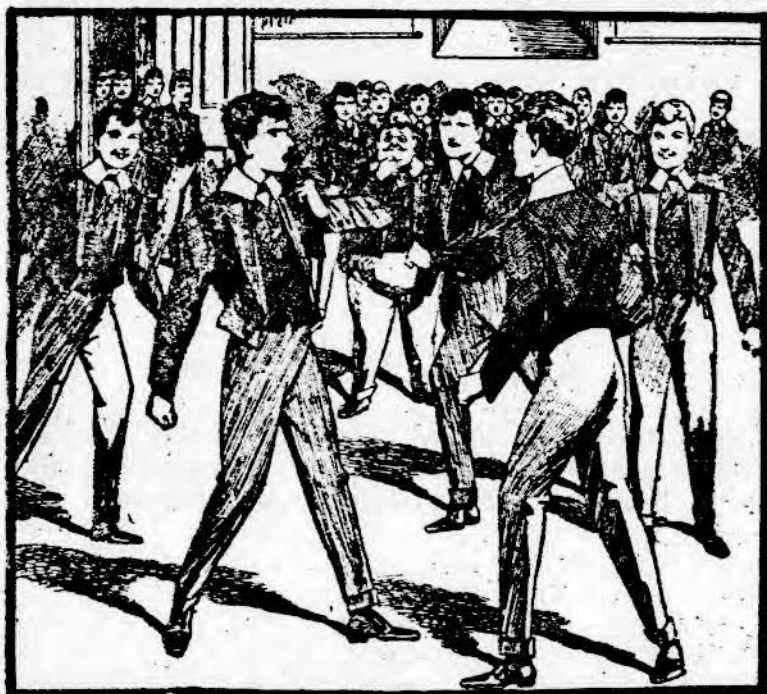


JANUARY 1987

The Penny Popular *Week Ending January 6th, 1917.*

No. 222

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Founded in 1946 by
HERBERT LECKENBY

VOL. 40

Price 52p

JANUARY 1987

No. 481

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A Word from the Skipper.

The remembrance of the past is
the teacher of the future.

WITH TEARS IN MY EYES

Last month, in my Christmas message, I referred to the old song we used to sing round the pianos: "I'm Dancing With Tears in My Eyes".

This month, it might be said that "I'm Writing With Tears in My Eyes".

For this is my last Editorial. I feel that the time has come for me to pass over the editorial reins to someone younger. Mixing my metaphors, as I often do, I feel that it is time for me to pack away my boots and my saddle.

I am in my 28th year as Editor of our beloved C.D., and I am

proud of the little magazine and its history. We have never missed a month, we have never advertised, we have never sought or wanted publicity - and I think I can truthfully say that C.D. is more loved today than it has ever been.

There are two main reasons which have made it all possible. One - and the most important - is your own affection and loyalty. The second reason is that the Lord has been good to me in granting me constant good health.

But 27 years plus is a very long time, and I am an octogenarian now. True, there are a few of us about, and I can bring to mind several who are still highly active in the hobby.

But, with an octogenarian, he knows that his longest time left cannot be very long. An ailment can strike without much warning. I feel that I am wise to "hand over the reins" while my health remains good, so that I can help to assure that everything is not too difficult for the new Skipper.

I recall only too vividly that our first Editor, Herbert Leckenby, held on to the reins just a little too long. So I was thrown in at the deep end with a vengeance, and it was a time before I got our lovely paper back on an even keel.

That is why I feel it necessary to leave the editorial chair gracefully while my health is still good.

But I am very sad, and for quite a long time I have been postponing the day. I have dreaded the wrench - the awful break. I hope that none of you will feel that I am letting you down by retiring while my health is still reasonable.

If I have tears in my eyes, I have sunshine in my heart, for I am able to give you the wonderful news that Mrs. Mary Cadogan is to be our new Editor and Publisher. When I think of Mary's great enthusiasm for the hobby and of her brilliant writings down the years, I am deeply conscious that our beloved C.D. could not be passing into better hands.

WELCOME TO MARY

So your next issue of C.D., the February number, will come to you from Mrs. Cadogan. Contributors and writers are asked to send their articles to her - and please send them along in shoals. Our Club Secretaries should send along their brief reports to her. Advertisements - and our advertisers help to keep the wheels turning - should be sent to her.

And, if your subscription runs out this month, you should send along your renewal to her.

Her address - the address of the new Editor - is Mrs. M. Cadogan, 46 Overbury Avenue, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 2PY.

S.P.C.D. has a great history. And I know that, with our Mary at the helm, it will have an even greater future. And I know that you all will give her your wonderful support, just as you have given it to me for so long.

Thank you, all, for being YOU.

TITLE CHANGES

We know that, when the stories in the Gem were reprinted in the Gem itself - and that reprinting was done as a result of my own suggestions to Mr. Down - the majority of the titles were changed. Many of the lovely old titles had been abstract, and the idea was probably to bring those titles up to date, even though, more often than not, the change was not an improvement.

But now and again one comes on other title changes which are more puzzling. A year or two ago in this column we commented on a James Hilton story which was originally entitled "Murder at School" by Glen Trevor, but which was later published in paperback as "Was It Murder?" by James Hilton.

A Dorothy Eden novel was originally entitled "Darling Clementine", but later appeared in paperback as "The Night of the Letter". Dorothy Eden herself told me of the change in title, though she never gave the reason why it was done.

Can you think of any title changes which took place in the same way?

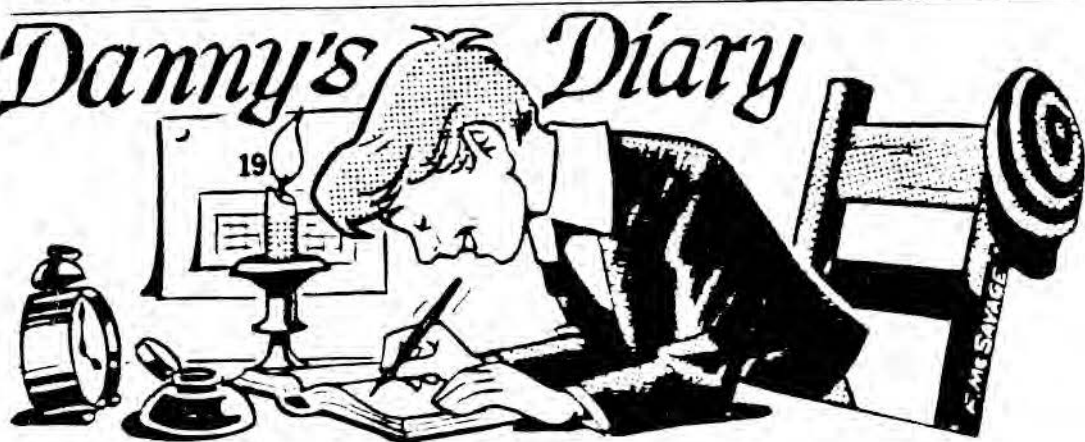
IT'S NOT GOOD-BYE!

Though this is my last Editorial, it is not Good-bye. I hope to go on writing, and, from time to time, to submit items to the new Editor for her consideration. I hope, too, that my readers, my dear friends, will keep in touch with me. You know my address at Excelsior House. Please don't lose touch. One thing, you have been very patient with me in the past, for, all too often, I have not had the time to reply to your letters, though so many of them have been unforgettable. All being well, I shall have a bit more time for my personal correspondence from now on.

Finally, I wish my Readers, all over the world, a Very, Very Happy and Prosperous New Year. God Bless you!

THE EDITOR

Danny's Diary



JANUARY 1937

England has made a very good start in Australia, where they are fighting for the Ashes. Last month, England won, by 322 runs, the First Test which was played at Brisbane. Early this month our Eleven won again, this time by an innings at Sydney. But in the Third Test, played at Melbourne, Australia won by 365 runs. So the series is still wide open.

The first issue of Modern Boy this year still had a very Christmassy flavour. With this number, Len Lex, the Schoolboy Detective, said farewell to Modern Boy in the last story of the Christmas series, entitled "Lost Sir Lucian".

