

STORY PAPER COLLECTORS' DIGEST

TOM MERRY & CO. CELEBRATE THE "FIFTH"! EXPLOSIVE MIRTH—INSIDE!





**COLIN CREWE
COLLECTORS BOOKS**

12B WESTWOOD ROAD, CANVEY ISLAND, ESSEX, SS8 0ED
TELEPHONE: 01268-693735 EVENINGS BEST



**OLD BOYS AND GIRLS BOOKS SOLD, BOUGHT AND EXCHANGED WITH ENTHUSIASM
YOUR WANTS LIST WELCOME SUITABLE COLLECTIONS WANTED**

LADIES & GENTLEMEN. Here it is! For the fourth year in succession **A TRADITION IN THE NOVEMBER COLLECTORS DIGEST** in good time for Christmas reading **THE OLD TIME ANNUAL LISTINGS.** Remember I have only one copy of each annual. To avoid disappointment a quick phone call will secure your choice. Payment can be delayed if necessary to fit postal order from a titled relation, or the proceeds of December carol singing. **HAPPY CHRISTMAS READING, COLIN.**

- CHICKS OWN ANNUAL 1945.** Scarce year, good. £14.00
HOBBY ANNUAL 1931. Amal Press, good. £8.50
THE JOY BOOK CHILDREN'S ANNUAL, year 1924.
Very attractive annual for little folks. £16.00
BOBBY BEARS ANNUAL 1937. A beauty! £15.00
BRITISH LEGION ANNUAL 1933. VG copy. £15.00
PUCK ANNUAL 1921 (the very first year), VG. £40.00
PUCK ANNUAL 1931. A very good copy. £22.00
PUCK ANNUAL 1937. A good copy. £16.00
WIZARD BOOK FOR BOYS 1937. A very good copy of rare collectors item. COVER: Small boy characters having a sports day, some on bicycles. £55.00
HOTSPUR BOOK FOR BOYS 1935 (the very first year). COVER: School Master teaching boys from blackboard, boys sitting on ground outdoors. Good. £38.00
HOTSPUR BOOK FOR BOYS 1940. A very good copy. COVER: Schoolboy on motorcycle scramble bike 26. £45.00
ROVER BOOK FOR BOYS 1927. A good copy. COVER: Cowboy trying to mount a bucking horse. £32.00
ROVER BOOK FOR BOYS 1928. Top notch copy. COVER: Two boys in blazers driving old motor car carrying camping gear. Car NBR, OK. £45.00
ROVER BOOK FOR BOYS 1930. A good plus copy. COVER: Rickshaw racing scene. £35.00
ROVER BOOK FOR BOYS 1937. Another top notch copy. COVER: Cowboys playing football. £45.00
ROVER BOOK FOR BOYS 1956. A VG copy. COVER: Globe in centre with Rover characters within stars. Morgan Mighty, Braddock Nick Smith. £16.00
CHAMPION ANNUAL 1927. A good copy. COVER: Canoe in rapids, appealing scene in back woods. £22.00
CHAMPION ANNUAL 1930. A very good copy. COVER: Rescue at Sea, Chums on raft and sea plane. £25.00
CHAMPION ANNUAL 1942. A very good copy. COVER: Winter scene, the Chums ice skating. Rare year. £38.00
CHAMPION ANNUAL 1947. A very good copy. COVER: Team without a ground football scene. £15.00
MY FAVOURITE ANNUAL 1933. Very good copy from Amal Press. COVER: Fancy dress on ice. £32.00
THE WONDERLAND ANNUAL 1923. Good copy from Amal Press. BEAUTIFULLY ILLUSTRATED edition, Uncle Dan. £30.00
TEDDY TAILS ANNUAL 1939. A beauty from Amal Press. COVER: Characters ride the speedway. £28.00
CRACKER ANNUALS FOR YEARS 1933, 1937 & 1938. Lovely annuals, superb illustrations. ea £25.00
JOLLY JACKS ANNUAL 1940. VG. FOXWELL COVER. £18.00
BRUIN BOYS ANNUAL 1935. Delicious. Good+. £22.00
PLAYBOX ANNUAL 1939. VG (Tim the Fireman cover). £35.00
TIGER TIM'S ANNUAL 1923. VG. SECOND YEAR COVER: The Bruin Boys Big Band on the march. £35.00
TIGER TIM ANNUAL 1926. VG. FOXWELL COVER with Tiger Tim as King enjoying feast of toffees. £28.00
TIGER TIM ANNUAL 1937. VG. COVER: Appealing scene of Tiger Tim as pillow fight champion. £25.00
PIP & SQUEAK ANNUAL 1923. 1ST YEAR. Good. £22.00
- WILFRED ANNUAL 1924.** 1ST YEAR. Fair. £16.00
ROBIN HOOD ANNUAL 1957. First class copy. £10.00
FOLLOWING ALBUMS PUBLISHED BY GERALD G.
SWAN DURING EARLY POST WAR YEARS:
KIDDY FUN ALBUM YEAR 1951. Good copy. £8.50
SCHOOLBOYS ALBUM 1948. Good copy. £12.00
SCHOOLGIRLS ALBUM 1952. VG copy. £10.00
FUNNIES ALBUM 1950. VG copy. £9.00
FUNNIES ALBUM 1956. A VG laughing copy. £8.50
RADIO FUN ANNUAL YEAR 1960. Good copy. £7.50
FILM FUN ANNUAL YEAR 1952. VG copy. £10.00
FILM FUN ANNUAL YEAR 1953. Good copy. £8.50
FILM FUN ANNUAL YEAR 1954. Good copy. £6.50
FILM FUN ANNUAL YEAR 1954. VG copy. £8.50
FILM FUN ANNUAL YEAR 1956. Good copy. £7.50
KNOCKOUT FUN BOOK 1950. Reading copy. £2.50
KNOCKOUT FUN BOOK 1953. Reading copy. £2.50
KNOCKOUT FUN BOOK 1952. Fair copy. £4.50
KNOCKOUT FUN BOOK 1954. Good copy. £6.50
KNOCKOUT FUN BOOK 1955. VG copy. £8.50
KNOCKOUT FUN BOOK 1956. Good copy. £7.50
KNOCKOUT FUN BOOK 1958. Good copy. £7.50
KNOCKOUT FUN BOOK 1959. Fair copy. £4.50
KNOCKOUT FUN BOOKS 1962, 1979 & 1981. ea £3.50
SUNNY STORIES ANNUALS. three different years undated. Lovely condition and delicious covers. Priced at £10 each or 3 for £24.
EAGLE ANNUAL No. 5. A beauty. £9.00
BBC CHILDREN'S ANNUAL 1955. A V/G copy in attractive d/w includes JENNINGS STORY. £12.00
BBC CHILDREN'S HOUR ANNUAL 1954. Good copy. Contents include JENNINGS AMAZING RECORD. £6.50
BBC CHILDREN'S HOUR ANNUAL ? YEAR. VG copy. Contents include JENNINGS SWITCHES ON. £7.50
CHAMPION ANNUAL YEAR 1951. VG copy. £5.75
CHAMPION ANNUAL YEAR 1952. VG copy. £5.75
CHAMPION ANNUAL YEAR 1953. VG copy. £4.75
CHAMPION ANNUAL YEAR 1954. VG copy. £4.75
SCHOOL FRIEND ANNUALS. Good copies of years 1955, 1956, 1958 & 1959. ea £4.50
LION ANNUAL'S 1955, 1957 & 1959 ea £7.50
GIRLS CRYSTAL ANNUAL 1953. Superb. £10.00
GIRLS CRYSTAL ANNUALS 1957, 1958 & 1959. All very nice copies. ea £7.50
GIRLS CRYSTAL ANNUALS 1960, 1968 & 1970. Good reading and nice copies. ea £4.75
HAPPY STORIES FOR GIRLS from Oxford Univ Press, VG in d/w. Contents include 'CAPTAIN BETSY' from the pen of DORITA FAIRLIE BRUCE. £14.00
PICTURE SHOW ANNUALS. In near mint condition.
1953 Anna Neagle & Michael Wilding cover £10.00
1954 Margaret Lockwood cover £10.00
1955 Alan Ladd & Shelly Winters cover £10.00
1956 Rock Hudson & Barbara Rush cover £10.00
1957 Deborah Kerr & Yul Brynner in a scene from *The King and I*. £12.00
1958 Audrey Hepburn and Mel Ferrer cover £10.00

STORY PAPER COLLECTORS' DIGEST

Editor: MARY CADOGAN

STORY PAPER COLLECTOR

Founded in 1941 by
W.H. GANDER

COLLECTORS' DIGEST

Founded in 1946 by
HERBERT LECKENBY

S.P.C.D. Edited and Published 1959 - January 1987 by Eric Fayne

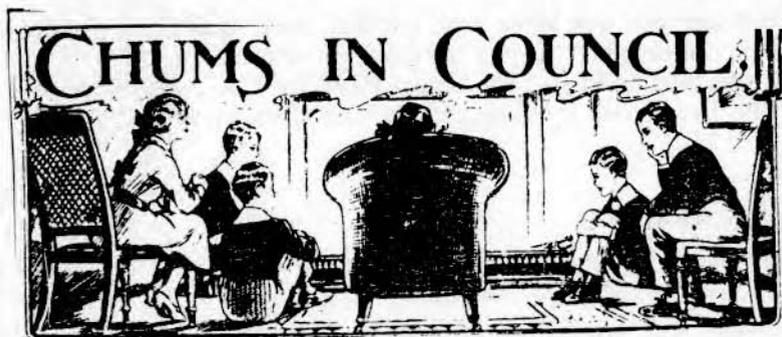
VOL. 49

No. 587

NOVEMBER 1995

Price £1.10

FURTHER PEEPS AT THE ANNUAL



As promised last month I am now able to 'trail' some more 'goodies' which will feature in our forthcoming Annual.

E. Grant McPherson has provided some lively St. Frank's material, Bill Bradford considers that extremely varied paper, *The Ranger*, Ernest Holman transports us into the exuberant world of Jeeves and Wooster (focusing particularly on the latter's relationships with his aunts) while Donald V. Campbell discusses the delights - and challenges - of Meccano and Hornby train-sets.

Larry Morley writes about 'Tod Slaughter - The Last of the Barnstormers', Norman Wright describes a colourful 'crib-cracker' and Laurence Price deals

with a very different hero, the writer and naturalist 'Grey Owl'. I referred last month to several Hamilton items and, in addition to these, Anthony Cook has produced an unusual 'Christmas Fantasy' in which Henry Samuel Quelch plays a prominent part.

Heroines as well as heroes are well represented in the Annual. Ray Hopkins reflects on 'Reg Kirkham's Lost Girls', Dennis Bird looks at three well known fictional schools, Morcove, Maudsley and Cliff House, Margery Woods stars the enigmatic Jemima Carstairs with Babs & Co. in a very Christmassy story while Ann Mackie-Hunter explores some vividly atmospheric girls' books in 'Elsie Oxenham - A Romantic Writer'.



I feel sure you will agree with me that, once again, our Annual will be truly a 'box of delights'. If you have not yet sent me an order for your copy there is still time to do so. The cost is £9.80 for U.K. readers and £11.00 for those who live abroad (postage and packing costs are included in both these prices).

AUTUMN READING

This month I am again grateful to Una Hamilton Wright for being able to include further unpublished work by her uncle ('A Schoolboy's Love Letters').

