

STORY PAPER COLLECTORS DIGEST

VOLUME 31 NUMBER 362

FEBRUARY 1977

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(An exciting incident from Owen Compton's great story of the boys of Rockwood School in this issue.)

20P

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Nelson Lees on the up and up! There seems to be a revival of this paper again! Lots of these (over 4,000) in singles and bound volumes. From about No. 180 o/s, 1st, 2nd and 3rd series. Old series £1; new series 85p each, or asst. "fair" copies (my selection) 25 for £10.

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- STORY PAPER -

COLLECTORS DIGEST

STORY PAPER COLLECTOR

Founded in 1941 by
W. G. GANDER

COLLECTORS' DIGEST

Founded in 1946 by
HERBERT LECKENBY

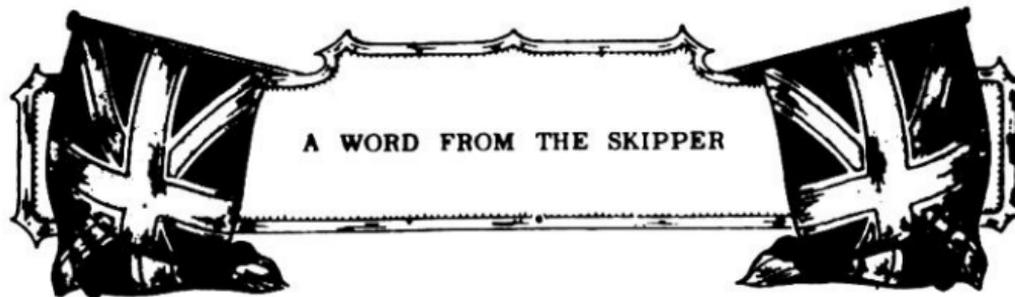
Vol. 31

No. 362

FEBRUARY 1977

Price 20p

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CONCERNING REVIEWS

A newspaper reviewer can make or ruin a stage production. I recall a first night when a clearly pompous young man was shown to his front stall with all the reverence and humility usually shown to the greatest in the land. A few minutes later he rose in his seat, turned, and waved a hand towards the auditorium. A number of attendants rushed forward to attend to his wants.

"Who on earth is that self-important young man?" I asked somebody.

The reply was hushed and reverential. "Oh, that is Mr. So-and-So-, the theatrical correspondent of the Daily So-and-So. He can

make or break this show."

Theatrical reviews are of vast importance to stage producers and that ilk. Literary reviewers are nothing like so important to book publishers. Publishers are very anxious indeed to get their books reviewed, but I have heard it said that they care but little whether the review is a good one or a bad one. The chief thing is to get the title mentioned.

All the same, it seems to me that a book reviewer of any work on a specialised subject should have some knowledge of that subject.

A week before Christmas, the following review appeared in a national newspaper: "I have a total blind spot about Billy Bunter. I have never thought his adventures or those of his companions to be other than a total bore. However, to many Bunter is the height of comicality. For such people Gyles Brandreth has provided 'Yaroo: a Feast of Frank Richards'."

The reviewer, at least, was candid, but whether he was really capable of giving a fair review of a book like the one in question, is, I would think, debatable.

SWEET IS THE USE OF ADVERTISEMENT

In the bad old days beyond recall, many of the advertisements in the old papers were truly remarkable. Some of them screamed to high heaven of fraud. But advertising managers accepted them and published them, and, no doubt, people with more money than sense - and also, sadly enough, those with a last hope - were caught and cheated by them.

But quite as remarkable was a serial "Live - and Let Live" by Henry St. John (illustrated by J. Louis Smythe) which started its run in the 1913 Christmas Number of "Fun & Fiction". The following is an extract from the opening instalment:

Schelig was a rich man, and growing richer every day. He was making money hand over fist. This world teems with fools, and Schelig, early realising the fact, set his mind to work to get the better of these dupes and credulous idiots who, like so many foolish fish, were only too willing to come into his skilfully-laid net.

Many were the enticing advertisements that emanated from the two small offices on the top floor of Billington Buildings.

"FREE! FREE! FREE! A real Illumina Gold Watch will be presented Free to all

purchasers of our new wonderful Illumina Gold Chain for 7s/6d! Do not miss this grand opportunity!"

Every week, every day, these advertisements appeared in papers throughout the country, and they brought in shoals of replies. The Illumina gold chains, of brass, cost three shillings a dozen. The Illumina gold watches were valued at 13 pence each. The seven-and-sixpence charged for the chain allowed a handsome margin of profit on the two articles. If customers were dissatisfied, it did not matter. Periodically Schelig closed his offices and moved to fresh pastures, where, under a new title, he played the old game again and again.

Well, that is the end of our extract from that old serial.

The amusing factor is that, if the reader of that serial instalment in "Fun & Fiction" had turned to the advertisement page in that very same issue, he would have found an actual advertisement offering a Real Lever Simulation Gold Watch Free to anyone buying "our Gent's Albert" to wear with the watch. (These watches are guaranteed for five years.)

And that advertisement - and others like it - Free Gold Watch and other equally magnificent prizes in return for selling 12 beautiful Christmas cards at one penny each (or 12 packets of reliable seeds at 1d each, in summer) - appeared for years in "Fun & Fiction", and, indeed, in all A. P. publications.

Of course, in the enlightened seventies, nobody can be cheated by trick advertisements or by "guarantees" which are not worth the paper they are printed on. Or can they?

THE FACTS OF LIFE

Inflation is still with us, and, so far as I can see, it is more alarming than ever for many of us. One can only ask, in despair, just where is it going to end - if ever?

We have held the price of C.D. steady now for over a year, and during that time our general production costs have been creeping up. Nobody regrets it more than I do - in fact, the worry is considerable - but the basic price of C.D. must now rise again if our little magazine is to continue to serve the hobby.

Commencing with our March issue, the price of C.D. will rise to 22p. And it is impossible to forecast just how long we can hold it at that price. Public transport is pricing itself out of existence. I hope that C.D. is not going the same way, but that the vast majority of our

loyal readers may be able to grin and bear it.

THE EDITOR

DANNY'S DIARY

FEBRUARY 1927

The opening two stories of the month in the Gem completed the excellent series about Talbot and his cousin, Crooke. Talbot has promised to keep his cousin's shady secret concerning stolen money, and in "The Toff's Sacrifice" he finds himself in deep trouble, trying to protect Crooke and Trimble from the results of their bad deeds. Talbot is driven from St. Jim's for something he hasn't done, but in the final tale, "True as Steel", Crooke gets injured and babbles out the truth in his delirium. But in the end, not realising that the Head already knows the truth, Crooke confesses - and the clouds roll by.

The rest of the month was a bit grim in the Gem. In "A Merseyside Mystery", a crowd of St. Jim's fellows go to Liverpool to be shown round some works for educational purposes, but there is a lot of adventure concerning Dr. Lowther, an uncle of Monty's.

Lastly, "D'Arcy's Comic Opera" in which D'Arcy writes an opera which is banned by authority. Eventually they give a midnight performance, in secret, in the gym, which seems very far fetched indeed when you come to think of it.

