67)		724	"	Faithful to his friend	J.N. Pentelow
653	"	The Schoolboy Artist	J.N. Pentelow	725	"	Against the Law	S.R. Shepherd
654	"	A bid for the Captaincy	G.R. Samways	726	1922	The team that couldn't	
655	"	Archie Howell's Return	G.R. Samways			be beaten	G.R. Samways
656	"	In Borrowed Plumes	F.G. Cook	727	"	The Foot-) Dr.	
657	"	A False Hero	F.G. Cook			baller's Feud) Arm-	J.N. Pentelow
658	"	Loder's Luck	J.N. Pentelow	728	"	Wibley the) strong	
659	"	The Council of Action	J.N. Pentelow			Wonder) series	J.N. Pentelow
665	"	Coker's Craze	F.G. Cook	(727 & 728 - unknown authors stories rewritten)			
666	"	The Man from America	G.R. Samways	731	1922	Mr. Bunter -)	
667	"	The Caterpillar's Rest				Form-master)	G.R. Samways
		Cure	G.R. Samways	732	"	The Bunter's)	
668	"	Smithy's Defiance	G.R. Samways			Conspiracy) Wally	G.R. Samways
669	"	Duping the Duffer	F.G. Cook	733	"	The Mystery) Bunter	
670	"	Up against it!	J.N. Pentelow			of the Warning) Form-	G.R. Samways
671	"	A Son's Dilemma!	J.N. Pentelow	734	"	A Form-Master's) Master	
673	1921	Ponsonby's Victim) Sir	G.R. Samways			Fate) series	G.R. Samways
674	"	The Runaway's) Timothy		735	"	Wally wins)	
		Return) Topham	G.R. Samways			through!)	G.R. Samways
		series		736	"	Billy Bunter - film star	W.E. Pike
675	"	Driven from the School	J.N. Pentelow	740	"	The Greyfriars Exile	Presumed sub-
676	"	His Blundering Best	J.N. Pentelow			(Based on Gem 368)	stitute.
677	"	Billy Bunter's Smugglers	J.N. Pentelow				Author unknown
678	"	Scaring the School	F.G. Cook	741	"	His Excellency -	
679	"	Harry Wharton's Sacrifice	J.N. Pentelow			Counte Bunter	S.R. Shepherd
680	"	The Form-Master's) Mr.	W.E. Stanton	742	"	Tickets for the Final	Presumed sub-
		Disgrace) Quelch	Hope				stitute.
681	"	By Wingate's Aid) in dis-	W.E. Stanton	746	"	The Stolen) Smithy's	Author unknown
		grace) Hope	Hope			Diary) diary	J.N. Pentelow
		series		747	"	For His) series	
683	"	The Schoolboy Protectors	J.N. Pentelow			Father's Name)	J.N. Pentelow
684	"	Bunter the Swot	G.R. Samways	754	"	Bravo, Bulstrode!	G.R. Samways
685	"	Rivals of the River	believed Noel Wood Smith	762	"	The Schoolboy Divers	<u>believed</u>
							W.E. Stanton Hope
686	"	Marooned!	J.N. Pentelow	767	"	Bunter's Lawsuit	F.G. Cook
687	"	Waking up Alonzo	J.N. Pentelow	775	"	The Call from the Air	F.G. Cook
688	"	Skinner's Secret Society	F.G. Cook	777	"	Ponsonby's Revenge	S.E. Austin
690	"	Bob Cherry's Luck) Mr.	J.N. Pentelow	778	1923	The Jap of Greyfriars	S.E. Austin
691	"	The Schoolboy) Jamfrey's		780	"	Detective Bunter	L.E. Ransome
		Film Stars) series.	J.N. Pentelow	785	"	Alonzo the Athlete	F.G. Cook
692	"	Maulverer's Peril	F.G. Cook	786	"	The Sporting Champion	G.R. Samways
694	"	The Vengeance of Woo Fing)	Presumed sub-	788	"	The Supreme Sacrifice	S.E. Austin
695	"	Wun Lung's Feud	stitutes.	790	"	A Message from the Sea	J.N. Pentelow
			Authors unknown.	791	"	The Jester of Grey-	
696	"	Sportsman from the North	G.R. Samways			friars	G.R. Samways
697	"	Sleepers of the Remove	S.R. Shepherd	792	"	Rivals and Chums	G.R. Samways
698	"	The Houseboat Mystery	G.R. Samways	800	"	The Haunted Camp	G.R. Samways
699	"	Bunter the Bandit	F.G. Cook	801	"	The Greyfriars day	
700	"	Coker's Conquest	G.R. Samways			boarder	G.R. Samways
701	"	Billy Bunter's Luck	G.R. Samways	802	"	Bunter's barring-out	F.G. Cook
702	"	The Skipper's Bat	J.N. Pentelow	803	"	A Puzzle for) The	
703	"	The Society for reforming				the Remove) Willesby	J.N. Pentelow
		Billy Bunter	G.R. Samways	804	"	The Twin) Twins	
710	"	Champion of the Remove	G.R. Samways			Tangle) series	J.N. Pentelow
711	"	Bunter, the Bard	G.R. Samways	805	"	The Hand of)	
						Fate)	J.N. Pentelow

813	1923	The Heart of a Hero	J.N. Pentelow	937	1926	The Prefects Plot	F.G. Cook
815	"	Fish's Friendly Society	F.G. Cook	938	"	The Hand of an) Enemy)Linley	S.E. Austin
816	"	An Island Mystery	Presumed substitute, Author unknown	939	"	Back to the) Factory)series	S.E. Austin
818	"	Disgraced by his Father. (Sexton Blake)	believed H. O'Mant	940	"	The Hidden Foe	S.E. Austin
824	"	The Greyfriars Gliding Competition	F.G. Cook	941	"	Billy Bunter's Legacy	H.W. Twyman
825	"	The Coker Challenge Cup	G.R. Samways	943	"	A Feud with the Fourth	Noel Wood-Smith
827	"	True as Steel	S.E. Austin	944	"	Fishy's debt collecting Agency	F.G. Cook
831	1924	The Greyfriars Newspaper	G.R. Samways	949	"	The Temptation of Peter Hazeldene	H.W. Twyman
832	"	The Waywardness of Wibley	F.G. Cook	952	"	The New Boy's Secret	Kenneth E. Newman
833	"	The Greyfriars Flood	F.G. Cook	953	"	The Mystery of) Popper's)Walker's Island)Aunt	S.E. Austin
835	"	Mauly's Amazing Adventure	J.N. Pentelow	954	"	For Another's) Sake)series	S.E. Austin
836	"	Bunter's Poor Relations	G.R. Samways	955	"	Bunter's Treasure Trove	S.E. Austin
837	"	The White Feather	G.R. Samways	972	"	Chums - through thick and thin	S.E. Austin
838	"	The Young Pretender	Presumed substitute Author unknown	974	"	The Suspected Form-Master	G.R. Samways
839	"	Duffer and Hero	F.G. Cook	980	"	Heroes of the Air	believed Hedley O'Mant
840	"	The Rebels of the Second	Presumed substitute Author unknown.	991	1927	The Schoolboy Broadcasters	believed Hedley O'Mant
841	"	Fishy's Treasure	Likely substitute to be confirmed.	993	"	Fishy's Travel Agency	believed G.R. Samways
842	"	True to his Word	J.N. Pentelow	1006	"	Fish's Burglar Hunt	W.L. Catchpole
844	"	The Plundered School	G.R. Samways	1014	"	Bunter the Bad Lad)	Presumed substitutes
845	"	Inky's Peril	F.G. Cook	1030	"	A Ventriloquist at) Large)	Authors unknown
847	"	The Secret of Shark's Tooth	S.E. Austin	1053	1928	In Merciless Hands	G.R. Samways
849	"	Capped for Greyfriars	J.N. Pentelow	1054	"	Bunter's Prize Essay	W.L. Catchpole
850	"	The Outcast of the Remove	F.G. Cook	1055	"	Coker's League of Friends	believed L.E. Ransome
851	"	The Iron Hand at Greyfriars	G.R. Samways	1058	"	The Hero of the Fifth	W.L. Catchpole
852	"	Peter the Plotter	G.R. Samways	1077	"	The Secret of the Schooner) Presumed substitutes.
853	"	Standing by their Pals	S.E. Austin	1083	"	Shunned by the Form) Authors
856	"	Drummed out of Greyfriars	F.G. Cook	1091	1929	Bunter - big-game Hunter) unknown
857	"	The Schoolboy Domestics	G.R. Samways	1108	"	The Masked Terror) Presumed sub- stitutes, Authors
861	"	True Blue	J.N. Pentelow	1109	"	Billy Bunter's Blunder) unknown
870	"	Billy Bunter's Wembley Party	believed R.S. Kirkham	1152	1930	Nap of the Remove) believed
871	"	Sir Hilton's Nephew)	Presumed substitutes	1153	"	Grease Paint Wibley) Hedley O'Mant
872	"	The Mystery Wreck)	Authors unknown	1189	"	Skinner's Narrow Squeak	believed L.R. Ransome
873	"	The Schoolboy Financier	F.G. Cook	1220	1931	Speedway Coker	M. Duffy
889	1925	To Shield his Father	S.E. Austin				
890	"	The Barring of Bolsover	F.G. Cook				
891	"	The Great Postal-Order Mystery	G.R. Samways				
892	"	Bunter the Prophet)	Presumed substitutes				
894	"	The Mystery of Moscoo)	Authors unknown				
895	"	Aunt Judy comes to stay	F.G. Cook				
898	"	The Schoolboy Sculptor)	Presumed substitute				
901	"	"Pep" for the 'Friars)	Author unknown				
902	"	The Feud with Cliff House	believed R.S. Kirkham				
903	"	Sports Week at Greyfriars	G.R. Samways				
904	"	The Rival Tuckshops	S.E. Austin				
905	"	Alonzo the Slogger	G.R. Samways				
918	"	Rival Oarsman	G.R. Samways				
919	"	Schoolboys versus Pro's	G.R. Samways				
920	"	Fish's Hair Raising Stunt	F.G. Cook				
921	"	The Greyfriars Film Fans	Presumed substitute Author unknown				
922	"	The Bounder's Way	S.E. Austin				
932	"	Facing the)Smithy World)leaves	S.R. Shepherd				
933	"	From Greyfriars)Greyfriars to Borstal)series	S.R. Shepherd				
934	1926	Bowling out Bunter	Presumed substitute Author unknown				
935	"	Coker's New Year Resolution	G.R. Samways				
936	"	Quelch's Queer Adventure	Presumed substitute Author unknown				

Notes on Stories and Substitute Writers

It must be presumed that all stories not appearing in the lists were written by Charles Hamilton. There has been no evidence to show that any substitute stories appeared before No. 87 'Billy Bunter's Windfall' in 1909. No. 85 'The Greyfriars Visitors' presumed by many (including the original John Shaw lists) to be written by a substitute writer was without doubt a genuine Hamilton story, as

proved by official records.

Personally, I agree with Eric Fayne, when he classed many of the early Red Magnet stories as 'Pot-Boilers', and it is possible that there were other substitute stories in this period not in the lists. But until evidence to prove the contrary is forthcoming - one must accept that all other stories were genuine tales. The statement by a former sub-editor of the 'Magnet' that No. 3. 'The Mystery of Greyfriars' was not written by Mr. Hamilton, has been checked from official sources and only brings to light the fact that Charles Hamilton most certainly wrote it.

No. 381 'The Punishment Policies' was drafted in rough form by Mr. H.W. Twyman who started his career at the Amalgamated Press in the Magnet office. This story was later entirely rewritten by Charles Hamilton, who must be credited with it.

No. 652 'Bunter's Baby' was a rewritten story from the original Charles Hamilton tale No. 67. 'Harry Wharton's Ward'.

No. 817 'Condemned by the School' was an old Charles Hamilton story slightly rewritten. It is believed that this story got mislaid somehow during the editorship of John Nix Pentelow in the war years. But as Mr. Hamilton was paid for the tale originally, he must be credited as having written it.

No. 841 'Fishy's Treasure' is a story at the time of going to press about which I am trying to get something concrete. The keen student in reading this will discover that 'The Greyfriars Newspaper' is mentioned as one of the previous money-making ideas of Fisher T. Fish. 'The Greyfriars Newspaper' was written by G. R. Samways, but he has no recollection of writing the latter story.

Other factors to be taken into consideration regarding stories are as follows:-

1. All manuscripts received from Charles Hamilton were not only beautifully typed but so expertly written that no subbing was required. But at times a story may have to be shortened - or lengthened as the case may be - to fit in with adverts, and serials etc. This may have given the impression at times of some Hamilton stories being slightly disjointed, and being eventually classed as non-Hamilton tales.
2. It had been known in the editorial office for parts of the original Hamilton stories to be missing. These parts were written in by a substitute writer to ensure that the genuine story should be used.
3. There is ample evidence that during the editorship of John Nix Pentelow he interloped a lot of his authentic cricket dialogue in original Hamilton stories. Whether Mr. Pentelow was justified in doing this is not the basis of this article, as I know only too well how this has been keenly debated in the past!
4. Occasionally a single substitute story appeared in the middle of a genuine Hamilton series. Mr. Hamilton was living abroad, and the arrival of his manuscripts did without question, cause his various editors headaches. The inclusion of a single story was only because the Magnet office did not have on hand by press date - the following week's instalment of the Greyfriars serial in question written by the genuine 'Frank Richards'.

Brief Notes on Sub-writers

- H. A. HINTON: Chief sub-editor 1908-11. Later Editor. Died 1941.
- H. CLARKE HOOK: Son of the famous writer of Jack Sam & Pete - wrote many early Gem stories. Untraceable.
- E. S. BROOKS: Creator of the famous St. Franks School in the Nelson Lee Library.

- G. R. SAMWAYS: Wrote well over 90 Magnet stories alone - and has a prolific output in the Companion Papers.
- JOHN NIX PENTELOW: War time editor of the Companion Papers. Died in 1932.
- W. STANTON HOPE: Prolific writer. Died last year in Australia.
- REGINALD S. KIRKHAM: Writer of many of the Cliff House stories in SCHOOLFRIEND. Became a highly successful business man leaving over £32,000 when he died some years ago.
- W. L. CATCHPOLE: One of the writers gained through the famous Greyfriars Story writing competition. Now holds high position in Insurance business in the City of London.
- STANLEY AUSTIN: Prolific writer of many of the Gem stories. Died some years ago.
- H. W. TWYMAN: Editor of 'Union Jack' and start of 'Detective Weekly'.
- S. ROSSITER SHEPHERD: Later became features editor of the 'People' and travel expert.
- F. GORDON COOK: Prolific writer - now Wireless Engineer.
- NOEL WOOD-SMITH: Former sub-editor on the Magnet. Died some years ago.
- KENNETH E. NEWMAN: Editor of post-war 'School Yarn Magazine' - Civil Servant.
- HEDLEY O'MANT: Chief sub-editor at various times. Died in 1955.
- W. E. PIKE: Sub-editor - wrote a lot of Rookwood stories.
- JULIUS HERMAN: As mentioned in June 1962. Nelson Lee Column article. Now known to have died some years ago.
- L. E. RANSOME: Probably greatest expert of them all in Charles Hamilton's writings and inside facts. Free-lance writer.
- MICHAEL DUFFY: Claim to fame that he wrote the very last known sub-story 'Speedway Coker'.

* * * * *

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CALL it SCIENCE
by
TONY GLYNN

Flights to the planets, dramatic encounters with alien forms of life, revolutionary discoveries and inventions, we know them all as the stock in trade of science fiction. To-day, the cinema, radio and television present science fiction as a matter of course and it has been approved by the intelligensia. Mr. Edmund Crispin and Mr. J. B. Priestley have been seen to debate it on television; in 1956, it was lectured upon at the University of Manchester and Mr. Kingsley Amis lectured on the subject in the United States, later publishing his lectures in book form.

But, just a few years ago, science fiction and fantasy made its appeal to only a minority. It was regarded as far-fetched tripe unless written by the two authors who were considered the only respectable workers in the field: Wells and Verne. There was, however, one concern which was giving the juveniles of the British Isles lashings of vigorous fantasy long before Dare Dare, Jet Morgan and Lemmy or Quatermass came upon the scene. This was the house of Thomson located in Dundee.

True, the "science fiction" of the Thomson boys' papers was stronger on fiction than on science, but there was plenty of it, which indicates that it was popular. Those who sniffed at it probably did not pause to reflect on the point that the much lauded Verne was often downright unreadable while Wells' work was frequently as scientifically haywire as the Thomson yarns.

Nevertheless, Verne and Wells obviously inspired much of the Thomson science fiction and a third matrix for this particular species of yarn seems to have been cast by Conan Doyle when he wrote "The Poison Belt" and "The Lost World".

Take "Full Speed Ahead to the Worlds of Fear" which ran in the "Wizard" in 1940. In this serial, the earth had drifted into a vast poison cloud, a situation taken from Doyle's "Poison Belt", and a party of space voyagers set out to find a new habitable planet in a large craft which was simply a bigger edition of that described in Wells' "First Men in the Moon". The travellers moved from planet to planet, encountering various adventures and eventually returned to what they imagined to be a dead earth. Fortunately, the inhabitants of the home planet were not exterminated by the atmosphere having been merely put to sleep. But while the planet had been gripped by the cloud, aliens had invaded and taken control. The returned space travellers eventually discovered that these creatures could not stand noise, so they rid Mother Earth of the invading pests by organising a large-scale racket, using anything capable of making a din!

Another alien invasion serial which ran in the "Wizard" appeared in 1933. Mars, which seemed destined to be Mother Earth's natural enemy since Wells produced his "War of the Worlds", was once more the villain of the piece. The serial was called "Raiders from the Red World" and it told of the coming of squads of silver-skinned Martians who wore winged helmets like that of Mercury and carried the inevitable ray-gun. Apart from their silver skins, they looked like the men of earth and

they lived on a weed which was their sole item of food. They planted forests of this weed on earth after their conquest of the planet which was achieved by the use of a secret device which temporarily robbed the Earthlings of their sight. Keeping up a constant battle against these invaders was the usual company of intrepid Earthmen who were whisked off to Mars by the retreating Martians when their schemes of conquest collapsed. Thereupon, the way was paved for a sequel dealing with the adventures of the Earthmen on Mars. The title of this was "The Blood Trail on Mars" and it amounted to something less than a travel brochure for the red planet. Although the Martians were so technologically advanced as to be able to send an invading force to Earth, they had done little in the way of benefitting their home planet. It was dominated by all kinds of biological horrors - mostly magnifications of earth creatures such as lobsters - to the extent that the men in the winged helmets were forced to live underground.

Also in the "Wizard" of 1933, there ran a serial dealing with a family which floated around the world in a kind of small scale ark after a devastating flood. This was remarkable in that it gave its readers something rare in the pages of the Thomson boys' periodicals, - a wife and mother. Usually, the female of the species just did not exist in these yarns, but this story had a mother, father and son sharing the hazards of life in the post-deluge world.

My own favourite "post-disaster" serial of the "Wizard" dated from 1934 and was about a gas which escaped from some mine-workings in Canada. It had the effect of robbing civilised men of their memories, which meant they became "cave men". The title illustration showed these "cave men" wearing animal skins, carrying clubs and cavorting in what was generally supposed to be a savage fashion on the streets of a modern Canadian city. From the coldly scientific view of cultural anthropology, this was just plain daft, since it is highly improbable that men robbed of their learned behaviour when surrounded by the sophistications of a modern city would be prompted to seek out skins and clubs and automatically simulate the behaviour of a hunting and gathering culture. Polemics to one side, however, the situation was a dramatic enough one with all Canada turning savage as the gas drifted across the land. Only the mining engineer hero and his chums, who'd had the foresight to find gas masks, remained in a position to fight the evils loosed upon the Dominion.

In its broad outlines, the tale was of a piece with the "new barbarism" or "post blow-up" tales of the latter 1940's and early 1950's in which writers of more sophisticated science fiction, notably those in the United States, depicted a collapse of society following atomic war. It is notable, too, that this story appeared in 1934. The previous year, the film classic "Things to Come", written by Wells, was produced. This had what were probably the first "new barbarism" sequences and might have inspired the "Wizard" serial.

That well-remembered Thomson periodical the "Skipper" foreshadowed the shape of things to come in its own way in 1938 when it featured a story which told of a legless German air ace of the first world war wreaking revenge for his maiming by controlling a fleet of pilotless planes which he sent out to bomb British cities. Those who remember the V 1 attacks of 1944 may recall that the first reports of Hitler's secret weapon described them as "pilotless 'planes"

The first instalment of this story showed the pilotless 'planes dropping warning leaflets on a city. This, again, was a foreshadowing of the future for, within two years, British aircraft were carrying out those quaint leaflet raids of the early stages of the second world war.



During the previous year, 1937, the "Skipper" ran a serial dealing with Britain under the heel of an oppressor. It was called "Britain Down But Not Out". While it was not exactly science-fiction, it had some of the elements found in more recent adult works such as George Orwell's "1984" or Constantine FitzGibbon's "When the Kissing Had to Stop". Its theme was the "yellow peril". The Mangoths, who came from central Asia, had over-run England having caught the country at a weak moment when its people were debilitated by the effects of the worst influenza epidemic since 1918. Englishmen were dragooned under the rifles and whips of brutal mongoloid soldiers, but there was a fighting force of heroes - a few years later, it would have been termed a "resistance movement" - striving to rid the island of the invaders.

The avenging hero was always a strong actor in Thomson yarns and one who deserves some mention was the "Slippery Shadow", featured in the "Rover" in 1930. He was an American crook catcher who used his own fantas-

tic invention to help him catch up with lawbreakers. This invention was something of a Thomson stereotype, though the "Slippery Shadow" might have been the first to use it. It was nothing more nor less than invisible paint. The Slippery Shadow painted himself from head to foot with this concoction then sallied forth in search of booze barons and public enemies. The paint worked on the principle that "it was so black it couldn't reflect light", therefore the Shadow could not be seen by anyone. The same formula appeared in a Dixon Hawke yarn in the "Adventure" during the war years when Hawke was up against an invisible Japanese spy who was draped in a fabric which was "so black that it wouldn't reflect light".

The house of Thomson had an obsession with invisibility. It was constantly cropping up and the first number of the "Adventure", which appeared in 1921, introduced "Invisible Dick" who was later to appear in comic strip in the early issues of the "Dandy" in 1938. Dick achieved invisibility by sniffing a strange jar from the mystic East.

The early 1930's saw "Zero the Silent" riding the crest of the wave - although a more apt metaphor would be "climbing up the wall". Zero was another scientifically endowed crook catcher, a disgraced policeman who furthered law and order in his own peculiar way. He wore the now familiar costume of skin-tight clothing found on heroes out of the Superman stable and he had suckers on his hands and knees. These enabled him to walk like a fly over walls and ceilings. By comparison, his method of self-defence was an anti-climax. It was a "throw ball", a heavy ball on strong elastic fastened to his wrist. Zero, who was popular in the "Adventure" in 1931 and

1932, simply bowled googlies at his enemies and the elastic brought the ball back to his hand for another throw.

Robots have long been part of the stock-in-trade of science fiction writers and possibly the most famous robot of all, so far as wartime schoolboys were concerned, showed up in the "Hotspur" in 1942. He was the celebrated Iron Teacher. This remarkable robot, complete with academic cap and gown, first appeared as master of a wild western school. A simple-minded stranger known only as "Sim" who always hugged an old biscuit tin under his arm was always in close proximity to the Iron Teacher and it was an open secret that Sim was far from being the simpleton he pretended he was. In reality, he was the creator and controller of the Iron Teacher.

A later series, "The Iron Teacher Fights the Crooked Cross", had the academic robot as a valuable addition to the Allied forces against Nazism.

Much of the Thomson "science fiction" can be so termed in only a loose fashion. Indeed, the bulk of it properly belongs under the cumbersome classification of "science fiction-fantasy-fairytale". For the house of Thomson was nothing if not experimental and inventive and magic pills and potions were as likely to turn up in a story as were pots of invisible paint and mysterious jars from the East. I, for one, never questioned such things any more than I questioned the powers of witches, wizards and magic wands as a small child. They were magic and that was that!

About 1941, there was a marshal in a "Hotspur" story who knew next to nothing about firearms because he was scared to death of them. But when he pinned on his star of office, he became the most dreaded town-tamer on the frontier. This was because the badge was made from a fragment of Aladdin's lamp and was invested with magic powers.

Around the same period, there was another western peace-officer in the "Adventure" who had spent years in Africa where he had absorbed the occult knowledge of witch doctors. His shack was festooned with ju-ju objects and he tamed the rough-necks of his town by use of the black arts.

In 1942, the "Rover" featured "The Lighter Than Air Schoolboys" who inadvertently became involved in an experiment which robbed them of their weight. They had to move around heavily weighted and were in constant danger of floating up into the sky if they mislaid the weights. An illustration showed the boys floating around a large light bowl suspended from the ceiling of a schoolroom. The bowl was full of soup and the floating boys flourished spoons and enjoyed an airborne meal. The shadow of Wells is again seen behind this story for it was obviously inspired by his short story "The Truth About Pyecraft".

Fantasy knew no bounds in the Thomson magazines and the spirit of having a go at anything doubtless gave their imaginative fiction its special charm. When that famous "Wizard" warrior, the Wolf of Kabul and his faithful retainer Chung - not forgetting Chung's equally faithful cricket bat which he used as a weapon - encountered a huge marching statue that was sheer fantasy. When a group of explorers, also in the "Wizard", were captured by a colony of gigantic bees, that was sheer fantasy also. When the "Adventure's" Strang the Terrible had to pass through a gate in a wall of human skulls, guarded by an enormous swinging axe, that was sheer fantasy again.

When O'Neill, the "Wizard's" six-gun gorilla strapped on his revolvers and went in search of the killers of his master, he was a long way ahead of any of the results achieved by Dr. Kohler whose patient experiments in simian behaviour are good science - he was in the realm of sheer fantasy.

/continued on page 16...

Alfred Concanen

by ARTHUR MOYSE

No student of the Victorian comic can afford to ignore the work of that little known minor genius Alfred Concanen. A master of a popular art in himself and a craftsman whose work must have had a direct and in-

direct influence on many an illustrator working within the same period and in the same genus.

Of the man himself little is known; that the family came to England from Ireland has been established by Ifan Kyrle Fletcher an historian of the period who succeeded in tracing the family's Irish domicile to the borders of County Galway and County Roscommon.

Alfred Concanen, however, was born in London in the year 1858 and after a quiet and uneventful youth married the slim, brown-haired Mary Anne Tholen. Mary Anne was 18 when she married Alfred Concanen and she left her father's home at 1 Kirkmans Place, just off the Tottenham Court Road, to go and take up her married residence at Concanen's home at 43 Bloomsbury Street. Concanen married the daughter of a London horse driver in September 1858, at the age of 23, and for over twenty years they lived happily together until his death twenty-eight years later on a bleak November day in the year 1886. Concanen's father Edward had always described himself on forms official and unofficial as an artist but Alfred for reasons best known to himself chose the title of lithographer to describe his occupation.

Gordon Craig when a boy of sixteen, tells how he was working at the old Lyceum with the late Henry Irving and he mentions a meeting with Alfred Concanen in a tavern in the Strand. Craig, without explaining why he, a youth of sixteen, was in the beerhall, described Concanen as "short, slight, with a heavy cavalry moustache" and this was on the 10th November, 1886. Concanen died that same night of apoplexy so that the sixteen year old Gordon Craig may have been among the last to place on record a meeting with Alfred Concanen

Yet Alfred Concanen, ignored by the dusty dictionaries of painting, recorded a London that he knew and loved. It was not the back street comics that carried his highly coloured drawings but the song sheets of the day and for two guineas a time he recorded the men and women of the streets and of the music halls.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the song sheet covers were no more than intricate book illustrations of which the steel engravings of George Cruikshank and Robert Seymour are good and typical examples, but by the middle of the century the coloured lithograph had managed to supercede the steel engraving. Yet lithography was still a neglected and a minor art and it was snobbishness that kept the hands of many craftsmen away from it. While the woodcut and the aquatint claimed its socially accepted devotees, the unwieldy process of lithography and the pendantic term chromolithography hummed too much of the back street factory and the sweating brow to win the support of the middle-class dabblers in the visual arts. In the forties of the nineteenth century Brandard was using lithography to illustrate ballet music covers but his work was so specialised that it could have had little contact with the mass of the people and though there were men like John Gould with his illustrated bird books, Bouvier of the Romantic Ballet with a capital R, Sir David Wilkie's phoney Eastern landscapes and J. F. Lewis's phonier Oriental scenes it was left to Concanen, in 1859, to use this method for his song covers of the vanished music halls.

When thanks are being passed around to those who have laboured to compile these

facts one cannot ignore the invaluable aid of Sacheverall Sitwell for without his rare book "Morning, Noon and Night in London" most of the foregoing would have been impossible to assemble, for all the people connected with Concanen are dead and most of the documents are lost while the halls that knew his characters have long been bombed or pulled down to make way for another box of offices. Sitwell's book, published by MacMillan & Co. in 1948, though now I believe out of print, is almost the only source of information about Concanen's work. There within these eighty-six pages of Sitwell's ornate and empty prose is embalmed the fragments of the life and times of Alfred Concanen and all who value the work and the craft of the comic illustrators are indebted to Sitwell for his labours. Then why should we who value the flimsy paper comic owe a debt to Alfred Concanen. It is because this man who churned out about a hundred song covers a year pioneered the way by his industry and his style for the English comic as we knew it in its heyday.

There is little relationship between the early English comic with its feeling for space and clean and simple lines and the American-germanic strips of today wherein every inch must be utilized even though it kills the beauty of the whole, when character is surrendered to a cliché ridden world of Teutonic male and female blonde muscle-loaded child adults and when the backgrounds form a Kafka'ish horror, no matter how simple or moronic the story line. But with Concanen we have a supreme example of the English comic artist at his best. In later years he tended to work direct from photographs of the music-hall comedians, and that in itself would justify his right to be recognized as an historian of his period, but his best music-hall covers can be ranked among the finest works of lithography that we have. There within the world of the Bohemian lower-middle-class and the sporting working-class, Concanen plied his trade and though many might work on a commercial cover Concanen, time and time again, worked alone and drew his own drawings upon the lithograph stone.

Yet as Sitwell rightly points out, even when Concanen left the work to other craftsmen his original style would still inspire those who followed to do the final acts of reproduction as though from Concanen's own hand. As Sitwell says, though the Japanese woodcuts may bear the name of Hokusai or Utamaro, the cutting and the printing of their wood blocks were time and time again the work of unknown craftsmen, and inasmuch as Hokusai and Utamaro were capable at any time of doing the work the resultant woodcut will always be known as the work of Hokusai and Utamaro, - so with Alfred Concanen.

It is here that we part company with Sacheverall Sitwell and his esoteric world for the back streets and the small newsagent shops, for here within its windows are ranged the papers that echoed the art of Concanen and all his disciples. The single figures in their gay and harmless poses, the flying dogs and horses and the hint of everyday backgrounds was Concanen's gift to the children of that age, for the artists of the comics left the laboured lines of the early English comic with its heavy handed facetiousness and its overdrawn physiognomy that verged always into the grotesque and met the men and women not as subjects to be mocked or derided for their physical infirmities but as equals sharing a common joke. Concanen in his cover of the "Hansom Galop" by Adrien Talexu with its soft tones highlighting the placid fop of fashion and the unconcerned coachman in a world of prancing horses tearing through a maze of traffic, set the style of excitement without sadism. In the "Age of Paper" his gormless man about town primps among street urchins with nothing more to fear than a shouted harmless insult, whereas a few years before any artists of children's comics would have shown the child throwing a brick. His "Kleptomania" is an action picture that could fit into any of the late English comics with its running women and its

bewhiskered gallant trying to catch the dog thief with a crossing sweeper's broom. It is with his "Off to Brighton" that Concanen gives the true feeling of all that is best in the English comic for here are assembled all the actors that would tread the pages of the halfpenny comic for our simple pleasures.

The sky of an eternal egg-shell blue with its hint of white clouds. The placid, sexless women gliding through this male world secure in the knowledge that they will never be the butt of the artist's humour, the elderly invalids who will never know pain, the perennial urchins who will never know the works and the world of de Sade or Kract-Ebbings, for Concanen gave us a world wherein the humour is the harmless and lovable humour of playing puppies and prancing dogs and horses. Alfred Concanen - that short, moustachioed frequenter of the Charing Cross Road and the Strand beer houses was a minor figure in the history of the international art world, but generation upon generation of the old and the young in heart are forever in his debt.

* * * * *

"CALL IT SCIENCE" (continued from page 13)

Who cares? Certainly, the readers who devoured these "anything goes" species of imaginative yarns never gave a jot that science was not regarded as a sacred cow in the house of Thomson. For the house of Thomson gave the readers uninhibited escapism. And the readers loved it.

* * * * *

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MISS E. B. FLINDERS, 18, CONQUEST CLOSE, HITCHIN, HERTS.

By
Richmal
Crompton

MEET WILLIAM

By
Richmal
Crompton

If William had added a year to his age each year since he first appeared in print he would now be a staid and (I hope!) respectable man of about forty. But William had no desire to become a staid and respectable man of about forty, so he decided to stop short at eleven. And eleven he has remained ever since!

As one of his chief characteristics, however, is an eager (sometimes too eager!) curiosity about everyone and everything around him, he has kept pace with the times. Though still deeply interested in Red Indians, pirates and smugglers, he is pondering the problems of space. His old ambitions - which include the careers of engine driver, chimney sweep, detective and diver - are not dead, but he now has serious intentions to being the first man to set foot on the moon. Towsled and grubby, he still makes (often disastrous) way through his native village and the surrounding countryside, accompanied by his faithful friends, Ginger, Henry and Douglas, with his beloved mongrel, Jumble, trotting at his heels; and his friends still follow his leadership with blind loyalty, despite the strange and hazardous situations into which that leadership so often brings them.

He has been called "the bad boy of fiction" but he is not so black as he is painted. His insatiable curiosity may put the refrigerator out of action, immobilise the hoover and fuse the electric lights, but it is the spirit of the inventor and pioneer that inspires his work of destruction. He explores unknown stretches of country, plunging into ditches, climbing trees, doing battle with his enemies, and comes home a sight to break his mother's heart, but his courage and initiative are the stuff of which heroes are made. He has sudden impulses to "help" his family. He "helps" to wash up and leaves a trail of broken crockery in his wake; he "helps" to bring in the coal, covering face, hands and the kitchen floor; he "helps" bring in the deck chairs, becoming inextricably entangled with each; he puts in a spot of gardening and no one can ever use the secateurs again. It is not always easy to remember how laudable his intentions were...

There is a theory that, on our way from the cradle to the grave, we pass through all the stages of evolution, and the boy of eleven is at the stage of the savage - loyal to his tribe, ruthless to his foes, governed by mysterious taboos, an enemy of civilization and all its meaningless conventions. He dislikes little girls, not only because he considers them to belong to an inferior order of being but also because he suspects them of being allies of the civilization that threatens his liberty. And, beneath his tough exterior, he is sensitive, generous and affectionate, though he has, too, a pride that makes him conceal these qualities. You can hurt him desperately by a careless word, but you will never know that you have done so. Moreover despite his outrageous appearance and behaviour, he has a strong sense of dignity that you affront at your peril.

I have been deeply touched to receive letters from parents, thanking me for helping them to understand the maddening creatures with whom they have to deal, thanking me (and William!) too, for having lightened the weary hours of a child's illness. I once received a letter from a Swedish youth, telling me that the reading

વિલિયમ સફેદ સાટીનમાં

૨૧૧



‘એ વેવડી જૂનવાણી ઘેડી છે.’

‘એ વેવડી જૂનવાણી ઘેડી છે.’ કચરેક તે પોતાનાં
વાકડિયાં કાળાં જુલ્હાં હાવાની મોકાચર્ચા ટીકા કરતી.
‘આ પુરાણી પૃથ્વી પર કોઈ જૂના સ્થળે તને બંધા મળે
એવી સૌથી વેવડી ચક્રમ એ છે, મારા જીવના સમ! એ

is by no means quenched, and we shall probably find him in many more tight corners before we see the last of him!

WILLIAM is known all over the world. The William stories have been translated into many different languages. Here we have a page taken from a William book in an Indian dialect. The book is "Just William". The artist in this case is Thomas Henry, who has always illustrated William. The original artist's pictures have been used in most of the foreign editions, though occasionally an artist has been employed who has made William and his friends look like boys of the country in which the foreign edition appears.

* * *

of the translations of the William books had made him, and many of his friends, feel at home in England from the moment they reached it.

Well, thirty-two William books have been published and a thirty third is on the way - William's Treasure Trove, to be published in September. In spite of the frequent buffets he receives from the hand of fate, his thirst for adventure

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CHARLES HAMILTON ARCHIVES

The President of the London O.B.B.C. is trying to collect material associated with the life and work of Charles Hamilton. Letters, Manuscripts, Photographs, Rare Issues, etc. If members of the O.B.B.C. are interested in the idea and would like to help it would be much appreciated. This is in no sense a private collection, and will be open for inspection. Copies can be made of rare items. Works has already commenced and some specimens obtained.

"RENDER unto RICHARDS..."

by Tom Hopperton

If incidence of quotation is anything to go by, The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam was not one of Frank Richards' favourite works, although up to 1940 he diligently followed one of Omar's precepts - to take the cash in hand and waive the rest. It is one of the oddities of his career that what personal fame accrued to him came after the reason for that fame had ceased to exist.

Once he did emerge from the shadows of Fleetway House he received more limelight than any other boys' author has had or is likely to have. This was no doubt highly gratifying but, despite Phineas T. Barnum's dictum that any publicity is better than no publicity, he would have been less than human not to be irked by the quality of some of his. It was not a question of open attack or the popular simplification of Greyfriars into a mass of "Yarooks!" and stolen jam tarts, but that into many nominally friendly articles intruded notes of facetious denigration and supercilious sneering. Even his obituary notices were not free from this, the sourest note being sounded by The New Statesman with its "What an extraordinary old monster."

There is no reason to suspect malice in most of this, the line being dictated by journalistic opportunism, the chance to raise an easy snigger by smart-alec ridicule and the feeling that a boys' writer - and the creator of Billy Bunter into the bargain - cannot be regarded seriously. The ground had, I supposed, been quite exhausted, even if the article writers were not, until along came Mr. Frank Shaw recently in The New Strand Magazine with a couple of side-swipes which seem to be making their bow in print.

"Much is made by his disciples of Richards' erudition, but what Latin of his I have seen lacks distinction. And he would never tell anyone where he went to school."

The first sentence fills me with admiration as a magnificent example of belittlement by insinuation. Without actually saying so, our critic blandly leads the reader to suppose that he is a Latin scholar of merit, and that Frank Richards was not. This may be so, although I am not aware of any specimen of Mr. Shaw's Latin available to form a judgment by. There is plenty of Frank's about, in such easily accessible places as The Times Educational Supplement, and when no one else seems to have noticed any inelegancy, inaccuracy or plain error in it, it is most penetrating of Mr. Shaw to have done so, and it would have been even more convincing if he had given us one or two examples as proof. Besides, it would help with the conviction if the prose of the article had a little more distinction. If Mr. Shaw means what he says he is woefully deficient in logic.

Unless he labours under the delusion that a public school and education are synonymous, why drag in Richards' school? One of the most sackless louts I ever met was at Durham School till he was nearly nineteen, and Thomas Cooper taught himself Latin, Greek and modern languages while slaving fourteen hours a day at a cobbler's last. I can't see that the school has any bearing on the matter and I fancy that there is a certain amount of malarkey being circulated about Frank's early days. My own opinion, based entirely on reading his works, is that if we ever get the full story it will show him to have been largely self-educated - and the more credit to him

if this were so! Erudition is in the eye of the beholder even more than beauty is and while we can grant that a busy writer may not be able to vie with Bertrand Russell or F. R. Leavis on their own ground, only ignorance or churlishness will deny Frank Richards a more than usual share, and whatever his school.

This intertwines with Mr. Shaw's other remark that: "His stories were surprisingly scattered with quotations (did the first readers understand them?) but prove nothing but wide reading and a good Bartlett. Raby far too often said 'True, O King!' Bob Cherry's cap far too frequently was like the 'plume of Navarre.'"

Prove nothing but.....? Mr. Shaw is too modest. If some of the professors who labour in the Shakespeare Industry were turned loose on them they would undertake to prove anything from the author's inferiority complex to his literary background and his opinion of the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes. But Mr. Shaw is pregnant with a startling revelation and hastens to be delivered. Consider the genesis of an expression such as "Quelch's brow, like the sable arms of the rugged Pyrrhus, it did the night resemble."

Frank Richards has arrived at a point in a story when he needs some vivid description of what an angry Mr. Quelch looks like. He stops work and hooks out Bartlett's Familiar Quotations, where he thumbs through the "Anger" section without success. (He won't find the rugged Pyrrhus in any case, as he isn't in this Bartlett.) But Frank is a sticker. Down comes The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations. He ploughs through both the "Anger" and the "Angry" columns this time and still can't locate anything that appeals to him. True, if he looks under "Shakespeare" he will locate the elusive Greek, but it has now dawned on him that what he needs is some variation of "black as night" or "black as thunder" and he turns to the fountain-head, Bartlett's Complete Concordance to Shakespeare. There, under "Night", he unearths the yellow-haired and sable-armed pest and having found his simile returns happily to work.

For over 40 years Frank probably never wrote less than 40,000 words a week and more often than not he would be ranging round the 50 to 70,000 mark. In other words, he belted out direct on the typewriter at 50 words a minute what was nearly the equivalent of a full-length novel every week. Thanks to Mr. Shaw we now know that if he had not been under this distressing necessity to knock off and rummage in Bartlett he could have bettered this output. This is certainly an original thought, a thought which calls to mind a quotation from Mat Prior to which Frank Richards became quite fond in his closing years:

"Let him be kept from paper, pens and ink
That he may cease to write and learn to think."

We have long been exhorted to give the Devil his due (which should surely include a capital) and should Frank have less? What he had was an appetite for books he considered to be in the classical succession, a selective and retentive memory with an aptitude for apposite quotation, plus the essential urge to exercise that aptitude. If Mr. Shaw wished to pour acid, it is here that he missed his greatest opportunity.

The habitual quoter must expect mixed reactions. Where one reader admires the erudition displayed another suspects blatant showing-off - perhaps with no more than the trappings of a looted Bartlett! Let Ezra Pound serve for illustration. Whatever his merits, he goads me into thinking him a parvenu of the library, an arrant literary snob, a name-dropper and quotation-brandisher, ostentatiously pelting the reader with the debris of half-a-dozen languages and half-a-hundred authors to a shrill clamour of "See how dazingly cultured I am!"

For all I know, Frank Richards may impress certain people in a somewhat similar way. I must admit that I catch a Poundian echo in his articles, which are overloaded with aggressively paraded quotations and allusions. Into one 700 word snippet he contrived to cram a daunting total of eighteen of them in English, Latin and Italian.

There is no reason to suppose him schizophrenic, so the one mind produced both articles and fiction, from which it may seem illogical that the stories have never impressed me in the same way. Quotations are just as much an integral part of the style, but they are not so thick on the ground: they are not flourished under one's nose but blend naturally into the narrative and add savour to it. When Bunter watches a cake that he hoped to loot being locked in a cupboard and "his eyes remained glued to it like the sad eyes of Dido to the departing sails of Aeneas," is that to parade the author's familiarity with The Aeneid? I think not: it is humorous by its incongruity, and effectively so. Most of his quotations, in fact, serve a similar function.

One reviewer of the Autobiography refreshed his memory of Greyfriars by reading a Bunter Book. He was conscientious but unwittingly misleading himself. A Bunter Book, though excellent in itself, is nevertheless merely a précis of bygone glories. Frank's greatest series bulked to three or four hundred thousand words, and it was in the uniquely limitless elbow-room of The Gem and Magnet that his highly expansive and seemingly discursive technique budded and flowered. Within the cramping confines of the books the plotting is simplified, the characterisation shorn to essentials and "atmospherics" pared to a minimum. Oddly enough, when everything else is reduced in scale two things have actually increased - the Latinity and the quoting. The books, then, are not completely representative but in literary style or, if you prefer it, his literary peculiarities, they are the most Richardsian of his work and display the peak of a rather uneven evolution.

Frank's pre-1907 work was comparatively terse and direct. Faced with the task of filling a complete paper with a prospectively endless succession of school stories, a task soon doubled by the addition of The Magnet to The Gem, there was an early modification. Jack, Sam and Pete could range the world breaking new ground each week. Tom Merry and Harry Wharton were to do more than their share of globe-trotting, but plots were automatically limited by the requirements of school. To avoid the impossibility of devising two "new" plots each week he concocted the polite fiction of the series that was really one long story, only to throw into sharper relief the existing difficulty of filling this yawning gulf of pages.

He became expansive and still managed to avoid diffuseness. Much of the new space went in the detailing and elaboration of the characters, not so much by direct description as in dialogue, until they became uncannily life-like to their devotees, and if any single factor has to be pinpointed as the main reason for his success it must be this character building. The physical humour and near-wisecracking of former days (see as late an example as Jack Blake in Pluck) were superseded by a quite involved, elaborate and extended comedy of character centering on Gussy, Bunter, Alonzo and the rest. It was this gentler, more leisurely playful humorousness so contrasting with the earlier sharper fun that seems to have brought in the quoting and one aspect of the Latin.

Once in, like the little peach in the orchard, it grew and grew, although the development was largely in two upsurges, each the result of a war. The first one halted Frank's jaunting around Europe while, coincidentally, internal friction at Fleetway House reduced his output. The second brought a lamentable blank in his writing for over five years. (There was a third hump in the curve of progress about

1930 when failing eyesight brought him finally to anchor, but it was reflected more in a general improvement in the stories than in the specific points I am pursuing at the moment.)

The Latin gambols made their appearance about the time Rookwood was getting into its full stride and - take it for what it is worth! - they centred on the opening section of The Aeneid. Time was an elastic concept in these schools, but even after the Fourth must inevitably have progressed into the third or fourth books some workshy prefect like Carthew would be deputed to them who insisted on going back to the beginning. As even the dullest Sixthformer should be able to retrace such once-familiar ground, the advantage seemed to lie more with the author than with the prefect - if only in allowing Tubby Muffin to translate arma viramque cano as the army, the man and the dog.

Comical translations from the Latin seem to have begun in that great source-book for so many school tales, Tom Wildrake's Schooldays. They were not much featured in A.P. papers, and the day was not yet come when Frank Richards was to make them peculiarly his own. It is noteworthy that much of the serious Englishing of the Latin at this period seems to have been taken direct from Dryden's rhymed translation, and anyone who cares to read the first ten lines of Dryden's Aeneis will find three quotations which were much used. Fluency and variety came later and increased steadily during the next twenty years. They never did come with The Iliad. When it was referred to, even in such expressions as "Achilles' wrath, to Greece the direful spring of woes unnumbered, was nothing to Coker's," it was always in the words of Pope's version.