Captain Justice also finished off a Christmas series with "The Fake Professor" in which Midge pits his wits against a mysterious Christmas visitor. The following week a new series of Captain Justice started with "The Earthquake". In this one, Captain Justice has a legacy of a metal cube which possesses amazing powers. This was followed by "The Cube of Mystery", in which Justice and Co. investigate the cube, with amazing results. Next came "Thunder Mountain". An urgent S.O.S. from Professor Flaznagel sends Justice and his friends flying half-way across the world in search of the mountain of mystery. Final of the month is "The Lost Professor", set mainly on Thunder Mountain - the source of a priceless electric ore whose discovery is going to shake the world. It shakes Captain Justice, too. I quite enjoy these science fiction stories.

Also in Modern Boy there is a series about a youngster who owns a mammoth store in New York. One story in this series, "The Twenty Thousand Dollar Cat", was a real scorcher - very amewsing.

George E. Rochester has a war series going strong, about Scotty of the Secret Squadron. Unfortunately, at present, there are no school stories in Modern Boy.

In real life, Mr. MacVicare of Bath has presented 24 acres of land to be made into a public park which will be known as Alice Park, in memory of his wife. Rather lovely, that!

As almost always, the Monthlies have been grand this month. In the Schoolboys' Own Library, the Greyfriars story is "Billy Bunter Gets the Boot" and I'm sure it is the funniest Bunter story ever written. I split my sides over it. Bunter horrifies the Head when he, Bunter, says he would rather be expelled than flogged, as he might be sent to a "better school than Greyfriars". So Bunter is expelled, but when he finds that his father has destined him for an office job, he goes back to the school and stows himself away.

The St. Jim's S.O.L. is "Tom Merry & Co. Declare War", a tale of rivalry" with Rylcombe Grammar School. It's gorgeous.

The St. Frank's S.O.L. is "Rebels of the Remove" which continues the tale about Martin, the martinet, the new Head of St. Frank's and the trouble he causes with his brutality to the boys.

In the Boys' Friend Library I had "The Outlawed Three" by Charles Hamilton. It is a splendid Western yarn about three young ranchers who flee from the Law, after they have been falsely charged by a rascally sheriff. In the Sexton Blake Library I had a novel by Edwy Searles Brooks entitled "The Midnight Lorry Crime". It starts off in thrilling fashion when the owner-driver of a big lorry is held up on the road from London to Norwich. The thrills go on and Sexton Blake and Tinker come into the picture to sort things out.

Yes, a Great Month in the Monthlies.

There has been a great tragedy in the news. An explosion occurred at Markham Colliery near Chesterfield, and eight men have been killed.

The month's opening story in the Gem is "The Funk of the Fourth". He is a new boy named Cecil Cavendish who found he wasn't popular, so he tried, by shady means, to retrieve an unhappy start. This is followed by "Gussy's Latest Love Affair" in which Gussy falls in love with the lady behind the counter in the tobacconist's. His chums are startled when Gussy starts buying cigarettes, cigars, and pipe tobacco. Joyous tale.

Next comes "The Swot" He is Figgins, who decides to enter for a stiff exam. Figgins is determined to show that he can shine

as a scholar as well as on the playing fields. This is followed by "Gussy Goes to Work". His father, Lord Eastwood, stops the supply of fivers to his son, so Gussy means to show his independence by getting a job. He delivers newspapers wearing a topper, but when he becomes a barber's boy the fur begins to fly.

Finally a drama, "Looking After Lowther". Lowther is led astray when he becomes friendly with Cutts of the Fifth, and Tom Merry & Co. run into trouble when they are looking after Lowther.

The old Magnet stories are still running in the Gem, and I love them. In one pair, the Greyfriars chums are challenged to a cricket match by a team of French schoolboys who are touring in Britain. Good stuff - but cricket in January! Well!

Early in the month a little girl named Mona Tinsley came out of her school in Newark - and disappeared. Though there was a wide-spread search she couldn't be found. Then several people came forward to say they had seen her with Fred Nodder, a man who had once lodged with the Tinsley family. A bus conductor said that Nodder got on his bus with a little girl. At last Nodder admitted being with the child, but asserted that he put her on a bus when she wanted to visit her aunt at Sheffield. But Mona hasn't been seen since, and Nodder has been arrested and charged with her abduction.

A pretty good month in the local cinemas. My favourite of them all is "Laburnum Grove", a British film starring Edmund Gwenn. He is a very quiet and stuffy husband and father, but it turns out he is a very clever counterfeiter, and at the end he takes to his heels and dodges the police. Never again will they say that the British don't make tip-top films.

"Mary of Scotland" starred Katherine Hepburn and Fredric March and is the story of Mary, Queen of Scots, who refused to give up her claim to the throne of England. It is elaborate, but I found it just a wee bit heavy-going. Fairly amusing was "Small Town Girl" starring Janet Gaynor and Robert Taylor. A girl tricks a man into marriage when he is drunk, and then has to win his love when he is sober.

Two quite good British comedies were Ralph Lynn in "All In" and Will Hay in "Windbag the Sailor". Cicely Courtneidge was good fun in a musical "Everbody Dance".

"The Country Doctor" starring Jean Hersholt is about a doctor who becomes famous when one of his patients has quintuplets. It is based on the story of the Dionne Quins, and they appear in the film. Laurel and Hardy are a bit miscast in "Babes in Toyland"

They are the assistants of Santa Claus in Toyland. It is what is called an operetta.

A bit slow-going was "Rhythm on the Range" starring Bing Crosby. He is a farm-hand who saves his boss's daughter when she is kidnapped. He sings nicely and it's all very pleasant.

There is a new kind of chocolate in the sweet-shops. It is called Aero, and it is very smooth and bubbly. In fact, it is delicious. Trouble is, one eats it too quickly, but the melody lingers on.

Though the first Magnet of the month was dated January it was actually on sale on Christmas Eve, and it is a Christmassy story. The chums are spending their holiday on board the steam yacht "Firefly". The story is "The Man from the Sea." The story introduces the Spanish Civil War, and in this tale there is, on the yacht, a dashing Spaniard Don Guzman Diaz who doesn't seem to have much time for General Franco who leads the rebels in Spain.

Next came "The Ship of Secrets". There is a mystery on board the "Firefly"; some secret between the Captain Compton and his strange crew. But the guests of Valentine Compton are not in the secret so far. The following week brought "Mutiny on the Firefly". Captain Compton decides to avoid going to prison by turning over a new leaf, but he reckons without his crew. They all finish up in Corsica as this story of smugglers and gun-runners for the Spanish revolution comes to an end.

It was all very much off the beaten track, and I enjoyed this series muchly.

Next week brought the start of a new series concerning Mr. Hacker, and it promises to be a barring-out affair with lots of extravagances. The opening tale is "Billy Bunter's House-Warming". The Head and Mr. Quelch get a ducking which gives them both a heavy cold. The Head has to retire for the time being, and Mr. Hacker - they call him the Acid Drop - what a lovely thought - becomes Head of Greyfriars.

Last of the month is "The Stay-In Strike at Greyfriars". Mr. Hacker declares that he will soon have the Remove eating out of his hand. But Harry Wharton & Co. determine to teach the Acid Drop a lesson.

I hope it works out all right, but it's a bit over-done.

NOTES ON THIS MONTH'S "DANNY'S DIARY"

Can it really be 50 years since "Laburnum Grove" was delighting theatre and cinema audiences? It was, of course, a Priestly play. I saw it at the "Q" Theatre with Edmund Gwenn quite superb as the slightly henpecked, typical suburban, husband and father, who had more in his shop than he showed in his window. Privately, the quiet little man was a counterfeiter. I am not sure whether the "Q" production was prior to or following the West End run of the play. It was then made into an equally successful film. It was rarely that a play ever transferred very successfully to the cinema screen, but this one did.

It was also rare for a play or film in which the criminal "got away with it" to be passed by the censor. But the wily, oily old rogue in "Laburnum Grove" did just that. He was last seen with a bag of his illgotten gains taking to his heels and hurrying down the street. We were left to wonder whether the police ever caught up with him. Edmund Gwenn must have long passed over, though I cannot recall ever reading of his death. But he was a man in late middle life in "Laburnum Grove", 50 years ago.