Autumn and winter are, of course, the seasons which are especially conducive to long and leisurely reading. As you know, I try always in the C.D. to cover the broad spectrum of our hobby. For this I rely on the energy and dedication of many contributors to whom I must convey my deep appreciation. However, I should like once more to make a plea for E.S. Brooks material. Despite the fact that this author has plentiful fans, articles about his work have recently been few in number. So Lee-ites, please bear my request in mind.

Happy Reading!

MARY CADOGAN

"THE BEST LAID PLANS OF MICE AND MEN GANG AFT AGLEY"
(Robbie Burns) **by Reg Hardinge**

This could be the alternative title to Martin Clifford's story "The Gunpowder Plot at St. Jim's" (The Gem No. 1238).

Something was up, said Jack Blake to the Terrible Three. Figgins & Co had been acting mysteriously for the last day or so. The antagonism between the School house and the New house was seldom in abeyance for long, and whenever it flared up Blake, George Herries and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the occupants of Study No. 6, always stood together with their school house comrades and rivals of Study No. 10, Tom Merry, Harry Manners and Monty Lowther.

Investigations by the Terrible Three soon revealed that George Figgins, the New house leader, and his two friends, Fatty Wynn and George Kerr, had constructed a dummy for burning on Guy Fawkes night which was imminent. The effigy, about the height of a 15-year-old boy, was built on a framework of wood for it to stand upright and unsupported. The body and legs had been padded out so that they fitted the old Eton suit which encompassed the frame, and a large pair of shoes had been nailed on to give stability. The head was made from a stuffed linen bag, with ugly features. Daubed on by Figgins using a paintbrush, and surmounted by a school house cap. Kerr had attached a placard to the guy's chest bearing the inscription "Tom Merry the Guy of St. Jim's."

Tom Merry wanted Figgins & Co. out of the way in order to put his plan of action into operation. Figgins knew that Merry had a recipe for making his own fireworks and was anxious to get hold of it. Tom Merry was aware of this, and by a subterfuge allowed a piece of paper purporting to be the recipe to fall into Figgins's hands. However it bore a resemblance to a doctor's prescription in its unintelligibility, so off went Figgins & Co. to Mr. Pilling, the Chemist in Rylcombe, to seek his aid.

This gave the opportunity for the combined force of studies Nos. 10 & 6 to carry out a raid on the new house, enter Figg's study in which the Guy was hidden, lower it down on a rope through the window to the quadrangle, and make off with it.

Meanwhile Mr. Pilling studied the piece of paper that had been handed to him with a puzzled frown, and eventually burst into a roar of laughter. He had deciphered the writing to be the broken and disconnected Latin syllables of the first two lines of Virgil's "Aeneid". "Spoofed", groaned Figgins & Co.

On Guy Fawkes night the effigy was mounted on a pole in the centre of the pyre which had been prepared in the quadrangle, bearing a huge placard proclaiming that it was "Figgins the New House Guy". But Figgins & Co had a trick up their sleeves. Producing a garden-hose they directed it at the school house juniors gathered round the pyre, forcing them to scatter. Figgins and his followers took undisputed possession of the guy, tore off the placard on it, and replaced it with one that Fatty Wynn had prepared. Then the bonfire was lit and in a few moments was burning brilliantly. The placard pinned on the Guy's breast was clearly visible to all - "Tom Merry the Guy of St. Jim's". Fireworks exploded everywhere as with a crash the blazing effigy fell into the heart of the flames "Tom Merry's Gone", shouted the new house juniors, and it was universally acknowledged that the new house was Cock House at St. Jim's. The victory was with the redoubtable Figgins after all.

"Pax" was called. Tom Merry conceded that he had been defeated, and the juniors of both houses celebrated the famous Fifth. However, the next day the School house were plotting and planning to get their own back.



OF PARSLEY, AND THE SALVATION OF INSPECTOR COUTTS

by Derek Hinrich

One day in 1900, in the course of *The Adventure of The Six Napoleons*, Sherlock Holmes remarked that, "the dreadful business of the Abernetty family was first brought to my notice by the depth which the parsley had sunk into the butter upon a hot day." We are unfortunately not provided with a fuller account of this case by Doctor Watson but, as Holmes also said on another occasion. "The old wheel turns and the same spoke comes up. It's all been done before and will be again." And thirty two years after *The Six Napoleons*, Sexton Blake, too, had occasion to consider the forensic possibilities of parsley and melting butter.

Three times in the course of 1930 Sexton Blake himself stood in peril of the law (see UJs 1371; 1395 & 6; 1398 & 1399) through the machinations of various enemies, one of them a "bent copper". He was saved by his own exertions, the benevolent assistance of the British Secret Service, and the loyalty of his good friend Inspector Coutts. Two years later Inspector Coutts also stood in similar danger and Blake was able to in his turn to save his old friend and comrade in arms from ruin and disgrace by defeating a conspiracy hatched against Coutts by a corrupt colleague. The tale is set forth in UJ 1519 of 26th November 1932 in *Suspended from Duty* by Gwyn Evans (it has a splendid cover by Eric Parker of poor Coutts sitting dumbfounded and in shock at the fate which has overwhelmed him).

The story is most ingenious in Gwyn Evans' best vein and, incidentally, contains some of his finest humorous dialogue for Mrs. Bardell which he surely must have enjoyed writing. The narrative deals with two separate but linked series of events.

In the one, a newly promoted Detective Inspector, Grimley by name, conspires with the proprietors of London's newest and most fashionable nightclub, *The Puce Lobster*, to get Coutts off their backs by framing him on a charge of corruption. Grimley himself plants on Coutts a packet of bank notes, the numbers of which have already been given to the Commissioner, Sir Henry Fairfax, by Grimley's confederates in the course of an allegation that Coutts has been demanding protection money. The notes are duly found in Coutts' possession and he is suspended from duty, pending an enquiry.

In the other, Sexton Blake, while taking up the cudgels on behalf of his old friend, also investigates the violent death in mysterious circumstances of a young man about town, a friend of Grimley's partners in crime (the police investigation of this case is being conducted by Grimley). The victim was found in his mews flat, dead from a shotgun wound fired at close range, shortly after a cocktail party attended by a number of his friends, all habitués of *The Puce Lobster*. Grimley arrests the dead man's former fiancée but Blake proves her innocence and establishes what actually happened. He also obtains

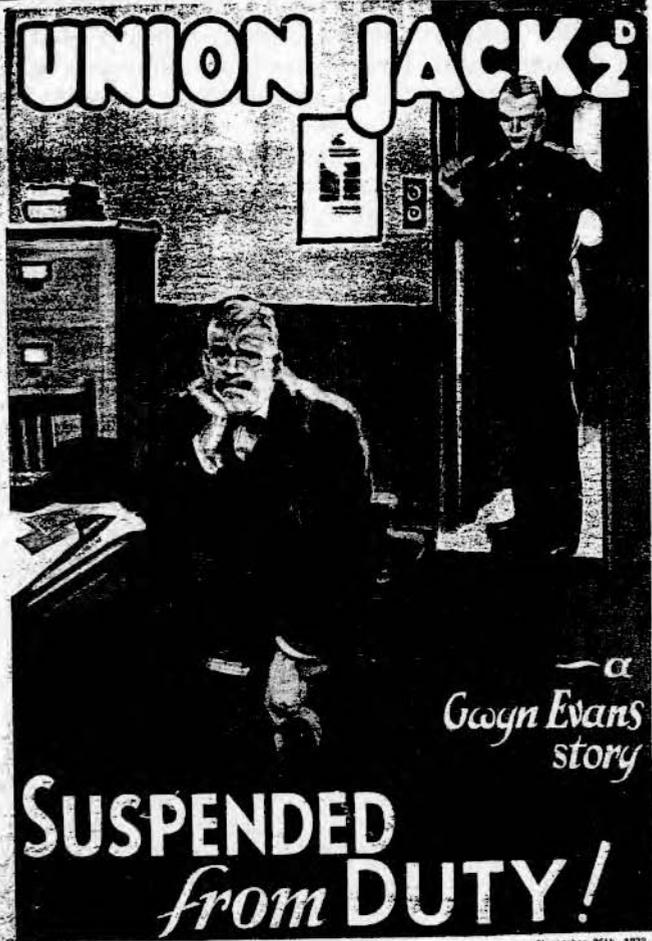
evidence which exonerates Coutts from the charge hanging over him and incriminates Grimley and the other conspirators.

He is helped to his solution of the mystery by some photographs taken at the cocktail party by a friend of Splash Page's and by his own observation of the debris of that party, not least of the depth which the parsley had sunk into the butter upon a hot day. Evans' version of Blake was always the most Holmesian!

It is truly all most ingenious but you really should read it for yourselves. I wouldn't dream of revealing the solution here!

**SEXTON
BLAKE**

in a gripping, Human-Interest Story of the
Downfall of Inspector Coutts, C.I.D., Extra-
long, and Complete.





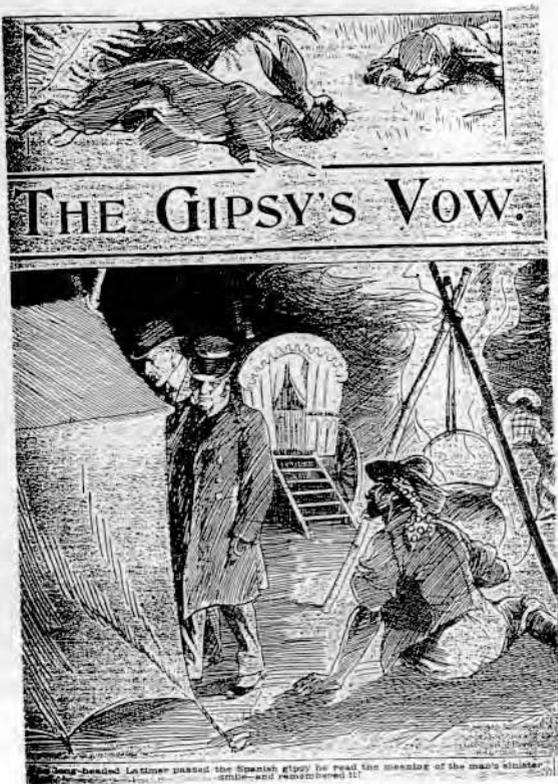
"LONG-HEADED" LATIMER

by Len Hawkey

Thanks, mainly, to the research of Bill Lofts, we have been reminded of many long-forgotten detectives whose exploits appeared in O.B. papers of yesterday, but "Long-Headed" Latimer must rank amongst the most unusual! In the first place he was basically a pork-butcher, secondly he was portly, middle-aged, and ponderous and, in addition, due to a moment's carelessness earlier in his training, he possessed a steel hook in place of his left-hand. One almost hesitates to add, that his assistants (so-called), were Captain Kidd, a rather talkative jackdaw, and a small skinny lad, a much put-upon errand-boy-cum-apprentice, called Dinky.

A pork-butcher's shop is virtually unknown today, but before and, indeed, after the first World-War these were quite common, and many a time as a lad, the writer was sent round, with appropriate basin, for six-pennyworth of pork dripping - delicious it was, too. Luke Latimer's premises were situated in the little town of Clayford, north-west of London. Its owner was a very popular tradesman, and in spite of any physical disadvantages, he was, like Agatha Christie's Miss Marple, possessed of a very shrewd and perceptive mind.