In Edinburgh, the trial has taken place of a youth named Donald Merrett, accused of shooting his mother and killing her. The verdict was the Scottish one of "non-proven", but Merrett was sent to gaol for a year for robbing his mother by forging cheques in her name.

The great defender, Sir Edward Marshall Hall, has died at the age of 68. He featured in many big trials in this country.

At the pictures we have seen Clara Bow and Warner Baxter in "The Runaway"; Norma Shearer in "The Devil's Circus"; Mary Pickford in "Human Sparrows"; Rin-Tin-Tin in "The Night Cry"; Bessie Love in "Lovey Mary"; Betty Bronson and Tom Moore in "A Kiss for Cinderella", a lovely tale by J. M. Barrie; and Jack Pickford in

"Brown of Harvard".

In the Nelson Lee Library, the exciting and very original series about Northestria has continued. The St. Frank's lads are captured by pirates and made to work as galley slaves in "The Schoolboy Slaves". But Handforth is annoyed at being a slave, and the pirates find they have caught a bunch of tartars - and Kassker, the Grim makes the same discovery.

In the next story, "The St. Frank's Crusaders", the juniors invaded Gothland. Handforth and his friends were caught and sentenced to a warm end by being burned at the stake. In "The Secret of the North", Kassker again tried to invade Northestria. The chums, led by Nelson Lee and Lord Dorrimore, engaged in a great sea fight and made some thrilling discoveries.

With the last tale of the month the series ended with "The Buried World", packed with thrills. Kassker was killed in the great fight at the finish - the dying horse fell on him - and the Gothlanders, with their leader gone, became a disorderly mob. For a little while, the chums had the awful thought that Handy had been killed, too, but he was found - a hero - and wondering what all the fuss was about.

A great series this one, and it will be a bit of an anti-climax when they all get back to school next week.

The new issue of the Monster Library - price one shilling - is "St. Frank's on the Spree".

Two very good tales in the Schoolboys' Own Library this month: "Boss of the Study" in which Bunter moves to a new study, and "School House versus New House", about house rivalry at St. Jim's.

There has been a great train robbery. £10,000 in notes was stolen from the night train from Cardiff to London. There was also an accident on the railway at Hull, a head-on collision between two trains owing to a signalman's error. 10 people were killed, and 48 were injured.

In the Magnet the month opened with "The Call of the Ring", the final story of the great Game Kid series. He had always yearned for life at a public school, but now Dury's heart was set on going back to the boxing ring.

The next tale "The Schoolboy Broadcasters" was novel, I expect,

but there is not much else one can say for it. Members of each form are to broadcast the evening's entertainment from the Pegg Wireless Station. There is a tennis tournament, bringing in Rookwood and St. Jim's, and Monsieur Charpentier is tied up in a cave, and ends up by singing on the wireless.

The next story was a single story which reminded me of the tales the Magnet and Gem used to have. Nowadays they nearly all run to series. In this one, "The Footprint in the Sand", a new master for the Second Form at Greyfriars, a Mr. Sutcliffe, is kidnapped in a cave while a cracksman, Gentleman Jim, turns up pretending to be the form-master. This sort of thing always makes a good read.

The last of the month "Fishy's Travel Agency" is so awful that I almost enjoyed reading it. Fishy buys a double-decker bus and runs a bus company, driving the bus himself. When he drives a party to London, he crashes through a shop window. Fishy earns forgiveness by rescuing Doctor Voysey's dear little niece from the wheels of a lorry. And the double-decker bus had been stolen -- And there was a reward of £75 for the return of the bus, so they were able to pay for the battered shop-front.

Pass down the car, please. Hold tight.

(EDITORIAL COMMENT: S.O.L. No. 45, "Boss of the Study" comprised two long Magnet tales of a loosely-compiled series of the autumn of 1910. S.O.L. No. 46 comprised two consecutive blue Gems of the early months of 1913. The first story "Figgins & Co's Feud" was probably a substitute story, possibly by E. S. Brooks, and the second tale "The Masked Entertainers" was typical rivalry stuff such as St. Jim's did so well. "Figgins & Co's Feud" was not reprinted in the Gem, but the second story was.

Donald Merrett, whose trial is recalled this month by Danny, got away with the brutal, callous murder of his mother. 27 years later, in 1954, two more women - his wife and his mother-in-law, - were to die at the hands of Merrett, who had changed his name to Ronald Chesney.)

GOLDEN FUN No. 6. As a special Christmas surprise, Golden Fun has produced its own 16-page comic entitled "The Bodger". It contains new picture strips by David Ashford, Walter Bell, Ron Hanna, and Ken Wilkins, plus the Event of the Year! G. M. Wilson's first comic-paper story in over 20 years featuring Four of her old characters (Roy Keen, Inspector Stanley, the Blue Domino, and Jane X) in one story. An instant Collector's Item. 35 pence plus 9 pence postage from: ALAN & LAUREL CLARK

1 LOWER CHURCH ST., CUDDINGTON (near Aylesbury), BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.

BLAKIANA

Conducted by Josie Packman

SOME MYSTERIES OF THE DETECTIVE WEEKLY SOLVED

In connection with my article on the December C.D. it has now been confirmed by both Cyril Rowe and John Bridgwater that the short Sexton Blake tale in D.W. No. 268 was originally published in Penny Pictorial No. 649 in 1911. The title was "The Murder of Morton Green". John has a copy of this Penny Pictorial and says the story was reprinted almost word for word except for a few amendments such as Hamer Fellows becoming George Fellows and a motor became a car.

With regards to the Marcus Max tales mentioned in the January C.D. these appeared intermittently in the D.W. for a short period. I can trace only nine stories in my collection of D.W's which is almost complete. The story in D.W. 191 entitled "The Secret of the Broken Phial" is listed in the Catalogue Supplement as Answers No. 1213 as "The Mystery of the Sandalwood Box". Further answers to our Detective Weekly mysteries are given in the articles by Cyril Rowe and Bill Lofts. Bill says that according to his A.P. records the story in No. 355, "The Green Eye of Banyah" was written by G. H. Teed. If so it was the worst tale he ever wrote.

MARCUS MAX - SEXTON BLAKE

by Cyril Rowe

In the Detective Weekly No. 165 there commenced some short tales of Marcus Max detective, with an oval portrait in the heading of the story depicting a young man with a trim beard. I am uncertain whether they were intermittent but certainly they were still running in No. 204 and I have seen the issues of Nos. 165, 166, 167, 168, 177, 181, 185, 191 and 204. (These were the only ones. See my remarks above. J.P.) As requested by Josie, I compared the tales in some issues of the Penny Pictorial which I possess and discovered that the Marcus Max tales were originally tales of Sexton Blake.

D.W. 165 "The Clue of the Green Scarf" appeared as The Problem of the Missing Bride in P.P. 636. In the P.P. tale the bride was Elsa Vaghn

and the scarf was a blue motor veil. In the D.W. she appears as Margaret Vane.

