

STORY PAPER COLLECTORS' DIGEST

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THE "GREYFRIARS HERALD."



BULSTRODE'S HEROIC SAVE IN THE GREAT FOOTBALL MATCH!



**A HAPPY NEW YEAR
TO ALL
C.D. READERS**

STORY PAPER COLLECTORS' DIGEST

Editor: MARY CADOGAN

STORY PAPER COLLECTOR
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W.H. GANDER

COLLECTORS' DIGEST
Founded in 1946 by
HERBERT LECKENBY

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The Editor's Chat



A NEW AND VERY SPECIAL YEAR

This January issue of the C.D. of course conveys to you all my warmest wishes for the New Year. As always, we hope for health, happiness and prosperity for our friends and families, as well as for real peace for the world.

1996 will be an important year for the C.D. because, during it, we shall be celebrating the fact that our magazine has enjoyed a half-century of unbroken publication. This must be something of a record for a privately published magazine,

and indeed the C.D. has also outlived many well-financed, prestigious and more fashionable commercial papers and periodicals.

Truly we have something to celebrate, and I shall be announcing in future editorials details of special publications and events to mark our fiftieth year. It is gratifying that after so many issues over the decades the C.D. still receives enthusiastic support from contributors and readers. We never seem to run out of things to say about the old papers and books, and although, sadly, many of our original subscribers have now passed away, our ranks have grown and members of the younger generation who have joined us seem to be as imaginative and as enthusiastic as our earlier readers. If any of you have personal reflections on the long run of the C.D. which you would like to share,

please put your pens, type-writers or word-processors to paper and let me have your comments.

As I write this Editorial (in fact well before the ending of 1995) I have already received several very positive letters from readers about our Annual which again seems happily to have struck the right note. I should like to express my thanks to all readers and contributors for their loyal support and encouragement - which of course have done so much to bring about our half-century!

A Very Happy New Year to you all.
MARY CADOGAN

WILLIAM BREAKS WITH TRADITION

by Margery Woods

Many of the customs and superstitions connected with the demise of the old year and the birth of the new go back into remote time, observed long before the beginning of Christianity and the festival of Christmas. In the hedonistic climate of modern festivities, the advent of a new year tends to be associated with a spot of first-footing and an excuse for a good old binge, perhaps to chase the depressing thoughts of the not so happy things brought with the new year post, bills and reminders of this and that, not forgetting the unwelcome communications from those unpopular folk at the Inland Revenue. Yet despite this many of us still follow the old custom of making New Year Resolutions. Even if flippant, or even cynical, we vow to try to be more patient with those who rile or irritate us, to answer all those letters that are beginning to yellow with age in the rack, to lose that tyre of podge that has crept unnoticed around the midriff, or give up smoking, or simply to try to shed goodness and light on all around us. In whatever spirit we travellers in hope make our resolutions, one thing is certain; they are meant to be good. Except for one very famous and much loved character, who although fictional is very much alive in the hearts of his countless admirers, who decided to break with that hallowed tradition. He decided to make a BAD resolution! Needless to say, that character was our beloved William Brown.

One New Year, flat after the excitement and excesses of Christmas, William was bemoaning the problem of making his New Year Resolution. To the Outlaws he recounted some of the disasters that had followed in the wake of his well-meant and perfectly sincere attempts to achieve good, to bring sweetness and light into the lives of those misfortunates who merited his help. (Alas, misfortune was invariably the outcome to the aptly termed misfortunates who were the subjects of William's administrations.)

A sad example was when the unwise Mr.



"MONEY DON'T MATTER," SAID WILLIAM. "THINGS IS CHEAP TO-DAY. AWFUL CHEAP!"

Moss of the local sweet shop confided in William that his New Year Resolution was to ask the lady of his affections to marry him. Touched by the free sweets bestowed on him by Mr. Moss, William decided to help. His help took the form of minding the sweet shop while Mr. Moss went forth yet again to plead his troth with the lady of his affections. Knowing William, the results can well be imagined. By the time of Mr. Moss's return the stock had suffered greatly in the course of a battle with one of William's enemies; it had also diminished -- mostly into William's stomach. But his star was in the ascendant that day. Mr. Moss returned a happy man. His lady love had at last accepted his proposal. William was forgiven for the depredations in the sweet shop, although his tummy did not forgive him for several hours afterwards!

Then there was the time when he got involved with Miss Milton's scheme for improving the lives of needy families. This entailed each better-off family in the village adopting a poor one, thus eliminating poverty and creating a wonderful peaceful society that would become one big happy family. Not surprisingly, this scheme failed to meet with the enthusiasm she had envisaged -- except from William. The selection by William of the unliable but needy infant called Albert as a suitable candidate for adoption by Miss Milton herself led to events over which it might be better to draw a veil. It probably took Miss Milton quite a time to recover, even though those involved in the final hilarious fracas suddenly ceased their recriminations and cried one name : William Brown.

Another year there was disgust from William and his Outlaws at the suggestions from their parents as to suitable themes for New Year Resolutions: Cleanliness; Punctuality; Helpfulness; Tidiness. These were dismissed with the scorn they deserved, and William decided that the area must be filled with victims in need of rescuing. Unfortunately this sincerely meant effort failed to work out the way it should, leaving several supposed victims in very aggrieved states of mind towards William, especially the business of all the poor little babies and toddlers imprisoned by the dastardly Mr. Creche. Or so the name on the gate of the house seemed to suggest. So finally William rebelled bitterly: he would make a Bad Resolution. It would be much more fun!

After some discussion as to how this aim might be achieved, a suitable inspiration hove in sight: the abhorred Hubert Lane. It all seemed meant, somehow!

What more exciting than a spot of thieving, starting with the Whistler Hubert was boasting about in his own unlikable way. Apparently his great aunt was coming to stay, bringing with her the Whistler, her most prized possession, without which she never moved, keeping it on her bedside table at night. It was so valuable, worth hundreds of pounds, Hubert told them with his irritating smugness.

William laid his plans, made unexpectedly simple by the fact that the Lanes' aunt refused the guest room offered by Mrs. Lane and insisted on appropriating the morning room for her domain. There was one difficulty, though. William wasn't entirely sure what he was looking for. After some discussion the Outlaws assumed it must be something to do with music, probably a whistle, perhaps of gold encrusted with precious jewels to justify its value of hundreds of pounds. Although Douglas still subscribed to the theory of a canary, a very special trained canary.

The actual theft proved more easy than William might have expected. In broad daylight he reconnoitred the Lane house and there through a French window he saw Hubert's aunt enjoying a peaceful nap while on the bedside table reposed something that looked like a trumpet, and a silly framed picture. Nothing else, so it had to be the trumpet thing. William cautiously opened the French window, Great Aunt Sarah snored on, and William picked up the ear trumpet and made his escape.

The Outlaws were not exactly impressed by William's daring feat, nor could any of them succeed in producing anything that sounded remotely like a whistle from the disappointing object that was supposed to be worth such an enormous sum of money. But

their disappointment and frustration was nothing to that suffered by Hubert Lane when Great Aunt Sarah awoke and found her ear trumpet was missing. Quite deaf without it, she couldn't hear Hubert's protestations of innocence when she accused him of taking it. Worse, she announced that not a penny would she leave the Lane family in her will, and certainly not her precious Whistler.

Meanwhile, William and the Outlaws, hoping to raise a spot of cash from their nefarious New Year Resolution, decided to try to sell it at the White Elephant Stall during the Jumble Sale next day. Mrs. Brown was dubious at first of her son's offer of help --- she had memories of so many previous occasions when William had helped --- but she was quite touched at the way he stood quietly behind the stall. And then Mrs. Lane arrived with Hubert and Great Aunt Sarah.



SHE TURNED TO HUBERT, AND BOXED HIS EARS WITH SURPRISING VIGOUR.



WILLIAM'S BRAIN REELED.

If Great Aunt Sarah's hearing was impaired, her eyesight wasn't. She seized the ear trumpet and proceeded to wreak her vengeance on Hubert. She felt a great deal better after that, when her gaze found William, who was more subdued than ever. The Vicar's wife had just told him what The Whistler really was. Great Aunt Sarah misread William's expression as virtue --- such a nice honest looking boy. Impulsively she gave him sixpence.

William felt happier. All was not lost. But he wasn't going to bother with New Year Resolutions next year...

But perhaps William should have considered another New Year Resolution; to pay more attention at school to his Art teacher!

How wonderfully Richmal Crompton evoked the idiosyncrasies of human nature through her adult characters, the foibles, the failings, the sheer illogicality inherent in some adult behaviour, and when she combines it with the child's eye view that sees it all with a simple, literal belief that what you see is what you get, she makes magic, hilarious magic. How many authors create books that can be read over and over and over again and still make the reader laugh and go on loving these characters like old and dear friends. Not many. And even fewer go on appealing to child and adult alike down through the years. She and William together are magic, sheer magic.

William's New Year's Day, from JUST WILLIAM
Their Good Resolution, from WILLIAM THE PIRATE
William Starts the New Year, from WILLIAM THE SHOWMAN
William's Bad Resolution, from WILLIAM AND A.R.P.

(We are grateful to Macmillan and the Thomas Henry Fisher Estate for permission to reprint Thomas Henry's illustrations.)

**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.

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**

I'M ONLY A LITTLE LAAAAMB

by Donald V. Campbell

"I'm only a little laaamb, baaa!" The tremulous tones of Derek McCulloch as Larry the Lamb gave decades of children their introduction to radio drama and to humour. Toytown also offered a view of old men, as epitomized by Mr. Growser. A view that would probably stay with them until their own old age. In those seemingly gentler days there were virtually no female figures in Toytown. Political correctness was non-existent! Mrs. Duck - or it might have been Mrs. Goose - owned the local store but, for the rest, there were men and boys and male animals.