When the enforced silence during the last war ended, it once more appeared that extended study and reading during the unwonted leisure had modified the style, which was more mannered than ever, perhaps because in a Bunter Book the author now had six months in which to brood over what he used to gallop through in a week, so that the writing was less spontaneous and more considered. Latin had become if not an obsession at least a major pre-occupation, which was reflected in the fact that classical references now formed a much larger proportion of the quoting.

Mr. Shaw asks if the original readers understood the quotations. For one who demands distinction in Latin his English shows a certain lack of clarity. If he means no more than he says, why on earth shouldn't they? Is there anything abstruse in Gussy being the glass of fashion and the mould of form, in good advice passing the Bounder by like the idle wind that he regarded not, and in a fleeing Bunter ignoring Quelch's bawled command because like the dying gladiator he heard but he heeded not?

If he means, did they know the sources, the answer must be, "Some did some and some did not, but did it matter much?" The turn of language would show even dullards that a quotation was being used. The ignorant (unqualified) would remain so: the ignorant but curious could always look it up in Bartlett if they wished, and who knows but that Frank reared a brood of Shakespeareans. When Jack Blake proclaimed after a successful jape, "Like Coriolanus, alone I did it!" there was surely someone who delved into Coriolanus to find just what it was that arrogant Roman did do.

If Mr. Shaw has read much in Richards he should have hesitated over the question. Frank knew his business - none better! - and he never forgot that he was writing for boys, to whom a posturing and condescending author may not smell to high heaven but certainly smells. In extracting the more than 400 quotations for the Hamilton Tag-List in the 1960 Annual it struck me that there was a cleavage between Charles Hamilton and Frank Richards. In articles and letters he abounded in foreign

phrases and out of the way extracts from minor Augustans and Victorians with odd emphasises and strange blanks. He never once drew on Dr. Johnson, a much more obvious source than the Macaulay whose verse and essays he seemed to have at his finger tips. When he continually dripped Shakespeare, why did he totally ignore the eminently quotable Sonnets?

As Frank, however, he was more restricted, giving the impression that he expected his readers to understand his allusions and that he was going out of his way to make it easy for them. When he removed into an alien tongue in either the classroom or foreign parts he obligingly provided a running translation in some plausible way. In English he relied almost entirely on the mainstream of established reading, using nothing after 1900 and levying writers of the widest currency - The Bible, Shakespeare, Scott, Byron, Gilbert, Carroll and Gray and the like.

Most of us know the Bible better at fourteen than we do at forty: few but have two or three of Shakespeare's more popular plays rammed into them at school: Gray's Elegy is the best known poem in the language: the Savoy Operas and Alice are common property. He was meeting us on our own ground - and if it wasn't our ground it ought to have been.

Even in the inexhaustible quarry of Shakespeare 27 quotations from Hamlet, ten from Macbeth and eight from Julius Caesar, all repeaters, show where the emphasis was thrown. If he had simply been writing to dazzle and particularly if he had scoured Bartlett for electrifying phrases the quotes would not have blended so harmoniously with the story, and he would have found striking snippets from such strictly non-juvenile plays as Titus Andronicus irresistible. Why, when Frank Nugent was proudly convoying young brother Dicky, did Skinner not demand, "Say, wall-ey'd slave, whither wouldst thou convey this growing imagine of thy fiend-like face?" Simply, I think, because Frank was quoting naturally from remembered reading as part of his normal literary method and not toting round a load of gems pilfered from quotation dictionaries to stick in his stories for trick effects.

(And that reminds me that there are a couple of lines in the same play which could well be pondered by any writer considering adding to the Bunter Books: "What fool has added water to the sea, Or brought a faggot to bright-burning Troy?")

The quotations, in point of fact, are not so much out of the way as some of the methods of applying them. Bob Cherry would impress one as the least literary of juniors, yet he is a favourite vehicle for quotations of which he has a large and unexpectedly varied repertoire. Cardew is also well stocked, mainly with aids to flippancy, as when he shrugs off his waywardness with, "Only Pretty Fanny's way!" Parnell seems an unlikely author for a Fourth-former to read, leaving one to suppose that he picked up the phrase at second hand. This is certainly how Bunter acquired his formidable armoury of misquotations and misascriptions, although he does trot out the occasional telling phrase as with his fatuous "Kindest friend and noblest foe - that's me!"

Where Mr. Shaw reveals his complete failure to grasp the very core of both Frank's modus operandi and the Richardsian attraction is in his complaint about the repetition. In some 3,000 St. Jim's, Greyfriars and Rookwood stories, it would be no more reasonable to demand fresh imagery each week than it would brand-new plots - particularly as the entire readership would change every four or five years. And who wanted them? The Gem and Magnet were drugs of addiction. It was the constant repetitive detailing of the characters, of the locale and of the mannerisms that so saturated the reader in the vivid lifelikeness of the schools that he came to crave the weekly dose and, pending it, he gobbled up whatever he could find in Penny Popular,

SOL and other reprints. That is why television and the Bunter Books cannot nourish another generation of Hamiltonians. They just cannot give the prolonged soaking in the atmosphere of the school necessary to breed habituation.

If familiarity breeds contempt is a truism, it is a physical and not a verbal one. Small children will demand the same story over and over until the adult reader is at the point of nausea. Why do comedians raise delighted weekly bellows with such inanities as "I'm in charge!" and "Dodgy!"? Frank exploited this persisting trait with catchwords aplenty, ranging from the simple "Hallo! Hallo! Hallo!" to the involved "I-if y-y-you sh-sh-shake m-m-me," etc. His quotations were not such diligent performers, but if Gussy lost the repose that stamps the caste of Vere de Vere every couple of months well, it was like meeting an old and dear friend again. So it should. Consider how one simple but telling quotation humorously conveys an impression of Gussy's customary dignified placidity and present lapse which could not be as well expressed in a paragraph of explanation.

Considerably more than forty winters have besieged my brow since I opened my first Gem and all I have read since then implants the conviction that in addition to Frank Richards knowing just what he was doing he believed with wholehearted enthusiasm in himself and his stories. He was given The Gem because he had been for years a popular writer selling all he cared to write - and the amount he did care to produce was staggering. If he had continued complacently churning out the mixture-as-before, who would have blamed him? So many boys' writers flourished by doing just that.

I do not believe that there was anything more artless or haphazard in his use of quotations or Latin than in anything else he did. It looks as if he accepted that as his boys had to know Latin it would be an advantage to their author to know it too, and he neglected no opportunity for verisimilitude and space filling. That it became a hobby-horse was coincidental. He met every new and increasing demand on him by intelligent and craftsmanlike adjustments in plotting, in characterisation and in stylism until he had perfect command of his material.

Jack, Sam and Pete danced their antic hay for many years, but who can date one of Clarke Hook's stories by any internal evidence other than the presence or absence of Algy? Against this, any collector hearing a previously unfamiliar Magnet story could place it with some accuracy. Why? Because Hook was static and Richards was so progressive that, to his particular credit, he developed a consummate mastery of the school story at a time when the demands on his pen were so great that he had every encouragement to sacrifice quality to quantity and the easy cheque.

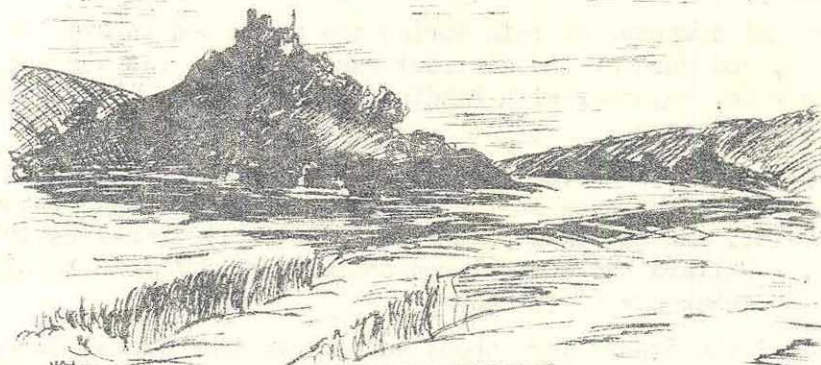
Criticism abounds, of course. George Orwell thought his influence pernicious: Mr. Shaw apparently suspects that he was a poseur. The necessarily widely varying range of the stories leads to dissension even among what Mr. Shaw calls "the disciples." Some, who expect a school story to be about school, cavil at the juniors cavorting about all the round earth's imagined corners, and I myself wilt when confronted by ventriloquists and missing heirs. Everyone, in fact, seems to have had a grumble -- except the near half million boys who at his peak potted out their coppers each week for his stories and, after all, Frank was not writing for the Orwells or the Shaws or the adult collector but for them. It was not a case of with all his faults they loved him still. Judging by the tribute of absorbed devotion that four decades of boys paid him, they probably were not even aware that he had any.

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I S L A N D

Willard's Island, in the River Stowe, which featured in many of the St. Frank's stories really came into its own in the old series 349-355 relating to the finding of the lost fortune of John Willard, a wealthy eccentric who built the stone building known as Willard's Folly in the centre of the island. A most picturesque pile, designed in the form of an ancient castle, with battlements and towers. It had never been completed, for old Willard died before his quaint dreams could be realized. For the last ten years it had remained deserted and dreary. Parts of it were roofed over, but other portions were exposed to the weather.

A terrible storm which had wrecked a portion of the Ancient House, destroying the Fifth Form and Remove dormitories, had also introduced John Martin, a lad of fifteen, who had saved Dr. Stafford, the Headmaster of St. Frank's, from a falling tree during the gale. Dr. Stafford was grateful to the boy, who appeared to be in poor circumstances and insisted that he should stay at St. Frank's as his guest.

Dr. Stafford had made enquiries from a Mr. Jenkins, with whom John Martin lived, and found that the boy had been given into the charge of Jenkins when he was four years old; also that his real name was John Willard, son of old John Willard. As old Willard was considered mad by the local inhabitants Jenkins had called the boy Martin, otherwise people would have thought him mad, too. Martin did not have a happy life with Jenkins, and was in ignorance of his real name. As Jenkins did not care what happened to John Martin, there was nothing to prevent him from accepting Dr. Stafford's hospitality.

Owing to the damage caused by the storm, the Headmaster made arrangements with Yexford College to take thirty juniors in for a month or five weeks - until, in fact, the repairs to the Ancient House were complete.

The St. Frank's Cadet Corps which had just been formed and composed of thirty or so juniors, had stepped in the breach, and, with the Head's approval made camp in Willard's Folly on the island. The Head agreed that it would be far better for the boys to stay near St. Frank's. The scheme had a double advantage. It would give

the cadets a chance to get really going, and they would all be near the school - near enough to attend lessons in the usual way. They would only sleep and eat on the island.

Although not on the same footing as the other St. Frank's fellows, John Martin received permission to join the cadets as his bedroom at St. Frank's had been completely destroyed.

The phenomenal downpour of rain during the storm had caused the River Stowe to burst its banks, and much of the district was flooded. It was soon after the storm that Nipper & Co. together with Handforth, Church and McClure took a boat out to have a look at the damage.

Nearing Willard's Island (which, owing to the swollen river was only about half its usual size) the boys saw that a miniature land-slide had taken place, due to the swirling water, and had exposed a well-built brick tunnel behind a mass of earth and stones. Willard had built large cellars and dungeons to his castle, but this tunnel was something new to the boys.

As Nipper and the others were about to explore this tunnel Tregellis-West rescued a wooden box that he saw floating away. Upon examination this proved to contain a jig-saw puzzle and a sheet of stout paper on which were strange markings and figures.

During the excitement which followed the find, a voice was heard shouting for help. It appeared to come from the very flood itself, and it wasn't until the boys approached in the boat, the top branches of a big oak tree which were sticking out of the water that they saw two men of the sea-faring type clinging to its branches. Handforth, with his usual recklessness, spoke of the finding of the box in front of the two men, who had now joined the occupants of the boat, and more than a passing interest was shown by them. The upshot of this was that the two men, Captain Niggs and his mate, Ben Croke, endeavoured to snatch the box from the boys. They were defeated in their designs by Handforth.

A few days after the finding of the box, which was now in Nelson Lee's safe keeping, the cadets made their camp on the island, having made Willard's Folly snug and habitable. With Handforth as sergeant, the Cadet Corps was something of a rag-time affair, but as they were not official cadets, it did not matter.

Handforth was a holy terror as a sergeant, but, on the whole, did fairly well. He took great interest in his work, and entered whole-heartedly into every task that was allotted to him. Here is an extract from O.S. 351 "The Island Camp" -

"Sergeant Handforth, I want you to take three men and run into Bannington as quickly as possible," said Lieutenant Nipper, looking up from his papers. "You will conduct the party to various establishments, in order to obtain supplies. There are several items which are urgently needed. I have the list here and -" "That's all right, sir," interrupted the sergeant briskly "Leave it to me, sir!" with the list of goods which were to be obtained, the sergeant saluted and bustled out.

"Shun!" he roared. "Every man will cease messing about!"

"Go and boil your head, sergeant" said De Valerie.

"We ain't on duty now, you ass!"

"Private De Valerie, you'll be reported to the commanding officer if you address me in that way again!" snapped Handforth.

"Shun, I don't want any insubordination!"

Handforth strode in among the cadets.

"I want three volunteers!" he exclaimed sharply. "You're to accompany me to Bannington on bicycles, and I don't want any arguments!"

"You'll do for one Church, you for another McClure, and Private Grey for a third. Better get into your kit at once, and report for duty in five minutes!"

"Hold on, sergeant" interrupted Grey "I thought -"

"It doesn't matter what you thought" snapped Handforth, "Obey orders!"

"You prize ass!" shouted Grey "Didn't you just say you wanted three volunteers? And before any chaps have a chance to offer themselves you pick three of us out. Personally I'm not keen on the job!"

"I'll go!" said Singleton.

"Same here!" exclaimed three or four other cadets.

Handforth glared, and swished his cane.

"The three volunteers have been chosen!" he retorted "Church, McClure and Grey - that's enough. I'm not allowing any squabbling about it, and unless you dry up, I'll put you through half an hour's extra drill this evening!"

This threat effectually put a stop to all further objections.

It was during this ride to Bannington that the cadets fell foul of Mr. Giddy who was steward of the Glenthorne estate, Colonel Glenthorne being abroad, Mr. Giddy had complete control of the Glenthorne property, which included Willard's Island. On learning that the St. Frank's cadets were camping on the island, Mr. Giddy made it his business to treat the cadets as trespassers and force them to leave the island. In this scheme he was supported by Captain Niggs and Mr. Croke who had been rescued from the floods by Nipper and Co. These men had offered themselves as watchmen on the island, and Mr. Giddy in his desire to throw the cadets off the island had eagerly accepted their help.

Both Niggs and Croke had put up at the "White Harp" in Bellton in order to be near the island and had taken advantage of Mr. Giddy's feud with the cadets in order to have the island to themselves in their search for Willard's treasure. In this they were joined by a Mr. Hudson who had overheard them discussing the treasure through the thin partition which separated the bedrooms at the "White Harp". Mr. Hudson also revealed that he had married Willard's sister and was, of course, John Willard's uncle.

Although old John Willard was considered to be a wealthy man when he died, no trace of his fortune could be found, and the possibility of the jig-saw and cypher leading to the treasure made these men highly dangerous.

An attempt one night by Hudson and his associates to obtain possession of the box and its contents from St. Frank's had failed. After breaking into Study 6 and finding an empty box, the men, attracted to a lighted window, found Nelson Lee engaged in trying to solve the puzzle. Entering the study and engaging Nelson Lee in a scuffle, Hudson & Co. were forced to flee empty handed with the arrival of Mr. Crowell, who had come down to investigate the noise.

So it was, that the following day, Mr. Giddy, accompanied by a policeman, arrived at the island, and, with the law behind him forced the cadets to leave. A temporary camp was made in the boat-house at St. Franks, which was far from suitable.

The only solution to this problem was to go over Mr. Giddy's head, and it was for this reason that Nipper and Watson visited Glenthorne Manor in order to personally see if a member of the family could help them, owing to Colonel Glenthorne being abroad.

The following is an extract from O.S. 352 "The Coming of Archie" -

Ferris, the butler, shook his head.

"I'm afraid you've wasted your time my boys," he said. "The family is all abroad. Colonel Glenthorne and his lady, and Mr. Harold and Mr. George. They're in Switzerland, enjoying the winter sports."

"And is nobody at home?" inquired Nipper.

"Well, young gentlemen, there's Master Archibald," said the butler in a queer voice.

"Master Archibald?"

"Yes, my lad, Master Archibald being Colonel Glenthorne's youngest son."

"Couldn't we see him?" asked Nipper eagerly, and with rising hopes.

"Well, there's no reason why you shouldn't" replied Ferris, scratching his ear. "But I shouldn't advise you to, young gentlemen, you won't do no good. You see," he added in a confidential voice, "Master

Archibald is - well, perhaps it wouldn't be right for me to say any more." And the butler gave us a significant look.

"All the same I think we'll chance it" said Nipper "Do you mind going to Master Archibald and telling him that two juniors from St. Frank's College would like to have a few words with him."

In due course Nipper and Watson were ushered into the presence of Master Archibald who regarded them languidly from the depths of a big armchair placed in front of the fire.

"Oh, there you are, then!" he observed. "That is, I mean to say, what?"

"I'm sorry to trouble you, Master Archibald" I began.

"Don't mention it, old fruit!" exclaimed Archie, "Don't even breathe it, and all that rot. How perfectly priceless for you to drop in."

Nipper managed to convey to Archie the predicament the cadets were in, and left with a promise that Archie would do all he could.

It turned out that a month or two back Colonel Glenthorne had completed all the necessary arrangements for Archie to go to St. Frank's as a scholar, but the scheme was turned down by Archie himself, who had an idea that public schools were the next thing to prisons.

It was a pleasant surprise to Nipper, and the rest of the cadets, when Archie put in his appearance at St. Franks the following day, with the intention of joining the 'merry old party,' as he put it. In other words, to become a scholar at St. Franks.

Dr. Stafford didn't forget the ordeal of Archie's interview for several weeks. He was a most difficult fellow to examine. He took a tremendous time to answer the various questions - but curiously, enough, he gave the correct answer. He was not nearly so ignorant as he made out. The Head was pleasantly surprised.

With Archie, now a scholar at St. Franks, the cadets were able to go back to Willard's Island again. When Mr. Giddy heard of the return, he again visited the island with the intention of throwing the cadets off for a second time. This time, however, the owner's son being with the cadets put a different complexion on the matter, as Archie informed Mr. Giddy that the cadets were there as his guests, thus cutting the grass under the agent's feet.

The sheet of paper found in the box with the jigsaw puzzle and which had been in Nelson Lee's keeping had now been solved, and put an end to every scrap of doubt regarding a treasure. The words from the deciphered piece of paper ran as follows -

He who has solved this riddle is indeed clever. The reward will be an ample one for he who pieces the fretsaw puzzle together, thus having in his hand a complete and accurate guidance to the precise whereabouts of my hidden gold. There is much of this - vast and unthinkable quantities of pure gold! The fortune is one which will make any man rich as a monarch of a fairy kingdom. It is easy to find - quite easy. Piece the puzzle together, and the pathway to the gold will become clear. Proceed.

John Willard

Even now that Nelson Lee had solved the cypher, the treasure was just as far off. For, before the gold could be found, it was necessary to piece together the intricate jig-saw puzzle. The whole thing was going to be big, and Lee now knew that Mr. Hudson, Captain Niggs and Mr. Croke were not chasing a wild goose.

Now that the threat of expulsion from the island had passed for the cadets, it was possible for those in the secret of Willard's treasure to carry on the search in the cellars of Willard's Folly. With the cadets at St. Frank's attending lessons it was simple for Hudson & Co. to get on the island with the same idea in mind.

It was while Handforth and Watson were doing a spell of sentry duty at the camp one night that John Martin disappeared from the sleeping quarters of the cadets.

It was obvious that he had been taken down to the cellars, as had he been taken out into the open, Martin and his captors would have had to pass the sentries.

Although Handforth and Watson, and Nipper searched the cellars, there was no sign of Martin. Watson was sent to the school in order to inform Nelson Lee and bring him to the camp.

With Nelson Lee on the scene, the search was intensified. It seemed that Hudson & Co. had stumbled upon some of the secrets of Willard's Folly.

The close search by Nelson Lee and the boys was successful in finding the secret door and rescuing Martin who was tied up in the cellar beyond. Whether the men who kidnapped him meant any harm is open to question, but with Martin out of the way, the next legal heir would be Hudson, and of course Hudson knew Martin as his nephew John Willard.

In the exploration of the tunnel which the floods had exposed, Watson had stumbled upon one of the stone stairs which proved to be on a kind of swivel and shot up when pressure was applied, showing an entrance to a further cellar. In a recess the boys saw a big pile of gold coins. According to Willard's cypher this could only represent a portion of his fortune, and it seemed that a more thorough search was necessary.

The eagerness to explore now seized the boys, but this could only be done at night in order not to arouse the curiosity of the cadets who were not in the secret.

With the majority of cadets grouped around the big camp fire, Nipper suggested to his chums that they might take advantage of the chatter and slip away for a while to investigate the cellar containing the gold coins.

Joined by Handforth, Nipper led the way into the tunnel which was quite dry, although the air smelt musty. After a while, the tunnel sloped and the boys commenced the descent of the flight of steep, roughly made steps. When nearing the bottom of the steps Nipper applied pressure to one of the steps and a fairly large opening appeared which led to one of the secret cellars.

Nipper and Watson had been down before but had been pressed for time and unable to do the job properly. In his eagerness to enter the cellar, Handforth who was last, completely forgot to close the secret entrance, and this oversight was to cause quite a lot of trouble for the boys.

The cellar was not large and in a recess lay a loose pile of sovereigns, discoloured by age. Altogether, the pile probably represented about seven or eight thousand pounds. This, of course, was a considerable sum - but a mere nothing compared to the treasure which was supposed to exist.

After examining the walls for a secret door, Sir Montie Tregellis-West noticed that one of the stone slabs which composed the floor was not quite so tightly fixed in as the others, and that it was smaller. With the aid of a cold chisel which Nipper had brought, the slab was raised revealing a black cavity. Nipper shone his torch down the shaft and the boys could see it was a square pit, built of brick, with a ladder running down one wall. With great excitement the boys descended the ladder and found a short tunnel leading into a natural cavern.

It was the contents of the cavern which interested the boys. Everything was smothered with dust, and it was obvious that nothing had been touched for many years. On one side stood a machine consisting of wheels and cogs, and metal rods and bars. A little further along stood a furnace capable of attaining stupendous heat. And

there, on a long bench, stood a large number of bottles, containing coloured liquids - obviously chemicals.

As it was getting near to supper-time, the boys thought it advisable to get back to camp. With a last look round Nipper flashed his torch on to the uneven rock-walls. And then, abruptly, he brought the light on some wide shelves which practically filled up the deepest corner of the cavern. The shelves made of solid slabs of stone, were deep and they were filled with large quantities of dull metal bars. Each bar was about a foot long, and an inch square, looking like chopped-up railings, at first sight.

Nipper went close, and examined them more carefully, and at first, thought they were brass bars until he picked up one and found it was a considerable weight. He felt the blood rush to his face with excitement. "Good Heavens!" he shouted thickly. "It's - it's gold!" The juniors crowded round, trembling with eagerness and incredulity. Nipper shoved the torch into Watson's hands and told him to hold it steady, and with his pocket knife scratched the surface of the metal bar. Then he knew he had made no mistake. The boys stood there, staring at it, almost too awed by the presence of such wealth to speak. Then, from above, came a sound - clearly and distinctly. Not knowing what to expect, the boys hid behind the mystery machine.

While Nipper and Co. and Handforth were exploring the cavern, Hudson and his two helpers had hired a boat from a villager with the intention of visiting the island. Taking care not to be seen by the cadets, the three men arrived at the broken cliff which marked the entrance to the secret tunnel and proceeded along it in single file. They descended the steps, and Hudson, in advance, had nearly reached the bottom when he fell headlong. He went down with a nasty jar, but managed to keep hold of the torch which did not go out. The light from his torch was playing fully upon a big opening in the stone stairway. It had certainly not been there before, and it was obvious that this was no accidental collapse. The place was a kind of door leading to a dark cavity beyond.

One after another the three men crawled through, and found themselves in a bare place where a big stone slab lay on the floor. Beside it yawned a black hole leading right down into the earth. The men concluded, then and there, that they had stumbled upon the secret, and that they were the only ones who knew it. And while they stood at the top of the shaft, complete silence reigned below.

Hudson and his companions came down the iron ladder, and then into the cavern. The three men crossed over to the shelves, and Hudson picked up one of the bars.

"Gold!" he gasped. "It's gold - gold! Absolutely pure gold. There's hundreds of thousands of pounds here.

The men fell to discussing how to get the gold out of the cavern, realising that they would have to have a place to put it, away from the island. It would not be easy to cart the gold away in secret. Then Mr. Hudson did something which fairly "put the lid on it." He closed down the stone slab over the shaft.

Corporal Pitt, concerned about the missing cadets, went searching for them. Church and McClure knowing pretty well where Nipper and the others had gone, confided in Pitt, with the result that Nelson Lee, their Housemaster, was informed.

Meanwhile, the imprisoned boys, who had kept hidden when Hudson, Niggs and Croke found the gold, decided to transfer the bars to an alcove in the cavern.

Actually, it was Archie Glenthorpe who rescued Nipper and the others from the cavern. It came about in a curious way. A new boy named Enoch Snipe, having got

into conversation with Hudson, arranged to lure John Martin in order that Hudson and his associates could leave him down in the secret cellar. Snipe, overhearing Hudson's conversation with Niggs, realised that Martin was, in actual fact, John Willard, and it would be to his advantage to be friendly with Martin, in view of the fact that the treasure was his.

In order to earn the £2 which Hudson had promised him, Snipe enticed Archie, hoping that the men would not notice the switch in the darkness. Having brought Archie down into the cellar before discovering their mistake, it was impossible to release him as they could hardly expect Archie to remain quiet. Fortune favoured the rascals, with both Snipe and Martin walking into their hands.

In order to profit by his knowledge of Martin's fortune, Snipe had informed Martin of his real name, and with the promise of a portion of old Willard's fortune, lightly given by a sceptical Martin, Snipe had offered to take Martin down into the cellars and show him the gold. The result was that both fell into Hudson's hands and were imprisoned with Nipper and the others in the cavern.

Nelson Lee, with Handforth's chums and Pitt entered the secret tunnel and came face to face with Hudson and Co. In the scuffle which took place, Hudson fired a shot which slightly injured Pitt, so that Lee had to give Hudson best. Nelson Lee and the boys were forced down the shaft into the cavern.

Meanwhile, during this excitement, Archie Glenthorne, who had been overlooked by the men when Snipe and Martin had appeared, had hidden himself in an alcove. Hudson, now free to concentrate on Archie in order to make him join the others in the cavern, naturally assumed he had escaped on to the open ground of the island when he was found to be missing. As the men rushed into the open, Archie emerged from his hiding place and with considerable effort raised the stone slab from the shaft and released Nelson Lee and the boys from the cavern. Lee, with support from the boys, awaited the return of the three men and after a stiff fight made them prisoners.

So, the fortune of John Willard went to his son, and with Dr. Stafford consenting to be his guardian, John Willard took his place in the Remove in the same capacity as the other boys.

The machinery and furnace, together with the chemicals in the cavern suggested to Nelson Lee that old Willard had found a method of making gold economically from baser metals, but, of course, it would never be known if that was the case.

The gold coins found, could have been for the purpose of comparison; and the old man had died without revealing his secret, because he realised the terrible danger to the markets of the world, and the disastrous chaos which would result had he made known his discovery.

Hudson was sent off to Australia with enough money to set himself up with land of his own. He made a faithful promise to work his hardest to blot out the past. Niggs and Croke being merely tools of Hudson were set free and so ends one of the exciting chapters in the history of Willard's Island.

* * * * *

WANTED: B.F.Ls. No. 7 'Shunned by the School'; No. 14 'Pride of the School'; No. 40 'Fourth Form at Greyminster'; No. 5 'Boys of St. Basils'.

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LATE SUMMER FOLLY

A Story of Tom Merry & Co. of
St. Jim's

By ERIC FAYNE

"That lissom form looks familiar," said Monty Lowther.

It was a glorious afternoon in mid-September. After an indifferent summer, the sun was shining warmly with the promise of a fine autumn, and the chums of St. Jim's were making the most of the closing days of their long vacation.

Seven bronzed schoolboys - the Terrible Three and Jack Blake & Co - were sun-bathing after more than half an hour of surf-riding. It was pleasant to relax under the warm sun after their exertions in the cool waters of the north Cornish coast.

Porthcove was a small, isolated bay. The scenery was rugged, with masses of rock standing high out in the sea. The sandy beach was enclosed by high cliffs. The waters of the Atlantic, as they flowed into the bay, mounted into rollers, thus making possible the surf-riding which can be enjoyed on many parts of that coastline.

The only building visible from the beach was an hotel, high up on the summit of the cliff, with a long wooden stairway running down the cliff side for the use of residents at the hotel. During the summer months the secluded beach was a favourite spot for the younger visitors at the hotel, but now, so late in the season, the only remaining guests were older people who were daunted by the thought of negotiating that long wooden stairway. They were satisfied by the view of the sea which they obtained from their windows or from the hotel garden, while the sea air was as enjoyable at the top of the cliff as at the bottom.

In consequence, apart from the seven schoolboys from St. Jim's, the sands were deserted on this sunny September afternoon. The boys had left their clothing in tents near the cliff top, and had descended with nothing but their swimming attire and their towels.

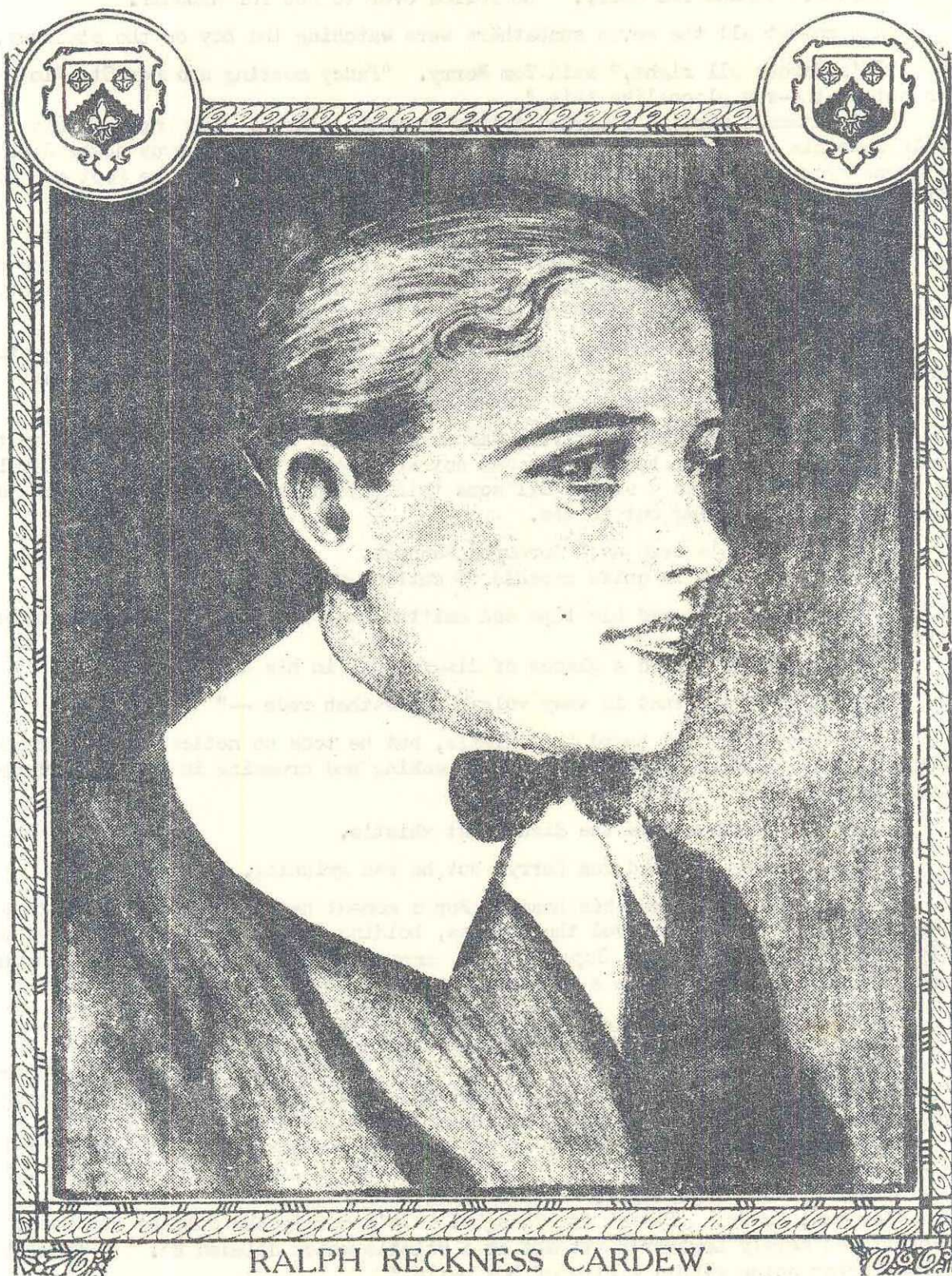
Monty Lowther was lying on his chest, his elbows making depressions in the soft sand, his chin resting in his hands. He was watching a figure descending the long stairway from the hotel grounds above.

"Whose lissom form?" demanded Manners sleepily. He was stretched out full length, with his face to the sun. His eyes were closed.

Jack Blake sat up and stared towards the steps. He shaded his eyes against the sun's reflection on the cliff face.

A youth was sauntering down the wooden stairway. He was wearing swimming trunks in black with yellow stripes, a large bathing towel was thrown over one shoulder, and he carried a pair of sun-spectacles carelessly in his hand. Slim though he was, he stripped well, was tall and muscular, and made an attractive figure in the sunshine.

"Cardew, by gum!" said Blake.



RALPH RECKNESS CARDEW.

"Cardew!" echoed Tom Merry. He rolled over to see for himself.

In a moment all the seven sunbathers were watching the boy on the stairway.

"It's Cardew all right," said Tom Merry. "Fancy meeting another St. Jim's man in an out-of-the-way place like this."

"It's a small world," remarked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. He inserted his monocle into his eye - even when disrobed for swimming Arthur Augustus never discarded his famous eyeglass - and scanned the newcomer who had now reached the foot of the stairway.

It was undoubtedly Ralph Reckness Cardew of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's. Under the cliff near the steps a rowing boat was drawn up, and Cardew sat on the edge of it for a few moments to enjoy the breathless warmth at that spot. He did not appear at any time to glance in the direction of the party of schoolboys.

"I hope, deah boys, that you will be polite to Cardew," said Arthur Augustus earnestly. "We do not wub along vewy well with him at school, but we buwy the hatchet duwing the vac. Pway tweat him as a kind of honahed guest."

Monty Lowther chuckled softly. Cardew had risen from the side of the boat and was strolling down the beach. He was not approaching them, but he drew level with the party and came to a standstill some thirty yards away. He donned his sunglasses, and stood staring out to sea.

"I wonder if he's seen us," murmured Manners.

"The cheeky sweep is quite capable of cutting us dead," grunted Blake.

Monty Lowther puckered his lips and emitted what is called, in modern parlance, a wolf whistle.

Arthur Augustus turned a glance of disapproval in his direction.

"Weally, Lowthah, that is vewy vulgah and wathah wude --"

Cardew certainly had heard the whistle, but he took no notice. He continued to stare out to sea where the rollers were breaking and creaming in on the surface of the shallow water.

Once again Lowther gave the discordant whistle.

"Chuck it, Monty," said Tom Merry, but he was grinning.

This time Cardew turned his head. For a moment he regarded the party through his sunglasses. Then he removed the glasses, holding them by one stem, and walked slowly towards Tom Merry & Co. Supercilious, arrogant, he had the air of an eastern potentate turning aside to make a patronising remark to his social inferiors.

"Nice to see you, Cardew," called out Tom Merry.

"It is a gweat and unexpected pleasuah," added Arthur Augustus politely.

"Ye Gods!" ejaculated Cardew. He came to a standstill, a flicker of amusement on his handsome face. "It's you lot. Comrades of the old Alma Mater. I thought it was a crew of motor-coach trippers out from Bude."

"Weally, Cardew, I hope that I do not look like a motah-coach twippah out ffrom Bude --"

Cardew grinned engagingly.

"Not you, Gussy. Perish the thought! It's merely the company you keep. In fact it was merely Lowther's attempt at a whistle which deluded me. I thought one only heard that noise within a mile of Bow bells."

"It was those swim togs of yours that did it," explained Lowther affably.

"You look like a wasp which has strayed far from its nest."

"Weally, Lowthah, such a wemark is vewy personal," said Arthur Augustus.

"Cardew's twunks are far too vivid and in wathah gawish taste, but it is ungentlemanly to tell him so."

There was an involuntary chuckle among the juniors.

Cardew was unabashed. He lifted a hand and brushed back his sleek dark hair.

"How nice to learn your unvarnished opinion!" he murmured. "Now I thought them rather swagger trunks. As a matter of fact they're new, well cut, and rather expensive."

Lowther put his head on one side.

"Anybody can see they're new," he observed. "Obviously nobody's ever had a swim in them. They're certainly well cut - it's clear that whoever cut them went on cutting for too long. The trouble with them is that they start too late and finish too early."

Arthur Augustus emitted a little cackle.

"Bai jove, I wegard that wemark as wathah funnay. I must twy to wemembah that, Lowthah. It is a vewy witty and shwewd comment. I do not wish to hurt your feelings, Cardew, deah boy, but I cannot appwove of your twunks. They are far too abbeviated."

"I will make a note of your disapproval," said Cardew solemnly. He glanced round the schoolboy party. Tom Merry & Co, with the exception of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, were wearing the trunks embroidered with the St. Jim's badge, which had done service throughout the summer term. Arthur Augustus was attired in a voluminous pair of black satin boxer shorts.

Cardew went on: "Your own swimming garments, dear men, look somewhat the worse for wear. You should present them to a jumble sale where they could join the proverbial collection of junk at such functions. Even Gussy's bloomers are no credit to the bloated aristocracy."

"Weally, Cardew, it is most impwopah for you to wefer to my boxah shorts as bloomahs," said Arthur Augustus indignantly.

Blake grunted.

"We swim in ours!" he said.

Cardew squatted on the sand, and leaned back on his elbows.

"I am wondering," he said lazily, "whether you realise that this is a private beach for people who are staying at the hotel. I should be pained to see you arrested for trespass."

Tom Merry smiled.

"We have permission to use it, Cardew. We've been hiking in Devon and Cornwall, but it was so pleasant when we got here three days ago that we decided to hang on for a while. They're our tents on top of the cliff. We pitched them in that field belonging to the hotel, and the manager told us we could use the beach. We've had it to ourselves most of the time."

"Ah, how clear everything is when you explain it," said Cardew nonchalantly. "The residents of the hotel are mostly old maids and ancient mariners. They jib at the thought of descending those exhausting steps. Even cousin Colin, whose valves should still be youthful, nearly threw a fit when I suggested that he might like to accompany me and that we should go down to the sea in slips."

He turned his head and glanced up at the cliff top where the two tents belonging to the schoolboy party were just visible from the beach.

"So those tents belong to you men," he went on. "And there was silly little me assuming that they were the remnants of a gipsy encampment. But what a delightful

way of spending the vac. How nice! How very nice! Seven fellows - eight including Herries' feet - in two small tents. Cramped, of course - but indisputably enjoyable."

Herries glared, and Arthur Augustus spoke hastily.

"Are you staying at the hotel, Cardew? When we awwived, I was tempted to stay there as a change fwom the tent, but I felt a sense of wesponsibility. I weally could not leave the lads to their own devices."

"The what?" demanded Digby.

"The lads!" repeated Arthur Augustus firmly. "It looks a vevy nice hotel, Cardew."

"Very nice for anyone who's too soft to rough it," snorted Herries.

Cardew twisted his sunglasses between his slender fingers.

"Oh, it's nice enough. I'm staying with Uncle Lilburn and cousin Colin.

They bore me, and I bore them, but one has one's duty to one's maternal uncle, hasn't one? Especially when he's a tough old nut who won't disgorge tips unless he is pleased with one."

Arthur Augustus shook his head doubtfully.

"That sounds a twifle mercenawy, Cardew."

"But I am mercenary, Gussy. On the make haste, in fact. My grandfather's in the south of France, and till he comes back I rely on the largesse of Uncle Lilburn. Hence my dutiful call upon him now. I spent part of the vac in Ireland with Levison and Clive. Now they've gone to the Levison homestead in Treacle Bumstead or Thames Ditton - I forget which. I had a pressing invitation to join them - an invitation which I resisted. Their company was delectable, but it was beginning to pall. Levison and Clive are so upright - even Thomas would approve of them. He would never blush in their presence. But I felt the urge to hear the click of the billiard balls and to inhale deeply over the lung-destroying cigarette. So I joined Uncle Lilburn. Hinc illae lachrimae. My second state is worst than my first."

"I think," said Arthur Augustus thoughtfully, "that I should call and pay my respects to your Uncle Lilburn. He is a distant wrelative of mine, a few times wemoved."

"The number of times removed makes your visit not really necessary," said Cardew. He yawned, and patted his mouth with the back of his hand. "In the South Seas it is not unusual, I believe, to see a beauteous maiden clothed in a string of beads and a smile. But the Porthcove Hotel is a select hostelry. The residents might be horrified to see in the sun-lounge a young man wearing nothing but a pair of rusty rompers and an eyeglass."

"Weally, Cardew --"

"I will give your respects to Uncle Lilburn," promised Cardew. "In any case, the old rip spends most of his time in the smoking room or in the bar where really nice boys do not penetrate."

"Splendid example for you and cousin Colin," said Manners.

"For me, perhaps. Colin is five years my senior, and examples - bad or otherwise - have little effect upon him. He is already well away on his journey along the racketty road to ruin."

Tom Merry had been watching Cardew thoughtfully. Good and evil blended curiously in Cardew's nature. He had little in common with the frank, unaffected junior skipper of St. Jim's. But Tom was the soul of good nature, and somehow at that moment Cardew reminded him of a ship without a rudder.

Tom Merry spoke impulsively.

"We're leaving to-morrow morning, Cardew. Shoving on with the hike for a day or two longer before we have to take the train home to be ready for the new term. Why not join us? I don't suppose your uncle would object, and we get a good bit of

fun out of hiking and camping. You'd be very welcome."

"Welcome as the flowers in May," said Blake heartily. "You'd enjoy it better than hanging around with older people in a lush hotel."

Cardew's eyes were dancing with mischief. He shook his head in mock sadness.

"I'm tempted. I confess that I am tempted. You heap coals of fire on my unworthy head. Could anything be more attractive than sleeping in a tent with Herries' feet and Gussy's snore?"

"Weally, Cardew, I am incapable of snorwing --"

Herries rose to his feet, grabbed up a surf-board, and stalked down the beach to the sea.

Arthur Augustus looked indignant, but Tom Merry smiled faintly. He was accustomed to Cardew's airy persiflage.

"Merely a suggestion," he said.

"And a kindly suggestion," insisted Cardew. "Sleeping in a tent - and eating stuff from tins - do you eat stuff from tins?"

"Who doesn't, these days?" demanded Digby.

Cardew laughed.

"Well, Uncle Lilburn doesn't if he can help it. Of course, what the eye doesn't espy, the heart does not regret. Uncle Lilburn is an epicure - or is it connoisseur?"

"Sure to be some sort of a sewer if he's in the Cardew family," said Lowther.

Cardew nodded. He took up a stone, and tossed it towards the sea where it fell with a light plop.

"How right you are! Trust Lowther to entertain with some brilliant repartee. With the alluring prospect of the tent, the tinned food, and Lowther's wit, I would fain join thee. But duty calls in the person of Uncle Lilburn. I needs must refuse, with heartfelt thanks.

He rose to his feet. Languidly he placed the sunglasses on top of his towel.

"And now for a swim," he said.

"Not much chance for real swimming now," said Tom Merry ruefully. He stood up and brushed the sand from his skin. "It's unsafe here when the tide's ebbing. It's been going out now for an hour. Don't go far out of your depth, Cardew."

"Dear man!" murmured Cardew.

"A dangerous current means nothing to a strong swimmer like Cardew," said Blake sarcastically.

"More than one strong swimmer has got lost on this coast," remarked Manners.

"Dear man!" repeated Cardew. "I know all about the tide. There's a giant notice about it in the reception hall of the hotel. There is a further Brobdinagian notice, admittedly defaced by seagulls, at the top of yonder steps. I am not blind, dear men, and I can read nearly as well as you intellectual fellows in the Shell."

Tom Merry grinned.

"That's all right, then," he said. "Have a dip, of course. The sea's warm, and it's safe enough so long as you don't get beyond the breakers. Take a board and have a shot at surfing. It's great fun."

Cardew eyed the rather battered surf-boards critically.

"Your own surf-boards?" he enquired.

"Ours for the time being. We hired them from the shop in the village."

"You fellows don't mind using hired equipment?" Cardew raised his eyebrows in elaborate surprise.

"What's wrong in using hired stuff?" demanded Blake.

Cardew shrugged his shoulders.

"Nothing wrong, probably. It's all according to taste. For all you know



ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY.

those boards may previously have been used by members of the great unwashed. Still, if you're not particular --"

Blake's eyes glinted. The blunt Yorkshire lad had little patience with Cardew's nonchalant impudence, but he kept his temper with an effort.

"Sea water's a good disinfectant," suggested Tom Merry.

"We haven't a Bentley to carry surf-boards round for us, even if we had the money to chuck away on stuff we would only use once in a blue moon," said Manners caustically.

"Quite!" agreed Cardew. "But I've heard that Blake fancies himself as a carpenter. Even one of Blake's contraptions would be preferable to a hired surf-board."

"If I had the wood I could make a surf-board if I had a saw if I had a plane," said Blake. "As I haven't any of them, a hired surf-board is good enough for me."

"It's hardly good enough for Cardew. He wouldn't like to rest those blinding trunks on a hired surf-board," remarked Lowther. "In fact, I doubt whether he would like to get them wet at all. The colours might run."

"I think it might be highly desirable if the colahs wan away altogethah, deah boys," chirped Arthur Augustus brightly. "Those twunks are weally a twifle too luwid, Cardew."

"And that's how I like them," answered Cardew gently. "Thanks a lot for the offer, but I'm going for a swim. I don't fancy hired surf-boards."