D.W. 166 "The Agony Ad. Mystery" was "The Belders St. Mystery" in P.P. 637. There were a few changes of phrase made.

D.W. 167 "Death on the Beach" was "The Case of Nurse Knight" in P.P. No. 647. Completely identical throughout.

D.W. 168 "The Clue of the Locked Diary" was "The Temple Towers Mystery" in P.P. No. 641. Not checked by me but by Josie Packman.

D.W. 177 "Death in the Coffee Cup" was "The Strand Cafe Tragedy" in P.P. 643. Checked by Josie. Strand Cafe was the scene in D.W. 177 which supports original title in P.P.

D.W. 181 "Who Killed Michael Cartmel?" was "The Clue of the Missing Volume" in P.P. 648. Completely identical throughout.

D.W. 185 "The Clue of the Chinese Foot" was "The Mystery of Paulton Towers" P.P. 655. Checked by Josie. Incidentally this tale brings in Marston Hume as the crook. Long after his previous P.P. appearance. Was it Michael Storm?

D.W. 191 "The Secret of the Broken Phial" see below.

D.W. 204 "The Phantom of Box B" was "The Mystery of Box B" in P.P. No. 633. In P.P. the heroine is Mamie Doran. In D.W. she starts as Mamie Doran but half way through becomes Vera Grayle.

I believe D.W. 191 to be a reprint of an Answers tale, No. 1213 "The Mystery of the Sandalwood Box". (See Supplement of S.B. Cat.) I do not possess Answers but the tale is a page shorter than the other Marcus Max tales in D.W. consistent with a single Answers page and the plot in D.W. revolves round a sandalwood box. What puzzles and annoys me as it does Josie in her December article, is the A.P. mucking about like this. Sexton Blake had begun a new run (after intermittent appearances) in the Union Jack in the autumn of 1904 and by autumn 1907 he appeared in Penny Pictorial and a year later in Answers. These latter stories appeared for six years and three years respectively. At the same time two theatrical companies were taking two Blake plays all round the country in provincial theatres. Moreover, in the summer of 1909 Reuben More, a singer, actor and ventriloquist, was using "Tinker" as his dummy. (P.P. No. 527) Therefore I ask, did A.P. induce Marcus Max authors to submit to a Blake change or did the later A.P. editors

change Blake to Max? (The latter, I should think, J. P.) Never in these tales in the Penny Pictorial were Tinker, Pedro, Baker St. or Mrs. Bardell, mentioned. Was all this done for Blake publicity before the Great War or not? The support that it was always Blake, however, there is never any mention of Max's beard in the tales. He never pulls thoughtfully at it. The matter rests!':':

May I add that Blake has a friend called Anthony Bathurst in both publications. J. P.

THE DETECTIVE WEEKLY

by W. O. G. Lofts

I was most interested in Mrs. Packman's recent article on the Detective Weekly. I think it is the universal opinion amongst collectors, both old and young, that this large buff paper was never in the same class as the old Union Jack. Certainly H. W. Twyman editor of the latter thought so too, and I can well remember his bitterness in his declining years in the sixties, and hearing the full story of the change of format. "Progress they called it, and to modernise Sexton Blake, and bring a breath of fresh air to his surroundings." After a first large sale of 185,000 copies, the sales soon slipped down quite considerably. A graph showing circulation figures proved it just went down and down, and when the late J. D. S. Hunt editor was succeeded by Donald Bobin, the paper was practically doomed. It was the last editor who was responsible for the reprints, the economics of the paper forcing them to do this, as they could not afford to pay for new contributions. When they did get brand new stories it was too late. With the Magnet and many other papers it closed in May 1940 never to return.

Elucidations of some of the mysteries are as follows:-

Many Blake authors wrote chapters of stories, and were paid for them in sort of instalments as they went along. Consequently and frequently some yarns were never completed. The D. W. 265 called Limehouse Loot was one of these by Teed, and although it was intended for the S. B. L. it was easier to insert it in the D. W. with not so much writing for a sub-editor to fill in. The Thriller Library was a one man concern independent from the staff of the S. B. L. and D. W. and this sub-editor was probably ignorant that the same tale had been chosen for

publication in the same period.

According to Derek Adley's record book, gleaned from my own researches and official records at A. P. and possibly original Walter Webb correspondence I can elucidate the majority of 'no trace' problems in the list in the Blakiana December 1976 C.D.

- D. W. 253 Mr. Smith, Gang Smasher, Paul Urquhart.
S. B. L. reprint. Origin not known.
- 255 The Man with the Purple Scar. Rex Hardinge.
S. B. L. reprint. Origin not known.
- 267 The Case of the Crook Oil King. Anthony Skene.
S. B. L. reprint, featuring Zenith.
- 276 The Case of the Sinister Uncles. Rex Hardinge.
S. B. L. reprint. Origin not known.
- 280 The Riddle of the Royal Oak. L. Black.
S. B. L. reprint. 2nd Series. No. 315.
- 284 The Bride of Doom. Anthony Skene.
S. B. L. reprint. Origin not known.
- 290 The Man from Alcatraz. Gilbert Chester.
S. B. L. reprint featuring Gilbert & Eileen Hale.
Exact origin not known.
- 302 The Trail of the Black Knight. G. H. Teed.
S. B. L. reprint origin not known.
- 317 The Clue of the Flaming Phoenix. Gilbert Chester.
S. B. L. reprint featuring Gilbert & Eileen Hale.
Exact origin not known.
- 318 Mr. Walker Wants to know. By Ernest Dudley.
Completely original story written by the man who
created The Arm-Chair Detective on Radio.
Syd Walker was a rag and bone man.
- 325 What would you do. By Ernest Dudley.
Original.
- 328 The Whistler. Warwick Jardine.
Reprint of S. B. L. 2nd series No. 325.
- 344 The Bank Note Bandits. By Donald Bobin.
Original written by editor.
-

- D. W. 355 The Green Eye of Banyah, G. H. Teed.
Origin not known.
- 361 The Man in Black. By Edward Holmes.
Original.
- 375 The Seven Blue Bombers. By Stanley Hooper.
Original.
- 376 The Pit of Doom.
No record at all - not original.
- 379 The Secret of the Loch, By Stanley Hooper.
Original.

* Stories that are presumed to have come from S. B. L.'s are based on the fact that Union Jack's have been perused.

* * * * *

Nelson Lee Column

1977 BROCHURE FOR A VISIT TO
ST. FRANK'S COLLEGE

by Bill Lister

(Article based on set of etchings of St. Frank's and map.)

You can't get very far if you happen to have a back-injury with blood-pressure to boot; add to that the weight of sixty-five years (fourteen stone - to be exact) and I repeat you can't get far. That is, unless you happen to be a St. Frank's fan and one of Edwy Searles Brooks "customers": In that case I revise my decision, carried along with the strong current of my enthusiasm, a map of the district and a few etchings of that noble pile of stones and one can spend a pleasant half-day viewing the landscape over.

