

STORY PAPER

Collectors'

VOL. 41
No. 489
SEPTEMBER 1987

Digest

THIS WAY PIP
TO THE ANNUAL
COMPETITION!



NUNC
NUNC!



52p

Large Stocks of BOYS FRIEND WEEKLY, mainly containing the Rookwood stories. A few bound volumes.

Good stocks of NELSON LEES, all series; also MONSTER LIBRARY. SCHOOLBOYS' OWN LIBRARY, several hundred, 3rd series, also 4th and 5th. UNION JACKS in quantity.

THRILLER No. 1 - Edgar Wallace story Red Aces, complete poor cover torn. Offers. (All other THRILLERS sold at present.)

Large Collection of No. 1s: Several hundred, mainly Post War children's, boys' and others. No lists of these. For callers only.

C.D. ANNUALS: C.D.s at 25p. Some in bound volumes, please state wants.

Post War ROVERS, WIZARDS, etc. Bound as New. Also HOTSPURS, VICTORS, etc. Complete range of HOWARD BAKER FACSIMILES. BOOK CLUB SPECIALS in stock, even a few out of print ones! Latest Book Club. Vol. No. 75 Grammar School Rivals now ready.

Lots of bargains in my vast stock, and prices are keen, too! Visitors very welcome at most times but please ring first to arrange a time. Weekends (afternoons) if more convenient. If you cannot call, your list of immediate wants appreciated. A good postal service is at your disposal. Do not send money with your order; you will receive an invoice with the goods. Sorry I cannot issue lists; stock far too large!

N O R M A N S H A W

84 Belvedere Road, Upper Norwood,
London, SE19 2HZ.
Tel. 01-771-9857

Nearest station is B.R. Crystal Palace

STORY PAPER

COLLECTORS' DIGEST

STORY PAPER COLLECTOR

Founded in 1941 by
W. H. GANDER

COLLECTORS' DIGEST

Founded in 1946 by
HERBERT LECKENBY

STORY PAPER COLLECTORS' DIGEST: Edited and Published
(1959 - January 1987) by Eric Fayne

VOL. 41

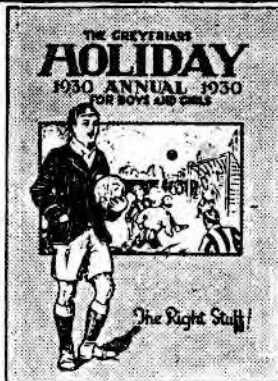
No. 489

SEPTEMBER 1987

Price 52p

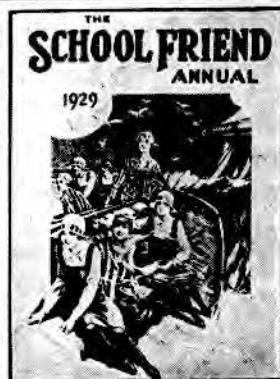
(COPYRIGHT. This magazine is non-profit making and privately circulated. The reproduction of the contents either wholly or in part, without written permission from The Editor, is strictly forbidden.)

THE EDITOR'S CHAT



A book for the manly boy. True to life stories and school and sport, also thrilling adventure tales.

6/-
Net.



Nearly 300 pages of entertaining stories and articles. Will delight every schoolgirl.

6/-
Net.

ANNUAL DELIGHTS

Thoughts of those bumper and beautiful Annuals which we read with such delight as children seem very much to the fore this month, providing inspiration for intriguing articles by two of our contributors, Bob Whiter and Margery Woods.

And, of course, it is now time to talk about our own forthcoming C.D. Annual - surely now one of the longest running! Our

41st Annual will be available, as always, in early December, and we happily predict that it will claim as proud a place as classic favourites like the Holiday Annual, the School Friend, or Tiger Tim's.

We already have in hand a feast of splendid articles and illustrations which we will 'trail' in detail in forthcoming issues of the C.D. But now, please, is the time for you to order your copy of the Annual, because it helps enormously if we can know well in advance the number of copies to be printed. It helps too if you advertise your 'wants' and 'for sale' items, and send your personal greetings to other readers, in the Annual. Our order form is enclosed with this issue, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Please Note: There is still room in the Annual for some further articles or illustrative features, so don't forget to send contributions to me in the fairly near future.

BOYS FRIEND LIBRARY CATALOGUE

Elsewhere in this issue you will find details of the Boys' Friend Library Catalogue. Readers may be puzzled that, when we first mentioned this, it was a project of Mr. Cyril Rowe, whilst the current announcement comes from Mr. Bill Lofts. It happened that Cyril, and those indefatigable literary sleuths Bill Lofts and Derek Adley, were working concurrently on a similar project. On realizing this, Cyril kindly made his researches available to Bill and Derek, who are now issuing a very comprehensive catalogue. We feel sure that this will be extremely well received.

Happy reading - as always!

MARY CADOGAN

* * * * *

THELMA

It is with profound personal sadness that I have to inform readers of the passing in July of Thelma Bradford of Ealing. Thelma was one of the London O.B.B.C.'s staunchest supporters, and a truly wonderful hostess to its members on many occasions. Ever since 1976, when her husband Bill became a member of the Club, his and Thelma's participation have greatly enriched it.

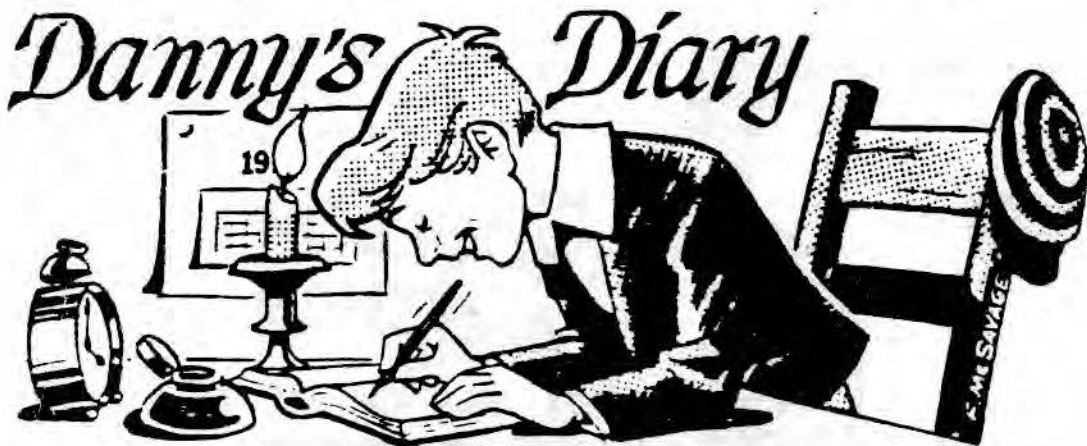
It is almost impossible to believe that Thelma, who was always so radiantly full of life, is no longer with us. We know that she bore her illness with characteristic courage. We grieve at her passing; at every future meeting of the Club we shall miss her warm

and kindly presence. With loving gratitude we shall always remember Thelma. To Bill we send our deepest condolences.

MARY CADOGAN

BILL BRADFORD WRITES:

I would thank our many friends in the O.B.B.C. for their concern, love and prayers during Thelma's illness, all of which gave us the strength to fight on. She showed incredible courage and a smiling face till the very end, and one of her last wishes was that I should carry on with the hobby which had brought us such wonderful friends. I intend to do so, and hope to see many of you soon.



SEPTEMBER, 1937

For quite a few months past the Modern Boy has been in the doldrums. I was even considering giving it up before it gave me up. But everything is different now. The old paper has taken on a new lease of life.

Free gifts there are, consisting of a stamp album and then a little collection of free foreign stamps to be given with each future issue. Not that the free gifts ever bother me. The main thing is the new batch of stories, and the most wonderful news is that the Rio Kid has now joined Modern Boy in a new series, commencing with the last issue of the month.

The opening tale is entitled "The Rio Kid Rides Again". And it's wonderful to have him back after such a long time, though the lovely old tales have been appearing regularly in the Boys' Friend Library.

In the new tale the Kid is riding out of Lariat. He gives assistance to a man who is on his way to the Lazy "S" ranch to be the new foreman. But somebody

doesn't want the new foreman to arrive, and he is set upon by a group of rustlers. But the Kid is there to lend a hand. And the Kid decides that he, even though there is a price on his head, must get the new foreman to the Lazy "S". Simply gorgeous. Roll on next week.

There is also a new Captain Justice series, beginning with "Captain Justice's Airway". A skyscraper city afloat in the Atlantic, the jumping off place for the Captain's World-Wide service. And some strange passengers turn up.

