

# STORY PAPER COLLECTORS' DIGEST

VOL. 50

No. 594

JUNE 1996



No. 97. Vol. 4.

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# STORY PAPER COLLECTORS' DIGEST

Editor: MARY CADOGAN

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Founded in 1941 by  
W.H. GANDER

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## Between Friends



### GOLDEN JUBILEE PREPARATIONS

Plans for our 50 years-on celebrations seem to be working out well, and I shall soon be able to give you details of the Museum Press volume to mark the great occasion. I have received many very interesting new articles and features for this and, of course, it will also include memories of, and some reprints from, early issues of the C.D. I shall be glad to receive in good time, well ahead of publication, any articles that readers might wish to submit for our special November issue of the C.D., which I hope will be a double number. A month or two before we have completed our 50 year run, the

C.D.'s half century will be celebrated at a special Luncheon of the London Old Boys Book Club. I understand from its Chairman, Bill Bradford, that representatives of other Clubs, and also individual friends will be coming from many parts of the country to attend this luncheon party.

### **WRITERS' DAYS AND SOCIETIES**

Last month I mentioned the regular gatherings which take place to celebrate the works of those popular authors Richmal Crompton, Enid Blyton, W.E. Johns and Malcolm Saville. I understand that now the Northern Old Boys' Book Club (whose members were responsible for the original launching of the Just William and Biggles meetings) now plans to start a Jennings Society. Anthony Buckeridge, who is of course the creator of this lively and entertaining schoolboy character, has given his blessings to the enterprise. Interested readers of the C.D. should please write for further details (enclosing S.A.E.) to The Northern O.B.B.C., c/o 37 Tinshill Lane, Leeds, LS16 6BU. It is hoped that the first meeting will take place in May or June of 1997, probably somewhere in the Midlands.

### **GOODBYE TO OLD FRIENDS**

You will see that following this editorial we have two tributes to members of our hobby circle who sadly have recently passed away. We heard too, towards the end of last month, of the death of that celebrated actor, Jon Pertwee. In memory of him we are pleased to publish in this issue Laurence Price's article about the Pertwee years of the Dr. Who Annual.

MARY CADOGAN

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### **CHARLES CHURCHILL** (Remembered by E. Grant-McPherson)

Charles sadly passed away on the 3rd of May at the age of 86. He had been until quite recently a very popular member of the S.W. Club. He was a keen reader of the Collectors' Digest for many years, and had many articles printed, all dealing with St. Frank's and the Nelson Lee, of which he was an avid supporter. He had been the proud possessor of a complete run of the old series.

Another of his favourite subjects was the detective 'Cromwell' popularly known by his disrespectful assistant, as 'Old Iron', written also by E.S.B. but under the guise of Victor Gunn. Again Charles had almost a complete run, with the exception of two, which I am pleased to say I was able to provide for him.

Because of the long journey from Exeter, he and his good lady were unable to visit the club so often. He and I spoke quite often, however, and he was always very keen to know of the happenings at the Book Club.

After the sad departure of Robert Blythe, Charles was probably as well versed in the writings of E.S.B. as anyone, and will be very sadly missed by many C.D. readers, and by the writer in particular.

**DEATH OF JAMES STAGG - SEXTON BLAKE WRITER.**  
**(A Tribute from Bill Lofts)**

News has just reached me of the death of 'Jim' Stagg who was assistant to Howard Baker on the Sexton Blake Library in the sixties. 'Jim', whom I knew fairly well, was born at Newport, Isle of Wight in 1918, was a journalist on several newspapers, including the old Live Letters on the Daily Mirror, before moving to Fleetway House. He mainly worked on the Picture Libraries including The Super Detective Library which was part of Bill Baker's group of papers.

'Jim' was a prolific writer of stories, especially children's, for which he won a prize of £500, the E. Nesbit Children's Book award for his novel 'A Castle for the Kopchecks'. His first Blake story was in 1956, and in 1961 he actually used his first name of 'Gilbert' on a tale by Gilbert Johns. An extremely pleasant man, he later went free-lancing in the West Country, where he worked as editor on a local newspaper. He died in March of this year, aged 77. My thanks to Dave Westlake for supplying me details of his death.

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*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 in our seventh year, the Winter 1995 edition (number 25) included a complete Biggles story and a non-fiction article by Johns. The Spring 1996 edition will be published during March.*

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## KALEIDOSCOPE OF THE 'OTHER TIME'

by Ted Baldock

It is very likely that many 'Magnet' readers carry in their minds a series of 'snapshots' which persist and show little sign of receding with the passing of time. These will have retained a clarity and freshness while much other material from early days - if not entirely forgotten - is seldom dredged up from the depths of the memory.

Who among these older readers does not recall and see vividly yet among a welter of other images that of Henry Samuel Quelch M.A. pacing sedately, in billowing gown, along Masters walk in the Spring sunshine, briefly free from the rigours of the Remove form-room.

Other resilient images are Mr. Mible's bent figure attending to the flower beds in the Head's garden or wielding a hoe in the vegetable plot: George Wingate striding by with Gwynne and Sykes, engrossed in football talk: Billy Bunter, hands in pockets gazing longingly in the tuckshop window: William Gosling active - in rather a sluggish way - with a broom in the vicinity of the main gate. Then there is 'Mauly' lounging towards a shady seat beneath the elms, in the topmost branches of which agitated old rooks are cawing. (Some of these have been likened, by certain humorous fellows, to certain masters, as they strut importantly on the sixth form green with clerky mein.)

Horace Coker reiterates at wearisome length for the hundredth time on his 'short way with fags' to the heroically long-suffering Potter and Greene whose expressions, were sometimes sufficiently lethal to have knocked the great Horace upon the hard stones of the quad. Loder, Walker and Carne are strolling along the footpath by the Sark with an exaggerated air of casualness in the direction of the 'Three Fishers'. There, doubtless, the beery countenance of Joseph Banks will be peering expectantly from the windows of the seedy billiard room anticipating a harvest of winnings in the offing.

Although it is acknowledged that Gerald Loder is a shady character, he is yet far from being a 'Flashman'. There exists a clear demarcation line between a 'Rotter' and an unmitigated 'Cad'. Delve a little into Loder's character and one might discover glimmerings of decency which, sadly all too often, are swept aside by less creditable urges.

A merry crowd of fellows, Harry Wharton and Co., are disporting themselves on the river with much shouting and laughter. The cool shadows beneath the trees on Popper's island beckon on a warm summer afternoon. Sunshine and shadows. Good times and anxious moments and, ever present, the old grey pile of Greyfriars school.

Further afield we know that, in Courtfield, 'Chunkleys' - that palace of delights - will be serving its usual splendid teas from well supplied tables against the cheery clatter of cups and saucers. And nearer home the quiet old village street of Friardale will be dreaming in the sunshine with all activity seemingly suspended. The corpulent figure of



police constable Tozer, will, with collar loosened in the heat under the awning of Mr. Clegg's little shop, ponder upon the prospects of promotion. This, for some perverse reason, appears to bypass this stalwart representative of law and order.

A grinning and furtively whispering trio near the box-room stairs at Greyfriars are obviously plotting a jape upon some unsuspecting victim. Harold Skinner, Snoop and Stott, - this less than salubrious trio have been well chronicled in the saga. Skinner, the acknowledged leader of this unholy three, has probably participated in more scrapes and less than honourable activities than any of his form-mates. Sidney James Snoop and Stott are his pliable pawns, although Snoop has on rare occasions shown promise of better things. They follow weakly in the wake of their leader painting a somewhat grey area on the canvas which throws into higher relief the sunnier places. But for these shadows would the sun seem quite as bright elsewhere?

No gallery of characters would be quite complete should it not record the stately progress of Paul Pontifex Prout, master of the fifth form, as he paces ponderously near Masters' studies; his voluminous fluttering gown has about it an air of permanence and solidity, a comforting assurance that all is well with the world of Greyfriars. This well-being, in part, is what the school means to so many readers, both young and not so young. Change we do not desire. These happy reflections are for us ever fresh and new. To alter them in any respect would topple the carefully built edifice into oblivion.