Oddly enough, I cannot bring to mind any time when "Laburnum Grove" appeared on TV, either as a play or a film, but surely it must have done.

Danny has caught me out this month with his reference to an early 1937 B.F.L. by Charles Hamilton entitled "The Outlawed Three". I thought I knew pretty well everything that Hamilton ever wrote, but I cannot place this one. I wonder whether it was a reprint of some serial somewhere, or whether it was specially written for the B.F.L. Anybody recall it?

S.O.L. No. 286 "Billy Bunter Gets the Boot" comprised the 4-story Magnet series which appeared immediately before the start of the first Rebel series late in 1924. Four Magnets were too much to squeeze into one S.O.L., necessitating too much drastic pruning, though it still reads pretty well in the S.O.L. version.

S.O.L. No. 287 "Tom Merry & Co. Declare War" comprises the 4-story "Wacky Dang" series in the Gem in January 1922. Here the much shorter Gem stories of the 1922 period fit beautifully in the S.O.L. medium, and it is an exceptionally good "school rivalry with the Grammar School" novel.

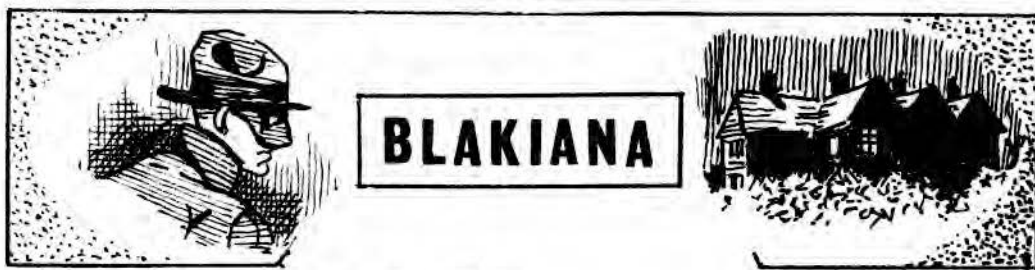
The 1937 Gem story "The Funk of the Fourth" had been entitled "Not Wanted" at the end of 1913. "Gussy's Latest Love Affair" had been "D'Arcy's Delusion" (not a very good title) the following week at the end of 1913.

"The Swot" had been "Rallying Round Figgins" at the start of 1914. "Gussy Goes to Work" had been "Earning His Living" (another uninspired title) in January 1914. "Looking After Lowther" had been entitled "Led Astray" in February 1914.

DEATH OF ARTHUR HOLLAND

We are very deeply saddened to learn, from our good friends Mr. and Mrs. Vic Colby, that our loyal reader, Arthur Holland of Wellington, Australia, died some months ago.

Arthur had been a keen supporter of this magazine and of our Annual from very early days, and his enthusiastic letters were always a joy to receive. For some years now, Arthur's health had been failing, and at the time of his death he was a resident in a Nursing Home. We can ill afford to spare the likes of Arthur.



SEXTON BLAKE AND THE STARS

By J.E.M.

Sir Donald Wolfitt is one of the English theatre's most famous sons. If he was never in the class of Olivier, there can be no theatre-goer and few cinema-goers ignorant of his name and fame. Tod Slaughter was an actor of a very different stripe, a barnstormer who toured the provinces with such good old melodramas as *María Marten*, *Sweeney Todd* and *The Face at the Window*. But in his own sphere, he was, perhaps, as well known as Wolfitt. And what has all this got to do with Sexton Blake? Simply the fact that both these celebrities acted in early talking films featuring our sleuth.

Just over half a century ago, in 1935, Donald Wolfitt (then plain Mr.) appeared in a supporting role in *Sexton Blake and the Bearded Doctor*, a story of murder and attempted fraud. The part of Blake himself was taken by George Curzon, a then established actor who, in the words of one critic, usually played "aristocratic" or "Sinister" roles: a versatile performer indeed to tackle *Sexton Blake*! The bearded (and homicidal) doctor of the title was played by Henry Oscar, another distinguished man of stage and screen who will certainly be remembered for his parts in such famous English films as *I Was A Spy*, *The Man Who Knew Too Much* and *Hatter's Castle*. It would be nice to think that all these performances were still remembered by older cinema goers. Incidentally, *Sexton Blake and the Bearded Doctor* was based on one of Rex Hardinge's novels.

Three years later, in 1938, Tod Slaughter played one of the principal parts in *Sexton Blake and the Hooded Terror*, adapted from a Pierre Quiroule story featuring those celebrated secret agents, Mlle Julie and Granite Grant. Julie was played by Greta Gynt who will be remembered by older fans as a glamorous Norwegian actress in many English films of the Thirties. Grant's part was taken by David Farrar who, some years later, himself starred as the famous detective in *Meet Sexton Blake*. A tall, virile-looking actor, and

just right for such a part, Farrar later went to Hollywood where he mostly played villains!

Other celebrated stars to appear in Blake adaptations were the very striking Magda Kun, the suave Dennis Price, famous on stage and screen and surely unforgettable for his performance in *Kind Hearts and Coronets*; and that lovely leading lady, Jean Simmons, who sadly was also stolen by Hollywood (where she shone memorably in the film version of Runyon's *Guys and Dolls*). Slightly less famous names to appear in Blake films included Kathleen Harrison, a wonderful character actress and comedienne, surely familiar to many C.D. readers, and Kynaston Reeves who was later to play Mr. Quelch in TV's *Bunter* series. In his younger days, Reeves might have made a good screen Blake himself.

The Thirties saw three Blake films and the war years two (both the latter inevitably concerned with Nazis and spies). All were cheaply-made "quickies" and one imagines that the great names I have referred to did not receive the star salaries they were later to enjoy. However, we have no reason to think that they did not give star performances and Sexton Blake was surely well-served in having some of his cases re-enacted by names, soon to be famous.

Blake had, of course, appeared on the silent screen many years before, a certain Douglas Carlile directing and playing the part of the detective in a film made as far back as 1908 - and incidentally, pipping Sherlock Holmes to the post as far as first English screen appearance was concerned. Whether Mr. Carlile had the star quality, or potential star quality I have been writing about, only the true film expert could tell us; so far, alas, I have never met anyone who has seen that early epic.

(Talkies from the Thirties and Forties: *Sexton Blake and the Bearded Doctor*; *Sexton Blake and the Mademoiselle*; *Sexton Blake and the Hooded Terror*; *Meet Sexton Blake*; *The Echo Murders*).

WANTED: Boys' Friend's Library Nos. 469, 501, 610, 614, 617, 621, 630, 625, W.P. £10 each.

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Spine -taped Gems, Magnets 50p; Sexton Blake No. 1455 £1. School-boys' Own Lib. spine-taped £1. N. Lees 1930's fair condition 50p. S.a.e. please.

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WHEN BROOKS DISCOVERED ATLANTIS!

by Len Wormull

ATLANTIS was a name I had never associated with E.S. Brooks in his Lost World Series for the Nelson Lee. But I was mistaken - and misled. I discovered recently that he had in fact written a six-part story on this very subject... UNDER ANOTHER TITLE! The name of the culprit was *The Island Above The Clouds* (2nd N.S. 141-46). The mystery surrounding Atlantis persisted here, too. For a start, the author's name went missing from the first three stories! Asked about this, E.S. Brooks replied: 'Don't ask me to explain this. They were always chopping and changing, and I really had no say in the matter'. Another omission, this time by the author, was the name Atlantis from the title credits, thus nullifying any impact the story might otherwise have had. A far cry indeed to those publicised worlds of El Dorado and Northestria. First mention of the legendary island comes, almost casually, with Chapter 6...

"It came to Dorrie with something of a shock that perhaps this rocky pinnacle, with its verdant summit was the last remaining scrap of the lost continent of Atlantis."

The St. Frank's contingent was restricted to five for this last of the great expeditions into the unknown. No doubt Brooks would love to have taken the rest of the regulars along, but orders were orders. This was a bad time for the lads, having once again to play second fiddle to the Detective Story. Here we find Nelson Lee and Nipper about to leave for the West Indies on a murder case. As so often happened in a Brooks' tale, things moved in mysterious ways!