Monty Lowther burst into a laugh.

"That's one way of dodging the issue. It saves you from showing us all what a noodle you are on a board."

Cardew stared at him fixedly for a moment.

"Think so?" He picked up a board. "Watch me, my friends, and get value for your money. I'm only a beginner, so don't be too critical."

He strode towards the sea where Herries was already enjoying himself in the surf.

Tom Merry & Co, all on their feet now, watched the slim fourth-former as he waded out into the sea.

The slope was very gradual, and the shallow waters heaped into rollers which swept shorewards for a considerable distance before they broke into creaming swirls of spray and foam. Further out the sea was colder than near the shore, and Cardew felt a sense of exhilaration. When he was well out, a great roller lifted him off his feet, and he was carried in for some distance before he felt the sand beneath him once more.

He trod out again to where Herries was standing with the water nearly up to his armpits.

"Ever done any surfing before?" called out Herries.

Cardew gripped his board. He shook his head.

"Not yet. It looks easy."

"It's dead easy when you get the knack. Get your board on the next one, and climb on," shouted Herries. "We got a few duckings when we first started."

Another great wave came rolling in. Cardew set his feet widely, far apart, to avoid being torn away, and watched Herries. Herries planted his board on the crest of the little hill of water, and slid on top of the board. For a few moments he rode the wave. Then the board and the rider were carried forward as the wave broke behind them, and Cardew saw Herries shooting ahead, skimming over the shallows with the foaming, frothing sea driving him onwards. It looked easy. A distance

away, on the edge of the beach, he saw Herries rise, gather up his board, and start on the outward trek once more.

The other juniors were all entering the water now.

Cardew glanced out to sea. Another great roller was mounting and sweeping towards him. As it reached him, he planted the surf-board on the smooth-looking summit, and made to spring on the board. But the wave broke before he was afloat, and he was dashed forward. He plunged down into the sea, swallowing gulps as the torrent of green ocean blotted out the bright sunshine. Head over heels he bowled up the beach until the force of the wave was expended, and he found the receding water sucking him out again. As he tried to struggle to his feet, another wave caught him astern, and he crashed down again to be swept further up the beach.

He sat up and pumped in breath. Lowther was standing, convulsed with laughter. Arthur Augustus retrieved the lost board, and waded with it to the luckless Cardew.

"Don't be downhearted, deah boy," he advised. "It isn't so easy as it looks, is it? I am wathah a dab at it now, but I expect that I gave just as silly an exhibish when I started. Don't give up, Cardew. Don't be discouwaged. If at first you don't succeed; twy, twy, twy again."

Cardew grabbed the board. He gave Gussy a mighty shove, and the swell of St. Jim's staggered back, sat down, and was carried in, rolling over and over as the water swirled about him.

Gripping the board, Cardew trod out again through the surf towards the distant rollers. He heard a shout behind him.

"Cardew, you are an uttah wuffian. You are a w'etched wapscallion."

Cardew plodded on, his ankles aching with the exertion.

"Cardew, you wascally wottah! Cardew, you wepwobate, I will give you a feahful thwashing --"

Cardew plodded on.

Half-way out, Tom Merry and Blake passed him, skimming along more or less gracefully before a creaming wave. Cardew's lips set in a determined line.

Once again he waited for a wet monster to reach him. Once again he thrust his board on the crest and essayed to spring on to it. For a few seconds he rode the roller, then, as the wave broke, he went down head first. The board twisted out of his hands, and clumped on his nose as he swept shoreward under a mass of water. He was gurgling and gasping and wondering whether his last hour had come when he felt a strong grip on his shoulder, and he was jerked to his feet in the boiling surf. Tom Merry was grinning at him.

"It takes practice, old chap," said Tom. "You'll soon get the hang of it. We were lucky when we started. The rollers were nothing like so big a couple of days ago."

Lowther was laughing like a hyena, and Cardew glared at him.

"Oh, what a plunge was there, my countrymen," gasped Lowther. He held his sides in merriment.

"Tide's going down fast," observed Blake. "You know why. Cardew's swallowed a few hundred gallons."

Arthur Augustus was kicking his heels in the surf. He called out to Cardew.

"I will let you off that feahful thwashing, Cardew, as a weward for making me laugh so much. I haven't seen anything so funnay for quite a time."

"Not since you looked in your mirror this morning," suggested Lowther.

Cardew had regained his usual nonchalance, though there was a gleam in his eyes.

"I am so glad that you were amused, dear men." He bent down and flicked water into Lowther's face. "I'm afraid this is all too childish for me. Be happy, children, if you can't be good. I'm going for a swim."

Tom Merry spoke a little tartly.

"Don't be an ass, Cardew. It's not safe for swimming on the ebb tide. There's a strong offshore current when you get into deep water. This part of the coast is notorious for it."

Cardew smiled.

"Dear me, the noble Thomas has cold feet. The gallant Thomas is a trifle nervous. Woe is me! Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon!"

Tom Merry frowned.

"I don't know about being nervous, but I'm not a fool. Only a fool goes swimming here on the ebb tide."

Cardew looked out to sea. Beyond the white surf and the rollers, the water looked calm and inviting under the sunshine.

"What you mean, Thomas, is that only a fool over-estimates his capabilities. I can swim, you know. I don't flounder like Gussy or play the porpoise like Herries --"

"You cheeky idiot!" called out Blake.

Tom Merry squeezed the water from his mop of curly hair.

"I can swim a bit, too, Cardew, but I shouldn't want to go swimming now when everybody knows it's dangerous."

"Yes, you can swim - what you call swimming in the Shell," agreed Cardew.

"You're just a wee bit nervous, that's all. Fie, Thomas!"

"Oh, let the stupid fool show off," growled Manners. "He won't risk his own precious skin."

Cardew laughed softly. He strode out towards the rollers again.

"Not too far --" Tom Merry called after him, and Cardew waved a hand carelessly.

As a wave reached the gently sloping beach it mounted high, and when it reached him Cardew took a header into it. For a few moments he was lost to sight; then he reappeared to disappear again as a roller hid him from view. Twenty seconds later they saw him beyond the rollers, in the smooth water. He turned, trod water, and waved a hand. Then he turned again, and struck out towards the open sea.

All the seven juniors were standing knee deep in the surf now, watching him. Tom Merry's brows were knitted a little anxiously.

"He won't go far," said Blake. "After all, he's a pretty good swimmer."

Six juniors resumed their enjoyment in the surf, but Tom Merry stood for a while gazing out to sea. Cardew seemed a great distance out, but Tom knew that the distance was deceiving, owing to the long stretch of shallow water. Nevertheless, he was worried. He watched the fourth-former swimming up and down parallel with the coast. After what seemed a long time, he saw Cardew turn towards land, but Tom's brows were still knitted anxiously.

Herries joined him. He was commencing to shiver.

"I'm going up to the tent to get some clobber on," Herries announced.

"Hang on just for a bit," urged Tom. "When Cardew gets back in his depth, we'll all come with you."

He shaded his eyes with his hand, and gazed seawards again. The other fellows joined him now, all ready to leave the sea and to get into clothing.

"Is that ninny still out there?" demanded Lowther.

Tom Merry stood watching for a moment more. Then he turned and looked

towards the deserted beach, and spoke quietly.

"You fellows, all of you, get that boat out from the foot of the steps. I'm a bit worried about Cardew. I think he's finding it tough going."

"The mad ass!" snorted Digby. He stalked away through the water towards the boat. Blake and Herries splashed after him, and Lowther and Arthur Augustus followed them.

Manners lingered with his leader.

"What's the game, Tom? We'll never get a boat over those breakers. It'll flood before we even get it afloat --"

Tom Merry breathed hard.

"I think you will. Six of you ought to be able to manage it. It won't be easy --"

Manners turned away, but he turned back at once. He spoke roughly:

"It's impossible and you know it. What are you going to do, Tom --?"

"I'm going after him. If he's in trouble I can help him till the boat comes --"

"You crazy ass, the boat won't come," said Manners angrily. "If two of you get in difficulties out there it'll be a thousand times worse than one --"

"I shall be all right, I tell you. I'm a pretty strong swimmer. Don't bother about me. But I don't want any of the others out there. They'll come if they think they can't float the boat, and then someone may be lost. Get over to the boat and lend a hand. You may get it afloat, but if you can't, be ready to help us in. You know it's common sense."

Tom waded out quickly into deeper water - farther and farther out. Manners stared after him for a moment with indecision. Then he hurriedly splashed his way to the sunny beach.

Cardew found it easy swimming beyond the breakers. Out in deep water it was fairly cold, but he was enjoying himself. He turned, trod water, and looked towards the shore.

He could see Tom Merry & Co standing in the surf which made a streak of white from the distance. They did not seem so far away, and Cardew did not worry. The waters were shallow for a fair distance out. It was the shallowness, in fact, which made the surf-riding possible. The waters flowing into the bay heaped up when they reached the gradually shelving sands.

It was not until he cleared the rollers that Cardew had found himself out of his depth. He had not swum far since he left the rollers behind. For a schoolboy he was an excellent swimmer, and he knew that he would not have far to go towards the shore before he touched bottom again.

Cardew was foolhardy, but he was no fool. Contemptuous of risk he undoubtedly was, but he had no intention of placing his life in jeopardy. It pleased his tortuous nature to show off, but it did not occur to him that he might lose control of the situation.

He did a couple of dozen strokes out to sea, then turned to the right for a swim parallel with the shore. Now a few immensely enjoyable porpoise rolls. Surfacing, he brushed his wet black hair back from his face, and chuckled. Now he swam back parallel with the shore once more. It seemed dead easy - and so far it had been easy. It was a glorious afternoon, perfect for swimming.

He trod water again for a few moments. He could not see any of his school-fellows now. The rollers were rising between him and the beach, obscuring his view of anyone who might be in the water near the shore. He could see the sands, beyond the blue of the sea, stretching like a golden band with the cliffs behind them. They

did not look so far away.

He swam up and down again for a short time, until he was beginning to feel a little tired. Then he struck out for the shore through the cool water, but he made the discovery that it was not so easy to get back. He swam hard for several minutes, and then he realised that he was not very much closer to the rollers. His heart was beating hard and uncomfortably.

He swam again, not frantically but with a steady side stroke. Again he paused and looked around. He felt a dryness in his throat. He remembered the urgent warning about the ebbing tide.

He changed to the crawl, which was faster but more exhausting. Was he making any progress at all? He supposed he was, but he just didn't know.

Cardew gritted his teeth. Again he trod water, breathing in great gulps of air. Then again he swam as strongly as he could, changing his stroke from time to time. A few minutes more passed. His breath came painfully. Yet again he trod water and looked shoreward. The rollers were a little nearer now - but not much.

"Ralph, old son, you've played the goat just once too often," he murmured to himself.

He tried to keep at bay that hideous, fatal panic which will come like a nightmare to the bravest of men when they find that the forces of nature are beating them.

He struck out again, but his strokes were weaker now, and he knew it. At this rate it would take him a long time to reach that shallow water, so near and yet so far, and he realised that he was nearly exhausted.

Again he paused. A little nearer to the shallows, yet too far -- too far --

A numbing horror chilled him as it passed through his mind that he had come to that Cornish coast to die on his first day there.

Cardew swam doggedly. He would go down fighting if he had to go down. He was sleepy. It would be so pleasant to stop swimming altogether and to fall asleep.

I shall never forget Tom Merry's face, that day I met him in the lane. Poor old Thomas. A good chap, really, though I pull his leg and he takes it all in good part. He's an ass, he's smug, he's a good little Eric, but I like him in a way.

What did I say to him that day in the lane near St. Jim's?

"I'm collecting the evidence, and if it's quite satisfactory I'm going to place it before the Head who will naturally proceed to bunk me from the school, of which I am an unworthy member."

How Tom Merry stared! But I reckon he could read the lines of care in my face. I reckon he minded. He would mind. He's a good chap in his way. Kind - and not so many people are kind nowadays.

"I'm sorry for your sake," I said to him.

"For my sake?" said Thomas.

"Quite! When I'm bunked from St. Jim's your extreme and exemplary goodness will no longer have a foil to set it off to advantage. You will not shine with half so much light."

Cardew threw up his head, and struck out again. He swam hard. He wanted to live. Dear God, he wanted to live. For a few seconds he swam. Then the effort was exhausted, and he was merely thrashing the water. He could never reach the rollers which would carry him to the shallow water beyond. He choked and swallowed.

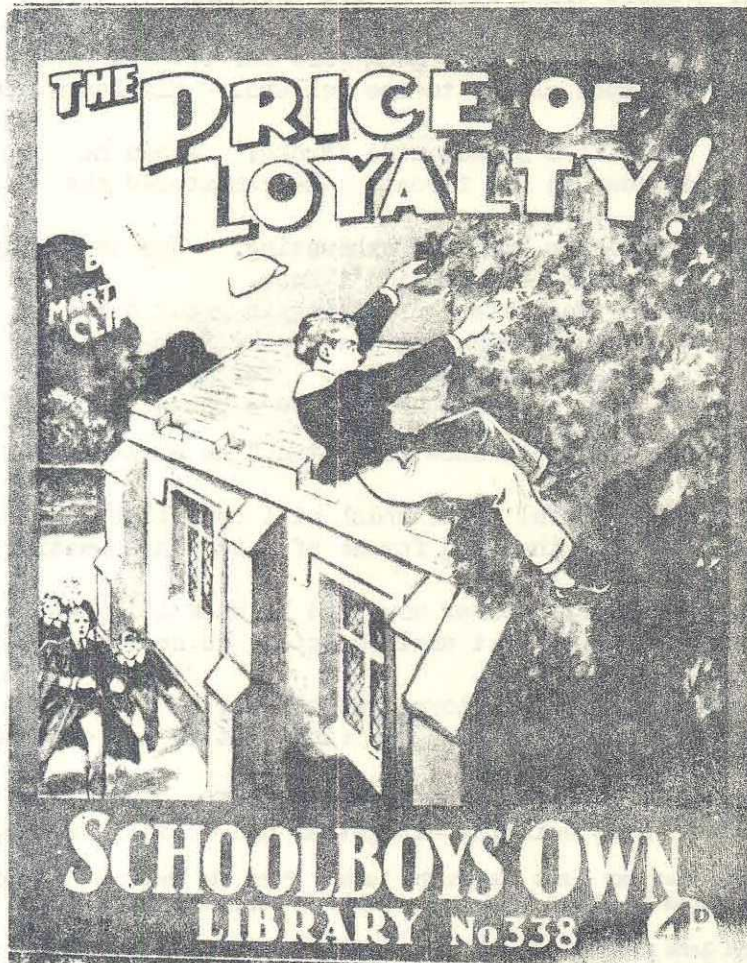
I shall always remember how I felt when I learned that Levison had sacrificed himself for me. I went to see Tickey Tapp at the "Green Man".

"Shall I tell you something, my unworthy friend?" I asked him. "You did not know that when Levison got that paper off you - my paper - he was nabbed as he got back into the school, with the paper in his pocket ---"

"Levison chucked that paper into the fire in the Head's study. And Levison is to be sacked for having disreputable friends outside the school, Mr. Tapp, all owing to his coming along to see you that night on my account."

How that boozy old bounder stared at me. He seemed pleased.

"Good!" he said. "I'm glad that young 'ound has got something for what he did to me."



I smiled - though I didn't feel like smiling.

I said to him: "Only one thing can save him - that is my owning up and taking his unpleasant position under the chopper."

Tickey Tapp grinned, the old beast.

"You won't be in a hurry to do that, I fancy," he said to me.

"Not in a hurry," I agreed. I'm never in a hurry - it's rather bad form. But I'm going to do it, all the same."

Cardew struggled madly. He was drowning - drowning in the waters off Cornwall. He opened his mouth to shout as a cold wave passed over his head. He was too tired to shout, and there was nobody to hear. Summoning up an immense effort, he swam again for a few moments. Then he desisted. He only wanted to sleep.

I owned up, of course. A fellow had to. I'm a bit of a louse - but I'm not a measly louse.

I got a flogging from the Head. My, how the old boy laid it on. He thought he was beating a carpet....

Levison and Clive were jolly glad that I got that flogging. So was I, in a way. It might have been the long jump.

"Well!" I said to them. "Well - all's well! Seven minutes!

steady jawing, and the flogging followed. It wasn't even a flogging in hall, either, with the proper pomp and ceremony. Merely a hole-and-corner affair in the form-room. I feel that I've been had!"

Levison called me a fathead. I expect I was a fathead. I can hear Levison calling me a fathead I can hear Levison calling Levison's calling

Cardew heard the voice. He opened his eyes. It wasn't a dream any more. He became aware of the head of another swimmer a few yards away. Tom Merry swept to his side on the tide.

Cardew could not speak. He grinned wanly - just that odd, wry grin of his.

Tom Merry spoke calmly: "Turn on your back. Kick out as hard as you can. I'll help you in. We're not far out. We'll do it -- easily. Just keep kicking."

Tom Merry said no more. He needed all his strength for the swim ahead of him.

Cardew turned over on his back, and kicked out with renewed hope. The knowledge that there were two of them now made all the difference. He felt Tom Merry's arm lightly supporting him, and the intense heaving of Tom Merry's body as he used a powerful back stroke. Cardew closed his eyes, and kicked and kicked.

After what seemed an age he sensed a roller rising under them, and they were both hurled forward.

"We're nearly there," came Tom Merry's voice. "Don't give up."

Another couple of minutes of hard swimming and another roller took them up. This time it broke over their heads, and as he went down, Cardew felt his fingers touch the sand. Another wave hit him, and broke. He felt many pairs of hands gripping him and hauling him up into the sunshine. The receding water left them in shallow water.

Half-fainting, he felt an arm go round him, and he was dragged to his feet. He staggered and would have fallen, but strong arms were taking his weight and propelling him onwards.

At last, on dry sand, in the warm sunshine of the late afternoon, Cardew sank down, his eyes closed. He was rolled on to his face, and rough hands began to massage his body, arms, and legs.

For a while it went on in silence. Then he heard Blake's voice:

"Let's get him up to the hotel and into his bed."

Cardew rolled over.

"No, I'm all right. Let me cook for a bit."

After a short time he sat up. He grinned faintly, though his face was white and strained. Blake, Manners, and Lowther were beside him, and they stared at him grimly. A few yards away, Tom Merry was stretched on a towel, his face to the sun. Digby, Herries, and Arthur Augustus had towelled him roughly till he begged them to desist, and threw himself at full-length.

Arthur Augustus came over to Cardew.

"How do you feel, deah boy?" he enquired.

Cardew drew a deep breath.

"My noble kinsman," he said, "I feel thundering sick."

He grunted, lay back again, and closed his eyes.

After another five minutes he felt better. He struggled up, and leaned on one elbow, looking around. Tom Merry & Co were standing in a group now, with their towels wrapped around them.

Tom Merry grinned down at Cardew.

"Feel better, old chap?"

"I'm not made of putty. I feel all right." Cardew rose to his feet a little unsteadily. He eyed Tom Merry thoughtfully. "I am constrained to believe that you saved my unworthy life."

Tom Merry made an irritable gesture.

"Rubbish! You'd have made it all right, but you'd have been darned tired. You're a jolly good swimmer. You were nearly home."

Cardew shook his head. There was an odd expression on his face.

"I couldn't have made it. I didn't deserve to make it, but the wicked seldom get their deserts in this unjust world." He shivered a little. "How did you know I was in trouble?"

"We've been here several days. We know the ebb tide. We guessed you'd find it hard going when you turned to come back."

"Lucky you're like a fish in the water. Lucky for me!" The colour was coming back into his cheeks now, and Cardew gave his old sardonic smile. "Those who are born for hanging will never be drowned."

Blake grunted.

"You can show your gratitude by paying the hotel for the damage to its boat. We tried to get it afloat, but it was impossible. We got it ashore afterwards, but it's a bit knocked about, and all the equipment's gone."

"I knew we should never get it afloat," said Manners. "Tom knew it, too. He sent us on a wild-goose chase for the boat to stop any of us swimming out with him

as we probably should have done."

Tom Merry shook his head.

"Nuts!" he said. "I think it's time we all got up the cliff and changed."

Cardew stood up. He was shivering a little, but his lips were twitching with sardonic humour.

"Uncle Lilburn will pay for the boat. He will think it a small price for the safe return of his erring but favourite nephew. He will also throw in gratis a long and sour lecture which will pass me by like the idle wind I regard not." He paused, while the other fellows eyed him rather grimly. He turned to Tom Merry.

"Thomas, I've always regarded you as a silly ass. May I say, if it is not too ungracious, that I now regard you as the silliest ass I have ever had the pleasure of meeting." Cardew grinned whimsically.

"Cardew, you are an ungrateful wretch!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus indignantly.

"Hear, hear!" put in Lowther.

Cardew sighed.

"How well you know me, dear friends. But I am not ungrateful, and I think that Thomas ran a good deal of risk in coming after me."

"No risk for me!" said Tom. "You weren't far out, and I hadn't got dead tired from swimming against the current like you had. I was never in any danger. I could easily get back to shallow water."

"But not with me!"

Tom Merry shrugged his shoulders.

"We both got back all right, so why harp on it?" he said.

"I can't help wondering whether, if you couldn't have got back with me, you would have left me and swum for it by yourself," mused Cardew.

"I daresay I should."

"I have a nasty, uncomfortable feeling at the pit of my tum-tum which tells me that you wouldn't have left me," observed Cardew. "The contingency didn't arise, as the lawyer johnnies say, but it's a most unpleasant feeling. I hope that, under reversed circumstances, I would have acted as you did."

"I know you would!" said Tom simply.

"I have only one more thing to say," added Cardew.

"What's that?" demanded Manners.

"Thanks a lot - and farewell!" said Cardew.

He picked up his sunglasses, tossed his towel over his shoulder, and turned and walked towards the wooden steps.

Tom Merry & Co collected their own towels, and strolled after him.

At the foot of the flight of steps, Cardew paused. He waited for them.

"You fellows are leaving to-morrow?" he queried.

Tom Merry eyed him curiously.

"Yes, quite early. Another couple of days hiking, and then we take the train back to London from Plymouth."

Cardew nodded.

"Is the offer still open for me to join you?"

"Wide open!"

"Good!"

Cardew ran up a few steps.

"We leave at six o'clock," called out Blake.

Cardew turned on the steps, and looked down.

"Ah, an unearthly hour. It deters me. I need my beauty sleep. Cannot you defer the departure to a more civilised time of day? Ten o'clock, for instance?"

"Six it is, and six it remains! An early wise will do you good, Cardew," said Arthur Augustus. The juniors were climbing the steps, /continued on page 51

MAINLY WRYKYN

by W. J. A. Hubbard

There cannot be the slightest doubt that P. G. Wodehouse was an outstanding school story writer and personally I consider he has very strong claims to be ranked as one of the best school story writers of all time. Other writers may certainly have written more brilliant stories but I seriously doubt whether they were able to maintain such a consistent standard of excellence.

Mr. Wodehouse had only a short career as a school story writer - about ten years or so - and during this time he mainly contributed to "The Captain", a magazine for public, grammar and secondary school boys that was published from 1898 to 1923 by Messrs. George Newnes Ltd. He wrote no less than eight serials and nineteen short stories for this paper and contributed three or four serious articles on Public School Rugger and Boxing. Most of his stories were afterwards reprinted in hard cover form with great success.

Mr. Wodehouse first began with short stories of St. Austin's School which were later reprinted under the collective title of "Tales of St. Austin's". A number of them were also reprinted in certain Holiday Annuals in the 1920s. These stories were of a very good standard and often featured a most attractive character in a boy named Charteris. They appeared in Volume VI of "The Captain (one story) (1901/2), Volume VII (Two stories), Volume VIII (three stories) and Volume IX (two stories). The first yarn of Wrykyn College - "The Gold Bat" - was published in Volume X (1903/04). Then came "Tales of Wrykyn (six short stories) in Volume XIII, "The White Feather" (serial) (Volume XIV), "Jackson Junior" (serial) (Volume XVII), while there is another short Wrykyn story "A Division of Spoil" in Volume XV. Wrykyn is also mentioned quite a bit in "The Lost Lambs" (reprinted from the second half of "Mike"), a story of Sedleigh School in Volume XIX.

A story of Eckleton School "The Head of Kays" appears in Volume XII while there is a short story of Beckford School - "Blenkinsop's Benefit" in Volume XI. Further short stories of St. Austings and Sedleigh are in Volumes XXIII and XXIV. The final story by Mr. Wodehouse in "The Captain" is "The Eighteen Carat Kid", a prep school story, mainly comedy, in Volume XXVIII (1912/13), the school featured being Sanstead House. When this particular story was reprinted a love interest was added presumably to make it more attractive to senior readers.

It is only possible, mainly owing to consideration of space, to deal fully with the Wrykyn stories in this article. I consider Wrykyn the best of all Mr. Wodehouse's fictitious schools. The stories represent some of the best of his school story work.

Wrykyn was based on Dulwich College, the famous Public School near London where Mr. Wodehouse was educated. It is portrayed as a large Public School of about 600 boys somewhere in the West of England. It had twelve houses and was situated near a river like many real and nearly all fictitious schools. There was, of course, a rival school - St. Judes - where all the juniors wore mortar boards.

A curious feature of the Wrykyn stories was that the Headmaster's actual name was never mentioned. There were, however, quite a number of House and Form Masters featured and several of them - Mr. Spence, Mr. Seymour and Mr. Wain for example - played fairly prominent parts.

Apart from Rupert Psmith, the famous larger than life character Mr. Wodehouse created in "The Lost Lambs", he featured no great character studies in his stories. His boys were just ordinary lads who apart from the fact that a number of them were outstanding at both work and sport, might have been boys who used to sit next to most of us in form or class. They ragged and played the fool - they were not above telling a few "whoppers" - like most boys - both to masters and prefects - they were often irresponsible and thoughtless with little regard for others. In other words realism was the order of the day with the leading characters only exaggerated enough to suit the author's purpose as is usual with most outstanding books, plays and films. But Mr. Wodehouse did not always concentrate on the athletic type in his stories. Sheen, the hero of "The White Feather" is, apart from his ability at Fives, almost entirely a scholar, his boxing prowess only developing during the course of the story.

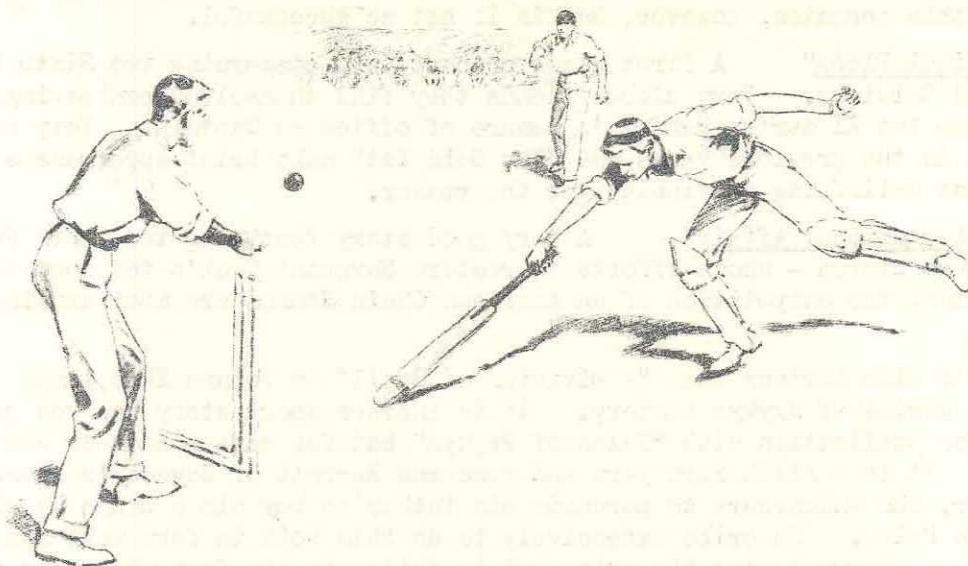
Mr. Eric Fayne has, in one of his "Controversial" articles in the Monthly C.D., stressed the importance of chronological order in school stories and has mentioned a number of examples in Charles Hamilton's work in "The Magnet". Mr. Wodehouse undoubtedly used a similar policy in connection with the Wrykyn yarns for events are chronicled in strict rotation, the characters grow up and leave while leading characters in certain stories play minor or "off" stage roles in other yarns.

The first Wrykyn story in chronological order is "Jackson Junior" (later reprinted as the first half of "Mike"), although it was, in fact, the third Wrykyn serial written. This story is well known as an outstanding school cricket yarn and tells of the arrival of Mike Jackson, the youngest of a family of five brothers, all of whom are brilliant exponents of the game. The story features and mentions many well-known Wrykyn characters - Trevor, Clowes, Henfrey, Clephane and Leather-Twigg among others. In this yarn they are all apparently in the Fourth or Fifth Forms.

With "Jackson Junior" as a starting point we can arrange the other stories in order of sequence of events with very little trouble. The next Wrykyn story - "The Gold Bat", a serial starring Trevor and Clowes, now 6th Formers and Prefects tells of happenings at the school in Mike Jackson's third year although it is interesting to note that he does not make an appearance in the yarn. The "Gold Bat" is a watch chain trophy presented to Trevor who lends it to a friend who proceeds to lose it thus setting off a train of amusing and exciting events. It is a good story with many fine descriptions of Rucker. We meet Milton and Rigby (Sixth Formers and Prefects), Barry, Drummond and Linton (rather irresponsible Fourth and Fifth Formers) and are re-introduced to Leather-Twigg who is now apparently in the Upper Fourth.

The next stories in order of sequence are six yarns written collectively under the title of "Tales of Wrykyn". They all appear to treat of events that took place at the school in Mike Jackson's second or third years, mostly the latter, I think. They are varied and interesting, the sporting events in them mainly having to do with cricket. Mike is mentioned in a number of the yarns as the most outstanding batsman at the school, but is mainly "off stage".





MIKE AND THE BALL ARRIVED ALMOST SQUARELY AT THE

An illustration by T. M. R. Whitwell to the Wodehouse story "MIKE".

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1. "Ruthless Reginald" This story stars Rigby, the Head of Seymour's House and his fag - Reginald Rankin - who contrives to obtain revenge on the senior in a most unusual way in return for a rather unfair licking. It is one of the few stories that Mr. Wodehouse wrote concerning junior boys. The policy of "The Captain" was mainly to feature Fifth and Sixth Formers no doubt in deference to the fact that readers of the magazines were boys and young men mostly of a mature age and standard.
2. "The Politeness of Princes" Concerns G. Montgomery Chappel, another junior of Seymour's House, who continually oversleeps himself and whose efforts to escape just retribution for his sins are amusingly described. Both this story and "Ruthless Reginald" make mention of many of the characters in "The Gold Bat", mainly in "walking-on" parts.
3. "Shields' and the Cricket Cup" A cricket story featuring Clephane, a senior boy and a member of the 2nd XI. Assisted by a friend and favoured with a considerable amount of luck, bluff and cool cheek, as well as some good cricket, he succeeds in winning the school Cricket Cup for Shields' House, the worse House in the School, particularly as far as sport is concerned. Henfrey, now Captain of the Wrykyn 1st XI plays a considerable part in this story while there is further mention of Mike Jackson. It appears, however, that he has changed houses.*

* In "Jackson Junior" Mike is stated to be in Wain's House but in "Shields' and the Cricket Cup" he is a member of Mr. Spence's House. Many explanations of course, come to mind but the most practical is that Mr. Wodehouse was guilty of an oversight.

4. "An Affair of Boats" Actually comes before No. 1. It again stars Rankin and concerns his attempts to get revenge on Leather-Twigg who has played a joke on him. On this occasion, however, Rankin is not so successful.

5. "The Final Place" A first class cricket yarn concerning two Sixth Formers, Ellison and Selwicke. Very close friends they find themselves contesting for a place in the 1st XI during Henfrey's tenure of office as Captain. Very many characters in the previous yarns and "The Gold Bat" make brief appearances in this story - most satisfying continuity for the reader.

6. "An International Affair" A very good story featuring two Fifth Formers - Dunstable and Linton - whose efforts to restore Sergeant Cook's tea shop to school favour against the competition of an American Chain Stores are most amusingly described.

It is also obvious that "A Division of Spoil" in Volume XV belongs to this particular period of Wrykyn history. It is another short story and was probably intended for publication with "Tales of Wrykyn" but for some reason or another was left out. It is a Fifth Form yarn and concerns Merrett of Seymour's House, a bit of an outsider, who endeavours to persuade his father to buy him a banjo by winning the form French Prize. He cribs extensively to do this both in form work and the terminal examination. Merrett wins the prize but is foiled by his form who under the leadership of the irresponsible Linton divide the prize among themselves - 13 pages each - leaving Merrett with only the cover of the book as a mark of his achievement.

The final story of Wrykyn in "The Captain" is "The White Feather" in Volume XIV. This carries on from the events described in "The Gold Bat".

It is the beginning of a new scholastic year at Wrykyn. Many of the characters featured in both "The Gold Bat" and "Tales of Wrykyn" have now left - indeed Trevor, Clowes and O'Hara actually appear as old boys in the course of the yarn. Drummond, Linton, Dunstable and Barry are now either Fifth or Sixth Formers, Drummond being also a House Prefect.

The sequence of the stories has made it very clear to the reader that the previous year at Wrykyn - with Trevor as Captain of Rugger and Henfrey as Captain of Cricket - had been quite exceptionable from the athletic point of view. But now the school has struck a bad patch, both in work and games and everything has gone wrong.

The story again features the inmates of Seymour's house and a character not previously featured in the yarns holds the centre of the stage. R. D. Sheen is a most unusual hero - a member of the Sixth Form but not a prefect - he is a scholar and of little account at games except Fives and that only at a House level.

Sheen has struck up a warm friendship with Drummond but to do so he has had to drop Stanning, another Sixth former, a black sheep and breaker of bounds. Stanning therefore seizes his chance to discredit Sheen when the latter funks a fight between some of the Wrykyn seniors and the Town louts. Dropped by Drummond, who is one of the best boxers in the School and barred by his House and eventually by the School, Sheen has a terrible time of it especially as he is a very quiet and retiring boy who is often dominated by others.

Sheen makes a desperate effort to redeem himself in the eyes of the School by an encounter with some of the Town louts. Completely outmatched and badly knocked about he is rescued by a man named Joe Bevan who turns out to be an ex-Light Weight Champion of the World, who is engaged in the vicinity in training a most promising young professional boxer. Mr. Bevan takes Sheen in hand and teaches him boxing so

that he is eventually able to take the place of Drummond, who is ill with mumps, and win the Public Schools Light Weight Boxing Championship at Aldershot.

"The White Feather" is, in my opinion, one of Mr. Wodehouse's best school stories; as good as "Jackson Junior" and "The Lost Lambs" in many respects. The description of the boxing at Aldershot with Sheen battling through three rounds of the draw to win the Championship for his school is brilliant and shows the author's mastery in describing athletic events.

Our last glimpse of Wrykyn comes in "The Lost Lambs", the story of Mike Jackson at Sedleigh - the story which marks the first appearance of Psmith. There is mention of Sheen's winning of the Light Weight Championship at Aldershot in that yarn while in the final chapter Sedleigh play Wrykyn at cricket and beat them in a very close match. Strachan is mentioned as the Wrykyn Captain and Rigby, Drummond and Jack Bruce, all characters used in "The White Feather" and previous stories are shown as members of the XI. What a great pity that Mr. Wodehouse was not able to give us further stories of Wrykyn. He would have made a first class job of it.

LATE SUMMER FOLLY (continued from page 46)....

and Cardew went up ahead of them.

He spoke over his shoulder.

"Maybe you'll find me waiting at the tent flap, but don't be too downhearted. It may never happen. If it does, I shall bore you and you will bore me, but at least the boring will be mutual. Even Herries' feet and Gussy's snore are preferable to much more of Uncle Lilburn and cousin Colin." He ran lightly up the steps, and the St. Jim's chums followed on more slowly.

At the top of the stairway, Cardew turned again.

"Don't be surprised if you find me waiting at the crack of dawn," he called out.

A moment later he had disappeared from their sight.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

The memories which passed through Cardew's mind while he was in the sea were of events related in Schoolboys' Own Library No. 338: "The Price of Loyalty", reprinted from the Gem.

WANTED: "Chums" for 1926 monthly parts or volume - with story "Powder-Monkey Jack"; also most issues of S.P.C.

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

SPECIAL WANTS: Magnets 1349, 1385, 1415; S.O.L. 190, 196, 197; Gem 1216, 1277.

JACK HUGHES, 16, NORMAN STREET, EAST BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA.

WANTED: S.O.Ls. Greyfriars, St. Jim's, Rookwood, Cedar Creek; B.F.L. 3d. Hounded from School, Talbot's Xmas, Blue and White Magnet, My Photo on cover. Good exchange.

G. SELLARS, 1, HESLEY ROAD, SHEFFIELD, 5.

WANTED: Magnets, Gems, S.O.L. (Greyfriars, Rookwood, St. Jim's), Populars.

E. THOMPSON, 6, RITCHIE PLACE, EDINBURGH, 11.

b y
Brian
Doyle

Through the Years with the B. O. P.

b y
Brian
Doyle

The title-page of the very first volume of the "Boys' Own Paper", covering the period January to September 1879, bore the description: "An illustrated volume of pure and entertaining reading." And this summed up pretty well what the contents were to be over the next eighty-odd years.

And let no one be misled by that word 'pure'. The stories in "BOP" always had a high moral tone, but that didn't prevent them from being full-blooded, rip-roaring and genuinely exciting. Many of those earlier stories make some of today's 'thriller serials in strip-pictures' seem decidedly insipid.

That first title-page also bore (and bears to this day) the motto: "Quicquid agunt pueri nostri farrago libelli." This is an adaptation of a hexameter line by the Latin poet Juvenal and roughly translated it means: "Whatever boys do (makes up) the mixture of our little book." It was a pity that the words "and like" could not have been included too, as boys certainly liked the contents of "BOP" and as far as they were concerned "the mixture as before" was just what the doctor ordered.

An attractive feature of the "BOP" during the first half of its career was the issue of the special Summer and Winter Supplements. These were not included in the annual volume, but were directed at readers who found time hanging heavily on their hands during the Summer days and the long Winter evenings. They were packed with seasonal stories and articles and can to this day evoke the scent of a Summer's day or the icy bite of a Christmas morning on turning their pages.

In George Andrew Hutchinson, the "BOP" had its finest and most dedicated editor. He was constantly at the helm from the first until his death in 1913 when, it is said, he died while actually preparing yet another issue for the press. His successor was A. L. Haydon who, soon after taking over, dropped the weekly edition (in 1914) and concentrated on the task of maintaining a successful monthly.

The most prolific serial-writer was Gordon Stables, who wrote no less than 19 full-scale serials, each having over 60,000 words.

Most overworked illustrator was Alfred Pearse, who illustrated a total of 76 serials! Gordon Browne, R.I. was next with 22.

In the 1880's serials - and short stories - would often be presented as if they were extracts from unpublished diaries and represented as factual incidents which actually happened. This was because there seemed to be a certain amount of prejudice against fiction aimed especially at young people.

Usually, of course, "BOP" contributors were beyond reproach and were liberally sprinkled with such qualifications as M.A., B.A., F.R.G.S., F.R.S., R.I., Bart., or even 'Paymaster to the Royal Navy', after their names, and Rev., Dr. or a senior Army or Naval rank before. All this greatly satisfied parents, who could rest assured that their offspring were reading good, wholesome (and, of course 'pure') literature. Which, in the main, they were.

It may be of interest to note that in Volume 23 readers were invited to nominate their 21 favourite serials and colour plates out of all those that had appeared in the first 21 years of the "BOP". The first ten stories were: "The Cock-house at Fellsgarth", "The Fifth Form at St. Dominic's", "Tom, Dick and Harry", "The Willoughby Captains", "The Dog With a Bad Name", "Captain Len Guy", "Nic Revel", "My Friend Smith", "The Triple Alliance" and "The Master of the Shell". A handsome verdict for T. B. Reed, who scored 7 out of 10. The first five colour plates were: "Scottish Regiments of the British Army", "Irish Regiments of the British Army", "Still as Death", "The Blood Trail" and "British Moths".

Two turning-points in the history of the "BOP" came, I think, in 1910 and at the beginning of the 1930's. Around 1910 and after the general lay-out of the paper became poorer; there were many less illustrations; and, instead of the usual generous measure of at least half-a-dozen good long serials in each volume, there were often only a couple readers could really 'get their teeth into'. Editor Hutchison died early in 1913 so perhaps this had something to do with the change.

At the beginning of the 1930's the paper became thicker, the stories often below the usual standard and the illustrations undistinguished. Many more photographs began to appear (a sign of the times) and there seemed to be a positive glut of articles dealing with wireless and radio.

And when Northcroft became editor (probably the least competent of the list) he began to inject screeds of fulsome 'plugs' for the stories. For instance: "... this out-tops all his former yarns. It really is an excellent story... bright, breezy... full of absorbing interest to the end. Once begun it is difficult to stop reading. What you have to do is recommend all your friends to buy this number of BOP ..." There were reams of this sort of thing - and it wasn't even tucked modestly away in the 'Editor's Chat'. It was blazoned across the top of the story's title-page. Readers grew restive with these insults to their intelligence; they liked to discover for themselves what a story was like. It wasn't surprising that Northcroft's editorship lasted for only two years...

When Robert Harding took over in 1935, however, the paper discovered an excellent editor (and a good writer too). Immediately he took over he reduced the price from 1/- to 6d - a daring but highly successful step - and under him the "BOP" celebrated its Diamond Jubilee in 1939. And when many other boys' papers ceased publication in 1940 he carried on right through the war. Until, in fact, the present editor, Jack Cox, took over in 1946. But the "BOP" after 1940 is not within the scope of this article. The "BOP" is, I'm glad to say, still with us, though in a very different form, with the accent on factual articles instead of fiction.

Now to the lists.

THE SERIALS IN "BOYS' OWN PAPER" - 1879 - 1940

<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>ILLUSTRATOR</u>	<u>TYPE</u>
<u>VOL. 1. (Jan. 1879 - Sept. 1879)</u>			
W. H. G. Kingston	From Powder Monkey to Admiral	?	Story of the British Navy.
Mrs. Eiloart	Jack and John; their Friends and Their Fortunes	?	Adventures of two boys.
'An Old Boy' (Talbot Baines Reed)	Parkhurst Days		School stories.
Ascott R. Hope	At the Masthead	?	An episode at a sea-school.

<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>ILLUSTRATOR</u>	<u>TYPE</u>
<u>VOL. 2. (1879-80)</u>			
Ascott R. Hope Jules Verne	The Amateur Dominic The Boy Captain (later published as "Dick Sands")	? Henri Meyer	Adventures of a Schoolmaster. Adventures by land and sea.
Ascott R. Hope	A Boy's Campaign	L. Benett	Adventures in the American War of Independence.
T. S. Millington	Our Holiday Tramp	?	Holiday adventures of Schoolboys.
W. H. G. Kingston	Peter Trawl	?	Sea story.
R. M. Ballantyne	Red Man's Revenge	?	Story of the Canadian backwoods.
T. S. Millington	Some of Our Fellows	D. H. Friston	School story.
<u>VOL. 3. (1880-81)</u>			
Ascott R. Hope	Adventures of a Boston Boy Among Savages.	?	Self-explanatory!
W. H. G. Kingston	Adventures Afloat	?	Sea story.
S. Whitchurch Sadler	Adventurous Voyage of the 'Polly'	?	Sea story.
Gordon Stables	Cruise of the 'Snowbird'.	Gordon Browne	Story of an Arctic cruise.
Jules Verne	The Giant Raft (later published as "800 Leagues on the Amazon")	L. Benett	Amazon adventures.
R. M. Ballantyne	My Doggie and I	?	Story about a dog and his master.
Paul Blake	The New Boy	Alfred Pearse	School story.
Talbot Baines Reed	Adventures of a Three-Guinea Watch	Gordon Browne	Self-explanatory.
Ascott R. Hope	Toby	Gordon Browne	School story.
<u>VOL. 4. (1881-82)</u>			
Ascott R. Hope	All By Himself	?	Story of the Scottish Highlands.
Jules Verne	The Cryptogram (later published as "800 Leagues on the Amazon")	L. Benett	Amazon adventures.
Talbot Baines Reed	Fifth Form at St. Dominic's.	Gordon Browne	School story.
Mrs. Eiloart	The Ill-Used Boy	?	Story of two cousins - one rich one poor.
Paul Blake	Sigurd the Viking	?	Viking adventures.
T. S. Millington	Thro' Fire and Water	?	Story of a boy who runs away to sea.
Louis Rousselet	The Two Cabin-Boys.	?	Adventures of two boys on land and sea.
Gordon Stables	Wild Adventures Round the Pole.	?	Arctic adventures.
<u>VOL. 5. (1882-83)</u>			
S. Whitchurch Sadler	Adventures on the Spanish Main	G. H. Edwards	Adventures of a young Naval Lt.
Louis Rousselet	The Drummer Boy	?	Story of the days of Washington.
Jules Verne	Godfrey Morgan	L. Benett	Two men and a dog shipwrecked on an island.
S. Whitchurch Sadler	Mutineers of the 'Good Intent'.	?	Sea story of mutineers.
Talbot Baines Reed	My Friend Smith	Gordon Browne	Story of school and city life.
Paul Blake	Sigurd the Hero	?	Viking story.
Gordon Stables	Stanley O'Grahame: Boy and Man	?	Story of the Congo.
Ascott R. Hope	The Tell-Tale	Alfred Pearse	School story.
R. M. Ballantyne	Twice Bought	?	Story of the Oregon goldfields.
Paul Blake	The Two Chums	Alfred Pearse	Grammar school story.
<u>VOL. 6. (1883-84)</u>			
A. N. Malan	Cacus and Hercules	Alfred Pearse	School story.
A. N. Malan	A Dunces's Disasters	Alfred Pearse	School story.
H. C. Adams	For James or George	?	A Schoolboy's tale of 1745.
James Cox	Morgan's Head	G. H. Edwards	Treasure-seeking story of the Caribbean Sea.
G. Manville Fenn	Silver Canon	Riou	Adventure in the Far West of America.
Talbot Baines Reed	The Willoughby Captains	Alfred Pearse	School story.
<u>VOL. 7. (1884-85)</u>			
Paul Blake	School and the World	Alfred Pearse	School and City life.