In the deep shadows long after 'lights out' we may glimpse the dark figure of Herbert Vernon Smith, the 'Bounder', making his silent way to that particular ivy clad spot in the cloisters where the crumbling masonry provides an easy exit into the lane beyond. Where is he bound at this hour? Need we ask. One thing may be taken as read. Back in the Remove dormitory, he has left an uneasy and sleepless chum. Tom Redwing's remonstrances have once again proved inadequate. The lure of the green shaded lamps over the billiard table and the click of ivory balls has proved, once again, too strong for the Bounder.

All these easily recognisable 'snapshots' of characters are from a fictional setting which has become legendary. They are part of our lives as natural to us as the next door neighbours, our high street, or village lane.

I often feel that, apart from certain characters in the novels of Charles Dickens and Sir Walter Scott, those of the Greyfriars saga are the best loved and most 'real' people on our imaginative horizons. It has been truly said, *bis pueri senes*.

There exists a certain school of thought that nostalgia is unwise - even dangerous. Surely this depends largely upon the individual. Researching into the historical past may well be considered as nostalgia, a desire to enter into and absorb the atmosphere of past times. To a lesser degree, even the contemplation of last year's holiday may be similarly viewed. However, providing a degree of discipline is observed, the 'activity' of looking back can be a fascinating and rewarding hobby.

Memory hold the door - I pray,  
May yet the lights still glimmer,  
Upon our youthful work and play,  
Let not the dreams grow dimmer.

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**WANTED: ALL** pre-war Sexton Blake Libraries, **All** Boys Friend Libraries, **ALL** comics/papers etc with stories by W.E. Johns, Leslie Charteris & Enid Blyton. **Original artwork from Magnet, Gem, Sexton Blake Library etc.** also wanted. I will pay **£150.00** for original Magnet cover artwork, **£75.00** for original Sexton Blake Library cover artwork. **NORMAN WRIGHT**, 60 Eastbury Road, Watford, WD1 4JL. Tel: 01923 232383.



## THE AUNT SOPHIE DEMOLITION COMPANY

by Ray Hopkins

"Charley's Aunt was a scream - but Archie's "Aunt" is a Tartar!" So runs the brief blurb above the title of this entertaining St. Frank's tale from late September 1928. The fact that Archie's relative's title is set in what we used to call inverted commas may caution one's immediate acceptance of the old girl. Do I make myself clear? No? Good, then perhaps you'll be intrigued enough to read on.

Hal Brewster, with five other members of the River House Fourth form, are visiting St. Frank's ostensibly to arrange footer matches with Nipper. That appears to be the main reason for their being on the spot. Secondly, they hope to be there when a certain big event materialises. A meeting in the lane with Archie Glenthorne so sunk into deep despair that he doesn't care if they rag him because nothing could be worse than the appalling visit from a "frightful dragon": the disgraceful way Archie describes his Aunt Sophie. He hasn't seen her since he was five when she departed for South Africa. Ten years later she has returned and is coming to visit him and to transform him. Archie remembers her as being an experienced grumble-grouch, a tremendous critic of small boys, orders and instructions pouring from her thin lips, and immediate obedience mandatory. She is a tiny little tornado who will whirl Archie out of his comfortable existence including the probable banishing of the devoted and very necessary Phipps.



A "painful" episode from the rollicking long complete yarn inside, featuring the Chums of St. Frank's.

New Series No. 126.

OUT ON WEDNESDAY.

September 29th, 1928.

Archie isn't exactly sure when the reign of terror will commence but his increasing gloom makes him fear that the end is nigh. And that very afternoon Aunt Sophie does indeed arrive. How glorious and not at all suitable for the ensuing comedy of horrors, had she turned up looking like the enchanting Kay Francis in the 1941 (Jack Benny) version of "Charley's Aunt" and, while she is not pictured as though she's just come from modelling at an 1890's fashion show as in the gowns usually assigned in the 1920's to Coker's Aunt Judy and Tom Merry's Miss Fawcett, she seems to lack that feminine softness of approach that one appreciates from one's Aunties, whether deserved or not.

Vivian Travers of the Ancient House Remove introduces himself to the lady when Archie's Aunt steps from the rather imposing looking car she has arrived in and, his politeness knowing no bounds, also introduces his study-mate Sir Jimmy Potts. But Aunt Sophie does not wish to know their names and requires no more than one escort to conduct her to her nephew's study. Oddly, she refuses to first call upon the Housemaster!

Arrival in the Remove passage finds a not unusual fracas taking place in Study D with the not unexpected ejection by Handforth of Church, culminating with his crashing against the passage wall and sliding down into a heap on the floor. This confirms Aunt Sophie's fears of finding St. Frank's a hotbed of hooligans and ruffians. Surmising that Handforth is the ill-mannered brute who has flung Church from the study, she demands that he approach her holding his hand out. Not to be shaken, you understand, but to be beaten, with her ever-ready umbrella. Handforth demurs and is instantly rewarded for his disobedience by three painful swishes to his knuckles, his back and his legs. Travers opens the door of Study E and indicates that the lady's nephew will be found within.

Archie Glenthorne is blissfully enjoying a most refreshing snooze. Aunt Sophie silences Travers as he goes to wake Archie. She prowls around Study E complaining of the absurd luxury and comfort, all totally unnecessary and making an absolute fool of someone who is already soft and pampered. Having totted up the unfortunate Archie's deficiencies, she decides to bring him into the orbit of her displeasure by a generous whack across his chest with her umbrella. Archie, strangely, believes this to be a signal from Phipps that a steaming cup of the brew that gently stimulates awaits him and, before really focussing on anything, utters chirrups of joy. Then out of the mists of pleasure appears the stern face of Aunt Sophie who informs him that she has already heard that he is "lazy, indolent and worthless" and she can see now that he is nothing but a "pampered dude" and a "perfectly useless member of society." Poor Archie! He is stunned, nay transfixed, as Aunt Sophie imparts the fact that his waistcoat is absurd and must be destroyed. His necktie is atrocious! Aunt Sophie throws it in the fire when Archie reluctantly removes it. Monocles being "a sign of imbecility." Archie's awful Aunt tears it from his eye and casts it into the waste basket.

This spectacle has been witnessed with delight by Travers and by Handforth and Nipper and other occupants of neighbouring studies drawn out by strident female tones. And on the outskirts of the crowd by the visitors from the River House School. Never had Brewster and Co. enjoyed such an entertainment on any of their previous calls at St. Frank's.

Polite murmurs from Phipps carrying a large tray of tea things cause a separation in the close-packed crowd around the doorway. But - "tea is poison" and "should be prohibited by Act of Parliament." Aunt Sophie has nothing good to say about anything at all and when she hears that Phipps is Archie's personal valet rather than one of the school servants her ringing tones inform all and sundry and, in particular, Phipps that his services are no longer required by her nephew and he may pack his bags and leave! Phipps objects to his summary dismissal but is quickly brought to heel by a whack from the umbrella which jogs some hot liquid out of the teapot and gives Phipps an unpleasant wet pain in his chest.

Can things get any worse? Oh yes, indeed! Aunt Sophie focuses next on Archie's furniture, overstuffed and gloriously comfy, and orders its consignment to a lumber room, whereat there is a general move to be gone from the highly amused audience in the passage. But it is too late! Several juniors are assigned to do a spot of heavy lifting and Archie's lovely furniture disappears down the passage.

Nipper, who has been a keen observer of the extraordinary goings-on, wonders if Aunt Sophie is perhaps off her chump: surely no close relative, however censorious, would go this far and strip down a comfortable study to a bare prison cell. One small table and a hard chair.....But here his ruminations are interrupted by a warning cry of the approach of Mr. Crowell, the Remove Form-master. Aunt Sophie swiftly orders the study door closed saying she wants no interruptions from a schoolmaster in her successful rout of Archie's comfortable existence.

Nipper happened to be looking closely at Aunt Sophie as Crowell's imminence is announced and is startled to see what looks like a flash of fear in the fierce lady's countenance. How does she, a complete stranger to St. Frank's, know the name is that of a master? And even if she did she would surely know that she would have to explain her heavy-handed actions to someone in authority before very long. Mr. Crowell does not, after all, enter the Remove passage and Aunt Sophie carries on with the superintending of the evacuation of Archie's furniture.