You might wonder what connections we can make between The Children's Hour and books. There are so many. The seemingly inexhaustible horn of plenty that was Children's Hour drama saw to that. Conan Doyle, (yes, those two stalwarts of radio drama Carleton Hobbs and Norman Shelley started their radio lives of Holmes and Watson on children's radio), Kenneth Grahame, E. Nesbit, W.E. Johns, Noel Streatfeild and so many many more featured in plays and serials from the earliest broadcasting days until the sad (and brutally engineered) demise of the Children's Hour.

It is tempting to think that thirties and forties radio consisted solely of Larry and his friends but memory serves us ill sometimes. The range of programmes masterminded by Uncle Mac belonged to a particularly broad church. If there was an element of preaching or "middle-classness" it was not overbearing. Nor was it that obvious - at least not at the time. What was different then was the lack of "shouting & screaming" as a mode of



*Illustration by the Toytown author
S.G. Hulme Beaman*

communication. Mr. Growser was the nearest anyone got to any form of crossness or loudness. Weren't we lucky?

In the late thirties my boyhood reading revolved around "The Daily Express Book for Boys and Girls". These were delightfully thick-paged annuals packed with classic stories, with games, with Rupert Bear, with cartoons and with things to make and do. The "Children's Hour" seemed to carry the pages of those annuals into the ether and to give me an exciting and extended form of imagining.

Was it really a gentler age? After all there was a World War. There were bombs and bullets. Nostalgia does tint the backwards-looking spectacles; however, there was then a more clement approach that suited us at the time. In the forties children were not seen as consumers but as people - little people perhaps but people nonetheless. There was an emphasis on a literate approach to entertainment yet it was well-sweetened and palatable. There was little, if any, "spin-off" into toys, games or peripherals to confuse and limit.

If Larry the Lamb and his "horizontally challenged" friend Denis the Dachsund are the characters that stick in the memory there were others. But before I come to them a note of S.G. Hulme Beaman and his Toytown stories.

He illustrated, in line, his own work with fascinating "wood-carved" figures; truth to tell he was an amateur carpenter and produced wooden models of most of his characters. The original that became Denis the Dachsund was initially a much fatter and less characterful dog called Toby.

In all there were more than ninety stories of Larry the Lamb and his friend.

Scotland offered us "Down at the Mains" where the accents were just (only just) the right side of comprehensibility for the Sassenach listener. At the "Mains" Molly Weir's was the most memorable voice. Also from Scotland was an anthropomorphic character to put into the memory alongside Larry and Denis. This was "Tammy the Troot" who was given warmth and credibility by Willie Joss.

Both as a child and, later, as an older schoolboy it was the plays and serials that most appealed to me. For example: Jack Watson was a memorable Biggles and was involved in a number of adventures. The one that sticks in the mind though is "Biggles Flies North". It was an exciting story set in the gold fields and snowy wastes of Canada. In this serial, music was matched perfectly to the notion of flying. The strains of Sibelius died away as the sound of an aeroplane engine took over seamlessly. Bizet was used to introduce Elleston Trevor's woodland people (I always thought they owed much to Kenneth Grahame's "Wind in The Willows" characters). Barbara Euphan Todd's "Worzel Gummidge" was a pleasant character that was later translated to TV - forty years after the originals gave us pleasure.

The Music of Wolf-Ferrari was selected for dramatizations of books by Noel Streatfeild - I remember her "Ballet Shoes". Much later it was revealed that Mac was, generally speaking, something of a musical illiterate and needed to call on David Davis to select and balance music for Children's Hour dramas. Talking of David Davis reminds me that there was available an audio cassette (from the BBC Radio Collection) called, simply, "The Children's Hour". It is introduced by David Davis and includes a number of splendid items. Larry the Lamb features, as does an episode from Wind in the Willows with Norman Shelley as Toad. There is a Nursery Sing-Song introduced by Trevor Hill - with Violet Carson at the piano. She is, I think, just a bit off key in "The Teddy Bears' Picnic" but it is all wonderfully evocative stuff. Well worth investing in.

That outstanding actress Patricia Hayes was involved in the Norman and Henry Bones boy detective adventures. She played Henry. Charles Hawtrey - later of "Carry On" fame - was Norman. I can no longer remember the stories but the voices were memorable. Before acting in the series she was a kind of general dogs body around the Children's Hour studio. In the sad but perceptive 1993 broadcast, "Uncle Mac, a Radio Life", she tells the story of

some birthday announcements that became her downfall. She collapsed with the giggles when trying to wish Pamela Wiffington and Angela Smellie a happy birthday! For this transgression she was temporarily banned from the air waves. But we young listeners knew nothing of this.

Most of you will know that Uncle Mac's smiling and penetrating soft-brown voice masked pain and suffering on an almost immeasurable scale. The range and nature of his physical troubles began at the age of three when he was dropped as an infant from the top tier of seats at a circus.

Later (and under-age, as many were) he went to war and was left for dead in no-man's land. A "friendly" German soldier attempted to put him out of his misery but only succeeded in passing a bullet through an eye and out of the back of his head. Innumerable operations left him with an empty eye-socket, a painful collar bone and general malaise.

A final tragic mishap occurred just after he was appointed to the newly created post of Director of Children's Hour. He was flung from one end of a Green Line bus to the other in an unexpected road accident. This resulted in many further operations which produced continuing pain. With the pain there was also a "phantom limb" following a leg amputation. Yet he continued to delight and entertain us. Some of this personal history may account for his uncertain and sometimes uncomfortable relations with his staff - but it never showed "on-air".

If we think of Uncle Mac as the archetypal source of children's programmes in those pre-war, war and post-war years we must not forget the enormous contribution made by the regions. Nan MacDonald in Manchester (to be followed by Trevor Hill), Kathleen Garscadden in Scotland, Lorraine Davies in Wales, and Cicely Mathews in Northern Ireland. All of these made their individual mark on programmes that were networked beyond the regions. One of the most enthusiastic, memorable and in many ways the saddest of these was David Davis. He had the unhappy, and it must be said, unwilling task of presiding over the death of the institution that Children's Hour had become. But whatever the faceless people in grey suits (and with grey minds) try to do, they can never erase our memories and our distant pleasures.

Thanks to all those who made childhood a wonderland, a treasure house and a fertile ground for the implantation of seeds that would bear varied and rewarding fruits.

BIGGLES & Co.

The W.E.Johns Quarterly Magazine

First published in October 1989, Biggles & Co is a non profit making A5 sized illustrated magazine, in full colour covers, with forty-four pages of articles and stories by and about W.E.Johns, the creator of Biggles. Now starting our sixth year, the Winter 1995 edition (number 25) will include a complete uncollected Biggles story and a non-fiction article by Johns.

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*Annual meeting to be held in Bayford, Hertfordshire, Saturday 18 May 1996.
For any more details on subscriptions or Annual meeting please write to:
John Trendler, 4 Ashdene Road, Bayford, Herts.SG13 8PX.*



WHO SEZ ST. FRANK'S NEVER WENT TO AMERICA!

by Ray Hopkins

Ned the Nudger, that's who! There's always one at every school and ours at Mantle Road Junior Boys was christened Edward, ergo Ned. He always nudged you with his shoulder before pushing you over! The original Ned appeared in one of the strip stories in the penny comics: I forget whether it was a blue one or a pink one or one of the white ones. You'll all remember what Ned looked like: bullet head with hair like a well-worn brush, very short and stiff and a mean look with the sides of his mouth drawn down and his eyes getting smaller and smaller as he got nearer and nearer to his victim.

"Wot's that yer readin'?" He grabbed at a rolled up book I was trying to hide. "Nelson Lee BFL!" "Whatcher mean BFL?" he said, "Gis it 'ere!" I held it further behind my back. "St. Frank's in America." "St. Frank's never went to America. I bin readin' St. Frank's a long time."

It surprised me to hear that he ever read anything at all; pushing people about in the playground is all I ever see him do. He reached into the back pocket of his short trousers and pulled out a grubby, folded-in-two copy of THE NELSON LEE LIBRARY. "Ain't never bin to America," he said again. "So watcha tellin' me lies for?" He looked down at his fist which he was clenching and twisting and turning. "Here'ya, Eddie," I said (Oh, you smarmy devil, I thought) and handed the BFL to him.

He read the title, mouth open. "Where'dya get this?" "Down at Cherry's, round the Marquis; it was only a penny." It wasn't all that old, just well worn from the many unwashed hands which had read it and then taken it back to exchange for something else from the tattered collection of second-hand boys' books (as we called them then) that were hung in racks around the door. "I'll read this," he said, and walked away from me. "Goodbye, old pal," I said to myself, meaning the book, not him.

It was funny how I got it back and what followed after. I actually picked it up off the cloak room floor, all wet. It must have slipped out of his mack. I ran across the playground with it tucked inside my coat and he nearly knocked me flying as he pushed past me. I guessed he'd missed it and turned round to holler that I had it, but the deceitful coward in me made me shut my mouth without saying a word. I didn't really believe he ever intended to return it anyway.

A few days later he came up and pushed a 4d library at me. It was the BFL he'd taken off me. My mouth dropped open as I looked at it. It was a much grubbier copy than the one I'd had. He said in a grumbling kind of way, "I lorst yours. I 'ad to go all the way up East Lane for it." I knew East Lane was a good tram ride up the Old Kent Road and I continued to stare at him, wondering at this unexpected kindness. "Cost me tuppence, too. Come on, take it!" And he opened my clenched hand and forced the book into it. "Jolly good tale," he said, and walked off grim-faced. I never did tell him it was I who pinched my own book back from him but I never felt quite so wary of him afterwards.