I'm never all that keen on Biggles, but there is a new Biggles serial "Biggles Goes to War". And there is also a new serial entitled "The Three-Coloured Pencil" by the broadcaster S.P.B. Mais. When Jim found the pencil he kept it as a joke; then he discovered that it held mysterious, dangerous secrets.

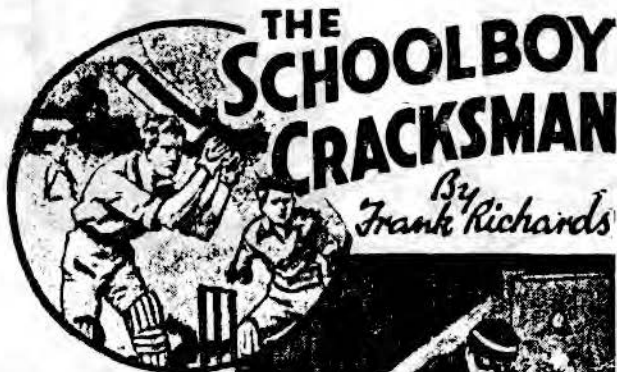
So the Modern Boy is himself again. Fine!

In real life old Hitler and Musso have addressed a huge meeting in Berlin, with all the Nasties cheering them.

Much more interesting is that Sir Malcolm Campbell has reached 127 miles per hour in Bluebird on Lake Maggiore. Good for him.

It has also been a truly marvellous month in the "Monthlies". I never remember a better one.

The Greyfriars Schoolboys' Own Library was "The Schoolboy Cracksman" which continues the story of Lancaster of the Sixth. To the School the new Sixth-former



To Greyfriars, the new Sixth Former, Dick Lancaster, is a great fellow and a fine sportsman. But the school little know that in the underworld he is known as the "Wizard," expert cracksman! You cannot fail to be enthralled by this gripping yarn of Harry Wharton & Co.



SCHOOLBOYS' OWN Library 4⁰

was a great fellow and a real sportsman. But the school never dreamed that in the underworld he was known as "the Wizard", an expert cracksman. This is a lovely story.

The 2nd S.O.L. is "The Boy Who Wanted the Sack". Sent to St. Jim's against his will, Angelo schemed to bring about his own expulsion. But instead of being expelled, he found himself in all sorts of other trouble. Fine stuff, this.

The 3rd S.O.L. is "The Battle of the Giants". War in El Dorada, the lost land of the Brazilian wilds. Primitive giants fighting one another for the supremacy of the lost world. And Nelson Lee and the boys of St. Frank's are in the middle of it all. There are lots of series about St. Frank's away on holiday, I think. Nice way to learn geography.

A red-letter day in the Sexton Blake Library with the return of Pierre Quiroule with "The Mystery of the Missing Aviator." It's gorgeous. The first Granite Grant and Mlle. Julie tale in the S.B.L. for quite a few months.

And the Rio Kid is prominent in the Boys' Friend Library in "The Rio Kid's Enemy". The villain known as Black George is out like an evil shadow on the trails, holding up stage-coaches, and robbing and killing. Until the Kid comes along. When the identity of Black George is revealed, he is not black at all. A white man wearing a black mask. Marvellous yarn.

Also in the B.F.L. we have this month a return of King of the Islands, in "South Seas Scallywag". A good-for-nothing English lad is fast going to the dogs. He is sent to the South Seas to see whether Ken can make a man of him. He can! Tip-top.

As well as the Grant tale in the S.B.L. there is "The Mystery of the Marchers" by Walter Edwards. It's topical. About a mysterious happening while the unemployed from the north are on the march to London. An intriguing tale.

There has been a terrible weather occurrence this month in Hong Kong. There has been what they call a screaming typhoon over the island, and 400 people have been killed.

The opening story this month in the Gem is "The Jew of St. Jim's". The new Jewish boy at St. Jim's is Dick Julian. A bitter and unreasonable quarrel arises between Monty Lowther and the new boy, until a heroic act puts an end to all ill feeling.

Next week brought us "The Fool of the School", and, of course, this one stars Grundy. It is a lively tale with plenty of fun and games. More serious was "The Silent Witness". A craze for photography sweeps St. Jim's. Somebody takes a snap of Mr. Selby falling in a ditch, and Manners was blamed for the offending picture. But Levison was the culprit.

Finally, "Skimpole the Benevolent". It's a great surprise when Skimpole receives £40 for his weird and wonderful invention. And even more surprising when Skimmy invites a crowd of tramps to share his windfall. And then a shock - for the real winner was Mr. Skimpoll and he wants his money - and our Skimmy has given it all away.

The stories running at the back of the Gem this month concern the arrival of Mark Linley as a new boy at Greyfriars. I am ashamed to say I never cared a lot for Linley.

All over the place now Belisha Beacons are springing up. They are poles with grapefruit on top to show you where to cross the busy main roads in the

towns. Traffic has to give right of way to anyone walking over the road between Belisha Beacons. They are named after Mr. Hoare Belisha who is Minister of Transport - or something. If lady drivers knock you down on a Belisha crossing they have to blow their horns to show they've done it - according to Max Miller. There is even a new game on the market called "Belisha."

A fairly good month in the local cinemas. Anna Neagle was in a British musical, "London Melody". Tom Walls and Ralph Lynn were in a rather stodgy comedy "For Valour". "Gold Diggers of 1937", starring Dick Powell, Joan Blondell, and Glenda Farrell is a nice, polished musical, though it is not so good as other Gold Digger films I remember in the past year or two. I found "The Garden of Allah", with Marlene Dietrich, Charles Boyer and Basil Rathbone, about a haughty lady who falls in love with a venegade monk, a bit heavy-going. This one was in Technicolour.

I usually find Shirley Temple a bit of a pain, but her new picture "Stowaway" was good, about a missionary's little daughter who stows away on a pleasure liner.

Finally "The Charge of the Light Brigade" with Erroll Flynn and Olivia de Havilland was not true to history but it is grand entertainment.

The new series about Wun Lung has continued and come to an end in the Magnet. The mysterious Dr. Sin has been trying to kidnap Wun Lung. The Famous Five have appointed themselves as Wun Lung's bodyguard for the holidays, and in "The House of Peril" they find themselves in Paris staying with Wun Lung's rich uncle.

The series continues next week with "Menace from the East", with Mr. O, from China, still bent on getting hold of the Chinese boy. The final story in this series is "The Greyfriars Crusoes". It has been quite a good series, with some original situations and plenty of action and excitement, but it does not travel beyond Europe and is not really anything like so good as the earlier China series.

Then another new series started, with the Famous Five, Wun Lung, and Bunter, all finishing off their holiday at Wharton Lodge. The first story of the series is "The Boy Who Couldn't Run Straight", introducing a youngster named Skip who is a pickpocket, and featuring Coker who has reason to take a big interest in the youthful pickpocket. It promises well.

On the last day of the month, England's oldest morning paper, the Morning Post, published its last issue. And on October 1st, it is amalgamated with the Daily Telegraph. It's sad to see old institutions fading away.

* * * * *

ERIC FAYNE comments on this month's DANNY'S DIARY.

So, after a lapse of some five years or so, Charles Hamilton was back with a new series of the Rio Kid, and this series at least had all the old charm of the original Kid stories. I have always felt that there was some secret behind the Rio Kid yarns. They are full of musical, descriptive writing, which never showed itself in any other tales which Hamilton wrote of the Wild West. Packsaddle, for instance, and the Magnet's Texas series, were harsh by comparison. When the Rio Kid tales ended I wondered whether ever again I should come across such musical prose. And I never did!

S.O.L. No. 311 "The Schoolboy Cracksman" was the second S.O.L. concerning Lancaster, and comprised 3 Magnets from the 11 story Magnet series of 1931. S.O.L. No. 312 "The Boy Who Wanted The Sack" comprised the first 3 stories of the 5-story Angelo Lee series of the 1927 Gem.

In a Sexton Blake Catalogue published some years ago, it was stated that the 1937 yarn "The Mystery of the Missing Aviator" was a reprint of an earlier story entitled "The Secret of the Six Black Dots". This was inaccurate. There was no similarity at all between the two stories. So far as I can trace this was a new Pierre Quiroule novel "The Mystery of the Missing Aviator" in 1937. Between this date and the start of the war the author was to write a handful of new stories of Sexton Blake. It is a long time since I have read them. I recall them as excellent adult novels, but not quite up to the standard of the earlier novels from this writer.

"The Rio Kid's Enemy" in the B.F.L. was, of course, a series from the Popular, and it was its second reprinting in the B.F.L.

