

STORY PAPER  
COLLECTORS' DIGEST

VOL. 54

No. 647

NOVEMBER 2000

MARY CADOGAN

FRANK RICHARDS

• *The Chap behind the Chums* •

With a new introduction by Jeffrey Richards and a foreword by Una Hamilton Wright



This Week's **BIG BANG!** "ALL THE FUN OF THE 'FIFTH'!" Harry Wharton & Co. Celebrate Bonfire Day.

# The **MAGNET**<sup>2</sup>



No. 1,238. Vol. XL.

EVERY SATURDAY.

Week Ending November 7th, 1931.

# STORY PAPER COLLECTORS' DIGEST

Editor: MARY CADOGAN

STORY PAPER COLLECTOR

Founded in 1941 by  
W.H. GANDER

COLLECTORS' DIGEST

Founded in 1946 by  
HERBERT LECKENBY

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

---

VOL. 54

No. 647

NOVEMBER 2000

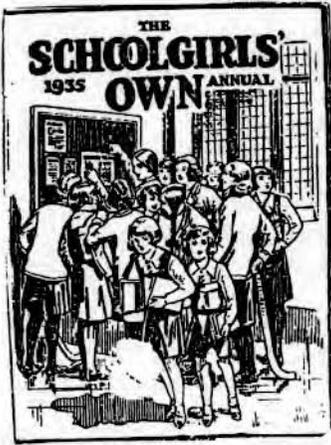
PRICE £1.50

---



## OUR ANNUAL

The Annual is daily growing and taking full shape. Some further items for your delectation are an amusing episode in verse by Johnny Burslem about Bunter coming for Christmas; a seasonably atmospheric Nelson Lee article *Christmas at Grey Towers* from Mark Caldicott; an intriguing look by Laurence Price at James Hilton's *Lost Horizon*, and a colourful account of a kind of 'Things to Come' episode from the *Boys' Friend Library* by Derek Hinrich. Terry Jones has provided a nostalgic appraisal of Henry Hall, the extremely popular dance-band leader, and, in more serious mood, Jennifer Schofield perceptively discusses the work and achievements of the celebrated travel-writer H.V. Morton, while Una Hamilton Wright gives us a study of Charles Hamilton's religious and spiritual development which provides new and truly fascinating insights into his life and writings.



So, if you have not already ordered your copy of the Annual, do not delay: the price is £12.50 for U.K. readers and £13.50 for those living abroad (postage and packing included in both cases).

### OUR COVER

The cover of this issue of the C.D. is particularly satisfying to me as it shows my book *Frank Richards: the Chap Behind the Chums* which Swallowtail Books are republishing this month. It seems impossible that the original hard-back version first appeared in 1988 – twelve years go! I am delighted with this 21<sup>st</sup> century paper-back (actually card-cover) edition which, just like the original, has a ‘chunky feel’ with large pages and lots of black and white line illustrations, and photographs. It includes two brand new features – a most interesting Foreword by Una Hamilton Wright about her Uncle Charley’s life and work, and an Introduction by Professor Jeffrey Richards which comprehensively and illuminatingly puts Charles Hamilton’s writing into a literary and social context.

A review of the new edition is included in this issue of our magazine: hopefully readers who *don't* possess the hard-back might wish to acquire this paper-back reprint – while readers who *do* have the original version might want to give the paper-back to friends and family as a Christmas present!

Forgive this personal ‘commercial’ – but I am sure you will understand my pleasure in seeing the book available again.

Happy reading!

MARY CADOGAN



\*\*\*\*\*  
 WIZARD OF OZ. Single cassette issued some years ago containing abridged version of film. Sale or loan appreciated. Price please to ERNEST HOLMAN, 10 Glenbervie Drive, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, SS9 3JU.  
 \*\*\*\*\*

# SOME PYROTECHNIC MUSINGS

by Reg Hardinge

The accompanying advertisement from a 1932 copy of *The Gem* set in train some thoughts regarding the origin and types of fireworks in common usage.

It was the Chinese who invented gunpowder which was used by them in the production of fireworks in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. Exploding crackers and raucous gongs are prominent with the parades of dragons in Chinese New Year celebrations.