BOYS' FRIEND LIBRARY No. 713 is a "New and Original Story" of St. Frank's, dated 31 May 1924 and entitled "The New York Mystery; or Nipper and Co. Among the Skyscrapers."

The Bannington evening paper contained a startling report to the effect that James Farman, the multi-millionaire owner of extensive oilfields in California and vast ranchlands in Montana, from San Barino, California had disappeared from a New York hotel leaving no trace. The East River had been dragged but there was no sign of a body! Fullwood and Co. receive the greatest pleasure, due to their mean little hearts, in bringing this report to the notice of Justin B. Farman of the Remove.

The millionaire is "fighting the biggest gang of oil crooks in the United States!" So Farman's son learned from a letter from his father and handed him by two men from The Pinker Detective Agency of West 15th Street, New York, Joseph T. Pinker, Pres. and his associate, Harker Moore. Mr. Farman, it appears, is directing operations against his rivals in secret, in up-State New York and needs his son by his side to help him. A trip on the S.S. Scanthia from Liverpool in three days time has been lined up. Pinker warns him that his father has said the fewer people who know of the boy's journey the better. The Scanthia will take 11 or 12 days to get to N.Y. encouraging less publicity than if they travel by a larger, faster vessel.

When Justin meets Pinker and Moor again in three days time for final instructions, Pinker gives him a letter for Dr. Stafford from Shaw and Martin, Mr. Farman's solicitors in Fetter Lane. He must show this letter to nobody else and must meet them again in an hour in order to take the train to London and Liverpool.

Scotland Yard Chief Inspector Lennard contacts Nelson Lee to make sure that Justin B. Farman stays safely within the confines of the school. Finding out from D. Stafford that Farman has already left as requested by his father's solicitors, Lee contacts the Fetter Lane office and is told they gave no instructions to anyone regarding a trip to New York. They commission him to recover Farman's son. In order to arrive at New York before the Scanthia (Nelson Lee obtains information from the American Consul that the boy had embarked on this ship with two older Americans) he obtains a passage on the "mammoth Star Liner the Ernormic" which will arrive in New York twelve hours before the slower Scanthia.

Ten Remove juniors, including Handforth and Co. are booked for a trip to Italy with Mr. Clifford, the St. Frank's Sports' Master, in charge. But, hearing of the changed plans of Nelson Lee and Nipper at the last moment (they too were to have gone to Italy) they get Mr. Clifford, easy-going and sympathetic, to change their plans as well, even to obtaining permission from their various parents for a change of venue. So that Nelson Lee and Nipper are considerably startled to hear familiar voices from St. Frank's echoing along the ship's passageways aboard the Enormic after she has sailed.

When the Scanthia berths in New York, Farman is registered at a quiet hotel on Broadway as Pinker's nephew, neither of them being aware that Nelson Lee has had them and Moore under observation as they debarked and arrived at the hotel. The hotel manager and detective check Nelson Lee's credentials issued by the Chief of the New York Police informing them that Pinker is a criminal who has apparently duped the millionaire's son into accompanying him to New York though for what purpose is not at present known. Lee's request that he be allowed to play the role of the desk clerk in order to listen in to any phone calls made or received by Pinker and Moore is readily acceded to by the manager.

Nelson Lee overhears a Mr. Shelley arrange to meet Pinker at the Samovar Restaurant in Greenwich Village later that night. Lee phones Nipper to join him and assigns Nipper to follow Farman and Moore if they leave the hotel. Lee, disguised as a shabby artist, is

pleased when Pinker and Shelley sit at the table next to his but the noise made by the other diners prevents his hearing their plans. However, he has a Ford waiting outside and he intends to follow the two men. The large sedan in which they commence their journey leads Lee through Central Park and the Bronx, through Mount Vernon and on into Westchester County. Fearing the narrower country roads might reveal the fact that they are being followed, he accelerates past them and, leaving the Ford in the centre of the narrow road when they are out of sight, with the lights on, he hides himself. Pinker and Shelley halted by the unattended car, push it to the side of the road and drive on, not knowing they have picked up an extra passenger on the luggage grid of their sedan. In under an hour from New York City the sedan stops at a large house outside the village of River Fork in upper New York State.

Otto Ganz, Philadelphia born and bred is waiting for them. He is the powerful President of the Santa Fez Oil Corporation of California and wants to take over James Farman's oil company. Farman has turned down all Ganz' offers to merge desiring to stay independent. Ganz confronts Justin's father in the room upstairs, changed into a well-furnished cage, telling him his son is in New York and they can be reunited immediately if Farman will sign the documents making his oil company part of the huge Santa Fez conglomerate. Believing Justin to be safe at St. Frank's, Farman refuses. Ganz phones Harker Moore at the hotel telling him to bring the boy out to the house.

Nelson Lee inadvertently steps into a steel mantrap while reconnoitring the house. An alarm bell alerts those inside that there is an intruder nearby. The sharp blow to his heel causes a momentary paralysis and he falls. The villains are upon him before he can move. Pinker recognises him as the "artist" who had eaten at the next table at the Samovar and an inspired guess makes him wipe Lee's face with a wet cloth, removing makeup and false hair in one sweep. Disconcertingly, they all know who he is! Ganz sardonically informs him that this will be Nelson Lee's final assignment! He is thrown into the repair pit in the floor of the garage, the side flaps flung down with Ganz' heavy car parked on top.

Due to Handforth's obtuseness - of course! - he, Church and McClure get lost on the Subway - New York's Tube - and find themselves in the Battery at the lower end of Manhattan. By this time it is dark but fate is on their side as the first figures they see in the lamplight are those of Justin B. Farman and Harker Moore. The next one is the disguised Nipper who urges them to return to the hotel and leave the chase to him.

Moore leads Farman, still convinced that he is in the hands of an honest detective, to a motor boat on the Hudson River. Nipper knows he is going to lose his quarry and feels a crushing sense of failure, only to be immediately uplifted by the sight of a small dinghy attached to the motor boat. He slips into the river then, making sure that Moore and Farman are not looking in his direction, climbs aboard. The motor boat takes off with the dinghy in tow but by this time Nipper has a companion lying beside him. It is that mixed blessing Handforth, who has disobeyed him and copied Nipper's unobserved movements in climbing over the side of the dinghy! Nipper's relief is evident but he wonders what complications might ensue with this clumsy and unwanted helper. Handy, for his part, thinks it's a bit thick that Nipper has to interfere with his plans to capture the whole gang and hand them over to the police single-handed!

When Justin arrives at Ganz' hideout he is taken up to the plush cage and realises at once that he had been told a pack of lies by a gang of crooks and that both he and his father are in extreme danger of not coming out of it alive. He urges his father not to sign anything. Ganz and Pinker, playing one last master-card, tie up the boy and with the help of Shelley lash him to the rails of an old deserted ferry boat moored near the landing stage. While Pinker windlasses the ferry out to the middle of the river, Ganz and Shelley bind James Farman's arms to his side and lead him to the water's edge. He is given the opportunity

again to sign the take-over papers or see the hawser cut through and the old ferry set adrift with his son lashed to the rails. One mile down river lie the Salter Falls and when the ferry inevitably goes over them it will smash to matchwood on the rocks below and his son will be killed.

Ganz is an evil man obsessed with money and power and when Farman still refuses he tells Shelley to cut the hawser with a heavy axe, having previously told him not to cut it all the way through as he's sure Farman will eventually give in to save his son. Ganz is not a murderer and he is transfixed when he sees the axe completely sever the hawser.

In a complete panic, he runs off, his bluff for domination of the California oil industry completely forgotten. Pinker and Shelley attempt to follow the ferry but the motor boat crashes against the moorings in turning and sinks. Nipper realises that he and Handforth alone can save Justin and taking Moore's automobile they follow the river. When the road swerves inland they continue beside the river over grassland but fail to observe a deep cutting which is too wide for them to ford. The car drops into the river, Nipper landing on the bank and Handy is left to use his superior strength to swim to the ferry, pull himself aboard and untie Justin. But the ferry is whirling round and round preparatory to hurling itself over the falls. They grit their teeth and prepare for the worst but a thick rope coils through the air and lands on the deck. As the old ferry falls away beneath them they manage to cling to the rope, their feet trailing in space as the river cascades over the falls.

When they are pulled ashore, through their dazed senses they realise their rescuers are Nipper and, biggest surprise of all, Nelson Lee himself. Escape from the repair pit utilising a long screwdriver his groping fingers had found in the pitch dark enabled him to unscrew a couple of the hinges on one of the flaps and the weight of the car had done the rest, leaving a small aperture through which he was able to pull himself.

Otto Ganz and his confederates are under arrest within three days of the attempted murder of Farman's son. It is a huge sensation in the New York newspapers but largely ignored by the juniors given a good holiday by Justin's father before returning them for another thrill-packed term at good old St. Frank's.



THE GREAT COLOUR QUESTION

by J.E.M.

No, this is not about the complexions of all those non-white allies and adversaries Sexton Blake encountered over the years (Gunga Dass, Lobangu *et al*). What I want to look at here is the use of colour in The Blakian periodicals themselves.