Come along with me (and it doesn't matter what physical state you happen to be in) you will be able to keep my pace. We shall start from Caistowe, and as I can see - a couple of sea-faring gentlemen leaning on the harbour rails, lets join them. Just below us another old salt is tending two row-boats while in the distance four fishing vessels are to be seen bobbing up an-down. A setting similar to a corner of Falmouth Harbour. We shall take the lane to the left passing the boat-

house and arriving at Holt's Farm. Delightful place. Standing this side of the duck pond we have a view of a rather substantial house with a Tudor type frontage, amid the trees. The old barn house door swings wide revealing the large farm cart.

If you care for a drink amid scenes graced by some of the St. Frank's boys, have one. They only serve milk, anyway, suits me, the alcoholics among us will have to wait till we reach the George Tavern at Bellton, a little way up the road on the left. Nice little country pub, I'll come in with you and have another glass of milk.

From Bellton we can see (faintly in the distance) Edgemoor - Bannington Moor - the Quarries - Willards Island and Bannington (scene of an E. S. Brooks ghost story) with Felling Village and the Lighthouse further to the right on the further side of the coastline to Caistowe.

Now a bunch of broken-down alcoholics and one or two milk drinkers are in no state to traverse that distance so we will again bear to the right and make straight to St. Frank's, via Bellton Wood. If you look further to the right you can see the "Old Mill" again, a setting for more than one St. Frank's story.

At last! St. Frank's. I've always wanted to see it, fictional school that it is; it meant a lot to me.

Living as a boy from about eight till fourteen in a caravan on the "then" outskirts of fast-growing Blackpool. On winter nights fierce howling gales used to rock our caravan like a ship at sea and in the mornings to find some had lost their roofs added to the fear of the next gale. St. Frank's College seems so solid and secure - my caravan home so fragile and insecure. No wonder I always wanted to see St. Frank's College.

So here it is! and very nice too, just as solid as I always thought; and our caravan home! Gone - gone these many years. Though I still have a photo of the old home-stead.

From where we are now Ancient House can be seen, with the stately block Tower, and the arch entrance. Come on boys! We are at the end of our yellow brick road (with apologies to the "Wizard of Oz").

Here we see the College House - and the Triangle where once Ezra Quirke walked into our lives, the moon up above causing our Ezra

to look like a spectre with the owl perched on his shoulder and where once Handforth and Co. and Nipper and Nelson Lee walked. The Cloisters ringing with the tread of favourite character creations of Edwy Searles Brooks.

On then to the Headmaster's House, with the old central Chestnut tree, ringed with wooden benches. At the back of the house - the garden. Graced with trees, flowers, vegetables and a row of standard roses, a small greenhouse on my left.

Time (or is it space) is running out. I have to leave room for the Charles Hamilton fans and the Sexton Blake enthusiasts.

However, before we go let us call in the St. Frank's Chapel, a grand place of worship, built to match the surroundings. Well! boys and girls (could be we have a few female St. Frank's fans along with us) let's say a prayer that the souls of our Edwy Searles Brooks and that of his dear wife (who gave her name to the College) shall rest in peace; and where better to pray than in the Chapel of his own creation?

A LETTER FROM ST. FRANK'S

by Jim Cook

I am afraid I will have to continue in jovial vein or my letter will be as miserable as some of the faces I saw in Bannington on my way to St. Frank's. I know the weather was bleak and inflation is rife but judging from the expression on the faces of some folk you'd think another war was imminent.

I have filched the following "Topical Mixture" from an old St. Frank's magazine I came across in Nipper's cupboard. Smile along with me.

*We learn that Teddy Long, of the Remove, has recently been suffering rather severely from earache. That's the worst of these draughty keyholes!

*Stevens of the Fifth has been making enquiries as to how he can make a bicycle stand. We have thought the question over thoroughly and suggest this as the most sensible method -- lean it against a wall!

*We understand our respected Head generally indulges in forty winks during the afternoon. But strangely enough, no one can ever catch him napping!

*Simms and Hodder of the Fifth, who couldn't agree for toffee

last term, are now as thick as thieves. It seems odd to some fellows that these two should chum up like this. It Simms even Hodder to us that they haven't had a scrap yet!

*We regret to hear that such good chums as Turner and Page and Harron, of Study 13, have recently been squabbling a lot; This can't go on, and we suggest that they Turner a new Page over and begin afresh. We further advise that they keep their Harron!

*Solomon Levi, of the Remove, is highly indignant at the rumour that he made fifty percent profit over the sale of his pocket-knife. Such a rumour is palpably absurd. He really made a hundred!

*We can't help it -- this one must come out! Pitt and Grey, of Study K, have had trouble with Timothy Tucker, their tame lunatic study mate. He has been writing reams of articles for the mag. He certainly Tucker long time to pen these effusions, and if his hair doesn't turn Grey it'll be a Pitty!

*The rumour that Nicodemus and Cornelius Trotwood are poisoned is quite unfounded. Their present indisposition is only due to the fact that they happened to be present in Study L while Fatty Little was manufacturing some home-made toffee. We can't help wondering why Fatty is still alive. He ate the stuff!

Had enough? There's plenty more!

DO YOU REMEMBER?

by Roger M. Jenkins

No. 140 - Magnets 1111-1115 - Feud With Loder Series

No one could have had any doubt by the summer of 1929 that the Magnet had taken on a new lease of life and that a great future lay in store for the old paper. Every situation was novel, every incident was related with zest, and the style was developing in so many ways that the most carping critic could hardly have dreamed of calling it stereotyped.

Loder was the villain of the piece, and the first two numbers in the series described how he carried on a feud against Wingate. When this collapsed, he turned his attention to the Famous Five, and the last three Magnets were devoted to recounting the vicissitudes of his schemes in that direction.

cont'd P. 18



VIN



VINTAGE MAGAZINE SHOP

5

4 Earlham Street,
London, W. C. 2.

Tel. 836-2926 (3 lines)

Dear Collector,

We are pleased to announce that we have now opened a new department on the third floor specialising in the sale and purchase of old boys and girls papers, annuals, comics, original artwork and related ephemera.

On the second floor our film department now offers recorded soundtracks in addition to a large selection of magazines, posters, stills, books and campaign books.

Our main shop on the ground floor continues to carry a comprehensive range of popular vintage magazines and pulps not to be seen anywhere else, in the U. K. or Europe.

Open 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., Mon. - Sat. Only a few minutes walk from four main tube stations - Piccadilly Circus, Covent Garden, Leicester Square and Tottenham Court Road. Five big car parks just across the road.

The Mail Order Dept. (and Buying Office) is now at: Vintage Magazine Shop (Mail Order Dept.), 6 Coptic St., London, W.C.1. (Tel. 01 580 8432)

Yours sincerely,

Danny Posner
Danny Posner.

Many incidents remain etched in the memory, the first being the time when a housemaid saw Loder "smothered over with a detestable compound of soot and ashes and other things - what are you laughing at, Wharton?" She clutched Dr. Locke when she had hysterics, which suddenly ended when Mr. Quelch offered to throw ink over her as there was no water to hand. "Still, a woman's rights were a woman's rights; and she indemnified herself by uttering a series of piercing shrieks as she faded away down the corridor." It quite spoilt their scholarly discussion about the meaning of the twelfth verse of Aeschylus' 'Seven Against Thebes'.