Rockets are used in aerial displays. Rising vertically they explode, spraying a shower of coloured stars, and sometimes a slogan or name as well. They are perhaps, the most spectacular of all fireworks.

The Catherine Wheel is a rotating firework giving off sparks and coloured flames as it revolves around a pin. It is named after St. Catherine of Alexandria who was condemned to be tortured on a wheel, and died in 307AD.

A Jumping Jack bounces along the ground before detonating, whilst a Roman Candle consists of a tube from which streams of sparks are ejected. A Sparkler is attached to a piece of wire held in the hand, burning down gradually, and giving off a scintillating cascade of sparks. A Squib is small, hisses when lit and eventually goes off with a bang.

(Editor's Note: Reg's article will remind any of us who no longer have, or go to, firework displays, about the pyrotechnic delights of our youth. I see that Brock's gave their fireworks the name 'Crystal Palace'. I suppose that then – as now – grand firework displays took place on or around the Fifth of November on the Crystal Palace site.)

# First for the "Fifth"!



WE lead the way again this year with an unsurpassed feast of firework delights! All the latest and best novelties are contained in this year's selection. With Brock's Fireworks you cannot fail to have a good "Fifth of November." So buy your fireworks at the shops which sell **BROCK'S "CRYSTAL PALACE" FIREWORKS.**

## A Selection from our

## LATEST & GREATEST Novelties

- |                             |                               |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Little Wonders - - jd.      | Auroras - - - 1d. 2d.         |
| Big Wonders - - 1d.         | Emerald Sprays - 1d. 2d.      |
| Little Demons - - jd.       | Indian Marvels 1d. 2d. etc.   |
| Boy Scout Rousers jd. 1d.   | Speedway Sliders 1d. 2d.      |
| Martian Comets - 1d.        | Guy Fawkes Mines 2d. 4d. etc. |
| Electric Hares - - 1d.      |                               |
| Crick-Cracks - - 2d.        |                               |
| Harlequins - - 1d. 2d. etc. | Brockens 2d. 4d. 6d. etc.     |
| Egyptian Palms 1d. 2d. etc. | Autogyros 2d. 4d. 6d.         |

**BROCK'S**  
CRYSTAL PALACE fireworks  
200 years' experience behind each Brock's Firework.

\*\*\*\*\*

## THREE FOR BONFIRE NIGHT

by Reg Hardinge

It all really started with the unexpected arrival at St. Jim's of Tom Merry's old governess Miss Priscilla Fawcett. The effusiveness of the little old lady's affection for the Captain of the Shell aroused much mirth from Gore and Mellish and others of the Fourth Form who escorted her to Tom's study. She, poor thing, was blissfully unaware of being the butt of their barbed remarks which were addressed to her right up to the time of her departure. Tom Merry was seething but good manners prevented him from venting his wrath on her tormentors.

Gore, Norton and Sands were preparing a Guy for Bonfire Night on the morrow. It was a hush-hush job and nobody except Herbert Skimpole who shared a study with Gore, knew anything about it. Figgins & Co. of New House had fashioned a dummy of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy for their November 5<sup>th</sup> offering, whilst the Terrible Three's effort was an effigy of Figgins.

Skimpole, with his bumpy forehead and large spectacles, felt that he could manufacture fireworks at a price far below that in the shops. He admitted though, that his grasp of chemistry was minimal. Nevertheless he had confidence enough to tackle the job. The problem however, was lack of funds. He tapped Tom Merry for two bob, but got nothing from Gussy.

D'Arcy Minor with his cheery, round, ink-stained face was cock of the third form. His devil-may-care attitude towards his seniors astonished them. He was broke, but was determined by hook or by crook to acquire some fireworks when Wally approached his elder brother for ten bob, Gussy retorted "we wefuse to advance you any money to spend in extwagance". So then with the help of his pals Jameson (whom he had ousted as leader of the third form) and Curly Gibson, a successful raid on the lodge of Taggles, the porter, resulted in the nicking of a box of fireworks ordered by Figgins and awaiting collection.