But Nipper, in a sudden flash of excitement caused by his observations and the quite incredible upheaval caused by Archie's Aunt, begins to wonder if the redoubtable lady is really real, or can she be a clever fake? Nipper turns his attentions to the River House visitors and observes that Brewster and Co appear to be having some difficulty in keeping their faces as straight as politeness would demand. Their very attitudes seem to be an attempt to hold back a much wider elation.

Nipper pulls back Handforth and Travers as they return from the lumber room, points out the quivering Brewster and Co, and comments that it seems suspicious that six of them turn up just to discuss soccer dates at the same time as Archie's Aunt appeared. Also, Archie would have no idea what his Aunt really looked like, not having seen her for ten years, and would a real Aunt fire Phipps in the way she did and order schoolboys to lug heavy furniture about? Is it possible, Nipper whispers, that Brewster and Co have employed this mystery woman to come to St. Frank's and cause havoc to put one over on their rivals?

But this is too thick and Nipper pauses for another think. The name Cyril Graham suddenly comes to his mind. A new fellow at the River House, son of a famous actor, who has fooled the St. Frank's crowd once before by dressing up as someone's sister. But he couldn't possibly be talented enough to be effective as an acidulous old lady. No smooth-faced schoolboy could be made up in such a way that a close look would not reveal the youthful features behind the greasepaint. But Aunt Sophie had not stood still long enough for any of them to have a really close look at her. And the brilliant acting would cancel out any little mistakes in the make-up and the "old" voice, rasping and unpleasant, would hide any apparent youthful lightness of tone.

Handforth typically wants to instigate some rough stuff to expose Aunt Sophie and is all for pulling off her hat saying it will be proof positive if the hair comes away with the hat. But Nipper cautions that they must be sure, before actually touching the old "she", that the person is a young "he" cleverly disguised. Nipper thinks he has a way to trip up Aunt Sophie so that she will condemn herself out of her own mouth.

Nipper, Handforth and Travers return to Study E to find it bare and desolate - even the carpet has been rolled up and removed - and Aunt Sophie is rousing Archie to come along to his bedroom so that she may take that living space to pieces.

Nipper politely introduces himself as the Captain of the Remove and informs Aunt Sophie that Archie had always been considered a special case and that his Uncle Jeremiah had insisted that he had comfortable furniture and, indeed, paid for it all, and advised Archie to live in a tranquil fashion to ensure long life. Aunt Sophie, not knowing that the curtain is about to fall on her really superb performance, reads from the wrong script when she admits to life-long impatience with Jeremiah, considering him to have all the same lazy attributes as Archie.

Nipper smiles as he has only just that moment invented an uncle for Archie called Jeremiah. If he proceeds with caution it will now be possible to round up the six visitors from the River House together with the star performer himself before they have the chance to leave the Remove passage, and punish them for what has been a most magnificent jape. But Handforth forestalls all Nipper's subtler plans by loudly revealing that a River House jape has been in progress. Before any of the St. Frank's juniors can move, Aunt Sophie has taken a flying leap out of Study E and follows Brewster and Co, along the passage and down the stairs, Nipper and Co, in hot pursuit.

The River House juniors are slightly ahead of the disguised Cyril Graham, creating interference for him as it were. Mr. Pyecraft, the Fourth Form master, comes through the Ancient House doorway as they emerge and is spread-eagled. Graham, swerving to miss him, just moves aside in time to evade a bag of jam tarts, swiped by Handforth from a passing junior, and hurled after the fleeing "Aunt Sophie".

Mr. Pyecraft, blinded by the squashy jam-tarts oozing through the thin paper bag, is unable to avoid the next onslaught caused by his being overtaken by Handforth and Co, and finishes up at the bottom of the Ancient House steps. The St. Frank's juniors are thankful that Mr. Pyecraft, temporarily blinded, will not know who his assailants are but they slow down momentarily gazing in consternation at the damage their blind rush after the japers has done to the master of the Fourth.

This slight delay has enabled all seven of the River House juniors to retrieve bicycles they had hidden in the hedge opposite the St. Frank's gates and be off down the lane, laughing their heads off, while Handforth and Co., deciding they had better make themselves scarce before Mr. Pyecraft looks around to see who has knocked him over, vanish around the Ancient House to return inside by another door.

Away from all the noise and confusion of the departure, Archie is surveying his bleak study and wondering how he has stood it all. He now knows that his study can be put to rights with the help of those who dismantled it. But what will happen when his real Aunt turns up? Is there not a chance that she will prove even more of a gorgon than the clever impersonator from the River House School?

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(Rewritten from incidents in NELSON LEE LIBRARY, New Series 126, 29 September 1928, entitled "My Only Sainted Aunt!")

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## 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.



## Brett Marlow - Private Detective

by Bill Lofts

*Lion* was one of the new style post war style publications that first appeared on 23rd February 1952. The Amalgamated Press was then still publishing under its imprint. So successful was its popular format that about two years later they started *Tiger*.

Like most other papers, *Lion* featured its own picture-strip detective, this time named Brett Marlowe, who was created by writer Colin Robertson (1906-80). He had penned 40 books, some stage plays and also produced items for broadcasting. A founder-member of the Crime Writers Association he wrote one Sexton Blake for the New Book era. His Marlowe stories were contributed under the House pen-name of 'John Fordice' as was the practice of other writers who took over from time to time, including Frank Pepper.

*Brett Marlowe -  
Detective*

# THE CASE OF THE TAILOR'S DUMMY

By  
JOHN FORDICE

BRETT MARLOWE, ACE DETECTIVE, HAD BEEN PAYING A CALL AT SCOTLAND YARD. THERE HE LEARNT THAT MUGSY GILL, TOP-GRADE JEWEL THIEF, WAS IN TOWN AGAIN. MUGSY HAD BEEN TAKING A SUSPICIOUS INTEREST IN THE GOLD TIGER OF SARADAH - A PRICELESS, JEWELLED ORNAMENT WHICH WOULD BE ON VIEW AT THE EASTERN EXHIBITION THAT EVENING. BRETT LEFT THE YARD TO RETURN TO HIS CHELSEA FLAT.



BRETT JOINED RUSTY RACE, HIS DARE-DEVIL CHAUFFEUR AND ASSISTANT, WHO HAD BEEN WAITING IN THE 'TEC'S' FAST SPORTS CAR, AND TOLD HIM ABOUT THE JEWELLED ORNAMENT.

THE GOLD TIGER OF SARADAH, CHIEF, I'VE HEARD THAT'S WORTH A FORTUNE.

AND HOW, RUSTY! NICE PICKINGS FOR A CROOK - IF HE COULD GET AWAY WITH IT! AND THE YARD SUSPECT THAT MUGSY GILL -

SUDDENLY - - A DRAMATIC INTERRUPTION ON THE THAMES EMBANKMENT.

HEY! SEE THAT, CHIEF?

I SEE ALL RIGHT! TROUGH GOINGS ON, RUSTY! I GUESS I'LL INVESTIGATE.

BRETT'S FIRST THOUGHT WAS FOR THE MAN IN THE WATER - -

THERE ARE STEPS DOWN TO THE RIVER FURTHER ALONG, RUSTY. WAIT FOR ME THERE AND GIVE A HAND WHEN I BRING THAT FELLER OUT OF THE WATER!

(Illustration of Brett Marlowe and Rusty Race on a boat, with Brett reaching out to help a man in the water.)

Brett Marlowe was cast in the familiar mould of being about 30 years old, clean cut, a private detective who lived in a flat at Chelsea. He had an assistant named Rusty Race; who was also a dare-devil chauffeur, who drove Marlowe's sports racing care - the Silver Lynx. The stories had a good run of 157 issues and ran to 19th Feb. 1955.

Some of them were reprinted about a decade later in the sixties in *Hurricane*. I knew the first editor of *Lion* quite well, he being a mine of inside information. Bernard Smith was on a number of popular papers in pre-war days including *Scout* and *Champion*. Still alive at 93! I also knew a later editor of *Lion* quite well. He was also a friend of the late Derek Adley.

No doubt that Brett Marlow will bring back nostalgic memories to the postcard collectors.