His local knowledge was profound, and he had the knack of getting straight to the core of a



"Long-Headed Latimer passed the Spanish gypsy; he read the meaning of the man's sinister smile—and remembered it!"

knotty problem, as Inspector Sharp, the local police-officer found on a number of occasions. As for example, when the pork-butcher was able to prove by his insight into High Street traffic conditions that a death, for which a man had been arrested on a murder charge, was in fact quite accidental. "Long-Headed" Latimer first appeared in the 1d Puck on May 9th 1908, and in a number of subsequent stories over the next few months. The author was Cerdic Wolfe, whose real name was Ernest Alais (1864-1922). He wrote many Sexton Blake stories in the Union Jack between 1906 and 1919, and also created the detective, George Sleath for The Marvel: and also, for Puck, the brother and sister sleuths, Kit & Cora Twyford. As a somewhat bizarre example of the species, "Long-Headed" Luke Latimer is pretty unusual. His first adventure was illustrated by Leonard Shields, but the example shown (from "The Gipsy's Vow", July 1908) is an early example of Warwick Reynolds, one of the finest artists ever employed by the Amalgamated Press.

**IAN WHITMORE
THE CHASE
ROUND OAK ROAD
WEYBRIDGE, SURREY KT13 8HT**

Collector recently retired sorting out spares.

FOR SALE ORIGINAL HOLIDAY ANNUALS

1920	-	£45	1927	-	£30
1921	-	£30	1928	-	£30
1925	-	£30	1931	-	£25
1926	-	£25	1937	-	£20

ORIGINAL MAGNETS

501 to 505 (JUDGE JEFFREYS)	£25
1374 - 1382 (POPPERS ISLAND)	£25
1383 - 1389 (BILLIONAIRE)	£20
1965 SOUVENIR FACSIMILE	
OF No. 1 MAGNET (MINT)	£4.00

WANTED - ORIGINAL MAGNETS

393	445	800	862	885
397	446	822	865	889
399	449	825	870	896
415	451	827	874	897
419	652	838	876	900
423	776	841	877	956
424	781	842	880	972
428	795	849	883	987

CAN ANYONE HELP WITH GOOD & COMPLETE COPIES (SALE or EXCHANGE)?

INTRODUCTION TO A SCHOOLBOY'S LOVELETTERS

by Una Hamilton Wright

Shortly after the first World War my Uncle had ventured back to the Continent, first of all to collect his dog who had lived with a French couple throughout hostilities. He had a farewell look at France and Switzerland and found the price of everything remarkably cheap. During the twenties quite a few English people chose to live on the Continent to keep the costs down while they were adjusting to post-war inflation. And many more took their holidays there for economic rather than for cultural reasons. It is to one of these families that young Aubrey Biggs belongs.

It was my mother who had the idea for these letters. She always loved the character of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy and the way he had a harmless eye for the girls. To him Aubrey owes his character. I think Uncle drew heavily on a younger cousin who was at Dulwich College and just after leaving school was very infatuated with sister Dolly. I know that football figured frequently in that relationship.

As soon as his sister outlined the theme Uncle could see what a good idea it was and was very enthusiastic. He was very grateful for plots and Dolly and her husband were always on the lookout for ideas and coming up with suggestions.

A SCHOOLBOY'S LOVE-LETTERS by Frank Richards

(Letter One)

Dearest Lou,

I'm sitting down to write to you, just as I said I would, as soon as I got back. At least almost as soon, because there are some things a fellow can't dodge. First of all I had to see old Moon---you remember I told you Moon was my beak. There was a bit of a fuss, owing to my losing my medical certificate, through that goat Carter assing about in the train down. Of course it's all rot: they don't really look at it, or care two pence; but if you haven't got it there's a row. Luckily I thought of telling him that I'd slipped it into one of my books in case I lost it. That's all right with Moon, because he never remembers anything the next day. Still, it was very annoying at the time, because he kept me a good five minutes, and Parkinson was waiting in the passage to speak to me, and when I came out at last he'd gone off with Ling.

My study's in a pretty state, as you may guess on the first day of term. Everything at sixes and sevens. The table's loaded like a bargain counter, and I've hardly room to write this letter, --there's my bag, and my football boots, and cake I've just unpacked, and a lot of my books, and a lot of Sutton's things. Sutton is the chap I mess with here: I think I told you about him. Not a bad chap in his own way, but frightfully untidy. His slippers are on the table this very minute.

I'd rather have Parkinson, really, we get on together splendidly, but Sutton seemed to take it for granted that we should mess together this term same as last, an a chap can't very well let a chap down. Besides you have to be jolly careful about this. If you're too slow you might get left without anybody, and then the mob would think that nobody wanted you,

and it would be against you all the term. I got left like that my first term in the Fifth, and had to put up with Pug Smith in the end, and was really lucky to get even him at the last minute, but it was rotten all round. This term I hoped to get Parkinson. I think I could have got Sutton to go with Brown major, who as I know would be glad to have him, because nobody really wants Brown, whose people are very so-so. His father came down last term in elastic-sided boots, and after that the fags used to squeak when Brown passed them, and put him into a terrific bait. But I should have had to arrange with Sutton before speaking to Parkinson, and then it might have turned out that old Parky was snapped up already. I know he seemed rather thick with Potter in the train, and I jolly well know that that greasy little scug, Walker, meant to bag him if he could. There's hardly a man in the Fifth wouldn't be glad to have Parkinson. So I might have got left and have had to put up with some nobody like Pug Smith again. So now I'm fixed up with Sutton as before, and perhaps it's all for the best, though I wish he wouldn't stick his slippers on the table or plug his smokes in among my instruments. Of course he has to keep them out of sight.

I shall never forget that last evening. It's just like a dream. What you could see in me I don't know, because I'm not worthy of you in any way I can think of. I'm going to try hard to be, and this term I've made up my mind to have nothing whatever to do with Chowne and his set. I shall bar them utterly. I told Sutton so on the train, and he said I'd better mind my step, because Chowne being a pre., and in the Sixth, he could make it pretty tough for any fellow who set up to bar him. I said "I don't care", and I don't, either. I can tell you that I started before we'd been back at Barcroft ten minutes. Chowne was in the quad, and he called out "Hullo, old thing!" and I pretended to think that he was speaking to somebody else, and just walked on with my bag. Of course a man has to be a bit tactful with a pre.

When I think of that last evening, it seems to bring back something in Tennyson, or perhaps Browning, though I can't remember it just at this minute. Ever since meeting you I seem to see a lot more in poetry than I used to. I shall go strong on English Literature this term. This will give me a leg-up with old Moon, too. He likes fellows who pretend to like it. You'd never dream how easy it is to pull his leg. Old Parkinson is very clever at it. He knows how to get Moon spouting, so that we get through perhaps half the hour practically doing nothing. But I shall take it very seriously this term, because I am now convinced that it is not by any means the tosh I always thought it. I have recently found that I like poetry, and have little doubt that there is a lot in it that I never thought of before. Of course a fellow gets a bit fogged sometimes, because so often it doesn't seem to have any sense in it. But I realise now, as I never did before, that football isn't everything, though of course I wouldn't like to say so in the day-room.

Speaking about football, there's practically no doubt that I shall play for School. This may sound like swank, but I assure you that it is not. Parkinson thinks so, and that as good as settles it. Sutton says that what Parkinson thinks to-day, Barcroft thinks tomorrow---- very neat way of putting it, I thought---- Sutton's no fool. (Luttrell-- I've told you about our skipper--well, Luttrell nodded to me on the landing when I came up. He didn't speak, but he distinctly nodded -- I'm absolutely certain of that. Luttrell, of course, won't be thinking about much besides football this term: he can't very well, in his position, and my belief is that it means that he has his eye on me.)

I don't mind telling you about this, because I know you don't look at games in the silly way girls generally do. The first time it came to me that I cared for you so much, was the evening in the hotel garden, on that seat you remember, when I was telling you about the Tatcham match, and you sat listening with your eyes closed, and never interrupted me once. It seemed so splendid to be talking to a girl who really understood. I can tell you that any of my sisters would have shut me up before I'd said a dozen words. A fellow's sisters never understand him: I've noticed that, I've got four, and all of them would have said "Oh, chuck

it, Aubrey" if I'd started on Soccer. I was so glad you were interested because it really was a great match. In my opinion Barcroft only pulled it off by a combination of luck and sheer good play. At half-time almost anybody would have said that it was Tatcham's game. In fact right up to ten minutes from the finish the outlook was pretty grim. But after Luttrell equalised, we let them have it----- I wish you'd been there.

It was just luck that I was in the team, being only in the Second eleven at the time, through a man getting crocked at the last minute. Luttrell had to shove in somebody, and he shoved me in, I think the result justified it. I couldn't expect goals, against men like Tatcham: but several fellows said afterwards that my passing was as good as any on the field, and nobody can deny that it was from a pass I gave him that Ling sacred the winning goal, though he was rather stand-offish when I mentioned it afterwards. But facts are facts, whether Billy Ling likes them or not. To my mind, Ling isn't a First-eleven man at all: being altogether too sketchy in his style, though I admit he has luck. If I were in Luttrell's place, I certainly shouldn't play him against a team like Tatcham. I should think it too risky.

Luttrell noticed my play that time. Two or three fellows said so. I wonder whether he remembers that pass I gave Ling. It looks like it, nodding to me as he did.

That last evening at Vevey was the happiest of my life. It seems like a glorious dream when I look back at it now. I was so jolly glad to get away from the hotel crowd and get a spot of quiet in the garden with you. How lovely the moonlight looked on the lake! And that jolly little seat under the big tree where we sat. I was feeling awfully sorry that I'd trodden on your dress in the dance---- I know I'm a rotten dancer, but I shall try to improve. Do you know, I thought just for a second that you were stuffy when we heard it tear. But the next minute I knew it was all right, you had such a lovely smile. But I was glad you owned up that you were tired of dancing, and said what about sitting it out. I mean to say I was sorry you were tired, but glad to get out into the garden and the moonlight, ---with you. I'd wondered and wondered whether I should have a chance of speaking to you before we had to part, and it made me very miserable to think of that early train in the morning and going without seeing you again. I'd even thought of coming round very early, before my people had to start for the station, on the off chance that you might be up. But it was all right, as it happened.

Will you ever forget that evening, Lou! I never shall, not if I live to be sixty. Wasn't it thumping luck that my people took me to Vevey for the hols, while you were there at the same time! This was one of those wonderful coincidences that happen sometimes. But for that I might never have met you. And we came near going to Scotland instead, only the pater thought that, on the whole, Switzerland would be cheaper. A poet whose name I forget for the moment said what great events from little causes spring. We had it in English Literature with Moon last term. I think more and more that poets very often hit the right nail on the head, and that there is a lot more in poetry than fellows think.

About you being a trifle older, I don't think that matters a bit, as I told you. Men really are older than women, even if younger by a year or two, being so much more practical and having so much more knowledge of the world. I feel that I could protect you, and that's what I want to do all my life. That is how I felt the day we had the trip on the lake steamer to Montreux. Looking after a woman, and taking care of her in every way, is a man's job. I was so sorry I left your sunshade on the steamer: it was a bit of luck that that American chap brought it off and gave it to you. Wasn't that a lovely afternoon at Montreux! Do you remember how we jolly nearly lost the boat back, as I was sure that we had till six, while it turned out that the boat left at 5.30 just as you thought!