Tom Merry, Mannars, and Lowther came out of the School House with their effigy hoisted in the air upon an ancient chair. A yell of laughter from the School House fellows greeted it. On the guy was a label that read: "THIS IS FIGGINS!" "Hurrah!" roared Blake. "Good old Figgy! It might be his twin!"

Skimpole had observed Gore and his cronies fashioning a Guy which was an imitation of Miss Priscilla Fawcett, and had passed on this information to Wally D'Arcy. The third-former burst into Gore's study to see the effigy for himself. Highly disgusted, he angrily referred to the trio who were painting the dummy, as being mean cads. Gore, Norton and Sands collared Wally, daubed paint on his face and round his eyes, and then yanked him across a table. Gore then thrashed him with the flat end of the coal shovel, and bundled him out of the study.

But this was not the end of it. Wally roused the whole of the third form who descended upon Gore and his mates, and by sheer numbers overpowered them. D'Arcy Minor then administered to the trio the same treatment he had received with the shovel. Honour was satisfied.

At night the quadrangle was filled with hordes of noisy boys. The bonfire was ready to be lit. Out trooped Figgins & Co. with their representation of the swell of St. Jim's. Arthur Augustus charged it and ripped to pieces the effigy of himself. But he was seized and placed on the shoulders of the new house contingent. This was the signal for Tom Merry & Co to intervene and rescue Gussy.

The bonfire was lit. It was the turn of the caddish Gore & Co to parade, in an old wicker chair, their creation of Miss Fawcett with curls and saucy bonnet. They were confronted by Tom Merry, blazing with righteous anger. "Put up your fists", he cried, and proceeded to rain blows first on Gore and then on Norton and Sands. The three bullies had no stomach for such an onslaught, and the encounter was soon over. The female Guy has been torn to shreds by Monty Lowther and Manners.

Finally the Terrible Three marched in with their Guy of Figgins on an old chair. A fierce tussle developed between the boys of the School and New Houses for possession of the dummy. Eventually it was torn into halves and both pieces were consigned to the bonfire.

Despite the many black eyes and swollen noses that had been sustained, all agreed that it was the very best Guy Fawkes celebration ever at St. Jim's!

\*\*\*\*\*

### **JAMES HILTON SOCIETY**

A Society has been formed to promote interest in the life and work of novelist and scriptwriter James Hilton (1900-1954), the author of *Lost Horizon*, *Random Harvest* and *Goodbye, Mr. Chips*, all of which were made into highly successful Hollywood movies. He also contributed as a scriptwriter to the Greer Garson war-time classic *Mrs. Miniver*.

The inaugural meeting was held in Cambridge on 9 September 2000, on the centenary of Hilton's birth. The meeting was well attended and included several members of the Hilton family.

Further details about the James Hilton Society can be obtained from the Chairman, John Hammond, 49 Beckingthorpe Drive, Bottesford, Nottingham, NG13 0DN or from the Secretary, Laurence Price, 21 Baytree Road, Weston-super-Mare, Somerset BS22 8HG.



## IRON IN THE SOUL

by Mark Caldicott

### PART FOUR – ADVENTURE FOR THE CORONATION

Kingston has managed a major coup in his battle against the Brotherhood of Iron. He has provided a strange and somewhat horrifying poetic justice to the evil Dr. Zeetman by drugging him into permanent madness and he has brought about the end of the Grange Private lunatic Asylum used by the Brotherhood to imprison sane men. This scuppers the Brotherhood's plan to imprison the Crown Prince Xavier of Balataria.

The King of Balataria is on his deathbed and the Prince is destined to take the throne. He has vowed to reform the government of its corruption. This has gained the Prince some enemies, and those in the government who are gaining from corruption want to prevent his accession, but there is a snag. In three years time the Balatarian government will be entitled to a vast sum of money owed by a great foreign power. But if the Prince dies before that time the debt becomes null and void and the money lost.