The 1937 Gem story "The Jew of St. Jim's" had originally appeared under the same title in mid-summer 1915. "The Fool of the School" in 1937 had been "Grundy's Great Game" some weeks later in 1915. "The Silent Witness" of 1937 had been "Well Played, Julian" the following week in 1915. (For some reason, the second 1915 tale of Julian, entitled "The Honour of a Jew", had been completely omitted, possibly due to a war flavour.)

The 1937 story "Skimpole the Benevolent" had been "Skimpole's Windfall" in the late autumn of 1915.



THE LOVELIEST MONSTER OF THEM ALL

by Jack Murtagh,
New Zealand

The Monster Library - recent mention of it has brought back a flood of happy memories, going back to the date the first copy came out, November 20th, 1925. This was followed by 18 more issues, one each month.

They contained 128 pages and were reprints of an average of

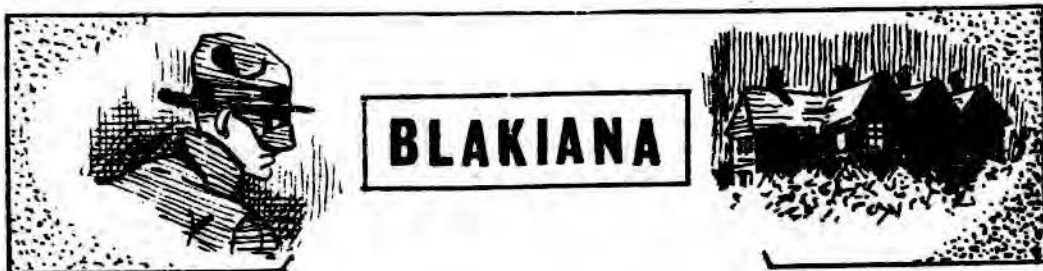
8 earlier Nelson Lees, always a complete series. They covered almost all the Nelson Lees old series from No. 158 to 348. I had started reading the Nelson Lee with issue 529 in 1925, "Adventure Bound", the start of a holiday series in the South Pacific, given to me by a school-mate. As far as the Nelson Lee was concerned it was love at first sight. This was 4 months before the Monster Library came out, and in that 4 months I had haunted local second-hand book shops looking for back issues and selling bottles and doing odd jobs to scratch up the necessary pennies to buy any issues that came to light.

Imagine, if you can, my delight when 4 months later the Monster Library appeared in the bookshops - it was unbelievable! A dream come true! At last I could read all the early stories of the St. Frank's boys - the only catch was raising the money to buy them. Fortunately I had an older brother who used to help out, providing I was well behaved when he brought his girlfriend home! And there was always the threat of blackmail - "do this or do that, else there's no money for the Monster". Although the price in England was one shilling, in New Zealand it was one shilling and four pence. After two or three issues I found a bookseller who was selling it at one shilling and three pence, a saving of a whole penny, so my order with the first one was cancelled and I shifted to the cheaper bookseller. What wonderful days they were. We didn't have much money but we enjoyed life. I still have the 19 Monsters I bought all those 60 or so years ago, and also a full set of all the series of Nelson Lees which I built up over the years.

A few years after the Monsters came out I suddenly discovered



that girls were more interesting than weekly papers! I parted with some of my collection to raise extra money, as I found that taking girls out to Movies, etc. was more expensive than buying weekly papers (one of them trapped me and we have been happily married for 48 years). Also I had acquired an old motorcycle which was very hungry as far as petrol was concerned - do you know it used to cost us 10 pence (old pence) for $\frac{1}{2}$ gallon of petrol! No wonder I decided to part with 240 old first series Sexton Blakes for one penny each - I got a whole one pound note for them!! I know Blake collectors will be crying when they read this and I feel like joining them!



MULTI MEDIA BLAKE - Part Four

by Norman Wright

I have said previously that the late 1930's found Sexton Blake's popularity at its zenith, yet diversity of his adventures was about to be curtailed. The acute wartime paper shortage brought about the demise of a vast number of magazines, papers and periodicals. "Detective Weekly" disappeared at the end of May 1940, and, although the "Sexton Blake Library" survived, its page count was soon to be reduced. One Amalgamated Press newcomer that did survive and thrive was "The Knock-Out Comic", first published on 4th March 1939 as a rival to the successful new comics launched by D.C. Thomson. Much unfair criticism has been levelled at "Knock-Out" by collectors of old boys books and papers. Purists found its publication of Greyfriars in picture strip form unpalatable. Whatever one's views it is certain that the picture strip tales of Bunter and Co. kept Greyfriars in the public eye. Had Greyfriars disappeared from view entirely it is perhaps doubtful whether it would have returned in hardback form. Less has been said about the Sexton Blake adventure strips.

It was Edward Holmes, editor of "Knock-Out", who mooted the idea of introducing Blake to the comic in picture strip form. He scripted the first serial strip, "Sexton Blake and the Hooded Stranger", and many subsequent scripts. The artist responsible for the first few episodes was Jos Walker. After a few months the strip was taken over by Alfred Taylor who remained the regular artist

for almost a decade.

Eric Parker only contributed one strip, "The Secret of Monte Cristo", a fifteen episode adventure that appeared early in 1949. The script by Holmes was reminiscent of his radio serial "A Case for Sexton Blake". A complete listing of the Sexton Blake picture strips, together with a synopsis of each story, has been compiled by David Ashford and appears in the current issue of "Golden Fun" (no. 17), available from A. and L. Clark, 24 Arundel Road, Tunbridge Wells, Kent., at a cost of £3.28, post free.

There were a couple of Sexton Blake films made in the 1940s, starring David Farrar. I must admit that I have not seen either "Meet Sexton Blake" or "The Echo Murders", but their non appearance on television is probably, though not necessarily, an indication of their quality.

The dullest Sexton Blake stories were, in my opinion, those published during the late 1940's and early 1950's. The plots were lack-lustre, hardly surprising as they were being churned out month after month by the same few authors, Parsons, Tyrer, Drummond and Hardinge, with just the occasional novel by someone else. Even the covers, usually lively and appealing, were dull and uninspired.

Howard Baker's 'new look Blake' was greeted by many enthusiasts with about as much enthusiasm as a thunderstorm at a cricket match. What those readers failed to understand was that Sexton Blake's survival over the decades was due to the ability of his chroniclers to change him with the times. Reading today some of his early cases reveals a character totally different to the classical detective of the 1930's. In the Edwardian decade he was chasing around in hansom cabs and employing street arabs to keep track of suspects. In fact, doing everything that his great Baker St. rival was doing! Such props would have seemed as out of place in the 1930s as the mid-war Blake seemed to readers in the mid-1950s, assuming one regards Blake as a contemporary of his readers. Such changes as took place in the mid '50s may have been hard to swallow for the hardcore of enthusiasts who saw Blake as a 'period' detective, but they were essential if the library was to continue and attract new readers. The covers certainly became more eye catching, even if they did reveal more cleavage than Nell Gwyn! The new authors brought some originality to the stories and revitalised the characters. Martin Thomas (Thomas Martin), who contributed over twenty novels to the library is amongst my favourite Blake authors. One of his novels, "Dead Man's Destiny" (no. 466) offered an explanation of Tinker's origin, including the origin of his name.

When the last of the old style "Sexton Blake Library" appeared in June 1963 there was speculation that the library had finally come to an end after 1652 issues. But a Blake renaissance was on the way. The library would return and Blake was soon to appear in another radio series. Perhaps most importantly of all he was to feature on that old one-eyed monster of the living room - television!

MY CHOICE OF SEXTON BLAKE STORIES

by Ann Clarke

Further to Bill Thurbon's selection of Sexton Blake stories, one choice of mine would be the same as his, No. 501 "The

Detective Airman". Besides being one of the best early Yvonne stories the flying episodes are fascinating. They remind me of a Nelson Lee story about the Black Wolf, which includes an air race round the British Isles - is it by the same writer?

Then I would choose a Waldo story, or rather two. The first Union Jack I ever read was No. 892 "The Case of the Chinese Antique", recommended to me by Josie Packman. I would certainly include this, but there is also a story of Waldo in his reformed days as a Peril Expert "The Captive of the Crag" (No. 1322), when he and Blake work together. In this, Waldo's special abilities save the day, but he is deceived by the crooks and it takes Blake to unravel their heartless plot.

Then a Zenith story, and my favourite there is "A Mystery in Motley" (No. 1182), partly because a large part of it is told by Zenith himself and gives a fascinating insight into his outlook, etc. Julia Fortune also appears in this. Another very good Zenith story is "The Plant of Prey" (No. 1171) where Tinker almost becomes the victim of a man-eating plant. Pedro must be included, and there is a pair of stories in which he takes a leading part, "The House on Hathou" and "Pedro Takes Charge" (UJ Nos. 1179 and 1180).