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## THE MAN FROM SCOTLAND YARD - (U.J. No. 222 JANUARY 11th 1908)

by Reg Hardinge

It was in this tale that Ernest Sempill (real name Michael Storm) introduced his creation, George Marsden Plummer, for the first time. If Lon Chaney, silent film star was considered to be the Doyen of make-up wizardry in the world of celluloid, then Plummer was his equal in the area of crime fiction. Using a variety of wigs, beards and attire, Plummer, during the course of the story, presented himself in no fewer than nine different disguises. Ringing the changes with hair of grey, black, tawny, white and sandy shades on crown and face, his impersonations included a solicitor; a woman wearing a grey shawl and cradling a baby (a doll actually) in her arms; a quarrelsome drunken sea-captain; two different medics and several other characters.

Actually Plummer's normal appearance was that of a clean-shaven, quietly dressed man of some five-feet-ten in height, with a powerful, quiet, inscrutable face, well-curved thin lips, a well-shaped nose, and well-proportioned figure. His hips had a lazy, assured strength in them "like the haunches of a panther sleepily stretching". He was born in Australia in 1875, the son of George Audley (A cousin of the Earl of Sevenoaks) and a Miss Plummer. At the time of his marriage Audley took the name of Plummer, and on his demise his widow and their son, George Marsden Plummer, came over to England and settled in Dawlish. (Coincidentally, another leading character in the *Annals of the Union Jack*, Yvonne Cartier, was also born in Australia) In 1893 Plummer joined the Police Force, and by virtue of his outstanding intelligence in 1903 had attained the rank of detective sergeant at Scotland Yard. He was 33 at the time of this narrative.

Plummer had learned that he was an heir of Alan Audley, Earl of Sevenoaks, whose grandson Horace Jenkins was his successor. Determined, ruthless and completely without scruples, Plummer decided to do away with Audley and Jenkins in order to inherit the earldom and the sixty thousand sovereigns a year that went with the estate. His first move was to travel down to Hastings posing as a solicitor, meet Horace Jenkins who was a coast guard, bludgeon him over the head, and send him toppling over the cliff edge and into the sea. Next he took a train from St. Leonard's to Sevenoaks, and then went on to Audley Hall. There, pretending to be a nobleman's secretary, he was admitted to the library. When the Earl arrived Plummer killed him by smashing in his temple with a life-preserver, and then leaving.

Sexton Blake, Tinker and Pedro were on a weekend cruise on Sir Lorrie Ogden's yacht, Stella, in the vicinity of Hastings. They witnessed from a distance the brutal attack on Jenkins, rescued him and took him on board the yacht. The unconscious man was holding a size 7½ inch glove in his clenched fist: the trio went ashore, Pedro was given the glove to sniff and picked up the scent of Jenkins's attacker. The trail led to the West Marina Station, and then, by dint of Blake's shrewd questions to various railway staff members, to Sevenoaks and eventually to Audley Hall. There they met Detective-Sergeant Plummer who had been put in charge of the case by Scotland Yard. Ironically enough he was investigating the murder which he himself had committed. Blake had met the Scotland Yard man earlier when both of them were on the Calthrop affair. On that occasion Blake had come off second best.

Before the Audley Hall murder was successfully concluded, Plummer had made two attempts on Blake's life. First, having trapped Blake in a room in a cottage, Plummer before leaving, had turned on the gas and ignited the combustible matter he had placed outside the door. But the explosion that followed shattered the door, allowing Blake an exit. Then, while travelling by train, Blake was saved by Pedro who nosing under his Master's seat uncovered a small dynamite cartridge with a time fuse, which the detective flung into the river that the train, was then crossing. On another occasion Plummer had Tinker in his power, drugged and bound, and with an 80 pound weight attached to his body. He dropped Tinker into the Regent Canal. Luckily the lad recovered, freed himself, and swam to safety.

Finally, Blake having all the evidence for a conviction, arrested Plummer for the murder of Alan Audley, Earl of Sevenoaks. The scoundrel looked round his cell, saw how white it was, and resolved that he simply could not stay in it for long.

The accompanying illustration by John Harris Valda is a rare example of Plummer's clean cut appearance.

When Michael Storm died, circa 1910, other authors continued to write about Plummer for the Union Jack and the Sexton Blake Library. His partnership with the exotic Vali-Mata Vali, a long running series penned by G.H. Teed, was certainly the most popular of his exploits. His tenderness towards Vali was perhaps the only redeeming factor in an otherwise thoroughly vicious individual.

'The man from Scotland Yard' was published as a serial in eight parts in the 'Dreadnought', commencing with the issue of November, 30th 1912. In 1913 it appeared in No. 50 of the 'Penny Popular' first series, under the title 'Hunter and Hunted Too'.

The illustration provided by Mr. Len Hawkey for the April 1996 C.D. cover shows Pedro with the all-important glove which linked Plummer to the murder. But why it was depicted as having been deposited in a filing cabinet in the Baker Street consulting room is another mystery altogether!



Pedro was attracted at his leash, his ruff distinctly excited, and his nostrils sniffing suspiciously round the Scotland Yard man.

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# Cliff House Annals

**MORE CASTAWAY CAPERS**

by Margery Woods

A desert island, or any island for that matter, is not necessary to a castaway, as the Cliff House chums discovered during a summer holiday in Cornwall with an aunt and uncle of Barbara Redfern, or to be accurate, as Bessie Bunter discovered. (SCHOOLFRIEND 97, 98, 99 March/April 1921)

Nine chums were met at the station by Uncle Tony, where they encountered Dr. Kelwyn, who greeted Uncle Tony and said sadly that he still dreamed his daughter Grace, missing for three years, might one day step off that train. Garth Lodge was only a very short distance from the seashore and after dinner that evening the girls went into the garden while Bessie unnoticed wandered down the path to the shore, her infallible Bunter nose

drawn by a smell of cooking. Bessie soon finds the rocky nook with the campfire and the cooking pot giving off that appetising aroma, and Bessie can't resist sampling the stew within, until suddenly a strange-looking girl appears and attacks her. When Bessie runs shrieking back to the house nobody believes her wild tale of being attacked by a cannibal. To pacify her the girls go to take a look but see no trace of fire, cooking pot or "cannibal". However, early next morning Babs finds a mysterious sandy footprint on the tiled floor of the hall at Garth Lodge.

And so the girls found long-lost Grace Kelwyn, although her name was withheld until much later in the story, and heard her strange and frightening tale of a ship torpedoed, of drifting alone on a raft, until she was washed ashore, unconscious, on a tropical island

where she fended for herself for three long years. On the island she found traces everywhere of an earlier Crusoe, and a wonderful hidden cave with an old chest containing a fabulous cloak of rainbow hues, also a bottle containing a strange liquid. When suffering a fever she dared to take some of the liquid, which proved to be a medicine which cured her fever. Then one day a steamer arrived, bringing white men and women, and trouble. Believing what they sought was the magic elixir, she offered it to them, only to see it smashed against the rocks, and instinct made her hide the cloak where no one would ever find it. Later she hears them talking about a plan they had found, and she decides to swim out to the ship and stow away in the hold, stealing food when she could, until England is sighted and she makes another desperate swim to escape the people she believes to be her enemies. And this was when Bessie made her startling discovery.

The story takes a humorous twist when Bessie decides to pose as a castaway and suddenly finds herself being captured and driven away. But help is at hand, and soon the news is out about the true castaway. The press descend on the little Cornish village, followed by the villains in full force and a second attempt at kidnap, to get the right girl this time, Bessie being not at all acceptable.

Then comes the denouement the reader had been waiting for since the start of the story. The Cliff House cavalry is racing to the rescue, but Dr. Kelwyn gets to the scene first, to realise he is rescuing his own precious daughter, unbelievably alive and well.

In the joyous reunion celebration that follows he is able to supply the missing part of Grace's story. The man on the island had been a doctor colleague from earlier days, a Dr. Knowles, who had gone to the island in search of solitude in which to research and study, until the outbreak of war in Europe when a naval cruiser, searching the chain of Caribbean islands found him and insisted on sending him back to England. Soon afterwards he died, leaving a packet addressed to his colleague of earlier days, Dr. Kelwyn. In it was his Will,



**THE STRANGE GIRL!** The figure of a girl—a girl dressed in torn and tattered rags, with bare arms and feet, and flying, long hair—appeared suddenly above the heads of the Cliff House girls, clinging to the face of the cliff.

a chart and a letter containing information about his invention of a cure for a dangerous fever and mentioning a remarkable cloak he had bought before he left England. It was then that Dr. Kelwyn and his daughter set sail for the island, only to be torpedoed and separated from each other in the dreadful time when the ship sank, and each believed the other had died.