There's an awful din going on in the passage. Of course there's always a lot of noise first day. I can hear that goat Carter giving one of his imitations of old Moon, and all the

fellows laughing. Carter's a very funny ass, and I wish you could hear him doing old Moon, and saying "Now, now, that's quite enough talking: we must remember that we are here to work!"----he gets his wheezy voice to a T. You might think it was old Moon speaking. It's not much use trying to write a letter with all that row going on, so I may as well go along, so I will close with dearest love from your own,

AUBREY BRIGGS

(Copyright, Una Hamilton Wright)

THE STOKE MORAN AFFAIR

by Ernest Holman

Of the fifty-six short stories of Sherlock Holmes, the earliest in date sequence took place in early April of the year 1883. This was the time when Holmes and Watson had only begun their association. What follows is, admittedly, only the barest of bones but the outline of the story is given as a meaningful brief synopsis.

When, therefore, Watson was awoken at an early hour by Holmes asking if he wish to be 'in' on a new case, the Doctor was all eagerness. The client who awaited them was a Miss Helen Stoner of Stoke Moran, where she resided with her stepfather, Dr. Grimesby Roylott. This person had earned himself a reputation in his locality for brutal exhibitions of strength and anger. Under the will of Helen's late mother, the Doctor was in charge of a large sum of money, a considerable portion of which was to go to the two daughters upon the time of their marriage.

Eventually, Helen's sister Julia became engaged and looked forward to the coming day eagerly. However, she did once ask Helen if, during the night, she ever heard a whistle and a clanging sound. Helen had not done so and did not know what might be the cause. It was not long after this that Julia staggered from her bedroom, murmuring somewhat incoherently and, sadly, died in her sister Helen's arms. The verdict appeared to be that she passed away from sheer fright, but what had caused the fright was never discovered.

Helen, now, was shortly to become a married woman and would soon be receiving her share of her Mother's money. She then told Holmes and Watson that recently she had heard the very same sounds in the night mentioned by her late sister. She was obviously agitated and implored the detective to help her. Eventually, Holmes told her that he and Watson would be with her at Stoke Moran later that day; it was understood that Dr. Roylott would be away.

In examining the room that Miss Helen Stoner now occupied - for some reason, she had been moved into her sister's room - Holmes noted a few curious items. The bed was clamped to the floor, near the head of the bed hung a bell rope that only led up to a ventilator between this room and the next, that of her step-father. Inspecting the adjoining room, a large iron safe was noticed, as well as an empty saucer nearby and a dog lash, twisted into a loop at one end.

It is arranged that Miss Stoner, unknown to her step-father, would sleep in her own room again and Holmes and Watson would remain in the room next to the Doctor's. The two sat silently in the darkness for a long time. Eventually, there came a quick flash of light from the ventilator and shortly afterwards a sound like a short jet of steam was heard. Immediately, Holmes struck a match and commenced to lash furiously at something on the bed with his cane. Something shot rapidly up the bell rope and then, a moment later, the house rang with the sound of a blood-curdling scream. Then silence.

Rushing into the step-father's room, the two discovered the Doctor sitting bolt upright in his chair, dead, with a curious yellow band around his head. Then the band reared up and Holmes, taking the dog lash and looping it around the reptile's head, put it safely into the safe with a clang of the door.

After Miss Stoner had been sent to safety, Holmes explained what had happened. The Doctor had already succeeded in removing one sister, thus preventing his handing over the relevant money upon the girl's marriage and now had attempted to repeat the process. No doubt, said Holmes, he kept the Swamp Adder in the safe, provided it from time to time with a saucer of milk and, at night, by means of the loop in the dog lash, lifted it up to the ventilator. Then it slithered down the rope and landed on the bed. When it seemed that nothing had happened to the sleeper, the snake was recalled with a whistle and shut up in the safe. This procedure obviously went on several times, with unhappy results in the case of sister Julia. Only Holmes' assessment of what was going on had prevented a further tragedy.

Holmes finally remarks to Watson "I suppose, really, I am responsible for the death of Dr. Roylott but I cannot say it is likely to weigh very heavily on my conscience."

FOOTNOTE:

Any similarity between the above story and that of another that was discussed recently in these pages may or may not be coincidental!

WANTED: PENNY BLOODS AND PENNY DREADFULS

I'm seeking bound volumes and single numbers from these fiction serials which prevailed from the 1830s to the 1900s. Early Bloods titles too numerous to list but publishers include - Edward Lloyd, Edward Harrison, G.W.M. Reynolds, George and William Emmett (Hogarth House), George Vickers, George Purkess, John Dicks, Edwin J. Brett etc.

Authors include - Thomas Peckett Prest, Mary Bennett, Thomas Frost, George A. Sala, James Malcolm Rymer, Pierce Egan Jr., Percy B. St. John, Hannah Maria Jones, Matthew G. Lewis, James Lindridge, Renton Nicholson, G.W.M. Reynolds, Bracebridge Hemyng, E. Harcourt Barrage, etc.

Later Publications I'm seeking are:

Boys Leisure Hour, Boys of England, Boys Standard, Bonnie Boys of Britain, Boys of London and New York, Jack Harkaways Journal.

The following reference books: Medcraft, John - Biography of the Penny Bloods of Edward Lloyd. Summers, Montague - A Gothic Bibliography, The Gothic Quest. Dalziel, Margaret - Popular Fiction 100 years ago. Frost, Thomas - Forty Years Recollections. Rollington, Ralph - A History of Boys Periodicals. Stonehill, C.A. - A catalogue of 19th century books. Watts, W.W. - Shilling Shockers of the Gothic School. Coke, Desmond - Confessions of an incurable collector. Block, A. - The English Novel, 1740-1850. James, Louis - Fiction for the Working man, 1830-1850.

Does anybody have the facsimile reprint (2 vols.) of Varney the Vampire by Dover Press, New York? Also looking for copies of 'The Collectors Miscellany' with Bloods Articles, Letters etc. or any publication with such articles, price lists, illustrations etc. I would be delighted to hear from anybody who collects or is interested in similar material. Thanks.

Michael Holmes, Aughamore Far, Sligo, Ireland. Tel: 071-46150. (From outside Ireland: 00 353 71 46150)

WILLIAM CELEBRATES THE FIFTH OF NOVEMBER

by Margery Woods

No-one could ever accuse William Brown of deliberately looking for trouble. All he ever asked in life was to be allowed to go his own way, seeking harmless pursuits from day to day with his faithful outlaw band. Just freedom, the greatest right in life, the way adults expected to be able to choose their own amusement. That this simple quest should invariably lead to disaster could hardly be William's fault could it? Nor that it should invariably lead to a constant state of feud with certain residents in the neighbourhood, although this did add a piquancy to life.

Apart from the eternally strained relationship between William and Farmer Jenks, the main other long-running feud was with Hubert Lane and his cronies. But although Hubert was spoilt and indulged by his doting mother and thus the Outlaws could never hope to emulate him in the acquisition of material aims, a strain of distinctive green in Hubert's not very attractive eyes could be discerned whenever William launched on some new project. For Hubert was not an innovator, and could not bear William's having anything that he didn't. So when he heard that William and the Outlaws had a whole ten shillings to blow on a magnificent display of fireworks that Guy Fawkes Day he had to go one better with a whole pound---twice as much as the Outlaws had---to ensure a doubly splendid show of fireworks. "To make William's look like a burnt match" was Hubert's kindly way of expressing it.

William promptly came up with the idea of having a guy, knowing that Hubert was usually pretty useless when it came to actually creating something.

The idea had a double edge; they would make it in the image of Major Blake, a new enemy who had just leased The Hall from the Botts. He was an agile man who wielded a mean stick and never hesitated to use it on trespassers caught on his property.

The guy turned out beyond their wildest dreams, aided by a great stroke of luck when a scarecrow appeared in the Hall grounds attired in one of the Major's distinctive suits. The Outlaws' lawless hearts revelled in the perilous expedition after dark to raid the scarecrow's garb. A second stroke of luck brought a box of fireworks for Henry from his aunt. On the downturn, Hubert was making a guy, or rather his slaves were---there was always a price to pay in return for Hubert's patronage. Then fate dealt a new card. At the last moment William and Hubert met at the village shop, each in search of last minute firework bargains, and a small, attractive girl came out of the shop and smiled upon them both. She offered them sweets, invited herself to their celebrations, and announced that she would be the judge and award a prize to the best fireworks display, with a beanfeast to follow in the old barn. Such generosity took William's breath away, and even subdued Hubert.

But this surprise encounter was nothing to the shock that lay in store for William that night.

When the little girl arrived she was accompanied by a tall figure wheeling a handcart that bore the food for the promised feast. She introduced her companion to William as her adored father. He was, of course, Major Blake, so transformed in temper to be almost a stranger, plainly a devoted slave to his small winsome daughter.

The Outlaws were aghast. How could they unveil their guy? That highly unflattering model of Major Blake?

Urged on by the little judge, William could do nothing but reluctantly draw off the covering that had concealed the guy. But instead of the expected wrath of Nemesis (a

goddess with whom William had much acquaintance) there was revealed the vastly inferior guy made by Hubert and the Laneites. The ever treacherous Hubert had seized an opportunity to switch the two guys and the Outlaws' effigy of Major Blake was now revealed as *his* guy!

The awful climax produced more metaphorical fireworks than the actual display as the little girl pointed accusingly at Hubert and Major Blake reverted to character. The stick worked overtime, the Laneites fled, and the Outlaws became proud winners of the magnificent camera from the little girl.

For the Outlaws it was a walkover. Once again, William's sadly overworked guardian angel had not failed her charge.

Another of William's choleric enemies was Colonel Masters. A fraught relationship at the best of times—one of the Colonel's favourite weapons was the garden hose—and November was the worst time of all. For Colonel Masters enjoyed fireworks and always had a good show of them in his garden, a show to which, needless to say, William was *not* invited.

Their parents' decision to ban fireworks that year only made the Outlaws more determined to ensure that their Guy Fawkes activities took place well out of sight and sound of spoilsport adults. The plan to be followed was similar to that wrecked on Major Blake. A guy was made, in a purloined suit of the Major's and the shopping list of fireworks budgeted for down to the last halfpenny of the five shillings promised by Ginger's aunt. Then the blow fell: Ginger's father decided to withhold the five shillings until Guy Fawkes was over, in case of any temptation for Ginger to blow the lot on fireworks.

Once again the Outlaws were thrown back on their wits, which did not fail them.

Colonel Masters had a sister who kept house for him, a timid lady who was not at all happy with her brother's indulgence in gunpowder fun. A procession of boys approached her, mournful of visage, at least what could be seen beneath the bandages generously swathing who knew what ghastly injuries, and bearing dreadful tales of



THE OUTLAWS WATCHED, DUMBFOUNDED AND AGHAST.

"I SAY," DOUGLAS'S FATHER WAS SAYING, "DO YOU REMEMBER THAT FIFTH WHEN YOU——?"

afflictions caused by fireworks made with the wrong kind of gunpowder. She absorbed all the subliminal messages about leaving the shed door unlocked so that fate might arrange for the fireworks to disappear so that her brother might be spared the awful suffering of these small victims.

So she left the shed unlocked, the Colonel's fireworks duly vanished, the Outlaws as the servants of fate prepared their display, and someone, Hubert Lane for sure, sneaked this information to the fathers of the Outlaws as they made their way home from the station. So authority arrived on the forbidden scene, took one look at the splendid boxes of bangers, squibs, rockets and Catherine Wheels, and was lost. Authority happily became boys again and began to set off the fireworks.