Seeing them off at Southampton is Lord Dorrimore and Umlosi, out to conquer the Atlantic in the newly-built *Sky Wanderer*. Handforth, scenting adventure, also turns up. Having quarrelled

and fought with his chums, Church and McClure, and broken off with girlfriend Irene Manners, he is in a more than usual reckless mood. The chapter is headed "The Stowaway" - need I say more? Stalwart adventurers all, the "Famous Five" little guessed the real mission in front of them.

But back to Lord Dorrimore and Umlosi. A cyclone puts paid to their Atlantic bid, though in this case an ill-wind did blow some good. Miles off course, they discover the mystery island in the sky, thousands of feet above sea level in the heart of the Sargasso Sea. To Dorrie, if not Umlosi, it spelt the magic word ADVENTURE. And Atlantis Island, as it became known, held out wonderful prospects. However, any temptation to explore the island work for the story proper. Staying long enough for close encounters with warring primitives, prehistoric monsters, and man-eating fungoids, they fly off in search of the rest of the 'A'-for-Adventure Team.

Meanwhile, not far away, Nelson Lee & Co. are meeting piracy on the high seas, led by a bearded giant of a man named Black Hawk. 17th Century pirates, we are told, and with a lingo to match. "May your marrows rot!" he hurls at Lee as a parting shot. They were destined to meet again in different circumstances. The murder inquiry, needless to say, has since been called off. The rest is elementary as they say. The arrival of Dorrie in the amphibious Sky Wanderer is well timed, and soon they are flying out to the island in the clouds.

"Think of it, Nipper! We're on the lost continent of Atlantis! It's - it's almost like a giddy fairy-tale!" Thus Handy, surveying the scene. Funny he should say that because he was already marked down for a fairy-tale romance. Even Handy couldn't believe it when it happened. There he was, lost to the world, going completely overboard for the young and beautiful Amanda - future queen of Atlantis! (Yes, I know it's been done before, but not by Brooks.) In the weeks ahead the couple would share many adventures together, though with the utmost propriety let it be said. In fact, Irene had no real cause for concern. As romances went it was nothing to get steamed up about. Not a kiss was exchanged!

And it was around Amanda that the story evolves. Her father, the Island's rightful ruler, has been slain by the evil Black Hawk, and for years the people of the lost community have bowed to his rule. Then comes Nelson Lee and his stalwarts to liberate them from the tyranny. How they accomplish their mission is told in E.S. Brooks' best style. Lee's worst moments are when he is made to

walk the plank, shackled and blindfolded. The loyal Umlosi comes to his rescue. The last we see of the Black Hawk and his cut-throats is in the weed-choked Sargasso, being eaten by giant rats. Then it is time to leave Atlantis Island. Amanda takes her rightful place as ruler of the Kingdom, saying that the modern world was not for her. By then Handy's ardour had cooled off. He was thinking of home, St. Frank's and the next adventure.

Summing up: The Island was a pirate tale first and last, with all the Brooksonian trimmings. Contrived and far-fetched though it was (things youngsters never bothered about anyway), I found it a most enjoyable read. The St. Frank's boys, I felt, would have given it that extra fillip.

Acknowledgements: 1. Brooks' quote is from a letter he sent the late Norman Pragnell, dated 14 April, 1955. 2. With kind thanks to our Nelson Lee Librarian.

"ST. FRANK'S IN THE BOYS REALM etc."

by C.H. Churchill

It is surprising to find how many pre-war papers other than the Nelson Lee Library included stories of St. Frank's by E.S. Brooks from time to time. Actually there were 12 in all and they were the Boys' Friend 4d. Library, Boys' Realm 2nd series, Boys' Realm of sport and Adventure, Film Fun, the Gem, Holiday Annual, Monster Library, Nugget 3d Library, Nuggett weekly, Pluck 2nd series, the Popular and the S.O.L.

Other than the Realm the majority were reprints. The Monster, of course, was all reprints of Lee stories, each one being an edited version of a series of Lees made into one continuous story and the result was excellent. It appeared monthly and was priced at 1/- There were 19 in all and were wonderful value if one could find the 1/-"

The greatest number of stories, however, were in the Boys' Realm second series which commenced after the first war in April 1919. There were 167 stories in all plus two serials. These last were by Mr. Brooks and were originals. The others were by Mr. Brooks (who wrote the first 44 and the one in No. 331) R.T. Eves, Noel Wood Smith and Maurice Nutbrown. One story appeared weekly until No. 138 after which gaps occurred, sometimes of one week sometimes of twelve weeks. This, of course, is another mystery of the times.

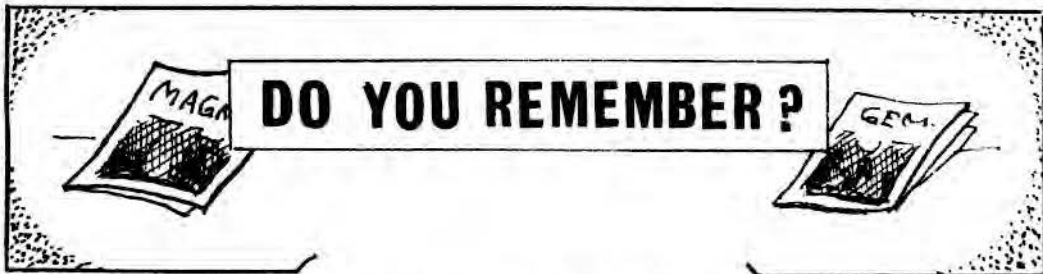
One strange thing is that E.S. Brooks for the first time introduced two new St. Frank's characters in a publication other than the N.L.L. These were Augustus Hart in No. 12 and Timothy Tucker

in No. 37. I cannot find any mention in a N.L.L. story of Hart being a new boy but Tucker was mentioned as being a comparatively new boy. All these stories in the Realm were originals whether by Brooks or the others and many were reprinted in the two Nugget Libraries.

The B.F.4d. Library contained some originals by Brooks and some reprints. Film Fun was all reprints but the Gem, amongst reprints, had six original serials by Brooks. Likewise, the two yarns in the Holiday Annual were originals by him. The one story issued in Pluck was an original by him and was reprinted in the B.F.4d. Library.

The Popular from 489 to 541 in 1928/1929 were all reprints of 3 N.L. series. These were each of eight stories in the Lee but were stretched out into 15 or more episodes for the Popular. A very small dose each week indeed.

Our kind Editor recently published in the C.D. an article of mine regarding the St. Frank's stories in the S.O.L. so I will refrain from going into these again.



No. 220 - Magnet No. 1227 - "A Dog with a Bad Name"

by Roger M. Jenkins

In the late 1920's and early 1930's the exploits of Vernon-Smith constituted a long and continuous saga. There were series, both short and long, that accorded him star billing, and even single stories helped the general progress of events. Each series of single story was complete in itself but nevertheless there were references back to past events and it seemed as though the career of the Bounder of Greyfriars was being given special treatment. Other characters might be static, but Vernon-Smith's personality seemed to develop from one episode to another. "A Dog with a Bad Name" was a 1931 Magnet single story that revealed many facets of his character.

It began with the Bounder telling Wharton that he would be unable to play on the following day for the Remove cricket team in the forthcoming Rookwood fixture because he had to go to Lantham. Wharton became irritated at such short notice and accused Vernon-Smith of intending to visit the racetrack. It later transpired that he had earlier received a letter from his father, which he had only just opened, telling him to meet the millionaire at Lantham that afternoon. Nugent enquired if Redwing would play instead, but Wharton replied that he would not play the Bounder's pal when the Bounder let the team down, and that Nugent would play instead.

There were a number of curious incidents in this opening chapter. Presumably Smithy would recognise his father's handwriting on the envelope and would read the letter at once, not keep it unopened for sometime. Equally odd was Wharton's remark about not playing Smithy's pal, since Wharton almost invariably managed to keep friendship and cricket in separate compartments. All this did help the plot, of course, because when Smithy persuaded his father to come to Greyfriars instead of going to Lantham, Nugent resigned his position much to Wharton's intense annoyance, and Vernon-Smith was able to rejoin the team.