<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>ILLUSTRATOR</u>	<u>TYPE</u>
<u>VOL. 7. (1884-85) (cont'd)</u>			
Jules Verne	Star of the South (subs. titled "Star of the Settlement"; and later published as "The Vanished Diamond").	L. Benett	Story of South African diamond mining.
J. F. Hodgetts James Cox	Ivan Dobroff A Schoolboy's Adventures with Moonlighters.	John Finnemore John Finnemore	Russian story. Irish adventures.
Talbot Baines Reed Talbot Baines Reed Gordon Stables	Heroes of New Swishford Reginald Cruden On Special Service	? Alfred Pearse John Finnemore	School story City life. Naval story.
<u>VOL. 8. (1885-86)</u>			
G. Manville Fenn David Ker	Curlieu Bog. Drowned Gold	Gordon Browne Alfred Pearse	Country adventure. Adventures on the West Coast of Africa.
T. S. Millington David Ker J. F. Hodgetts A. N. Malan R. M. Ballantyne W. H. G. Kingston	A Great Mistake Ilderim the Afghan Kormak the Viking. The Last Straw The Prairie Chief Roger Kyffin's Ward	Alfred Pearse John Finnemore John Finnemore - ? ?	War story set in 1870. Story of the Indian Border. Viking story. School story. Red Indian story. Historical story set in the 1790's.
H. C. Adams	Two Old Westminsterers	Gordon Browne	School story.
<u>VOL. 9. (1886-87)</u>			
Mayne Bolin Arthur Lee Knight A. N. Malan Jules Verne Talbot Baines Reed	Alone; a Sailor's Story Basil Woolcombe, Midshipman Buried Treasure Clipper of the Clouds A Dog with a Bad Name	Gordon Browne "S.B." H. Petherick L. Benett Alfred Pearse	Sea story. Sea story. Treasure found on a sea-shore. Scientific adventure. Story of a boy who did wrong and tried to make up for it.
Paul Blake David Ker	The 'Marquis' of Torchester Red Fingered Cyril	J. Lawson Alfred Pearse	School story. Story of the war between the Russians and the Tartars.
A.N. Malan W.H. Williams C.M. Archibald	St. Valentine's Day The Silk-Robed Cow A Soldier's Story	- Alfred Pearse -	School story. Story of the Canadian North-West Life in the Army, including the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny.
Ascott R. Hope V. Lovett Cameron	A Strange Trip Abroad Tom Saunders	Alfred Pearse W.H. Overend	Sea story. Shipwreck and adventures in tropical Africa.
Arthur Conan Doyle	Uncle Jeremy's Household	R. Caton Woodville	Mysterious happenings in Yorkshire connected with the Indian Thugs.
<u>VOL. 10. (1887-88)</u>			
J.R. Hutchinson	Back to Life	George Hutchinson	Tale of the Indian jungle.
J. Allen Bartlett J. F. Hodgetts Gordon Stables	Bill Martock Edric the Norseman For England, Home and Beauty	Gordon Browne John Finnemore Alfred Pearse and A. Monro Smith	Tale of the Severn Sea. Adventures with the Norsemen. Story of the Royal Navy in the late 18th Century.
Lady Broome Charles Deslys Talbot Baines Reed R.M. Ballantyne A.N. Malan Sir Gilbert Campbell	Harry Treverton Last of the Paladins Master of the Shell The Middy and the Moors A Smuggling Adventure Treasure of the Cacique	Alfred Pearse Edouard Zier Gordon Browne W.S. Stacey T. Downey Gordon Browne	Story of Australian life. Tale of the 9th Century. School story. Algerian story. School story. Mexican story.
<u>VOL. 11. (1888-89)</u>			
Jules Verne	Adrift in the Pacific	L. Benett	Group of schoolboys are shipwrecked on a desert island.
Franklin Fox	Conqueror Compass	?	Sea story

<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>ILLUSTRATOR</u>	<u>TYPE</u>
<u>VOL. 11. (1888-89)(cont'd)</u>			
A. N. Malan	Cynotragoedia: a Swan Tragedy	J. Temple	School story
R. D'O. Martin	Gulab Singh	Alfred Pearse	Indian adventures.
A. N. Malan	Mysterries of Masterton Marsh	T. Downey	School story.
Ascott R. Hope	The Parlour-Boarder	Alfred Pearse	School story.
Talbot Baines Reed	Sir Ludar	Alfred Pearse	Story set in the days of Elizabeth I.
David Ker	Through the Darkness	H. Walker	African story dealing with the conquest of Angola.
<u>VOL. 12. (1889-90)</u>			
Jules Verne	Barbican and Co., or The Purchase of the North Pole	G. Roux	Story about what happens when the North Pole is bought by experimenters and blown up!
A. N. Malan	Beware of the Hydrophagon	-	School story
Gordon Stables	Our Home in the Silver West	Alfred Pearse	Story of Scottish settlers in South America.
David Ker	For Life and Death	H. J. Walker	Story of Northern India.
David Ker	Lost Expedition	Alfred Pearse	Story of West Africa.
Ashmore Russan	New House Mystery	Gordon Browne	School story.
A. Laurie	Raymond Frezols	Riou	Story set against the background of an American oil-well.
Ashmore Russan	A Strange Epidemic	Alfred Pearse	School story.
A. N. Malan	Uncle Towser	T. Downey	Humour and school.
J. Munro	The Wire and the Wave	Alfred Pearse	Telegraph-cable laying in the coral seas.
<u>VOL. 13. (1890-91)</u>			
Talbot Baines Reed	Cock House at Fellsgarth	Alfred Pearse	School story.
David Ker	A Coral Prison	Bernard Munns	Story about a group of boys shipwrecked on an island in the Indian Ocean.
A. Baker	George Freeborn	Alfred Pearse	Story of a sailor and exile who became the first parson of Aurora Island in the South seas.
Ascott R. Hope	Taffy	-	School story.
David Ker	The Tiger Chief of Burmah	Alfred Pearse	Adventures of two boys on the River Irrawaddy.
<u>VOL. 14. (1891-92)</u>			
James Cox	Among the Dahomians	-	African adventure.
J. Macdonald Oxley	Archie McKenzie, the Young Nor*Wester	J. Jellicoe	Canadian adventure.
A. Laurie	Axel Ebersen	George Roux	Swedish story.
Burnett Fallow	Boys of Birchwell Hall	-	School story.
David Ker	Champions of the Kremlin	H. Walker	Russian adventure.
Gordon Stables	Just Like Jack	-	Sea story.
Arthur Lee Knight	Lost in a Ceylon Jungle	Alfred Pearse	Self-explanatory!
Ashmore Russan and Frederick Boyle	The Orchid Seekers	Alfred Pearse	Adventures in Borneo with authentic orchid-collecting theme.
R. D'O. Martin	Pambardi, the Hooded Snake	Frank Feller	Adventures in Southern India.
George B. Perry	Voyage of the 'Boadicea'.	"G.H."	Sea story.
<u>VOL. 15. (1892-93)</u>			
David Ker	Afloat in a Volcano	H.F. Hobden and H. Walker	Pirate story.
Jules Verne	Rodolphe de Gortz; or The Castle of the Carpathians	L. Benett	Story about a mysterious and apparently haunted castle.
Henry Frith	The Smugglers' Beacon	Maynard Brown	Adventures with smugglers.
Talbot Baines Reed	Tom, Dick and Harry	H. M. Paget	School story.
<u>VOL. 16. (1893-94)</u>			
David Ker	Captives of the Ocean	F. W. Burton	Story of the Canary Islands.
Jules Verne	Claudius Bombarnac	L. Benett	Mystery and adventure in the East.
Paul Blake	Jack	Alfred Pearse	Christmas holiday adventures of a schoolboy.

<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>ILLUSTRATOR</u>	<u>TYPE</u>
<u>VOL. 16. (1893-94) (cont'd)</u>			
George B. Perry	Kin Against Kin	W. H. Overend	Slavery days in America.
Ascott R. Hope	The McKickshaws	Frederick Barnard	School story.
G. Demage	A Plunge Into the Sahara	Paule Crampel	Desert adventures.
A. N. Malan	Saintony Cross	Alfred Pearse	Cornish adventure.
<u>VOL. 17. (1894-95)</u>			
David Ker	Amid Siberian Forests	H. M. Paget	Tale of the Russian Conquest of Asia.
Jules Verne	Captain Antifer; or His Excellency's Millions	G. Roux	Story of buried treasure in Egypt.
David Ker	The Eagle's Rock	G.E. Robertson	Story of the Polar Seas.
Ascott R. Hope	Hard Up!	-	Mystery on Exmoor.
Gordon Stables	In the Land of the Lion and the Ostrich.	Alfred Pearse	Story of Scottish settlers in the Cape of Good Hope.
A. N. Malan	The Wallaby-Man	Fred Barnard	Adventures in an English South Coast holiday resort.
<u>VOL. 18. (1895-96)</u>			
Gordon Stables	The Cruise of the Good Ship 'Boreas'	Alfred Pearse	Sea story.
R. W. K. Edwards	The Cygnet's Head	W. S. Stacey	School story.
John Dawtrey	The Death Feud	J. K. Sadler	Story of Chinese vengeance.
A. N. Malan	The Drere of Lovemoath Grange	W. Thomas Smith	School story.
David Ker	The Finder of the White Elephant	H. M. Paget	An English boy at the Court of Siam.
Clife Holland	Island of Three Palm Trees	Alfred Pearse	Adventures on a yacht in the South Seas.
G. Hawley	Pilgrim's Fireship	The Author, and W.J. Urquhart	Sea story.
G. Manville Fenn	Ydoll Gwyn; or The Flood Beneath the Sea	Alfred Pearse	Adventures in an underground mine.
<u>VOL. 19. (1896-97)</u>			
G. A. Henty	The Fetish Hole	Alfred Pearse	Story of East Africa.
Burnett Fallow	Founding of Hillbrow Hall	-	School story.
Gordon Stables	Frank Hardinge	W. Thomas Smith	Adventures 'from Torrid Zones to Regions of Perpetual Snow'.
David Ker	The Lonely Islands	H. M. Paget	Adventures in the Azores.
Skelton Kuppord	The Mess that Jack Made.	Alfred Pearse	School story.
Charles Young	Mystery of the Mountain	Alfred Pearse	Story of the Indian Mutiny.
Harold Avery	The Triple Alliance	Alfred Pearse	School story.
<u>VOL. 20. (1897-98)</u>			
G. A. Henty	Among Malay Pirates	G.E. Robertson and others	Adventures among pirates.
Alfred Colbeck	A Bedawin Captive	Alfred Pearse	Adventures among Arabs in the desert.
A. N. Malan	The Belgian Hare	Thomas Downey	School story.
Harold Avery	Mobsley's Mohicans	Sidney H. Sime	School story.
G. Manville Fenn	Nic Revel	Alfred Pearse	A white slave's adventures on an American plantation.
John Dawtrey	Reaping the Whirlwind	Warwick Goble	Tale of the Mormon Border in America.
Ascott R. Hope	Sandy's Secret	-	Scottish village life.
Jules Verne	Simon Hart	L. Benett	Strange story of science and the sea.
<u>VOL. 21. (1898-99)</u>			
Gordon Stables	Allan Adair	Alfred Pearse	Adventures on land and sea in several countries.
G. Manville Fenn	The Blackbird Trap	G. Hawley and others	Sea story.
G. A. Henty	Burton and Son	G. E. Robertson	Story of a shipwreck on the coast of Australia.
Jules Verne	Captain Len Guy	G. Roux	An Antarctic mystery.
David Ker	Hunted Through the Frozen Ocean	Alfred Pearse	Adventures with a Russian Prince and a cabin-boy on a ship in the Icelandic seas.

<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>ILLUSTRATOR</u>	<u>TYPE</u>
<u>VOL. 21. (1898-99) (cont'd)</u>			
A. N. Malan	In the Isles of Coutances	A. F. Lydon, G. H. Edwards, J. Jellicoe, etc.	Tale of the Civil War.
J. Macdonald Oxley	North Overland with Franklin	A. G. Perkes	Story set in Canada with a back-ground of the Hudson's Bay Co.
W. E. Cule	Stories from the Schoolhouse	-	School story.
E. Harcourt Burrage	The Three Chums	Warwick Goble	Adventures among Spanish brigands.
<u>VOL. 22. (1899-1900)</u>			
David Ker	A Bold Climber	Alfred Pearse	Story of Robert Clife of India.
V. L. Going	Damon and Pythias	-	A story of the Sudan.
G. A. Henty	In the Hands of the Cave Dwellers	Alfred Pearse	Story of an Apache Indian raid.
A. N. Malan	Lout of Smackboy School	The Author, F. J. Lang, and others.	School story.
W. Clark Russell	The 'Pretty Polly'.	G.E. Robertson	Sea story.
V. L. Going	Sutherland of 'Ours'.	-	Story of the Matabele Rising.
John A. Higginson	Two Chummy Shellbacks	G.E. Robertson	Sea story.
W. E. Cule	Watkins' White Elephant	-	School story.
Jules Verne	William J. Hypperbore; or The Will of an Eccentric	G. Roux	Story of a very strange board-game - with the entire U.S.A. as the playing area and the winner to take 20 million pounds!
<u>VOL. 23. (1900-01)</u>			
Victor L. Whitchurch	Chronicles of Dullminster Grammar School.	-	School story.
Harold Avery	Confessions of Cobb Minor	-	School story.
Gordon Stables	Cruise of the 'Arctic Fox' in Icy Seas Around the Pole	Alfred Pearse	Self-explanatory!
William James Marx	'Daisy Claim' Klondike	Powell Chase	Gold hunting in the Klondike.
F. Curzon Britten	The Giant Engine	-	Story of a highspeed railway engine set in South Africa.
W. E. Cule	Mortimer's Marrow	-	School story.
J. Macdonald Oxley	Norman's Nugget	Alfred Pearse	Gold-hunting in America and Canada.
<u>VOL. 24. (1901-02)</u>			
David Ker	A Dead Man's Secret	J. Jellicoe	Story of an expedition to Siberia.
John A. Higginson	In the Grip of the Wind	-	Sea and shipwreck story.
W. E. Cule	Mr. Herne's Hallucination	-	School story.
John Finnemore	The Story of a Scout	G.E. Robertson	Story of the Army in Wellington's time.
Gordon Stables	The Shell-Hunters	Alfred Pearse	Adventures on land and sea in search of valuable sea-shells.
<u>VOL. 25. (1902-03)</u>			
Gordon Stables	Chris Cunningham	Alfred Pearse	Adventures in the days of Nelson.
Skelton Kuppord	Croesus Minor	-	Humorous adventures of a boy who has to spend £1,000 in a year.
A. M. Jackson	Dick and Philip	G.E. Robertson	Adventures of two boys who are kidnapped in Italy.
A. N. Malan	Queer Mr. Quern	Alfred Pearse	Story of an eccentric school-master.
<u>VOL. 26. (1903-04)</u>			
A. N. Malan	The Doctor's Sea-Gulls	-	School story.
John A. Higginson	Four Years Aft the Galley	W. Rainey	Sea story.
E. S. Tylee	A French Frog and an American Eagle	-	School story.
Andrew Home	A Quarrel in the Sixth	Tom Browne	School story.
W. E. Cule	Rollinson and I	Percy V. Bradshaw	School story.
W. H. Fitchett	A Sea Feud	Alfred Pearse	18th Century sea story.

<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>ILLUSTRATOR</u>	<u>TYPE</u>
<u>VOL. 27. (1904-05)</u>			
Gordon Stables	The Butterfly Hunters	Alfred Pearse	Adventures in Borneo, New Guinea, etc. in search of butterflies.
Skelton Kuppord	Fred and Bill	Percy V. Bradshaw	School story.
G. Manville Fenn	The New Forest Spy	J. Jellicoe	Historical adventure.
J. Macdonald Oxley	Skin for Skin	-	Story of an expedition hunting natural history specimens in the Orient.
Arthur Lee Knight	A Strange Seining-Party	J. Johnson	Fishing story.
John Lea	Swinton's Open Secret	-	School story.
<u>VOL. 28. (1905-06)</u>			
Percy V. Bradshaw	The Fourth Form Ferret	The Author	Humorous school story.
Adrian Leigh	Adventures of Jack Alderson, V.C.	-	Army adventures.
George Ethelbert Walsh	The Mysterious Beacon Light	Arthur E. Becher	Adventures of 4 boys in Labrador.
Frank Curzon Britten	Story of Sir Roland Preederoy, Knight.	J. Jellicoe	A tale of the last Plantagenets.
Gordon Stables	Voyage of the 'Blue Vega'	Alfred Pearse	Story of Arctic adventure.
<u>VOL. 29. (1906-07)</u>			
Lloyd Clifford	The Emir's Jewels	Arthur Twidle	Sea adventures
John Lea	My Cousin Douglas	-	School and sea adventures.
A. N. Malan	Mystery of Abbeyside School	Percy V. Bradshaw	School story.
Louis Becke	Randalls of Karossa Creek	Alfred Pearse	Australian Bush life.
William A. Bryce, and H. de Vere Stacpoole	The Reavers	-	Adventures on the Scottish Moors.
W. J. Ferrar	Red Thurston's Son	J. Jellicoe	Story set in the 11th Century.
Mary E. Ropes	The Ring and the Tan	Percy V. Bradshaw	Story of circus life.
Gordon Stables	From the Slums to the Quarter Deck	Alfred Pearse	Story of a boy from the London slums who rose to become a R.N. Commander.
<u>VOL. 30. (1907-08)</u>			
Percy V. Bradshaw	The Cocklers' Club	The Author	Humorous school story.
Tom Bevan	The Goldsmith of Chepe	J. Jellicoe	Tale of the Plague year.
Thomas Cobb	The Green Van	-	Story of an English Summer Holiday in a caravan.
Gordon Stables	The Ivory Hunters	Alfred Pearse	Sea story.
H. A. Hinkson	The King's Liege	-	Adventures in mediaeval England.
W. E. Cule	Muff Morgan's Gold	-	School story.
Allen French	Pelham and His Friend Tim	Charles Grunwald	School story.
W. E. Cule	Trench in the Garden	-	A boy's summer holiday adventure in Essex.
B. E. Evans	Trials of a Guardian	Alfred Pearse	Story of a boy's Guardian.
<u>VOL. 31. (1908-09)</u>			
Reginald H. Poole (Michael Poole)	Dr. Silver	Gordon Browne	School story.
Gordon Stables	From Fisher Lad to Fleet Surgeon	Alfred Pearse	Story of a poor Scottish fisher boy who rose to become a R.N. Surgeon.
John Lea	Mr. Lattimer's Tax	-	School story.
Alfred Colbeck	The Mystic Feathers	-	Story of two young stowaways.
Percy V. Bradshaw	Pages from a Prefect's Diary	The Author	School story.
Alfred Colbeck	Quenching of the Fiery Tide	-	Story of Ancient Britons.
B. E. Evans	A Twelve Months' Holiday	-	Story of a boy's seaside convalescence.
<u>VOL. 32. (1909-10)</u>			
Percy V. Bradshaw	After School Hours	The Author	Humorous school story.
Oswald Kendall	Cruise of the 'Manzarita'	The Author	Sea story.
H. A. Hinkson	For the King	Gordon Browne	Civil War story.
Tom Bevan	Greyhound of the Skies	-	Story of a man who invents an airship.

<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>ILLUSTRATOR</u>	<u>TYPE</u>
<u>VOL. 32. (1909-10) (cont'd)</u>			
William Pollock	The Hawkins: Father, Aunt and Two Boys	-	Humorous family story.
John Lea	Leutchford's Lion	-	School story.
F. Cowley Whitehouse	Meltonians All!	Alfred Pearse	School story.
Ravenor Bullen	Mystery of Cabin No. 7	Arthur Twidle	Mystery story.
F. H. Bolton	"Nobless Oblige"	Alfred Pearse	School story.
<u>VOL. 33. (1910-11)</u>			
Ravenor Bullen	Floating Ground	Alfred Pearse	African adventure.
Alfred Judd	The Lie Direct	-	School story.
Robert Boyle	Pettychap at St. Matthews'	-	School story.
J. Claverdon Wood	Sinclair of the Scouts	John Finnemore	Adventures in West Africa.
A. Allen Brockington	Talbot's House	Gordon Browne	School story.
Percy F. Westerman	Treasure of the 'San Philipo'	Arthur Twidle	Sea story.
<u>VOL. 34. (1911-12)</u>			
Tom Bevan	The Baymouth Scouts	Gordon Browne	Napoleonic story.
M. P. Adams	Cave of Illapa	Photographs	Adventures in Peru.
Adrian Leigh	The Concession Hunters	J. Jellicoe	South African story.
J. Claverdon Wood	Jeffrey of the White Wolf Trail	Arthur Twidle	Red Indian adventures.
Ravenor Bullen	Jewels of Zenobia	J. Jellicoe and Maynard Brown	Desert adventures.
J. and P. Wilson	Mystery of the Black Cliff	Alfred Pearse	Mystery and adventure in Cornwall.
W. E. Cule	Portland colours.	Alfred Pearse	School story.
Spencer R. Blyth	Strange Doings at the Courthouse	Alfred Pearse	Mystery story.
<u>VOL. 35. (1912-13)</u>			
Sercombe Griffin	Between the Two	"W.D.A."	Grammar school story.
Argyll Saxby	The Fiery Totem	Arthur Twidle	Adventures in the Canadian N. West.
A. Ferguson	Scarred Cliff Island	Edgar Holloway	Story of a vendetta.
John Lea	Sky Cruise of the 'Kestrel'	-	Story of a balloon voyage.
F. H. Bolton	Under the Edge of the Earth	George Soper	Adventure and mystery.
<u>VOL. 36. (1913-14)</u>			
Frank Elias	Adventures of Harry Leftwich	Ernest Prater	Adventures at sea and in the South Sea Islands.
Stanley Portal Hyatt	Black Pearl of Peihoo	Archibald Webb	Tale of the Malay Seas.
Tom Bevan.	Heir of Wyselwood	Gordon Browne	Mystery and adventure in Dorset in the early 1800's.
Jules Verne	Master of the World	G. Roux	Scientific adventure.
John Lea	Under the Harrow	Ernest Prater	School story.
<u>VOL. 37. (1914-15)</u>			
Charles Gilson	In the Power of the Pygmies	George Soper	Story of the Great African Forest.
Paul Blake	Beyond the School Gates	J. R. Burgess	School and city life.
A. L. Haydon	For England and the Right!	Archibald Webb	Story of the Great War set in Belgium.
Jules Verne	Kongre the Wrecker; or The Lighthouse at the End of the World.	G. Roux	Adventures with pirates and wreckers.
<u>VOL. 38. (1915-16)</u>			
Charles Gilson	Submarine U. 93	George Soper	Naval adventures in the Great War.
John Lea	Chronicles of Clayhouse	Arthur Twidle	Humorous school story.
Charles Young	Olaf the Sea Bird	Gordon Browne	Viking story.
J. Claverdon Wood	Stolen Grand Lama	Arthur Twidle	English boy's adventures in Tibet.
Arthur Lee Knight	Cayman Island Treasure	Alfred Pearse	Story of a Haitian revolution.
<u>VOL. 39. (1916-17)</u>			
Charles Gilson	At the Call of the Tsar	George Soper	Story of the first Russian advance in the Great War.
Thomas Downey	Great Auk's Egg	The Author	Mystery and adventure on the Welsh Coast.
Kent Carr	The Shaping of Jephson's	J. R. Burgess	School story.

<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>ILLUSTRATOR</u>	<u>TYPE</u>
<u>VOL. 39. (1916-17) (cont'd)</u>			
Edward C. Adams	Out for Gold	Stanley L. Wood	Adventures in Mexico.
<u>VOL. 40. (1917-18)</u>			
Charles Gilson	Mystery of Ah Jim	George Soper	Chinese Underworld and Piracy on the high seas.
Edward C. Adams	Warden of the Islands	Alfred Pearse	Adventures of a young Naval Officer in Papua.
James B. Hendryx	Sam Morgan's Boy	Stanley L. Wood	Story set in the ice wastes in Alaska.
F. H. Bolton	Into the Soundless Deep	George Soper	Scientific adventure.
<u>VOL. 41. (1918-19)</u>			
Kent Carr	Caught Out!	J. R. Burgess	School story.
W. E. Cule	In the Secret Sea	George Soper	Adventures in the South Atlantic.
Alfred Colbeck	Guardians of the Shield	Arthur Twidle	Adventure and mystery in the East.
<u>VOL. 42. (1919-20)</u>			
Charles Gilson	The Lost City	George Soper	Adventure and mystery in the Egyptian desert.
John Lea	Told in the Captain's Den	J.M.R. Whitwell	School story.
Frank Elias	Mystery of the 'Mayflower'	Gordon Browne	Story set in the time of the Pilgrim Fathers.
Raymond Raife	Sheik's White Slave	Arthur Twidle	Desert adventure.
E. Charles Vivian	Aztec Gold	Stanley L. Wood	Adventures at sea and on land in Yucatan.
<u>VOL. 43. (1920-21)</u>			
Charles Gilson	Wizard King	George Soper	Adventures in Central Africa.
Frank Elias	Shadow on the School	T.M.R. Whitwell	School story.
Argyll Saxby	Living It Down	Arthur Twidle	Tale of the American Prairie.
Kent Carr	Dixie of the Cock House	J. R. Burgess	School story.
J. Claverdon Wood	When Nicholson Kept the Border	Stanley L. Wood	Tale of the Indian Mutiny.
<u>VOL. 44. (1921-22)</u>			
Richard Biard	The Red Flag	T.M.R. Whitwell	School story.
Raymond Raife	In the Realm of the Arctic Poppy	Arthur Twidle	Adventures in the great ice wastes of the Far North.
G. Godfray Sellick	Secret of Canute's Island.	R. H. Brock	Period adventure story set in the English countryside.
Harold Avery	A Fifth Form Mystery	T.M.R. Whitwell	School story.
<u>VOL. 45. (1922-23)</u>			
Charles Gilson	'Jack-Without-a-Roof'	John de Walton	Story of the French Revolution.
Harold Avery	A Sixth Form Feud	T.M.R. Whitwell	School story.
G. Godfray Sellick	The Riders from the Sea	Archibald Webb	Tale of Smuggling.
Argyll Saxby	Treasure of Tregudda	Arthur Twidle	Cornish mystery and adventure.
J. Claverdon Wood	Under Serpent's Fang	Stanley L. Wood	Story of adventure in New Guinea in the last century.
<u>VOL. 46. (1923-24)</u>			
Charles Gilson	In the Land of Shame	John de Walton	Story of the Slave Trade in Central Africa.
Frank Elias	Two Captains of Tuxford	T.M.R. Whitwell	School story.
Raymond Raife	Into a Forbidden Land	Stanley L. Wood	African adventure.
Walter Wood	A Son of the Dogger	George Soper	Adventures in a trawler on the North Sea.
<u>VOL. 47. (1924-25)</u>			
Richard Bird	Ace of Stamps	T.M.R. Whitwell	School story.
G. Godfray Sellick	Fortunes of Humphrey Dawn	Gordon Browne	Story of Roundhead days.
W. H. Milligan	Helgi the High-Born	John de Walton	Viking story.
Frank Elias	Out of the Straight	T.M.R. Whitwell	School story.

<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>ILLUSTRATOR</u>	<u>TYPE</u>
<u>VOL. 48. (1925-26)</u>			
Eric Wood	With Faith and Steel	Robert Strange	Story of the Crusades.
T. J. Gorman	Falcons of the Frontier	Douglas Constable	Indian adventures.
Frank Elias	The New Housemaster	H. L. Bacon	School story.
Dillon Wallace	Troop One of the Labrador	P. G. Ebbutt	Adventures in frozen Labrador.
<u>VOL. 49. (1926-27)</u>			
John L. Roberts	The Glory of Greystone	J. R. Burgess	School story.
G. Godfray Sellick	Into the Hands of Spain	E. E. Briscoe	Story of the Spanish Main.
S. T. James	On Company's Service	R. Simmons	Story of railway life in England.
David Ker	The Treeless Land	Robert Strange	Adventures in the Orkney Islands.
George E. Rochester	The Flying Beetle	H. L. Shindler	Air adventures.
<u>VOL. 50. (1927-28)</u>			
Richard Bird	Barrett of Pulling's	J. R. Burgess	School story.
K. Maclure	Colin of the Seven Seas	R. Simmons	Sea story.
Argyll Saxby	Cruise of the 'Water Bat'	Robert Strange	Scientific sea story.
G. Godfray Sellick	To the Perilous East	E. E. Briscoe	Historical adventures in India.
George E. Rochester	Scarlet Squadron	Robert Strange	Air adventures.
<u>VOL. 51. (1928-29)</u>			
Richard Bird	New Traditions	J. R. Burgess	School story.
Oswald Dallas	Secret of the Desert	Gordon Browne	Desert adventures.
Michael Poole	Under Ringwood's Rule	J. R. Burgess	School story.
George E. Rochester	Vultures of Desolate Island	Robert Strange	Air adventures.
Geoffrey Prout	Wrackness Island	J. R. Burgess	Sea scouts involved in a strange mystery.
<u>VOL. 52. (1929-30)</u>			
George E. Rochester	Despot of the World	H. L. Shindler	Air adventures.
Robert Harding	Behind the Ranges	R. B. Ogle	Adventures in India.
Richard Bird	Garvice v. Grammar	J. R. Burgess	School story.
G. Godfray Sellick	The Shadow Cavalier	E. E. Briscoe	Story of Cavaliers and Roundheads.
<u>VOL. 53. (1930-31)</u>			
Argyll Saxby	The Dinkum Aussies	Robert Strange	Australian adventures.
K. Maclure	Enemy in the Midst	A. Oliffe	Royal Naval adventures with young midshipmen.
S. T. James	The Master Hand	A. Oliffe	Story set against the railway of the future.
Harold Avery	Potted Thunder	J. R. Burgess	School story.
C. W. C. Drury	Riddle of the Screen	A. Oliffe	Mystery and adventure.
<u>VOL. 54. (1931-32)</u>			
Herbert Hayens	Golden Quetzals	G. P. Micklewright	Adventures in Mexico.
Sercombe Griffin	Fetters of Freedom	R. B. Ogle	Adventures of a boy sold into Turkish slavery.
Michael Poole	Lisle of the Transitus!	J. R. Burgess	School story.
A. B. Sherlock	The Mystery Boy	A. Oliffe	Adventures of a young Australian reporter.
H. Bedford Jones	A Sword of Nippon	C. Ambler	Adventures with the Mediaeval Japanese.
<u>VOL. 55. (1932-33)</u>			
C. W. C. Drury	The Admiral's Chart	A. Oliffe	An ancient chart leads modern-day youths to treasure.
Robert Harding	Banner of the Prophet	R. B. Ogle	Indian Secret Service adventures.
Michael Poole	Cranks of Marston	J. R. Burgess	School story.
K. Maclure	Governor of the Colony	G. P. Micklewright	18th Century adventures in the East Indies.
<u>VOL. 56. (1933-34)</u>			
Percy F. Westerman	Boys of the Bulldog Breed	C. Gifford Ambler	Adventures of three young mining engineers.
William MacMillan	Seas of Adventure	Thomas Somerfield	Adventures in the Arctic.
Oswald Dallas	'Ferret' of the 'Omnipotent'	J. R. Burgess	Adventures of a young Naval officer.
Michael Poole	Secret of Druid's Cross	Charles Willis	School story.

<u>AUTHOR</u>	<u>TITLE</u>	<u>ILLUSTRATOR</u>	<u>TYPE</u>
<u>VOL. 56. (1937-34) (cont'd)</u>			
George E. Rochester	Return of the Flying Beetle	Robert Strange	Air and sea adventures.
<u>VOL. 57. (1934-35)</u>			
Sercombe Griffin	The Crimson Caterpillar	J. Mills	Adventures in the Sahara Desert in a strange motor-car.
Michael Poole	Cross Roads at Broxton	Reginald Mills	School story.
Percy F. Westerman	An Exile in Vahlia	Thomas Somerfield	Adventures in a South American Republic.
Geoffrey Trease	New House at Hardale	Reginald Mills	School story.
"Sea-Wrack"	"Still"	T. Cuneo	Adventures of two young Naval cadets in the Mediterranean.
Robert Harding	Terror of the Desert	G. E. Lang	Story of gun-running in the Persian Gulf.
<u>VOL. 58. (1935-36)</u>			
William MacMillan	North With the 'Polaris'	Serge Drigin	Adventures in an airship.
C. M. Rogers	Quest of the Magical Herb	Thomas Somerfield	Adventures in South Africa.
Percy F. Westerman	Wrested from the Deep	W. Caton Woodville	Sea story.
<u>VOL. 59. (1936-37)</u>			
Michael Poole	Broxton's Silver Spur	?	School story.
Sercombe Griffin	Claws of Ka Weit	Thomas Somerfield	Adventures of two young airmen in the East.
"Sea-Wrack"	Scourge of the Seas	Serge Drigin	Tale of Naval Secret Service.
<u>VOL. 60. (1937-38)</u>			
Wallace Deane	Comrades Three	?	Adventures in Fiji.
Gunby Hadath	Minor and Major	Savile Lumley	School story.
Gordon Humphreys	The Tenth Item	"Nick"	School story.
<u>VOL. 61. (1938-39)</u>			
Michael Poole	Butt of Barnston	Fred Bennett	Humorous school story.
C. W. C. Drury	Agents of the Coast	H. M. Brock	Napoleonic story of smugglers.
E. Collins	Galleons of the Air	Patrick Nicholls	Story about 'pirates' of the skies.
Percy F. Westerman	Mystery of the 'Sempioire'	?	Sea adventures.
<u>VOL. 62. (1939-40)</u>			
Percy F. Westerman	Bob Strickland's Log	Archibald Webb	18th Century sea story.
Gunby Hadath	In Sea rich of a Kingdom	Raymond Sheppard	Mystery and adventure in the French Alps.

SOME NOTES ON A FEW OF THE CONTRIBUTORS TO THE "B.O.P."

THE AUTHORS

R. M. BALLANTYNE: In an interview published in 1889, this popular Scottish writer said he had written, up until then, 77 books, of which 72 were adventure tales, and that he had been an author for 33 years. He also wrote numerous magazine articles, apart from his fiction. Was an accomplished artist and occasionally illustrated his own stories. More often, he gave the illustrator a rough sketch of how he wanted a scene to appear. His stories always had authentic backgrounds. His most famous book was "The Coral Island."

RAVENOR BULLEN: Educated at University College School, London, he lived for many years at Bampton in Oxfordshire. He later went to Canada to look after mining interests and subsequently became associated with the production of crude petroleum in the oil-fields of Ontario. Wrote mainly mystery and adventure stories, several of which were published in book-form.

KENT CARR: Considered by R. A. H. Goodyear to be one of the best school story writers of his period, which was in the early-1900's. His serials appeared in "The Captain" and "Boys of Our Empire" and also in hard covers.

ALFRED COLBECK: A Yorkshireman by birth, the Rev. Colbeck was educated at Batley, and at Ranmoor College, Sheffield. His ministry was spent in Lancashire, Yorkshire, Shropshire and Staffordshire. Made his first contribution to "BOP" in 1895, and subsequently wrote several serials and many short stories for it. His stories were mainly about the adventures of young Englishmen in foreign parts. His backgrounds were authentic as he had travelled widely, especially in Egypt, Palestine, Greece, Turkey and Russia.

ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: In a congratulatory message to "BOP" in 1903, Doyle wrote: "Personally, I owe the 'BOP' a debt of gratitude for it was one of the first papers which grew tired of returning my MSS and began to print them instead." His first contribution was in the 1883 Christmas Number when he was aged 24; it was published under the name 'A. Conan Doyle, M.B., C.M.' and bore the title "An Exciting Christmas Eve - or My Lecture on Dynamite." His only serial, "Uncle Jeremy's Household" appeared in 1887 in "BOP" also. But "A Study in Scarlet" appeared soon after and from then on he was kept fully occupied with outside work. Four years later, in 1891, the immortal Sherlock Holmes made his bow in the pages of "The Strand Magazine" and Doyle wrote no more for the "BOP".

GEORGE MANVILLE FENN: Born in London in 1831, Fenn was the son of well-to-do parents and his early years passed in comparative luxury. Then, because of family misfortunes, he was thrown on the world at the age of 10. Living a life of solitude and dependent entirely on his own resources for amusement, he soon developed a great love for reading. This love of self-education led to his entering one of the training colleges for teachers run in connection with the National Society. Many of his best adventure stories were for the "BOP".

CHARLES GILSON: Educated at Dulwich College, he distinguished himself there at cricket, playing for the Young Amateurs of Surrey against the Professionals at the Oval - and taking 8 wickets for 20 runs! - while still a schoolboy. He was also good at Rugby football, playing for the school and later for Croydon and the Eastern Counties. At 20 he entered the Army and gained a commission. During a period of convalescence after being wounded he began to write. (All his earlier books bear the name of 'Captain Charles Gilson!'). He began writing stories for boys, the first being the popular "The Lost Island." During the Great War he joined the Naval Division and served in Antwerp. After the war he left the service, this time with the rank of Major. He holds a unique "BOP" record - that of opening no less than five consecutive volumes (Vol. 42-46) with a serial. He also wrote serials for "Chums," "The Captain" and many other leading A.P. publications, as well as publishing numerous bound books. His stories were always exciting, colourful and action-packed, and he was particularly at home in writing about the Orient.

JAMES B. HENDRYX: Born Sauk Centre, Minnesota, 1880. After leaving school, Hendryx worked in his father's printing office and post-office, at one time covering a mail route that necessitated a 30-mile horseback ride through the forests six days a week. He later spent many years in the Klondike, was a 'cow-puncher' in the cattle districts, and camped, hunted and trapped in the wild regions of North-West Canada. He published many adult adventure novels set in Canada which still sell well today.

G. A. HENTY: Born Trumpington, near Cambridge, in December, 1832, and was educated at Westminster School and Caius College. Originally went to the Crimea in the Purveyor's Dept., and was soon promoted to the post of Purveyor of the Forces. After the war he wearied of the work and resigned. Later he joined the staff of the "Standard," for which he wrote leaders and reviews and became a journalist-of-all-work.

Then he grew restless again and volunteered to go as Special Correspondent for the Austro-Italian war. After this he accompanied Garibaldi in his Tyrolese Campaign and also went to Magdala and Kumassi. Next he reported the Franco-German war, starved in Paris throughout the Siege of the Commune, and then turned South to Spain to rough it in the Pyranees throughout the Carlist insurrection. He later toured Asiatic Russia, America, India and other countries. Subsequently he wrote well over 100 exciting adventure and historical stories for boys (and their elders!), several of which were serialised in "BOP". Today, First Editions of his books are widely collected, especially by American enthusiasts. His obituary notice in the London "Sketch" read: "By the death of George Henty the boys of England lose one of the best friends they ever had..."

JAMES FREDK. HODGETTS: Commander Hodgett's "BOP" serials were invariably exciting adventure stories about Early Britons, Vikings or Norsemen. He also wrote several important books on archaeology, to which Ruskin once publicly expressed his indebtedness.

GEORGE ANDREW HUTCHISON: The first - and greatest - editor of "BOP". He became its first 'acting editor' from the first issue in 1879 and held the post until his death in 1913. When he became editor he was 37 years old and threw himself with immense enthusiasm into the job. While deeply religious by nature, he laid down once and for all the principle by which the "BOP" was always guided - that, while giving its readers what was straightforward, manly and Christian, it should not obtrude too obviously a surface of religion, nor reveal itself as a thinly-disguised tract. Hutchison was English by birth and Scottish by parentage. A few months before becoming editor he formed a new church in a London suburb. Among his later activities and concurrently with the "BOP" his editorial work extended to the "Sunday School World," "The Baptist," "Night and Day" (the organ of Dr. Barnardo's nationwide ministry) and "Toilers of the Deep" (the magazine of the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen). But the "BOP" was his great dream and his great deed.

DAVID KER: His full-blooded tales of Russians, Tartars, Afghans, Africans and Indians became famous wherever the "BOP" was read. A distinguished journalist, he was a war correspondent for the "Daily Telegraph" and other papers, and also a permanent correspondent for the "New York Times". He travelled widely in the East and acquired a knowledge of out-of-the-way corners of the world that was probably unequalled in his time. He wrote every word of his stories in tiny, microscopic handwriting on small sheets of very thin notepaper.

A. N. MALAN: The Rev. Dr. Malan was one of the most prolific of the regular "BOP" writers and wrote between 20 and 30 serials - although they were usually shorter and more lightweight than those of, say, Gordon Stables, who wrote 19 long and full-blooded serials. Malan's stories were usually of school life, a subject which he should have known something about since he was for many years Headmaster of Eagle House School, Wimbledon.

T. B. REED: The King of "BOP" school story writers. It was undoubtedly Reed who shaped the traditional school story as readers later came to know and love it. Even the great Charles Hamilton would probably have admitted to getting one or two ideas from him! Reed was born in Hackney, London, in 1852, and was the son of Sir Charles Reed, M.P., Chairman of the London School Board. He wrote the very first contribution to "BOP", which was the first of a series of sketches of sporting life at Parkhurst School and titled "My First Football Match." The sketches were signed 'An Old Boy' and later published in book-form as "Parkhurst Days." A fortnight after his first 'Parkhurst' piece appeared, came the first of a short series of papers from the

same pen under the title "Boys of English History." His first real school story appeared in August 1879 in two chapters and was called "The Troubles of a Dawdler." Then, at editor Hutchison's suggestion, he wrote his first serial, "The Adventures of a Three-Guinea Watch" - this time under his own name. It was an immediate success and he subsequently wrote a further 11 serials, mainly about public school life. Although he himself attended a day-school Reed's descriptions of public school life were generally agreed to be strictly accurate. He also reported the annual Oxford and Cambridge Boat Race for many years. His last published story was "Tom, Dick and Harry" and he died at Highgate, London, in 1893. At his death he was still working on a story about the Rebellion of 1798 and called "Kilgorman." It was later published in book-form by Thomas Nelson and Son, but is something of a rarity today.

GEORGE E. ROCHESTER: The first story he ever wrote was for "BOP"; titled "Funk" it was published in the 1926 volume. The editor invited him to write a serial and the result was "The Flying Beetle" the following year. It was so successful that it started him well and truly on his long career. He holds a fine record in "BOP" which has only once been surpassed - that of opening four consecutive volumes with a serial. The record is held by Charles Gilson with five opening serials. Rochester wrote a number of serials for the "Magnet," including "The Lost Squadron," "Black Hawk" and "Shadow of the Guillotine." Also wrote for "Thriller," "Union Jack," "B.F. Library," "Modern Boy," "Chums," "S.O.L.," "Wizard," "Rover," "Adventure," "Vanguard," "Knockout," "Beano," "Dandy" and "Miracle." His many pen-names include: Barton Furze, Frank Chatham, Hamilton Smith, Eric Roche, John Beresford, Mary West, Martin Hale, Elizabeth Kent, Hester Roche and Alison Frazer. Born in Northumberland, he lived for a number of years in Broadstairs. During the First World War he served as a Flight Lieutenant in the R.F.C. In the Second World War he served in the R.A.F. Regiment. Is the author of 70 bound books - and he even wrote one Sexton Blake story!

S. WHITCHURCH SADLER: He was Paymaster-in-Chief to the Royal Navy, and turned out several rattling sea stories for "BOP".

ARGYLLE SAXBY: The letters which often appeared after his name included 'M.A. and F.R.G.S.' Was the son of Jessie Saxby, a well-known Scottish writer and also a former contributor to "BOP". He usually wrote stories of adventure in foreign lands.

GORDON STABLES: He wrote the very first serial to appear in "BOP" - "From Powder Monkey to Admiral" and went on to contribute no less than 19 full-scale serials - the record number for the paper. He was descended from a branch of the great Gordon clan which went to fight for the French in the Huguenot days and took, or was given, the name of St'Ables, a corruption of St. Abel. Stables himself was born in Banffshire and later educated at Aberdeen. He studied medicine at Aberdeen University. He later came to be recognised as one of the world's top authorities on all breeds of dogs. Lived largely in a caravan called "The Wanderer" and toured around the countryside in it, writing as he went. When not travelling the caravan stayed in the 'Jungle' - the grounds of his lovely Berkshire home. As well as many famous serials - they include "For England, Home and Beauty," "From the Slums to the Quarter-Deck," and "From Fisher-Lad to Fleet Surgeon" - he wrote regular nature and hobby articles for "BOP", including some blood-curdling paragraphs on taxidermy...

JULES VERNE: Born Nantes, France, 1828. Originally intended to be a lawyer but a chance meeting with Alexandre Dumas the Younger led him to writing. He had no great struggle for recognition and was successful from the first with "Five Weeks in a Balloon." His first "BOP" serial ran in Volume 2 and was called "The Boy Captain" (later published in book-form as "Dick Sands"). Altogether 16 of his serials were

published in "BOP".

J. CLAVERDON WOOD: Wrote his popular adventure stories from personal knowledge of the countries described, having travelled widely abroad. His main recreation was sailing and yachting and he held the Silver Cup for 'open boat sailing'.

J. G. WOOD: The first natural history 'expert' of "BOP". Under the title 'Out With a Jack-knife' he wrote on animals, birds, insects, fishes, etc. for some years. He was previously editor of "The Boys' Own Magazine."

THE ILLUSTRATORS

GORDON BROWNE: He was the son of Hablot Knight Browne, better known as 'Phiz,' the famous illustrator of Charles Dickens. He studied at Heatherley's Art School, and also in South Kensington. He began to draw for the "BOP" in a curious way. A brother of his had been commissioned to illustrate T. B. Reed's "The Adventures of a Three-Guinea Watch" and had to give up the work. 'G.B.' was called in to finish it. After that came the illustrations to Stables' "Cruise of the Snowbird" (also in Volume 3). And from then on Browne was kept busy drawing for "BOP" and numerous other papers (including "Chums" with which he was also closely associated) for year after year. When you saw a drawing of his of any period, especially of the Round-head and Cavalier days, which he most delighted in, you could assure yourself that details of dress, weapons, etc. were quite correct. He had a large collection of armour, helmets, swords, pistols, daggers and so on to which he constantly referred. An R.I. and an R.B.A. he exhibited in oils at the Royal Academy many times.

TOM BROWNE: Born in Nottingham in 1872, Browne was one of the foremost illustrators of his time. Illustrated countless books, stories and articles. Did much work for comic papers too; his best-known - and immortal - creations in this field were, of course, Tired Tim and Weary Willie in "Chips." Was made a member of the R.B.A. in 1895, and of the Institute of Water Colourists in 1901. Was a frequent exhibitor at the Royal Academy.

L. BENETT: Illustrated the majority of Jules Verne's serials in "BOP" and also many of his books. Was a close personal friend of Verne's as well as being a fellow-Frenchman.

J. R. BURGESS: Illustrated many school stories in "BOP" and was particularly happy in capturing the humours of public school life in his drawings. Could depict a boy as graphically as anyone in his period. Was especially good when working on John Roberts' 'Greystone' stories - which, incidentally, were among the finest of this type to appear in the "BOP". When one of the best of them - "The Glory of Grey-stone" - was reprinted in book form, Burgess again illustrated it. Burgess himself was an old "BOP" reader and a former prize-winner in its art competitions.