William and his Outlaw band walked disgustedly down the road, where they met a furious Colonel Masters. He was looking for his fireworks and the thieves who had stolen them. William was quite happy to point him in the right direction, and continued more blithely on his way. Life did have its little rewards sometimes.

The coming of the War put a damper on fireworks and bonfires for everyone, but it could not dampen William's determination to commemorate this famous anniversary. For William, Guy Fawkes had assumed the status of a folk hero, and snatches of opinion overheard at home convinced him and the Outlaws that their respective fathers shared their son's sympathies at times. As Douglas said:

"It seems wrong to a great man like that lettin' people forget him jus' 'cause of the war." Whereupon Henry reminded him that Guy Fawkes wasn't a great man, he'd tried to blow up Parliament, and hence Douglas' recollections of certain mutterings by his father on the subject of rapacious demands by Government Tax Officials.

So the Outlaws decided that November the Fifth should be marking by enacting the great conspiracy and the trial and subsequent execution of a sadly inefficient blower-up of the country's seat of power. The new conspirators, with corked moustaches and a nice line in dialogue of the Gadzooks! variety, met to discuss plans, aided by Joan, the only little girl who ever really stole into William's heart with any permanence. She was about to be sent away to a new school, albeit unwillingly, even if it seemed a wonderful offer from a certain old schoolfriend of Joan's mother. Joan decided she would play Guy Fawkes' mother and help him to escape from prison, while Miss Cummins partook of tea with Joan's mother and also discussed plans. She expressed a desire to talk to Joan, and said she would see her as she made her way to the station.

There followed another of the delightful involvements that follow William through life. Armed with a description of the green hat and coat Joan was wearing. Miss Cummins set forth, unaware that at that precise moment Joan in her role of Guy Fawkes mother, has visited William and he is now escaping disguised in her green coat and hat.

Miss Cummins thinks she has never seen such an uncompromisingly ugly little girl before. The ensuing exchange with William, wary enough to maintain his female impersonation, did nothing to enhance the uncharming personality of this child she was planning to take into her beautiful school and educate free of charge. A grim suggestion about being a lot more polite when "she" comes to Miss Cummins' school brings a terse and honest reply from William. "I'm not coming to your rotten school."

Joan's mother is a little puzzled next morning, trying to equate Joan's statement that she had never seen Miss Cummins with the letter just received which conveyed Miss Cummins' fervent regrets about not having room for Joan after all.

But Mrs. Parfitt soon dismissed the puzzling aspects of the affair; it was so marvellous that Joan wasn't going away after all.

So indirectly Guy Fawkes succeeded in making one little girl and her mother very happy, even if the Houses of Parliament were still standing defiantly several centuries later, still the scene of decisions that made many of the country's long-suffering inhabitants feel quite as dissatisfied as those in the time of one of William's many heroes.

It is difficult to believe that William is now going on eighty and seems set for immortality, thanks to the genius of his creator whose wonderful sense of humour is never malicious but always unblinkered, and the gift she has given to her irresistible character of being able to see life and people with a child's vision coupled with an adult's perception of all human failings and pretensions. Let us hope that William carries on, always, to cheer our hearts all the year round as well as on November the Fifth.

(Illustrations by Thomas Henry are used with the kind permission of Macmillan's and the Thomas Henry Fisher Estate.)

Announcing *The Just William Society*

The *Just William Society* was officially inaugurated at the Annual William Meeting in April. The president is Richmal Ashbee, and the editors of the twice-yearly magazine are your very own Mary Cadogan, and children's author and 'William' specialist David Schutte.

The first issue is due out before Christmas!

UK adult membership is £7, child (under 16) £5, overseas £10.

To join, please send your full name, address (and date of birth if under 16) and crossed cheque/P.O. (made payable to *The Just William Society*) to:

**The Just William Society Treasurer,
c/o Black Cat Bookshop, 36-39 Silver Arcade, LEICESTER LE1 5FB**

OH, REALLY!! (Or, if you prefer, OH, REALLY?)

A Flight of Fancy

by Geoff Lardner

Chapter One Sam and Milly

Sam woke early, as he always did. His eyes still closed, he was savouring that delectable drowsy moment of half-sleep which precedes full awakening when, with a happy sigh, it came to him that today was Sunday and that he had no need to get up for another hour. That was good. Sam was fond of his bed, just as he was of his meals, and reckoned that he worked hard enough during the week to deserve both when the chance came.

Yes, he reflected sleepily, he'd worked hard and come a long way. Chief clerk to a respected firm of City stockbrokers was a long, long way from the little house in front of his father's rag and bone yard in Bermondsey. But there

was money in rubbish and the old man had made enough to send Sam and his brother to a decent private school, where the education was good enough to get them each a start as office boys in good businesses, and to leave them each a tidy little nest egg when he had passed on a year ago.

Sam thought about that nest egg and wondered if the time had come to put it to use. His employers were both getting old: Mr. Byett's health was failing and Mr. Selwell couldn't wait to retire and spend all his time with his chrysanthemums. Sam reckoned that they'd be glad to sell him the business, lock, stock, barrel, goodwill and all if only he could raise the money. What his father had left was nowhere near enough, but then there was always Milly.

Milly had plenty of money. Her father had made his way in life too, from a jellied eel stall in Bethnal Green via a fried fish shop in Shoreditch to the biggest, flashiest and most prosperous pub in Hoxton. Milly and her two brothers had shared a not so small fortune when old man Carter, brought to a premature end by over drinking and overeating, had unexpectedly left for a better world a few months ago. Sam knew that she had her eye on him and that she hated keeping house for her two vulgar, loud-mouthed brothers. She was great on refinement, was Milly, thanks to the little convent school she'd been sent to, and what she didn't know about Royalty and the aristocracy wasn't worth knowing. You never saw her without the Tatler or the Sphere or some such society magazine in her hand and all her dreams were of social advancement.

Sam didn't exactly think he loved her. She was too plump for that, having inherited her father's appetite, but love wasn't that important. Milly was amiable enough and they got on pretty well together. They thought alike on most things and, after all, she did have that money. Yes, decided Sam, he'd ask Milly to marry him when he went to tea with her this afternoon.

Contentedly he turned over and, within a very few moments, a sound as of distant thunder began to swell until his bedroom reverberated to loud, rhythmic rumblings.

Chapter Two Hope Springs Eternal

Deep in thought, but with his head half-turned towards the door, as though listening for something, Samuel stood with his back to his study fire. The "Sam" had been dropped, along with the "Milly", at Amelia's insistence, on their wedding day, five years ago. The East End was now only a memory, and one which was rapidly receding as what might be called a kind of voluntary amnesia settled itself on them both. After all, in their fine new villa in suburban Surrey, and with a cook and a little slavey at their beck and call, they had a position to keep up.

And this, Samuel told himself, was only the beginning. His stockbroking firm had come on by leaps and bounds since he had bought out the old partners and while he wasn't exactly a rich man yet, there was enough coming in for him to plan still further advancement. Found a dynasty, perhaps. True,

the birth of a daughter a year ago had been something of a disappointment but, who knows.....

A step in the hall brought him fully alert and at a tap on the door he called sharply "Come in!"

"Oh, Sir," chirruped the beaming nurse who entered, "It's a boy! You can see them now."

Samuel was out of the room and up the stairs at a speed which belied his usually carefully maintained dignity and his growing portliness. And as he stood by Amelia's bed, hardly aware of her presence, his heart swelled with pride until he thought it would burst. This was his son, this little bundle of brand new humanity on which his gaze was fondly fixed. His son, for whom all things were possible. His son, who should receive the finest of educations and mix with ease with the scions of the leading families in the land, as he prepared to join his father at the head of a burgeoning commercial empire. He, Samuel, would make his son into a fine gentleman who could hold up his head in any company. In his mind's eye he saw him growing and developing into a splendid figure of a man, academically brilliant and the embodiment of all the virtues.

The little eyes opened, the little round nose wrinkled and an unexpectedly capacious mouth opened wide - very wide - to emit an unexpectedly powerful wail: "WaaaaOooogh!"

"Poor dear," said the nurse. "He's hungry. Perhaps you should go now, Sir."

With a murmured word to Amelia, Samuel turned and, feeling as though he were floating on air, left the room and descended to this study. There he stood before the fire for a few minutes more, turning over decisions in his mind. The boy's names were already settled. Practical considerations had over-ruled his desire to name his heir after himself. Amelia's brothers showed no sigh of marrying and they had a lot of money to dispose of. Prudence dictated that the boy should be given their names. Perhaps there would be a second son to bear his father's name. But, what about a school?

Slowly he walked over and sat at his desk. He picked up the open copy of the "Public School Yearbook" which he had been studying earlier and looked again at the page.

"Yes," he said to himself, "That's the one. No doubt about it." Drawing a piece of paper towards him, he began to write.

"Dear Headmaster,

I wish to enrol my newly born son on the waiting list for Greyfriars School, to take up his place on reaching the appropriate age. His name is William George....."

THE END
(Of the beginning)

COLIN MORGAN COMMENTS ON BRADDOCK

I noted with delight the article on Matt Braddock in CD.585 by Donald Campbell as the stories, which appeared in THE ROVER and the later ROVER & WIZARD were among my favourites, but I have to say that, as I read through it, I felt that possibly Mr. Campbell had misrepresented the airman in several places - but perhaps this is due to his drawing his facts from the book, I FLEW WITH BRADDOCK, published by D.C. Thomson in 1959. This book was an abridged version of several Braddock tales from the first seven years of the tales in THE ROVER in the 50s, and I can understand how various misconceptions can have arisen.

Mr. Campbell went to great lengths to analyse Brad and his navigator and friend, George Bourne and states towards the end of his article that something about the Braddock character grates on the older reader. When the series began in 1952 I had just begun my National Service and I revelled in Brad's attitude to those people in the Service who put rules and regulations before anything else. I suppose I could be called 'an older reader' at that stage! However, Braddock DID observe rules and regulations, providing that it wasn't just red tape getting in the way. I note also Mr. Campbell's observation that Braddock was always right and that, I have to say, appears to annoy him. The very make up of the human race in all our differences ensures that some people are more talented and therefore more expert in what they do than others.... In fact, the student of all the Braddock episodes (435 in all) would tell you that he wasn't always right by any means. Donald goes on to say the excuse for Brad's rudeness was his V.C. and Bar but this is far from the truth. He had no time for gongs, as he called them, at least as far as he was concerned. In fact, in one episode, when he was awarded the D.F.M., he asked if he had to take it, as so many who really deserve gongs don't get them. On only one occasion did he use his V.C. to make a point: outside of that he had to be told to wear his medals on parades and suchlike.

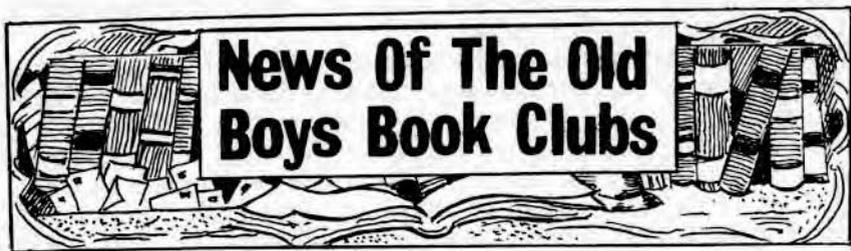
The message that I, as a young soldier, got in 1952 and subsequently from the series was 'Make sure you are right before you stick your neck out' and no harm can come to you. It was a valuable lesson and one which I've impressed on young people who've worked for me in later years. Perhaps I don't go by the book as some do, but no one can criticise me often for being wrong.