Up to the First World War, most of the cheap popular weeklies were

virtually colourless. At best, their covers had a single printing (usually black) on tinted paper, the *Union Jack* itself falling into this class. Then, in the Twenties, came the great printing revolution, most of our favourite story-papers now enlivening the news-stands and bookstalls with covers printed by the two-colour half-tone process. The *Union Jack* positively glowed, Sexton Blake being especially lucky in his principal illustrator. Eric Parker's dramatic front-page masterpieces played no small part in persuading us to hand over our weekly two pence.

If blue and red often dominated this work, Parker also produced some quite stunning effects with other combinations which were always just right for the subjects illustrated. I have in front of me three eye-catching *Union Jacks* from 1932 and '33. The cover to *The Crimson Smile* (UJ 1523) depicts a hunched, shadowy figure peering into an unlit room from a snow-covered exterior. Printed in blue and black this illustration produces exactly the right sort of chilling effect. *Behind the Fog* (UJ 1526) has a black and yellow cover eerily suggestive of the story's title, with Blake and Tinker straining to read something under a hazy street light, while a cloth-capped figure lurks nearby. The front page of *The House of Light* (UJ 1528) shows Blake about to cut off the power which brilliantly illuminates the eponymous house. A most dramatic effect is achieved in blue and yellow; we truly sense the imminent plunge into darkness. Since the *Digest* cannot show you such examples of the illustrator's and colour-printer's art, it is worth studying a few old UJ covers to see what I mean.

Sadly, after 1933, there was to be no more *Weekly* colour. When the *Union Jack* was replaced by *Detective Weekly*, it was back to tinted paper for the exterior with a one-colour printing of title and illustration. Because the DW had a bigger page size, the total effect was not wholly a disaster, though it brought some howls of rage from older readers. Their protests were clearly aimed at this presentation, not the paper's contents, since at least in the early days, our favourite authors - Teed, Jackson, Evans, Skene and the rest - carried on their good work as before.

Significantly, it was about this time that the monthly *Sexton Blake Library* took on new life. As pop lit expert Jack Adrian pointed out some years ago in a national newspaper feature, Eric Parker "pulled out all the stops" in his work for the SBL. Jack might have added that Parker was greatly helped by the introduction of *three-colour* covers. Until the early Thirties the SBL, like the UJ, had used only two colours for its front page. The *three-colour* process was a great leap forward. It meant, at least in theory, that almost any range of colours could be reproduced by the "mixing" (i.e. overprinting) of the three primary hues, red, yellow and blue; and, in fact, some most compelling illustrations were the result. So what the *Union Jack* lost in the way of colour by its transformation into *Detective Weekly* was, so to speak, gained by the *Sexton Blake Library*. At all events, this was now the heyday of the SBL, a golden age which lasted through and well beyond the Second World War.

Detective Weekly, by contrast, went into decline, its last issue appearing in 1940. How far was the loss of its appeal on the book-stands due to lack of a coloured cover? It may be significant that, very shortly before its end, the DW did try a last desperate stab at a two-colour page one but, by then, it was all too late.

We know there were many factors contributing to the demise of the DW and we can argue endlessly about how much, or how little, the colour factor played a part in the death of one Blake periodical and the success of another. I can only urge readers to go back to copies of all three Blakian publications before making up their minds. For my own part, I believe that a character as dazzling as Sexton Blake should always have been given the full technicolour treatment!



"THE BUTTERFLY" SAILOR DETECTIVES

by Reg Hardinge

Reading Bill Loft's most interesting contribution, 'Sam Smith, A.B., The Sailor Detective' ('Other Favourite Detectives', C.D. September 1995) struck a chord in my memory. Turning up issue no. 1162, July 1939 of *Butterfly*, there on page 2 was a short story, one of a series of 'The Sailor Detective', and entitled 'The Missing Stamp Collection'.

It featured Tom Main who was on the 'Border Queen' steaming through the Red Sea, and it dealt with the attempt by a passenger named Harrap to fake the robbery of his valuable stamp collection. He planned to claim on his insurance policy, and then, after the affair had blown over, to sell the collection. Double indemnity, so to speak!

An innovation was that readers were invited to deduce how Tom Main's suspicions had been directed towards Harrap. The solution was given in the editorial column on page 7, 'Uncle Bertram Calling' which was addressed to his dear Butter chums by Bertram *Butterfly*, the editor.

So eight years after the Sam Smith tales this type of story was still popular with the subscribers to *Butterfly*. Unfortunately, because the names of the contributors to this popular comic were never published we will never know who wrote these splendid short stories.

THE SAILOR DETECTIVE



The Missing Stamp Collection.

IT was an hour after midnight, and the *Border Queen* was steaming through the still waters of the Red Sea.

Tom Main was pacing up and down the boat deck, but suddenly he came to a halt and stared hard at one of the ship's cats which was coming towards him.

"Why, you're Timothy Tim, and your job is to keep rats and mice away from No. 1 luggage hold," the sailor detective murmured. "You were shut in the hold a couple of hours back. Who let you out?"

The cat started purring as though it expected Tom to make a fuss of it; but the sailor detective at once hurried away to No. 1 luggage hold.

The cat's presence on the deck had aroused his suspicions, because Timothy Tim could not have got out of the hold unless someone had opened the door. And as soon as the sailor detective arrived at the door he found startling proof that his suspicions were right.

The lock had been broken, and when Tom switched on the light inside the hold he saw a large leather trunk which had also received rough treatment. The brass locks of the trunk had been cut right off, and the lid gaped wide open.

"None of the other luggage seems to have been interfered with," Tom told himself. "Whoever broke into the hold was after something which he knew was in this trunk."

A label on the trunk showed that it belonged to a passenger named Harrap,

Tom Main proves that it is a dangerous thing to lie to a detective.

who occupied Cabin No. 45 on E deck. And when Tom awakened him out of his sleep and told him what he had discovered, Mr. Harrap, who was a fat little man with a bald head, was very angry.

"Someone must have been after a valuable collection of foreign stamps which I was taking to England to sell!" he cried. "I packed them in that trunk because I thought they would be safer in the luggage hold than in my cabin, and—"

Mr. Harrap broke off in the middle of the sentence and stared at Tom in a curious way.

"Phew!" he whistled. "I have just remembered that the only person besides myself who knew that the stamps were packed in that trunk is my secretary, Jack Macey. He is travelling with me on this trip, but to save expense I booked a cabin for him in a cheaper part of the ship. The rascal must have robbed me."

Ten minutes later Mr. Harrap had been to the luggage hold with Tom, and had found out for certain that the valuable stamp collection was missing.

"I was sure of it," he declared. "Let us go and talk to Jack Macey."

The secretary was a young man about twenty-two years old, tall and well built. He was asleep in his bunk when Mr. Harrap and the sailor detective entered his cabin and awakened him.

"Hallo, what's wrong?" he demanded.

"Oh, don't pretend you were asleep, because I know very well you weren't," said Mr. Harrap. "What have you done with the stamp collection you stole? You had better own up, because this man is a detective."

Jack Macey turned his gaze on Tom.

"Are you accusing me of being a thief?" he asked angrily.

"I haven't done so yet, but things seem pretty black against you," was Tom's quiet

reply. "A valuable collection of stamps has disappeared from Mr. Harrap's trunk down in the luggage hold. He says that you are the only person besides himself who knew that the stamps were there."

Macey leapt out of the bunk and landed in front of his employer.

"Clear out of my cabin!" he cried. "I'm through with a boss who is so ready to accuse a fellow of being a low-down thief. Why, I shouldn't be surprised if you stole the stamps yourself."

"Don't talk nonsense!" snapped Harrap.

"I'm not talking nonsense, and you know it!" the young secretary went on. "You insured the collection, and the insurance company would have to pay you a large sum in the event of the stamps being stolen. You're not above getting that insurance money, and then selling the stamps later on."

"And now," Macey added fiercely, "I'm going to throw you out of my cabin!"

Luckily, however, Mr. Harrap fled, and then Tom managed to quieten Macey.

"Sorry, but if you knew what I've put up with since I've been Harrap's secretary you would understand why I was so ready to throw up the job," Macey said. "And now I suppose you want to search my cabin for those precious stamps. All right, old chap, get on with it."

Tom searched the cabin most thoroughly without finding any sign of the missing stamp collection, and in the end he went off to tell Mr. Harrap.

To his surprise, however, Mr. Harrap was not in his cabin, and although he soon turned up, he seemed far from pleased to find the detective waiting for him.

"It gave me quite a start, seeing you standing there," he declared. "I haven't yet got over Macey's bad behaviour. It so upset me that I felt I wanted some fresh air, and I've been for a walk round the promenade deck."

Tom gave him a keen look, and then glanced out of the porthole window.

"What sort of a night is it now?" he asked.

"Oh, not too bad, but I didn't stay on deck very long, because the wind was a bit chilly," Mr. Harrap told him. "Did you search Macey's cabin?"

"Yes, but I didn't find the stamps," was Tom's reply.

"Then you can rest assured that the

young crook has hidden them somewhere else," said Mr. Harrap. "I hope you will be able to discover his hiding-place, but in case you don't, I want you to search my cabin as well."

"Are you still worrying about what Macey?" Tom asked.

"Yes," was the sharp answer. "He might suggest to the insurance company that I was the thief, and unless I can produce sound evidence I'll have a whole lot of trouble to get the money they promised to pay me in the event of the stamps being stolen. A few words from you will clear me of any suspicion."

Tom searched Mr. Harrap's cabin, and then he left Mr. Harrap with the promise that he would keep an eye on Jack Macey.

Mr. Harrap did not return to his bed, however. Five minutes after Tom had gone he stepped softly out of his cabin and stealthily entered another one a few yards along the alleyway.