One of the best Plummer stories is the first one "The man from Scotland Yard" (No. 222); besides being a very good detective story it has a real period flavour. (I think it was dated early 1908). However, there is also "The Problem of the Yellow Button" (No. 334), again good detection, and some rather macabre touches. Then I think I would choose No. 995, "Eyes in the Dark", including Professor Kew, Count Bonalli (The Owl) and Blake's friend Lawless.

There are so many others it is impossible to make a selection; for instance, a Roxane story such as "Lost in the Legion" (No. 1478); The three Musketeers; Huxton Rymer; Miss Death; Kestrel; Nirvana; Wu Ling; Gunga Dass; The Black Eagle; etc. etc.

Many of the best stories are either in the Sexton Blake Library or are part of a series, and so would probably be book-length, e.g. the Waldo series of 3 UJs beginning with "The Affair of the Bronze Mirror", or the Wu Ling serial "The Black Abbot of Cheng-Tu". Several other Wu Ling stories form series, and really need to be read as a whole, e.g. the four beginning with "The Adventure of the Yellow Beetle", and several others.

* * * * *

THE BULLSEYE FAMILY

BY J.E.M.

Born January 1931, died July 1934, Bullseye was one of AP's shortest-lived offspring. Yet its popularity with collectors is not due merely to its brief existence. The truth is there had been nothing quite like Bullseye before - well, not for 20 years anyway.

Bullseye's distant forebear was Fun and Fiction, also from AP, which ran from 1911 to 1914. It anticipated that eerie black-on-blue cover, its stories and illustrations the same brand of sinister fantasy. A copy I have of F. and F. from 1912 contains titles like "The Sign of the Twisted Tooth", "The Woman with the Black Heart", "Kiss, or The Iron Beetle" and "Adam Daunt the Millionaire Detective". Typical illustrations depict hooded figures, mysterious females and strange science-fiction machines.

Bullseye not only copied this style but was guilty of some pretty direct "swipes" from F. and F.! Adam Daunt, for instance, was succeeded in Bullseye by another millionaire detective, Mortimer Hood; while F. and F.'s "The Sign of the Twisted Tooth" became Bullseye's "The Sign of the Crimson Dagger" (both the latter series concerned hooded avengers against crooked financiers, exploiters of the poor, etc.). But Bullseye also introduced tales with an even stronger "gothic" slant. These included the famous "House of Thrills", "After Dark" and "The Phantom of Cursitor Fields", all titles whose flavour speaks for itself. And all with those unforgettably sinister and heavily shaded illustrations. A random couple of drawings in front of me convey the general appeal. One shows a man in smart up-to-date dress entering a darkened castle vault. From a hole in the floor emerges a woman's hand holding a large jewelled star, while behind the man a figure in mediaeval armour swings a gigantic axe at his head! The other drawing depicts a young girl in a strange iron mask surrounded by a number of men in evening dress, two of whom are tying her wrists. In the background is a mass of weird and wonderful machinery, always a favourite ingredient of Bullseye stories (the cover of the paper's first issue, drawn I believe by G.W. Wakefield, shows a man trapped in a giant bubble the shape of an electric light bulb in what is clearly a mad scientist's laboratory!).

Many of the actual yarns were well-written. The author of "The House of a Thousand Thrills" (and many other Bullseye stories) was Alfred Edgar who, as Barre Lyndon, wrote the famous play - and, later, film - "The Amazing Doctor Clitterhouse". As a Hollywood scriptwriter, Lyndon wrote the screenplay for "The War of the Worlds".

The year after Bullseye's launch, AP brought out a sisterpaper called Surprise - which was not particularly well-named. Apart from a two-colour cover on white paper, the so-called Surprise bore a very familiar resemblance to Bullseye, carrying serials such as "When Midnight Chimes" and "The Monk of Ironstone Prison". It too had a millionaire detective this time called Martin Holt, who had graduated from an earlier series, "The Man with a Thousand Millions". With no doubt unconscious humour, this epic had been juxtaposed with a serial entitled "Money Isn't Everything"! The eerie and bizarre flavour of Bullseye was also reflected by the Surprise. A typical serial, "The Girl in the Iron Muzzle"

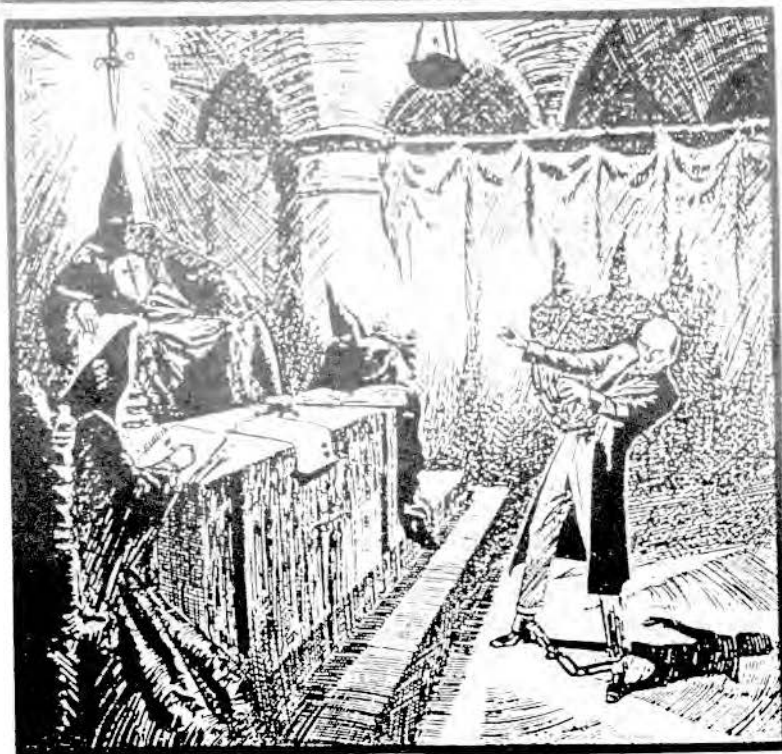
[The illustration from an episode of The Sign of the Crimson Dagger surely echoes scenes from The Spanish Inquisition? The terrifying tribunal of hooded figures reminds one of those frightening mediaeval Church Courts - Except that the white robes are now black and the cross emblazoned on them has become a dagger!]



No. 158 Vol. 7

Week Ending January 27th, 1934

TWO PENCE



boasted characters with names like Baron Jasper the Lord of Doone, as well as some pretty fantastic goings-on.

The old Fun and Fiction had been regarded in its day as an adult story-paper. By contrast, Bullseye and Surprise were largely read by juveniles. Perhaps, by the nineteen-thirties, youngsters were thought to be better educated or, at any rate, more sophisticated. At all events, the earlier sex-interest was retained. As in Fun and Fiction, this was innocent enough, the lady villains as chaste as the most spotless heroines. Not that any of them lacked sex appeal. This is from a series in Surprise entitled "The Ace of 'Tecs": "Kiddie Wix was sitting perched upon the sill, swinging a pair of pretty, silken-clad legs... in her short black silk office frock she certainly looked more like a picture on top of a chocolate box than a lady detective." Though Kiddie Wix is only an assistant to the main character, she seems to grab most of the action, frequently leaping to the aid of her boss or rugger-tackling hefty male villains, and always illustrated with a good display of those "pretty, silken-clad legs".

Surprise lasted only 89 issues before being "incorporated" (the favourite word for such exercises) with Bullseye itself. Eight months later, Bullseye too called it a day. Why this pair lasted so short a time is anyone's guess. Maybe they fell between two stools: perhaps too fantastic for the more adult readership of papers like the Union Jack or Thriller, and perhaps too adult (all that concern with young ladies?) for a juvenile audience. For me, Bullseye and Surprise - as F. and F. before them - seemed to carry a faint echo of the old Penny Dreadfuls (Sweeney Todd et al); and they certainly owed a good deal to the Gothic novels of an even earlier age, with their haunted castles, frightening ruins and strange mixture of magic and science. If, in this day and age, they an no longer raise a thrill or a shiver, they can still entertain and amuse and provide endless fascination for both hobbyists and students of popular reading.