This story, the first in the Grace Kelwyn and Cliff House castaways series, set the scene for the exciting journey of the girls with Dr. Kelwyn, Grace, and Babs' aunt and uncle to find the island and the formula for the fever cure. An ocean yacht was chartered, which turned out to be the same vessel that the villains had been on when they first found Grace, but Uncle Tony assured the nervous girl that the crew had now been vetted and the police were searching for the men and women who had tried to kidnap Bessie and then Grace. However, in the way of all storypaper villains, they have made their unwelcome way aboard, the women as stewardesses and the men among the crew, where they bribe some of them to mutiny as soon as the island is reached.



**BESSIE IS READY FOR ANYTHING!** "I'm blessed if I can see anything to grin about!" said Bessie Bunter. "Supposing we meet some cannibals; you'll be jolly glad that I've got my sword!"

The girls are trapped in an underground cave and by the time they escape to warn the adults it is too late and the yacht is disappearing towards the horizon. Now the girls are all castaways, and on such a paradise as the island proves to be they could enjoy life, for a while, but wonder when the villains will return to search again for the cloak they desire so much or whether they will make for a port where they can sell the yacht they have stolen.

The villains do return, leading to a series of plots and counterplots between the castaways and the villains turned pirates. The setting and the situations are exploited to the full during the rest of the story, with action, excitement, hopes dashed and then renewed, in the long battle for the cloak, making a tale to delight the aficionados of castaway tales, the one query being the cloak. A wonderful garment, as it is described several times, but what was its value, and what was the story behind its origin? We are told that Dr. Knowles was a rich man, but that he spent almost all his money on the cloak before he left England. Why, when his main purpose was to study and set up a laboratory on the island, not exactly an inexpensive project, even if the island did provide most of his basic needs free? Was it worth as much or more than a luxury ocean-going steam yacht? The cost of the pursuit of it would be quite considerable, plus the bribes to the crew. The formula of the fever cure could have proved a far more lucrative proposition if the rights were negotiated with a big pharmaceutical company yet the villains scorned this discovery. This is one mystery doomed to remain unsolved, along with a few others from those long gone storypapers.

Some readers may have been curious about the illustrations. Aboard the yacht the girls are depicted in suitably summery dresses yet on the island they are shown in school uniform. Would they pack uniforms to wear on holiday? On a tropical island?

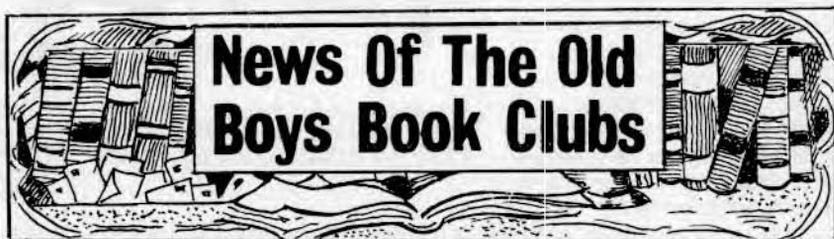
The basic outline of this series probably joined other popular plots on A.P.'s editorial stocks for it was worked several times during subsequent decades, starring island girls--- and boys--- on strange quests, the variations suitably embellished according to the style of

the particular author. The wonder-drug theme emerged some thirty years later in AERIAL CASTAWAYS OF THE SOUTH SEAS by Hazel Armitage (John Wheway), and the torpedoes had another war in which to riddle the seas.

Grace Kelwyn became a pupil of Cliff House soon after the party returned home but found enemies there, especially the arch meanie Marcia Loftus. It was too early to expect her to adapt instantly to such a different life-style. When she was discovered by Bessie she had simply exchanged one castaway setting for another, living by her wits on a lonely Cornish beach for several weeks. Pilfering food and basic essentials wherever she could under cover of darkness, all the while still in fear of people who could be hostile, and tragically unaware of her father living so close by. Her experiences had made her tough and self-sufficient; they had also robbed her of three years of schooling and the vital years of adolescence normally spent in preparing for adulthood and learning to rub along with one's peers. So Dr. Kelwyn decided to take her travelling with him until the wild restless spell of her island experiences began to relax its grip. Only then could she become a schoolgirl again.

There was no counselling for castaways in those days!

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### CAMBRIDGE CLUB

For our May meeting we travelled to the Duston (Northampton) home of member Howard Corn. After our usual short business meeting, Howard talked about the characters through the ages who had undertaken great escapes from injustice, basing his talk around an *Eagle* feature on the theme and on a recent Radio 4 series. We listened, captivated by tales from the time of Bonnie Prince Charlie, through the French Wars, the Boer War, P.O.W.s in W.W.I. and W.W.II. to the recent past of a Berlin Wall escape in 1980.

Later, Paul Wilkins provided an entertaining 20 question quiz also on the subject of escapes and escapees.

ADRIAN PERKINS

### LONDON O.B.B.C.

We met at the West Winterset (Salisbury) home of Gwen and Roy Parsons on Sunday, 12th May. The 18 members present were provided with an excellent buffet lunch, with second or even third helpings not unknown.

The programme started with a novel Quiz from Roy, in which he named a film or TV series and played a recording of the theme or background music, of which we had to name the title and composer. This was won by Brian Doyle, with Eric Lawrence and Graham Bruton in second and third place. The rest of the meeting had the theme of humour, commencing with a witty and entertaining discourse by Brian, including experiences in the film world, followed by a brief extracts from THREE MEN IN A BOAT, DIARY OF A NOBODY and the late Arthur Marshall's I'LL LET YOU KNOW.

Eric Lawrence then read a chapter from the GREYFRIARS HIKERS, always a popular series, this extract featuring Horace Coker at his best-or worst! Finally Roy spoke of P.G. Wodehouse, covering much of his life and career, and reading passages from his own large collection of this author's output. An informative and entertaining contribution.

It now looks as if our Lunch in September will attract more than forty hobbyists, so, if you have not already done so, please advise our Secretary if you wish to attend, as we may need a larger room than anticipated. Next meeting is on Sunday 9th June, at Wokingham commencing at 3.30 p.m. Bring your own tuck, but let Betty and Eric know if you are attending, along as they have to organise the seating.

BILL BRADFORD

### NORTHERN O.B.B.C.

At our May meeting, Joan gave an account of the excellent recently held William meeting in Leicester. From this stemmed a discussion concerning the proposed formation of a Jennings Society - especially as Anthony Buckeridge is our Vice-President.

Anthony had given us his "blessing" to go ahead, so readers of the C.D. will be kept in touch concerning progress.

It is hoped that five people will represent the club at the C.D. lunch in Chingford on 8th September.

We were pleased to have Alyson Leslie with us from Dundee - especially appropriate for our guest speaker was Derek Marsden from Liverpool talking about the storypapers of D.C. Thomson of Dundee.

Derek's theme was mainly sport, and he made reference to E.S. Turner's celebrated "Boys Will Be Boys". Sport stories appearing in "Boy's Own" had no plot as such and, without plots, descriptions of boys kicking footballs can be very boring. "The Marvel" had a similar aspect, although generally two themes ran side by side with the sport story. In 1921, Thomson produced "Adventure" which had a different attitude. When "The Wizard" came out some time later, there was still the aftermath of the melodrama of previous papers. Plots in the various sport stories were very similar as time went by, and Derek gave us some examples of the incredible themes including blind footballers, gangsters, poisoned and kidnapped competitors and of course, the orphaned boy player. By 1932 there was still a legacy of what had gone before. This "formula" writing appeared to work well for sales. The inventiveness of the hundreds of Thomson writers was tremendous. Derek's excellent presentation was much enjoyed by all.

Our next meeting is June 8th - summer break and barbecue at the home of our secretary in Wakefield. On July 13th we have as our guest Bill Lofts from London, and also Dr. Nandu Thalange will be talking about "Ponsonby the Psychopath".

JOHNNY BULL MINOR

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## GEMS OF HAMILTONIA FROM PETER HANGER

"Bunter, you are ten minutes late for class," said Mr. Quelch severely. "I - I'm sorry! I - I was busy, sir" stammered Bunter, with an uneasy blink at the pointer.