JOHN FINNEMORE: After receiving his art education in Birmingham and Antwerp, he made a tour that included Greece, Russia, Turkey, Germany and France. Soon after his return to England he contributed his first black-and-white drawing to the "BOP". Later illustrated many important serials and short stories. As a special artist was formerly attached to the "Graphic," "Black-and-White" and "Sphere" magazines, representing the latter throughout the Boer War. As a painter in oils and water colour he was invited by the Government to contribute to various international exhibitions. Was a member of the Royal Institute.

ALFRED PEARSE: The doyen of all the "BOP" artists. Pearse illustrated no fewer than 76 serials (his nearest rival for Gordon Browne with 22!) and countless short stories and articles. His connection with the "BOP" began even before the paper

existed, for he submitted a pictorial design to adorn the front cover of the 1st issue. It was while "The Adventures of a Three-Guinea Watch" was running through the early portion of the 3rd volume that his first drawings began to appear regularly. They were done for Reed's short story about Parkhurst School, "The Battle of Parkhurst Heath." Later he illustrated several of Reed's famous serials. In 1901 he was appointed Special Artist of "The Sphere" and accompanied the Duke and Duchess of York (later King and Queen) on their tour throughout the British Empire. He served in the New Zealand 1st Brigade during the Great War and did many sketches at the Front while under fire. Illustrated his last serial in 1917 - but was still drawing for the paper in 1923, and celebrating 45 years with the "BOP"!

EDWARD WHYMPER: Did many illustrations for the first few volumes of the "BOP", and also contributed an account of his Alpine adventures to Volume One. Whympers was, of course, a great mountaineer and the most famous climber of his generation.

STANLEY L. WOOD: He became famous for his original drawings of 'Captain Kettle', the fiery little sea-captain created by C. J. Cutcliffe-Hyne and featured in several books and magazine stories. Illustrated many stories in "BOP" and "Chums," as well as other papers. Had a tough, adventurous life himself and in his younger days lived for years in the plains of Western America. He camped, rode and worked in the cattle districts of Southern Texas and Southern California, and virtually lived the life of a cowboy. All his rifles, pistols, saddles, cartridge-belts, horses, etc. were drawn from the real thing.

R. CATON WOODVILLE: Born in 1858. From the moment he exhibited his first painting, "Frederick the Great on the Eve of the Battle of Leuthen," at the Royal Academy, he never looked back. Queen Victoria bought several of his paintings and some of them hung on the walls at Windsor and Balmoral Castles. He was responsible for the design which decorated the binding of the yearly "BOP" Annual for many years. He illustrated several serials and short stories in "BOP", including Arthur Conan Doyle's only serial "Uncle Jeremy's Household."

WANTED: Holiday Annual 1922, 1934-1941; School Friend 1919-1920; School Friend Annuals; Schoolgirls' Own Annuals; Schoolgirls' Own Library, 1st series; Early Boys' Cinema.

LACK, 4, RUSHMERE ROAD, NORTHAMPTON.

NELSON LEES WANTED O.S. 114, 121, 123, 128, O.S. 136, 137, 139, O.S. 143, 144, 145, 146.

JOHN GUNN, QUEENS HEAD HOTEL, MATLOCK, DERBYSHIRE.

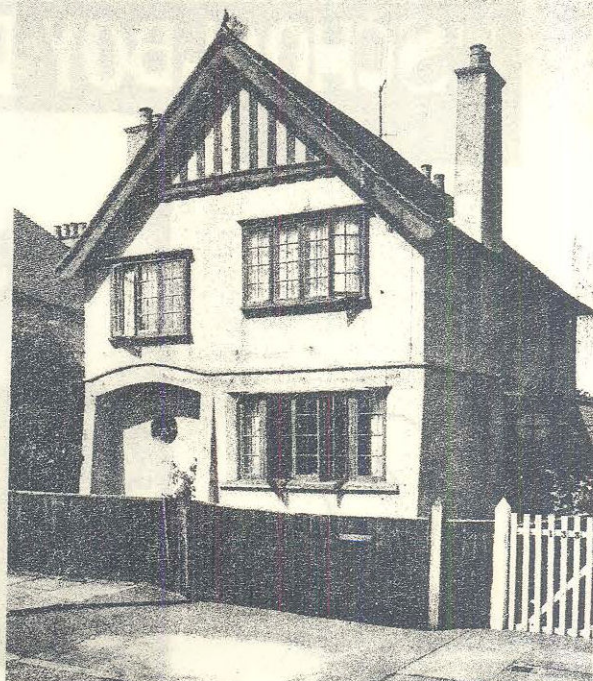
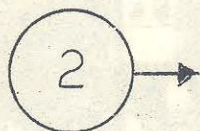
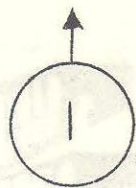
The Thriller, Detective Weekly, S.B.Ls., C.D. Annual 1948, S.P.C. 1-50, Captain Vols. 27, 31, 35, 45 and 50. WANTED:

R. GUEST, FLAT 7A, 72 WESTWOOD HILL, LONDON, S.E.26. (SYD. 7911)

WANTED: Sexton Blake Lib. 3rd Series 1, 2, 8, 12, 13, 18, 24, 26, 73, 83, 85, 156; Champions containing Colwyn Dane Stories.

D. NEWMAN, 13, LONGCROFT LANE, WELWYN GARDEN CITY, HERTS.

MEMORY LANE



SOWING THE SEEDS OF REBELLION—SEE THIS WEEK'S ST. FRANK'S STORY!

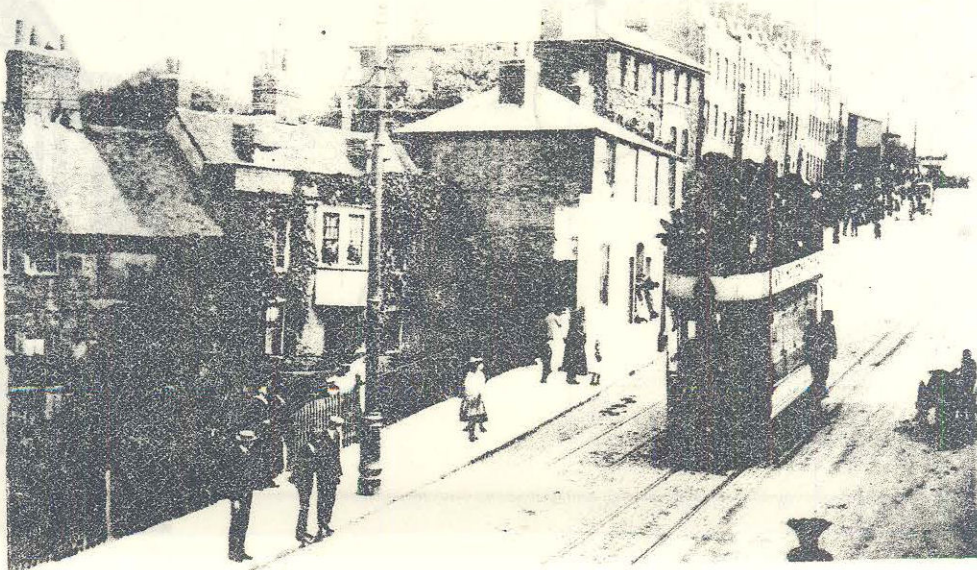
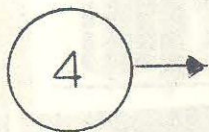
THE NELSON LEE 2nd



Handy's heart nearly stopped beating at the shock of what he saw.

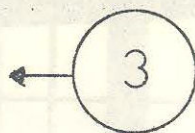
THE SCHOOLBOY DESPOT!

No. 555.



MEMORY

LANE



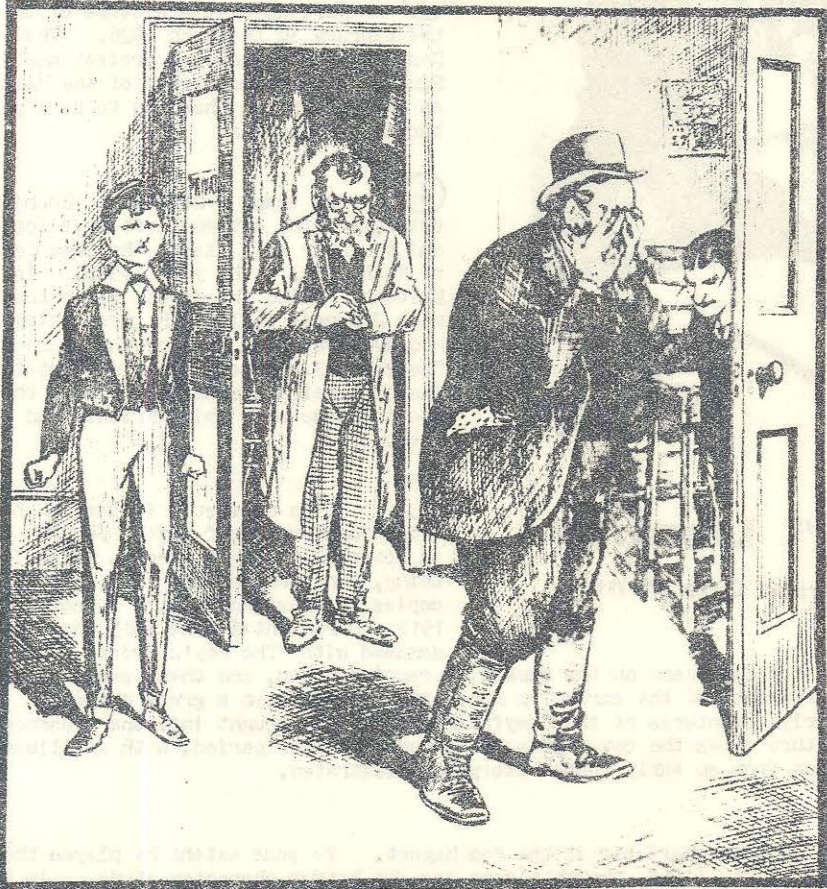
MEMORY LANE

SAVING HIS CHUM!

A Magnificent Long Complete School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars

The Dreadnought ^{1st}

Published Every Thursday. No. 144 WITH WHICH IS AMALGAMATED "THE BOYS' JOURNAL" Vol. 6. Week Ending Feb. 27th, 1915.



← 5

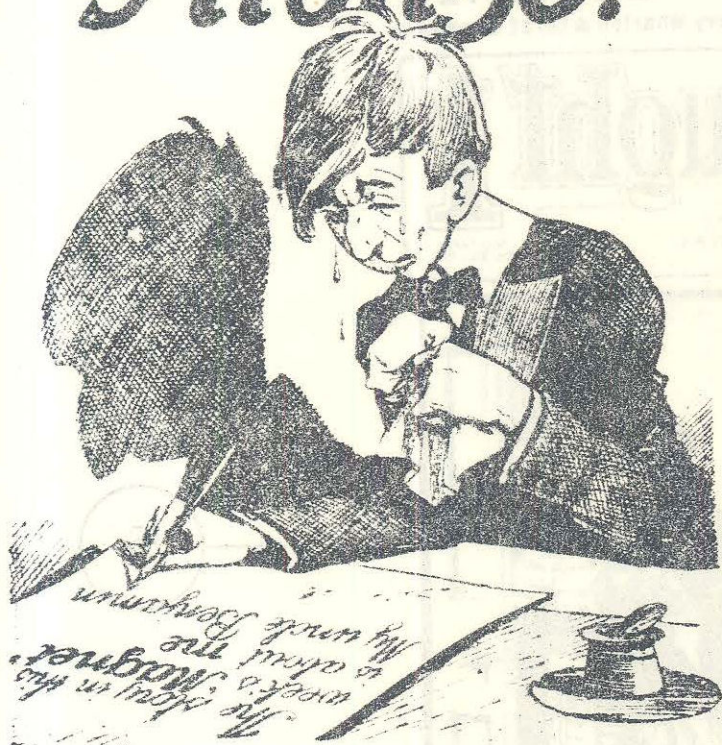
IN THE MONEYLENDER'S GRASP!

A Dramatic Incident in the Magnificent Long, Complete School Tale Continued in this Issue.

MEMORY LANE

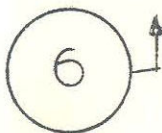
You must not miss meeting

Alonzo!



"The Magnet" Library.

Now on Sale. Price One Penny.



1912 "The Penny Popular" came on the market, a reprint paper, and there seems little doubt that the representation of the early Tom Merry stories had been a great success. As a result of this, the early adventures of the Greyfriars chum were brought into the Dreadnought in 1913. Our picture shows the cover of a Dreadnought of this period, with an illustration by Mr. C. H. Chapman from an early Magnet story as illustrated.

⑥ Alonzo Todd was a very popular character in the Red Magnet. To some extent he played the role of Greyfriars which Skimpole filled at St. Jim's, though Alonzo was the better character study. In later years he seemed to leave Greyfriars for long periods, and for some years towards the end of Magnet history he had disappeared completely, which was a pity. Alonzo always roused great fun for the reader. The finest character study of him was in the far-fetched but extremely enjoyable Strong Alonzo series, in which his strength turned him into a narrow and tyrannical reformer.

① This is a picture of Frank Richards' study - his "Den" he may well have called it. It was in this room that most of his greatest stories were written. It was a jealously-guarded sanctum, and it was almost unknown for any visitor to be allowed to enter it.

② A scene well known to readers who visited Frank Richards - the exterior of Rose Lawn, the famous author's home at Kingsgate in Kent.

③ Here we have a picture of the Nelson Lee Library in the year 1926. The Schoolboy Despot was a tyrannical prefect named Guy Sinclair, the Housemaster of the West House. An early story in what was to be a popular barring-out series.

④ The scene - Star Hill, Rochester. The cottages on the extreme left have long vanished, and on their site stands the huge Gaumont Theatre of Rochester. The year, 1908. In 1908 Britannia ruled the waves. The tram is packed with Japanese sailors who were being shown the Medway Towns by a trip on the tramcar "special." The young Japanese sailors were stationed in Chatham, being taught how to sail the ships of the Japanese navy which Britain had built for them.

⑤ It is difficult to decide whether the Dreadnought was ever a very popular paper. It is now widely sought to-day, which is a good thing, for there do not seem to be a great many copies in existence now. It commenced in March 1912 and ran until June 1915 when it was amalgamated with "The Boy's Friend." In October of



THE BUNTERS AT HOME

By Roger M. Jenkins

Part 1 - The Bunter Children

The whole of the Bunter family is removed at least one stage beyond reality. This is in itself rather a strange circumstance, since Charles Hamilton's characterisation was, generally speaking, superb. He created a range of finely differentiated characters possibly, as George Orwell claimed, so that each reader could find at least one with which to identify himself. Yet Billy Bunter, Charles Hamilton's most famous character, is about the last person any one would wish to claim kindred with, and is also the grossest character of them all (in traits as well as size): the subtle touches that distinguish the others are entirely lacking here. Bunter surprises and amuses us with his audacity, his misfortunes and his successes. Yet we never stop to think how out of place he really is.

In his early days Bunter was nothing but a silly, half-blind schoolboy, a character as credible as any of his form-fellows, but it was not long before he began to become more exaggerated. The explanation of this is to be found in a letter which Charles Hamilton wrote to me ten years ago:-

"Here it is, straight from the horse's mouth! Billy Bunter was first evolved about 1898 or 1899, as I think I have mentioned in my autobiography. No, not as a minor character, but as one to be developed according to circumstances: or rather, left to develop himself. Poor old Bunter might have been rolling down the Remove passage while the Boer War was going on, had the editor of the time seen differently. But he had to wait for years, when at length I sort of smuggled him into the Magnet, where he had a chance to grow - and did! 'Planning' never comes into this kind of thing: if you 'plan' a character I think you will end up by producing something like nothing on earth. He just grows, like Topsy. All that the author has to do is to give him his head!"

Dickens had had experience of characters getting out of hand, especially his grotesques like Mrs. Gamp and Mr. Micawber who seem to be so differently constituted from his more restrained ones. But Dickens' later novels have none of these really eccentric characters whereas, of course, Bunter was a fixture at Greyfriars to the end. This blending of reality and unreality was skilfully done, but one has only to compare the behaviour of Mr. Quelch in, say, the Stacey series (Magnets 1422-33) with his behaviour in the Bunter the Runaway series (Nos. 737-9) to spot the difference: in the first one, Mr. Quelch is a character of high drama, whereas in the other he is approaching a caricature out of a comic strip. There are merits in each series, but this kind of antithesis is to be observed throughout the Magnet, and it is Bunter who is responsible.

Sammy Bunter is, if anything, more in touch with reality than is his elder brother. On the very day that he arrived at Greyfriars (Magnet 144), he showed the clearer understanding, the greater perspicacity:-

"I shall return it to you out of some of my postal-orders if I do not get the loans back from Wharton and the others."

"Oh, chuck it! That kind of yarn's no good in the family, you ass!" growled Bunter minor.

Billy Bunter rubbed his nose thoughtfully. It occurred to him that Sammy was right on this point. But humbug was so ingrained in Billy Bunter's nature that to part with it would be like parting with a bit of himself.

Sammy is too spry to allow himself to indulge in flights of fancy like his brother. In the renowned Bunter Court series Sammy was quite willing to share the benefits of the swindle but he left quite suddenly when events took an awkward turn. As a consequence, Sammy is not so unbelievable a character as Billy, but he is also clearly presented to us without a grain of sympathy: towards the end of the 'twenties Charles Hamilton showed quite a deal of affection for Billy Bunter, but Sammy was always detestable.

Bessie Bunter made her first appearance in the School Friend, the first six numbers of which were written by Charles Hamilton. She is nearer to Billy in age, but closer to Sammy in outlook. The first Magnet reference to her is in No. 651, in which Billy dressed up as Bessie in order to secure admission to a feed. Bessie's appearances in the pages of the Magnet were usually fleeting: she seldom played any part in the plot, and was just an unwelcome companion to Marjorie and Clara. Billy and Bessie are usually more entertaining when referring to each other in absentia: Billy when offering to put in a good word with Bessie on behalf of one of the juniors (in the mistaken belief that this commendation would earn him the favour demanded), and Bessie when threatening a boy that she would get her brother Billy to thrash him for his misdeeds. Bessie is like her two brothers - she is literally and metaphorically short-sighted at times.

Part 2 - The Adult Bunters

Mrs. Bunter is a somewhat shadowy figure who never puts in an appearance at Greyfriars: even letter writing is something she leaves to her husband. But Mr. Bunter more than makes up for his wife's reticence. He is mentioned fairly regularly in the Magnet, the first occasion of any importance being in No. 366 when he pulled off a handsome deal on the Stock Exchange and sent his eldest son four fivers. This horn of plenty soon ran dry, but the episode was long remembered and often lent credence to some of Bunter's later boasts. Skinner, for example, referred to this event in "Chequemate" (1929 Holiday Annual) when Bunter received a cheque for fifty pounds from his father. It turned out that the cheque was only to be shown around, and then returned, so that Mr. Bunter's eldest son could keep up appearances.

Mr. Bunter's vanity led him astray more than once. A famous occasion was No. 474 entitled "Viscount Bunter". He was convinced that he could lay claim to an extinct earldom - all that was needed was to pay the expenses of an investigation. He even put in an appearance at Greyfriars on this occasion, whereas in No. 897, when history repeated itself, the closest we come to him is in correspondence:-

"There was a Sir William de Bonterre who fought for King Charles," said the Owl of the Remove. "There's a lot about him in this book, sir. Of course, we always knew we were descended from a distinguished family. We're connected with many titled people - "

"What?"

"And, according to what the man told my pater, sir, the connection of the Bunters with the de Bonterres could be worked out quite easily. It's only a question of paying the necessary fees for the investigation."

Mr. Quelch opened his lips and closed them again. He did not desire to state to Mr. Bunter's son what he thought of Mr. Bunter's absurdity. If the fat

stockbroker chose to believe that he was of knightly descent, and to pay away cash to some unscrupulous adventurer for inventing a pedigree for him, that was Mr. William Bunter's own business.

Bunter was blessed with many aunts and uncles. There was, for instance, Aunt Peggy whose remittance he failed to share with Sammy on the day his younger brother first came to Greyfriars. There was also Aunt Amelia, who entertained some of the Bunter tribe for Christmas in 1939. But the astute one was Aunt Martha who was asked to have the young Bunters for Christmas in 1933: she firmly stipulated that, if Bessie came, it was only on the strict understanding that neither of Bessie's brothers accompanied her.



A new picture of Billy Bunter, specially drawn for Collectors' Digest Annual by C. H. Chapman.

The most famous of the Bunter uncles was Mr. George Bunter who was reputed to be very rich. Bunter had been named after him, and had great hopes of a valuable Christmas present from him in No. 1036: it turned out to be a copy of "The Christmas Carol" :-

"There was some delay in obtaining the book," said Mr. George Bunter. "I did not care to pay two shillings for so small a volume; but after some delay I discovered a shilling edition."

Bunter gasped.

Uncle George went on to elaborate his reasons for choosing this book:-

"You are doubtless aware, William, that you are absolutely selfish -"

"Wha-a-at?"

"That you never give a thought to others -"

"I-I say -"

"That you disgust your relatives by a base and undivided attention to your own selfish interest -"

Uncle George was also a disappointment in No. 1139, when he was ill and staying at a seedy boarding-house in Folkestone. Mr. Bunter suggested that his eldest son should pay a surprise visit to the invalid, but it was Bunter who had the surprise:-

"Mr. Bunter thanks you for calling to enquire after him, sir -"

"Show us up," said Bunter.

"But he does not feel well enough to see a visitor -"

"Eh?"

"And he advises you -"

"What?"

"To return to your school without delay -"

"Oh!"

"As it is so late. That is all, sir," said the hall-porter politely.

Uncle George was convalescing in Mentone on the Riviera in No. 1159, from whence he sent Bunter an ironic letter congratulating him on the progress in his studies and promising a handsome tip if he won a prize for Latin verses. Bunter was artful, but not artful enough, and Uncle George was never called upon to honour his promise.

If Mr. George Bunter had heard nothing about his eldest nephew to please him so far, he came to hear something which quite definitely displeased him in No. 1349, something which must have quite blighted Bunter's chances of being made his uncle's heir. This sad rift in the lute came in 1933, at Christmas time, when Billy and Sammy were farmed out to Uncle George when Bunter villa was closed down for the holidays. He was not the type of uncle that liked to see his nephews enjoying their food, and objected most strongly when the cook told him that cakes and puddings and cold fowls were missing from the pantry. In an effort to find better quarters, Bunter telephoned Wharton Lodge to inform Harry that he was prepared to put up with his fat-headed old fossil of an uncle over the holidays. Unfortunately it was Colonel Wharton who answered the telephone, and the desired invitation was not forthcoming. As he put down the receiver, Billy remarked peevishly to Sammy that he supposed he would have to put up with the stingy old codger after all. Unluckily, Uncle George happened to enter the room just at that moment, and Bunter was given notice to quit. His great expectations were finally shattered.

Part 3 - Home Sweet Home

Even when taken one or two at a time, the Bunters are overwhelming: when they are all gathered together en masse at Bunter Villa in Reigate, the result is pure farce. Charles Hamilton's puckish sense of humour takes wings and flies away on its own, as it does so magnificently in Magnet No. 1019:-

The poet has told us that 'tis distance lends enchantment to the view. Certainly that was the case with Bunter Court.

Generally a building seems small in the distance, and grows larger the nearer one approaches to it.

In the case of Bunter Court this well-known natural law was reversed.

Bunter Court loomed as a large and imposing mansion from the distance of Greyfriars. Close at hand, it diminished remarkably into the moderate dimensions of a villa in Surrey.

Five or six Rolls Royce cars woke the echoes of the wide domain of the Bunters when Billy was at Greyfriars. When he was at home, a single Ford spread its scent of petrol over the whole place, and did not have to spread it very far.

Bunter's dealings with his family in this number of the Magnet shed a revealing light on holiday life at Bunter Villa:-

There was trouble at home for William George, too. He owed Bessie five shillings. Five shillings was not a large sum; but if it had been five hundred thousand pounds, Bessie Bunter could scarcely have dwelt on the subject with more eloquence. In season and out of season, Elizabeth Bunter dwelt on that topic tirelessly. Bessie was, in Billy's opinion, a cat. Bessie's opinion of Billy could not be expressed so laconically. Her vocabulary on the subject was very extensive indeed. Only on one subject could Billy and Bessie agree. That was the subject of Sammy. They heartily agreed that Sammy was a little beast.

Bunter had approached Sammy for a loan and, annoyed at being refused, he banged his head on the fence. His final approach was to his father:-

"I'm afraid you'll miss me a lot, dad, if I'm away practically the whole of the vacation."

"Why should you suppose so?" asked Mr. Bunter in surprise.

"Oh!"

"You need be afraid of nothing of the sort!"

"I-I think perhaps I'd better do some shopping in Southampton, dad," he stammered. "Things for a voyage, you know."

"Quite a good idea."

"Twenty pounds would see me through," said Bunter hopefully.

"Very good. If you possess such a sum, there is no objection to your expending it on an outfit."

"Oh!"

"Now, please do not interrupt me further."

Of course, there was a sting in the tail. As Billy was leaving, his sister came running after him:-

Bunter smiled. At the moment of parting Elizabeth Bunter seemed to realise what a nice brother he was, and wanted to say good-bye - perhaps to hand him a cake or a packet of toffee for the train. Bunter's fat face was quite genial as Bessie rolled up.

"You're going away?" gasped Bessie.

"Yes."

"Not coming back?"

"N-n-no!"

"Well, then, that five shillings -"

"Wh-a-at?"

"That five shillings -" gasped Bessie Bunter.

William George Bunter stared at her. His geniality vanished. It was not to say an affectionate farewell that Bessie had hastened after him - it was not to give him a packet of toffee to eat in the train. It was to raise, once more, that old, distasteful question of the five shillings.

As a study in heartlessness, a complete and callous disregard for each other's

feelings, these episodes from Magnet No. 1019 could hardly be excelled. The whole Bunter family seems to exemplify the psychiatric notion that those people who are unloved find consolation in eating. It is episodes like these that have led one recent critic to declare that Charles Hamilton must have hated Bunter; but this is a false conclusion. Of course, if Wharton or Nugent or Cherry had been treated with callous indifference by his close relatives, it would have been a dramatic story indeed, but then these are all credible characters. When you have characters that are almost incredible, then normal standards must go by the board. We are intended to enjoy Bunter, even to hope that he will be successful in his outrageous escapades, but we are never intended to feel sorry for him: even when he is wronged, as in the Carter series (where hilarity is the keynote), the only re-action the reader is expected to have is a feeling that he richly deserves practically anything that comes his way. So it is that the Bunter episodes in the Magnet are on a completely different plane from all the others. As soon as one of the Bunters is mentioned, we depart from normality and enter the realms of irony and satire.

If any one doubts this, it is only necessary to consider some parallel series to prove the point. Compare, for instance, the dramatic Wharton the rebel series (879-888) with the hilarious expulsion of Bunter series (874-7); compare the serious snobbery of de Vere (749-752) with the fatuous snobbery of the Bunter Court series (910-917); see how serious were the effects of da Costa's plots against Harry Wharton (1059-1067) and how amusing were the effects of Carter's plots against Bunter (1561-1572); think how sorry we are supposed to feel for Colonel Wharton when he was temporarily financially embarrassed (1255-1261), and how we laugh at Mr. Bunter when the same unfortunate thing happened to him (1349). The Bunter version of each theme seems like a farcical parody of the other version. Walpole said that life was a comedy to those who think but a tragedy to those who feel: certainly we feel for Wharton and we think about Bunter. It is also true that tragedies appear to be comedies only when they feature characters who are slightly unreal.

There was, of course, one person at Bunter Villa who seemed to have some spark of natural feeling, and that was Mrs. Bunter. As natural feelings are so out of place at Bunter Villa, we do not see much of her. It is, however, on record that she used to give William an affectionate hug when he left and also provided him with food for his journey. It is also on record, in Magnet 1532, that Bunter utilised an unexpected windfall to provide his mother with a holiday in Bournemouth when she was ill. But these moments of tender affection are, really, false coinage in the Bunter clan: Bunter out of character is not Bunter at all. So when he reforms under the influence of Cora Quelch in Nos. 364 and 460, when he saves the gipsy child in 1016, and when he becomes benevolent in No. 1036, he is acting out of character: in fact, any time when he ceases to be selfish he also ceases to be the Bunter who rightly earned his creator such world-wide renown, and he becomes just a good-natured fat boy like Fatty Wynn. The collector who likes Bunter when he seems to have reformed is the collector who does not really like the true Bunter at all, and he had far better transfer his allegiance from Greyfriars to St. Jim's. Of course, Bunter does not star in every Magnet story, even though he features in most. But he is an inescapable part of the Greyfriars scene, and no one can honestly claim to like the Greyfriars stories if he fails to find amusement in Bunter.

Dickens was not the only author to combine eccentric characters with credible ones: Shakespeare, for example, featured Falstaff and Prince Henry in the same play. The relationship between Bunter and the Famous Five must be regarded in the same light, as a bridge between farce and true drama, be it comedy or tragedy. Only a

(continued on page 82)...

The Life of PICTURES and THE ~ PICTUREGOER

by
Thomas
Arnold
Johnson
* * *

It may seem odd to include the history of a film magazine in Collectors Digest which is primarily intended for Old Boys' Book news, but I feel sure that its inclusion IS merited because of the fact that so many youngsters DID purchase this film magazine regularly every week during that truly wonderful period of the silent cinema.

Here then, is a brief history of a famous magazine, one of the very first British periodicals to deal with the cinema.

PICTURES commenced when the movies were young in 1911, and continued to appear on the bookstalls in various guises until April 23rd, 1960.

It was, as stated on the cover, "an illustrated weekly magazine of fiction for lovers of Moving Pictures" price one penny. Its chief aim was to advertise films issued by some of the early film companies such as Kalem, Lubin and others, and was published by The Picture Publishing Company, 88 Wardour Street, London. The first issue was dated October 21st, 1911, and contained stories of various film productions, with illustrations from the film itself, the pink and white, (later green and white), covers depicting a thrilling scene from one of the stories within. Volume I Number I had for its cover illustration a gallows scene from the film RORY O'MORE (Kalem). Other stories in this first issue were THE BRAHMA DIAMOND, THE VILLAGE HERO, WHEN THE SUN WENT OUT and others. Later on, actual portraits of the stars appeared on the cover and within, together with items of film interest and gossip. There was also an ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS column.

The first issue consisted of 16 pages only but after a few weeks the magazine was enlarged, first to 22 pages, then 24, and later, for number 43, it was enlarged to 32 pages; a healthy sign that all was well.

The covers had by this time introduced another colour - purple and white. With the appearance of Volume 5 the paper seemed to be losing its grips, and the 1913 Christmas number (No. 115) was a poor affair altogether, and indeed it was easy to see that the paper was in difficulties, and something was about to happen. Inside pages became coloured, reproductions were not up to the usual standard, printing was poor, pages were reduced to 22 and with number 122 and 123 it was announced that the paper had been acquired by another weekly entitled THE PICTUREGOER, which had commenced only on October 11th, 1913, published by Odhams. (I have never been able to find one solitary copy of this paper during its short run of 18 issues before the amalgamation with Pictures.)

The two papers became one with the issue dated February 21st, 1914, (Volume 6 No. 1 new series) but both titles were retained, PICTURES & THE PICTUREGOER. I believe the word PICTURES was used, so that if the paper ceased to flourish, it could be turned into a penny illustrated paper of the usual news type. The paper did, however, flourish in a big way, and became the best known British Film magazine on the market. There had previously been an Illustrated Films Monthly 1913 to 1915

but it was short lived and was killed by the 1914 war.

Volume 7 of our paper had pale mauve covers with blue lettering, and although the name remained the same, a side panel read "The War Picture Weekly. All the latest and best photographs." It once more looked as if it was on the way out as a film magazine, and was about to become a War periodical. The front covers no longer depicted film stars portraits, but Generals and others connected with the War, such as Winston Churchill, Tzar of Russia, Sir John French, Admiral Jellicoe, General Joffre.

The frontispiece consisted of photographs of war leaders, articles on the war appeared in each issue, and a special 8-page supplement consisting of war pictures taken on the battlefield, in the air, and at sea, were included in the first 9 issues of this volume.

With the issue dated October 3rd, 1914, the cover became pale blue with dark blue lettering, and issue number 36, October 24th, once more concentrated upon film star portraits; the war leaders disappeared, as did also the war supplement. The Picture Theatre Weekly heading was reinstated, at first in the side panel and then once more beneath the main title. The change over was due to complaints from readers who thought that the war pictures were taking precedence over the film content. With number 39, the blue covers concluded, and an ugly grey with black lettering took their place. Number 44, however, was a Xmas issue and the lettering was changed, for this one copy, to red.

Volume 7 concluded with number 58 dated March 27th, 1915, and the format remained the same until volume 12, which contained only 12 copies, March 24th, 1917 to June 16th, 1917 (No. 174.). Volume 13 had larger pages, and this size remained for the next few volumes, (Vol. 13 to Vol. 20).

More variety was displayed when, in Volume 17, number 290, dated September 6th, 1919, brilliantly coloured covers appeared each week, yellow, purple, green, etc. The title was slightly altered to PICTURES & PICTUREGOER, "the" being omitted. The coloured covers continued until the 1st issue of Volume 18, Number 307, dated January 3rd, 1920, and became blue and white once more. Plain black and white covers came with No. 322 and the title was changed to PICTURES FOR THE PICTUREGOER for some unknown reason, the portrait covers being, for a few weeks, sketches by Ginsbury.

Number 330 brought about a great change, for the covers became photogravure, and magnificent double page photogravure supplements were introduced each week, the centre pages of it being devoted to very fine portraits of all the leading stars of the period, the first being Constance Talmadge. These fine art plates continued to the end of Volume 20's last issue No. 384 (dated June 25th, 1921), and the FIRST issue of Volume 21 (Number 385). This volume consisted of only 9 issues and after the first number the photogravure covers ceased, although the art supplements continued in each issue. Nine numbers only (385 dated July 2nd, 1921 to 393 dated August 27th, 1921) in this slender volume, and then an announcement that "from Monday next every issue of Pictures will be printed entirely in TWO COLOUR PHOTOGRAVURE and will consist of 32 pages for 2d, and so with issue number 394 a new volume (22) commenced, and the size of the magazine was much reduced in a handy pocket edition similar to Home Chat and Home Notes.

Number 412 dated January 7th, 1922, commenced Volume 23 and ran for 3 issues only (numbers 412, 413 and 414), for in the last copy appeared yet another important announcement that "January 20th will be a joy day for Picturegoers, for on that day the first issue of the NEW PICTURES, THE SCREEN MAGAZINE will be published."

DECEMBER 27, 1912

Pictures

Picturegoer 2^d



MARY PICKFORD

The NEW PICTURES will be a 1/- monthly de luxe, printed in photogravure in 4 colours, and all the features that have made PICTURES so popular in the past will be retained."

February 1st saw Number ONE of Volume 24 (Number 415), its size enlarged once more to normal and containing 62 pages of stories from the films with scenes illustrating them. A magnificent affair. How long would this last? Unfortunately not very long, for after 7 issues only the following announcement appeared in the August copy, "The next issue of PICTURES will be incorporated with the August number of PICTUREGOER MONTHLY our companion Movie Monthly price 1/-." PICTUREGOER MONTHLY had commenced in JANUARY 1921, and continued unrivalled as a great and beautifully produced film magazine until May 1931, when once more it became a weekly with the issue dated May 31st, 1931. The announcement of this change over read as follows:-

Important notice to Picturegoer readers. From Friday, May 29th the Picturegoer will be published weekly price 2d. It HAD to come. It was as inevitable as the passing

of the silent film, as logical as the talkie. No wonder that the time has arrived to launch a new kind of film paper to keep pace with the new order of things. etc. etc."

During the war the number of pages were reduced and it appeared only fortnightly from September 6th, 1941, to July 2nd, 1949. During the later 50's it deteriorated into a teenage magazine devoted to T.V., Pop singers, records and the like. It had little or no resemblance to the fine magazine it had been in its earlier years.

Picture Show suffered in a similar way. This paper commenced on May 3rd, 1919, and after the war went rapidly down hill until the end on December 31st, 1960.

I think readers will agree that very few magazines had such a varied career as PICTURES & THE PICTUREGOER.

Footnote:

It is interesting to note that the covers of Picturegoer Monthly for July, August and September 1925, read "Picturegoer & Theatre Monthly" although the headings of each page within still retained the word PICTURES. In October 1925, the headings to each page had "Theatre Monthly" added to Picturegoer, the word PICTURES being omitted altogether. With the November issue 1925, both Pictures and Theatre were dropped from the title, and it became known as PICTUREGOER Monthly once more as in 1921 when it started.

Important Dates in the Life of PICTURES & THE PICTUREGOER

Pictures first issue dated October 21st, 1911.

Picturegoer Weekly, first issue October 11th, 1913.

Pictures & The Picturegoer amalgamated February 14th, 1914.

Picturegoer Monthly, first issue January 1921.

" " last issue May 1931.

Double page art supplements commenced June 12th, 1920.

Small all photogravure issues commenced September 3rd, 1921 and ended

January 21st, 1922. (21 issues).

PICTURES Monthly commenced February, 1922.

Pictures and Picturegoer Monthlies amalgamated in August, 1922.

Picturegoer Weekly (new series) commenced May 31st, 1931, ended April 23rd,

1960.

All volumes from Number one to 20 contained the usual number of issues with the exception of Volume 12 which contained only 12 issues. Volume 21 - 9 issues only, Volume 22 - 18 issues only, Volume 23 - 3 issues only, Volume 24 - 7 issues only.

Other known cinema magazines appearing at this period were:-

ILLUSTRATED FILMS MONTHLY - Published by F. F. W. Oldfield & Co., Camberwell.

Volume 1. - September 1913 to February 1914, Volume 2. - March 1914 to August 1914,

Volume 3. - September 1914 to February 1915. For the latter Volume the title was altered to PICTURE STORIES MAGAZINE.

CINEMA CHAT, Number 1, May 26th, 1919 to Number 67, August 30th, 1920.

Cinema Chat & Home News No. 68, September 6th, 1920.

Home News & Cinema Chat No. 70, September 20th, 1920. (Film items becoming less.)

HOME NEWS No. 74, October 18th, 1920 to No. 90. (Film interest practically nil.) This magazine towards the end, only had a few film items within. After 90 it became known as Dainty Novels & Home News. It was the size of Home Chat & Home Notes. A feature of this paper was that each week it presented free a postcard photo of a film star.

Cinegoer 1916 issued by Pathe. Did not have a very long life.

Trade Magazines included Bioscope Kine Weekly, Transatlantic Review 1913 onwards issued by Universal Film Co. etc. Others appeared later but there are enough to form another article if readers are at all interested.

* * * * *

THE BUNTERS AT HOME (continued from page 78)...

gifted author can synthesise almost incompatible elements into an acceptable whole. That is the measure of Charles Hamilton's true greatness: not so much that he created Bunter but that he contrived to place such a character in a believable setting.

* * * * *

WANTED: "Chums", 1910, 1911, 1912, 1913, 1915; "Captain", Volumes 47 and 49; pre-1934 "Magnets" (preferably bound or in long runs); pre-war "Hotspurs", "Film Funs", "Film Fun Annuals" and hard-backed editions in pictorial bindings and spines of school stories by Cleaver, Hadath, Bird, Havilton, Bell, etc. Also any bound copies of "Strand Magazine" after Volume 34 (1908).

BRIAN DOYLE, 14a, CLARENDON DRIVE, PUTNEY, LONDON, S.W.15.

(please note new address).

.....

by
Arthur
Harris

COMIC CUTS

by
Arthur
Harris

A new era dawned upon the comic paper world when, on May 17th, 1890, the firm of Harmsworth sent out the first number of "Comic Cuts" at the price of one halfpenny - a price that caused a mild boycott from the newsagents of the day who naturally thought they wouldn't be getting much out of so small a price. Hitherto comic papers had been one penny. It continued undaunted, however, in spite of this and its life did not end until 1953.

From its commencement it was an immediate success and at a halfpenny became within reach of a far larger number of people. Prominent people of the day even took an interest in it and it is recorded that Gladstone, the Prime Minister, was one of its ardent supporters and could often be seen about the grounds of his home at Hawarden with "Comic Cuts" in his hand. Then when it was but twelve weeks old we read that it was seen in the House of Commons. There it was in the hands of that eminent scientist Sir Lyon Playfair, ex-postmaster-general and formerly Deputy Speaker of the House of Commons.

"Comic Cuts" had no special stories for some time nor any settled comic characters. Its first short serial story, however, commenced in November 1890 and was called "The Adventures of a Gentleman Cadger." February 1891 saw the commencement of "The Legend of Ivy Towers" by James Wood. One-page stories appeared until May when another serial called "The Finger of Fate" by Sir Gilbert Campbell, Bart., which was the commencement of longer serials. This was followed by "Through Hidden Dangers" by Robert Leighton in July. Towards the end of August, James Wood, who wrote the first serial, contributed another called "Mortimer Danecourt," and in December "In the Eye of the Law" by Fred M. White which ran until April 1892 when another long serial called "The Cotton King" by Robert Leighton took its place and ran until the August when it was followed by one called "Missing - £10,000 Reward."

ONE HALFPENNY. PICTURES, PRIZES, JOKES. ONE HALFPENNY.

1d. Comic Cuts 1d.



By 1894 better known authors commenced serial stories and one of these that year was "The Chief Torturer" by Henry T. Johnson and "Mysteries of the Thames" the author of which was not named. Neither was he named for the chief serial of 1896 "The Blue Room Mystery" but the same author followed with another called "On His Track" towards the end of that year.

In 1897 the firm gave readers a surprise in the form of coloured issues - the first that had appeared. They were the Spring Number on March 27th; another on May 5th; Diamond Jubilee of the Queen, June 19th; September 4th issue and Christmas Issue on December 4th.

On February 27th, 1897 appeared the first standing characters. They were Chokey Bill and the Area Sneaker, and were drawn by Frank Holland.

The chief serial of 1897 was "Three Jolly Britons" by Henry T. Johnson followed by "Lost in London Town" by C. E. Pierce; the Christmas Issue that year saw the commencement of a serial by Charles Langton called "Dungeon Deep," and he followed this with one called "Starvation Joe" in 1898. Then came "The Hand with the Flaming Torch" by Henry Farmer in October.

On December 24th a new comic series commenced on the front page in the appearance of Crusoe. Chokey Bill continued on the back page. Crusoe was joined by Man Friday and a baby elephant. This series was drawn by Tom Brown. Later, Jenner took over and, later still, Phillip Swinnerton who continued to draw them until they finished.

In March 1899 the serial "A Human Panther" commenced but no author was given. This was followed in May by "For Guilty Gold" by Colin Collins. In the meantime Crusoe and Man Friday, the front page stars, had been joined by the Fat Bo'sun and Chokey Bill had departed.

The 1904 serial was "The Mystery of Number 13" with again no author named.

1905 saw the appearance of Lucky Lucas and Happy Harry (the latter a copy of Happy Ike of other papers) as back page comic characters with the inside featuring the serials called "The Hawks of London" and "Foul Play." No author was named for either. August saw the commencement of "The Mystery of the Red Room" and "The Scarlet Butterfly."

1906 serial was "The Road to Fortune!" This was followed by "The Book with the Silver Clasp" and "King of the Waves." In May the Mulberry Flats, a new comic feature shared the front page with Crusoe.

The year 1907 saw the following serials "The Village Blacksmith," "The House of the Blue Flame" (by Hubert Trelawney), "Only a Factory Girl" and "The River Police." Of the comic characters, by April, Crusoe and Co. had departed after a run since 1899 of over 8 years, and in June, Happy Harry and Lucky Lucas finished.

In 1908 the serials were "Slaves of the Red Rock" and "99999" and in 1909 "The Work Girl." 1911 saw "The Red Rovers" and "Behind a Mask" as serial stories.

Of the comic characters in 1911 the Mulberry Flats were removed to the back page and a new feature called "Comic Cuts Colony" shared that page with them. The front page "star" was now Tom, the Ticket of Leave Man.

"Tic o' Midnight" and "Queer Street" were the serials of 1912 with "Thumbs Up" appearing in 1914.

No change took place in the chief characters between 1911 and 1914, Tom, the Ticket of Leave Man, Mulberry Flats and Comic Cuts Colony all enjoying a four years' run.

* * * * *

WANTED: Early Hotspurs. DISPOSAL: S.P.C. Nos. 36-53.

MATHESON, I.C. AIRPORT, WICK, CAITHNESS.

WANTED: Rangers containing series or G. Rochester serial "The Scarlet Eagles" circa 1932. Chums (1914-15 year).

HUGHES, 33, FOUNDRY ROAD, WALL HEATH, BRIERLEY HILL, STAFFS.

In the monthly COLLECTORS' DIGEST the sensation of the year 1962 has been DANNY'S DIARY. At the request of large numbers of readers we have selected some of the festive entries which Danny made in his Diary for the year 1912.



DANNY'S

I love Christmas, of course, but almost more, I think, I love preparing for Christmas. It's wonderful to see all the shops decorated, and the blazing electric lights, and the crowds of people carrying stacks of parcels and holly and mistletoe. The worst of it is that when it's all over, everything seems so empty - so long to look forward to next Christmas - and Mum says it's wrong to look forward

to next Christmas as it's like wishing one's time away.

Mrs. Tucker's shop is near my home. It's a lovely little shop, and she sells almost everything. Corned beef - 4d a half-pound; pickles which we buy loose at 2d a basinful; syrup at 3d a jar - you take the jar with you. She has a lovely stock of sweets, too. All sorts of toffee at four ounces a penny. You have to buy a pennyworth to get the sweets in a bag. For less than a penny she does them up in little cones which she makes out of newspaper.

Mrs. Tucker's windows look lovely this Christmas. She has little bits of cotton-wool stuck all over the panes and on long threads of cotton hanging down. So you kind of look at the sweets as though through a snow storm, as it were. It's

fearfully attractive. Her shop smells so nice, too. It's lit by gas so it's not so bright as those in the town, but it still looks terrific after dark.

This Christmas Mrs. Tucker has a new sweet called Christmas Log. It's a kind of soft nuggit covered with icing, and she cuts it up with a sharp knife. It's rather expensive - two ounces a penny - but Mrs. Tucker lets the scales go down with a bang, so it's not too bad.

Early in December Mum made her Christmas puddings, and I helped her. It's always a great occasion in our house. Immediately after tea we went in the kitchen and I helped to wash the currants, and stone the raisins, and cut up the peel. I ate plenty, of course, but I think Mum had allowed for wastage. She kept saying "No more, Danny" and "You've had enough, Danny" but I couldn't resist them. Inside the peel there were large lumps of sugar, and I ate these too. Jessie, our maid, kept saying "I can't think where that boy puts it all," but I expect Mum knew.