Another amusing incident was the watch on the Three Fishers kept by the prefects all afternoon when Loder was certain that the Famous Five were inside, and Mr. Quelch refused to believe him. Harry Wharton & Co. were in fact in Courtfield, and Mr. Quelch was extremely pleased to accept their offer to have tea with them in the Bunshop when he saw them there. The climax in Hall when all this was unravelled provided a foretaste of some of the climaxes in the later Rebel series of 1932.

One of the notable points about Charles Hamilton's technique of series writing in those days was the way in which episodes ran over from one issue to another. Loder's plot to send Wingate a false telegram was planned in No. 1111 and put into execution the following week. In the last six or seven years of the Magnet each number in a series tended to be a self-contained unit, whereas in earlier times a series resembled a continuous story cut up into weekly sections. When a series is read as a whole, there is no doubt that the latter method is far more acceptable as a basis for constructing a plot.

All the illustrations for the series were provided by Shields who was, according to Chapman, a man of independent means who drew merely as a hobby. He was far more successful in depicting seniors and adults than he was in his illustrations of the Removites, who looked rather too youthful and cherubic. In particular I never liked his drawings of Bunter who seemed too cringing and servile. On the other hand, he had a fine sense of movement and action, and most of his drawings conveyed a lively idea of the dramatic situation. Certainly, the Magnet was indeed fortunate in possessing two artists of the calibre

of Chapman and Shields.

LET'S BE CONTROVERSIAL

No. 213. THE BOSS, THE ADVERTISEMENT, and THE GREEK

Exactly fifty years ago, Danny bought, read, and enjoyed Schoolboys' Own Library No. 45, entitled "Boss of the Study". Unluckily, this happens to be one of the few Hamilton S. O. L's which is missing from my own collection.

Many years ago, in a massive piece of research work, Roger Jenkins, assisted by John Shaw, traced the origins of almost all the S. O. L's, for the benefit of the readers of the C.D. Annual. According to that work, S. O. L. No. 45 comprised Magnets 141 and 142.

These were tales of a 3-story series relating how Billy Bunter, who had shared Study No. 1 with Wharton and Nugent since the Magnet's birth, now transferred himself to a new study - No. 14 - which had been provided on the Remove corridor, and set himself out to be "Boss of the study".

I would imagine that the two stories which were intended to make up S. O. L. No. 45 were Magnet No. 141, "The New Firm" and No. 143, which was a sequel to No. 141 and was actually entitled "The Head of Study 14".

All the same, there was some mention in No. 142 of Bunter in the new study, and one must confess that many of the red Magnets were so flimsy, plotwise, with one theme trailing into another after a few chapters - part of their charm today - that it really did not make a great deal of difference which stories were used. Some pruning, probably, occurred, even though only two Magnet yarns were used, for the Magnet tales were very long at that time, running to twenty chapters and more.

The intermediate story, No. 142, whether or not it was used in the S. O. L., is of interest on account of a couple of items which have appeared in recent C.D. editorials. Catchpenny advertising of the period is highlighted. Bunter draws attention to an advertisement addressed to "public schoolboys in particular" who are invited to send a postal-order for one shilling in return for which they will be supplied

with profitable "translation" work. The advertisement appeared in the Friardale Gazette, and applicants had to write to a box number. It appears that Bunter gets several shillings as a result of writing in to the box number, and other fellows are encouraged to send in their bobs.

Actually Bunter had inserted the ad, and was collecting the bobs.

In fact, Bunter was miscast in a role of this type - it would have been more suitable for Fisher T. Fish. But the Bunter charm of two years earlier had deteriorated greatly - a curious error on the part of the author, in a way.

Also in the story, Bunter had pretended, to Mr. Quelch, that he was interested in Greek, a subject which was not in the curriculum at Greyfriars. So the suspicious Mr. Quelch tells Bunter to turn in a Greek exercise.

Bunter goes to Ionides, who is a "modern, not an ancient", Greek. Ionides tricks Bunter. He writes out "the first line of the Anabasis, which, of course, he remembered, a line known naturally to every schoolboy who has ever looked at Greek as a subject."

And when Bunter submits the line, Quelch is cross for some reason or other. The story contains a few odd references to the Greek alphabet, and it's rather a mixed-up affair altogether.

Before leaving this brief Controversial interlude we can just have a thought of the second S. O. L. published for Danny and his pals fifty years ago. Entitled, rather clumsily, "School House versus New House", it comprised blue Gems Nos. 261 and 262. No. 261 was named "Figgins and Co's Feud". Years ago a friend who was knowledgeable on Hamiltonia wrote me that he had placed a 'D' for Dubious against this one, and asked my opinion as to whether it was written by Hamilton. My reply was that, personally, I have no doubt that it was a substitute tale. It was not reprinted in the Gem. The second tale "The Masked Entertainers" was typical Hamilton, of the rollicking rivalry type which was always so well done in the author's St. Jim's stories, and this one was reprinted in the Gem in the thirties.

* * * * *

CHANGE OF ADDRESS. Mr. Syd Smyth's new address is: P. O. Box 284, Rydalmere, N. S. W. 2116, Australia.

BIOGRAPHY OF A SMALL CINEMA

No. 35. SAILING ON - WITH JESSIE, WAYNE & GARFIELD

Our opening double-feature programme, both films coming from Warner Bros., comprised a typical British knockabout comedy, Max Miller in "Everything Happens To Me" plus Kay Francis in "Comet Over Broadway." This was followed by another double programme, from the same firm, and equally and entirely forgotten today: Carole Lombard and Fernand Gravet in "Fools for Scandal" plus John Litel and Ann Dvorak in "Midnight Court".

Next came a long film, from Warner's: Errol Flynn with the Mauch Twins in the famous Mark Twain story "The Prince and the Pauper". Obviously the twins played the two title roles, while Flynn was the adventurer who saved the young prince. Next, also a single-feature show, was Fernand Gravet and Joan Blondell in "Romance is Sacred". I remember nothing of Fernand Gravet, and I presume he was a star who enjoyed a short and unmemorable career.

Now a double show, both from G. F. D.: A fine British film in its day, George Arliss in "Dr. Syn" (I think this must have been one of the last films of the great Arliss) plus John Wayne in "I Cover The War". I wonder which war it was that John Wayne "covered". Not the 2nd world war, for that was still rumbling in the wings. Possibly the Spanish civil war, for the title sounded almost too modern for it to be the American civil war.

Next, a double programme from Warner's: the incomparable and ubiquitous

Dick Powell in "Hard to Get" plus Glenda Farrell in "Torchy Blane in Chinatown". This was, I think, the first of a series of Torchy Blane films, and we played a number of them. Useful length for second-features, probably.

Then another double-feature show, both films from G. F. D.: Victor McLaglen in "The Magnificent Brute" plus Sally Eilers in "The Nurse from Brooklyn".