As with all Charles Hamilton's descriptions of matches, the details were subordinated to the personalities of the main players, and Wharton's irritation marred his batting, whilst Vernon-Smith's bad temper and poor sportsmanship showed when he himself encountered failure. As a result of all these events, Wharton and Nugent became estranged and the Bounder revelled in the situation he had been the unwitting means of bringing about.

Magnet 1227 was somewhat crowded with incidents and might well have been developed at more leisure and with more conviction had it been made into a short series, but in mid-August the summer holidays were already delayed and the Kenya series was to start the following week. Certainly, the general reconciliation that took place at the end of No. 1227 helped to lay the foundation for the Famous Five to accompany Smithy on the trip to Africa. And so it was that the Vernon-Smith saga continued, this time from single number to series. There could be little doubt that he was one of the most popular characters in the Magnet.

A Happy New Year To All Our Readers!

THE VANGUARD $\frac{1}{2}$
LET'S BE CONTROVERSIAL
No. 58. PUBLISHED EVERY TUESDAY.



"Pong!"
or
The New Boy
of St. Kate's

By FRANK DRAKE

No. 245 "PONG!"

I wonder if there are any C.D. readers aware that there was once a school story entitled "Pong!" Not many, I fancy.

I wonder if there are any C.D. readers aware that Charles Hamilton once wrote a school story entitled "Pong!" Well he did.

It appeared in 1908 in the Vanguard, a Trapps Holmes publication and, by that time, both St. Jim's and Greyfriars had been created and the Gem and the Magent were going strong for another publisher. Hamilton wrote a handful - perhaps half a dozen, - stories of St. Kate's for Vanguard.

A curious thing is that the earlier St. Kate's tales appeared under the author's own name, Charles Hamilton. But "Pong" and a later story (there was at least one more of them) appeared under his pen-name Frank Drake. One cannot escape the conclusion that the change of author's name was due to the fact that his main work was now appearing in the Amalgamated Press papers. Possibly he had a contract to work out with Trapps Holmes but, by 1908, the end of that contract was very near.

Hamilton wrote short series of two other schools for Vanguard. They were Northcote and St. Freda's. That St. Freda's was a boys' school. By 1910, Hamilton was writing "Cousin Ethel's School-days" described as "a story of Tom Merry's Chum", set at another St. Freda's, this one a girls' school with a Headmistress named Miss Penfold. "Cousin Ethel's Schooldays" ran as a serial in the Empire Library, and, a few years later, was repeated as a serial in the Gem. And later still it formed a Boys' Friend Library.

Back to "Pong". "Pong" was a French boy named Gustave Pons. Although "Pong" was sub-titled "The New Boy at St. Kate's" he had actually arrived at St. Kate's in an earlier story "The Captain at St. Kate's" (this one under the Hamilton name) when he had just been in time to give the one vote needed to sway a school election.

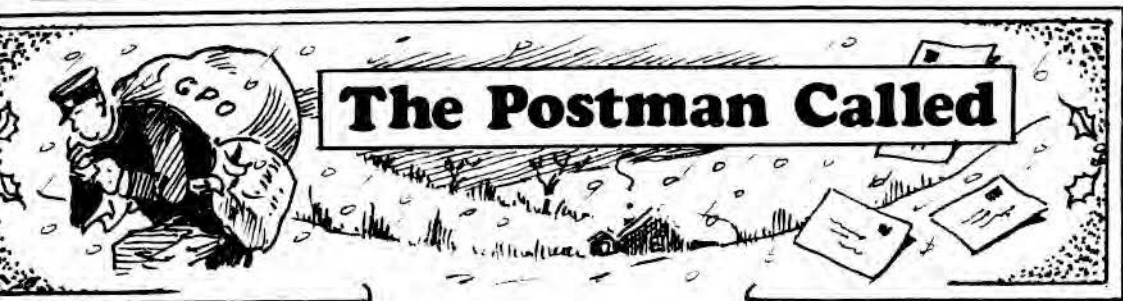
A master at St. Kate's was Mr. Bulkeley. Gustave Pons (nicknamed "Pong") was very popular with his friends whom he called "my shums". A year or two later, an exact copy of "Pong" arrived at Rylcombe Grammar School. He was Gustave Blanc, nicknamed Mont Blong by the boys. He, too, called his friends "my shums". In fact Gustave Blanc of Rylcombe Grammar had all the characteristics of Gustave Pong of St. Kate's. The Grammar School tale was "The School Under Canvas", written for the Empire Library, but the Empire Library faded out and the serial was run in the Gem. This, too, later appeared in a B.F.L. I often wonder why they never gave it another run in the S.O.L.

How mixed-up it all was! And how intriguing for us, all these years later.

And, well-known and perhaps the most amazing factor of all - as late as 1908, tales of Blackminster School, with a leading character named Billy Bunter, by H. Philpott Wright, were running in the Vanguard.

I wonder how they sorted it all out. We shall never know.

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LEN WORMULL (Romford) I cannot let the occasion pass without sending my heartfelt thanks and congratulations on your Ruby anniversary. I began reading C.D. just over 20 years ago, and I've been looking back ever since! And enjoying every minute of it. The amazing thing is its consistency in high standards - I am enjoying it as much today as I ever did.

Frank Richards was famous for his "quotes", as we know, but confess to being mystified by this one. It comes from Magnet 1155, "Duffer and Hero":

'There are fools and fools; but Coker was the fool absolute. He was the kind of fool that, though you bray him a mortar, yet will not his folly depart from him.'

Does anyone know its origin - or meaning of 'bray him a mortar'?

(EDITORIAL COMMENT: It comes from the Bible, one of the Proverbs. But its exact meaning eludes me.)

IDRIS CARBIN (Merthyr Tydfil) Forty years! How they have flown by, and how wonderful that the beloved C.D. has remained the favourite magazine of so many people!

For me it has preserved those happy days of my youth, 1930, when I was able to read each week the Magnet, Gem and Modern Boy. The Modern Boy was the only paper delivered with the daily paper. I had to earn the others by running errands etc. Danny's Diary brings it all to life again. Many people must be in debt to you for many happy hours with the C.D. Long may it remain a reminder of better days long past.

TED BALDOCK (Cambridge) Congratulations on a splendid 40th anniversary issue of the Collector's Digest, a red ruby occasion indeed suitably celebrated. It was very pleasing to find the dear and

familiar features of Mr. Quelch (as acid and severe as we could wish) and the inimitable 'Owl' included on the cover. May they and their many contemporaries across the whole spectrum of Hamiltonia continue their triumphant march.

When I read of the past history of the C.D. and of those who have been associated with it from its inception, I experienced a small pang of regret, that I have come so late into the field. But immediately, cold, sound commonsense comes to the rescue and assures me that it is better to arrive late - even some thirty-five years late - than to have missed the boat completely. With which solid comfort I must rest content.

G. H. CUNLIFFE (St. Helen's) As a pre-war D.C. Thomson collector I am trying to trace a "Skipper" with the front page depicting a very ferocious tiger escaping from a cage. This cover sticks in my mind, but I am hazy as to the year. It could be any time between 1932 and 1935. I would be very much obliged if any of your Thomson readers could help me by pinpointing the serial number and date.

There were others of Thomson's Big Five having covers with tigers and cages, but the particular one I have in mind was a "Skipper".

Chas. VAN RENEN (Walmer, South Africa) I must once again thank you in the warmest terms for all the happiness you have brought me down the years through the medium of that best of all publications, the little C.D. Each month as I settle down to read my copy nostalgia comes over me like the smell of old lavender. I am extremely sensible of all the labour of love that you and your staunch band of contributors have put into the production of the C.D. Your efforts are deserving of the greatest honour!

BILL LOFTS (London) In answer to Don Spiers query - whilst like our editor, the title of "Mick O' the Midnight Mail" sounds familiar likewise there does not seem to be any trace of it in the period of Magnets he mentions. The Greyfriars Herald did contain all sorts of odd short pieces and could have been in this section sometime. There was a serial called 'The Mystery of the Midnight Mail' written by W. Murray Graydon in the Boys/Greyfriars Herald that ran over a Xmas period 1920/21 however.