Mr. Quelch gave a glare

"You were too busy to come into your lessons?" he exclaimed.

"Exactly sir," said Bunter, apparently pleased to see that Mr. Quelch understood how the matter lay. MAGNET 643

Was this, Coker asked himself, the conduct a fellow had a right to expect from his pals - pals whom he had cherished, whom he corrected in their faults for their own good, whom he was never tired of lecturing for their improvement? MAGNET 1120

"You can search me if you like," gasped Bunter. "If - if you find any tuck about me I - I - I'll eat it!" MAGNET 1224

"BUNTER!"

"Oh!" gasped Billy Bunter

And he bolted.

It was surprising

It was, in fact, amazing.

Harry Wharton & Co. of the Greyfriars Remove stared blankly after the fat junior as he scudded across the quad.

"BUNTER" roared Bob Cherry.

Bunter did not heed. He hurtled on. It was not only surprising and amazing, it was astounding. For it was tea-time, and at tea time Billy Bunter was always more anxious to be found than to be lost. MAGNET 1477

"Cost you ten punds, sir!" said the taxi-man

"That's all right," said Bunter airily, jingling an English penny against a French one in his pocket. MAGNET 1244

He can't very well give me more lines when I've a book already and haven't touched it yet! Detentions, perhaps! If he gives me extra French, I will put up with it, for the sake of peace! MAGNET 1630

....."You've got some money in the bank, Richards. I'm relying on you to see me through."

"Oh, my hat!"

Frank Richards' money in the bank seemed to haunt Chunky Todgers. Somehow Chunky seemed convinced that if a fellow had any money in the bank he, Joseph Todgers, had a good claim to some of it. Chunky was a little bit of a socialist without knowing it.

BOYS' FRIEND 987

Bunter did not, perhaps, regard himself as a perfect character. But he was, he had no doubt, as near perfection as frail human nature could get. At all events, he could see no room for improvement, even with the aid of his big spectacles.

MAGNET 1563

.....said Herries of the Fourth. "Better chain him up out of reach of my bulldog. Towser doesn't like monkeys, and I shouldn't like Towser to eat him. He doesn't look overclean".

"Why, you silly ass --" said Tom Merry, indignantly.

"Well, I don't want Towser to be ill, you know. "

GEM 1539

William George Bunter, generally conspicuous by his circumference, was now conspicuous by his absence.

MAGNET 1010

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## DR. WHO ANNUALS - THE PERTWEE YEARS CONSIDERED

by Laurence Price

The BBC announced the third Doctor on 17th June 1969, the radio and stage actor, John Pertwee, perhaps then best known for his role in the long-running radio comedy series, "The Navy Lark".

The first colour episode was broadcast on 3rd January 1970. The sixties were gone and so were the old black and white episodes. There were other major changes, with a Tardis that would remain firmly earthbound for most of the first two seasons. The development of UNIT (United Nations Intelligence Taskforce) with the marvellous Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart (Nicholas Courtney) to the fore, was its effective replacement.

There were to be three consecutive female assistants, the scientist, Liz Shaw (Caroline John), intelligence agent, Jo Grant (Katy Manning) and the very popular Sarah Jane Smith (Elizabeth Sladen), a freelance journalist.

Pertwee, with his frilly shirts and cloaks, brought an extrovert, dandy-like approach to the Doctor, as well as his love of Bond-like gadgets and inventions, including the futuristic Whomobile of his own design and not forgetting "Bessie", his yellow 'Edwardian' car. He met a number of his old enemies, but Pertwee personally hated the Daleks, finding them boring. He had admiration, however, for a new enemy in the form of the villainous Master, a renegade Time Lord bent on evil, played by the excellent Roger Delgado. Delgado was a close friend of Pertwee who was sadly killed in a car crash in Turkey in 1973. This was to be a factor in Pertwee relinquishing the role of the Doctor in mid-1974.

During Pertwee's five year reign as the Doctor, World Distributors produced four annuals (there was an inexplicable gap for 1972). Although of varying quality these books were, in my view, the last tolerably good annuals relating to the series, the later Tom Baker era 'and beyond' annuals being best forgotten!

A common fault, nevertheless, running through these Pertwee annuals is that some of the stories are poorly constructed, rambling on to no satisfactory conclusion. Evidence of 'hack writing' with little knowledge of, or even enthusiasm for, the subject permeates the annuals, which could not be said of the earlier Hartnell annuals which Doctor Who script editor David Whitaker, treated with a respect for the genre.

The first Pertwee annual of 1971 is the only one to have a painted cover and a good percentage of the artwork accurately portrays the Doctor, Liz Shaw, 'Bessie', and then everyday vehicles like a Ford Escort police 'panda car'. This is also the last annual to have a 96 page-count, including the laminated covers. From 1973 onwards the annuals only

have 80 pages - early examples of the short change children get today, compared with the golden-page annuals of the inter-war years.

The 1971 annual is accurate in that the stories are earthbound, and the Tardis noticeable by its absence with UNIT featuring extensively.

# THE DR WHO annual



Starring:

JON PERTWEE

as DR WHO

CAROLINE JOHN

as LIZ SHAW

Based on the popular

Television Series

By scriptwriters

BBC

"Soldiers from Zoltan" is one of the better stories. A spacecraft launched from Earth has earlier crashed on Mars, with no apparent survivors. But earlier pictures revealed other visitors to Mars - the Zoltans, 'bipeds in spacesuits and helmets unfamiliar to the eyes of Earthmen'. Were the Zoltans responsible for the crash? The answer appears to be no, because they produced one surviving British astronaut, Fairley, who on his return to Earth, confirmed that the Zoltans had shown him no animosity, although he had no memory of the crash or the fate of the other astronauts.

It has, nevertheless, caused confusion and consternation on Earth and the Doctor, Liz and the Brigadier are observing the aftermath of a march where men, such as Argus Possiter, wish to invite the aliens to visit Earth. The Doctor and the others soon observe that Possiter seems to die of fright while he is delivering one of his speeches.

In quick succession several people in opposition to the coming of the Zoltans also die. Lis is convinced the Zoltans are not behind the deaths or attacks; after all they do not appear to have an army or to show signs of wanting to invade earth. The Doctor is, however, suspicious. It becomes evident that one man has been in the close proximity of all those who have died. Fairley! Perhaps the Zoltans are using him?

Then Fairley is found dead in his bungalow! Nothing untoward on the scene, just an insect buzzing by the window and a cat cleaning herself in a strip of sunlight. Inside the bungalow the Doctor sees a terrifying apparition in a mirror, a hovering, winged monstrous creature as big as he is, when the apparition turns out to be real he panics and falls unconscious. He comes round to find Liz Shaw and the Brigadier anxiously waiting over him and to see a dead, damaged winged insect lying near him, of a type unknown on earth.

Here is the Zoltan 'soldier', an insect that stings, inducing an illusion that literally scares the victim to death - but fortunately not the Doctor, who doesn't have human blood or heart (in fact, he has two!). The Zoltans' plot discovered, they flee Mars, but the Doctor doubts that Earth has heard the last of them....

There was no annual for 1972 and the first of the thinner annuals appeared for 1973, now with a photographic cover, showing Pertwee in the UNIT laboratory. The stories remained erratic in quality and there was a surfeit of filler items, although many were at least space-related. The Master also made his first appearance in the annual, as did Jo Grant.

The 1974 annual showed Pertwee both in the UNIT laboratory and inside the Tardis. Time-travelling had begun again in the television series but the annual stories sadly remained earthbound, the Doctor assisted by the Brigadier and Jo Grant with the Master making further appearances. The first Pertwee cartoon strips appeared in this annual, one strip, "Menace of the Molags", featuring unnamed aliens who bore a marked resemblance to the Pan/Devil-like monsters in the 1971 Pertwee classic "The Daemons".

The last Pertwee annual for 1975 seemed an improvement as the Tardis was at last back and, for the first time, the Doctor is referred to as such in the text and not as Dr. Who! UNIT and the Brigadier are entirely absent from the stories and Sarah Jane Smith 'appears' in the two of them although the artwork throughout is clearly of Jo Grant. "The House that Jack Built" is an enjoyable tale, in which the Doctor is described as a 'celestial alien' He is tinkering with the control panel of the Tardis console which Jo and he have dragged out of the Tardis for repair to the dimensional direction unit. Jo begins idly to finger the switches when suddenly the room shakes violently.