FOR SALE: 32 copies of New Zealand CHUMS from No. 1 to the last issue, mostly consecutive (very nice copies) (year 1947): £15 the lot. Sexton Blake Library No. 400 (post war issue) "The Sea Tigers" by Peter Saxon: 75p; UNION JACKS: "Mystery of the Chinese Antique" (Waldo, the Wonder Man story: 1920) £2; "The Proud Tram Mystery" by Gilbert Chester (1932) £2; "The Masked Carollers" (1932 Christmas Number) £2; MARVELS: No. 2 new series, circa 1904: £2; a 1910 issue £1; 2 1915 issues £1 each; YOUNG BRITAIN 1921 issue: £1; MAGNETS Nos. 1333, 1336, 1339: (year 1933) £1.50 each; SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN No. 16 (year 1921) £2. Also available, many halfpenny early Union Jacks containing adventure stories by Charles Hamilton at £2 each. Also Magnet 1477 (good copy but damaged at corner: 50p). Also Magnet No. 9 (year 1908) VERY rough copy 25p. PENNY POPULARS Nos. 19 and 23 (year 1913) £1.50 each; GEMS: 732, 736, 887, 861: £1 each.

More special offers shortly.
P. & P. extra on all items.

Write ERIC FAYNE, Excelsior House, 113 Crookham Road, Hants.
(No reply if items already sold.)



CLIFF HOUSE CORNER

By MARGERY WOODS

The summer hols are over, and once again Cliff House rings with the excited voices and laughter of the girls as they exchange holiday anecdotes and try to unpack and talk and see everyone all at the same time.

Babs and Co. have had yet another gloriously thrilling holiday, starting with the innocuous promise of sun and fun and sea but rapidly changing into anger-fraught adventure when they were caught up in international intrigues of kidnapping and espionage.

Clara had been one of the heroines of the great holiday adventure and the principal of the daring counterplot in which the kidnapped Ambassador's school-girl daughter was rescued. However, memories of all this excitement are far from Clara's mind at the moment: Clara is brooding on a certain book she has just acquired, and a certain content in that book.

She had to cut short the last two days of the holiday with the chums, during which they had all wound up at Babs' home, in order to visit an elderly uncle, normally resident abroad in sunnier climes, who was on a brief visit to England and had expressed a wish to see his favourite niece.

Clara, not usually the most tactful of girls, managed to evince suitable enthusiasm for a gentle perambulation round Regent's Park, then a visit to Madame Tussauds, followed by tea at Harrods, all considered by Uncle to be highly suitable entertainment for a young lady who only a few days ago had walloped a guard on the head, filched his keys and managed to reach the cell where Elvira was held prisoner. There, unfortunately, time had run out and Clara, improvising without thought of cost to herself, had managed to thrust her own outer garment on Elvira and impersonate the kidnapped girl long enough for her to stumble out through the confusion to where the other chums waited anxiously. Even so, Clara suffered a day of deprivation until the international incident and diplomatic storm which blew up forced the protagonists to release their hostage.

So, even if anything would seem tame after that, Clara played fair, and provided good company for the uncle of whom she was really very fond. Her eyes sparkled when, seeing her to her train, he bought her a super new British Girls Annual*, newly mint from the Amalgamated Press, with which to while away her journey. But there within its crisp pages lay the source of Clara's present

annoyance.

Not the stories. They held a grand mixture of schoolgirl adventure, mystery with the Sea Rangers, stolen jewels, cloak and dagger stuff from Good King Charles' olden days, sport, film-making, humour, and one special story to delight the dog-loving heart of Clara, about a sagacious doggy orphan called Swim-Swam.

The illustrations were fine, too, especially one of Princess Errant riding a black mare named Brunhilde up a great flight of stairs. (Stairs up which Queen Elizabeth I. actually rode four centuries ago.) Glancing at the handicraft articles, Clara did not think she'd turn her hand successfully to making a treasure box but felt certain that her chum Marjorie's clever fingers would succeed admirably. And Clara was quite prepared to acknowledge her own lack of expertise in the music line but was sure that with the aid of her chums she'd have solved the Beethoven cryptogram in the tale of Connie's Concertina. Great fun!

So what upset Clara?

The Editor's Page! In his friendly chat to his young readers he stated that there are very few magazines for girls, but the one that holds very first place is LITTLE FOLKS. The magazine for schoolgirls.



THE TOMBOY'S CHOICE!

You simply must obtain these four splendid November issues of the

SCHOOLGIRLS OWN LIBRARY.

- No. 416—Will appeal to all lovers of school mysteries.
- No. 417—Is an enthralling tale of circus life.
- No. 418—Will be welcomed by all "Sally McAllister" fans.
- No. 419—Is a gripping adventure story by a very favourite author.

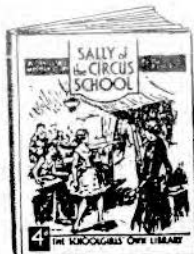


No. 416.

* * *

Each book contains 100 pages of thrilling reading, and the long winter evenings will not be complete without these delightful little volumes.

PRICE 4^D. EACH BOOK.



No. 417.



No. 418.



No. 419.

The magazine, indeed!

Clara spent the rest of the train journey mentally rehearsing the indignant letter she was going to write to that editor the moment she got to Cliff House. What about THE SCHOOLGIRL? What about SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN? (For though Clara would never concede top school status to any other school than Cliff House she and her chums held a polite but very real respect for Morcove and its undoubtedly brilliant crowd of pupils.) Hadn't he heard of SCHOOLGIRLS' WEEKLY? Really, thought Clara, it made one wonder if A.P.'s editorial office let one hand know what the other was doing!

So, with all due respect to that much-loved magazine LITTLE FOLKS, Clara was not going to let that Editor get away with such high treason.

Poor man!

(* The British Girl's Annual, edited by H. Darkin Williams, pub. Amalgamated Press, about 1933.)

NEXT TO A MEAL I
LIKE A GOOD
BOOK!



"A LESSON FOR PONSONBY"

Reviewed by Eric Fayne

Frank Richards
(Howard Baker Book Club)
Special: £18)

This delightful volume, not too imaginatively titled, comprises 6 consecutive issues of the Red Magnet of the autumn of 1914. It is of special interest to Magnet researchers in the fact that the Great War has suddenly struck the paper with almost the force of a bomb. To some extent,

and temporarily, War is glorified. Patriotism, more worthy, is fully evident.

The first of the 6 issues has, on the cover, a striking illustration by Hayward of the sinking of the First German Dreadnought. A war serial begins - "A World at Stake" by W.B. Home-Gall, "now serving his Country with the British Army" - and, in fact, it appears in the first few pages of each one of these six issues. Pride of place.

In the first of these war issues there is a full-page drawing - a good one, also by Hayward - of King George the Fifth.

Readers are exhorted to be patriotic in all things - and to order in advance. The editor tells his readers that large numbers of A.P. staff have gone immediately into the fighting forces, and that he himself, the editor, would also

be serving his country in a week or two.

Less obsequiously, without apology or any mention at all, with the second of these War Issues, the size of the Magnet was reduced by 4 pages, from 32 pages to 28 pages.

It would be an exaggeration to suggest that, suddenly, the grand old paper lost its innocence. It would be more apt to suggest, perhaps, that, temporarily, the Magnet had lost its way.

A remarkable factor is that the first of these War issues is dated week-end September 5th. So the war had only been "on" for exactly one month. Yet we were always told that the papers went to press six weeks in advance of publication.

This sudden war flavour gives a special quaintness to these 6 issues.

The first of the Greyfriars tales is "A Cool Card". It is time for the arrival of the new boy who was given the slightly absurd name of Sampson Quincey Iffley Field, obviously in order that he could be adorned with the embarrassingly contrived nickname of "Squiff". Squiff came from Australia. He played a substantial part in the stories for a while, and then was to settle into the background as one of the large "supporting cast".

The early stories of Squiff at Greyfriars are mildly reminiscent of those, later on, concerning the arrival of Putty Grace at Rookwood. I would think that Putty of Rookwood was slightly the better piece of characterisation.

"Ructions at Highcliffe" is the second yarn in the volume, and a tip-top yarn it is. Ponsonby lands a false charge of theft on Nugent, and, to punish Ponsonby and Mr. Mobbs, the new boy Squiff goes to Highcliffe posing as a new boy named Clare. Quite unbelievable - and quite grand reading.

"Spirited Away" brings another new boy to Greyfriars, this time Sylvester, of the Second Form, the son of an American millionaire. The boy is kidnapped by the 1914 type of American gangsters, and Ferrers Locke makes a welcome return to the scene. Actually the detective had made his initial appearance in the Gem, years earlier.

"Hard Up" is joyous fun. The Famous Five and their new chum Squiff are the "hard up" gents of the title, due to having to pay damages to Ponsonby and Highcliffe, and the story centres on how they set about raising the wind.