Regarding the Rio Kid, seemingly The Modern Boy Annuals and Popular Book of Boys Stories contained some original tales at have never been recorded. Has any reader a set of these to enable them all to be scrutinised? The British Library files are far from complete.

M. R. THOMPSON (Sunderland) I want you to know how much I enjoy reading the C.D. I find waiting 4 weeks for each issue is an awful long time sitting at the table waiting for the postman.

I used to go two or three times a week to the "pictures", but I haven't been for years. Things are not the same nowadays. Walk into the newsagent's and what a variety of rubbish one sees. No replacement for the John Bulls, Answers, Everybodys, Picture Posts. Then we had the monthlies - Argosy, Lilliput, London Opinion Courier. There was so much good reading in those days. I think I shall end this letter to you before the tears begin to pour down my cheeks.

LESLIE KING (Chesham) May I point out one small error in this month's "Danny's Diary" which is my favourite feature in C.D. mainly because I was an avid reader of the A.P. Boys' papers of the thirties and many memories are rekindled for me by this feature. I was an habitual cinemagoer (if I could get the money plus permission) during this period, and the error I have mentioned refers to the film "Lives of a Bengal Lancer." I well remember being thrilled by this film, but the third star mentioned was Richards Cromwell, not Richard Barthelmess.



NEWS OF THE OLD BOYS BOOK CLUBS

MIDLAND

Despite terrible weather on the evening of 25th November, 9 members attended, and in marked contrast to last month we had a very enjoyable meeting.

There was much concern for our popular Chairman, Tom Porter. He was found in his home after a fall, and had lain there for 13 hours till the police and ambulance got him away to hospital. He is now in Wordsley Hospital for skin-grafting on his legs. I know that all O.B.B.C. members of all clubs will wish him well.

The meeting was conducted by Geoff Lardner. Refreshments were provided by Joan Golen and Betty Hopton, and Ivan Webster brewed tea and coffee from his own ingredients and with his own utensils.

Your Correspondent gave a 15-questions quiz with three handsome prizes, the winners being Geoff Lardner, Betty Hopton, and Ivan Webster.

Geof conducted a game, "Take a Letter", the solutions being titles of S.O.L's. There was also one about Charles Hamilton's pen-names: Martin Clifford, Owen Conquest, Prosper Howard, etc. Ivan Webster won this. Apparently, Hamilton had 10 pen-names.

The Midland Club sends best wishes for the New Year to all the Clubs.

JACK BELLFIED (Correspondent)

CAMBRIDGE

Our Christmas meeting on 7th December was held at the home of our Chairman, Vic Hearn. The Secretary drew attention to an article about Jack Overhill which appeared in the Cambridge Weekly News. Vic Hearn opened the programme with a quiz on the war's opening months, known at that time as the "phoney War."

Bill Lofts followed with a talk on the London street markets of his youth, particularly of the many book-stalls which boys' papers could be found to buy or exchange.

Roy Whiskin followed with his list of "Desert Island Books".

After enjoying Mrs. Hearn's tea we resumed the programme. Tony Cowley showed the B.B.C. Scrapbook presented in 1970. Keith Hodgkinson then showed two films; the first of the summer visit of the Club to the home of Ruth and Neville Wood; the second was a very funny Laurel & Hardy film, "Two Tars".

The meeting closed with a very warm vote of thanks to Vic and Mrs. Hearn, and a hearty exchange of seasonable greetings.

LONDON

The 37th Christmas meeting of the club took place at the Liberal Hall, Ealing on Sunday, 14th December and was attended by thirty-four members. Roger Jenkins read his customary Yuletide reading from a Magnet and Bill Bradford obliged with extracts from a St. Frank's ghost story. Leslie Rowley also read from one of his own compositions all about a ghost.

Mary Cadogan mentioned the tribute to Frank Richards that is featured in the current issue of Punch and went on to state that her book on Richmal Crompton will be published in paper-back format next April.

Roger Jenkins won Graham Bruton's quiz. Arthur Bruning was the winner of Roy Parsons E.S. Brooks Acrostic and Larry Morley won Bill Bradford's Companion papers and comics covers quiz.

From the January 1962 issue of the Club's newsletter, Bill Bradford read extracts which included the tribute to Frank Richards on his demise on Christmas Eve 1961. Arthur Bruning rendered a fine essay which he entitled "New Year Resolutions".

The Radio Four's feature "Billy Bunter's Xmas Party" was discussed and comments on it were fairly favourable.

Thanks were accorded to Bill and Thelma for providing the excellent feed and thanks were also given to the ladies who assisted.

Next meeting at the Walthamstow venue on Sunday, 11th January. Tea provided but bring own comestibles.

BEN WHITER

NORTHERN

Christmas Party held: Saturday, 13th December, 1986.

We had a reasonable attendance of 17 at our party the highlight of which was a visit of our two honorary members from Lancashire to whom we refer as "The Rochdale Players".

After a most delicious study spread organised by the ladies, we were able to delight in the performance lasting 55 minutes from "The Players". Using excerpts from Holiday Annuals, "Magnets" and other old papers, they put together a fitting presentation for the Christmas season. There was plenty of opportunity to issue forth laughter! "The Players" were given a hearty round of applause (continued on page 27....)

FAIR PLAY

(The first story to introduce Hurree Singh)

The grinning juniors proceeded to form the court. Robinson and Hake looked at each other with a sickly smile.

Trial by jury was an institution at Netherby, a delinquent often being arraigned by his own Form, and, if found guilty, generally ragged as a punishment. But for a lower Form to presume to try fellows of a higher Form was unheard of. But Redfern, since he had become cock of the Third, had shown a disposition to make things hum. The Third were evidently in earnest now.

The two prisoners were placed in the dock, the dock being a form, and several youngsters stood on guard over them. Then Redfern told

off twelve lads as jurymen. He himself was judge, and he occupied a high seat upon a desk. The rest of the Third stood round in a circle watching the proceedings with enjoyment. "The court is now open" said Redfern, tapping on the desk with a ruler. "Prisoners at the bar, do you demand the assistance counsel?"

"I'll break your neck!" said Hake.

"The prisoner uses threats of violence towards the judge, which amounts to contempt of court" said Redfern. "Contempt of court is punished by three pinches in the tendermost spot discoverable upon the person of the offender. Tigg minor is appointed pincher

to the court."

"What-ho!" said Tigg minor.

He had often been cuffed by Hake, and he now inflicted the sentence of the court with a keen relish. Hake squirmed and yelled.

Having thus restored order, Redfern proceeded:

"Lawrence is counsel for the prosecution. I hereby, herewith and thusly appoint Knowles counsel for the defence."

"All serene, I'll defend 'em!" said Knowles.

"I believe it's the proper caper for the prosecution to begin" said Redfern, a little doubtfully. "Get on to it, Lawrence."

Lawrence stepped up.

"The prisoners are accused," he said "of being pigs and cads in general and having upon a specific occasion maltreated a young gentleman belonging to the Third Form at Netherby. This gentleman who is the most high and mighty Nabob of Bhanipur, Rajah of Ratz, and Emperor of Cochin-China, is now in court to give evidence."

"Call your witness!"

The Nabob came forward. He told a plain, unvarnished tale of what had happened in the bicycle-shed.

"That's my case," said the counsel for the prosecution. "I demand that the prisoners be hanged, drawn and quartered and likewise whacked."

"Wait a bit. We haven't heard the defence yet."

Knowles got up.

"I don't really know what to say in defence of these mongrels" he said; "but I will do my best for my clients. Of course, anybody looking at the prisoners at the bar will be able to see that they

are wasters and rotters of the first water, the hideousness of their personal appearance being only equalled by the beastliness of their manners."

Laughter in court.

"The fact that the prisoners are such awful rotters must not be allowed to count against them," continued the counsel for the defence. "They can't help it. The defence is that they were born like it and mustn't be blamed, because Nature was hard on them. They are more entitled to pity than anything else."

"Oh, just you wait till we can get at you!" muttered his clients rather ungratefully.

"Silence in court!"

"Oh shut up!" said Robinson. "When are you going to stop this giddy rot?"

There was a thump at the door from outside.

"Open this door, you cads!"

"Help!" shouted Robinson. "Fourth to the rescue!"