She had a big earthenware basin, and in the end it was full of a most wonderful mixture. Everybody had a stir for luck, and then Mum scooped it into six big basins, and fastened them over with cloths, ready for boiling. I finished up the mixture out of the bowl, using Mum's big wooden spoon. It was most tasteful.

The next day Mum boiled the puddings in our big copper. All day long the boiling went on, and a beautiful steamy smell filled the whole house. Mum didn't take them out of the copper till quite late in the evening.

Mum has a quaint custom. She always keeps one pud for the following Christmas, so this year we shall be eating one which she made twelve months ago in 1911. You'd think it would go bad, but it never does. Mum puts a kind of beer called porter in the puddings, and that may help to keep them.

This year we're going away for Christmas, which doesn't please me much for I always like Christmas at home, but my grandmother is getting well-preserved so we're going to her for a day or two.

After the puddings were made the days passed quickly, and I broke up from school. Then it was a real rush and tear to get ready for Christmas. I was out every day, shopping for Mum and buying presents for the family. Dad gave me the money to buy something for Mum, and Mum gave me the money to buy something for Dad, and I asked both of them for some extra to buy a present for my brother Doug. Doug also gave me a bit to help with general expenses, so I didn't do so badly.

I love walking round the Penny Bazaar which is all decorated and has plenty of Christmas stock. The market, too, is a dream of delight just before Christmas. Even the fish stalls have bits of holly stuck all over the cod and the kippers.

On the Monday, Mum gave out the Christmas boxes to the men who call regularly - the milkman, the baker, the coalman, the postman, and the dustman. Christmas must kind of get into them, for they are ever so polite at this time of the year. But the tradesmen gave Mum some presents too. Mrs. Tucker gave Mum a box of chocolates, and Mr. Tonge, from whom we get some of our groceries, sent her a big jar of preserved ginger. They both thanked her for her custom and hope they will have the privilege of serving her for many years to come. I hope so, too.

Tuesday was Christmas Eve, and after an early lunch we set off for the station - Mum, Dad, Doug, and I. I looked round our decorated rooms and felt sorry to be going, but, as Mum says, one goes away for the pleasure of coming home. Before we left, Dad turned off the water and emptied the cisterns, for it is bitterly cold, and it would be awful to come home and find everything frozen up. Jessie has gone to her own home for Christmas, and I gave her some copies of the Marvel and Cheer

Boys Cheer which different people had given me during the year. I hope she will enjoy them.

We had to go from Liverpool Street station, as we did in the summer when we went to Yarmouth. My grandmother lives in Essex at a place called Layer Marney. It was snowing when we reached the London station, and I thought about Doug's old sledge in our coal-cellar at home. The sky looked like a sheet of lead, and Dad says it's going to be a white Christmas.

We took a slow train as we had to get down at a little station called Kelvedon. I like to put my head out of the carriage window, but the snow kept blowing in, and I got cinders in my eyes, so I couldn't do it much.



I had bought the Christmas Double Number of Lot-O-Fun at Liverpool Street, so I was able to read this on the journey. It was a fine number. Dreamy Daniel was on the front, of course, and he was dreaming that he was spending his Christmas with a lot of animals in evening dress. Then there was Patriotic Paul, Winkle and Binkle, Topsy of the Tea Shop, Paul Push (he gets the sack every week), and tons of other pictures. There were also plenty of stories to read. One long story was "Santa Claus's Theft" by Walter J. Holt. It was splendidly illustrated. There were also several serials, one of them being "The Silent Forward", a football story by Lucas Reid.

When we got to Kelvedon it was pitch dark, and there was thick snow everywhere. We had to change on to a small branch line, and the carriages on this line were more like a lot of trams joined together. A conductor came along the train and issued the tickets. It was very comfortable and there were curtains at the windows. The

train was full, and I was told to behave myself very carefully as country people on their own train are very fussy.

At last we arrived at our destination, but the train took a fair time to do nine miles, as the engine driver had to keep getting down from his engine to open gates to let the train through. Then we would stop again while the conductor got down to close the gates. It was great fun.

It was very dark when we alighted from the train, for there was only one oil lamp on the tiny platform. A carriage was waiting for us, drawn by two horses, and the horses had rag bound round their hooves so that they would not slip in the snow. Even as it was they slid about a bit as we drove over to my grandmother's house at Layer Marney. Gran had sent a hot water bottle, and Mum carried this in her muff.

Gran's house is quite a big one, but they have only oil lighting. The oil lamps are quite spectacular, and can be pulled up and down on chains from the ceiling. We had a lovely supper of cold roast pork, and the flavour was wonderful. We followed the pork with mince pies and then I had an orange.

I borrowed a pillow-case from Gran to hang at the foot of my bed. I always do this every year, and early in the morning, before I am awake, Mum pops in and fills it with my presents.

Gran won't have oil lamps in the bedrooms, so I had two candles. I had brought with me the Gem and Magnet Christmas Numbers for last year, 1911, to read while I was away from home. The story in the Gem was "The Ghost of St. Jim's," and, though I had read it before, I still found it very exciting and very creepy. So I read this in bed on Christmas Eve. The ghost of the Monk of St. Jim's always walked when the snow was on the ground - and he walked in this story. Mr. Selby had a guest who had a deceased brain and it was this poor man who was playing ghost. But it was fearfully creepy till they found out it wasn't a real ghost, and I kept looking at the snow which had collected round my window-panes.

It took me a long time to get to sleep that night, though I don't know whether it was due to the Ghost of St. Jim's, the thought of my pillow-case, or the roast pork.

It was about eight o'clock when I woke on Christmas morning, and the room seemed unusually bright, owing to the daylight reflecting from the snow. It was fearfully cold, so I nipped out of bed, grabbed my pillow-case which Mum had filled during the night, and dived back into bed again. I had a wonderful time opening my parcels. One present was a splendid clockwork train, which I had asked for but Dad said I couldn't have as I was too old for it. Yet he had bought me a wonderful set. Aren't parents astronomical?

I had several board games, and a pack of cards called "Happy Families." Gran gave me an Eton suit, which I thought would be very exciting, and would make me feel I was Tom Merry. I also had a pair of stockings from Aunt Gwen. They had dark blue legs and light-blue turnover tops.

My brother Doug gave me five school stories which had just been published for the first time in stiff covers. Doug told me later that one or two of them had previously appeared as serials in aristocratic magazines like Boy's Own Paper, Chums, and the Captain. The stories were "The Right Sort" by Leslie Havergal Bradshaw; "Black Evans" by R. S. Warren Bell; "Head of the School" by Harold Avery; "Talford's Last Term" by Harold Avery; and "Who Conquers? - or A Schoolboy's Honour," by Florence Bone. I am very grateful to Doug for such a lovely present. No wonder his Gladstone bag was heavy on the way down in the train. Most of our luggage came down in advance.

I made a fearful Foe Parr at breakfast. Mum had told me to be sure and thank Gran for the Eton suit, and I remembered it as I was half-way through the lovely ham we had for breakfast.

I said: "Oh, thank you, Gran, for the bum-freezer!"

After I said it I felt terrible for there was dead silence. Mum looked very

horrified. Doug said: "Oh, that boy --" Dad said: "Daniel, I think it may be as well if you leave the table." He only calls me Daniel when he is really grim.

But Gran was laughing like a hydrangea. She said to Dad: "Don't you dare to send the little darling away like that on Christmas Day! He didn't mean anything, bless his heart! He's just innocent."

Of course, I'm not really innocent, but I didn't mind Gran thinking so. Auntie Gwen, my mother's sister, said I must never use such words, but she would forget it, owing to it's being Christmas. So it all blew over, and it was lovely ham.

We all went to Church except Gran - she couldn't face the snow. We didn't have the carriage as her coachman was enjoying his Christmas. It was very enjoyable, slogging through the snow. I liked the service because there was no sermon, but we sang lots of carols.

We had turkey for dinner, followed by Mum's 1911 pudding which she had brought as a present for Gran. Auntie Gwen had done the cooking, and she brought in the pudding with a sprig of holly stuck in the top. She poured something over the pudding and set it alight which was exciting. To finish up we had Snap Dragon. I think it was raisins with spirit poured over it and then set alight.

Gran, Mum, and Dad slept all the afternoon, and I read my "Black Evans" in front of the big fire in the drawing room. It was quite a good story about a Welsh boy who hated his Headmaster, but I like the Gem and Magnet better.

Then Auntie Gwen lit the lamps and drew the curtains and it was very cosy indeed.

That evening we played with one of my games for a little while. It was called "Houp-La," and we all sat round the table with a little hand in front of us made of cardboard and wood. We had to use the hands to flick coloured cones into holes in a board placed in the middle of the table. Gran kept the score, and Dad won. He is a skilful man and winning the game put him in a very good temper.

We played a round game called "Proverbs" and a game with pencil and paper called "Consequences." In this game we kept writing down bits, turning down the papers, and passing them round. Doug read them all out and they were very funny.

That night in bed, with my two candles - new ones - I read the Magnet Christmas Number for last year, 1911. It was called "Wingate's Folly" and was illustrated by Arthur Clarke. Wingate fell in love with a girl called Paula Bell who was appearing as Red Riding Hood in a pantomime. It was a bit sloppy but I quite enjoyed it. I fell asleep as I was reading, and the next morning I found that both my candles had burned out.

Boxing Day we had a nice time. Gran owns a few cottages in Layer Marney, and on Boxing Day she always sends a little hamper of goodies to each of her tenants. It was still very cold and thick with snow so Gran could not go out herself, but Doug and I took the hampers round for her. We pushed them in Gran's wheelbarrow. At one cottage the lady gave me a slice of cold Christmas pudding; another lady gave me a box of Christmas Crackers; and at a third place I did some snowballing with some boys who lived there. The enjoyablefulness was terrific, as Inky says.

At tea that afternoon we pulled my crackers. They contained table fireworks and mottoes. I read out my motto which said:

"Roses are red; Violets are blue; what colour are yours?"

I didn't see any of the other mottoes as Aunt Gwen collected them up very quickly and put them in the fire, but I burned a hole in Gran's best tablecloth with a firework. Mum was very cross about it, and Auntie Gwen said she was grieved, but Gran said:

"Don't scold the little darling. Every boy is entitled to burn one tablecloth at Christmas time."

That evening we went to a Christmas concert at the Village Institute. This time we had the carriage, which had carbide lamps, and once again the horses were padded to stop them slipping on the icy roads. Being well-preserved, Gran risked it, and came with us.

I didn't really like the concert very much though they served cups of tea and Pat-a-cake biscuits in the interval. A lady played "On the banks of Allan Water" on the harp which was all right till she sang it as well. A gentleman in a tight suit recited "The Fireman's Wedding." A little girl played "The Maiden's Prayer" on the piano, and then the Laver Marney Glee Trio sang some songs which made me wonder where the Glee came in. Best of all was a man in a kilt who played the bagpipes and sang some of the songs of Harry Lauder. Then he sang "Put on your ta-ta, little girlie", and invited the audience to join in. I sang so loudly that Dad tapped me on the knee and shook his head sternly. But Gran said: "Let the little darling sing, Charles. Don't be a kill-joy. It's Christmas!" (Charles is my father.)

That night I was too tired to read, and I went to sleep almost before I was in bed. The next day, Friday, we returned home. It was a bit sad to think that Christmas was really over though I knew we should have some more Christmas fun at home. Gran came to the station with us, though it was thawing and everywhere was wet and sloshy. We went in the carriage, and the horses churned up the mud and water. When I kissed Gran good-bye she whispered: "Let me have a photograph of you in your bum-freezer, Danny," and slipped five shillings into my pocket which I thought was very decent of her.

That evening when we got home we found the house very cold, but Mum soon got a fire burning in the dining room grate. Jessie wasn't due back till to-morrow.

The next day Dad took Mum and me to the Garrick Theatre to see "Where the Rainbow Ends." It was a fairy play and introduced St. George. Actually it had its first presentation last year at the Savoy, and some people think it may be repeated every Christmas now.

On Monday afternoon Mum took me to see "Peter Pan" at the Duke of York's Theatre. It is a lovely play by J. M. Barrie. We had to clap if we believed in fairies, in order to save the life of Tinker Bell. Of course I don't believe in fairies (though I have a kind of fairy grandmother who gives me five bob for burning her tablecloth), but I clapped like anything. Pauline Chase was "Peter Pan," the boy who never grows up. I think that Harry Wharton and his friends must be Peter Pans too.

On New Year's Eve we came to the end of the festivities. Dad took us all, Jessie as well, to "The Sleeping Beauty" at Drury Lane. It must have cost Dad a fortune, for we went in the front stalls which cost him no less than 5/- each. It was the most beautiful pantomime I have ever seen, and the scenery was wonderful. Florence Smithson was "The Sleeping Beauty," and Wilfred Douthitt was the Prince. The chief funny man was George Graves, and even Dad laughed fit to burst his buttons.

After we got home, there was only about twenty minutes before the New Year

came in, so I was allowed to sit up.

At midnight all the church bells were ringing, and we opened the drawing room windows to listen. As the clock struck twelve, Dad lifted his glass of port and said: "It's 1913! A happy New Year to our King and Queen - and to all of you in my happy family."

Mum kissed Dad, and then lifted her own glass and said: "To you, dear Charles, and Douglas, and Danny, and thank God for giving you all to me."

Doug lifted his port and said: "1913! Happy New Year, Mother, Dad, Danny ---"

And I lifted my glass of lemonade and said: "1913! A happy New Year to Martin Clifford, Frank Richards, and all the writers and all the artists, and all the editors of all the papers I read - and to you Mum, and to you Dad, and to you Doug ---"

The bells were clashing and ringing, and in the distance I could hear people singing about Auld Acquaintance, and Mum was smiling and crying a bit, I think --

It was lovely lemonade. I wonder what kind of a year 1913 is going to be --

* * * * *

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by
ROBERT
KELLY

DISCOVERING THE MAGNET

by
ROBERT
KELLY

I have discovered the "Magnet" twice in my life - once as an impressionable boy, and later in more sophisticated years.

The first time was in 1943 when the "Magnet" had already ceased publication. My first "Magnet," a salmon covered number about Vernon Smith under threat of expulsion, proved merely an aperitif for a much larger batch I was able to purchase shortly after. The "Magnets" in question were all tattered or well-worn copies from the 1927-30 period, surely the most magical in the paper's long history.

My discovery of the "Magnet" was accidental - I took one in exchange against my better judgement because a friend told me I would enjoy the story. How right he was! Not only did the story excite me, I found myself fascinated by the portrayal of Vernon Smith. I had been used to the Thomson papers which, whatever their merits, were particularly weak on characterisation, which was usually pathetically one dimensional. Vernon Smith was my first encounter in literature, though not in life, with a character who was a mixture of both good and bad. Even at that early date I realised that the Greyfriars stories were something out of the ordinary.

After my introductory "Magnet" I purchased the batch, mentioned earlier, in a seedy second hand bookshop and read in quick succession parts of the Carboy, Hollywood and Brander series (none of the sets of stories were complete). Even today, when I see a pile of "Magnets" of the late '20s or early '30s I have feelings of acute nostalgia. The Shields covers of the period set the scene with their monstrous Billy Bunter's in yet another pantomimic situation, say sitting in the rain on a milestone marked "miles from anywhere," or perhaps having his Christmas beauty sleep disturbed by the ghost of whichever stately home he has chosen to park himself over the season of goodwill. The Shields covers and line illustrations of this period are absolutely brilliant and a fitting accompaniment for the stories "Frank Richards" was turning out at the time. I was lucky in my first introduction to the "Magnet" in that I saw the paper at its peak and the magical quality of the stories glittered all the more fiercely in the austerities of wartime London.

Later I was to learn that an author called Charles Hamilton was responsible for all the stories that had pleased me so much. For a time I thought about collecting the "Magnet" again but the years went by without my making any efforts to get hold of copies.

Then just over a year ago I tried the dangerous experiment of revisiting the past and purchased a large batch of loose "Magnets" mainly from the year 1931. The Shields covers and illustrations still looked as fine as ever but the stories themselves seemed to lack something - or was it only nostalgia after all that had made the Frank Richards' stories seem so wonderful in my youth?

These melancholy thoughts were prompted by a reading of the Tatters series which I did not complete and one or two single stories from the year 1931. It was not until I read the Cavandale Abbey (1930) and Mauleverer Towers (1931) Christmas

series that I really started to enjoy the "Magnet" again. Billy Bunter, to quote the "Magnet" advertisements, was still as funny as ever.

As a result of a series of exchanges (yes I let the batch go without trying the Lancaster series) I was able to read the 1932 Wharton Rebel set of tales in S.O.Ls. and this was really the series that turned me into a serious "Magnet" enthusiast again after 18 years. I literally could not put the story down although I was supposed to be watching television with my wife. The television set droned on in front of me but I was far more fascinated by the razor sharp descriptions of clashes between Wharton the rebel and Mr. Quelch, and my enjoyment of this series owed nothing to nostalgia.

However, Bunter is still my favourite literary character. He is one of the immortal anti-heroes in literature and a wonderful antidote to the sometimes overpowering heartiness of Bob Cherry who is nevertheless another of my very favourite Greyfriars characters. Billy Bunter is today as famous as Sherlock Holmes, Falstaff, Mr. Pickwick and all the other characters who are either as well-known as, or more celebrated than their authors. Bunter, as George Orwell, once admitted, is a real creation and his popularity is due entirely to his originality. Whatever he owed to other characters, i.e. the fat boy in "Pickwick," was lost at a very early date. As a result "Bunter Court" is one of the funniest stories ever written, even though much of the humour is bound up with the presentation of Bunter as a character rather than the comic incidents, hilarious as some of these are.

The Brander rebellion was perhaps the final proof that my youthful judgement was not at fault. When I read this series as a young boy I thought it pure gold all the way and when I recently borrowed it from the Hamiltonian book club I all but read it round the clock.

Not every series stands up so well. Two 1933 series, the Valentine and Hiking series, strike me as being a trifle overrated - except of course when judged by the level of the acclaim given to "hard cover" authors by well meaning critics of boys literature. And like other collectors I have been charmed by stories not particularly rated as classic Hamiltonia. I thought for instance that the 1935 Warren series was a delightful set of tales.

I have had so many hours of enjoyment from the Frank Richards stories that I am apt to get a little angry at the neglect of his best work by the reading public in general. It seems incredible to this writer that even now Hamilton's status as a classic for boys is in doubt.

Is it asking too much for an enterprising publisher to reprint some of the best series between hard covers with, of course, the original illustrations and covers reproduced?

I like to think that 20 years hence another young boy will be able to pick up the Brander rebellion or Carboy series and be able to enter the magical world of the "Magnet" as I once did.

* * * * *

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By
RCSS
STORY

The Magic of Brooks

By
RCSS
STORY

It is now (alas, how times flies!) more than thirty years since I first read about the Boys of St. Frank's. They came to me through the medium of a cousin who loaned me his copies of the Monster Library - and what a marvellous shillings-worth they were! A few months later, while still at school, I came across some old copies of the Nelson Lee Library on sale outside a shoe-mender's shop in Watford High Street. They were displayed at $\frac{1}{2}$ d each - 5 for 2d! Pennies were not so easily come by in those days but from then onwards my weekly pocket-money found its way into the hands of that enterprising cobbler - and the local newsagent. There were times when I surreptitiously sacrificed my 'dinner-money' to feast metaphorically on the Nelson Lee - truly greater love hath no man (or schoolgirl!)

I was an avid reader, devouring everything I could get my hands on - with the exception of girls' stories, which I loathed! I read The Magnet, the Gem, the Popular, and of course the Nelson Lee; and I took them right up until the time the dear old Nelson Lee folded. Yet out of all these stories it was the stories of the Boys of St. Frank's which truly lived on in my heart.

It is strange to find, now that these books have again come into my hands, how much about them I remember - or, rather, never forgot! When after more than thirty years the first Nelson Lee fell into my hands again I felt a most undignified lump come into my throat. The writing - the pictures - the characters themselves were all so clear in my mind that I found I could repeat verbatim (and without looking at the page) sentences I had not read for more than three decades. I knew exactly what words would follow the sentence I had just read before ever I turned the page. And this, I think, was the Magic of Brooks.

Compared with Brooks, all the other writers seemed dull, the situations trite and repetitious. What Brooks had to give his readers he gave with all his heart - generously, sometimes even ruthlessly. There was a punch and gusto in his writing which, to my mind, no other writer has ever succeeded in emulating. Many of his stories could be regarded as far-fetched - but like H. G. Wells he managed to make the most improbable scenes believable. His enthusiasm for what he was writing simply spilled over, so that no matter what he was writing about, you went along with him.

His stories had everything - suspense, humour, thrills and superb characterisation. And they had, too, what none of the other stories of this period possessed - a double plot. Running parallel with the school story there was inevitably an undercurrent of mystery or crime and these Brooks blended together so perfectly that, like threads running through a cloth, they joined together at the end without a flaw. His plotting was amazing - in the midst of a thrilling scene he would suddenly cut to a humorous interlude with Handforth and Co, indulging in one of their perpetual arguments, and you would wonder where the scene - which seemed quite irrelevant at the time - tied in. But it always did. I often wondered how far ahead Brooks plotted his stories; for at the beginning of one story he would often sow the seed of the story which was to follow. Each story held a link with the story to come, so that you felt you were irrevocably bound up with these boys and their adventures,

whether at the school or away from it.

To my mind nobody could 'capture' an atmosphere as Brooks did. Every time I re-read the series dealing with the Floods at St. Frank's I almost expect to see the water running down the pages; and whenever I read that superb summer story of Handforth's return to the school (to find Chambers in possession of Study D) I can hear the crack of bat against leather and see the open-necked shirts and the white flannels of the players. And when Brooks took you away from the school and plunged you into Peril in the Pacific who could ever forget the description of the storm at sea - the coppery, fiery sky, the stillness of the water - the vast devastating YELL with which the cyclone burst upon them? And in The Tyrant of Rishnir who else could have captured and portrayed the crash in the jungle, the trek to the city of Rishnir, the war against the evil Ameer, the siege in the clouds and the escape by parachute to find the Wanderer and land her on top of the crag. This to my mind was one of the best 'away' stories Brooks ever wrote - nothing has ever rivalled it for excitement and suspense.

It is only now perhaps that we can realise what a true artist Brooks was in his ability to create characters. In our schooldays we were probably too immersed in the story itself to pay much attention to the characters as characters; but now that I am privileged to read about them again I am amazed at the strength and forcefulness behind his characterisations. Who can forget the arrival of Reggie Pitt - his amazing vendetta against the whole Remove; the absolute ruthlessness behind his plotting and scheming? You got the impression he could have accomplished anything he set his mind upon - that he could have got the Headmaster himself 'sacked' if he had wanted to. His arrival left an impression upon my mind which still persists in spite of the fact that the bad old Reggie is no longer with us. In actual fact, Reggie's reformation was much more believable than that of Fullwood - somehow Fullwood's villainy had been going on too long for us to accept his change of heart. It was a pity, in a way, he did reform - for he afterwards seemed to become just 'one of the boys' and not a very prominent one at that. Reading of his treatment of Nipper, when Nipper first arrived at St. Frank's, and the number of times he almost succeeded in getting Nipper and his friends expelled, I can only marvel at the forgiving nature of his companions. But perhaps that was just another of the things Brooks taught us - to forgive our enemies.

Another character whose arrival made an indelible impression was Buster Boots. Who could forget his single-handed domination of the Remove - his brutal treatment of those who opposed him; his almost unbelievable drive and determination? True, he 'reformed' and became a much pleasanter character in consequence - although I don't think I ever really forgave him for 'outing' Bob Christine from the captaincy. For me Bob always had been and always would be the real leader of the Modern House.

Then there was Ezra Quirke - the Magician of St. Frank's - and who can ever forget the truly spine-chilling events which surrounded his arrival. Brooks was as much at home here as in any other sphere about which he chose to write - the impossible became possible; the unbelievable became believable. Everything fell neatly into place at the end, as it always did. Yet, somehow, like the boys themselves, I was glad to see Ezra go. He seemed to have no true place in the clean, healthy, normal atmosphere of St. Frank's.

Whether you liked or disliked any of Brooks' characters, you had to acknowledge their strength - their superb portrayal. Some say Nipper was a prig and that he was too perfect - I say he was not and that he revealed all the qualities of leadership which gave him and caused him to retain his hold on the captaincy. No matter what

difficulties the boys encountered you felt a terrific confidence in the fact that Nipper was there - you knew he would evolve some plan to extricate them. It was Jane Trimble who once said, rather grudgingly that she felt Nipper would one day make a 'great man' and I think she was right.

And Handy! - for me at least there would have been no St. Frank's without the aggressive, obstinate yet truly lovable Edward Oswald. He was a masterpiece of characterisation and I think he truly deserved the popularity which became his. Where Handy was there was trouble, excitement and, inevitably, humour. Brooks' humour was unique - the under-statement rather than the over-statement; the subtle rather than the slapstick. He could make you laugh until you cried with a single line of dialogue.

Even the less prominent characters - weaklings such as Hubbard and Teddy Long, bullies like Kenmore and Grayson, buffoons like Chambers and Armstrong - all of them fell into the prescribed pattern so that your imagination was peopled not by fictitious schoolboys but by characters so real that they remained in your mind and heart long after their stories had ceased to be chronicled. And if I were asked which of all the characters was my own personal favourite I would reply: Church. He was such a good-tempered boy, so loyal and so quick to forgive, never bearing malice or antagonism - that I sometimes felt that Brooks himself misjudged him when he described him as 'lacking initiative'. I think he had a great deal - as well as many of those qualities which would make the world a much pleasanter place today if only more of us possessed them!

Perhaps we should be glad that the Nelson Lee Library ended when it did. Perhaps if another writer had tried to assume Brooks' mantle (for it was obvious towards the end that Brooks himself was losing interest) we should have lost forever that marvellous style, those truly unmatched plots, those vivid characterisations. Perhaps, too, we should have lost the boys themselves - for who can live in the world of today, with its atom-bombs, its nuclear weapons, its mad race to be first to establish war-bases on the moon, without assimilating at least some of its cynicism and disillusion? No - let the Boys of St. Frank's remain for ever undisturbed in their leisurely and pleasurely world where time stands still and we may, whenever we wish, reach back and shake their hands in everlasting friendship.

* * * * *

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A Three-Way Contribution from NEW ZEALAND

Part One
by
Geoff
Hockley

ONE ENCHANTED EVENING

Part Two
by
Jack
Murtagh

(Illustrated by Geoffrey Harrison)

Although the strange and unprecedented experience which befell me on the evening of July 12th, 1962, has impressed itself indelibly on my memory, I have decided to commit to paper this description of the most puzzling, yet most joyous episode of my life. Was it dream, or illusion? Who can say? Read it, fellow-lovers of the grand old papers which thrilled us in our boyhood, and form your own conclusions. I offer no explanation - perhaps there is none - but as I have said, it remains the most delightful episode in my life.

My name does not matter - suffice it to say that I am not unknown among our happy fraternity which never tires of delving into the golden past of boys' literature - a fraternity which someone once aptly termed "The Brotherhood of the Happy Hours." My own modest collection of the treasured papers of my boyhood has been the source of endless hours of pleasure, and I have never ceased to marvel at, and to deplore, the odious comparison between the work of the boys' writers of the past and the lurid, nauseating trash served up for the edification of the youth of today.

Pondering on this subject at length, I conceived the idea of trying the experiment on writing a story on the lines of the tales which delighted us in our youth - partly, I must confess, for my own amusement, and partly to see (if it ever saw the light of publication) how it would be received by the present generation. Alas! the lot of an amateur author is no easy one, as I was soon to find! Plot after plot was considered and discarded, and many were the sheets of paper torn frenziedly from my typewriter and hurled into the fire in despair, after which I would light my pipe and sink into my armchair in another fruitless quest for the inspiration which never came.

On the evening to which I have referred, I had arrived home at a late hour after a convivial evening with some old friends (here let me admit that the lobster supper of which I had partaken may have had some bearing on what subsequently occurred). However I determined, before retiring, to make one last effort to get my story under way, so, poking the fire into a blaze, I drew my table and chair up before it, inserted a virgin sheet of paper in the machine and staring into nothingness, concentrated as I had never done before, with my fingers poised over the keys.

Previous to this, I had succeeded, with much brain-cudgelling, to reach a point at which my hero, Tom Bracebridge, had run away from home to escape from his scoundrelly guardian and the guardian's equally scoundrelly associate, after the precious pair had attempted to force him to reveal the whereabouts of a treasure map left in his keeping by his late father. I had Tom on the run, with the two crooks in hot pursuit, but then, alas! my inspiration vanished once more and I sat, thinking hard of fresh ideas for carrying on my narrative.

I must have nodded over my task, for I awoke with a start to the realization that the fire had died to a mere glow. But what was this? My familiar room seemed to have changed in some indefinable manner and lengthened into infinite distance, stretching away into a misty vista in which I seemed to perceive a number of figures seated around a huge table. I gazed spellbound - surely some of them were familiar? I peered again, with confused senses and beating heart - yes, some, at least, I had met, and others I recognised from having seen their photographs. I passed my hand across my brow. Surely that cherubic figure at one end of the table, in dressing-jacket and skull-cap, by whose side crouched a beautiful tabby cat, was none other than Frank Richards? And opposite him, cracking a joke with his neighbour, was - yes, he was - Edwy Searles Brooks! A slim, silver-haired gentleman on his right I identified as Samuel Walkey, and further down the table sat a square-jawed man of commanding mien whom I recognised as Captain Frank Shaw. As my bewildered gaze roved from face to face around the table, the amazing truth smote me like a thunderclap. Here, assembled by what magic I shall never know, were the world's greatest writers, both living and dead, of the tales which had enthralled me in my boyhood.

As I watched spellbound, a tall, dark-moustached man whom I seemed to recognise but whose identity eluded me at the moment, rose from his chair and rapped on the table, and the hum of conversation ceased.

"Well, gentlemen," he said, "I must commence by expressing my pleasure upon seeing you here on this momentous occasion. The reason for to-night's gathering is known to you all, but I shall refer briefly to what we hope to accomplish. As you are aware, our friend here" - he glanced at me with a smile - "is having some difficulty in launching his very laudable project - a difficulty which, I think, you have all encountered at some time or other in your writing careers. However, I feel that your combined experience as professional authors may be of assistance to him in invoking that elusive inspiration, and so, gentlemen, without further preamble, I am going to call upon some of you to provide a chapter of a narrative, commencing at the point where our friend's inspiration temporarily deserted him. Each of you has his own individual style, and I am sure that we shall derive considerable entertainment from our little - er - game, in addition to being of some slight assistance to our budding author here. Now - who will start the ball rolling?"

There was a unanimous cry of "Frank Richards!" from the assembly, and the famous creator of fiction's best-loved schoolboys rose and bowed.

"Thank you - thank you, my dear fellows!" he said. "I am only too pleased, of course, to offer my small contribution. Let me see - ah, yes, I see no great difficulty in picking up the thread of our young friend's narrative." And without further ado, he began.

Billy Bunter, of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, was financially embarrassed.

Not that this unhappy state of affairs was any new experience for Bunter. The Owl of the Remove was in an almost permanent state of penury, but on this sunny half-holiday, which could have been pleasantly spent, had funds permitted, gorging in the tuck-shop, life seemed drear indeed.

"Beasts!" muttered Bunter, as he wandered disconsolately through the school gates and peered down the dusty road. Suddenly he stared harder. Hurrying in the direction of Greyfriars was a boy carrying a suitcase, and as he panted to a halt at the gates he cast an anxious glance behind him. "This - this is Greyfriars?" he demanded of Bunter. "Yes, of course - I can see that you are a Greyfriars chap. Tell me, please - where can I find Doctor Locke?"

"The Head?" replied the Owl of the Remove. "He'll be in his study, I suppose. Are you a new chap? I'll take you to him, if you like. I say, old chap, you look pretty hot and dusty. What about some lemonade and a snack before we go to look for the Head? I'll show you the tuckshop--"

"Sorry, but I must see Doctor Locke immediately. If you will take me to him, please--"

"Certainly, old chap. Let me carry your bag," replied Bunter amiably. "I say, I suppose you couldn't lend me half-a-crown until to-morrow? You see, I'm expecting a postal-order --"

"I'm sorry, but I have no money," muttered the boy. "If you will take me to Doctor Locke, please--"

"No money?" hooted the Owl. "You can jolly well find the Head for yourself, than! We don't want any paupers here--!"

"Hullo, hullo, hullo!" interrupted a voice. "What's going on here?"

Five juniors wheeling their bicycles had appeared on the scene. The Famous Five had decided to take advantage of the beautiful afternoon to go for a spin. They eyed Bunter and the stranger curiously.

"I am looking for Doctor Locke," the boy said. "If one of you --"

Harry Wharton stepped forward.

"I'll be glad to take you to him," he said.

As the Remove captain and the stranger departed, Bob Cherry turned on Billy Bunter.

"You fat, cadging bounder!" he hissed. "I heard what you said to that fellow! For two pins I'd break your fat neck, you - you--"

The front wheel of Bob's bicycle came into violent contact with Bunter's waistcoat, and the fat junior sat down suddenly in the dust.

Disregarding Bunter's yells, the grinning juniors proceeded to wheel their bicycles over his prostrate form, and as they passed through the gates, a glance backwards revealed the Owl struggling painfully to his feet, his spectacles hanging over one ear and his jacket streaked with dusty tyre-prints.

In Doctor Locke's study, Tom Bracebridge faced the Head of Greyfriars across the table. The kindly old doctor stared in amazement as the boy concluded his story.

"Bless my soul!" he ejaculated. "This is incredible!"

"It's true, sir - every word of it!" panted the boy.

"Bless my soul!" repeated Doctor Locke. "Do I understand that these men have followed you here with the intention of forcibly possessing themselves of this map which you are carrying? Surely the police --"

"The police would laugh at me, sir!" Tom Bracebridge broke in. "And remember, I am still legally under my guardian's authority. What can I do? Oh, sir --"

"Calm yourself, my dear lad!" interrupted the Head. "I appreciate your turning to me, your late father's oldest friend and I will do anything in my power to help and advise you. But I must confess that the circumstances are so astounding that I -- wait - let me think."

There was silence in the study for some minutes. Then Doctor Locke picked up the telephone.

PART TWO

It was here that by popular vote Edwy Searles Brooks was called on to continue the narrative.

Dr. Malcom Stafford headmaster of St. Franks turned from his window where he had been idly watching some of his boys punting a football round the Triangle. The ringing of the phone stopped as the Head lifted the receiver.

"Good afternoon! Dr. Stafford, St. Franks College, speaking." There were various clicks and sounds of very far away conversations then a click and a voice the Head knew well - his old friend Dr. Locke of Greyfriars.

"Dr. Locke here."

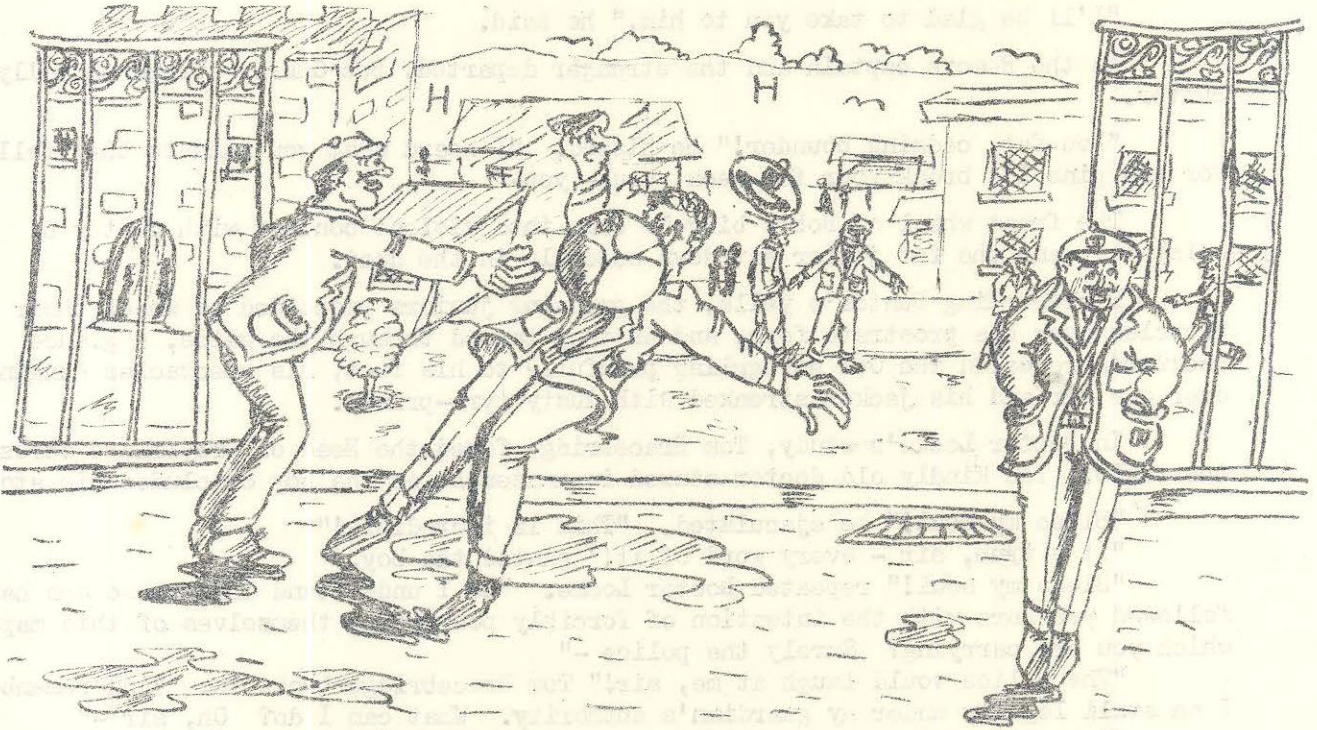
"Yes I recognised your voice at once. It's nice to hear from you again."

"I have a problem, Dr. Stafford, and I think you can help me."

"I'll be pleased to do anything I can. What is the trouble?"

Dr. Stafford's face grew serious as Dr. Locke told him the amazing story of Tom Bracebridge's troubles.

"I am ringing you to ask if it would be possible for this lad to go to your



THE BALL LANDED RIGHT ON HANDFORTH'S FACE

school for the time being where he would be under the watchful eye of Nelson Lee - he would know what to do if these scoundrels track this lad down to St. Franks."

"A splendid idea," said Dr. Stafford. "We will make arrangements at once."

The cold Autumn wind was keen as it whirled dead leaves in flurries round the Triangle at St. Frank's but Handforth & Co. of Study D did not notice the cold as they punted a football near the main gate. The ball shot through the gate as Handforth gave it such a mighty kick that it was a wonder it didn't burst there and then - and as it bounced on the road outside, a fair curly-haired boy who was about to enter the gates dropped the case he was carrying and caught the ball beautifully with his toe - it shot back through the gates and as it did so a gust of wind caught it and it and it landed right in Handforth's face. He staggered back, his face a mixture of red and black. Red from rage, and black from the mud on the ball. Handforth finally lost his balance and sat down in a puddle.

The fair-haired boy came running up, concern showing on his face.

Handforth glared as he picked himself up and Church and McClure who had just started to laugh became suddenly serious.

"I'll smash you," roared Handforth.

"I apologise, I'm honestly sincerely sorry," said Tom.

Handy calmed down because he knew at heart that it was an accident - but strangers had to be put in their place.

"Who the dickens do you think you are anyway?" he demanded.

"Tom Bracebridge."

"If you're pulling my leg," said Handforth darkly, "you'll jolly soon get what's coming to you."

"That's my name," said Tom quietly, "and I'd be pleased if you would direct me to Mr. Nelson Lee of the Ancient House."

Handforth regarded it as one of his duties to put all new kids through their paces as he called it and he was about to put the 3rd degree on Tom when Nelson Lee strode in at the gates. He noticed the new boy at once and came over.

"Are you Tom Bracebridge?"

"Yes, Sir."

"Good. I've been expecting you. Come to my study, I'll arrange for your admission, and Handforth go indoors at once and wash your face - you are a disgrace to St. Franks."

Church winked at McClure as he picked up the ball and the trio headed for the Ancient House.

In Nelson Lee's Study, Tom at Nelson Lee's request related every detail of the events that had taken place since his father's death.

"You say your guardian's name is Bradley, James Bradley - the name seems vaguely familiar as does that of his associate Ralph Ryder. My old friend Sexton Blake is coming over to see me tonight, I'll see if he knows anything of this precious pair. Meanwhile, I'll hand you over to Mrs. Poulter our housekeeper and she will make you comfortable. Later you will meet Dr. Stafford. He is away this afternoon with his old friend Dr. Brett."

.....

At this point the tall dark moustached man rapped on the table and said "Edwy Searles Brooks has done very well but we can't let him tell the whole story. Is there

a Sexton Blake author here who can continue for us?"

.

The soothing click of the windscreen wipers was very comforting as Sexton Blake's powerful car swished along the rain swept road through Belton Wood. It was a terrible night.

Blake had been on business to a nearby town, Bannington, and Nelson Lee had invited him to stay the night in Lee's quarters at St. Franks. They had much in common and Blake was looking forward to a chat with his old friend. Also he hoped that Lee might be able to help him with the strange case that had come up just before he left London.

He had been thinking about it all the way from London. In mind's eye he could still see the sun-tanned stranger standing in his consulting room. He would give no name other than John Smith because of a great fear that his enemies who had left him for dead would find he still lived.

It seemed that he went on a business trip with his partner to Australia; they ran a diamond mining concern and were looking over prospective new areas in the sun-burnt heart of Australia together with a mining expert. Three days drive in a specially fitted truck from Alice Springs had brought them to a low range of bare sunbaked hills. It was here that Percy Marlowe, great friend of John Smith, had made a promising find of diamonds. He had urged Smith to fly to Australia and join him with an expert. Since then, silence. He had disappeared without trace. Natives had found his truck and advised the authorities, but in that waterless waste no hope was held that he would be found alive although extensive searches had been made.

After several days prospecting the three men came to a high cliff-face with sand dunes right up to the face of the cliff. They camped the night there and during the night a terrific gale created a very heavy sand storm. With the breaking of dawn the gale had died down and the prospectors found that the wind had blown a large amount of the sand away from the cliff base - revealing a cave. Curiously, they inspected it and were surprised to see a circle of light far away in the dark depths. The cave on further inspection proved to be a natural tunnel which opened up into a large canyon and as they emerged into this canyon John Smith saw something glistening in the sand ahead. He picked it up and the glowing fires in the glistening stone told him right away that their search was ended. It was a beautiful white diamond.

Eagerly the men pressed forward, their eyes darting here, there, and everywhere, but as they rounded a bend they stopped dead, for shining white in the sand, bleached by the sun, the wind, and the rain, lay a human skeleton; the elements had done their work well, helped by ants and vermin. The suspicions of the three men turned to a certainty when they spied the gold ring set with jade bearing the initials P.M, on the bony finger of the skeleton's hand. Reverently John Smith took it off and then covered the skeleton with a coat. He had not noticed what his companions had seen - a glass jar nearby, almost covered by sand, full of glistening uncut diamonds. Neither did he see his partner, shielded by the expert, drag his foot over the sand and cover the jar. An understanding glance passed between these two men.

"Let's go a little further before we return," said John's partner.

As the men proceeded the floor of the canyon grew steeper and steeper.

Suddenly John slipped and gave a sharp cry of pain - he had fallen heavily and broken his leg.

It was decided that his two companions should return to the truck and get the first aid equipment and stretcher. The two schemers picked up the jar of diamonds on the way back, and the expert still had the large white diamond that John had handed him. Fame, power and fortune could be theirs and if John was out of the way there

would be more for this precious pair - also a long jail sentence and ruin faced his partner the next time the company's books were audited for he had been juggling the books so long now that he could cover up the discrepancies no longer. Here was a golden opportunity and they wasted no time taking advantage of it - a charge of dynamite in the tunnel entrance sealed the canyon and John was left to die - no evidence of his murder would ever be found.

The rascally pair headed back to civilisation in high spirits until they suddenly realised they were lost. Once out of sight of the hills the land was flat in every direction as far as the eye could see - nothing grew here except saltbush and an odd stunted Mulga tree. They suddenly realised that John still had the map and the compass.

Out of petrol, out of water, they were found by a wandering band of Aborigines who took the two delirious men to the nearest township knowing they would be rewarded with sugar and various stores by the authorities.

Ten days in the local hospital restored them to health and they told the authorities the sad story as to how their companion had wandered off into the desert when their water ran out. They joined search parties for their own reasons. They wanted to locate the hills where they made the rich strike. They found many hills but never the right ones. There was only one thing for it. They must return to England and get the original copy of the location map of the diamond hills from John Smith's son. John had made a copy just in case.

As our readers will know by now our John Smith is really John Bracebridge, Tom's father, and his partner and the expert are the two scoundrels who were seeking Tom.

They thought it would be easy to get the map off Tom but the lad remembered his dad's last words:

"Tom, if anything should happen to me, on no account give this map to anyone. Wait until you are grown up and follow the trail yourself."

The two men, when friendly efforts to get the map off Tom had failed, became very threatening so Tom, grief-stricken at the news of his father's death, had run away to Greyfriars School and Dr. Locke, his father's life-long friend.....

As Blake swung the car round a bend and out of Belton Wood he little dreamed that his visit to St. Frank's would have any bearing on the subject of his thoughts. Then with dramatic suddenness things began to happen. The brilliant beams of the headlights of Blake's car picked up the main gateway of St. Frank's. At the same moment two dark figures with a smaller one struggling between them appeared, and, dazzled by the lights of the car, they cowered against the wall beside the gates. The small figure wrenched himself free and ran across the front of Blake's car. With the brakes full on Blake juggled with the wheel as the car broadsided completely around on the greasy road.

Tom Bracebridge pelted down the road with his two recent captors in pursuit. They were catching up rapidly when Tom shot off the road under a large oak tree and then on into a clearing beyond. His two pursuers followed and just as they were passing the trunk of the tree a sizzling jagged bolt of lightning split the tree asunder with a crash of thunder that shook the very ground.

Tom was thrown to the earth and was just picking himself up when Blake arrived. An hour later in Nelson Lee's study, Tom explained how he had been down to see Josh Cuttle, the school porter, about the arrival of his bicycle, and as he was leaving Cuttle's lodge the two men had seized him. Unknown to Tom they had followed him first to Greyfriars and thence to St. Franks. But fate had taken a hand and the two

scoundrels who had sown seeds of greed and murder had reaped a harvest of death in the form of the bolt of lightning that killed them both.