Then another double from G. F. D.: Jack Buchanan and Maurice Chevalier in "Break the News" (probably a musical, and it is impossible to say whether it was British or American in origin) plus Boris Karloff in "Night Key". After this, a double-bill from Warner Bros: Dick Powell in a Musical "Going Places" plus Bonita Granville in "Nancy Drew - Reporter". Bonita Granville made several Nancy Drew films, which were typical double-bill films.

Now, back to G. F. D. for a double programme: the delicious Jessie Matthews in a British Musical "Sailing Along" plus Buck Jones in a western "Sudden Bill Dorn".

Last show of the term was a fine drama, John Garfield in "They Made Me a Criminal" plus Glenda Farrell in "Torchy Runs for Mayor", another of the Torchy Blane films. Both from Warner Bros.

Usually, with the double-feature shows, we would have only the current Universal News in support, though we would sometimes add a cartoon. Warner's were now releasing the "Porky" cartoons at about one a month, and we played them all as soon as they were released.

The Postman Called

(Interesting items from the Editor's letter-bag)

T. KEEN (Thames Ditton): I purchased a copy of "Yaroooh", the latest Frank Richards book published, with introduction by Gyles Brandreth, who, at the lunch, proved to be a most entertaining person. Has this book anything new to offer though, apart from the episode "Exit Bunter"? However, it is a pleasant and attractive addition for collectors of Hamilton lore.

May I dare to point out, and in a very humble way, as I may be totally wrong, but the illustrations of Miss Bessie Bunter of Cliff House School, on Page 40, being the target for the oncoming goat, and the same Miss Bunter pictured on the ice, Page 76, a reproduction of a cover of the Magnet, are almost identical. The only difference being that in the Magnet reproduction, Bessie is wearing skates, and the scarf is just a fraction different, but the pose, dress, and features are identical.

My query is ... who was the artist? On Page 40 it states C. H. Chapman as the illustrator, but surely the Magnet cover was a Leonard Shields drawing!

Am I right? If so, who has copied who?

One other minor fault with "Yaroooh", the Bessie Bunter story, and Billy Bunter story were both about filling inkwells with gum. Rather a sticky business!

(EDITORIAL COMMENT: Mr. Keen is observant, and we congratulate him. There is not much doubt that the artist of the page 76 drawing copied the Chapman picture reproduced in page 40. The copying of other artists work was not unknown with Shields. Some readers may recall that a few years ago in C. D. Annual we reproduced two Magnet covers - one by Clarke of red cover days and one, obviously copied by Shields, many years later from the Clarke drawing. All the same, I confess that I do not recall when the Chapman picture appeared. The Shields one was from the latter-day Magnet.)

F. OSBORN (London): I always read the C. D. Editorial first when I receive my copy. There is always something in it to make me nostalgic. I read with interest your remarks on Broadcast records. Yes, I remember as a boy playing them on a gramophone one had to wind up. I still have some 78 records, kept for sentimental reasons; no Broadcast, however, unfortunately. May Collectors' Digest long continue to

brighten our lives.

D. SWIFT (Leeds): The Collectors' Digest Annual was excellent - I enjoyed reading every word.

I should like to thank Brian Doyle for his excellent article, "BUNTER ON TELEVISION". His report and comments were most enjoyable. I certainly recall some of the series when I was a boy (we hadn't a television set for most of that time, and I used to call round to the local electrical and radio shop to watch Bunter on television!)

I remember seeing one series where the part of Mr. Quelch was not played by any of the three actors mentioned by Brian Doyle - Kynaston Reeves, Raf de la Torre and John Woodnutt - but by Jack Melford who I recall took the part very well. I agree with Brian Doyle that after the excellent "TOM BROWN'S SCHOOLDAYS" shown in recent years, there is no reason why "BILLY BUNTER OF GREYFRIARS SCHOOL" cannot be re-instated in a new format, with better scenery and props, etc. Perhaps further lobbying at the B. B. C. may produce some result - or, perhaps even at the I. B. A. ?

(EDITORIAL COMMENT): Was TV's "Tom Brown's Schooldays" all that excellent? I seem to recall that it strayed far from the book. I am not sure, either, that another B. B. on TV is all that desirable. It could be a pain in the neck for some of us.)

A. I. STANDEN (Stockport): It was Charles Hamilton, I believe, who advised would-be authors of stories intended for youngsters to "Write for Adults".

That is one of the reasons why his stories can be read with pleasure by adults today and names of other authors with a mature, breezy style come to mind - Cecil Hayter, Stacey Blake, Pierre Quiroule, Derwent Miall, Major Charles Gilson and Percy F. Westerman not least.

They flattered the young reader by appearing to assume that anything mentioned in the course of a story about personalities, places and literature in general would be readily understood, without an explanation, in brackets, from the Editor.

The author who wrote under the names of Duncan Storm and Harry Revel (Gilbert Floyd, I understand) managed to introduce, in tales of the wildest adventure a good deal of local colour and information, often through the tales of a tough ship's Petty Officer, for the edification of the

young gentlemen of the Bombay Castle.

We can still read these "old chaps" as Herbert Leckenby called them, with pleasure today.

L. HOLLAND (Oldham): I felt I must write once again and thank you for the 1976 Digest Annual, which is well up to standard, and which contains a feast of fascinating articles. I particularly enjoyed Roger Jenkins' piece "The Magnet Lives Today". It was most interesting to read how genuine school-life so closely resembles Greyfriars situations in some of its incidents. This was also my first introduction to the "Charles Hamilton Tag-List", and this has really pleased me. I hadn't realised that some of the phrases mentioned were quotations from other literature. Very interesting indeed, the whole list.

I also enjoyed Mr. Buddle and Slade School once again. I have come to look forward to the first days of each month when, any evening, that familiar C.D. envelope may be waiting on the hall table. It's like the "plop" of the old Magnet through the letterbox on those long-lost Saturday mornings.

M. HALL (Penryn): I would like you to know how much I enjoyed this year's Pearl Jubilee Edition of the Annual, especially "Back Street Boy" and "Streets of Memories". I often go into the shops and think the same way. The shops are still newsagents, but the old sellers have passed on, and the old papers, comics, and Annuals likewise, leaving only memories.

H. P. CLARK (Nuneaton): Congratulations on the Pearl Jubilee edition of the Collectors' Digest Annual - a superb production.

My top favourite, as usual, was Mr. Buddle, but Herbert Leckenby's "Street of Memories" came a close second - a beautifully written article which I found most interesting.

You have certainly hit the jackpot with this fine annual.

* * * * *

G. W. MASON writes: While flicking through an 1896 volume of "Household Words" I was interested to learn that Nelson Lee, a showman, appeared at Southwark Fair in 1731. He was the son of an old Peninsular Colonel. Nelson Lee was at Greenwich Fair in 1852. Appearing in booths such as these he must have been known up and down the country, at many a fair, not realising that his name would be perpetuated two centuries later.