There was a crash on the door. Two or three angry Fourth Formers had put their shoulders against it with all their strength. But the door was strong, and showed no sign of yielding.

"We can leave those giddy kids to amuse themselves", said Redfern serenely. "The trial will proceed. The prisoners are proved guilty-----".

"You haven't asked them yet which they plead" said Knowles.

"Well, why didn't you remind me, fathead!" said the judge. "Prisoners on the form-- I mean at the bar-- are you guilty or not guilty?"

"Rats!"

"Go and eat coke!"

"Very well. Prisoners refuse to plead. Gentlemen of the jury, you have heard the able speeches of the counsel for the defence and the prosecution. What's your verdict?"

"Guilty!" howled the jury.
Crash!

The door trembled and shook; but the panels were of stout oak, and the lock was big and strong. There was no danger of invasion. Redfern took no notice of the onslaught.

"You hear, prisoners?" he exclaimed. "You are guilty!"

"Rats!"

"You have been guilty of a crime of extreme seriousness," said Redfern severely. "Your little squabbles in your own Form are of no consequence to anybody, but when you presume to lay your hands upon a gentleman of the Third, it is time something was done. The only mitigating circumstance is that you, Robinson, owned up before Lummy about it."

Redfern looked round. "What is to be the punishment of these gross offenders? I leave it to the court!"

There was a great variety of suggestions at once.

"You'd better not touch us!" exclaimed Robinson. "I'll make you all wriggle for this, as soon as I get a chance!"

"Then you may as well have a good dose while we're about it!" replied Redfern.

"Gentlemen of the Third. I suggest the frog's-march. This sentence can be carried out here and now, which will be convenient."

"That's right!"

"Frog's-march the bounders!"

There was a rush to seize the prisoners. They were seized and hauled off the form by a dozen pairs of hands.

"Now, start!" said Redfern. "Keep it up till I say when."

The juniors started. Robinson and Hake yelled and struggled in vain. Round and round the room the juniors went trampling, and the two chiefs of the Fourth experienced the fullest joys of the frog's-march.

The trampling of feet, and the yells of the fellows outside, who redoubled their attack on the door. The kicking and thumping and banging in the passage was simply terrific. The Third Formers took not the slightest notice of it. Round and round they went with the victims of stern justice.

Robinson and Hake had never had such a time in their lives. Before they had been twice round the room, they devoutly wished that they had never cornered the nabob in the bicycle-shed.

"Stop, stop! We give you best! Chuck it, Redfern! Chuck it!"

Redfern took pity on the delinquents.

"Stop now, chaps!" he exclaimed "If they beg Inky's pardon handsomely, we'll let them crawl out!"

The march ceased. Two dragged looking wretches lay gasping, with their clothes disordered and covered with dust, their collars and ties torn out, and their hair ruffled. Robinson and Hake had been put through it with a vengeance.

"Beg the nabob's pardon," said Redfern. "You haven't had half enough, but if you do the handsome thing we'll let you off

lightly."

The two victims were too far gone to think of further defiance.

"I beg your pardon, Inky!" gasped Hake.

"I bub-bub-bub--" stuttered Robinson

"You mustn't do that, Robinson," said Redfern, shaking his head.

"I bub-bub-beg your pardon."

"Granted", said the nabob loftily. "You are pardoned, little boys, but mind you don't do it again, or you will again be the recipients of the severe punishment."

There was a sudden hush outside.

The noise had attracted a prefect, and at his approach the Fourth Formers had melted away like snow in the sunshine. There was a sharp authoritative rap on the

door. Knowles opened it and Lantham came in.

"What's all this row about?" the prefect demanded. "Great Scott! What have those fellows been doing? Who and what are they?"

"They are two prize beauties out of the Fourth" grinned Redfern. "They've been enjoying themselves. Don't they look like it?"

The prefect grinned.

"You've no business in this room, Hake and Robinson. Get out!"

And the two heroes of the Fourth travelled, Lantham, with a warning gesture to the Third, following them out.

"Ha, ha, ha!" giggled Redfern.

"I fancy we've scored this time, my infants. Who said that trial by jury wasn't a great institution?"

EDITORIAL COMMENT: The final chapter in this story was a double-length one devoted almost entirely to a lengthy and detailed description of a Rugby Match between the Third and Fourth forms. I think it must be unique in Hamiltonia. Whether Hamilton ever again wrote of a Rugby game I am not sure, but I am certain that never again did he devote so much space to describing a match. Here then, is how the story finally ended, after the Third had beaten the Fourth at Rugby:-

Robinson was a little grim as he came off the field, but he managed to give Redfern a grin.

"I never, thought you'd d-d-do it, Reddy," he said. "I didn't think your beastly fuf-fuf-form had it in them."

And Robinson, like a true sportsman, joined in the cheer as Redfern and Hurree Singh were carried off on the shoulders of their Form-fellows.

(continued from page 24....)

for another of their fine presentations. Co-incidentally, their performance commenced at 7.00 p.m. exactly the time that "Billy Bunter's Christmas Party" was going out on B.B.C. Radio Four's "Saturday Night Theatre" production.

Arthur Fortune presented a musical quiz which enabled our guests to take part.

Supper was at 8.30 p.m. and another time to have a good chat before it was time to wish everyone well for Christmas prior to departing.

All at Northern Club wish every reader of the C.D. a Very Happy New Year with the hope that we may see even more visitors in 1987 at our meetings.

JOHNNY BULL MINOR

ARM OF THE LAW

(E. Baldock)

The official pencil - all three inches of it - is poised having been duly moistened by the tip of Police Constable Tozer's tongue. The official notebook is open and 'Tozzy' is wearing his most official look. A chew or so at the end of the pencil and he is ready to take down, in brief regulation official jargon, certain facts and details appertaining to a number of apples missing from an adjacent orchard.

"Now Master Bunter, you were hobserved leaving the vicinity of the - er - crime with certain unnatural bulges about your person."

"Look here Tozzy...."

The enquiry is afoot. To extract a statement from William George Bunter may well prove - to say the least - very difficult, though not perhaps nearly so difficult as assessing the veracity of that statement when once obtained. This may well prove to be beyond Tozzy's rural capabilities, meticulous and careful though he maybe.

It is all part of P.C. Tozer's day - the suppression of petty crime. For nothing more worthy of note has ever been recorded in dear sleepy old Friardale. A little apple pilfering from the local orchard; a modicum of poaching in the Popper Court preserves; a lamplless cyclist on a dark night; these are the only ripples which ruffle the calm and serenity of Tozzy's day - and night. It all falls into the line of duty, (and Tozzy is a whale on duty) whether taking an unofficial cup of tea in Mr. Clegg's little back parlour, or a glass of something a trifle more potent at the back door of the 'Three Fishers'; P.C. Tozer takes them all in the course of duty, in his official capacity as it were. He is always alert and ready to assert and uphold the laws of England in this charming little backwater of Friardale. It is only towards the middle of the day, when he removes his helmet and loosens his collar and belt, and sits down in his little cottage at lunch-time with an anticipatory grunt, and awaits the culinary delights prepared for him by the redoubtable Mrs. Tozer - excellent woman - that his official manner in some degree fades into the background as he seizes his knife and fork and proceeds to do ample justice to the efforts of his spouse.

Inspector Grimes, of Courtfield is 'Tozzy's' commanding officer. This awesome figure is wont to descent upon Friardale (and Tozzy) at certain unspecified times, supposedly unknown to the village 'arm of the law'. Yet he has never been known to have been caught 'napping' in anything untoward. It has been darkly hinted that some system of underground intelligence operates upon these occasions.

Be this as it may, Tozzy always knows when Grimey is in the offing, and it is at these times that Mrs. Tozer excels herself in the button-burnishing and boot-polishing line, and her husband is always turned out resplendent for the scrutiny of the Inspector. Mr. Clegg's shop and the 'Three Fishers' are passed by with nothing more than an official glance as they make a perambulation of the village together. True, Inspector Grimes does relax a trifle when Mrs. Tozer does the honours at the board at tea-time before 'Grimey' takes his leave, but it must be admitted that 'Tozzy' himself breathes a sigh of genuine relief when he gives the Inspector a final salute at the termination of his visit, then all things once more settle back into the even and uneventful tenor of their ways.