The Prince's enemies enlist the aid the Brotherhood, and a scheme is hatched whereby the Prince is to be kidnapped for three years, then returned to recover the debt, after which he can be killed. In the absence of Zeetman's asylum the Brotherhood decide to imprison the Prince on the Iron Island. Crawford warns Kingston that something big is in the air. He tells how the *Unicorn*, the Brotherhood's replacement yacht for the wrecked *Night Hawk*, is preparing for a trip to the Iron Island, and that among the passengers is the British Ambassador of Balataria. Kingston deduces that the Prince of Balataria is to be the victim and, like himself, is destined to disappear from view, becoming a prisoner on the island. Kingston prepares his own yacht, the *Coronet*, taking with him also the *Dart*, his submarine.

Kingston visits Professor Polgrave to tell of his absence, with the surprising result that the professor, normally a recluse, makes the monumental decision to accompany him on the adventure. Disguised, Kingston visits the *Unicorn* and mesmerises the captain in order to elicit the facts of the voyage. He learns that the Prince is to be kidnapped by being plucked from his car by a sky hook attached to an aeroplane. Kingston manages to meet with the Prince and convinces him of the plot. The victim is hooked into the sky as planned, but of course it is Kingston, disguised as the Prince (courtesy of the professor's drugs). On board the *Unicorn* he drugs the ship's water and leaves the crew on the Iron Island. He takes the Prince to Balataria in time to hear that the old king is dead and Xavier is to be proclaimed king.

The next episode of the *Brotherhood of Iron* serial reveals yet another facet of Brook's writing skill, albeit one which all story paper authors had to develop, that is the ability to make stories topical. This was an important moment for the British nation.

Edward VII, who had reigned for ten years, died in May 1910. The nation prepared for the coronation of the new king, George V. ESB, in common with other Amalgamated Press writers, supplied his Coronation Day yarn. Of course, there have been many stories which feature plans to break into the Tower of London to steal the Crown Jewels. Even Creasey's John Mannering, in his days as the jewel thief The Baron, has succeeded in this task. What is different about Brooks' story is that the Crown Jewels are to be stolen so that they can be held to ransom, for how can one have a Coronation without the Crown? The brotherhood reason that to steal the Crown Jewels immediately before the Coronation will put the British government in such an awkward position that they will be willing to pay a million pounds (at 1911's value!) for their return.

The Brotherhood infiltrate the Tower with their own men, including the butler of Sir Henry Kenning, Lieutenant of the Tower of London. The plan is to kidnap Kenning. A forged note asks him to meet his son urgently at the Mansion House underground station. Here he is met by a car purporting to have been sent by his son but, entering it, he finds himself being taken out of London. He is chloroformed and taken to James Milverton's house where Milverton helps another Inner Circle member, Hon. Percy Claydon, to disguise himself as Sir Henry. Using Sir Henry's keys Claydon lets himself into the Tower and gives orders that the Wakefield Tower is to be closed to visitors and the alarm system switched off in order that he can examine the Crown Jewels. At noon, as planned, while the alarm system is inactive, there is a great explosion which tears a hole in the wall of the well Tower.

Crawford has warned Carson Gray that something is likely to happen at the Tower and Gray is on the spot. When Claydon, as Sir Henry, walks away from the Tower with other men, each carrying a bag, Gray is suspicious and tries to intervene but is prevented by a policeman who believes this to be the real Sir Henry (as does Gray, as it happens). Gray tries to show the policeman that the men's bags



Unnoticed by his companions, Count von Bismarck slipped the flight lock off the end of the line under the Crown Prince's belt.

contain the jewels but is forestalled by Claydon who, threatening everyone's life with a bomb, makes his escape. Kingston and Gray conclude that this was the not real Kenning.

The real Sir Henry, along with the Crown Jewels (rather unwise to put them together, but it helps the plot), is secreted on a wherry on the Norfolk Broads so that when the ransom note, in Sir Henry's name, is paid he can be released with the jewels. Old Nick Barton, the boat owner, is in the power of the Brotherhood. They have not told him that the jewels are also to be kept on the boat. Crawford is able to tell Kingston that the real Sir Henry, together with the jewels, are to be transported in a large provision case to the Norfolk Broads. Of course, Kingston manages to substitute his disguised self for Sir Henry and is imprisoned on the wherry.