This second cabin had been unoccupied throughout the voyage, and Mr. Harrap was smiling grimly as he opened the clothes cupboard and reached up to take a parcel off the top shelf.

"It will be safe to hide it in my cabin trunk now that the detective has made the search," he muttered.

But then Mr. Harrap got a big shock. The cabin light was suddenly switched on, and standing in the open doorway was Tom Main.

"So Jack Macey was right, after all!" said the sailor detective. "You planned a sham robbery so as to get the insurance money, and make more profit by selling the collection after the affair had blown over. You told me that you had been taking the air on the promenade deck, but really you had been in the cabin, hiding what was supposed to have been stolen."

Mr. Harrap hung his head.

"What made you suspect me?" he murmured.

"I knew you were lying when you said you had been out on deck, because . . ."

What was it that opened Tom's eyes? Perhaps you have already made up your mind what it was; but if you haven't think it over, and then turn to page 7, and find out if you have struck the right solution.

(Another fine liner mystery in next week's BUTTERFLY.)

15-7-39

(Editor's Note: Perhaps next month Mr. Hardinge will give us the page 7 solution. Also does he know whether the picture heading this story is by Leonard Shields?)

FORUM

From RAY HOPKINS:

Rather belatedly I looked up Ray Saville in the BL Catalogues (Bill Lofts article in the October SPCD) and they came up with the following:

The Boy Scout Crusoes (1922), *Boys' Own Library* No. 35.

The Fool of Fellsgate (1921), BOL 22.

The Headmaster's Secret (1921), BOL 15.

Kidnapped at Fellsgate (1922), BOL 37.

The Mystery Master at Fellsgate (1922), BOL 34.

He is listed as SAVILLE (Ray) and there is no pseud. information. Malcolm Saville lists no book published prior to the 1940's.

The Lofts/Adley Catalogue lists *Boys' Own Library* (2nd Series) ran from 1921 to 1922 for a total of 44 issues.

Referring to Bill's article in the October SPCD, the accompanying illustration of "The Fool of Fellsgate" shows this is the cover of *Boys' Pocket Library* No. 18 and presumably a reprint of the 1921 BOL 22, shown above, The L/A Cat reveals *Boys' Pocket Library* ran from 1931 to 1932 and comprised 24 issues. Both of these libraries were published by Aldine, though the BL Cats do not show this.

From PETER BARNICOTT:

An article in "The Times Literary Supplement" for 22nd September, 1995, deals with an American character who bears a remarkable likeness to our old friend, Valerie Drew, the girl detective.



VALERIE AMONGST THE MYSTERY MAKERS

*An Enthralling Complete Story Featuring Valerie Drew, The Famous Girl
Detective, And Her Clever Alaskan, Flash.*

From The Popular Book of Girls' Stories, 1938

Both are named Drew, both are girl detectives aged about 18, both have fathers who make an appearance, both started in the 1930s. The American first appeared in 1930 in "The Secret of the Old Clock", the English girl on 7th January, 1933, in "That Amazing Room of Clocks". The picture in the TLS shows a girl with red hair and blue eyes; the English detective had (if I remember aright) red-gold hair and violet blue eyes.

The similarities seem to be too many for mere coincidence. I wonder if "Adelie Ascott" / "Isabel Norton" got their ideas from America. You will see that the TLS reviewer, Gillian Avery, thinks that Enid Blyton may have been influenced by the Nancy Drew books.

There is one great difference. The American girl has no faithful Alsatian, Flash.

(Editor's Note: I too once wondered whether Nancy had inspired Valerie's creation but I now incline to the view that the resemblance between the two flame-haired sleuths was coincidental. As early as in 1922 John W. Bobin (later the originator of Valerie Drew) created a teenage girl detective called Sylvia Silence for the *Schoolgirls' Weekly*. He wrote about her in the pen-name of Katherine Greenhalgh, and Sylvia had "bronze-brown hair". Then, for the *Schoolgirls' Own* in 1930 Bobin (then writing as Adelie Ascott) introduced another girl investigator, Lila Lisle, who was blessed with "shingled red-gold hair". Both Sylvia Silence and Lila Lisle had animal assistants (monkeys!), and Sylvia's alsatian companion, "Wolf", seems a fore-runner of Valerie's intrepid and brilliant assistant of the same breed, "Flash". Significantly Nancy Drew, the American equivalent of Bobin's string of British teenage sleuths, was helped in her case-solving *not* by animals but by a boy-friend. She also started her long career with "Titian" hair but, somewhere during her long and still-running career, changed from being a red-head to becoming a blonde!)

From MARK TAHA:

I hate to have to say this but I noticed a mistake in the November C.D. The SCHOOLBOY'S LOVE LETTER was previously published in Gyles Brandreth's anthology YAROOH! back in the 'seventies. Re-reading it, I must say that it made me laugh out loud. Incidentally might D'Arcy or Mauleverer have grown up to be rather like Gyles Brandreth? Just a thought... I enjoyed Geoff Lardner's 'flashback' story and found his description of the Bunter family's background convincing. I remember Bunter relatives at various times including an uncle called George Bunter, an Aunt Elizabeth. An Aunt Rebecca (admittedly invented by Pentelow), an uncle named Joseph Carter with a nephew named Arthur who had a cousin called Gideon Gooch, a cousin named George Cook and of course Billy's cousin and double, Wally. I'd always thought of Bessie as Billy's twin rather than his older sister, though - and weren't his father's Christian names William Samuel rather than just Samuel?

(Editor's Note: One more Bunter relative whom I recall is the Aunt Annie, to whom Bessie sometimes referred in the 1930s SCHOOLGIRL. Under John Wheway's authorship this aunt turned out to be a pleasant lady who was capable on more than one occasion of sending Bessie a hamper or a postal order. I don't remember her featuring in the MAGNET saga or offering similar generosity to Billy!)

From DONALD V. CAMPBELL:

I couldn't keep my hands off this year's CD Annual. Usually it is saved for me by a family member until Santa calls. But, this year, Santa had no chance, he had to keep HIS hands off whilst I got MINE on! The Annual is such a bargain and a Gem. It is a Schoolboy's Library (and Schoolgirl's ditto) - self contained and an out-and-out Magnet, pulling, as it does for us, perfect nuggets of happiness, joy, nostalgia and memorabilia.

Of himself the great Max Miller said "There'll never be another!" But another and another and another keep us happy each year. C.D. Annual is first on my next Christmas list already. Thanks, Mary!

HAMILTON'S 'GUINEA PIGS': Part One

by Peter Mahony

The Scholarship Boys

One of Charles Hamilton's recurring plots concerned the tribulations of the "Scholarship Boy". These fortunate unfortunates suffered, in the estimation of their less-tolerant school-fellows, from two irredeemable drawbacks. They had too little money, and too many brains!

In chronicling the careers of these lads from 'the other side of the tracks', Hamilton plundered a rich seam of seediness in human nature. While Linley, Penfold, Redwing, Redfern, Rawson and Co. struggled to 'fit in' with the Public School ethos, types like Bulstrode, Skinner, Bunter, Snoop, Smithy, Cardew, Townsend and Topham were able to indulge their most unattractive qualities. Personality clashes were frequent - and often painful. The more decent lads tended to 'sit on the fence': only occasionally did they intervene in the raggings of the hapless newcomers. Boys' cruelty to boys was the basic theme, but, as always with Hamilton, there were plenty of variations.

GRIM GREYFRIARS

The unhappiest place for a scholarship boy was undoubtedly the Greyfriars Remove. That form contained a prize collection of Hamilton's most snobbish, unfeeling, block-headed characters - and they 'ganged up' with glee on the 'free place bounders'. The obtuse, idle Bunter; the malicious, sneering Skinner; the sly, envious Snoop; the over-bearing, snobbish Bulstrode; all found their 'sensitivities' offended by the shabby clothes, the lack of money, the poor relations and, above all, the commitment to study of Linley, Penfold & Co. Their 'raggings' of the scholarship lads exceeded the bounds of rough good humour and decency. Often, the damage they did brought financial hardship to the victim as well as physical discomfort and emotional humiliation. These four (Bunter, Skinner, Snoop and Bulstrode) were not 'nice' boys. Their unbridled malice in these episodes leaves a nasty taste.

"THE FACTORY HAND"

Mark Linley had the roughest ride. A Lancashire lad, possibly with a trace of an "Eeh, bah, goom" accent, was likely to be a misfit in a Kent Public School anyway. At best, he might have been tolerated as a shy, un-obtrusive nonentity, respected for his brains and sporting ability. Unfortunately, Bulstrode & Co. had other ideas. They made a 'dead set' on Linley and he endured a series of vicious 'rags' which amounted to systematic persecution.

The ragers' motives were mixed. The domineering, wealthy Bulstrode was always seeking to assert his authority in the Remove: Linley, from a different social class, was an affront to his snobbish self-esteem. Bulstrode was not one of Quelch's brighter pupils: the bare idea of a working-class lad outdoing him in the form-room gave an extra edge to his bullying.

Skinner, too, resented Linley's scholastic ability. A clever, intelligent boy, Skinner probably 'coasted' near the top of the Remove without extending himself unduly. A hard-working student, with a definite aim to succeed in exams, was a threat to Skinner's intellectual superiority. The dear lad may have had to start swotting to keep his end up! He much preferred to deter Linley by malicious jests and sarcastic ridicule.

Snoop, the toady, wanted to remain in Bulstrode's good books. He also probably envied Linley's 'free education'. The Snoops' financial circumstances were never healthy; I suspect that Sidney James Snoop may have once been pressed by his parents to try for a 'scholarship' himself. The idea of working to change his status from 'fees paid' to 'scholarship cad' would have left him horror-stricken. His peculiar vanity required him to hang on to the 'wealthy set'; a scholarship would have placed him in the 'outsider' class. The tormenting of Linley helped him to 'work off' this particular apprehension.