'Tozzy' is a likable old character. Promotion in the Force has passed him by, yet leaving no sense of frustration in his breast, hereby singling him out at once as superior in moral stature to many more privileged and intellectual gentleman of our acquaintance. Friardale minus the watchful eye of P.C. Tozer to preside over its peaceful gyrations would be bereft of much of its undoubted charm, and 'Tozzy' without the background of Friardale would appear a sad and lonely figure indeed. Although he does not figure largely in the Greyfriars scene, he is, even so, an integral part of it. There have been occasions when 'Tozzy' has been the butt of ill-timed japes from Ponsonby and Co of Highcliffe and Skinner and Co. of the Remove. These happily have not been too frequent or serious. 'Tozzy' enjoys a certain popularity among the Greyfriars fellows. This has been made obvious on more than the odd occasion. It is certain that beneath the blue tunic, humanity reigns supreme, and a youngish heart beats strongly when he discards his official image; he then becomes quite a jolly old fellow who, together with Mrs. Tozer form part of the village scene which would be certainly less colourful without them. Dr. Samuel Johnson, that eminent eighteenth century man of letters once opined that 'The law is an ass'. Possibly so, but in Friardale at least it is quite congenial (old) ass. May its local representative long wield his official baton with impunity.

Together with Gosling, the Greyfriars porter, his friend of many years and with whom he has much in common. Not least of which is a mature and expert palate concerning certain local ales and beer obtainable at, among other holsteries, the "Three Fishers" down by the river where they have spent many happy hours together discussing how they would each personally like to deal with those young 'raskils' up at the school.

THE 'JAY'

by J.F. BURRELL

The reference in the early Hurree Singh story to Jobling, the school porter, makes one wonder if this was the earliest use of a name beginning with "J". CH seems to have been obsessed with people whose names began with this letter and they were mainly servants or small time crooks, as follows:-

Jackson, Popper Court Keeper.
 Jacobstein. Secondhand clothes dealer.
 Jarvis. Butler at Cherry Place.
 Jasmond. Butler at Reynham Castle.
 Jeeves. Butler to Major Thresher. I don not know who was first, CH or Wodehouse.
 William Jenkins. Plumber and glazier from Chunkleys.
 Jenks. Keper at Compton Hall.
 Jermyn. Valet to Sir William Byrd.
 Jervis. Chauffer to Ponsonby.
 Jervis. Valet to Sir Richard Ravenspur.
 Jessop. Keeper at Wharton Lodge.
 Jobling. Small time thief from river boats.
 Jobson. Hirer of horses and traps.
 Johnson. Keeper at Compton Hall.
 Alf Johnson. A waif befriended by Vernon Smith.
 Joliffe. Landlord of the Red Cow, Friardale.

19 Joneses.

Jorrocks. Motorcycle dealer.
 Joyce. Head keeper Popper Court.
 " Under Keeper, Wharton Lodge.
 Judkins. Steward MY Silver Scud.
 " Gardener Wharton Lodge.
 Joe Judson. Theft of Popper Court Moonstone.
 Albert Juggins. Tramp who tried to rob Hacker.
 Albert Juggins. High Oaks Chauffer.
 Alfred Juggins. High Oaks Caretaker.
 Algernon Cecil Juggins. High Oaks pageboy.
 James Juggins. Doorman and bouncer, Courtfield Picture Palace.
 Martha Juggins. Cook, High Oaks.
 Percival Juggins. Supernumerary chauffer High Oaks.

In the Hardbacks

Jimmy Jecks. A thief after Billy Butlin's wallet.
 Jenkins. Thames boatman.
 Jenkins. General servant to Sussex landowner.
 Jenkins. Popper Court Keepers.
 Nosey Jenkins. Pickpocket.
 Jervis. Name taken by atomic spy, Krinko.
 Johnson. Courtfield taxi driver.
 James Jugson. Real name of Jimmy the Spiv.
 Slim Judson. After Sir Hilton Popper's Blue Mauritius Stamp.
 Judson. Highcliffe School porter.

A QUESTION OF THOUGHT

from Ernest Holman

Coker would rush up the staircase to the Remove studies; pretty soon, he would be rolled down.

To where? The first floor of Greyfriars - was that the situation of the Fifth Form studies and Games Room? In which event, further stairs would lead on to the ground floor. So - were the Remove studies as high as that - from outside, the third upward set of windows?

Presumably, the Remove landing was at the beginning of the passage, near Study No. 1. Were there, then, stairs at right angles to the Fifth, another landing and stairs to the ground floor? Were there, also, stairs upwards from the Remove landing, to the Upper Fourth, Shell and Dormitories?

The stories never gave us this information - the illustration only provided most misleading set-ups; author's licence, really - and so long as the stories were good what did it matter?

Well, we know the stories were good; so why mention 'details' - in fact, just don't think of it! I agree - unfortunately, once started on something it is not always easy to halt. Better run the course, perhaps.

Were there many windows in the Remove passage, opposite to the studies?

Did any corridor run off at right angles between, say, Studies 7 and 8?

Study 14 had once been a box-room. Was it at the end of the passage, or round a corner - with additional box-rooms up another staircase, for the use of smokers?

Where, in fact, was Greyfriars? North of Dover, near St. Margaret's Bay? South of Folkestone, near St. Mary's Bay? On the East Kent coast, of course; but what a contrivance to allow cricketers to leave after first lesson and be ready to start at Rookwood at the end of second lesson. Mind you, the age of the train was much younger then, so perhaps it was getting there in those days!

I've just about got 'there' too. Otherwise, imagination will know no bounds - Rookwood will turn out to be on the doorstep of this Magazine's Editor; Sexton Blake and Ferrers Locke will be 'definitely placed' in Baker Street (how sensible of Nelson Lee to avoid such a location! and Dr. Holmes will, like his Greyfriars equivalent, be related to a well-known detective.

A contrived article? Don't think of it!

HISTORICAL STORIES

by A.G. Standen

Writing acceptable historical stories is not cosy; it takes more than a semi-archaic style, and S. Walkey once had a story reviewed by the old Manchester Guardian as "How not to write an historical story for boys". I did, however, like his first "Jack-a-Lantern" series in the 1910 Chums, and at writing pirate stories he was simply the best.

Morton Pike, of course, comes to mind for his fine Robin Hood and other stories with war themes under his real name of D.M. Perry, whilst Draycott M. Dell will be remembered for excellent yarns like "Drake's Drum" in Young Britain.

That fine all-round writer Arthur S. Hardy had a great serial in the early 30's Magnet called "The Red Falcon under the name Arthur Stafens, and I have "The Swordsman" (dedicated to Sir Emsley Carr) in hard covers by Newnes, about France under Regent Orleans and with great understanding of the English stage of the period.

The A.P. Robin Hood Library had very good tales by Coutts Armour, and Major Charles Gilson was at his brilliant best with "Jack Without-a-Roof" (B.O.P.) and "The Lost Empire". My own favourite in the Senior League, as it were, is Stanley J. Weyman, showing fine characterisation and feeling for the period.

A CHANGE OF NAME!

By W.O.G. Lofts.

Readers may recall me writing a short piece a year or so ago, on visiting The Sexton Blakes Restaurant in Panton Street, just off Haymarket. London. I found that it was named not after our famous sleuth of Baker Street, but after the cockney slang for 'Fakes' - e.g. Sexton Blakes. The only pictures hanging from the walls were slightly romantic in theme, so it is not surprising, that in passing there the other day I saw that the name has now been changed to Saint Casanover!

As Research Officer for The Henty Society, we have often held committee meetings at 'The Cornet and Horse' public house, that is situated in Lavender Gardens. Battersea - where G.H. Henty used to live. Indeed he titled one of his famous books 'Cornet and Horse'.

On a recent visit, Myself and others were very surprised to find that after all these years the 'Horse' part has now been dropped, it just being known as 'The Cornet'. The 'Cornet' in this case being an old now outdated name for a sub-lieutenant - and not the ice-cream variety!

Not in my opinion a change for the better, now that the 'Horse' is missing from an ideal title for a very old hostelry.