Donald asks what became of Braddock - well, before the war he was a steeplejack in the Midlands (see the story entitled 'Born to Fly'), and after it he became the top test pilot. In the story 'The Ace of Space' in the WIZARD in 1959 he was on the selection panel in the States for the pilot of the first space rocket and also involved in the training of the eventual chosen man, who turned out to be his nephew, Norman Braddock.

To close, a word on George Bourne. 'Fawning' is not a word I would use. Frankly, Bourne looked up to his friend, Braddock. He was proud to be part of 'his war'. He DID, on occasion, rebuke Braddock and when this happened, Braddock would acknowledge him with a gruff 'you're about right, George'.

They were good mates and were the Thomson fighting heroes of the 50s and 60s as The Wolf of Kabul and Chung had been in the 30s and 40s.

In the last few years, I have been told by several collectors of the Thomson papers that they feel that the Braddock stories stand up today better than any of the other Thomson 'heroes'. Surely, that says it all for the storylines and the men who wrote them.



LONDON OLD BOYS BOOK CLUB

At the October meeting held at Eltham, Mary Cadogan gave an illustrated talk on famous school stories, beginning with Angela Brazil and ending with the present day.

After tea it was the members' turn to ponder the answers to Mark Taha's 21 question quiz. Finally Peter Mahony spoke about fights in Hamilton's school stories.

The November meeting on Sunday 12th will be at the Chingford Horticultural Hall and the theme will be "The Wild West".

SUZANNE HARPER

NORTHERN O.B.B.C. REPORT

Twenty seven people assembled at the Swallow Hotel in Wakefield for our annual luncheon with guests President Mary Cadogan and Alan Pratt from London Club. An excellent luncheon was served. The afternoon was spent leisurely at the home and library of our Secretary with Vera being the perfect hostess as always.

An attendance of twenty six at the evening meeting with many travelling long distances. As well as our two guests from Greater London, we had visitors from Lancashire, Cheshire, Derbyshire and County Durham.

Our first speaker was Alan, who delighted us all with his presentation on Franklin W. Dixon's Hardy Boys. Alan had originally come across a Hardy Boys story in his local library and liked the fast moving story with its many twists. The Hardy brothers who came from a not-too-rich family nevertheless were able to have their own car, motor boat and the financial wherewithal to take them into all sorts of adventures, outwitting the local police force and, even their father who was a world famous detective! Wonderful escapism, of course. In the 1960s, stories were re-issued and altered - for instance, the boys no longer

carried guns! Franklyn W. Dixon was a publishing-house name, the stories being written by a syndicate, and there are now around 200 books in the series!

Mary then spoke about war time literature for children. Despite the paper shortage and the cessation of such papers as *The Gem* and *The Magnet*, there was still plenty of fiction available, though sizes of books and papers were reduced. Generally, comics like *The Beano* and *The Dandy* made light of the war to make children (and adults!) laugh despite all the problems, whereas *Boys' Own Paper*, *Girls' Own Paper*, etc. conveyed things more seriously and realistically. Many famous writers of children's fiction like W.E. Johns, Richmal Crompton and Noel Streatfield wrote war-style stories. Outstanding was E. Brent-Dyer whose *THE CHALET SCHOOL IN EXILE* has poignant accounts of the appalling situation in Nazi-occupied Europe. Evadne Price's *JANE AT WAR* showed the tomboy Jane being her rumbustious self, proving that girls were as lively and patriotic as boys, any day! As always, an excellent presentation from Mary and the conclusion of a splendid day.

Our November meeting is the A.G.M. and on 9th December we have our informal Christmas party to which all are invited. Our venue is S.P.C.K. Holy Trinity Church cafe, in Leeds city centre.

JOHNNY BULL MINOR

CAMBRIDGE CLUB

We gathered at the Longstanton village home of our Secretary, Tony Cowley, for the initial meeting of the 1995/96 session. After the usual business meeting, which this month included the Club's A.G.M., we listened to Andy Boyce talk, from a 1990s perspective, about the plethora of educational partworks edited by Sir J.A. HAMMERTON in the Twenties and Thirties. Rather like Arthur Mee, he came from a newspaper background to the world of editing this type of publication. The partwork titles included 'Peoples of the World' and 'Wonders of the Past', and were often in several editions decades apart. These publications are remarkable for their picture research and the unique quality of the illustrations used. Historically his titles spanned treatments of the Great War and The Second World War though perhaps his 25 volume 'Punch Library of Humour' best demonstrates his breadth of subject range.

Later, Paul Wilkins presented us with a quiz that he had devised. This time our grey cells were interrogated about catchphrases associated with comedians such as Arthur Askey, Rob Wilton, Jimmy Wheeler, Al Read, Tommy Cooper and Tony Hancock. It was not at all as easy as might be assumed.....

ADRIAN PERKINS

From Sylvia Reed, 8 Goline Court, Hillman 6168, Western Australia.

WANTED: Schoolgirls' Own Library, first series from 1922. Also striped Leander Blazer, size L-XL, any colour combination.

**GEMS OF HAMILTONIA from John Geal: No. 19 Robert Cherry
MAGNET No. 1311**

"Bob Cherry was whistling.

Bob often whistled when he was cheery - and he was seldom anything but cheery. In the Remove passage fellows would yell at him to chuck it - and they would "chuck" things themselves sometimes! Often and often as Bob whistled he had seldom or never been known to whistle in tune. It was rather painful for a fellow with a musical ear - and not enjoyable for a fellow whose ear was not musical. There was no doubt that when Bob whistled his way up the Remove passage every fellow there realised how very golden silence was.

Coker of the Fifth frowned at him unheeded as he came cheerily and untunefully along. "Side!" growled Coker. And his friends, Potter and Greene, nodded. Whistling in the passages was "side".

Coker of the Fifth hadn't a musical ear! He was no more musical than an electric drill or an American jazz band. Coker's own voice was music to his ears - which was proof that there was no music in his soul. It was not, therefore because Bob's cheery whistle was loud, because it was shrill, or because it was out of tune that Coker objected. He objected, strongly because it was "side".

Coker waved his hand at Bob as he came along. "Stop that!" he called out.

Bob's whistle stopped - for a moment - while he looked round. Had it been Wingate or Gwynne, or any Sixth Form man who called to him, Bob would have turned off the music and kept it turned off. The laws regarding "side" seemed rather ridiculous to the fellows who suffered from them. Still, a fellow had to play up. A fellow had to take his school as he found it; he did not come here to make new laws, and invent new manners and customs. Indeed, schoolboys are such natural conservatives that even a fellow "whopped" for "siding" would probably have objected to the abolition of any of the rules. Such things were traditional; and traditions were traditions!

But to "ring off" at the order of a Fifth Form man was quite another matter. The Fifth were not prefects! They were seniors, that was all. They had no more right to give orders to the fags, than the fags had to give orders to the Fifth! Coker often forgot that! Now he had forgotten again!

So having ascertained that it was merely a Fifth Form man who had called to him, Bob Cherry restarted after the interval, as it were. And he put his beef into his renewed whistle! He turned out a screech that would have made a steamer's siren a cooing whisper. It had to be made clear that no Remove man was going to take orders from the Fifth! This was important as any Remove man would have agreed at once. Bob proceeded to make it clear, with a fearful whistle that might have set the nerves of a statue on edge."

WANTED: ENID BLYTON, W.E. JOHNS, CROMPTON. First editions in wrappers and ALL ephemera related to these authors. ANY original artwork related to Bunter, Blyton, Biggles, Eagle or other British comics and boys papers. ALL Boys Friend Libraries by W.E. Johns and Rochester. Many "Thriller" issues and first editions in wrappers by Charteris required. NORMAN WRIGHT, 60 Eastbury Road, Watford, WD1 4JL. Tel. 01923 232383.

FORUM

FROM NAVEED HAQUE: I was in our Canadian Rockies towards the end of July for ten days. This, to my mind, is a beautiful region. I love it. There is a lot of it (in terms of area). In this respect there is a similarity between the Rockies and F.R.'s writings - one can enjoy it in profusion!

I enjoy the letters of F.R. (in the September Collectors' Digest) pertaining to The Kid - a forerunner of our Western outlaw, The Rio Kid. I am still of the opinion that some enterprising publisher should re-publish all The Rio Kid tales in book form. There may be lots of Westerns on the market, but nothing to compare with these tales - especially those in The Popular. Incidentally I am on the look-out for the post-war Western book 'The Lone Texan' (although I am aware it was not particularly note-worthy). Any extras? (I don't expect a response to that)!!

FROM TONY GLYNN: Does anyone remember a story called "Out of Cabbage Court", published as one of the AP's libraries - at least, I'm nearly sure it was - possibly the Schoolgirls' Own Library, though it was hardly a school story. It was about some children who escape from a wretched slum life to better things, one of those hard-done-by orphan type yarns. I remember it being a great favourite of my sister's and she certainly read it during the war, but I feel it was an old one, possibly pre-war. I have a desire to find it as a surprise for her.

Did you read about the recent death of Elleston Trevor? The "Guardian" gave him a lengthy obituary. He had lived in Arizona for many years and had a great success as an author in the field of tough thrillers. Long before that, he appeared in the "BOP" but I first encountered him in the war years when he wrote fairy stories for Gerald G. Swan's humble little "Fairy" series of booklets for very small children. This must have been among his very first work. Since he was in the RAF during the war, he might have written them in off-duty hours. I have a feeling he also wrote for Swan's more adult productions.

FROM ARTHUR MANTLE: More years ago than I like to remember, in the 1930s, I was a schoolboy and our class was being given a list of books which our teacher thought we should obtain from our local library and read. I can remember smiling at some of the titles, when the teacher looked at me and said "I suppose you would be happier with a list of "Twopenny Bloods". Twopenny Bloods was what we children called the *Wizard*, *Hotspur*, *Rover* and *Skipper* etc., and, of course, he was quite right, for after all these years I am still fascinated by and enjoying these papers as much as ever.

FROM MARTIN WATERS: I can assure Ted Baldock that some men do still collect the books by Henty. Apart from one or two very old gentlemen who treasure these souvenirs of their boyhood, I know of several men in late middle age who seek out these books. I think the attraction of Henty's work is the meticulous historical background of the stories coupled with the tough, but utterly wholesome flavour of the stories - 'people who run down Britain' were certainly not in favour when these epics were penned. It is worth mentioning that, until fairly recent years, books by Henty were included in lists of books for adult reading where someone wished to research a particular historical period.

Many adult readers find this, author heavy going, and it is amazing that he was so popular with youngsters at the turn of the century; it speaks very well for the standards of basic education of those days....

I am always interested to read memories of Charles Hamilton, though I would disagree with some of the comments in his wartime letters. Arthur Harris and his men dealt in *strategic bombing* - i.e. the long range bombing of objectives deep in the enemy homeland. Tactical bombing is the support of ground forces in the field, such as air support given to our forces in Normandy, the Falaise gap and in the Ardennes.