Tom idly wondered what was going on when Lee and Blake came into the room with a sun-tanned man. Tom jumped up - he just couldn't believe his eyes. He flung himself into his father's arms with tears streaming down his face.

Blake had earlier phoned Tom's dad to come at once when he found Tom was at St. Frank's.

A thousand questions were on Tom's lips. Tom's father explained how fate must have been on his side. The explosion that sealed the cave tunnel had done its work well but the falling rocks had opened another one above it and Tom's dad had painfully dragged himself through it. Luckily it was that time of the year for the Aborigines' walkabout because another group had found him and taken him with them and nursed him back to health and as they were on the move all the time they had been missed by the search parties. But as Tom said and everyone heartily agreed:

"All's well that ends well."

- - - - -

"Well done! Bravo! A toast to our new author." I suddenly realised the tall dark man was speaking again and looking straight at me with his glass held high. "But-but I've done nothing" I stuttered. "Frank Richards did the first part after I came to a miserable stop and the Nelson Lee and St. Frank's episode was the work of E. S. Brooks and the final episode about Blake was--"

"Yes," said the dark stranger, "who wrote that?"

"Well, now I come to think of it, who did write that episode on Blake?"

"You did!" everybody present cried and as they said it they seemed to fade into the shadows all except one with a cat at his side. He beamed at me and gave a little chuckle as he said:

"Well done, my boy, carry on the good work and remember whenever you are writing I'll be somewhere in the shadows peeping over your shoulder and all those boys I used to write about will be with me." Then he too faded from view chuckling to himself and I could not help but notice how very happy he looked.

I must have dozed off after this for I woke in the early hours in my armchair, cold and stiff outwardly, but happy within. Some may say that I had a vivid dream but I know that this is not so. They were with me and helped me.

Postscript: Maybe I'm sentimental but, readers, I just finished writing the last of this late at night and believe me I really did feel that dear old F.R. was looking over my shoulder and guiding my pen as I wrote the last part of this. I do know that at no time did I have to stop and think. The words just flowed from my pen. It's nice to think that perhaps he was somewhere around.

* * * * *

WANTED: Britain Invaded, Britain at Bay, Britain's Revenge, Sexton Blake's School-days, Sexton Blake in the Sixth, Sexton Blake at Oxford, Sexton Blake in the Congo.

D. M. MACKENZIE, BANSTEAD HOSPITAL, SUTTON, SURREY.

WANTED: Certain Gems 1916/1925. Magnet No. 1194. Prepared to pay good prices.

CHARLES VANRENEN, BOX 50, UITENHAGE, SOUTH AFRICA.

By
HARRY
BROSTER

THE COWBOY HERO

By
HARRY
BROSTER

The main interest of our clubs embraces the boys' papers published, roughly, between 1900 and the outbreak of the last war - to wit, Magnet, Gem, Boy's Friend, Nelson Lee Library, and kindred periodicals. In the main, school stories and adventure stories.

As our pocket money was limited in those days when we were youngsters, we could probably only buy one or two of these papers, so we helped to increase our supply of reading material by begging, borrowing, and swopping with our friends. After that, we resorted to the Public Library.

Here we were able to obtain school stories by writers such as Talbot Baines Reed, Meredith Fletcher, and Harold Avery, or adventure tales by Ballantyne, Rider Haggard, Manville Fenn, Henty, and Gordon Stables. For Sexton Blake or Nelson Lee we had to spend our precious pocket money, but in the Libraries the Sherlock Holmes and other detective stories were available. But apart from school stories, what type of adventure yarns were the most in demand? By a large majority Red Indian yarns.

Buffalo Bill was not in evidence in those early days, but we had the Deerfoot tales by Edward S. Ellis, the Leather stocking series by Fenimore Cooper and quite a few by Ballantyne. Anything and everything to do with Red Indians was in demand. Why shouldn't it be? Who has not played Cowboys and Indians in their youth? Why were the Western films so popular in those days? A funny thing though, was that no one wanted to be an Indian. We all wanted to be the cowboy hero, due no doubt to the Indian in story or film, always having the worst end of the stick.

So the tales like those of Fenimore Cooper and Ellis which featured frontiersmen and hunters gave way to tales of the cowboy. The cowboy became a popular figure on the films. Do you remember such actors as William S. Hart, Justin B. Farman and Jack Holt, and coming to later years Buck Jones, Tex McLeod, and many more? Up to the present day - to the most well known cowboy of all time - Hopalong Cassidy. What lad today has not heard of Hopalong Cassidy, has not seen one of the numerous films when Bill Boyd enacts the role of this particular hero of the West? I should think Hopalong Cassidy is more widely known than even Buffalo Bill at the present time what with the yarns by Clarence E. Mulford, Tex Burns, all the films, the comics, annuals, etc. Now the tales of Hopalong Cassidy and the Bar 20 outfit must surely come within the category of Old Boys' Books. No argument about these being stories for boys and as the first one was published at least thirty years ago, definitely qualified to be termed "old". I read the first Cassidy yarn myself at least thirty years ago.

Having established the fact that these cowboy yarns are old, and, like some of our school stories, still being published and in addition still being filmed, a word about the stories themselves. There are 22 tales of Hopalong Cassidy and the Bar 20 Ranch, 18 written by Clarence E. Mulford and four by Tex Burns. To my mind these cowboy stories have a resemblance to another series of tales which we all have read or should have read in our youth - the tales of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. The Bar 20 outfit was another band of "Knights" who rode out to right wrongs, to help people in trouble; a Western version of the Round Table, with Hopalong Cassidy as Sir Galahad. The films with Bill Boyd as Cassidy keep up this tradition.

The time of the Bar 20 stories was in the early Western days, perhaps about 1870, the days of the cattle drives, range wars, outlaws and rustlers and a few Indians. The Bar 20 Ranch was in Texas and Buck Peters was the foreman. There were about a dozen cowboys with Hopalong Cassidy acting as second in command under Buck Peters. Next in seniority was Red Connors, an expert at long distance shooting. Then came Tex Ewalt who was the best known card player of his time. Lanky Smith and Skinny Thompson were roping experts. Billy Williams and Pete Wilson were another two. Johnny Nelson was the youngest of the outfit until Mesquite Jenkins joined the band. There were, during the series of yarns, others who were killed - Frenchy McAllister, Ace Judkins, - all of them true cowboys, many of them only a little inferior to Cassidy with a six-gun.

As time goes on the Bar 20 of the early stories breaks up; Johnny Nelson and Tex Ewalt acquire ranches of their own, Buck Peters inherits a ranch in Montana and towards the end we find the old Bar 20 re-established on the Double-Y ranch in Montana with Cassidy as partner to Buck Peters. Twenty two tales of the old West, plenty of adventure and outdoor life; maybe a lot of fighting and killing but nothing sordid. A love interest in one or two stories but nothing overdone. As in the yarns by Zane Grey, there is something attractive about the general script. Not particularly written for boys, but mainly boys' tales - thirty years old and still popular. The hero of most of these twenty-two yarns still reigns supreme as the best known and most popular of the boys' heroes of the present time. If not a subject for discussion when old boys books are to the fore, what else is? Hopalong Cassidy the king of cowboys.

To describe the men of the Bar 20 and their leader Cassidy we cannot quote anyone better than the author Mulford in one of the later stories:- "This was no mere outfit, for everyone of them was a leader, possessing initiative - everyone was an expert with six-shooter and rifle, everyone a plainsman. The marshall's glance passed on to the leader and rested there, on a man whose fame had spread from the frontier to the coast, from the north line to that of the south. An old eagle, he was: swift, certain, ruthless when aroused, master of strategy and warfare, tempered and ground and honed in more than thirty years of conflict against lawlessness. An old eagle, aye and here was an eagle's brood. Two-gun men, tested in flame and smoke and thundering stampedes - men without a flaw in courage. Stern and ruthless yet kind and sympathetic - men who typified the better spirit of the old time west.

Before I leave you to decide whether Hopalong Cassidy should take his place as one of the heroes of old boys' books as we know them, along with Buffalo Bill, Robin Hood, Dick Turpin, with Sexton Blake and Nelson Lee - that is, grown up heroes who have lasted many years - there is one little point which I am not happy about. It is not a great matter but I find that the eighteen stories by Mulford the creator of Hopalong Cassidy do not tally with the four by Tex Burns and the films featuring Bill Boyd as the hero. The stories by Mulford always portray Cassidy as a red head, with a decided limp in one leg (due to a gun shot wound); a slouching, untidy looking sort of cowboy. But in the Tex Burns' books and in the films, Cassidy is a dandified type of individual, dressed all in black and above all with silvery white hair. I can understand Bill Boyd being chosen for the part, apart from the colour of his hair and the limp. He makes a good cowboy hero but why could not Tex Burns still follow on from Mulford and not as it seems, adopt the film hero as his model, at least as far as appearances go.

Following is a list of the Hopalong Cassidy yarns in proper reading order:-

Clarence E. Mulford: 1. Coming of Cassidy, 2. Bar 20, 3. Bar 20 Days, 4. Hopalong

Cassidy, 5. Buck Peters, Ranchman, 6. The Man from Bar 20, 7. Johnny Nelson, 8. The Bar 20 Three, 9. Hopalong Cassidy Returns, 10. Hopalong Cassidy's Protege, 11. Tex of Bar 20, 12. The Bar 20 Rides Again, 13. Mesquite Jenkins, 14. Mesquite Jenkins Tumbleweed, 15. Trail Dust, 16. Hopalong Cassidy and the Eagles Brood, 17. Hopalong Cassidy Takes Card, 18. Hopalong Cassidy Serves a Writ.

TEX BURNS: Hopalong Cassidy and the Rustlers of West Fork, Hopalong Cassidy and the Trail to Seven Ponies, Hopalong Cassidy and the Riders of High Rock, Hopalong Cassidy Trouble Shooter.

* * * * *

ADDITION and CORRIGENDA

Since our article "THE NEXT BEST THING" on the substitute writers in the Magnet went into print we have received the following additional items from Derek Adley:-

MAGNET

No. 840	The Rebels of the Second.....	F. G. Cook
No. 841	Fishy's Treasure.....	C. Hamilton
No. 871	Sir Hilton's Nephew.....	S. E. Austin
No. 872	The Mystery Wreck.....	S. E. Austin
No. 894	The Mystery of Mossoc.....	F. G. Cook
No. 898	The Schoolboy Sculptor.....	S. E. Austin
No. 901	"Pep" for the Friars.....	S. R. Shepherd
No. 902	The Feud with Cliff House.....	F. G. Cook

Mr. Adley adds: "I mention 841 'Fishy's Treasure' as I believe we put it down as a possible sub story, but this is incorrect. It is a genuine Hamilton yarn and should be deleted from the list of sub writers.

* * * * *

WANTED: Early Mint Magnets, preferably bound, and Rookwood Boy's Friend; also bound Populars, Gems.

S. B. WHITEHEAD, 12, WELLS ROAD, FAKENHAM, NORFOLK.

FOR SALE or EXCHANGE: B.F.L., N.L.L., Boys of Our Empire, Boys Own Annual 1915/16, Champion Annual 1926.

A. F. THURBON, 29, STRAWBERRY HILL ROAD, TWICKENHAM, MIDDLESEX.

COPY SOUGHT (purchase, hire or loan) of RODERICK DHU (Victorian Blood).

BOX A, c/o COLLECTORS' DIGEST, EXCELSIOR HOUSE, GROVE ROAD, SURBITON.

Would like to hear from collectors of GARTH, RIP KIRBY and similar strips.

WILLIAM SHARPE, BOX 81, BOX HILL, VICTORIA, AUSTRALIA.

which

twin?

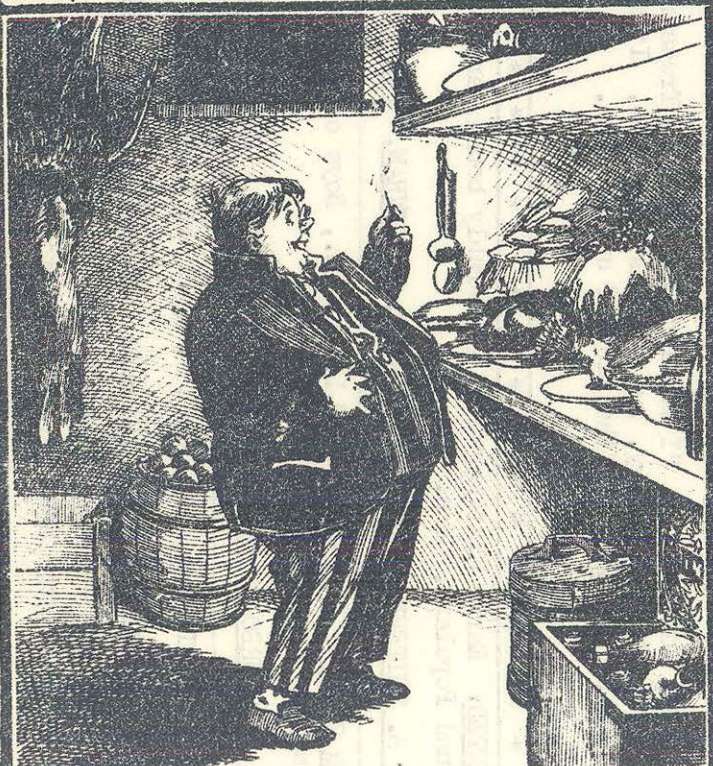
"JOHN BULL JUNIOR."

Splendid School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co.

The Magnet Library

Thrilling Detective Story of Stanley Dare, the Boy Detective

No. 152 | The Complete Story-Book for All | Vol. 8.



"My hat!" murmured Billy Bunter. "This is ripping! They can put it down to the cat in the morning."

HARRY WHARTON & Co.'s Thrilling Yuletide Adventures in... THE HOUSE OF MYSTERY!



No. 1424 Vol. XLVIII.

EVERY SATURDAY

Week Ending December 23th, 1932.

WHICH TWIN?

On the opposite page we present one of the oddities of the Companion Papers. The picture on the left shows the cover of the Magnet, drawn by Arthur Clarke, and dated January 1911. The picture on the right shows the cover of the Magnet, drawn by Leonard Shields, and dated December 1935.

An examination of the two pictures makes it beyond doubt that Shields copied the picture which Clarke had drawn a quarter-century earlier. The pictures are so much alike in main detail that it is clear Shields had the old Clarke picture before him as he drew - it was not a case of drawing from memory.

The mystery for us, more than another quarter-century on, is why a gifted and experienced artist like Shields should copy an old picture of another artist in such detail. It can hardly have been laziness. Is it not likely that Shields, reading that story which he had to illustrate in the Polpelly series, was reminded of the similar incident in the Magnet story which Clarke had illustrated at Christmas 1910? If such was the case, then Shields must have been an old reader of the Magnet. Yet Shields was no boy in 1911. He was then a young man, for his work can be found in Amalgamated Press publications soon after the turn of the century.

Is it more likely that it was the editor who remembered the incident, placed the old copy before Shields, and suggested that he should reproduce it in detail? Yet if this was the case, why did not the editor actually use the old picture, which was not dated in any way?

We don't know the solution. It is just interesting to surmise. Whatever the reason, we can be assured that Shields regarded the old picture as a real work of art. Otherwise he would not have copied it so closely.

Arthur Clarke seems to have died just before the first world war. Leonard Shields passed on about ten years ago. Both were exceptionally fine artists. Shields left a fortune of something like £70,000 at his death. It is, of course, by no means certain that he acquired this fortune from his work as an artist, but he drew prolifically throughout his life and probably earned a high income from his work.



Christmas with Frank Richards

By UNA HAMILTON WRIGHT

Christmas brings Frank Richards to mind recalling those inviting Christmases of his stories. Wharton Lodge, Mauleverer Towers and even Bunter Court (at least in Billy Bunter's imagination) provided fabulous settings for festivities where the oiled wheels of domestic routine offered unlimited hospitality to hungry schoolboys. Prosperity and plenty oozed from the printed page.

Perhaps many of his readers have wondered how Frank Richards' own Christmases were spent? Did he preside over a long festive board and carve endless portions of turkey for his assembled family or did he shun celebration and curl up over the fire with his favourite Horace?

The answer is he found a middle way between these two extremes. Until the outbreak of War in 1939 he used to come and stay at my parents' home in London for the Christmas holiday. Originally he had been part of our household, but finding that the air at Kingsgate suited him so well he began to stay longer and longer in his seaside house there. So when he arrived in London we really felt that it was a homecoming. Sometimes he would come up a month early in time to take part in the final stirring of the Christmas Pudding. In later years when journeys began to be troublesome he would arrive on Christmas Eve complete with a week's work in hand so that he could have a real holiday from the typewriter for the first few days of his stay.

To me it was particularly poignant that he should have died on Christmas Eve - the very day I shall always associate with Uncle Charlie's arrival.

The homecoming was a truly joyous occasion. Father Christmas himself could not have received a warmer welcome. The actual business of arriving was lengthy. Uncle always travelled in an enormous hired car which he had no difficulty in filling. He did not believe in methodical packing when there was a large volume of space on wheels into which parcels and personal belongings could be stowed unceremoniously. On the floor beside Uncle's feet sat Remington, protected from the buffettings of the journey by its pre-1914 leather case. Uncle's feet reposed in a fur-edged foot-warmer, on his lap a hot water bottle and draped over the top a thick tartan travelling rug. Round his shoulders was a soft cashmere muffler - a favourite article of apparel. Somewhere in the car lay his dressing case in its faded canvas jacket. Constructed stoutly of hide and as large as any suitcase, it was luxuriously fitted inside with all manner of bottles and jars and hairbrushes with monogrammed silver tops. Not being interested in the "vanity" aspect of a dressing case Uncle kept important papers and manuscripts in it because it had a good lock!

A trunk of loosely-packed clothes was roped on the back of the car and all sorts of parcels - small toys for the Christmas tree - some little gifts for me "to be going on with," and many varieties of sweets - cluttered the interior. Usually there was a large bunch of the last chrysanthemums from his garden and a basket of apples from his orchard near Folkestone.

Unloading took a considerable time and many were the journeys the driver made down the path with boxes and packages. Eventually my father would come and remind

Uncle that his man wanted to be off. "I say Charlie, old man" he would say, "Pickfords have finished." The driver would be paid off with a handsome tip and Christmas really began.

Next we would settle Uncle into his room. He was rather like a dog and its kennel regarding his choice of room - he liked one that just fitted. He preferred a small one that would take his bed, his typewriter and himself and no more. But it had a lovely view of trees stretching away towards Hampstead Heath and he was passionately fond of trees. In the little hearth a coal fire blazed merrily for he would not work by artificial heat. Under his influence we had no fewer than five coal fires burning daily throughout the Christmas holidays!

After tea we would put the finishing touches to the Christmas Tree, which my father and I had been dressing all the afternoon. It was an enormous tree reaching to the ceiling and we had to use the tall steps to reach the top when placing the fairy-doll in position. This job usually fell to my mother as it was delicate work. When I was very small there were real candles gaily sputtering and whenever I approached the tree Uncle would dart after me - "mind you don't burn yourself, precious." I can remember the relief I felt when we first had electric tree-lights and I could hover near the Christmas tree in safety.

And so to bed on Christmas Eve and to sleep for the minimum time before waking up to the glory of Christmas Day and a fat rustling stocking across the bottom of one's bed. Then down to breakfast and a general exchange of presents. Uncle was always difficult with regard to presents - he had everything. Everything he wanted, that is, and his wants were simple. Christmas Day passed in an atmosphere of joyous relaxation. My father would play the piano for us to sing carols in the morning. Uncle had a powerful bass voice, my mother was a soprano and my father sang tenor. I purred quietly in support a trifle overawed by the galaxy of talent.

Christmas dinner at 1.30 p.m. was the traditional turkey with all its accompaniments followed by Christmas Pudding and hot rum sauce. The curtains were drawn and the lights lowered for us to admire the blue flame of the burning spirit as it engulfed the pudding. Mince pies, tangerines and nuts followed for those with the stamina to continue, of whom Uncle was not one. He was never a good trencherman and my father used to remonstrate with him for eating what he termed merely a "Bird's dinner." Whereupon my uncle would rejoin that Percy (my father) during the course of his life must have eaten his way through a line of sheep stretching from Exeter to London, and a procession of bullocks reaching to York!

Christmas afternoon was spent by the grown-ups either playing with me and my new toys or taking a quiet nap. Usually there were two on duty while the third had forty winks. Uncle was quite inspired when playing with children and would gladly get down on all fours if required or help sort out the mysteries of meccano, he would even bring dolls to life with the most imaginative conversations. Tea round the fire and stimulating conversation interspersed with strings of puns from Uncle, blistering criticism of "canned" radio entertainment buzzed round my head as we ate Christmas cake and hot mince pies - these latter sent up by Uncle from a baker in Folkestone. They would arrive in an enormous cube-shaped biscuit tin carefully packed in pale yellow tissue paper. The sight of yellow tissue still makes me think of the lightest and airiest puff pastry it is possible to imagine.

After tea more music. Uncle would sing "Simon the Cellarer," my mother followed with some arias from her favourite operas, usually including the "Jewel Song" from Gounod's Faust, and my father would play whatever anybody wanted. Uncle was always very pleased to hear the tunes from the Gilbert and (continued on page 114)

By
JIM
C O O K

Fatty Little's Christmas Pudding

By
JIM
C O O K

The junior common room was packed. Rain had been falling all afternoon followed by sleet which later turned to snow, and now, the windows in the common room were covered outside with a snowy blanket.

The sole topic under discussion was the coming Christmas vacation and as the school would break up in the next few days the juniors were making arrangements for spending the holidays.

Handforth having decreed that his study mates, Church and McClure, were to accompany him to Handforth Towers had nothing further to talk about and consequently he was at a loose end. He stood gazing at the bright fire for a few minutes and suddenly looked up.

"What about the poor people of Bannington?" he shouted above the din. The din subsided.

All eyes turned to Handy.

"What about the poor people of Bannington?" drawled Vivian Travers. And Handforth, having gained his audience jumped on to a table and faced the juniors eagerly.

"Listen, you chaps, I've just had a marvellous idea---!"

"Bury it! Dry up, Handforth, Good gad! Ideas at jolly old Yuletide!"

"Yes, at Yuletide," he roared. "You rotters!, here you all are, making your plans for gorging and guzzling all you can at Christmas and the poor in Bannington are probably wondering where their next meal is coming from today!"

"But Handy, old chap," said Nipper gently, "the poor round these parts are always looked after at this time of year. The mayor of Bannington provides Christmas fare from local funds and our own Rev. Goodchild collects money for parcels for his parishioners---"

"If I were Remove captain I wouldn't suggest that was enough" sneered Handforth, appealing to the crowd for support. But he appealed in vain, and his sudden brain-wave, worthy though it were, would have died there and then had not Fatty Little spoken.

"I tell you what, you chaps, I'll make a great Christmas pudding for the poor. A huge one, big enough for two hundred people" he beamed.

"Ha ha ha."

"Good old Fatty!"

And nobody disagreed with this idea.

It was Sir Montie Tregellis-West who promised he would give a fiver to start a collection to go with the pudding. And Ralph Leslie Fullwood suggested a guess-the-weight competition at a shilling a guess would bring in a tidy amount, too.

Nipper, seeing that the juniors intended carrying out Handforth's original idea, took charge, and it was agreed that whoever guessed correctly or nearest would receive £5. The remaining sum would be handed over to the mayor of Bannington for sharing among the poor.

The project, Nipper decided, should be referred to as Handy's Poor Box!

Although the vast majority would enter the competition in a spirit of fun and laughingly hazard a ridiculous weight there was one junior who thought of nothing else. To Enoch Snipe five pounds was a fantastic sum, an amount he had never held at one time. He saw no reason why he shouldn't be included among the poor of Bannington.

Snipe belonged to the East House and he was an unpopular junior. Small and thin, and so round shouldered that he looked hunch-backed, he had sharply pointed features and a foxy expression. His red rimmed eyes were pale and watery. He was a cringing sort of fellow, and was renowned for his vindictive cunning.

It was arranged to display the giant pudding in the Ancient House dining room prior to handing it over to the Mayor of Bannington.

With the assistance of Mrs. Poulter, the House matron, Fatty collected the necessary ingredients and with Hart and Owen major as assistants commenced making the biggest plum pudding he had ever seen.

They devoted their whole half day off to the task and it was not until the next day that Fatty was satisfied the Christmas pudding was cooked, and with the crane arrangement over the large kitchen boiler the wire cage that housed the pudding was raised and the steaming ball was lowered to where a weighing machine was wheeled beneath it.

There it was left to cool and Fatty and his assistants left the kitchen. Afterwards in the presence of Mrs. Poulter Nipper weighed the mass and transferred it to a platform trolley borrowed from old Josh Cuttle.

Somehow it was wheeled up to the dining room in the Ancient House and put on view.

Fatty's Christmas pudding was, by now, the talk of the school, and fellows came to see it out of sheer curiosity. And their curiosity cost them a shilling for Nipper sat by it in charge of the competition.

Enoch Snipe handed his shilling reluctantly to Nipper and received a slip of paper on which to write what he considered the weight of the pudding.

Snipe's greedy eyes showed no interest in the amount he had written down as he gave the paper to Nipper. And later in the evening it was announced that Snipe was the winner by correctly forecasting the weight.

Not that anybody was interested for most of the chaps had written down weights that were more in keeping with bags of coal. Vivian Travers had simply written "one ton!"

But Snipe's uncanny correct guessing had made Nipper suspicious. That Snipe had written down the weight even to the ounce correctly was strange in the extreme and Nipper held over payment.

Together with Snipe's manner when the winner was announced it was evident the East House junior fully expected to be the winner for he showed no elation as was perhaps natural in so surprising a discovery.

Handforth, too, became suspicious. But although Handy went about openly accusing Snipe of trickery nothing could be proved.

Nipper visited the Ancient House kitchen and questioned some of the domestics. He hadn't the faintest idea what he was looking for or what line to pursue.

He glanced over to where the heavy scale had been placed after weighing the

pudding. He was surprised to see that the brass bob which he had moved to ascertain the pudding's weight and the iron discs which were used for hundredweights showed exactly the weight that had registered the pudding.

Now he had got it. The weights had not been removed. They were in the same position as he and Mrs. Poulter had left them. Thus the exact weight of Fatty's offering was there for anyone to see.

Nipper realised most people after weighing articles leave the scales with the weights in position and he had done the same. And when Mary Jane, in reply to his enquiry stated that Snipe had asked to use the scales to weigh a parcel of books on the day the pudding was weighed the mystery was solved.

Snipe did not get the fiver but he got a thrashing instead. Had he not confessed he would have received a ducking in the fountain in the Triangle. But the amount of money to be given to the poor was richer by five pounds and everybody was happy. But Snipe did get the threatened ducking in the fountain after all when it was learned that he had borrowed the shilling from Archie Glenthorne to pay for the entry into the competition.

Only a fellow like Snipe would think of the weights on a scale being left in position.

CHRISTMAS WITH FRANK RICHARDS (continued from page 111)..

Sullivan operas being a great admirer of Sullivan.

On Boxing afternoon we all four went to the Drury Lane pantomime. In later years Uncle dropped out of this expedition as he disliked crowds. The following Saturday we had the Christmas Party - close relations and school friends. We all wore fancy dress and I can remember Uncle looking very convincing as a Chinaman complete with pigtail. He used to be the life and soul of these occasions being expert at entertaining little girls. He and father would operate the cine projector after tea, showing films to keep the little ones amused. Neither of them were mechanical geniuses and I think they were hard put to it sometimes not to use strong language before the children when the film unaccountably wound itself off the reel.

And so the Christmas holiday sped slowly by. Uncle and father composing school songs together and sometimes putting on an impromptu musical comedy act; Uncle and I walking in the park every day feeding the ducks and the deer, and at bedtime there would follow another adventure of "Silverwings" - a fairy character he had invented especially for me.

Eventually Billy Bunter claimed Uncle's attention in the mornings and school claimed mine, but it was reassuring to find him at home in the afternoons pottering about happily and singing to himself strains from the "Merry Widow" or "Pagliacci."

His visits would last anything up to six or eight weeks and then he was gone, back to the bleak wastes of Thanet whipped by the east wind, and back to work at a higher pressure. And when he was gone I would count the weeks till Easter when we would join him by the sea.



SEXTON • BLAKE ANNUAL

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SEXTON BLAKE & WALDO, THE WONDER-MAN!

THE UNION JACK 2^D



THE
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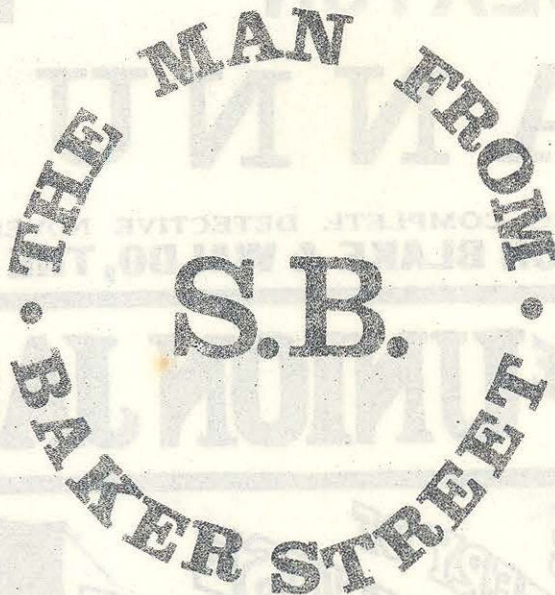
MEMBERS OF
THE SEXTON BLAKE
CIRCLE

*
*
*

By
Chas.
Wright

from my scrapbook

By
Chas.
Wright



LEONARD PACKMAN,
Chairman,
The Sexton Blake
Circle,
East Dulwich,
London, S.E. 22.

Looking through my rather ponderous scrap book some evenings ago I became interested in the various Blake items.

How many readers remember Sexton Blake on the stage? At least four times in 1909 he was represented on the "boards." In October he appeared at The Prince of Wales, Salford, and also at Alexandra Theatre, Hull. In September he was at the Star Theatre, Liverpool, and at the Grand Theatre, Brighton. The play was "Hush Money" or the "Disappearance of Sexton Blake". It was billed as magnificent melodrama, portraying many exciting episodes in the career of the great detective.

The next item I saw was a 1949 cutting from the "Glamorgan County Times" describing a Rhiwbina man's unusual hobby. He was our old friend Maurice Bond, who together with the late Herbert Leckenby started the monthly magazine of the hobby "Collectors' Digest" which of course still pursues the even tenor of its way under the very able editorship of Eric Fayne. The article describes Maurice as an authority on Sexton Blake as he no doubt was (and we hope still is). He had up to 1949 built up a collection of 1500 books dealing with Sexton Blake's adventures. We are indebted to him for the information that in 1904 the publishers got together a team of special writers to boost Sexton Blake. All of them were men qualified in branches of science, the arts, commerce and trade. There were university professors, world travellers and sportsmen of all kinds who could write authentically on almost any subject and any country under the sun. In his opinion the greatest writer of them all was G. H. Teed and I think that a great number of Blake enthusiasts will agree with him.

My next item was the illustrations from a Union Jack of October 1909 called "The Mystery of the Scarlet Thread." Both Blake and Tinker are adorned with bowler hats and stiff choker collars and the police constables have tunics reaching almost to their knees. The crook who is being arrested also sports a choker collar and a

swallow-tailed coat. The illustrations were by H. M. Lewis.

Next I came across a 3-columned description of George Marsden Plummer, stated to be an introduction to this popular old character for new readers. It informs us that but for an accident of birth he would have inherited the Earldom of Sevenoaks and its rent roll of £60,000 a year. He became a policeman but his outstanding ability soon brought him promotion to the rank of detective sergeant and his work in this capacity frequently gave him a hold over rich persons and he commenced a system of blackmail. It was Sexton Blake who eventually exposed his double life and from then on they were concerned together in adventures which lasted until the end of the Union Jack. I have also a replica of the cover of Union Jack No. 2 price one half-penny, published every Friday at Tudor St. and Primrose Hill, London, E.C. The cover depicts the now well-known picture of a body being exhumed. I also noticed the coloured cover of Union Jack number 1000 dated December 1922, entitled "The Thousandth Chance." It depicts Blake, Tinker and Pedro at table with the remains of a Xmas pudding. Sexton Blake is standing with his wine glass in hand, toasting some of his old opponents whose framed pictures hang on the wall, namely Zenith the Albino, Ysabel the Black Duchess, Dr. Huxton Rymer and Algy Somerton, one of the Three Musketeers. Stuck in the corner of this page is an advertisement of the rules of play for "Sexton Blake - this greatest of all card games." I wonder how many readers have played this game, or have even seen it for that matter?

The next item was an article from a 1950 Daily Express called "The Satchel Club" which takes boys and girls back fifty years - to the hero of the day in the magazine of the day and then follows a portion of a story which is taken from a serial by Christopher Stevens in the Union Jack of 1900. An article follows on penny dreadfuls by A.J.C. who was I think A. J. Cruse from a short lived paper named "Hobbies Unlimited" and he supplies us with the information that the Union Jack first appeared in 1880, and only ran for three years. The second issue was reborn as a 1/2d paper in 1894 and continued an unbroken run of success until 1933 when the title was changed to the Detective Weekly. Sexton Blake appeared in number 2, Tinker in 53 and Pedro the bloodhound in No. 100.

An interesting article appeared in the Manchester Guardian in 1950 by David Williams. He describes himself as a devoted adherent of Sexton Blake. He describes Blake as a lean, ageless figure who frolicked with death in four separate 64-page bouts every month. He always wore well cut tweeds that had a magical knack of emerging uncrumpled and obstinately presentable from disused copper mines, opium dens and the engine rooms of submarines illegally acquired by master criminals. Speaking of these criminals, he goes on to say "For some of these opponents of Blake, Scotland Yard stretched out its arms in vain, and opened its handcuffs fruitlessly; these opponents were the "master criminals" by blows and cousins germane to Professor Moriarty. They plagued Blake's days and nights with master scheme after scheme, Blake scotched these schemes alright and did everything except clinch their business by capturing them; they lived to fight on in some future number of the Sexton Blake Library or the Union Jack.

Sir George Martin appears next, visiting an exhibition of boys' papers and periodicals arranged by Northern Branch of the Old Boys' Book Club at Leeds Art Gallery in 1950. He was describing some of the exhibits and mentions the first and latest samples of probably the best loved hero detective of all time and he says: "This is the 72nd year of daring exploits which have been depicted by over one hundred authors." (The number of authors has been considerably augmented since that time.)

The next item I came across was the cover of a pink 1½d Union Jack dated November 23rd, 1918, that period which some of us older readers remember well because of the first world war and the shortage of paper which caused the Amalgamated Press to use almost microscopic print which has been reputed to have ruined more schoolboy eyes than anything else. This U.J. is called "Foes in the Dark" or "The Curious Case of Anthony Bassett." This cover is divided into four portions, each of which contains an illustration, probably to save illustrating the inside. Somebody in Derry Times Pictorial describes the Union Jack as a paper which specialised in the serial detective story featuring the fabulous Sexton Blake of Baker Street, Tinker who acted as the great man's assistant, and Pedro the dog. He says that after a lapse of forty years he can still remember the style of the stories - "Hastily divesting himself of his outer garments, Sexton Blake leapt into the murky Thames. Suddenly a deep bay rent the night air; it was the ever faithful Pedro" - and so on.

The Sydney Sunday Chronicle in 1950 on old Boys' Books, has an illustration of Sexton Blake in his dressing gown, pipe in mouth and reclining in his deep armchair with several newspapers on the floor, with the caption 'Sexton Blake receives a mysterious visitor' and goes on to state that Blake was the schoolboys' Sherlock Holmes and he followed closely in the steps of the master, and it asks us to note the lean figure, hatchet face, pipe and dressing gown, (incidentally the illustration is one of Parker's).

I then came across a Union Jack cover for 1908 called "Libel and Slander", a tale of Sexton Blake illustrated by E. Briscoe. Blake is depicted standing by a table covered with newspapers and holding one in his hand. He has the invariable choker collar, a watch and chain across his chest and a long coat reaching to his knees, with cloth buttons. He has quite a round face and not the lean and hungry look that came later. At the bottom we are informed that a serial is running in this issue by Allan Blair called "Sentenced for Life" the story of a great injustice.

The Times Educational Supplement devotes a column in 1951 to wondering why our affection for Sexton Blake and schoolboy heroes of our youth continues on to middle age and longer, while the heroes of school books such as Cicero etc., don't. It also points out that making a cult of school and detective stories is halfway to making them classics and examinations are trouble enough with questions on Shakespeare, Dickens, etc., without having awkward questions to answer about Harry Wharton & Co. and Sexton Blake. Further on we are informed in a review of E. S. Turner's book "Boys Will be Boys" that Sexton Blake's adventures began in 1893 and "after two hundred million words is still going strong."

From the New Zealand Listener for 1951, is a fine illustration of Blake - head and shoulders, in his dressing gown, and at his back is his own bust and also the famous Baker Street Index, and also an article by myself which I had forgotten.

A new item from the Daily Express of 1952 tells us how a Sexton Blake fan by name a Mr. Tilley, an old sweat of the 1914 war, obtained a job as a night watchman. He took along to work with him one night a Sexton Blake called The Scrap Metal Mystery and while reading it suddenly found himself confronted by a young masked bandit armed with an iron bar. Mr. Tilley grabbed up an ebony walking stick and went for him and despite head injuries from the iron bar, succeeded in overcoming him. He was afterwards congratulated by the management.

From "Answers" in 1953 is a cutting about Alfred Denville, the founder of the Denville Actors Home, who when he was an M.P. was conversing with the then Prime Minister and telling him that a fellow passenger in a train was reading a Deadwood Dick. Said Mr. Baldwin "My favourite is Sexton Blake" and produced one from his

pocket.

The next cover I came across was a 1913 pink one headed - Great New Series - Yvonne v Sexton Blake. Its title was "Beyond Reach of Law" or "A Woman's Revenge"; the first story in what was to become one of the most popular U.J. series.

The next article came from Liverpool Evening Post in 1954 on stopping the sale of objectionable comics. It states that the term comic meant Weary Willie and Tired Tim, Micky Mouse and Charlie Chaplin, and it also stated that this term could be stretched to include Greyfriars and St. Jims and Sexton Blake and Nelson Lee. I wonder how many Blake enthusiasts will agree with that statement?

From the Yorkshire Evening Post I read of the meetings of the Old Boys' Book Club at Leeds with its library of 1200 books, many of them Sexton Blakes and Union Jacks. The author of the article says that nearly all the members are young at heart who look back on the romantic days of youth with nostalgia and that every schoolboy passes through the stage of dreaming that he is foiling master crooks as assistant to Sexton Blake.

Then follows an Evening Standard article in 1957. An East German periodical "Das Neue Lehen" has announced a new serial to be published in 157 instalments and as this is a fortnightly journal it will take six years to complete. It goes on to state:- "protracted as this project may seem; what about Sexton Blake? He began life as the poor man's Sherlock Holmes in 1893 - he was an egg-shaped man with patent leather boots and a bowler hat and deviating from satorial orthodoxy only by his habit of wearing a shirt of fine chain mail under his ankle length fur-lined overcoat. It continues that sixty-three years and three hundred milion words later we find Sexton Blake enviably rejuvenated. He has black sleek hair, rakish features, a sardonic twinkle and a devil-may-care eyebrow. (Ye Gods what descriptions!!)

For the most part the remainder of the Blake items in my scrap album are covers - one a 1932 Christmas enlarged number but still 2d., not one of the old hefty thick double numbers that used to brighten our Xmas. It is entitled "The Secret Passage Murder" or "Who Killed Danton Strong?" I have a picture of the Sexton Blake bust which was designed by Eric Parker. Incidentally I also possess one of these busts. It would be interesting to know how many of them are still in existence. A couple of covers of Union Jacks - one "The Lightning Flash Mystery" introducing our old friend Waldo the Wonder Man, and a G. M. Plummer story called "Plummer's Missing Million."

Just as I was about to close the album I saw an article at the back entitled "Have you seen Sexton Blake?" from Daily Mail by Peter Carson. He states that since 1893 the sale of Sexton Blakes of all kinds have passed five hundred million copies. He adds that both Edgar Wallace and Leslie Charteris wrote Sexton Blake stories, but I think that he is mistaken on this point. He goes on to say that Sexton Blake has had to conform to new world conditions. He now has a plushy office suite in Berkeley Square and when he goes into the Berkeley Buttery for a cocktail, pretty women look at him twice, but, laments Mr. Carson, I fear that the new Sexton Blake has a weak stomach, because in five separate places in a recent story he feels sick when confronted by a few corpses.

* * * * *

BEFORE AND FIFTY YEARS AFTER



SEXTON BLAKE



On my left, Sexton Blake as he was depicted exactly fifty years ago in 1912. On my right, Sexton Blake as he is depicted to-day in 1962. Which do you prefer?

Maybe neither is quite Blake as you visualise him in your mind's eye. Maybe Sexton Blake on your left is a little too old, a trifle too ascetic, a modicum too haggard. Maybe Sexton Blake on your right is a little too pretty, a trifle too young, a modicum too characterless.

In the stories, Blake never seems to have been portrayed as an ascetic in late middle-life. Nor has he been portrayed as the punch-happy, sex-ridden, booze-bewildered private eye who struts his way through countless American and English stiff-covered modern pot-boilers which are here to-day and gone to-morrow.

Whether in 1912 or in 1962 Sexton Blake is a highly intelligent man, in the peak of physical condition, and of great strength of character. That is why he has lived on down the years in the affection of the world.

* * * * *

A Story of
the World-Famous
Detective.

FACE VALUE

By
ERIC FAYNE

"Can I trouble you a moment, Mr. Blake?"

Sexton Blake looked up with a pleasant smile as the manager of the Greyhound peered into his room. The detective had been spending a brief fishing holiday at this comfortable riverside hotel at Marlow, and he was on the most cordial of terms with the portly manager and his staff. Blake was reading his correspondence when the man put his head round the door, but he dropped the letters on one side and waved a hand in welcome.

"Come in, Mr. Moss."

The manager entered the room and closed the door behind him. There was a slightly worried expression on his plump face, which Blake noted.

"Could I ask your advice, Mr. Blake? It may be nothing - it probably is - but still --"

Blake indicated a chair, but Mr. Moss shook his head.

"I won't sit down, sir. It's just about a young fellow who signed in here late last night. The American gentleman. I'm a bit worried about him."

Blake nodded.

"Would that be the youngster who was talking so loudly and volubly in the dining room at breakfast? I thought he was a newcomer."

"That's the feller, sir. He doesn't look much more than a boy, but he's twenty-three. Been in the American Air Force - or so he says. He rang up last night about ten o'clock and asked for a single room. I'm never very happy about receiving new guests as late as that, but he said he had just arrived in Marlow from the States. He had an American accent --"

"An accent you could cut with a knife!" remarked Blake.

"Quite so, sir! At any rate I told him we could accommodate him, and he turned up about twenty minutes later - on foot."

Blake raised his eyebrows.

"No taxi? What about his luggage?"

"That's the point, sir. My porter informed me that the new guest had brought no luggage, so I made it my business to go up to his room. I saw the young man - I found him pleasant, well-dressed, and very American - but all he had in his possession was a small brown paper parcel. It seemed irregular, but he paid me in advance for three days' accommodation. When I enquired about his luggage he said it had been delayed at Plymouth when he caught the boat train to London."

Blake rubbed his chin thoughtfully.

"It might be true," he commented. "I only observed him superficially this morning, though his accent struck me as rather overstressed at times. At any rate, you're on the right side if he has paid in advance for three days. Don't let him run up a bill."

The manager shifted uneasily.

"I certainly shan't, sir, but that isn't all. He went out about five minutes ago, and I was a bit curious about him. I went up to his room to see if I could find out what he carried in the parcel. I was astonished, Mr. Blake! His only personal possessions are a coat-hanger, a china ornament, and a copy of yesterday's Daily Telegraph. No pyjamas, no shaving gear, no raincoat, no nothing --"

Blake whistled softly.

"Travels light, doesn't he? A bit odd, certainly, Mr. Moss. How did he sign the register?"

"Would you come and look at it, sir?" asked Mr. Moss, diffidently.

Down in the vestibule Blake scrutinised the hotel register. The young man's signature was scrawled; Marlon Varro; 1954 Beverly Square, San Francisco, U.S.A.

The detective turned to the manager who stood watching him.

"I should imagine that your new guest is something of a phoney, Mr. Moss, though there may be no ulterior motive. No cause for alarm, probably."

Mr. Moss said, in a low voice:

"Do you think he could be a deserter from the army, on the run - or some criminal escaped from prison?"

Blake smiled faintly.

"If the young man is still out, I should like to have a look at his room, Mr. Moss."

A few minutes later Blake and the manager were in the comfortable bed-room which had been allotted to the mysterious new visitor at the Greyhound. A quick look round showed Blake that what Mr. Moss said was true. The only personal possessions of Mr. Marlon Varro were three in number - a china ornament of a prancing horse, which stood on the table beside the bed, a coat-hanger constructed of wood and wire, and a copy of yesterday's Daily Telegraph.

Blake turned over the ornament. It was ugly in its tawdry cheapness. He examined the innocuous coat-hanger. In the corner of the article, printed in pencil on the wood, was the word COATES.

"I saw that!" volunteered the manager. "Doesn't spell very well, does he?"

"Why should anyone want to print coats on a coat-hanger, in any case?" murmured Blake.

He picked up the newspaper which was lying on the dressing table. Written on the top corner, obviously by a newsagent, was the address: 6, Lime Gardens. Blake replaced the paper as he had found it.

"Is there a Lime Gardens in Marlow?" he enquired of the manager.

Mr. Moss scratched his head.

"Maybe, sir. There's a Lime Avenue, I know, just off Riverclose Road. What do you make of all this, Mr. Blake?"

Blake shook his head.

"Not much, at the moment. There's something a bit odd certainly, and I can only advise you not to give this young man any credit. It may all be harmless. Can you put Mr. Marlon Varro at my table for lunch?"

Mr. Moss eyed him doubtfully.

"I daresay we can think of some excuse to put him there, Mr. Blake, if you don't mind having him with you. Do you think you can find out something about him?"

Blake smiled, without replying.

The detective had started his soup when Mr. Marlon Varro entered the dining room, and the head waiter immediately ushered the young man to Blake's table.

"We have a couple of tables out of use this morning, Mr. Blake," said the waiter. "Would you kind if Mr. Varro joined you?"

"A pleasure!" said Sexton Blake politely.

Marlon Varro seated himself. Well-dressed, rather handsome, and youthful, Mr. Varro soon engaged in conversation and was chattering away about himself. Unobtrusively Blake was watching him as he rattled on. He was twenty-three years of age, he had served in the American Air Force, and had been awarded a medal.