In many ways, the most obnoxious of Linley's detractors was Billy Bunter. The amusing traits in the Owl's character tend to obscure his worse features. For example, he was undoubtedly the most arrant snob of all the Removites. His fatuous insensitivity gave voice to the most awful insults - Linley was a "factory hand"; "not a gentleman"; "a cad, who worked for his living"; "a hard-up, no fees bounder", etc. Because of his obvious stupidity, most of the Remove disregarded Bunter's gross ill-manners, but Linley, conscious of his working-class background must have suffered agonies of humiliation under this barrage of jibes.

Bunter was also very scornful of Linley's lack of money. In view of Bunter's almost perpetual impecuniosity, this seems pretty rich! Of course, he was not above cadging off Linley from time to time, just as he did from almost everyone else. Such blatant two-facedness was part of Bunter's fascinating make-up - how he survived his school career without suffering a severe mischief is hard to credit. He really was the outside edge!

So poor Linley had to endure the attentions of this precious quartet. Others, like Bolsover and Hazeldene, joined in the persecutions occasionally, and the Lancastrian nearly went under. Keenly sensitive, Linley was hurt by the insults, infuriated by the physical bullying and impoverished by the destruction of his books and belongings. He had enough courage to stand up to the belligerent Bulstrode and won several fights against different opponents. The need for funds 'to pay his way' always inhibited him. On numerous occasions he 'pot-hunted' to keep the wolf from the family door; sometimes, his prize bought his sports kit etc. Generally, he had a hand-to-mouth existence and only the cheerful support of Bob Cherry (none too well-off himself) kept him going.

After weathering these initial storms, Linley became established as the Remove's top scholar. He was also a regular member of the Soccer and cricket teams. Later he replaced Wharton as Head Boy when Harry was at odds with Mr. Quelch. Nevertheless, on several occasions, he seriously contemplated leaving Greyfriars.

The most interesting aspect of Linley's character, highlighted by Hamilton, is his emotional diffidence.

Linley was, perhaps, no cleverer than Wharton or Peter Todd or Vernon-Smith. Nevertheless, unremitting hard study kept him clearly at the top of the Remove. Why then did he worry so much about the jibes of Skinner, Snoop and Bunter? Northerners, generally, affect to despise the 'effete' southerners' yet Linley was clearly worried by their refusal to rate him. Could it be that he sub-consciously agreed with their scornful estimates of him? Did his humble origins make him feel inferior to such 'tatty' middle-class products as Bunter and Snoop? Hamilton never made it crystal clear, but there were enough hints in the stories to justify the suspicion.

Finally, did even the better fellows find Linley's serious turn of mind irritating? He certainly lacked humour. There was a marked tendency to anticipate the worst in any situation. Boys can tolerate almost anything except pessimism. Perhaps Linley's solemn persona was just too daunting. They could accept his addiction to study; admire his dogged determination to make the most of his opportunities; sympathise with his reduced financial circumstances; but his adult approach could only be taken in small doses.

Even Harry Wharton (granted during one of his 'rebel' periods) found Linley's sense of duty a bit much. Linley had replaced him as Heady Boy of the Remove - Quelch's decision,

not Linley's. Linley reported Wharton to Quelch for ragging in the form-room. Ostensibly to revenge himself on the 'sneak', Wharton soaked Linley's bed with water. As might have been expected, Wharton had to surrender his own bed to Linley. The unlucky Mark then collected a record walloping from Loder who came hunting for Wharton in the dark. Rotten of Wharton, but did Linley's sense of duty ask for it? Certainly, in Wharton's jaundiced view, it did.

Linley, then, was always an uneasy resident at Greyfriars. His quiet character, natural gentlemanliness, and studious bent were sadly at odds with the Remove bear-garden. His Lancashire working-class origins probably made little difference after he had overcome the Bulstrode/Skinner set; but he remained 'square peg' - liked by some, tolerated by most, a butt for the mean-minded. On his side, he genuinely liked Bob Cherry, had a fellow-feeling for Huree Singh and Wun Lung (two other 'misfits', for cultural rather than class reasons), and tolerated the rest - dare it be said - with a quiet contempt for their idle disregard of the education which he valued so highly. He never voiced any general criticism of his form-fellows, but he did state some fairly strong views during the "Bob Cherry-Swot" series. Disdain and censure were not entirely one-way in the Linley saga.

THE COBBLER'S SON

Dick Penfold had an easier ride than Linley. The awkward trail had already been blazed for him by the Lancastrian. Of course, there was some ragging from Skinner & Co. but Penfold gave the mischievous Harold a hammering and the campaign faded away. Significantly, Bulstrode had changed his attitude between the arrivals of Linley and Penfold. The death of his young brother had chastened Bulstrode; then the advent of Percy Bolsover had toppled the bully from his "Cock of the Walk" position. (It's surprising how often a bigger bully makes the original see the error of his ways!)

Shortly before Penfold joined the Remove, Bob Cherry had solved the "Bolsover problem". Consequently, Penfold was not subjected to the attentions of either Bulstrode or Bolsover, and shortly afterwards Skinner was expelled. (He was reinstated later, but Penfold was well-established by then.) The petty jibing of Bunter and Snoop was all Penfold had to endure - not a difficult task.

There were other factors which helped Penfold. Son of the local cobbler, he obviously derived moral support from his family. (Poor Linley, miles from Lancashire, was 'on his own'). Like Linley, Penfold was a good sportsman - and he also had a vein of good humour which the Lancastrian lacked. His penchant for writing poetry, generally of a light, comic nature, went down well with the leading lights of the Remove. (He may be a swot, but at least he's human!) He was also a keen photographer - another status point in the rather facile thinking of the Lower School. Finally, the Penfold finances could be helped by well-meaning school fellows without them appearing to give 'charity'. All they had to do was patronise the cobbler's shop, a service needed by everybody from time to time.

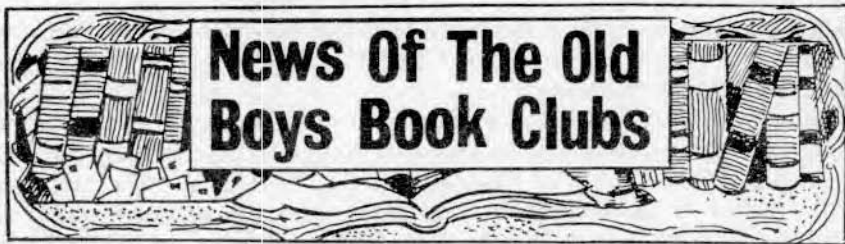
Two characters, in similar circumstances, yet how differently did Hamilton portray them. Linley, remote from his origins, yet always conscious of them; Penfold, close to his, yet behaving in a natural, matter-of-fact way. Linley, single-mindedly pursuing education - to better himself and benefit his family; Penfold, working hard, but enjoying too the lighter side of school life. Linley, I feel, played games to keep fit; Penfold played for the joy of it. Both were stalwarts of the Remove teams: Linley was consistently good, but it was Dick Penfold who played the occasional 'blinder'. Linley's glass was always half-empty; Penfold's was half-full. An excellent contrast.

The third of Greyfriars' scholarship boys was Tom Redwing, whose career has already been examined in detail in the "Brands from the Burning" articles about Herbert Vernon-Smith. Redwing, unlike the other two, did not remain a scholarship boy. First, after discovering that his award had been 'fixed' by the Vernon-Smiths, he resigned the

scholarship. Later, his personal fortune was made and Redwing returned to Greyfriars on an equal footing with the rest. His role in the stories was really as 'guide, philosopher and friend' to Vernon-Smith. The 'scholarship status' was Hamilton's initial device to put these contrasting characters together. He abandoned it when their relationship required deeper development. (The same ploy had been used earlier in his brilliant Highcliffe saga "The Boy Without A Name". Arthur Clare was a "working-class, poverty-stricken bounder", who fell foul of the rascally Cecil Ponsonby, but was befriended by Rupert de Courcy. This saga was also explored in "Brands from the Burning". Clare was eventually identified as Frank Courtenay, son of a well-to-do soldier - and cousin of Ponsonby! He remained at Highcliffe as a 'fee-payer', so the scholarship element faded into the background.)

Therefore, Linley and Penfold remain as Greyfriars' permanent scholarship lads. There were others from time-to-time. Bob Cherry and Wharton both swotted for scholarships when funds were tight; several 'birds of passage' took up places and then dropped out; but, generally, Hamilton had exhausted the theme by the end of World War I. Working-class boys still came to Greyfriars, but they were always sponsored by special benefactors (Jim Valentine and the 'Game Kid' spring to mind, as well as "Tatters", "Flip" and "Skip").

(To be concluded)



NORTHERN O.B.B.C. REPORT

We had a total of seventeen present for our informal Christmas Party. As in the past, our study feed saw a table groaning under the weight of some delightful comestibles.

The centre of attraction was Joan's superbly iced cake: this year's theme was Father Christmas sitting on top of a chimney with Rupert at his side and surrounded by books of our hobby. Another wonderful sweetmeat from Joan. Another delightful item was Kuchen provided by Regina who had used the basic recipe as would be eaten by the girls of the Chalet School along with their Kaffee. A more elaborate recipe (strudel) was also there. Richard had brought along three large bottles of ginger pop which he claimed (as did the computer printed labels) had been obtained from Uncle Clegg's of Friardale, Mrs. Mible's Tuckshop and also (according to the label) a more forbidden variety from The Three Fishers pub! Our members were amazed at such acquisitions and that computerisation had entered the area of Greyfriars, but

one or two doubting Thomas's claimed they could see original Sainsbury's labels under the computer ones!