The fifth tale, "Changed by Adversity", is a sub yarn, credited to Brooks. It features Mauleverer who, pro tem, loses his lackadaisical ways when faced with adversity. Not many readers have much interest in sub tales, but this one has its moments, and its inclusion here keeps the run intact.

Finally, in the volume's final tale, "The Greyfriars Spy-Hunters", the War caught up with the author as well as the publishers. Herr Gans, afraid of being arrested as an enemy spy, takes to his heels. A new German master, Herr Muhlbach, is engaged to take his place (Would Greyfriars really have engaged a fresh German to teach German in late 1914?) and he proves actually to be a spy. Well, the Head of Greyfriars asked for it, didn't he! I am not quite sure, looking back, whether Herr Gans ever featured in the Greyfriars tales again.

So! A collection of very pleasant and readable stories, with the star author well up to form. And the volume, as I said earlier, is an unending source of pleasure for the researcher and the Magnet historian.

FROM BROWN TO BUNTER

by P.W. Musgrave

(Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1985) Reviewed by MARK TAHA.

I borrowed this book from the library and advise all readers to follow my example. For one thing the writer's past works include "The Sociology of Education" and this one includes in its first chapter the sentence "Reading a book, then, can be seen as a construction by readers from varying social positions of a text" - need I say more?

It's a curate's egg of a book, good only in parts. It gives a history of the boys' school story, and synopses of various books: it also gives rather amusing proof that some things never change (the same things said about TV and real-life crime today were said about penny dreadfuls a hundred years ago, when "Ivanhoe" and "John Gilpin" were attacked on moral and religious grounds!). The book devotes whole chapters to analysing "Tom Brown", "Eric", and "Stalky & Co.". Having read them, I'm still surprised at the permissiveness of "Tom Brown" (boys allowed to drink beer, organise Derby lotteries, a comparative blind eye turned to poaching) compared with Greyfriars, and I can't help wondering if anyone actually read the didactic passages rather than skipping straight to the good bits! "Eric" I found a ridiculous Victorian melodrama, which gave me a good laugh. As for "Stalky and Co.", I regard it as the best non-Hamilton school story of them all. But isn't it interesting that Kipling's heroes made even Vernon-Smith look wimpish?

Does our hobby get a mention? Yes - the author describes the "Magnet" and "Gem" as the "worst examples of standardisation" and adds to his offence by quoting Orwell, complete with egregious errors (games not compulsory)! The Gem and Wizard, he says, were used as teaching materials (anyone know anything about that?). "School Friend" and "Schoolgirls' Own" get mentioned in passing, and the names M. Cadogan and P. Craig appear in the index.

So, to sum up, don't buy this book. It's only worth reading for the synopses and bibliography.

"MORE ADVENTURES OF RUPERT" (facsimile)

Published at £5.75 (plus postage) by Express Newspapers PLC

Reviewed by Norman Wright

My earliest childhood memories of Rupert Bear revolve around the fat, thick papered books published by Sampson Low and sold cheaply in Woolworths. The images were rather frightening, recounting as they did Rupert's encounters with witches, ogres and giants. They were certainly moral lessons on the dangers of wandering far from home! Those Sampson Low books constantly reprinted a limited number of strips drawn by Mary Tourtel, creator of Rupert. "More Adventures of Rupert", originally published by the Daily Express as the Rupert annual for 1937, comprised seven adventures drawn by Alfred Bestall, who took over as artist in 1935 and remained the creative genius behind Rupert for thirty years. Bestall's brief was to play down the ogres and witches. He created

a magical world, exciting but without the nightmare quality found in his predecessor's drawings. Those of you who bought and enjoyed the facsimile of the first (1936) Rupert annual, republished a year or so ago, will relish the contents of this new reprint. The fifth adventure in it, "Rupert, Algy and the Smugglers" is of particular interest as it was Bestall's very first strip. In the early frames his drawings emulate those of Mary Tourtel, but by the end of the adventure his own individual style is dominating the work.

Children at the time, and readers of this facsimile, will be puzzled by certain incongruities resulting from the original compiler arranging the strips in a haphazard order. But this is a minor grumble as the publishers have successfully endeavoured to produce a book as close to the original as is possible. The present book was never issued with a dustwrapper; instead it followed the custom of most other annuals of the time and had pictorial boards. A collector with an original edition tells me that the colours on the Facsimile are slightly paler than on the original. The strips are all printed in black, white and red. It was several years before Rupert was to enjoy the luxury of full colour.

Copies of the early Rupert annuals are now rare and costly items. The upsurge of interest in Rupert recently has made it difficult for new collectors to obtain even poor copies of the early volumes. This new facsimile makes it possible for every collector to have a mint copy in their collection. (Also, at the time of writing, the Express still have a few copies of the 1936 facsimile left.)

IN CELEBRATION OF CRICKET by Kenneth Gregory
(Pavilion Press £5.95)

Reviewed by Eric Lawrence

This fine anthology (originally published in 1978) of fifty great cricketers from W.G. Grace to the South African, Barry Richards, demonstrates how difficult it must be for the editor to decide who to leave out. For example, how can one include the New Zealander, Martin Donnelly and exclude Patsy (Elias) Hendren; or choose four right-handed leg-break and googly bowlers (Vogler, Grimmett, Maily, O'Reilly) and leave out left-handed J.H. Wardle, who bowled the "Chinaman", or the orthodox left-handers Charlie Parker and Hedley Verity?

Writers of the calibre of Neville Cardus, John Arlott, R.C. Robertson-Glasgow, Ray Robinson, Jack Fingleton and a host of other great scribes ensure that every one of the 336 pages is eminently readable, enjoyable and, in some cases, poignant. There are also some rather unexpected contributions from such as Alistair Cooke and a piece from Punch, "Cricket prospects for 1902" accredited to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. This is the sort of book into which one can dip for the odd ten minutes or read from cover to cover at one sitting - albeit a long one.

There are some very fine photographs, my own favourite being the one showing Maurice Tate, the England and Sussex bowler in action, although this is closely followed by those of Ray Lindwall, Jim Laker and the Master, Jack Hobbs.

Finally, I must include here a brief extract from the pages on C.I.J. Smith ("Big Jim", one of the heroes of my schooldays) by Ian Peebles.

"Legend has it that once, during his salad days with Wiltshire, Smith was sent in at 6.10 p.m. as nightwatchman. Twenty minutes later he returned to the pavilion 80 not out. The spectators were delirious; the cows, several fields distant, indignant."

This book is a "must" on my shelves.



Re-reading for the umpteenth time my collection of C.D.s the other night (what endless joy they give), I came across Brian Doyle's delightful article on 'Pip, Squeak and Wilfred'. Towards the end of the article, Brian mentions the two annuals that were published, containing these favourite characters, i.e. 'Pip and Squeak Annual', and 'Wilfred's Annual'. Does anyone remember the 'Pip and Squeak Competition Annual'? The copy I had, would, I think, have been published either in the late 20s or early 30s. The picture on the cover showed an immense christmas tree, loaded with goodies, and I think had our three friends gazing at it. This was one of the puzzles; I seem to recall you had to count the presents. Most of the competitions consisted of picture puzzles, some of them after the style of yours truly's humble efforts in the last two C.D. Annuals. Others were full page - find the missing boy or how many cats can you count, type of puzzle. The picture puzzles were on various subjects - one had several small pictures with hidden clues suggesting dogs; another, musical instruments, while in others you had to guess girls' names, countries and occupations. I can well recall one Sunday, sitting with some of my sisters trying to solve them. The annual also contained several short stories, two of which I seem to remember were illustrated by Saville Lumley. One was of a boy and girl stranded on an island, who find a deserted ship. The boy tinkers with the engine and manages to get it going. The other describes two officers on horses being chased by arabs in the desert. The latter apparently was a prize-winning tale in a previous competition. A motor race was the subject of another story.

And then we had the account of a school boy, who having won a cup on sports-day finds to his dismay that the trophy has been stolen prior to its presentation to him. He recovers it after an exciting chase which ends on an express train. And of course to sound off the story side, there was a jolly good pirate tale. This dealt with a ship's boy taken prisoner and forced to watch his ship-mates walk the plank. He manages to escape in the ships pinnace and return with a navyship and avenge his comrades. Finally there was a play for amateurs. This was entitled "The Runaway Parents". When we had our school concert party I endeavoured to get our master to include it in the show - without success I'm afraid. There were also numerous references to Pip, Squeak and Wilfred throughout the book. One page was filled with all the other characters that the trio had encountered during the run of the strip - up until then of course. This was entitled "How Many Do You Remember?".