The German Army of WW2 was without doubt the finest armed force in the world in its time. Not all German generals were titled aristocrats. Some of the generals were of 'middle class' origin - Rommel and Walter Model spring to mind here. The only German

general of humble origins that I can locate is Joseph 'Sepp' Dietrich, and he was an officer in the Waffen SS (the military arm of the Nazi party) rather than the regular army. (Dietrich had worked as a publisher's agent during the 1920s: - book lovers get everywhere don't they!)

FROM LEN HAWKEY: Re. Tony Glynn's mention in FORUM of Helen McKie, Tony seems to think she died only a few years ago but, if so, she must have been a very good age. She was born around 1890 and became one of the very few women illustrators, apart from those working on children's publications, to be employed widely in adult magazines and books. She was doing 'headings' and tail-pieces' in *Puck* as early as 1908, and I have work of hers in *Home Notes*, *Pearson's Magazine*, etc. around 1911. The 1914 - 1918 war brought her wider employment, especially advertising, as with *Army Club Cigarettes* (1916). By the 1920s she was on the staff of the prestigious *Bystander* and for a number of years had a full page of social, sporting 'gossip', with a humorous slant, of her own.



The hunter should be dressed in the smartest coat and breeches of a man of Mars.

Up to the Second World War she was busy in many spheres, including *The Strand Magazine*, *Little Folks*, *Blackie's Children's Annuals*, and in boys' periodicals such as *Chums* and *Boy's Own Paper*. The *Beau Geste* to which Tony refers was a de-luxe edition, published by John Murray in 1927. I am lucky enough to have a copy, which has a studio portrait of the artist as frontispiece, plus 4 coloured plates, 16 full-page black and white plates and numerous chapter-headings. As Tony remarks, her work was lively, always professional, and deserves remembering (I enclose one example, from a 1918 *Pearson's Magazine*).

FROM BRIAN DOYLE: Helen Madeleine McKie was on the illustrating staff of the *Bystander* magazine in the 1920s and contributed to other magazines, such as the *Graphic*, esp. to the Christmas issue of the latter in 1915. The daughter of a bank official, she studied at the Lambeth School of Art in London, and exhibited her work at the Walker Galleries, and the Brook Street Art Gallery, London. Queen Mary purchased one of her works on exhibition in June, 1928. Other magazines she contributed to included *Sphere*. She illustrated translations of Pierre Mille's books. Her architectural drawings and interiors appeared in *English Life*. She lived in Chelsea, London. (The above from *Who's Who in Art*, 1929)

I possess a copy of P.C. Wren's *Beau Geste*, illustrated by Helen McKie; it is a 'de luxe' edition, limited to 1,000 copies for sale in Britain and the United States and was published by John Murray, London, in 1924. It is personally signed by P.C. Wren, and McKie has supplied 4 colour plates and 25 black and white drawings. I must say that, personally, Ms. McKie's work does not impress overmuch: she's not very good on humans (rather like Disney!) and the general effect is spidery and a little amateurish. Her French Legionnaires are somewhat reminiscent of characters from the old 1940s Gerald G. Swan comics. But, as I say, that's just my opinion - others may find her terrific and hot stuff!

For Sale at very low prices - HOWARD BAKER volumes E.S. BROOKS, LEES, CONQUEST etc. Original Holiday Annuals, Bunter paperbacks & hardbacks. Gold Hawk paperbacks. S.O.L's. Sexton Blake & many, many more, S.A.E. for list to: ERIC SHEPPARD, 1 FORGE CLOSE, BEMPTON, BRIDLINGTON, YO15 1LX.

BOOKS

Collecting Children's Books. Compiled by Book and Magazine Collector.
Published by Diamond Publishing Group Ltd. ISBN no. 0951555375 price £19.95.

Reviewed by Norman Wright

Since its inception *Book and Magazine Collector* has opened up the market-place and brought together collectors and those with books to sell but like most of the media it always seems a little too ready to encourage readers to believe that almost any book they may have is worth a small fortune. *Collecting Children's Books* tends to do the same thing. In the world of cigarette card collecting values of fairly common sets are usually reckoned to be about half of those given in the price guides and it would be as well if the same rule was applied in book collecting. As in all collecting fields scarce items can usually be sold for the sort of values given in a price guide; but with fairly common books it is usually a buyers market. There are still dealers who try to sell Bunter books for fifty pounds a piece - but I certainly do not have customers queuing up to buy them at that sort of price! Nor do I find many eager collectors wanting to part with twenty five pounds for early 1950s Biggles books or a tenner a time for Aldine *Robin Hood Library*, though those are the prices quoted in this volume. It is at that end of the market - where supply outstrips demand - that price guides have to be viewed with caution.

Having said that, this guide has a lot to recommend it. *Collecting Children's Books* is a very handsome production of over three hundred pages with a large selection of mouth watering illustrations. In fact there are illustrations on almost every other page. The book is alphabetically arranged covering everything from Richard Adams to J.D.Wyss. All the 'pop' collectables; William, Biggles, Bunter, Lewis Carroll, Blyton and Brent Dyer are included along with quite a multitude of other authors as well as sections on annuals etc. In all about 250 authors and collecting areas are covered. The format is easy to use with a short four line biography of each author or collecting area followed by a listing of first and other important editions of all their works. Like any book there are errors. A number of quite scarce and valuable *Eagle* related books are omitted while Dan Dare collectors will search in vain for three pop-up books from the 1950s - there was, I am afraid, only one! It is, however, a useful reference work for giving the collector or dealer an idea of *relative* values. For example if you happen to have a copy of the first edition of *Wind in the Willows* tucked away in the attic this price guide values it (if complete with original dustwrapper) at twelve hundred and fifty pounds. With that knowledge one does at least realise that one has a fairly desirable book and should not sell it for a fiver! The book is also a very useful reference work for looking up the dates and titles of any particular children's author. Since I have had a copy I have constantly found myself dipping into it to discover the date a favourite book was first published or how many books a particular author wrote. I may not like price guides but this book is far more than that and as such I can thoroughly recommend it.

THE THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE MAN, by Brian Sibley. (Heinemann - Reed Int. Books Ltd., London, 1995. £19.99)

Reviewed by Brian Doyle

If ever there was a boy who wanted to be an engine-driver when he grew up, that boy should surely have been Wilbert Awdry. But, despite his deep interest in trains in general and locomotives in particular, young Wilbert decided that he wanted to study for a degree at Oxford University and then follow in his father's footsteps and become a clergyman. And so it came to pass that he did both of these things.

He also became one of Britain's best-selling authors, whose books have sold some 25 million. And he created one of childhood's best-loved and most famous characters: Thomas the Tank-Engine.

Now that clever and prolific writer, Brian Sibley, has produced the first biography of the Rev. Wilbert Awdry and a very thorough and fascinating job he has made of it. The large-format and beautifully-produced book has over 300 pages, with 172 colour and black-and-white illustrations and is published to mark the 50th Anniversary of the very first book in Awdry's Railway Series for children. That was "The Three Railway Engines", about a trio of memorable and endearing engines (Edward, Gordon and Henry) who could think and talk to one another.

Thomas the Tank-Engine, in his fine light-blue livery, followed the next year, in 1946. (Note for railway buffs: Thomas is based on the Class E2 type 0-6-0 tank-engine, designed by Lawson B. Billington.)

The Rev. Awdry's interest in railways began when he was 5 and loved pouring over his father's bound run of "The Railway Magazine"; he couldn't yet read, but loved gazing at the photographs of engines. He never forgot them and, much later, they became an important reference source for his children's books.

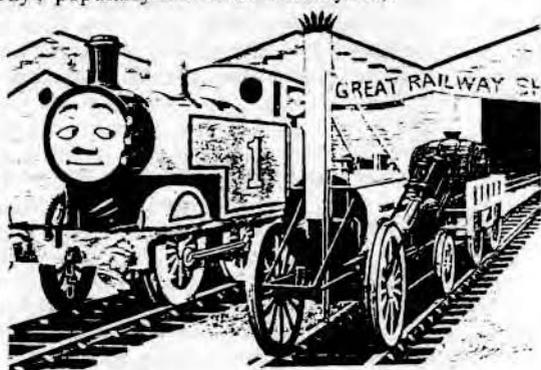
His railway stories were born when he started to tell them to his son, Christopher, who was then 2 and in bed with measles. That very first tale was "Edward's Day Out" (no, Thomas wasn't the first-born!). Two more stories were about engines Gordon and Henry; these three stories comprised the first book, the aforementioned "The Three Railway Engines", published in 1945 (you may have heard of the great celebrations held that year to mark their arrival: 'Very good Engines Day', popularly known as 'VE Day'.....).

Today, there are 37 books in the Railway Series. The Rev. Awdry wrote the first 26 then, in 1972, passed on the torch (or the green flag) to the self-same son, Christopher Awdry, who has written the last dozen or so, plus picture-books and early-learning titles. Publisher's Heinemann (part of the giant Reed International conglomerate) say there are now over 200 'Thomas' (and his friends) books in the range, plus an incredible 500 items of 'Thomas merchandising tie-ins, ranging from pencils and school-bags to bed-linen and pillows, and even an 'engine-shaped' bed (no doubt supplied with the appropriate 'sleepers'.....).

There have been three 26-part TV series (twice-nominated for BAFTA Awards), records and tapes narrated by such diverse talents as Johnny Morris, Willie Rushton and Sir John Gielgud, two popular fortnightly comics, and.....but one could go on and on listing all the Thomas books and ephemera and etceteras.

HRH Prince Charles told author Brian Sibley in a letter that he adored the books as a child and remembers so well the joy of the stories; he also recalled reading them aloud to his younger brothers.

In this lovely book, Sibley traces Wilbert Awdry's Edwardian childhood, his student days at Oxford, his teachings in the Holy Land, his Ordination and his experiences as a country parson, and details how he later became one of the country's most popular and



Thomas meets Stephenson's Rocket at the National Railway Museum at York: an illustration by Clive Spong for *Thomas and the Great Railway Show* (1991).

best-loved children's authors. The Rev. Awdry still lives in his beloved Stroud, in Gloucestershire.

I have always thought that Awdry's tiny railway books have succeeded so consistently over the years partly but precisely because of their size (or lack of it). They could be slipped into small pockets without any trouble, to be taken out at convenient (or inconvenient) moments during the day to be read or looked at or chucked over. Small books for small hands. The striking colour illustrations have also contributed a lot to the books' success (by Dalby, then Edwards, especially); the varied expressions on the engines' 'faces' are so often hilarious or touching (or both), as the case may be. These attributes allied to Awdry's sparse but effective and amusing writing all add up to a winning combination.

I also think that the engines' adventures, moods and conversations often reflect those experienced by the small children who read about them. After all, small engines are very like small boys and girls in many ways - and big, old engines are perhaps sometimes like grown-ups, especially Mums and Dads.....!

I have only one slight criticism of Brian Sibley's excellent and comprehensive book, and that is the lack of any bibliographical information in compact form. A complete list of all the books in the Railway Series, with publication dates, details of illustrators, etc. at the end of the book (plus details of 'spin-off' picture books, recordings, videos, and so on) would have been very useful, especially to collectors of First Editions, etc.

Apart from that, a warm welcome to Brian Sibley's gorgeous book. A 'Really Useful' book (which harks back to Christopher Awdry's first title in the series, "Really Useful Engines" and, incidentally, the name Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber chose for his own vast organisation, 'The Really Useful Company' - he's another fan....).