After we had joined in games and quizzes, Geoffrey Good presented his usual annual toast and we thought of absent friends, the founders of the Clubs and toasted the success of the clubs now in existence.

Printed programmes of the events in 1996 are now ready and at our January meeting we have Paul Galvin speaking on "Radio Comedy Favourite" and Mark Caldicott on "Researching E.S.B.". On February 10th Richard Burgon speaks on "Harold Avery- the Forgotten Man of Boys' Fiction" and we have "Herlock Sholmes" from Chris Scholey.

JOHNNY BULL MINOR

LONDON OLD BOYS BOOK CLUB

The November meeting at Chingford began with a talk by Alan Pratt on Western Picture Strips. Chris Harper followed with his western theme quiz which was won by Alan Pratt. Peter Mahony read an extract from The Puncher from Panhandle from the 1941 Holiday Annual.

The December meeting at the home of Bill Bradford in Ealing began with Una Hamilton Wright, the niece of Charles Hamilton giving a talk on her uncle's connection with Ealing.

Following a Christmas tea, members set to and answered Peter Mahony's rhyming pairs quiz, which was followed by Roger Jenkins reading an extract from Magnet 1558, Wraith of Rainham Castle. Bill Bradford's quiz was to find the names of hobby related magazines, and the meeting ended with Duncan Harper reading from "Crime of the Christmas Tree" by Gwyn Evans.

The Meeting on January 14th will be at the Secretary's home in Loughton.

Your Editor says—



It helps the C.D. if readers advertise their WANTS and FOR SALE book and story-paper items, etc. in it. The rates are 4p per word; a boxed, displayed ad. costs £20.00 for a whole page, £10 for a half page or £5 for a quarter page.

MORE LISTS FROM BRIAN DOYLE

Five actors who portrayed Greyfriars boys in the 1950s TV series who subsequently became very well-known

John Osborne (Wingate) later wrote many famous and often controversial plays, such as "Look Back in Anger", "The Entertainer" and "Inadmissible Evidence" (all subsequently filmed).

Michael Crawford (Frank Nugent) later won fame in the popular TV series "Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em" and in the West End stage musicals "Billy" (based on "Billy Liar"), "Barnum" and "The Phantom of the Opera" (in which he also starred on Broadway).

Anthony Valentine (Lord Mauleverer and Harry Wharton) later starred in several popular TV series, including "Callan", "Justice", "Colditz" and (title-role) "Raffles". Still busy today and also does much 'voice-over' work for TV and radio commercials.

David Hemmings (Potter) later became a leading British film star and appeared in many major productions. In recent years has also become a director.

Desmond Carrington (Wingate) later became a busy TV actor, co-starring in one of the first popular 'soaps' on ITV, "Emergency Ward Ten", as a young doctor. For the past seven years has presented the popular BBC Radio record programme, "Radio 2's All-Time Greats" for three hours every Sunday lunchtime. Also tours in his own one-man show about the Duke of Windsor.

("Billy Bunter of Greyfriars School" ran successfully on BBC TV from 1952-1961, plus repeats. It starred, of course, Gerald Campion, as the Fat Owl, throughout, in around 80 different episodes. Campion has now virtually retired from acting.)

Four Actors who portrayed Billy Bunter on stage, TV and radio

Gerald Campion (see above). He also played Bunter in the first two London stage productions featuring the Fat Owl: "Bunter's Mystery Christmas" in 1958, and "Billy Bunter Flies East" in 1959.

Peter Bridgmont, who played Bunter in the following four London stage productions, from 1960 to 1963.

Hugh Thomas played Bunter in the BBC Radio 4 production "Billy Bunter's Christmas Party" broadcast in December 1986. The full-length play was repeated two days later.

David Timson, who starred in the title role of the full-scale stage musical show "Bunter!" at the Northcott Theatre, Exeter, in June-July, 1988. The producers hoped that the show would transfer to London's West End, but sadly this never materialised, despite good notices and excellent reaction.

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.

WANTED; ROVERS - 1962: 10/2, 17/2, 24/3, 30/6, 1/9, 8/9, 15/9, 22/9, 29/9, 6/10, 13/10, 20/10, 27/10, 3/11, 10/11, 1/12, 8/12, 15/12, 22/12. 1964: 22/2, 7/3, 14/3, 21/3, 28/3, 4/4, 25/4, 2/5, 9/5, 21/11, 28/11, 26/12. 1965: 23/1, 30/1, 13/2, 27/2. JOHN GIBBS, Wells Cottage, Eastcombe, Bishops Lydeard, Taunton, Somerset, TA4 3HU. Tel: 01823-432 998.

WANTED: original artwork W.E. JOHNS related. Biggles, Worrals, Gimlet, Space, drawn by H. Leigh, Stead, Studio Stead or of course by Johns. **Christmas cards** or **prints** advertised in *Popular Flying* in the 1930s illustrated by Johns, Leigh or Stanley Orton Bradshaw. **Playing cards**, with Aircraft design signed Johns. **British Air League** albums illustrated by Leigh. **Skybirds** magazines, models. **Skyways** magazines. **Murder at Castle Deeping** by W.E. Johns, J. Hamilton Edition.

JOHN TRENDLER
4 ASHENDENE ROAD, BAYFORD, HERTS, SG13 8 PX.
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OUR BOOKSHELVES

REVIEWS BY
MARY CADOGAN

(Picture by Terry Wakefield)

HARD-BOILED: AN ANTHOLOGY OF AMERICAN CRIME STORIES. Edited by Jack Adrian and Bill Pronzini (Oxford £17.99)

Jack Adrian's compilations are well known to C.D. readers, and this latest bumper volume (532 pages) which he has prepared in co-operation with Bill Pronzini lives up to the high standards of his previous selections. It comprises 36 suspenseful tales of the 'hard-boiled' school: the Editors define this quintessentially American genre as crime fiction dealing 'with disorder, disaffection and dissatisfaction'. Many of the stories are set in the *noir* world in which 'clashes between good and evil are never petty' and 'character conflict is essential'. As the Editors point out, stories of the hard-boiled variety are reflective of their period and society. They have chosen tales from the 1920s to the '90s with particular emphasis on the 1930s and '50s when the genre had two separate flowerings. (However, they end their interesting and comprehensive Introduction with the suggestion that the 1990s 'may prove to be the form's third most important decade', and the book's three contemporaneous stories are powerful enough to endorse this view.) The anthology fittingly begins with a darkly atmospheric story by Dashiell Hammett ('the founding father of the hard-boiled movement') and includes pieces by such luminaries as Paul Cain, Raymond Chandler, Mickey Spillane and Ross Macdonald. Several writers previously unknown to me have made impressive contributions, and I appreciated the prefatory notes provided for every author and story.

THE NELSON LEE LIBRARY: A COMPLETE GUIDE & BIBLIOGRAPHY OF THE WRITINGS OF EDWY SEARLES BROOKS (Compiled by Robert C. Blythe: Revised by Mark Caldicott)

Many C.D. readers will already have seen the two editions of this Guide brought out by the late and warmly remembered Bob Blythe, who did so much over so many years to further interest in the works of E.S.B. This excellently produced third edition, revised and expanded by Mark Caldicott, contains all the material of the original in a more 'user-friendly' format and provides fuller information than the earlier editions on E.S.B.'s Norman Conquest and 'Ironsides' Cromwell stories. As Mark Caldicott rightly says in his Preface, these books now have a following of their own, and, in fact, many of today's Brooks' enthusiasts first came to him through the Conquest and Cromwell books rather than the school stories. The order of some of the items has been changed for more clarity and manageability. A welcome innovation is the grouping into series of the complete listing of Nelson Lee Library St. Franks stories. Mark Caldicott has also added a most interesting 14 page Biographical Introduction which not only covers Brooks' personal life but gives some detailed information about different aspects and fields of his writings. Larger than the previous editions (115 A4 pages) and in good, clear type, this revised version will be much appreciated by many collectors. Copies can be ordered from Happy Hours Ltd., 37 Tinsill Lane, Leeds LS16 6BU at £10.75 plus 98p postage.

THE DEPARTURE OF BIG CHIEF I-SPY

by GEORGE BEAL

DILIGENT readers of our newspapers will know that Big Chief I-Spy has gone to his happy hunting-ground. Charles Warrell, creator of the I-Spy books, and of the I-Spy club which accompanied them, has died aged 106. *Requiescat in pace.*

I met him when I was working for the *Daily Mail* not long after the end of the last war. Charlie Warrell, a former headmaster of a primary school, was interested in children's educational books and wrote a number of them. It was when he came up with the the I-Spy formula that he approached a number of publishers, but none was interested, and in 1948 himself published the first I-Spy Spotterbook, which was sold in Woolworth's for sixpence (or a shilling in colour).



The formula worked: there were accurate pictures and descriptions, encouraging children to go out and find the objects depicted, giving them the right to fill in the score-panels in the books. Forty pages long, the books covered a wide range of subjects, from motor-cars to the seaside, and from animals to pillar-boxes.

He was able to convince someone at the *Daily Mail* that his idea was worth taking further, and an I-Spy feature was regularly published. The *Daily Mail* also took over the responsibility for the publication of the books, and children could write to Big Chief I-Spy at his Wigwam-on-the-Water, London, E.C.4.