I would dearly love to see, or better still, own a copy of this annual - but nobody seems to have heard of it. I remember asking my old friend Frank Lay to keep his eyes open for me. He was a perfect wizard in obtaining hard to find books, and lots of the Volumes in my collection I owe to his resourcefulness. But with this particular edition, even he was stumped! In conclusion, I would like to crave collectors' indulgence; the facts stated in this brief article are written from memory, it must be nearly 50 years since I had this book in my possession, so please bear with me, should any mistakes be noted.

* * * * *

THE BOYS FRIEND LIBRARY CATALOGUE

At last after many years of painstaking research, this catalogue is a must for all collectors of this famous Library.

Lists not only both series of titles and authors, but contains the origins of the stories, as well as pin-pointing the original tales, also indicating famous characters such as Sexton Blake, Nelson Lee, Ferrers Locke, Ken King, Jack Sam, Pete and others.

Full review in the October C.D.

Available only from:

W.O.G. Lofts,
56 Sheringham House,
Lisson Street,
London, N.W.I. 5NY.

Price £4 post free

80 pages

THE MORCOVE GIRLS AT WEMBLEY

by Tommy Keen



No. 158 Vol. 7

PUBLISHED EVERY TUESDAY.

[Week Ending July 22nd, 1924]

One of the great events of 1924 was the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley, it being officially opened by the visit of King George V and Queen Mary. During the summer of 1924, all roads and railways led to Wembley. Families, school parties, Scouts, Guides, almost everybody went to the Exhibition... including Betty Barton & Co. from Morcove School.

For the first part of the summer holidays, Betty and her chums were invited by Helen Craig (a recent arrival at Morcove) to stay at her home in London, which was stated to be near Hyde Park, and for their visits to Wembley, the girls could travel by the Underground from Baker Street. These journeys were enjoyed immensely

by Naomer Nakara and the rest of the girls, though Paula Creel, the aristocrat of the Fourth Form, found 'Stwap hanging, wather undignified'. The vast Amusement Park is the girls' main attraction, but again Paula finds the Witching Waves, the Dodgems, and the Giant 'quite fwightening'. But of course, apart from the enjoyments of Wembley, drama has to be involved.

A lonely, troubled looking girl is noticed by the chums, standing on the bridge over the lake, who hurries away when she sees Betty & Co. watching her. However, again they see her, and decide to speak. They learn that she is an orphan, and had been brought to Wembley by her guardians, a Mr. and Mrs. Searle, who had then promptly deserted her. She said she had lived with them for a while

in London's West End, but they had now disposed of the house.

The girl's name is Edith Enson, and as she has evidently no place to go, Helen Craig invites her back to her home. Lo and behold, it is the very house where she had lived with the Searles. (When the Searles moved out, and Mr. Craig moved in, is not explained!) However, Edith's whereabouts are soon discovered by the villainous couple, and Mrs. Searle breaks into the house, and attempts to steal a locket belonging to Edith. She is discovered by the girls, and escapes, but minus the locket. Inside the locket are two small pictures, which Edith shows to Betty & Co., one of her Mother, and one of Mrs. Searle.

After a few days at Helen Craig's home, the girls are due to spend a couple of weeks at Dolly Delane's home in Hampshire, where they are to look after themselves, and sleep in tents; therefore it becomes 'Morcove Under Canvas'. Most extraordinary things happen here. On the day of the girls' arrival, a letter arrives addressed to Betty Barton, and from of all people... Mrs. Searle. How she knew Betty's name was a mystery, never having met her, and, even more of a mystery, how did the woman know that Betty & Co. were transferring from London to Hampshire? In the letter, Betty is asked to meet Mrs. Searle at dusk at a nearby beauty spot. The Searles are now living in a local bungalow... there is an elderly man living in a shack near Mr. Delane's farm, known as 'Old Nemo', who has lost his memory, not even knowing his own name. Edith Enson is 'strangely drawn' to Old Nemo... there is a fire at his shack one evening, caused by the Searles, who are trying to steal some documents from Nemo (however did they know HIM)? Old Nemo receives a knock on the head, and he then vaguely remembers living in one of the Colonies, but where, he could not say. Polly Linton brilliantly suggests taking him to Wembley, where there were various colonial Pavilions. India, Hong Kong, Canada, Australia, New Zealand meant nothing to Nemo, but in the Gold Coast Pavilion, his face brightens, and he says, "My goodness... the Gold Coast... yes it was there. As a lad, people always said Jim Enson was not cut out for roughing it, but I did".

"Enson" cried Edith, "that is my name too". And Edith finds her Father!

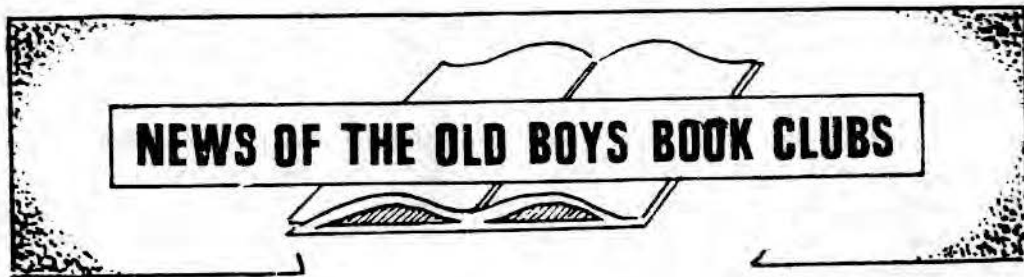
The documents the Searles were after appear to be blank papers, but turn out to be in invisible ink. Held in front of the fire at Mr. Craig's home the writing becomes clear; it is a confession from a man who had performed a crime for which Jim Enson

was blamed. And the Searles knew!

Oh dear, how complicated it is becoming! So finally, we will leave Edith, with her Father, and Betty & Co. back at Wembley, with Paula Creel again suffering the indignities of the Amusement Park.

Cliff House also went to the exhibition, Barbara Redfern and her chums staying at the home of Vivienne Leigh... How odd, that in No. 2 of the SCHOOL FRIEND, Charles Hamilton named a Fourth Former as Vivienne Leigh, little realising that two decades later, there would be another very famous Vivien Leigh, who, in her most famous film "Gone With The Wind", became, through her first marriage, Mrs. Charles Hamilton. Well, well!

Wembley was ignored in the GEM, but a rather dull sub-writer story was published in the MAGNET, after the Greyfriars juniors return from the Sahara in 1924, entitled "Billy Bunter's Wembley Party". Nuff said.



LONDON

A new venue for the August meeting at the Chingford Horticultural Society's Hall, which was ably hosted by Tony and Audrey Potts, assisted by Harry and Marjory Hickman. They were rewarded by a good attendance of 29 members and friends. Don Webster, in the chair, expressed a hearty welcome to all. Then there was a minute's silence in memory of our Thelma. Roy Parson's Desert Island books were "The Pickwick Papers"; "Persuasion"; "The Code of the Woosters"; "Boys will Be Boys"; Chums 1929/30. "The School-boy 'Tec", SOL 353; The Christmas Barring Out series, Gems 776-784; and the Warton Lodge Christmas series, Magnets 1349-53.

Bob Whiter's quiz was won by Chris Harper, with Roger Jenkins and Don Webster in second and third places. Cut-out Greyfriars characters were the prizes.

Jim Cook's 'Fivah' question was won by Bob Whiter, the answer being Conan Doyle's "Lost World". Arthur Bruning's tea interval quiz was won by Roy Parsons. Bill Lofts talk on Sherlock Holmes was very well received.

The pièce de resistance was Les Rowley's reading of letters despatched to Dr. Locke, Bunter's pater, Mr. Quelch, Chunkley's store, Wharton's aunt and other Greyfriars characters. An excellent tea was served in this ideal meeting place and the hosts and their helpers were suitably thanked.

Next meeting: The Maidstone Hamilton Museum visit on Sunday, 13th September. Full details will be in the Club's Newsletter.

BEN WHITER

NORTHERN

Even though we were in the midst of the holiday season, we had an attendance of eleven on the very sunny summer's evening of August 8th. David and Elfrieda Bradley served welcoming cups of coffee, and it was good to see Arthur Fortune back with us, after a spell in hospital. Keith and Margaret Atkinson were on holiday, and also our Chairman, so Darrell Swift took the Chair. We all agreed that our informal meeting at our Secretary's home had been a great success. David Bradley and Paul Galvin gave encouraging reports on the W.E. Johns Meeting to take place in Nottingham on 17th October.