News of the Clubs

LONDON

What was reminiscent of the lantern shows of our youth was in evidence when Mary Cadogan exhibited the excellent slides that featured the girl characters of the old books and papers and which husband Alex had produced. This display at the home of the hospitable Baddiell family at Gladstone Park and taking the first syllable of the location, it was indeed a very glad occasion.

Eric Lawrence had prepared one of his Character Grid competitions, a painstaking job and it was Roger Jenkins who discovered the most names, David Baddiell was second and the hosts had kindly donated two prizes.

Winifred Morss read more chapters from Les Rowley's version of how the Battle of The Beaks may have been written.

Readers of the first issues of Story Paper Collector may have been puzzled as to what the initials H. R. C. who compiled the first few Who's Who stood for. The answer was evident as Bob Acraman had brought along Herbert Reginald Cox, who wrote those early Who's Who and also compiled an article in the S. P. C. on the Nelson Lee Library.

An excellent repast was provided by the hosts and a vote of thanks was accorded to them.

The Annual General Meeting will take place on Sunday, 20th February. Rendezvous is the residence of Bob and Louise Blythe, 47 Evelyn Road, Kingsbury, London, NW9. Phone 205-0732.

BENJAMIN WHITER

SYDNEY, Australia

The Golden Hours Club met for its Christmas meeting at a new restaurant for the occasion. An enjoyable get-together was held with superlative food supervised by the proprietor, Nick, and his charming wife. Several items were passed around, notably the C. D. Annual, and, as most members had their copy already, preferred articles came up for lively discussion. All agreed we should be lost without our

essential pre-Christmas present - the Annual.

All members saw their first copy of a St. Jim's Pluck - no less than two! Another "gem" was present - the Pearl Jubilee menu of the OBBC. We are a small club, but the enthusiasm is something to see when rare items are produced for approval. Three hours went like good wine and the last toast was for the health of our overseas friends in 1977.

S.S.

CAMBRIDGE

The Cambridge Club met at 5 All Saints Passage, on 9th January.

President Bill Lofts and Secretary Bill Thurbon reported on researches they were carrying out on G. A. Henty's family and birth place, following enquiries to Bill Lofts from a member of the Henty family. Evidence so far seemed to confirm that Henty was born at Trumpington, but Jack Overhill, who lives in Trumpington, spoke of the difficulty in tracing the actual house in which Henty's birth occurred.

It was agreed that in future Club meetings would be held on the first Sunday in each month in place of the second.

Bill Lofts then gave a well-researched talk on Publishers and their fortunes, ranging from Brett and Lloyd, through Harmsworth, and the progress from Amalgamated Press to I. P. C., to other publishing firms. Bill's revelations in one long and detailed report on a firm caused a sensation. An interesting discussion followed - ranging over Prowse as an illustrator, and various opinions about the financial structure and management of some publishing firms.

Jack Overhill reported that the late Lady Keynes had consulted him about various matters in her projected history of what is now Darwin College; this book had now been published posthumously and carried recognition of Jack's efforts.

Danny Posner then opened a discussion on the Zulus, producing a variety of magazines and papers on the subject. Bill Thurbon talked about Lobangu, the Zulu chief in Cecil Hayter's Sexton Blake stories, and other characters. He repeated his opinion that Hayter had based Logangu on Rider Haggard's Zulus, but that in late Lobangu stories Hayter, and certainly Rex Hardinge had made Logangu more like Edgar Wallace's Bosambo in the Sanders of the River stories. Many other

books or stories about Zulus were recalled from Morris's "Washing of the Spears" and various books on the Great Trek to the works of Rider Haggard, Bertram Mitford (a somewhat forgotten author), Captain Brereton and S. Walkey. Danny wondered why Lobangu was armed with a "great spear" instead of an Assegai. The Secretary suggested that this was copying Rider Haggard's Umslopogaas with his great axe.

The Secretary reported that the Souvenir Press was republishing some of Wodehouse's school stories, including the "Gold Bar" which, originally a "Captain" tale had later appeared in the "Boys Friend". A vote of thanks to Bill and Mrs. Thurbon for their hospitality was passed. Next meeting 20 Wingate Way, on 6th February.

NORTHERN

Saturday, 8th January, 1977

After business, discussion and the Library session the first item on the agenda was the playing of a recording of a recent BBC Leeds Hobby broadcast. Randall Hurley was interviewing Geoffrey Wilde, Harold Truscott and Darrell Swift, and the programme ends with the music of Floreat Greyfriars. One might regret that the forty minutes or so of the original discussion is reduced to a mere ten minutes, but nevertheless what is left is realistic and praiseworthy. Harold Truscott's comparison of Hamilton with Conrad and Flaubert must surely have helped to correct the impression that we are not just a group sub-intellectual eccentrics who read comics!

After refreshments Mollie gave us a talk entitled 'Brazilian Reflections', nothing to do with the South American country but an appraisal of the work of Angela Brazil. Mollie remarked that she herself had a modest collection of some 30 or so of Angela Brazil's books, and all of them she could still read with enjoyment.

Angela Brazil took up the themes which she knew would appeal to her readers - pressing flowers - writing poems, plays, etc. Mollie remarked on a difference between boys' and girls' books. In the matter of dressing-up, for example, the Magnet tells us how Wibley and the members of the Remove put on their costumes but girls' books tell how the characters make the costumes.

Mollie concluded by giving a reading from 'The Youngest Girl in

the Fifth'.

NEW ZEALAND ITEM

From M. Branks

In one of a series of programmes broadcast over Radio New Zealand and entitled "MEN OF THE ANGRY THIRTIES", Sir Dove-Meyer Robinson, Major of Auckland, New Zealand's 800,000 city, part of the transcript of the interview between James McNeish and Sir Dove-Meyer, is as follows:-

James McNeish: Who were your heroes?
 Sir Dove-Meyer Robinson: All my heroes were Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry, Tom Merry.
 James McNeish: This is MAGNET?
 Sir Dove-Meyer Robinson: This is the MAGNET and GEM, and I used to buy them every week surreptitiously because my father who had not been brought up in England, didn't understand the British middle-class code of conduct.
 James McNeish: Not Billy Bunter?
 Sir Dove-Meyer Robinson: Oh, Billy Bunter, he was a cad! Do you know ever since that day to this, I've always had a dislike of fat people. Of course, it was all clear cut in those MAGNETS and GEMS.
 James McNeish: Slightly priggish?
 Sir Dove-Meyer Robinson: Oh very priggish, but nevertheless I don't think it was a bad code of conduct to assimilate. I learnt from that a code of conduct which I still try to live up to, strangely enough; that you don't tell lies, you don't betray friends, you don't do dirty tricks, you don't steal, of course, and we absorbed the typical middle-class code of conduct.

(Sir Dove-Meyer or "Robbie" as he is known is one of New Zealand's best-known and most controversial figures.)

TAGS

by M. S. Fellows

Collectors' Digest Annual gave me so much pleasure over the

Christmas holidays. I recaptured the excitement I used to experience with the "Holiday Annual" when I was a boy. Then I used to pay into the Christmas Club at the local newsagent's and keep the Annual for Christmas Day and later. I did the same with our excellent Annual and really enjoyed myself.