Together they hurtle through the walls into a black void and travel down an extremely long corridor. Suddenly they find themselves in a brilliant white room, with a heavy oak door the only way out. The Doctor soon discovers it is electrified. He overcomes this obstacle, with cloak and sonic screwdriver.... Eventually in the centre of giant chessboard, they apparently find the Tardis. But again all is not what it seems - the pieces are lethal all armed with deadly, whirring sharp blades. It is *not* the Tardis, but another trap.

They are carried upwards, to a computer that is organising the deadly games, which the Doctor outwits by demanding 'checkmate at three dimensional chess in six moves'. Unsurprisingly, this proves too much for the computer which blows up along with the complex. The Doctor and Jo escape just in time.....

By the time the 1975 annual came out, Pertwee was no longer officially the Doctor, Tom Baker having made his first appearance in the role in late-December, 1974. The Pertwee era was over, and with it the best period of the Doctor Who annuals also drew to a close.

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## OUR BOOKSHELVES

REVIEWS BY  
MARY CADOGAN

(Picture by Terry Wakefield)

### ANOTHER BLYTON INDEX

I am glad to be able to draw readers' attention to the second part of the Index to Enid Blyton's *Sunny Stories* which has recently been published. Like the first section of this Index, the new volume is of great value to children's book collectors because of its comprehensive nature and the ease with which the reader can use it. As Norman Wright says in his Introduction, this volume 'covering the period 1937 to 1941, lists the short stories, serials, poems and picture strips together with details of most of the illustrators. But this is more than just an issue by issue guide.' It also includes an alphabetical listing of every short story for the paper during this period, together with a key which makes it possible to trace the eventual first book publication of most of the stories. There is also a Character Index, and a list of every serial that has appeared in book form, with details of publishers, illustrators and dates.

## *Enid Blyton's Sunny Stories 1937-1941 An Index*



**Tony Summerfield & Norman Wright**

Anyone with a special interest in such characters as Brer Rabbit or the schoolgirl heroine known as The Naughtiest Girl in the School, or illustrators

like Dorothy Wheeler will find fascinating information in this Index. It is available from Norman Wright, 60 Eastbury Road, Watford, Herts, WD1 4JL at £5.00 for U.K. readers, and £5.50 if ordered from abroad (postage included in each case).

## **THE NAITABAL BOOKS**

Some time ago I reviewed in the C.D. the first of David Schutte's books in this series, and there are now four titles available. As I wrote previously, the author has a flair for creating convincing and lively characters, and I find echoes in his stories of the Just William kind of happy-gang adventures. The books are designed for eight-to-twelve-year-olds but, as well as providing a jolly good read for our children and/or grandchildren, they are likely to entertain some of us too! Titles and short critiques are given below.

### **THE NAITABAL MYSTERY SERIES by David Schute**

#### **1. DANGER, KEEP OUT! (£3.50)**

##### **She Thought Her Secret Was Safe Forever....**

*Miss Coates steamed up the garden path. Her white hair glowed in the moonlight. She stopped at the well in the middle of her lawn and shone her torch into it. And then.....she disappeared.*

#### **2. WAKE UP, IT'S MIDNIGHT! (£3.50)**

##### **A Phantom Figure Waits in the Shadows...**

*Suddenly they heard a ghostly sound. It was the tapping of a typewriter, hanging in the dark air, haunting them....*

#### **3. WILD WOODS, DARK SECRET! (£3.99)**

##### **Danger stalks the Lonely Forest....**

*The woman was moving along a track a little way above them. Instead of walking she seemed to be sailing effortlessly, floating like a ghost above the ground....*

#### **4. BEHIND LOCKED DOORS! (£3.99)**

##### **Fear Lurks in the House of Secrets....**

*The message was written on yellow paper in a spidery scrawl, and it said: PLEASE HELP ME!*



"The plots....are worked out with mind-boggling precision. The narratives make compulsive reading: once started, the reader is hooked until the final donouement is reached. These books provide a really enthralling read form start to finish. It is difficult to put them down until the last page is reached. Congratulations, David Schutte!" **Anthony Buckeridge**

"It (Wake Up, It's Midnight!) works extremely well. What is so exciting about these children is they have their own language and their own secret codes which really work.....the sort of thing that children will take up in the playground and use themselves. It works well, it's a very, very adventurous story.... splendid, I think.

**Mary Cadogan for John Dunn's BBC Radio 2 Christmas Selection 1994.**

\*\*\*\*\*

**SOME OLD JOKES FROM THE OLD PAPERS** (Supplied by Leslie S. Laskey)

A lady who had named her house Kismet engaged an Irish servant. Bridget, desiring to know the meaning of Kismet, was told it meant Fate.

Shortly after, Bridget was painfully climbing the stairs.

"What's the matter, Bridget?" asked her mistress.

"I've got fearful corns on my Kismet", replied Bridget.

From THE VANGUARD 3rd October 1925

\*\*\*\*\*

Judge: "Speeding, eh? How many times have you been in front of me?"

Motorist: "Never, your honour. I've often tried to pass you, but my car will only do fifty!"

From THE MAGNET 15th November 1930

\*\*\*\*\*

Every time Willie took a dose of castor oil, his father put a penny into his money-box. This enticed Willie to take medicine regularly. After a few days his father counted the money.

"Two shillings", he said, "just the price for another bottle of castor oil".

From THE SKIPPER 19th June 1937

\*\*\*\*\*

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**FOR SALE, OR EXCHANGE WITH GEM VOLS FROM 1926-1934.**

I have Greyfriars Book Club Nos. 14, 41,66 @ £18 each as new. MAGNET OMNIBUS Vols. Nos. 3 & 4 @ £13.00 each Nos. 20,21,22,23 @ £25 each. No. 34 @ £18.00. Nos. 44 & 58 @ £13.00 each.

GEM OMNIBUS Vols. Nos. 2,5,11,12 @ £10.00 each. H.B. ANNUAL 1977, £20. H.B. EASTER OMNIBUS 1978 @ £13.00. H.B. St. Franks Barring Out, @ £10.00. "The Big Fat Bunter Book" £10.00. All as new with dust jackets.



## PART 2: Conclusion

A very funny picture entitled "How's That?", depicting a bowler breaking the batsman's bat with a fast ball, was Lumley's frontispiece to the Annual of 1932. "Rookwood's Reckless Rascal!" was a sepia plate showing George Alfred Gower, who, in 1790, tied a birch to the flagstaff at the top of the school's tower. This was just one of the many occasions when the Holiday Annual gave little glimpses of the purported histories of the schools - a feature that Roger Jenkins has pointed out was missing from most of the postwar attempts to copy the famous annual. These two plates were rounded off with another coloured painting, "The Demon of the Lake!" This shows a dinosaur emerging from the water which, together with Lumley's line drawings, illustrates Cecil Fanshaw's story of the same name, *The Demon of the Lake*.

The Holiday Annual for the year 1933 had Hanson's *Twin Brother* on page 39 and *Getting Their Own Back!* on page 217 - two stories supposedly written by Owen Conquest - but definitely illustrated by Savile Lumley. Also, whilst on Rookwood, we had extracts from *Mr. Mander's Diary* on page 236 and three sepia plates all illustrated by Lumley. The plates were further examples of the make-believe histories previously mentioned. Rookwood was represented by the following: A Royalist being rescued from the Roundheads by the boys, which is opposite page 236; "The Gunpowder Plot" at St. Jim's on page 193 which really needs no explanation. The Greyfriars picture tells of "Cheering the Victors of Waterloo" (see page 65).

The year 1934 again saw Mr. Lumley supplying the annual's frontispiece. This had been printed in one of his wittiest moods, and shows a lion being offered a juicy morsel to enable the cameraman to film the animal. Entitled "Will it Come to This?," it must have caused quite a few chuckles! He also illustrated the Rookwood Story (?) on page 27, entitled *Presence of Mind*; also Howard Tracey's story on page 41, *The Jungle Railway*. *The Boy Who Wouldn't Budge* was the only story with pictures by Mr. Lumley and this will be found on page 165 in the 1935 Holiday Annual.