At the *Daily Mail*, responsibility devolved upon Arthur Bolitho, manager of the Ideas and Business Development Department, a sort of in-house advertising agency-cum-publishing company. Bolitho was a tiny man, who had joined the *Daily Mail* from Benson's, the advertising agents, where he had been renowned for his advertising launch of Sarony cigarettes. I often wondered why these were so-named, although I had an idea that there was some connection with Leslie Sarony, the comedian and songwriter.

At that time, I was working under Arthur ('Mr Bolitho' to me, of course. None of your first-name familiarity then!) in a somewhat junior capacity. He it was who involved me in the publication of I-Spy books. He was an odd little chap, but very efficient, with a somewhat quirky sense of humour.

Although I lived very near the office, I was almost invariably late, sometimes being caught in the act by Arthur. I was also frequently required to work on a Saturday, which meant I could claim overtime (at 'time-and-a-half'). On one week-day occasion, Arthur caught me creeping in late. "Good morning Mr Beal," he said. "Quarter of an hour late, I see. At this rate, you'll be putting in for some *undertime!*" He went off, chortling to himself, while I counted myself lucky that his sense of humour had prevailed!

The I-Spy books were quite a success, and the regular feature in the *Daily Mail* helped matters greatly. Members of the club received an I-Spy badge and were initiated into the secret code system, with its familiar greeting "Odhun/tinggo"! In case anyone is puzzled, that means 'good hunting'. Charlie was careful to offer this greeting to members of the staff when he arrived at Northcliffe House, and we were expected to reply similarly. At its peak, the club had half-a-million members who could take part in various outings and meetings.

One day Arthur Bolitho opened the little hatch window from his office, and called out to me: "Would you come in, Mr Beal?" Inside, I found Arthur looking rather perturbed. "Mr Beal, you know Charles Warrell, of course." Arthur's face had a strange, hunted look.

"But do you know what Mr Warrell wants to do?"

Of course, I hadn't the foggiest idea. "No, sir. Is there some difficulty?"

"You could certainly say that. Mr Warrell wants to go round the cinemas dressed as a Red Indian!" He sat back in his chair, looking up at me, and obviously waiting for an expression of horror to come over my face. I was a little surprised, but felt like laughing. I really couldn't see any very awful about the idea, and anyway, Charlie Warrell was a genuine eccentric, and nothing about him surprised me.

"He's asking for big posters from the *Daily Mail*, and wants to perform a stage act of some kind. Can you imagine what Mr McWhirter¹ or Lord Rothermere² will say to that?"

I wasn't too sure. Associated Newspapers, which published the *Daily Mail*, *The Evening News*, *The Sunday Dispatch*, *The Overseas Daily Mail* and *The Continental Daily Mail* was a very important, and dignified organisation, a national institution whose image was not to be sullied. Arthur Bolitho was horrified at the Red Indian idea, and made this clear to everyone, including Charlie Warrell.

I'm not sure whether Big Chief I-Spy actually did visit cinemas, but I doubt whether it was done under the *Daily Mail* aegis. At any rate, a year or two later, the *Daily Mail* lost interest in I-Spy, and Charlie Warrell took his idea to the *News Chronicle*, which continued the idea very successfully. But changes were to come. In October, 1960, the *News Chronicle* and its sister paper *The Star* ceased publication, and sold out to Associated Newspapers, which merged the titles with the *Daily Mail* and *The Evening News*.

So it seemed that Big Chief I-Spy would be back with the *Daily Mail* again. By this time, I was working for Fleetway Publications, so was not present when the news was broken to Arthur Bolitho, but I can imagine his chagrin. Fortunately, however, the *News Chronicle* organisation had formed a book company called Dickens Publications, which was responsible for the I-Spy books and it was arranged that this company would continue independently. Charlie Warrell's titles went with the deal, but it happened that Warrell had retired the year before.

I-Spy Books went on for some time, and only a few years ago, they were re-launched by Michelin, in a very much up-dated style. Charles Warrell was born in Farmborough, Somerset, on 23rd April, 1889, and claimed that he was taken to see Queen Victoria when he was four years old. For some years he lived at Budleigh Salterton, where former Redskins could visit him. His death was reported by *The Daily Telegraph* in 1991; news which – understandably – annoyed him, but suitable reparations and a gift of champagne mollified him. He died in Matlock, Derbyshire on 26th November this year, six years after reaching his century.

¹William McWhirter, managing director; father of the McWhirter twins who started *The Guinness Book of Records*. ²1st Baron Rothermere, chairman.



ROOKWOOD RHYMES—

KIT ERROLL
(of the Fourth Form).

KIT ERROLL, fearless, frank, and free!
So true to all his vows and,
As "H. A." readers will agree,
A fellow in a thousand!

The way he backed up Mornington
Through fair and stormy weather,
Has for this dauntless junior won
Both praise and fame together!

He stood by Mornington throughout,
He backed him up in all things;
Nor was this faithful chum put out
By mighty things or small things.
If Mornington received the "sack,"
And caused a big commotion,
Kit Erroll would be at his back,
So great is his devotion.

He also brings off many feats
In every sort of pastime;
Each cricketing achievement beats
The score he put up last time.
His style at footer's very neat,
He joins in routs and rallies;
And, once the ball is at his feet,
He very rarely dallies!

Had Erroll lived in bygone days,
A knight in shining armour,
His chivalrous and manly ways
Would win him some fair charmer.
"A very perfect, gentle knight"
Would be his reputation;
And like a lion he would fight
For freedom and the nation!

Kit Erroll, you're a splendid sort!
The girls and boys of Britain
Enjoy your deeds in school and sport,
So well and ably written.
Long may you strive to play the game,
And noble virtues cherish;
Then never shall your name and fame
Within our memory perish!



ROOKWOOD RHYMES—

TOMMY DOYLE
(of the Modern House).

THE "Tommies" on the Modern Side
Are only three in number;
But, causing havoc far and wide,
They seldom seem to slumber.
With Jimmy Silver and his host
They wage perpetual warfare;
And every day fresh scars they boast,
Yet nothing could be more fair.

There's Tommy Cook and Tommy Dodd—
A precious pair of beauties,
Who sometimes—do not think it odd—
Neglect their daily duties.
They much prefer a rousing scrap
To Q. Horatius Flaccus;
And so do most of us, mayhap—
Therefore, the masters whack us.

Another Tommy shares the spoil;
He's always known to smile and
Look pleasant; this is Tommy Doyle,
Son of the Emerald Island.
Without him, both his chums would find
The game not worth the candle;
For Doyle's is quite a master-mind—
Vast problems he can handle.

Keen, daring, eager for a jape,
He wins our admiration;
Mixed up in many a boyish scrape
And warlike operation.
The Classic heroes must admit
That Tommy Doyle's a terror;
In youthful escapades he's IT,
And seldom makes an error.

Go forth and prosper, Tommy lad;
The future lies before you!
Long may your merry japes make glad
The readers who adore you!
Your sunny smile, in calm or strife,
Is ever bright and cheering
To those who, up the hill of life,
Are gamely persevering.

"Come, Bunter," said Mr. Quelch genially. "You can tell me what monarch came after Queen Elizabeth?"

"Oh, yes, sir!" said Bunter confidently.

"Well, who was it, Bunter?"

"Phillip of Spain, sir."

"What?" ejaculated Mr. Quelch.

"But she wouldn't have him, sir!" added Bunter.

MAGNET 1069

"I say, what about a lift?" asked Bunter. "I'll give you half-a-crown for a lift to Lantham, if you're going there."

Some fellows would have offered a shilling for a lift in a returning lorry. Bunter generously offered half-a-crown.

As he had neither half-a-crown nor a shilling in his possession, however, he could afford to be generous - in his offer, at least.

MAGNET 1059

It was right and proper, of course, for Bunter to be wanted. No party really was complete without Bunter. No excursion could be considered a real success unless Bunter joined therein. This was all clear to Billy Bunter.

On the other hand it never seemed clear to other fellows as it did to Bunter. Fellows had been known to prefer Bunter's room to his company - not, of course, realising how much they were missing.

So right and proper, as it were, for the Famous Five to want Billy Bunter's company that bright April morning, Bunter was suspicious. He thought that there was a catch in it somewhere.

MAGNET 1628

"Here, my man!" said Coker. "Show me the shortest way to Friardale Lane, will you? I'll tip you a shilling."

"Thank you kindly, sir!" said the broken-nosed man, picking up a cudgel from the log. "Mebbe you'd make it a pound?"

Coker stared at him. He was not quick on the uptake, and did not see the connection between the cudgel and the request for a pound.

MAGNET 1516

Every fellow in the Form knew more or less of his strange story, owing to the length and activity of Billy Bunter's tongue.

MAGNET 1196

Certainly, the sounds that were proceeding from the wireless at the moment were not grateful or comforting. They were, in fact, horrid. A Jazz Band with a double allowance of saxophones would have sounded musical in comparison.

But in radio matters, as in others, the rough had to be taken with the smooth. Sometimes a station came through beautifully. Sometimes it seemed to be coming through a dog-fight, accompanied by a horde of cats on the tiles.

MAGNET 1522

"Oh crickey!" gasped Bunter.

He flew.

Bunter was no sprinter, but circumstances alter cases. With fierce pursuit at his heels, the fat owl of the Remove could put on speed, and he did. He puffed and he blew, but while he blew, he flew.

MAGNET 1524

IN THIS
ISSUE:

"HOMEWARD BOUND!"

A SPLENDID STORY OF THE
GIRLS OF MORCOVE SCHOOL.

The Schoolgirls' Own



DELAY WOULD BE FATAL! (An incident from the grand long complete story of the girls of Morcove School contained in this issue.)

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