There were so many good things in it and so I will not list them all. How fortunate we are to have such an editor!

I derived a great deal of satisfaction from "A Charles Hamilton Tag-List". What a splendid piece of work! I spent a great deal of time on the "Untraced" quotations. I cannot say that I discovered very much about them. But just a few thoughts ...

"WHAT HE HAD SAID, HE HAD SAID"

Although the authors say "Not Bible", I wonder whether Charles Hamilton was thinking of "What I have written, I have written" from St. John, 19:22. There is no evidence that C.H. ever read Chaucer, but in "The Manciple's Tale" we have: "What's said is said and goes upon its way."

"FEELINGS TOO DEEP FOR WORDS"

This is an intriguing one, and I am sure we all think we know it; but where on earth does it come from? The nearest I can get is:

"Thought is deeper than all speech,
Feeling deeper than all thought;"

This is from "Thought" by C. P. Cranch, an American poet and painter (1813-1892); but it seems doubtful.

I would be interested to know if any other readers have succeeded in tracing any of the other "Untraced" items.

"POTERCLIFFE" - and Another Little Mystery' by James Hodge

It was early December, 1941, and as the remnants of my Regiment fought on through the savage battles in the Western Desert, I was a "walking patient" in a military hospital in Alexandria, Egypt, hobbling around with the aid of a stick.

One afternoon on one of my rather painful short walks in the town I went into a back-street shop for some cigarettes. As I waited

for my change I noticed a handful of obviously second-hand magazines on a shelf. Prominent among them was a solitary copy of "The Magnet", edges a little frayed, corners a trifle dog-eared but otherwise intact. It was dated 17th August, 1935.

On impulse I bought it (for one piastre or about two old pence) and sat on the sea-front in the bright winter sunshine and read it. What subsequently became of it I do not recall - it was probably thrown away, given away or just lost. Certainly it went and was soon forgotten in the momentous events of those days.

At least, I THOUGHT it was forgotten until one day in the late winter of 1975 I was looking at a newly-arrived brochure of Howard Baker facsimiles and noticed an illustration to a volume called "Bunter's Sea-side Caper", portraying a beach scene with Bunter being thrown from a donkey while the Famous Five chortle in the background.

After almost 34 years I recognised the illustration at once. It was the cover to "The Magnet" I had found that day in Alexandria. It was No. 1435, "The Mystery of Portercliffe Hall".

An even more intriguing mystery to me and one that I, now myself somewhat frayed and dog-eared, often ponder about is -- by what diverse means did that "Magnet", published in London in 1935, make the journey to that little back-alley shop in Egypt, three thousand miles from home and six years later?

CHARLES HAMILTON MUSEUM requires the following MAGNET numbers for binding.

310: 311: 312: 313: 314: 316: 328: 381: 382: 383: 387: 390: 391: 393: 397: 490.

The following numbers are available for exchange.

292, 328, 340, 356, 357, 359, 391, 392, 393, 395, 399, 401, 403, 404, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 424, 425, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 461, 465, 466, 469, 471, 472, 474, 475, 482.

Other numbers, and volumes can be made available for exchange only.

THEY'RE AT IT AGAIN!

By the Editor

Mr. H. Truscott has sent me an article which has appeared in a Northern newspaper, purporting to give its readers information concerning Frank Richards, Bunter, and the like. Mr. Truscott wrote

me: "I thought you should see it, since you are quoted as Eric 'Payne', and also since it is the most astonishing hotchpotch I have ever seen in a newspaper - and that is saying something."

If anything, Mr. Truscott understates the case. But it is by no means the first I have seen of this inaccurate hotchpotch. It has featured in a number of newspapers in the country, in varied versions of it, and readers have been sending me clippings from all points of the compass.

In the version which I have received this morning from East Anglia is the following bit of nonsense: "The club publishes its own newspaper 'Story Paper Collectors' Digest' which recently devoted an entire issue to Bunter.

"Club member, Eric Fayne, says sternly: 'Please don't refer to Bunter as a comic strip hero. He appeared first in a string of 'book length school takes' (sic), illustrated by two brilliant artists, Hutton Mitchell and C. H. Chapman."

It is hardly necessary for me to say that I have never said anything of the sort, nor have I given interviews to reporters on these various newspapers.

John Wernham is quoted, though whether with his permission I cannot say.

The report (the one before me now) says: "One of the leading experts on the life of Bunter is author Denis Gifford. He says: ... Billy's uncle, Wally, was for a short time master of the first form at Greyfriars ... The prissy Jones Minor attempted the hopeless task of trying to reform Bunter ..."

"A tireless excavator of the career of Charles Hamilton, Gifford is able to solve a minor mystery which has perplexed fans for years. He says: 'People have been puzzled over the identity of Hilde (sic) Richards, who wrote stories about Bessie Bunter in School Friend. In fact, this was Charles Hamilton, too - churning out countless stories under the two aliases.'"

Collectors' Digest has protested before against articles of this type. We don't care much for them when they are accurate. When they are inaccurate, they are intolerable and a menace. We are also somewhat concerned at the way our clubs are being linked with these items.

TEDDY TAIL of the DAILY MAIL

by C. H. Churchill

I wonder how many people remember the adventures of Teddy Tail and Dr. Beetle which were featured in the Daily Mail many years ago. The original ones appeared prior to the first world war, I understand, but this is too far back for me to go. What I do know, is that they re-appeared after the war, in 1919 I think, but do not know the exact date. When they started, I commenced cutting them out and sticking them into old school exercise books, two to a page. I still have three volumes full but am afraid they are a little tattered with age now. I am also sorry to have to admit that at the time, in my youthful enthusiasm, I coloured them all with crayons of various hues!

The drawings were very good, measuring 4 x 4 (inches) and were in series, each adventure lasting round about 50 to 60 pictures. One was given each day, of course. One can hardly describe them as cartoons as the characters were not distorted in any way. Each one bears the name Charles Folkard in the bottom corner. This was obviously the artist, though whether he wrote the verses underneath as well I do not know, but presume so.

I think he must have been away to the war as no series appeared during this time. I think the first item bears this out, as one must agree on reading the verses underneath which ran -

"Oh, children I'm delighted
Once more to be with you!
I'm really so excited
I don't know what to do,

I want to tell a tale about -
Oh, dear, I can't explain,
Today I've got to dance and shout
At seeing you again."

This first series was entitled "Teddy Tail in Babyland". The first picture showed Teddy Tail prancing along with a Union Jack in each hand and a giant one fastened to his tail which he was holding upright.

The last series I have in my book was called "Teddy Tail in the Tropics" and I see the name in the bottom corner is now H. Folkard. It must be a change of artist as there is quite a difference in the drawings of the characters compared to the earlier ones, but the verses remain at quite the same standard as the previous ones. I remember reading in the press some months ago that a Mr. Folkard, the creator of Teddy Tail, had died but, unfortunately, forgot to cut out the item so do not know if it was "Charles" or "H" Folkard. I therefore, still do not know for certain if they were two people or only one.