The ransom note is sent to the Prime Minister. Claydon visits Barton on the boat and Kingston, with his remarkable powers of hearing, hears Claydon ask Barton to look after a "box of papers", and guesses they are the Crown Jewels. When Claydon has left, Kingston renders Old Nick harmless with one of the professor's drugs. As arranged, Carson Gray arrives in a car and the pair return to London with the Crown Jewels.

The adventures of Prince Xavier and of the Crown Jewels demonstrate that Brooks' ability to develop complex original plots and exciting action sequences is growing at a remarkable pace. He is, after all, on an extremely tight schedule here, having only a week at a time to exercise his inventive powers. He has ranged, as was said last time, a formidable array of characters each bringing a special dimension which can be drawn upon for plot development. One feels at this point that the series could have continued forever. As Kingston took up his next challenge, however, the serial was running into problems. Brooks tells us the reason in his interview with Marjorie Norris:

I kept that 16,000 word instalment going for about a year. This thing went on interminably. The longest serial imaginable I should think. Must have reached three or four hundred thousand words by the time it was finished. Well it finally did finish, and then there was a squeal called the Brotherhood of Iron. One day I went up to the office and Mr. Griffith was gone. I'd spoken to him on the telephone the previous day. He'd vanished. What happened I never knew. But he was dismissed or sacked or something – a minute's notice and he was gone. And the sub-editor immediately said to me "The serial comes to an end – the next instalment". So that was that. On the whole I was glad because it was a frightful responsibility. But it was a marvellous apprenticeship for me – couldn't have had anything better. A young fellow, just starting, and I was given a chance like that. It was marvellous really. Because of course I had to do it. The serial had to come out – I couldn't let them down. And so of course I did it every week. It was a very fine beginning for me.

Actually the serial finished in three episodes, but they were each very short, and brought to a rapid and rather forced conclusion the fortunes of the Brotherhood. Kingston decides he will finish the Inner Council for good. With Gray's help he kidnaps Ludwig Capelli, the chief agent of a foreign power, bundles him into a car and take him to Scotland Yard. Kingston mesmerises him into a confession before witnesses, one of these witnesses being the head of Scotland Yard. Capelli reveals his country's collusion with Mount-Fannell and the Brotherhood to remove a dozen British Navy battleships, the Brotherhood's submarine attaching mines to these battleships. All the members of the Inner Council are to travel on the *Unicorn* to witness the explosion. Kingston boards the *Unicorn* and faces Mount-Fannell who, in a moment of insanity sets a charge to blow up

Kingston himself and the *Unicorn*. Kingston escapes by diving through a porthole and swimming with colossal speed back to the *Dart* before the *Unicorn* explodes killing the remaining members of the Brotherhood.

Kingston is now free to reveal himself to the world again as Philip Graydon. Carson Gray suggests that now he is free from the Brotherhood he should consider becoming a private detective. Kingston agrees it is something he should think about, but that before that he must see Dolores de las Mercedes and ask her a very important question... though we have to make up our own mind what that may be.

When the title for this series – *Iron in the Soul* – came to my mind, seeming as it did to describe the effect of the island upon both Kingston and Brooks, I was not conscious of its origin. In fact it is the English translation of the title of a part of Jean-Paul Sartre's *The Road to Freedom* trilogy. If one wished to be fanciful, one could see a correspondence of ideas here. For Sartre, the iron in the soul is that which weighs down and hampers the journey of the novel's hero to a truly existential state. It is that from which he cannot escape. For Brooks it is as if the Iron Island serial entered his writer's soul and stayed there to influence all of his subsequent writing. And I'll be looking at the re-emergence of these themes in future.



"If any man moves, he dies!" cried the Bogus Lieutenant of the Tower; and these at the gates would see that he held a bomb in his hand. "Stand clear while I and my companions pass out!" (1967, p. 203)

\*\*\*\*\*



(Editor's Note: Here from our archives is another previously unpublished article by our old, and sadly no longer with us, friend.)