"My kite came a purler, so they sent me to this li'l ole country for a vacation. Mighty good of them, considering I smashed up their kite!" he informed Blake.

Blake agreed, obviously much impressed.

"I believe the management of the hotel wondered at your arriving here without luggage," he observed, casually.

"Sure, I reckon they did," chuckled Mr. Varro. "But it would be unusual to cross the pond with a stack of trunks under your nose, wouldn't it? A guy doesn't travel around with a lot of gear in each hand."

It occurred to Blake that it was just as unusual to arrive at an hotel with nothing but an ornament, a coat-hanger, and an old newspaper, but he did not say so. He let the loquacious Mr. Varro chatter on.

When coffee was brought, Mr. Varro produced a red packet of Fifth Avenue cigarettes. He shook one out of the corner of the packet and Blake accepted it. Both lit up, and Mr. Varro went on talking.

Mr. Varro was a much-travelled young man. He had been in every corner of the world in his twenty-three years, and his father was an important official in the American Embassy in Ceylon.

"You know Ceylon well?" queried Blake, with interest.

"Like the back of my hand!" said Mr. Varro heartily.

"Then you'll be interested in this," remarked Blake. He drew his wallet from his pocket, and extracted a photograph. The picture, taken earlier in the year, showed Tinker and himself standing under an immense archway over which was printed in ornamental letters "Tiger Balm Garden." Palm-trees and a seascape formed an attractive background.

"Ye gods, yes!" ejaculated Mr. Varro. "Not very far from the American Embassy, this place! Many an hour my old man and I have spent here. So you've been around, too, Mr. Blake?"

"Here and there," admitted Blake.

That afternoon Sexton Blake visited Lime Gardens, which he found to be a turning off Lime Avenue. It was a pleasant neighbourhood of largish, semi-detached houses. The homes of people who were moderately well-to-do, Blake decided.

He knocked at the door of No. 6, but there was no response. He rang the bell, and knocked again, but the interior of the house remained silent. Frowning slightly,

Blake went to the adjoining house, where his ring was answered immediately. A tall, middle-aged woman opened the door, and Blake raised his hat.

"Excuse me, madam," he said. "I wonder if you could tell me who lives next door at number six? I have a message for the occupant, but can get no reply."

"I see!" The woman regarded him doubtfully. "Mrs. Coates will be at home, but she rests in the afternoon. You would probably get an answer if you came back about four."

"Thank you, I will do that," said Blake courteously. "Would Mr. Coates be at home then, do you think?"

The woman's look became suspicious.

"If you're just selling washing-machines ---"

"I assure you I'm not selling anything, madam. Something has been found bearing Mrs. Coates's name, and I am anxious to return it to her, that is all."

"Oh, you're from the police!" Her brow cleared. "There isn't a Mr. Coates. Her husband has been dead many years. Mrs. Coates lives quite alone."

"Is that so?" Blake nodded. "Do you happen to know whether Mrs. Coates has had any male visitor recently?"

"Male visitor!" The woman bridled. "Most unlikely, I should think. Mrs. Coates has a middle-aged son who lives in Cornwall, but his visits are very few and far between."

Sexton Blake spent the next hour in sauntering in the neighbourhood. For a time he strolled round in a large fairground near Lime Avenue - there was nothing of the snob in Blake's make-up. There was not a lot to see, however. The main activity of the fair would occur in the evening. By four o'clock he was back at No. 6. This time, after he had knocked twice, the door was opened. An elderly woman, frail and white-haired, stood on the threshold, eyeing him.

"Mrs. Coates?" queried Blake.

"I am Mrs. Coates. Can I help you?"

It was the voice of a gentlewoman. Blake assessed her age as well over seventy.

"There are one or two things I wish to ask you, Mrs. Coates."

"Yes? Excuse my not asking you in. I live alone, you see."

"I have no wish to come in." The detective spoke pleasantly. "Do you happen to know a young man named Marlon Varro?"

The elderly woman shook her head decidedly.

"A young man who says he is twenty-three years of age, but looks younger," persisted Blake. "Medium height, fair, rather nice-looking ---"

The elderly woman shook her head. Her mild eyes were troubled.

"I have no acquaintance with anyone like that."

Blake regarded her thoughtfully.

"Last night, Mrs. Coates, a young man calling himself Marlon Varro, and claiming to have arrived recently from America, registered at the Greyhound Hotel. He had no luggage, and the only items in his possession were a china ornament of a horse, a coat-hanger bearing the name Coates, and a newspaper with your address pencilled in the corner. It seemed to suggest that Mr. Varro had been here."

"Quite a mistake!" said Mrs. Coates firmly.

"Do you happen to have lost an ornament or a coat-hanger, madam?"

For the first time, a smile curved the old woman's lips.

"I have no ornaments, and I haven't lost a thing. It is nothing to do with me, I assure you. Good afternoon."

Blake turned away. At the gate, he looked back. The front door was closed.

Back at the Greyhound, Blake left a message at the reception desk, asking Mr. Varro to visit him in his room when he, Varro, returned to the hotel. It was nearly six before a tap came at his door, and Mr. Varro looked in. The handsome young man was smiling.

"They said you wanted to see me, Mr. Blake." The American drawl was very pronounced.

Blake nodded. He lay back in his chair and lit his pipe.

"Come in. Close the door. I thought we could continue our jolly chat that we started over the lunch table."

Marlon Varro came in. He sat down opposite the detective, and lit a Fifth Avenue cigarette.

"This is mighty good of you, sir," said Mr. Varro.

"The pleasure is mine," replied the detective. "I think we might get better acquainted. You know me as Mr. Blake, but my full name is Sexton Blake. Does that mean anything to you?"

An alert gleam shot into the youngster's eyes.

"Sexton Blake - the private dick? Well, what a surprise!"

"I thought it might be," Blake said dryly. "So now you know that my name is Sexton Blake, while I know that your name is not Marlon Varro."

The young man sat bolt upright.

"You're a liar!" he said angrily.

"Then a fellow feeling should make us wondrous kind," said Blake politely. "Your name is Coates."

The youngster rose, but Blake was ready for him. The detective crossed the room, and stood with his back to the door.

"You're not going yet, Mr. Coates."

"My name isn't Coates!"

"I've been talking to a lady, who, from your facial resemblance to her, is your grandmother," murmured Blake.

With a grunt the youngster sat down on the side of Blake's bed. He stared resentfully at the detective.

"Did she tell you about the raincoat? She bought it for me. She gave £12 for it, but she wouldn't give me any money. Usually she will, but yesterday she was hard as nails."

Blake looked stern. He said:

"What's your christian name?"

Coates shrugged his shoulders.

"Vernon!"

"How old are you?"

Another shrug.

"Seventeen - all but a month."

"You've run away from school?"

Vernon Coates grinned sheepishly.

"I left school three months ago. My parents find me a nuisance - they're only interested in one another - and I hate the sight of them. I ran away from home as soon as I finished with school. I got to London and took a job as a waiter. I've been doing well, but money goes like water. Only Gran knew where I was. I told her. She wouldn't give me away to the old folks at home. Besides, I can usually get her to cough up a bit of cash. She's got plenty."

Blake refilled his pipe and lit it again, watching the young fellow shrewdly as he did so. Then he said:

"I'll tell you what I think you did yesterday, Vernon Coates. You visited your grandmother at Lime Gardens. She welcomed you, I daresay, but she refused to give you any more money. You took from a wardrobe the raincoat which she had bought you, with the coat-hanger still in it. You packed it up in brown paper, with or without her knowledge. You carried this parcel, and also her daily newspaper, when you left her last evening, promising, maybe, to go back to your parents or to return to your job as a waiter in London.

"But on your way to the station you saw a fairground. You stopped at the fair. You spent some considerable time there. You won an ornament at one of the sideshows. You sold your raincoat for a few pounds to one of the loafers there who had an eye for a bargain. You used the brown paper to wrap up the ornament and the now redundant coathanger. You retained the newspaper which you had brought away from your grandmother's house. It was getting late, you had money in your pocket, and you decided to stay for a few days at this very comfortable hotel. So you rang up the hotel.

"That may be incorrect in a minor detail or two, but, broadly speaking, it covers your activities last evening, doesn't it?"

Coates grimaced.

"How did the old girl know all that?" he demanded.

"She didn't! She denied all knowledge of the affair. She wasn't anxious about your welfare, though - she took that for granted - which shows me that similar things have happened before in your life story." Blake gave a hard smile as he noted the look of surprised incredulity on the other's face. "You forget that I'm a detective. It's my business to find things out."

A sneer was twisting the boy's lips.

"And what now, Mr. Private Eye?"

"Now, Mr. Vernon Coates, you will give me the name and address of your parents, and I shall communicate with them."

"Not on your Nellie!" said Mr. Coates.

"If you don't," said Sexton Blake gently, "I shall ring the police, and detain you here till they arrive to take you into custody."

For a moment Vernon Coates glared resentfully; then his face crumpled into a resigned grin. He produced a card from his pocket.

"That's the old man's telephone number," he said, handing it to Blake. "Tell me, Private Eye, how did you come to smell a rat?"

Blake took the card and glanced at it. It bore a Bodmin address.

"Several things, Mr. Coates, several things. Your accent, for instance. Broad Yankee when you were careful, broad English west country when you were careless. Your name was a trifle too Hollywoodish to be genuine. You made an elaborate display of smoking Fifth Avenue cigarettes, which sound and look American but are actually manufactured and sold in this country by the firm of Abdullah. You signed the register with a number of nearly two thousand, Something Square. Even in the States, a square is unlikely to run to two thousand street numbers."

"Neat, very neat!" said Vernon Coates appreciatively.

"And," added Blake, "you claimed to have been all over the world, and you recognized the Tiger Balm Garden of Singapore as being near the American Embassy in Ceylon. Do you wonder I thought you odd?"

"We learn from experience," said Mr. Coates urbanely. "I'll do better next time."

Some six months later Blake was dining with Tinker at the Savoy Hotel in London. They were enjoying an excellent meal and had reached the cheese and biscuits stage when Blake became aware of animated chatter from a table close by.

A young man wearing a smart dinner jacket sat with his back to Blake and Tinker. His companions were two middle-aged ladies, both expensively attired. The young man was doing most of the talking, and something in the tone of his voice touched a chord in Blake's memory.

"So that's how I won my decoration," the young man was saying. "It was nothing, really. I don't know why my colonel thought so highly of what I had done."

"I think you Canadian Mounties are wonderful," said one of the ladies with something like a sigh. "You're too modest, Mr. St. Leger. I'm proud to have met a young man who could do something so brave. I should like you to meet all my friends."

She put out a heavily be ringed hand, and touched him almost reverently on the arm.

The young man laughed pleasantly. He spoke in a slow American drawl.

"You're spoiling me, Mrs. Murgatroyd. You mustn't give me a swollen head to take back with me to the Rockies. We Mounties just do our job. If it's dangerous at times, well, it's all in the day's work. We're a happy crowd."

"I think you're a hero - a real hero!" said the second lady emphatically. "I shall never forget this evening, and I am so glad you were able to spare the time to be our guest."

"You're too kind!" said the young man.

"Mr. St. Leger," said the first lady soulfully, "I have a favour to ask. I would dearly value a photograph of you in your Mountie uniform."

"I'll remember that!" promised Mr. St. Leger. "Just as soon as I get back to the Rockies I'll look one out for you and mail it to you pronto. Gee, I guess I'll have a picture specially taken for you."

Tinker was regarding Sexton Blake with interest, watching the changing expressions on his chief's face.

"Do you know that young hero?" he enquired in a low voice.

Blake smiled wryly.

"We have met!" he said.

As Blake and Tinker left their table, they heard the trans-Atlantic drawl of Mr. St. Leger.

"In the Mounties a man learns to be tough, Mrs. Murgatroyd. It's no good being chicken when it comes to shooting the rapids --"

Vernon Coates was on his travels again.

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(TWO FIRST-CLASS NEW NOVELS OF SEXTON BLAKE APPEAR EVERY MONTH IN THE WORLD-FAMOUS SEXTON BLAKE LIBRARY)

* * * * *
* * * * *

By
F.
Vernon
Lay

AGE CANNOT WITHER

By
F.
Vernon
Lay

A Dissertation on Sexton Blake with particular reference to his exploits as recorded in the Boys' Friend Library

Mr. Sexton Blake sat in the public bar at the Plough, puffing away at his huge pipe, and drawing plots on the table with beer-dipped finger. As usual he was behind with his copy and at any moment he expected the pub door to open to admit one or more hirelings from the Amalgamated Press out for his blood. Many a time he had taken refuge in the Gents until the hunters had departed for his other haunts. But to-day inspiration arrived before the hunters in the form of a Breton onion-seller asking for the "patron" and so was born the famous series "The League of Onion Men." For our Mr. Sexton Blake was none other than Gwyn Evans, one of the most popular recorders of the adventures of Sexton Blake. He was known in the Plough and elsewhere as Mr. Sexton Blake from his habit of impersonating the detective. From time to time he would vary this by disguising himself as some of his own characters and when he was "in the money" the beer flowed freely and his friends and syncophants caught the fever and the fun flowed fast and furiously as Gwyn appeared as a dope fiend with painted greenish-white face and black-rimmed eyes, switching later to an effeminate man, mincing in with high heeled shoes and lipstick, powder and paint. When not at the Plough he lived at the Post Office Social Club where his wife kept up the tradition by appearing as a ghost and this element of the bizarre is displayed to full advantage in many of his stories. Yet although his style and plots were so unusual as to stand out from those of his more practical and plebian colleagues events have proved that one cannot always be right in these judgments. For instance for years we thought that Union Jack 1232 "The Case of the Disqualified Derby" was written by Gwyn Evans. Mr. Tom Stenner has recorded how for some short time he eked out a precarious existence writing for the Amalgamated Press and that two of his published efforts were the above-mentioned story and Union Jack 1223 "The Mystery of the Blue Ensign" - which story he regards as one of the best he has ever written. And this has since been substantiated from official sources.

This is the fascination of the Sexton Blake saga. It is not only the story of

the Immortal Detective (see C. D. Annual 1961) but that of the numerous scribes who recorded his adventures from that momentous day in 1893 when Harry Blyth debated whether to call his detective Sexton Blake or Gideon Barr, to the present day when a dozen or so talented authors present to us the sexy, sadistic stories that we are told, and no doubt correctly, represent the public taste to-day. As yet our present-day team of authors have not acquired the background that comes with time and as the spot-light is constantly upon them in a way that was not generally possible with the giants of yesteryear it is likely that there will never be the same glamour with them. There will be no need to search for clues to identities and pseudonyms and for the fascinating chase of once well-known authors who have abandoned the profession for other means of livelihood. As the passing years take their toll the task becomes more difficult, nay almost impossible and yet even now it is surprising the information that rewards our indefatigable team of researchers. How long will it be before they find the inn in the West Country where, we hope, mine host, Lewis Jackson (Jack Lewis) still presides?

At and after the turn of the century there were numerous detectives featured in the various papers but as time went by it resolved itself into a duel between Nelson Lee and Sexton Blake. The chroniclers of Nelson Lee were originally Maxwell Scott and Melton Whyte and it was not until 1915 with the birth of the Nelson Lee Library that the services of the regular team of Sexton Blake authors were switched to stories of Nelson Lee. The characters of Lee and Blake and Tinker and Nipper were so similar that in many instances it was not until the story was actually scheduled for publication that it was finally decided which it was to be. By this time Sexton Blake was firmly established and the larger range and variety of stories provided by the more numerous team of authors is I think one of the main reasons for his greater popularity. When with issue 112, the Nelson Lee introduced St. Franks, Lee was doomed. The combination of schoolmaster-detective cannot be said to have ever been a success.

Yet at the same time this abundance of chroniclers has its disadvantages. At one time the attempt was made to extract from the saga the life-story of Sexton Blake, starting with his father, Dr. Berkeley Blake, and arriving at his birth-date from the date of the sinking of the "Princess Alice" which was mentioned in "Sexton Blake's First Case" (U.J. 69). But soon so many contradictions occurred that the attempt had to be abandoned. It is not possible to imagine Sexton Blake foiling the war-time agents of Nazi Germany at the age of ninety!--and whilst it is possible for Pedro to give pride of place to his son and heir, are we to assume that our present-day reporters record the doings of Sexton Blake Junior? True Blake once did have a wife who soon vanished into limbo - could she be the reason why he was so able to withstand the blandishments of Yvonne, Roxane, the Black Duchess and the other delightful females who would have dearly loved to be Mrs. Sexton Blake. In 1933 came the famous Brother of Sexton Blake Series (Nos. 1, 2 and 4 Detective Weekly) in which we learn that old Berkeley Blake had two sons, Nigel and Sexton. And yet way back in 1905 he had another brother whose name was Henry Blake. He, like Nigel, was a crook and the story of his duel with Sexton Blake is graphically told in the Boys Friend Library No. 10 "Sexton Blake's Honour!" Most of these early Boys' Friend Libraries were reprints of serials mainly from the Boys' Friend Weekly, the Boys' Herald and the Boys' Realm but, to date, there are quite a number of these early tales that are described as original and until other evidence is forthcoming are regarded as such.

Most of these early Sexton Blake yarns can be described as melodramas, where black is black and white is white and the stories follow the famous Pearl White

tradition of whetting one's appetite for the next instalment, and to those of us who are old enough to look back to pre-war values, they stand for something, a standard of conduct, of morality and of something which to-day one seldom hears, and this is "honour". "Sexton Blake's Honour" is a story in this tradition and we are told how Blake's life is saved on several occasions by the criminal he is chasing, how they finally confront each other and he realises he has been chasing his own brother, and the consequent struggle between his honour and his concern for his own flesh and blood, how he twice enables Henry Blake to escape from arrest by Inspector Spearing and the Inspector's gradual realisation of the true position and his very human understanding of Blake's dilemma. The portrait of Blake on the cover by H. M. Lewis shows him to have what appears to be an American crew-cut and very intense eyes and is far away from the later portraits by Parker that we know so well.

The tales that follow are quite good but not of any particular interest except perhaps 68 "Sexton Blake's Trust" which has a fine countryside cover by my late departed friend Ernest Briscoe. His cover for No. 96 "The Mervyn Mystery" giving his impression of Blake, Tinker and Pedro is best passed over. For all his remarkable talents in depicting landscape and architecture Briscoe's portraits were very weak and did not improve until 1935 when his main work appeared in the Boys' Own Paper. "The Mervyn Mystery" is of great interest. By Michael Storm and featuring George Marsden Plummer it appears to bridge the gap between Union Jacks 302 and 315. It is a sentimental story dealing with Plummer's ally Rupert Forbes who fagged for Blake at school and whose life Blake had saved, thus creating a bond between them in spite of their being on different sides, a bond that was finally broken by the death of Forbes.

No. 72 "The Coster King" is a remarkable effort. As yet the author is unknown and it is distinguished by a wealth of characters from London's East End of the day, drawn in the manner of Charles Dickens and an outstanding contrast from the average Blake story.

Nos. 96, 102 and 105 are too well-known to be dealt with here at length. They deal with Blake's adventures at school, and at Oxford in company with Spots Losely who was destined to be his companion on many adventures in Africa and elsewhere. They are not particularly inspiring tales and, as in one of them, we read of Tinker's first meeting with Sexton Blake, we reach another of those impasses so frequent in the Saga. If this account be correct then Herbert Maxwell's in U.J. 53 must be incorrect, and of the two versions, I prefer Maxwell's.

123 and 124 deal with Blake and Tinker's adventures in Africa with the Zulu Shumpogaas and whilst quite readable adventure yarns, do not, in my opinion, come up to the standard of Hayter's Loseley and Lobangu African epics, and the shade of Rider Haggard and Umslopogass runs through all these tales.

An unusual picture of Pedro distinguishes the cover of No. 131 "Detectives Ltd." a run-of-the-mill Spearing story. A better picture adorns the cover of 134 "The Mill-Master's Secret," an interesting tale of the Lancashire Mills, in the style of Allan Blair.

It is peculiar that the next Sexton Blake Boys' Friend Library No. 155 "Ten Years' Penal Servitude" also had Pedro for the cover. It is a good tale of Scotland and Dartmoor with plenty of local colour.

165, 172, 177 and 199 are not particularly distinguished stories. 165 and 199 are presumably from the pen of Wm. Murray Graydon and it would not surprise me if

172 and 177 were also.

In 228 "The Great Mining Swindle" we meet Huxton Rymer for the first time in the Boys' Friend Library but it is not Teed at his best.

229 and 232 are included as they deal with Tinker and his schooldays but really they have no part in the saga.

"Sexton Blake's Zulu" No. 246 by Hayter is a famous story and has been dealt with elsewhere so we will pass on to 248 "The Ghost of Rupert Forbes" (no connection with the Rupert Forbes of No. 96). As it features Inspector Martin it is almost certainly by Michael Storm especially as Forbes has an accomplice Tony just as Forbes did in No. 96.

"The Mystery of the Diamond Belt" No. 302 is the first Boys' Friend Library by popular Lewis Carlton and it is a worthwhile tale. 429 and 433 are famous Lobangu adventures.

The remaining Blake stories do not warrant special comment so we refer the reader to the Appendix for details. But to sum up, these stories bring back memories of days that are gone and are well-worth the reading by those who enjoy clean tales well told.

APPENDIX 1. Authorities consulted: Jack Lindsay "Fanfrolico and After," Nina Hammett "Laughing Torso," Tom Stenner "Sport for the Million," Detective Magazine.

APPENDIX 2.

<u>Boys' Friend Library No.</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Author</u>
10	Sexton Blake's Honour	Norman Goddard
27	A Woolwich Arsenal Mystery	E. J. Gannon
39	Sexton Blake in Siberia	W. M. Graydon
49	The Sleep Walker	"
54	Tiller & Tideway	E. W. Alais
57	Sexton Blake's Clerk	E. J. Gannon
68	Sexton Blake's Trust	"
72	The Coster King	?
88	The Mammoth Hunters	Hayter
96	The Mervyn Mystery	Norman Goddard
102	Sexton Blake at School	Hayter
105	Sexton Blake in the Sixth	"
107	Sexton Blake at Oxford	"
123	Sexton Blake in the Congo	W. M. Graydon
124	Across the Equator	"
131	Detectives, Ltd.	Norman Goddard
134	The Mill-Master's Secret	?
155	Ten Year's Penal Servitude	T. C. Bridges
165	Sexton Blake's Quest	W. M. Graydon
172	Sexton Blake, Foreman	?
177	Sexton Blake, Steward	?
199	Sexton Blake, Spy	?
228	The Great Mining Swindle	Teed
229	Tinker's Schooldays	Hayter
232	The Four Musketeers	"
246	Sexton Blake, Zulu	"

Boys' Friend
Library No.

Title

Author

248	The Ghost of Rupert Forbes	Goddard
302	The Mystery of the Diamond Belt	Lewis Carlton
429	Through Unknown Africa	Hayter
433	In the Hands of the Head Hunters	Hayter

2nd Series

388	Reprint of 102	
392	" " 105	
396	" " 107	
515	The Stunt Club	Walter Edwards
	(Guest appearance of Sexton Blake only)	
655	They Came to Spy	Brearley reprinted from Pilot
671	The Flaming Frontier	"
691	The Mystery of the Dope Den	John Andrews
698	The Secret of the Missing Convict	"
687	The Stationmaster's Secret	"

My thanks are due to Derek Adley, Bill Lofts, Len Packman and Walter Webb for assistance and any errors are my fault not theirs.

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THE MYSTERY OF THE CHINESE ANTIQUE

Our picture which introduces this year's SEXTON BLAKE ANNUAL shows the cover of a Union Jack in late 1920, very soon after the paper was permanently enlarged and coloured covers introduced. The story was by Edwy Searles Brooks and introduced his popular Waldo, the Wonder Man. The artist was E. E. Briscece.

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Prospectus of Greyfriars School

Compiled by ARTHUR V. HOLLAND

Friardale, Kent, England.

Telephone: 125 Friardale.

Telegrams: "Friars, Courtfield."

GREYFRIARS SCHOOL

Founded by the Ancient Order of Grey Friars, A.D. 1472.

Pleasantly situated near the coast of Kent, Greyfriars is one of the best known of our great public schools.

It has accommodation for 250 scholars, the fees being £80 per annum (exclusive of special tuition). Admission may also be gained by scholarship.

The school is divided into Forms, under the captaincy of George Wingate, who is assisted by prefects. Each form has its cricket and football elevens, matches taking place during the season with other public schools. There are two large Museums, one for Natural History and one for Art. The school is amply furnished with racquets courts (hard and soft ball), fives courts, gymnasium, sanatorium, and other buildings.

The River Sark, which flows through Friardale, is used by the Greyfriars boys for boating and bathing purposes.

The management of the school affairs is vested in a Committee of Governors, who meet at the Carlton Hotel on the first Wednesday in each month. The present members of the board include Colonel James Wharton, Sir Bevan Snooke, the Honourable Archie Chalmers, Peter Purkiss, Esq., J.P., the Reverend B. Lamb, D.D., and the Headmaster.

THE STAFF

Headmaster:.....	Herbert H. Locke, M.A.
Assistant Masters:.....	Paul Prout, M.A.
.....	E. Mordaunt Price, M.A.
.....	A. J. Capper, B.A.
.....	Henry Quelch, M.A.
.....	Ernest Blaine M.A.
.....	Bernard M. Twigg, B.A.
.....	Lawrence Lascelles, B.Sc.
Gardener.....	Joseph Mimble
Porter.....	William Gosling
Head Cook.....	Mrs. Kebble
Page-boy.....	Fred Trotter
School Tuckshop.....	Jessie Mimble (Proprietress)

APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION

A filled in application form must include:-

- A. Enrolment Fee of £2. 2. 0.
- B. Certificate of character from present Headmaster.
- C. An Extract of Birth Certificate.
- D. All monies for Fees and etc., must be sent to the Headmaster.
- E. A full term notice, in writing, of intention to remove boy from school is required.

SCHOOL REGULATIONS

Hereunder for your guidance is a copy of current School Regulations. Will you please study these which have been framed to facilitate the efficient conduct of the school and for the convenience of both parents and the school authorities.

Entry to the school: Boys may be enrolled a year or two ahead. It is advisable to send in Entrance Form early, in order that reservation may be made and disappointment avoided.

Pocket Money: A regulation amount of pocket money is allowed each boy in the Junior School, which must be deposited with the Headmaster at the beginning of each term. Pocket money of any reasonable amount may be given or sent direct to boys in the Middle and Senior Schools.

Vacations: There are vacations at the end of each term. No leave will be granted during term, except in extraordinary circumstances.

Visits of Parents: Parents desiring to visit the school at any time must arrange in advance with the Headmaster.

Telephone Calls: Parents are not permitted to make telephone calls to boys except in cases of urgency, and then only if the call is addressed in the first instance, to the Headmaster. Boys may make calls only when permission has been granted by the Headmaster.

Returning to School: The dates for the beginning and end of holidays are clearly stated, and no boy may either leave school before the holidays begin or return after the day specified for reopening of school, except for urgent reason.

SCHOOL ROUTINE

Rising-bell	7 a.m.
Chapel	7.45 a.m.
Breakfast	8.15 a.m.
Morning School	9 a.m. to 12 noon
Dinner	1 p.m.
Afternoon School	(with the exception of Wednesdays and Saturdays), 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
Recreation	4 p.m. to 5.30 p.m.
Tea (either in studies or Big Hall)	5.30 p.m.
Calling Over	6.30 p.m.
Preparation	6.45 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Recreation (Juniors)	8 p.m. to 9 p.m.
Recreation (Seniors)	8 p.m. to 9.30 p.m.

Passes out of gates are given on application to, and at the discretion of any

master or prefect.

Failure to observe the times and regulations stipulated above will be reported to the Form-master of the delinquent, or, in exceptional cases, to the Headmaster.

SCHOOL RULES

1. Boys will be respectful to the masters and prefects appointed in authority over them.
2. They shall refrain from smoking and from using doubtful language.
3. The school boundaries are clearly defined, and no boy must go beyond them, unless he has a pass signed by a master or prefect.
4. The Greyfriars cap, bearing the school colours - blue and white - must be worn by all scholars when outside the school premises. Straw-hats, bearing school colours are permitted in summer.
5. The games of cricket and football are compulsory.
6. Boys must obey orders smartly, implicitly and with cheerfulness.
7. Sixth-Formers only are privileged to have fags.
8. Boys buying goods on credit from local tradesmen must on no account allow their liabilities to exceed the sum of ten pounds.
9. Wilful damage to school property will be punished. The carving or writing of names on any part of the building whatsoever or upon the trees in the playing-fields is prohibited.
10. Every boy must attend chapel at least once during Sunday.
11. Bicycles are allowed, but application for the use of motor-cycles and other vehicles must be made beforehand to the Headmaster.
12. No boy is permitted, under any pretext whatever, to carry firearms, catapults, or other weapons, likely to inflict hurt or damage.
13. No boy must entertain strangers of a doubtful character.
14. No boy may absent himself from lessons without the Headmaster's special permission.
15. Prefects are empowered with the right to cane.

NOTE: This Prospectus of Greyfriars School was compiled from information given in the "Magnet" stories, its Editor's Chat and lift out editions of "Greyfriars Herald," and various Supplements of interesting matter relating to the school.

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STUBS versus INDYS!

By CoMiCuS

Everyone knows the Terrible Three, the Fistical Four, and the Famous Five, but who now remembers the Tomboy Trio? Their adventures ran for well over a year in the pages of "PUCK".

Daisy Morris was the leader of this triumvirate of feminine fun and girlish glee, and the members of the 'Co' were, Leonie Tallent - the inevitable fat one, and Soo San - a Chinese charmer.

The seat of learning the three girls attended was Miss Spink's Seminary for Young Ladies, 'a large, square white house, on the outskirts of Wilmhurst, a sleepy old town, not far from Brighton'. What a pity it is that Daisy and Co. never met the girls from that other school in Kent - Cliff House. They would have wakened them up considerably!

Daisy arrived in March 1909, and was immediately asked by Leonie - "a very fat girl, with a turned up nose" -

"Are you a Stub or an Indy?"

"What on earth's that?" queried Daisy in bewilderment. "I'm neither, as far as I know."

"Oh, but you must be one or the other," expostulated Leonie. "Haven't you seen what Spinkie says in the prospectus? 'Special attention paid to altering and forming the characters of stubborn or indolent pupils.' Well, we're all one or the other, and so we're divided into two sections, the Stubs and the Indy's. I do hope you're a Stub. What were you sent here for?"

"To finish my education, I believe," replied Daisy. "Oh, and now I come to think of it there was a little trouble about my refusing to practise Czerny for the full hour each day."

"Oh, joy, joy! That's stubbornness itself!" cried Leonie, dancing around with an agility amazing for one so fat.

The war between the Classics and Moderns at Rookwood pales into insignificance beside the struggles between the Amazons at Miss Spink's Seminary. And the modern 'Teen-ager' has nothing on them either. Here is Soo-San's opening speech:

"Welly nicely," murmured Soo San complacently. "Captlin man on big water puff-puff, he kissee Soo San."

"The captain of the steamer kissed you, did he?" asked Josephine Winter, the acknowledged leader of the Indy's. "Some girls get all the luck."

I can recommend these stories of school-life in the so called quiet days of 1909. You'll be surprised!



By
Robert
Mortimer
*

MOVIE

MEMORIES

By
Robert
Mortimer
*

The other evening, looking over some old "Magnets" and "Gems" in a case, I came across the picture of a beautiful girl with fair golden curls. It took me back over forty years.

It was during the first World War; I was about sixteen, and I fell in love with this lovely girl. For years I became her ardent admirer, but we never met, for she was only a shadow on a silver screen.

Like myself, many others must have admired her, for she became famous as "The World's Sweetheart." Pinned to the photograph was a delightful little poem which I think is worth repeating:-

Oh, bright-eyed, brown-haired, laughing maid,
At nought dismayed, at nought afraid,
How many times your face I've seen,
Upon the motion-picture screen.

With untied hair, and manners wild,
I've seen you as the simple child
I've seen you act the haughty dame--
Yet e'er to me you seem the same.

A maid lighthearted, free from care,
With smile bewitching, bright and fair.
It seems to me you cannot know
Of life's sad trials and hidden woe.

Could unkind grief your joy molest?
Do you have trouble as the rest?
No! Sorrow, sadness, and despair,
Must strangers be to one so fair.

Born in Toronto, Canada, on April 8th, 1894, of British parentage, she went to America whilst very young, and as Mary Pickford became world-famous. I saw most of those early films, and what memories they recall: "Hearts Adrift," "Tessibel of the Storm Country," "Pollyanna," "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm," "Poor little Rich Girl," and so many others.

Of course, those early silent pictures, compared with the polished technicolor productions of to-day, may seem crude and unsophisticated, but they had a charm and simplicity lacking in present day films.

Mary Pickford to-day is a dignified grey-haired lady of sixty eight, but to me she will always be the girl with the golden curls.

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THE MAGIC OF VERSE

Verse lives in the memory. Not of necessity good verse. Perhaps just a jingle. It may be a matter of opinion as to what constitutes good verse. There must be some quality in any bit of doggerel which remains in the memory while scores of years slide by.

Sentiment was often laid on with a trowel in verse written in Victorian times. It must have been popular, and even to-day many of the old tear-jerking jingles are remembered with affection by those who read them in old-fashioned "readers", seated at old-fashioned desks in old-fashioned schools.

Does anyone recall the following? It was called "The Old School-House," and I have reproduced just the few verses I remember.

The school-house now is gone, I know, that old brown house so queer;
 Yet I can see the boys and girls, their merry voices hear.
 I wander with the boys again, along the rural glade;
 We buy and sell our pocket toys, again our jack-knives trade.

The long, low seat for little boys stood by the master's chair,
 And John and Sam and Bill and I were each located there.
 Where are they now, those merry boys with whom I joined in play?
 They've run their race, their battle's o'er, and they have passed away.

The old brown house, the playground trees, the fence along the lane,
 All, all are gone, and in their place a field of waving grain.
 Old memories cluster round the spot, the spot so dear to me,
 When life was one long summer day, so joyous, bright, and free.

Obviously anyone who remembers those jingles must be blessed or cursed with a well-developed streak of sentimentality. In this cynical age it occurs to us that when an old school-house disappears it is more likely to be replaced by a supermarket than a field of waving grain. Was our school life ever one long summer day - joyous, bright, and free? When we look back at the hills, time clothes them with a hazy purple, and we forget how steep we found those hills at times.

What about the following? A few more verses from a poem which recalled schooldays.

Within, the master's desk is seen,
 Deep-scarred by raps official;
 The warping floor, the battered seats,
 The jackknife-carved initial.

Long years ago a winter sun
 Shone over it at setting,
 Lit up its western window-panes
 And low eaves' icy fretting.

It touched the tangled golden curls,
And eyes with grief o'erflowing,
Of one who in her steps delayed
When all from school were going.

For near her stood the little boy
Her childish favour singled;
His cap pulled low upon a face
Where pride and shame were mingled.

He saw her lift her eyes; he felt
The soft hand's light caressing,
And heard the tremble of her voice,
As if a fault confessing.

"I'm sorry that I spelt the word:
I hate to go above you,
Because" -- the brown eyes lower fell --
"Because, you see, I love you."

Still memory to a grey-haired man
That sweet child-face is showing.
Dear girl! the grasses on her grave
Have forty years been growing!

He lives to learn in life's hard school
How few who pass above him
Lament their triumph and his loss,
Like her, because they love him.

Verily those old jingles had something or I should not have remembered them. I make no apology for setting them down here, for they will either touch a chord in a sentimental heart or bring a hearty laugh to the cynic.

If St. Jim's had been a Secondary Mixed we might have thought of the little boy as Figgins, and the dear girl as Cousin Ethel. Or is that going too far? Boys are usually far more quixotic than girls.

And what about the verse which many of us remember from the Greyfriars Herald? Bits like this:

Long life to Wharton! May his reign
Be prosperous and joyous;
May no mad fool aspire to rule
The Form, and thus annoy us.
May Wharton always rule the roost,
He's active, keen, and clever;
Through storm and shine, we'll toe the line,
And rally round him ever!

Hundreds of jingles of this type appeared down the years, many of them of high quality. They all were published anonymously, but we know that Mr. G. R. Samways wrote a great deal of the verse which featured in the Companion papers.

In this one, the poet grew sentimental about the end of the cricket season:

Willow, 'tis hard to leave you,
I am oppressed with gloom.
Silently I must heave you
Into the lumber-room.
There you will lie and languish,
Many a weary day;
Leaving me full of anguish
Till you return next May.

And what about this bit which comes to my mind:

How would I like to spend the vac?
Why, with a kit-bag on my back
And a stout cudgel in my hand
I'd tramp throughout the giddy land.
Strange misadventures I might meet
I might not get enough to eat.
I might be sand-bagged after dark
By some low, money-grabbing shark.
But if I boasted ample tin
I'd stay at some sequestered inn ----

And so one could keep on. What about this one?

Matron! I am feeling queer.
Atishoo!
Matron! It's the flu, I fear!
Atishoo!

Yea, verily, we loved those old chunks of verse, sentimental or humorous.
We owe a lot to the men and women who wrote the jingles, long ago.

"The piccaninnies sitting round the fireside bright
Hanging up their stockings on a Christmas night --"

(EDITOR'S NOTE: I really must step in here and cry "Halt!"
Our contributor seems prepared to go on for ever.
That reminds me of a little rhyme:

I come from haunt of coot and hern
I make a sudden sally ---

(NOTE FROM THE PRINTERS: We refuse to print any more jingles.
You'll be getting us at it ourselves.
So there!)



By
Vera
Nicholls

BED-TIME AT MORCOVE

By
Vera
Nicholls

The long summer day was over, and the Morcove girls were trooping, very reluctantly, up to their dormitories. They were in good spirits, but by no means anxious to go to bed. There were skirmishes between Fourth-formers and their rivals of the Fifth, and shrieks of laughter floated down the stairs.

"Girls! Girls!" called out Miss Redgrave, the young mistress of the Fourth form.

"Silence up there!" came the sharp tones of Miss Massingham, mistress of the Fifth. "You will be sorry if I am obliged to come up to you."

"You can keep away, zank you!" came the muttered reply of Queen Naomer Nakara, royal scholar from the desert country of North Africa.

"One of these days," whispered Polly Linton, "she will hear you."

"Good job, too!" said Naomer. "She is nothing to do with our form, anyway. The poor Fifth are greatly to be pitied."

There were murmurs of approval, but it seemed to Betty Barton, the captain of the Fourth, that although they had a more easy-going form-mistress, things were getting a little out of hand in the Fourth-form dormitory.

Poor Paula Creel had provided the usual sport for Polly and Naomer, and the laughter and noise were increasing. Somehow a pillow fight had developed, and feathers were all over the place.

Scarcely a bed was in its right position, and the dormitory looked a shambles.

"Easy on, girls!" called out Betty. "Let's straighten up now."

The culprits, realising the state of the room, collapsed with laughter, leaving all the tidying up to the innocent ones.

Naomer, one of the most guilty, felt the need for a drink after her exertions, and hurried out of the dormitory.

A bat flew in at one of the high windows, and there were loud shrieks of feigned alarm. Paula Creel, vaguely aware that a bat was some sort of a flying mouse, slid for safety under one of the beds.

Amid shrieks of merriment Polly pulled her out from beneath the bed, and chided her for cowardice.

"Look here," said Betty, uneasily. "Let's get to sleep now. There'll be a row if a mistress or a prefect comes up."

At this moment Naomer arrived back, carrying several glasses, a jug of water, and a large packet of sherbet. Before the girls realised what she was doing, she emptied the whole packet of sherbet into the jug. Immediately it frothed up, spreading speedily over the floor, and over the squealing Paula.

"Wow!" screamed Paula. "You silly cuckoo - you --"

"What the diggins, queek!" shrieked Naomer, not knowing how to deal with

the frothing mixture.

Just then Miss Redgrave entered the dormitory.

"Girls!" she said sternly. "You can be heard all over the school. Why are you not in bed?"

She saw Naomer's predicament, and, in spite of her anger, Miss Redgrave could not help joining in the laughter.

"Where did you get that - that fearful liquid?" she demanded.

"I went down ze stairs," replied Naomer, "bekas I was zirsty."

"Well, drink it up, now," directed Miss Redgrave. "Next time, Naomer, quench your thirst with water."

Naomer make a valiant effort to drink up the sizzling sherbet, and her antics were too much for Miss Redgrave. The girls were helpless with laughter.

"If you have quenched your thirst, Naomer, you may give me the jug," said Miss Redgrave.

Naomer handed over the jug.

"It is so nice - I advise you to have a drink, too!" she said breathlessly.

Miss Redgrave smiled, took the jug, but did not sample the contents.

"I shall put out the lights in five minutes," she said severely. "Any girl who is out of bed when I return will be punished. Remember that!"

When the form-mistress returned, five minutes later, every girl was apparently fast asleep. With a little smile, Miss Redgrave turned out the lights and took her departure.

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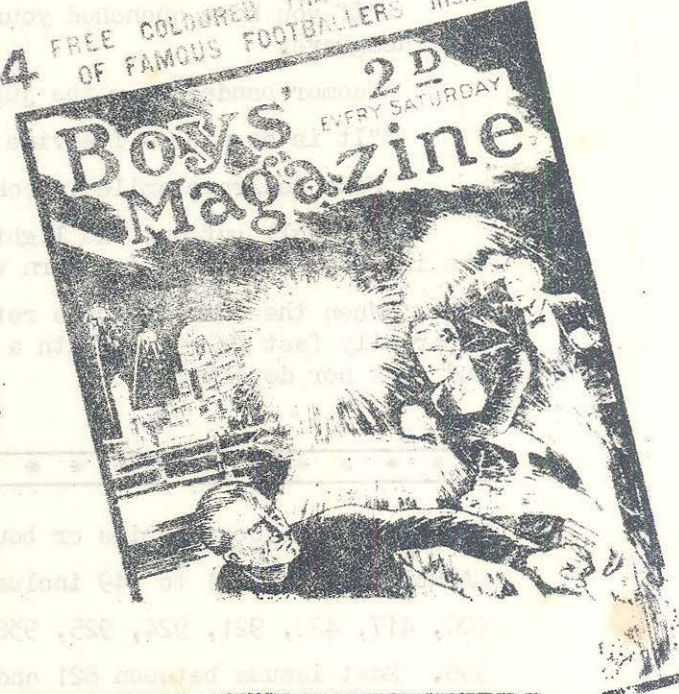
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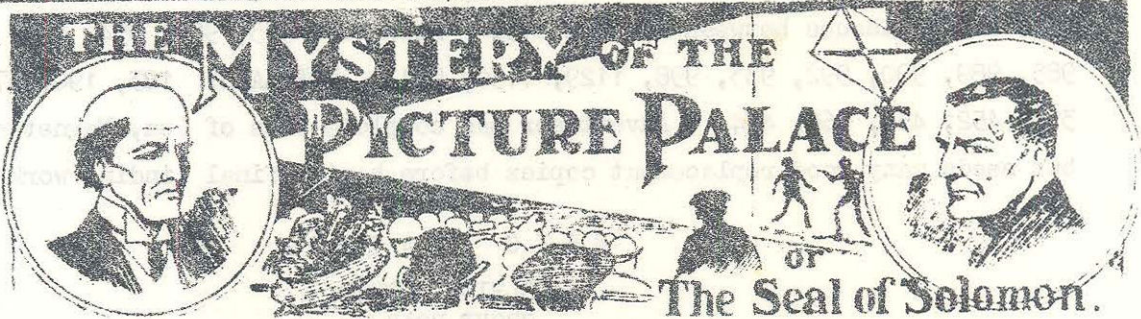
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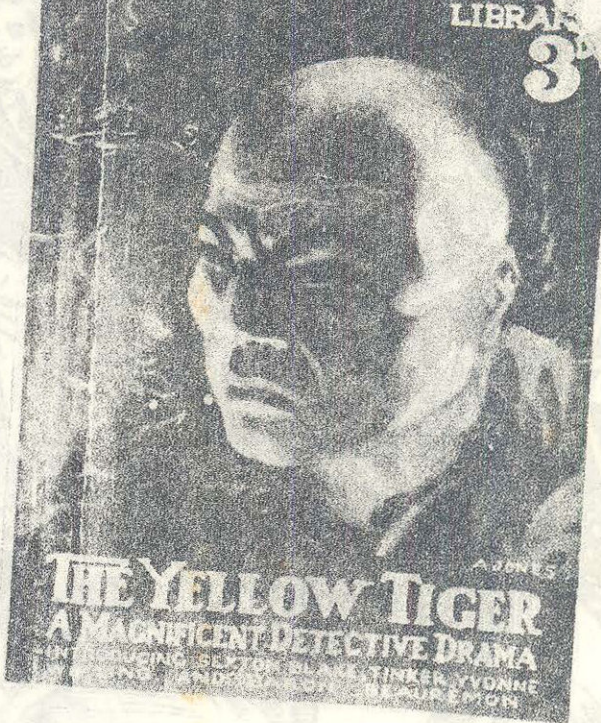
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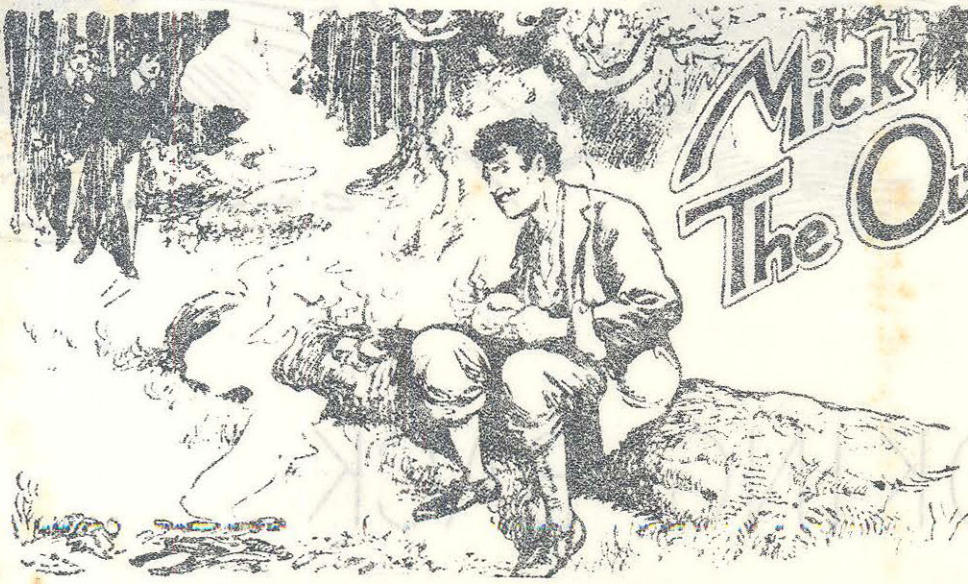
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