School stories and a Western tale fell to his lot to illustrate in the 1936 Holiday Annual. The *Outlaw Kid* was reprinted from the *Popular* 567, Dec. 7, 1929. The original artist pictured the same incident that Mr. Lumley was to use six years later. It is interesting to compare the two styles. The event portrayed is where the Jadwin gang are trying to

force Rancher Sylvester to sign a draft for money by piling rocks on his chest. The Holiday Annual version starts on page 67 and, as an added treat, as it were, Mr. Lumley painted a fine plate entitled "The Rio Kid's Good Turn!" This shows the Kid, with the aid of Sidekicker, pulling his enemy Mike Jadwin to safety with his lariat (facing page 80). *Melting Mr. Manders!* was again supposedly written by the "master," but there was no mistaking Savile Lumley's artwork! There were only two occasions when they used the St. Frank's stories in the Holiday Annual; the first time was in the 1932 edition when the story *Rivals of St. Frank's* was illustrated by Kenneth Brooks (no relation to Edwy). In the 1936 issue, the second of the St. Frank's tales had Savile Lumley doing the drawings. The title of the story was *Handforth's Windfall!* and it is to be found on page 123.

## MELTING MR MANDERS!



By OWEN CONQUEST

*When Mr. Manders "cut up rusty," Jimmy Silver & Co. hit on an amazing idea for melting his wrath. But the resultant wheeze, much to the alarm of the Rookwood juniors, had an unexpected outcome.*

To Savile Lumley fell the honour of designing the title page in the 1937 Annual. It consists, for want of a better term, of a collage. Thus, we have a cricket scene top left, one on football top right, with a typical view of a school acting as a divider, and, finally, in the bottom middle, two schoolboys being questioned by a teacher from behind his table.

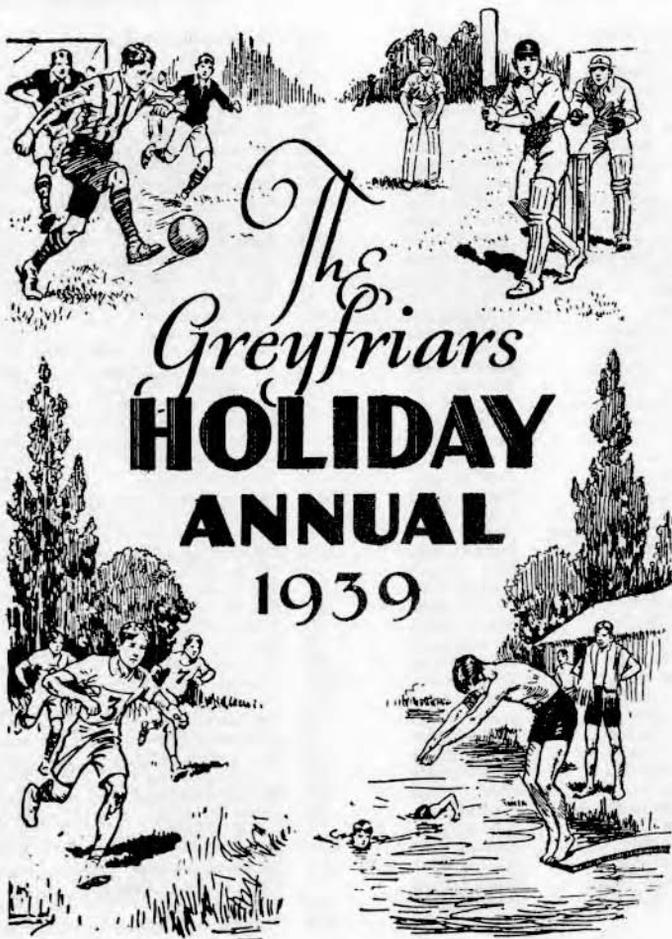
Facing page 208 was a coloured plate entitled "Dinner Time." This illustrated a column feature which told how Tubby Muffin, after swimming to a projecting rock, was stranded when he spotted a small shark swimming around his precarious perch. (It's funny that, during its twenty-two-year run, a publication entitled *The Greyfriars Holiday Annual* should have had so few actual coloured plates pertaining to the three main schools.) Mr. Lumley also illustrated "The Rookwood Story" by Owen Conquest. This was reprinted from *The Boy's Friend*, 1257-8. Found on page 209, it bore the title *Carthew goes too Far!*

In the early Holiday Annuals, R. Symmonds illustrated most of the Cedar Creek tales. In the 1938 issue, Martin Clifford's story about his friend Frank Richards' school days, saw Mr. Lumley doing the drawings. With the Christmasy title *The Cedar Creek Pantomime*, it was a worthy addition to the annual which was, itself, generally a happy addition to a Christmas stocking or pillowcase! Once again, we had Lumley illustrating the Rookwood stories with the main one *Lovell on the Warpath*, having a fine coloured plate entitled "Back to Rookwood!" by him to augment it. It is interesting to note that, in the 1967 *Billy Bunter's Holiday Annual*, the same plate was used, albeit repainted by Patrick Nicole. (It

is sad to relate that, according to our good friend Norman Wright, Patrick Nicole passed away recently.) Some slight differences can be observed. Mr. Skinforth's topper has been replaced by a bowler and the walking stick in the original has now become a "brolly." The lady holding the dog on a leash has been modernised, and the small boy picking up the fruit no longer wears a cap!

The Annual for 1939 once again had the title page designed by Lumley. Each corner had a different sport - football, cricket, running and swimming being represented. Lumley was also responsible for the various Rookwood stories and features.

The penultimate issue of the Holiday Annual (1940) contained two genuine Rookwood stories ably illustrated by Savile Lumley and, as I have already stated, he painted the frontispiece and drew the black and white pictures for the Len Lex story in the last Holiday Annual (1941).





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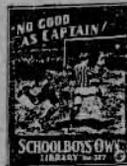
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| 31. A Mill Lad at Greyfriars       | Frank Richards  | 203. Billy Bunter's Bodyguard        | Frank Richards  |
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| 105. Just Like Coker               | Frank Richards  | 212. The Boot-Boy Baronet            | Edwy Searles B  |
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| 341. On Fighting Terms                 | Owen Conquest   |  |                  |

## Greyfriars Jingles

By PETER TODD



FROM China's great dominion came  
A cheerful youth, Wun Lung by name,  
Who, when he cannot recognise  
The meaning of our questions, cries  
"No savvy!"

The said Celestial isn't dense,  
No fear; he's got a lot of sense!  
He often understands quite well  
Despite the fact we hear him yell,  
"No savvy!"

It might not be convenient  
To understand just what we meant,  
So when he finds that silence pays,  
He shakes his head and blandly says,  
"No savvy!"

At times we ask him to explain  
A certain thing. We ask in vain!  
When these contingencies arise  
He smiles politely and replies,  
"No savvy!"

"You savvy right enough!" we roar;  
"We'll knock your head against the door  
Unless you answer like a bird!"  
He does—with just the same old word,  
"No savvy!"

We knock his head, then squash him flat!  
We bump him—what's the good of that?  
Although a heap of rags and bones,  
The obstinate Celestial groans,  
"No savvy!"

## Greyfriars Jingles

# TOO MUCH FAG!

By PETER TODD



DON'T ask the Earl Mauleverer  
What kind of sport he would prefer;  
Upon his study couch reclined  
He'll yawn, "That kind of thing I find  
Too much fag!"

This limp and lazy nobleman  
Spends every single hour he can  
Upon his study sofa springs,  
And mildly calls all other things  
Too much fag!

Don't ask him why he does not wield  
A bat upon the cricket field  
And knock the bowling into fits—  
He's pretty sure to tell you it's  
Too much fag!

Of course, he gives his full support  
To every healthy form of sport,  
But taking part in it—no fear!  
The reason why is very clear—  
Too much fag!

The Latin language he'll approve  
Of being learnt by the Remove;  
The same with grammar, French and  
"stinks,"

But learning them himself he thinks  
Too much fag!

He's fond of Lower School delights  
Like rags and feeds and pillow-fights,  
But does not share in them, not he!  
He says, "They always seem to me  
Too much fag!"

But Mauly, heed this little tale:  
There lived a tired and languid snail  
Who did not dodge the early bird  
Because he found it, so I've heard,  
Too much fag!

(Other slackers take warning!)

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