Paul gave the third talk in his very interesting series about W.E. Johns and Biggles, and, once again, brought some intriguing and rare items from his vast collection of Biggles stories, including Modern Boy, The Gem and the Australian Silver Jacket.

Darrell then spoke on 'William - Down Under', referring to an article written by Jack Hughes of Queensland, which would be featured in full at the next William meeting (to be held in Chester in April 1988). Jack gave information about the William books in Australia, and the Australian Dymock imprint. Darrell supplemented this article from his own researches, and had brought along some Australian editions from his own collection.

Members please note that Bill Lofts is now coming to our October meeting. Because of accommodation problems, our

September meeting is being brought forward to 5th September, at the normal venue, S.P.C.K. Cafe, Holy Trinity Church, Boar Lane, Leeds 1.

JOHNNY BULL MINOR

* * * * *

FISHING IN THE O.E.D.

by John Bridgewater

Mr. Barrie Stark's article "Fishy Vocabulary" in the August C.D. interested me considerably. Having discovered Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious and its variants in the new Vol. 4 of the Supplement to the Oxford English Dictionary I wondered whether the great James Murray had included the Fishy Vocabulary in the original volumes of the O.E.D. That wonderful lexicographer did not disappoint me. All the words are there. Here are a few brief notes on what I found.

"Absquatulate. Also absquotilate - a factitious word simulating latin form and of American origin and jocular use meaning to make off or decamp. First mention in an 1837 quote in the second form." Fishy is in good company as the following quote shows: "1858 Dow Serm. In Bartlett Dict.Amer. Hopes brightest visions absquatulate."

"Galoot. Also galoot and geeloot. In 1812 meaning a soldier; in 1867 an awkward soldier - an awkward or uncouth fellow. Often used as a term of good-natured depreciation." In 1892 R.L. Stevenson and Lloyd Osbourne in "The Wrecker" wrote "My dear boy, I may be a galoot about literature but you'll always be an outsider in business."

"Slab-sided. Having sides like slabs; flat-sided; long and lank." An 1825 quote worthy of Fishy:- "Great, long slab-sided simple gawkeys."

Jay. Besides being birds, jays are also impertinant chatterers. Also applied to a person absurdly dressed; a gawk or a 'sight' - a stupid or silly person, a simpleton.

Vamoose. Also vamoose (Spanish vamos 'let us go'). To depart, decamp, disappear. An 1848 quote:- "It's occupants forthwith vamoosed with their baggage." Incidentally Eric Partridge's "Origins" suggests that shortening vamoose led to mosey - "to mosey off", which, having run through all Barrie's words, I will do right now.

(Editor's Note: We received a great deal of correspondence about 'absquatulate' and other Fishy phrases, some of which appears below.)

Ernest Holman, Leigh on Sea: There was one U.S. soldier I met during the war whose version of "buzz off" was ABBBBB-SQUOTE. Thanks to Fishy, I gathered his meaning!

Ann Clarke, London, S.W.18: Re. Barry Stark's mention of "absquatulate", I first came across it in "In the High Valley" by Susan Coolidge (sequel to "What Katy Did"), when the visiting Englishwoman, Imogen Young, tries to talk American to her hosts and says "People absquatulate from St. Helen's towards autumn, don't they?" (This was written in 1891).

Denis Gifford, Sydenham: Re ABSQUATULATE: never heard of this until the C.D. came, and then, low and behold, it was used by John Mills in THE HISTORY OF MR.

POLLY on Channel 4 that same afternoon! I think it was a Wellsian word made up to illustrate Polly's pseudo-sophisticated turn of phrase.

Dave Hobbs of Seattle, U.S.A. suggests that even if 'absquatulate' was once popular American slang, it is little known across the Atlantic nowadays: After a telephone chat with our daughter Donna, we both agreed that much of Charles Hamilton's 'American' slang was home-made! For instance, ABSQUATULATE is a word I have never heard used - nor had Donna. Neither of us could find it, or similar, in any dictionary - and I have looked, over the years, in several, including dictionaries of slang! Sounds like something a Britisher might 'expect' an American to say - especially in the Hamilton time-period. (We stand to be corrected!).

BOYS' AND ADULT SCHOOL FICTION - Autumn Term catalogue (No. 4) available now from Robert Kirkpatrick, 244 Latimer Road, London, W10 6QY. SAE appreciated. Wants Lists welcome. Boys' and adult school fiction also always wanted - please offer anything in this field.

FOR SALE: 519 Magnets, year 1932 to 1940 - £450 the lot, plus postage (or buyer collect).

Replies to:
MR. WATSON, Olympus, 1 Cartbridge Close, Walton on Naze, Essex, CO14 8QJ. Telephone Frinton 78311.

ILLUSTRATED CLASSICS SERIES

- Quarter bound in dark blue bonded leather
- Blocked foil in gold on spine and raised bands
- Head and tail bands
- Ribbon marker

SOME NEW BOOKS FOR YOUR AUTUMN READING

Do not send money with order: you will receive an invoice.

THE RETURN OF SHERLOCK HOLMES Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Illustrated by Frederick Dorr Steele

It took the American magazine *Colliers* to persuade Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to resurrect Sherlock Holmes in 1903. They also commissioned Frederic Dorr Steele's 11 spectacular colour covers and 70 line drawings. They now appear together for the very first time in this beautifully produced leatherbound edition. To be published on 24th September. Hardback £12.00. 12 colour plates and 70 black and white photographs.

THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA Gaston Leroux Illustrated by André Castaigne
When Gaston Leroux's masterpiece was originally published in Paris in 1910, it was illustrated with a fine series of water-colours by André Castaigne. This new edition marks the first British publication of Castaigne's illustrations. To be published on 8th October Hardback £12.00. 6 colour plates.

TALES OF MYSTERY AND IMAGINATION Edgar Allan Poe Illustrated by Harry Clarke
This edition features Harry Clarke's superb illustrations, originally published in 1923, and now regarded as the finest 'Poe' illustrations ever published. Clarke was the greatest and most successful of all the artists who have attempted to illustrate the stories of Edgar Allan Poe. The present edition is a facsimile of the original and is printed on high quality paper. To be published on 24th September. Hardback £12.00. 8 colour plates and 20 black and white photographs.

THE GOVERNESS - or, Little Female Academy by Sarah Fielding (1710-1768)

Introduced by MARY CADOGAN

Originally published in 1749, this is the earliest full-length novel written for young people and the first ever school story for girls. "The Governess" is set in a girls' boarding school where the school's founder and principal, Mrs. Teachum, encourages self-sufficiency and creativity in her nine pupils. Each girl tells the story of her life, and through these desperate accounts, Sarah Fielding shows up modern prejudices and focuses on more progressive attitudes. "The Governess" entertains as well as educates and makes lively reading.

To be published in September. Paperback, 192 pages, £4.95.

Your order for any of the above books, will be welcomed at:

HAPPY HOURS UNLIMITED

37 Tinsall Lane LEEDS LS16 6BU England



GREEN MEADOW BOOKS

Kinoulton, Notts., NG12 3EN Tel. (0949) 81723

3 Weekly Paper Lists available - MAGNET, GEM, and assorted, including GIRLS' CRYSTAL, GIRL, EAGLE, SEXTON BLAKE, NELSON LEE, etc. etc.

Regular Catalogues issued including all favourites

20p stamp appreciated, to above address

Visitors welcomed to the Bookroom, by appointment

BUY, SELL OR SWOPS OLD BOYS' STORY PAPERS, COMICS AND BOOKS

BOOKS: Bunters, William, Biggles, Jennings, Henty, Brent-Dyer Oxenham, Magnet volumes. COMICS: Beano, Dandy, Radio Fun, Knockout Film-Fun, Rainbow, etc.

STORY PAPERS: Magnet, Gem, S.O.L., Champion, Hotspur, Rover, Skipper, Adventure, Wizard, etc. ANNUALS: Holiday Annual, Tiger Tim, Rainbow, Champion, Film-Fun, Radio Fun, Schoolgirls' Own, Beano, Dandy, etc.

No lists at present but do let me know what you need or have for disposal.

Contact: COLIN CREWE, 12B Westwood Road, Canvey Island, Essex. Tel. 0268 693735.

Evenings: 7.15 - 9.30 p.m.

WANTED: Anything on W.E. Johns. Books, Biggles Games, Puzzles, etc. Gem Issues with Johns stories. Any other Story Paper, Comic or Magazine with Johns interest. Especially 1 - 8 of the Silver Jacket, bound or loose.

MR. P. GALVIN, 2 The Lindales, Pogmoor, Barnsley, S. Yorks., S75 2DT.