The whole Awdry enterprise has been, and is, so successful (and presumably profitable) that perhaps a change of name might now be in order - to 'Thomas the BANK Engine'!

BRIAN DOYLE

THE HAMPSTEAD POISONINGS - Glen Petrie (Ian Hay Publications)

Reviewed by Mark Taha

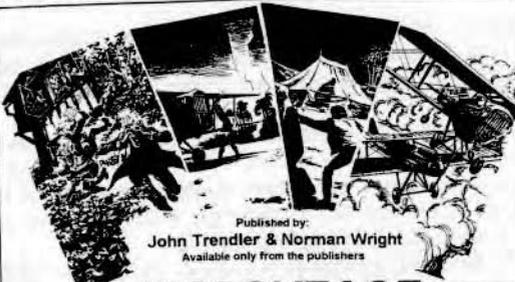
This book is subtitled "A Mycroft Holmes adventure" - Mr. Petrie's third; his younger brother Sherlock is unable to take the case of a woman arrested for poisoning due to a previous engagement so the generally sedentary government agent Mycroft deals with it; as one might expect, and in the words of his boss, it involves "deep waters, Holmes, deeper than you know."

The dead man, a cashiered ex-Army officer, had been engaged to the daughter of a successful businessman whose businesses were patronised by the highest in the land but not of the kind approved of by respectable Victorian gentlemen in public! The accused's being driven mad by ill-treatment on remand would be in certain people's interests - unless the facts came out, which would lead to a scandal in Britain's enemies' interests.

Furthermore, Mycroft is also concerned in his official capacity with thwarting German ambitions re a certain principality in the Rhineland - and his attention's being distracted by his old enemy, Bismarck's agent Carl Guttman (who merits a book or two of his own, in my view), with the motives of diverting Mycroft's attention, creating a royal scandal by implicating the Prince of Wales in a conspiracy to pervert the cause of justice, and having Mycroft shot on a visit to Sandringham. So we have two villains - Villiers Manyon, the businessman with the straightforward motive of wanting to get hold of the late officer's fortune, and Guttman. How Mycroft thwarts them makes a tale worth reading.

The ideal Christmas gift

Limited edition books & videos.
 Prices include inland postage. From:
**NORMAN WRIGHT 60, EASTBURY ROAD,
 WATFORD, HERTS. WD1 4JL.**
 Cash with order. Send a cheque today -
 books etc. sent by return of post.



Published by:
 John Trender & Norman Wright
 Available only from the publishers

MOSSYFACE
 by William Earle
 (W.E. Johns)

£26.50
 post free

Out of print for over sixty years, this rare W.E. Johns title is now available as a deluxe, buckram bound edition of 300 numbered copies with specially commissioned illustrations by Ron Tiner.



Remember those Saturday cinema serials? Now available as a limited edition video. The classic 1957 serial:
"Five on a Treasure Island"
 Filmed in Dorset. Superb quality. Over 2 hours playing time. £19.20

THE HARDBOILED ART
d. mcLoughlin



David Ashford & Denis McLoughlin

**Collectors Guides: A5 card covered:
 W.E. JOHNS & MODERN BOY: An**

Index By N Wright. All of Johns' output for the paper & annuals etc. Plus his BFL's 40 pages £4.40.

GEORGE E. ROCHESTER by Bill Bradford. All of his books plus serials in papers & comics. 24 pages £2.75.

ENID BLYTON'S MAGAZINE 1953/59 by Summerfield & Wright. 32 pp £3.50.

SUNNY STORIES 1942-53: An Index by Summerfield & Wright. Issue by issue listing + book publication + character index. 52 pages £5.00.

"The Hardboiled Art of D McLoughlin"

by David. Ashford & Denis McLoughlin. McLoughlin's Autobiography. Plus: unpublished photos, a detailed study of his work. Full colour cover & centre spread £9.95.



**COLIN CREWE
COLLECTORS BOOKS**

12B WESTWOOD ROAD, CANVEY ISLAND, ESSEX, SS8 0ED
TELEPHONE: 01268-693735 EVENINGS BEST

GRAND CHRISTMAS SPECIAL



JOHN ARLOTT 'BASINGSTOKE BOY' First volume of Johns autobiography covering years 1914-1958. Evocative account of rich and varied life. How we enjoyed his inimitable style mint in d/w £15.00

SAINT NOVELS BY LESLIE CHARTERIS V/G COPIES. Published by Hodder & Stroughton as Famous 2/-
PAPER YELLOW JACKETS IN THE EARLY 1950s each £5.50

1. Saint Overboard. 2. Saint sees it Through. 3. Saint Closes the Case. 4. Saint Plays with Fire.

EDGARD WALLACE THE BIOGRAPHY OF A PHENOMENON. By Margaret Lane 1939 edition V/G copy £8.50

SAINT. HANDBACK NOVELS BY LESLIE CHARTERIS V/G COPIES.

SAINT OVERBOARD D/W bound 1951 edition £4.75

SAINT ERRANT. Thrillers Book Club nice D/W £4.25

THE SAINT IN MIAMI. 1952 edition. Hodder & Stough in vintage style V/G yellow D/W £7.50

ALIAS THE SAINT. 1951 edition from Hodder & Stough in vintage style V/G yellow D/W £7.50

EDGAR WALLACE HANDBACK NOVELS from Hodder & Stoughton V/G copies in vintage style D/Ws

'IT IS IMPOSSIBLE NOT TO BE THRILLED BY EDGAR WALLACE'

1. **THE TRAITORS GATE** £8.50 2. **FOUR JUST MEN** £6.50. 3. **THE RINGER** £7.50 4. **THE SQUARE EMERALD** £8.50 5. **THE STRANGE COUNTESS** £8.50

6. **THE FEATHERED SERPENT** £8.50

7. **THE SINISTER MAN** £7.50

8. **THE BLACK ABBOT** £6.50

SANDERS OF THE RIVER V/G in D/W New Edition re-set published by Ward Lock 1945 £10.00

SEXTON BLAKE CASEBOOK from Gallery Press 1987.

Almost mint copy in dustwrapper £12.00

SEXTON BLAKE DETECTIVE LIBRARY from Hawk

1989 mint copy in dustwrapper £10.00

THE COMPLETE CASEBOOK OF HERLOCK

SHOLMES from Hawk Books mint copy in attractive D/W

£10.00

CRIME AT CHRISTMAS (SEXTON BLAKE INVESTIGATES) Mint copy in D/W from Howard Baker

1974 £15.00

THE PLAGUE OF ONION MEN (SEXTON BLAKE STAR OF UNION JACK) Mint in D/W Howard Baker

£12.50

NINTH SEXTON BLAKE OMNIBUS from Howard Baker

£12.50

Mint copy in yellow dustwrapper £10.00

THE CHARLES HAMILTON COMPANION VOLUMES V/G MINT COPIES PUBLISHED BY THE MUSEUM PRESS @ £15 EACH

WHARTON LODGE TO LINTON HALL. The Christmas Stories by MARY CADOGAN AND TOMMY KEEN

ROOKWOOD (A CELEBRATION OF THE SCHOOL) with contributions by OWEN CONQUEST, ERIC FAYNE, ROGER JENKINS, BREEZE BENTLEY and MARY CADOGAN.

VOL. 1. A HISTORY OF THE MAGNET AND GEM by ERIC FAYNE AND ROGER JENKINS

VOL. 2. THE GREYFRIARS CHARACTERS Jointly penned by MARY CADOGAN and JOHN WERNHAM

VOL. 3 CENTENARY EDITION an Anthology contributions UNA HAMILTON-WRIGHT, R. JENKINS, L. ROWLEY, THE BIG FAT BUNTER BOOK. Hawk

Mint in D/W £10.00

ORIGINAL GREYFRIARS HOLIDAY ANNUALS 1920-1941. WHAT COULD BE BETTER FOR CHRISTMAS STOCKINGS? AMAZINGLY. I have over 300 originals

in the book rooms. Variable condition of course why not give me a ring for any wants. You will not be disappointed.

GREYFRIARS SCHOOL - A PROSPECTUS. J.S. Butcher, fine copy in dustwrapper. £10.00

MAGNET COMPANION 1971. V.G. in d/w £5.00

MAGNET COMPANION, 1977. V.G. in d/w £7.50

YAROOH! A FEAST OF FRANK RICHARDS. Edited by Gyles Brandreth. 1976, fine in d/w £10.00

GREYFRIARS FOR GROWN UP. Edited by L. Sutton. 1980, fine copy in d/w £10.00

THE ROAD TO GREYFRIARS. G.R. Samways, 1984, a must for all Hamiltonians, V.G. in d/w £14.00

MCCALL'S GREYFRIARS GUIDE. Peter McCall. Improve your knowledge of the school, fine copy in dustwrapper £12.00

FAMOUS HAMILTON STORIES RE-PUBLISHED BY THE MUSEUM PRESS THE MYSTERIOUS X (Gem year 1912) £10.00

THE HOUSE MASTERS HOME-COMING (Gem year 1915), must be read £12.00

TOM MERRY & CO + TOM MERRY'S CONQUEST from the boys' Friend Library year 1907/1908 (Intro of Rylcombe Grammar School). A delight for all St. Jim's fans. Vg. £12.00

THE BOY WITHOUT A NAME + RIVALS & CHUMS. Frank Richards only story of Highcliffe School. Very good copy £15.00

BUNTER YELLOW JACKETS HAWK REPRINTS OF THE FAMOUS CASSELL SKILTONS. Mint copies in superb dustwrappers.

Bunter the Bad lad £10.00

Bunter Does his Best £10.00

Bunter Afloat £10.00

Billy Bunter Butts In £12.00

B.B. and Blue Mauritius £12.00

Billy Bunters Beanfeast £10.00

Billy Bunters Banknote £12.00

Billy Bunters Benefit £12.00

Bunter the Ventriloquist £12.00

B.B. of Greyfriars School £12.00

B.B. is Barring Out £12.00

Billy Bunter in Brazil £12.00

Billy Bunters Christmas Party £12.00

Bill Bunters Bodyguard £10.00

Bessie Bunter Cliff House School £12.00

Billy Bunters Bolt £12.00

ORIGINAL MAGNET GEMS AND POPULARS CHRISTMAS PACKETS GOOD MIX MY SELECTION.

PACKET (A) 10 Different Issues for £15.00

PACKET (B) 20 Different Issues for £25.00

PACKET (C) 50 Different Issues for £48.00

ORIGINAL ISSUES OF SCHOOLBOYS OWN LIBRARY. CHRISTMAS PACKETS MY SELECTION.

PACKET (A) 10 Different Issues for £29.00

PACKET (B) 20 Different Issues for £48.00

Good News for Frank Richards Fans!

A brand new book

**THE MASK
OF
COMEDY**

Collected poems of Charles Hamilton
widely known as

FRANK RICHARDS

Edited by his niece
Una Hamilton Wright

A5 format - 120 pages cloth bound

£12.50 postage £1.00



Happy Hours
Specialising in Books of Yesteryear

37 Tinshill Lane, Leeds LS16 6BU, England Tel. 0113 267 1394 Fax 0113 230 0193

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

Editor: Mary Cadogan, 46 Overbury Avenue, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 2PY.
Printed by Quacks Printers, 7 Grape Lane, Petergate, York, YO1 2HU. Tel. 635967.