## SEXTON BLAKE

by Bill Lofts

Sexton Blake could quite rightly claim to be the second greatest detective in the world. Second only of course to the immortal Sherlock Holmes, whom he could also claim as a very close neighbour living also in Baker Street. Since he first appeared in No. 6 of the Halfpenny *Marvel* dated December 1893 he has appeared in every medium possible. Magazines/newspapers/libraries/plays/films/picture strips/ and on T.V. Nearly 200 authors have chronicled his adventures in over 4,000 stories, making a total of roughly 200,000,000 words! As in many cases of famous characters, his creation is still debatable. The first chronicler Harry Blyth, who used the pen-name of Hal Meredith, claimed that he coined the detective's name, but a senior editor of the publishers Harmsworth Brothers disputed this. He stated that the name originally was Frank Blake, but was rejected on the grounds that it was not colourful enough. The name of 'Sexton' was suggested editorially as it was a name that conjured up the sombre and somewhat mysterious atmosphere of graveyards and gloomy crypts, it was finally chosen in order to give the character an element of eeriness.

Harry Blyth died in 1898 of typhoid fever, aged only 46, so he did not live long enough to see how famous his creation was to become. It is also commonly assumed that Sexton Blake was based on Conan Doyle's more famous Sherlock Holmes, but some people have always found this very hard to accept. The first descriptions and illustrations showed him to be a middle-aged Victorian gentleman dressed in the typical clothing of that period – complete with curly-brimmed bowler and carrying a heavy walking stick. He was the son of Dr. Berkeley Blake, a surgeon of Harley Street, London, W. and according to early chroniclers was educated at Ashleigh Public School, St. Anne's, and later Oxford and Cambridge. He had two brothers, Nigel and Harry, the former a waster and scoundrel. In the Union Jack Christmas Number for 1901, when Blake was living at Norfolk Street, Strand, it was mentioned that he had a wife, but this was and has been the only reference to his married status. It has always been accepted that he remained a strict bachelor. In those days, Sexton Blake did not live in Baker Street, but in New Inn Chambers, and in later stories in Wych Street (a turning off the Strand) where he was in partnership with a French detective by the name of Jules Gervaise. Whilst that other famous mythical detective of Baker Street, Sherlock Holmes, seemed to solve most of his problems by his own fireside, clad in a stained dressing gown and expatiating to the

somewhat dense admirer, Dr. Watson, Sexton Blake travelled to the four corners of the world to bring his cases to a successful conclusion.

It was not until an editor named W.H. Back took control of the *Union Jack* in 1904 that Sexton Blake really came into his own. After several strange assistants including Griff (half-man and beast) and a Chinese named We-Wee, Tinker, his most famous assistant, arrived in a story entitled *Cunning Against Skill* – whilst one of the most popular characters of the Blake household, his housekeeper, Mrs. Martha Bardell, came a year later. Plump and garrulous, with a gift for malapropism, Mrs. Bardell had a use (or miss-use!) of the English language which was both weird and wonderful. Another addition to the household in this period was Pedro, the famous bloodhound, sent to Blake by a well-wisher by the name of Mr. Nemo. In 1915, W.H. Back thought up the brilliant idea of having a full-length original 60,000 word story of Sexton Blake each month, and so the famous library was born. Up to this period Sexton Blake had been drawn by a large number of artists, but none of them seeming to portray Blake as his readers imagined him. However, this was all changed when in 1922 a young artist named Eric Parker started to illustrate the stories in the *Union Jack*. Blake, Tinker and Pedro were just as the many readers visualised them. Blake himself was tall, lean, strong limbed, with hair receding at the temples, and with a high intellectual forehead. He wore when indoors at Baker Street a red dressing gown, smoked a briar pipe and had a favourite chair. Blake had appeared in stage productions as far back as 1907, the first in the West End of London was in 1930 where he was portrayed by Arthur Wontner. The first film featuring the detective was in 1914 – a three reeler called *The Clue of the Wax Vesta* and in the thirties a considerable number were made. David Farrar, who had played a minor part in an earlier film, also played Blake in the forties, including *Meet Sexton Blake* and *The Hooded Terror*.

A Sexton Blake bust was sculptured by Eric Parker in 1926, and in 1936, with Blake increasing in popularity all the time, a gramophone record was made entitled *Murder on the Portsmouth Road* (H.M.Y No. 02044) with Arthur Wontner in the lead. There was also the Sexton Blake card game, plus the highly successful Sexton Blake Annuals which ran up to the start of the Second World war. Although many papers which featured Sexton Blake closed down during the war, the Sexton Blake Library continued throughout, whilst Blake also appeared in picture strip form in Knockout Comic.

In 1955, and with a change of editorship, it was decided to give Sexton Blake an extensive modernisation, to keep abreast of the rapidly changing social mores. The result of this face-lift was that Sexton Blake became a rather less ascetic character, and not quite infallible as of yore. Firstly, Blake moved offices from Baker Street to Berkeley Square – the front door of the new Headquarters bearing the legend, 'Sexton Blake Investigations'. His original staff of two who had assisted him on all his cases, Tinker and the bloodhound Pedro, had been increased by Paula Dane, Marion Lang, and Miss Louise Pringle the office typist. One must also include Milly the sealpoint Siamese cat, based on a real life namesake, who was very well known to the writer, once scratching him very severely when he went to stroke her!

Tinker, of course is still an important part of the set-up though no longer the boy assistant but a very mature young man under his full name of Edward Carter. Yet another

film was made in this period with Geoffrey Toone in the leading role, the title being based on one of W. Howard Baker's stories *Murder at Site Three*.

Sexton Blake through the years has been translated into about twenty different languages, not counting some discovered in Indian dialects which had been unauthorised.

Contrary to belief that the Sexton Blake stories were for a juvenile readership, H.W. Twyman, editor of the old *Union Jack* and its later modernised new look *Detective Weekly* for the first year, once conducted a survey of the exact readership, finding that it ranged from 8 to 98!

Indeed Lloyd George and Stanley Baldwin, two famous Prime Ministers, read him, as well as the Duke of Windsor, far too many famous people to list here. So that the tag on the stories of Blake being 'the office boy's Sherlock Holmes' deserves further inspection.

The Sexton Blake Library finished at No. 536 (Fifth Series) in June 1963 entitled *The Last Tiger*, but was revived in Mayflower Books in 1965 in novel format running for 50 issues, the last four actually being in book form at 16/- each (January 1970). Two further T.V. Series have appeared since that date, including a paperback based on a film in 1977.

Hawke Books and Howard Baker Press have brought out reprints; there has been an excellent anthology by Jack Adrian, but no sign of a reader based revival. However, let us celebrate over 100 years of Blake, and give thanks that, since his creation in Queen Victoria's reign, his adventures have entertained many, many thousand (perhaps a million?) readers.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **CHARLES EDWIN JEREMY DARBISHIRE: OLYMPIAN? by Jonathan Cooper**

It is entirely right that we should revel in Britain's most successful Olympic performance since the year of the first Greyfriars Holiday Annual. The Games of 1920 were perhaps the first that featured young men brought up on the intoxicating tales of Charles Hamilton. These yarns featured plenty of role models to inspire budding athletes. Greyfriars' Famous Five could, between them, have shown up well in most events at a hypothetical Youth Olympics. Bob Cherry would certainly have stood a good chance in the boxing. Admittedly, not all Frank Richards' creations are physical paradigms. William George Bunter could, under duress, pick up an impressive head of steam, but only when in near mortal peril. The rest of the time he preferred to be the archetypal couch potato, in the manner of the Empire growing wider still and wider. However, Bunter was not a character whose habits one would want to emulate. One might laugh at Bunter, but surely one would never wish to BE Bunter.

Anthony Buckeridge's Jennings books were written in a post Magnet and Gem era, and their characters are younger and thus physically less robust than their glorious Hamiltonian forebears. Darbshire is, however, even by Linbury Court standards, a remarkably inept games player. He is memorably described as a "clumsy hippopotamus" and a "flat-footed newt". Nevertheless he participates with varying degrees of willingness, in most sports. As a potential Olympian, though, he displays little promise.

Darbishire considers Jennings' idea of hiring a boat as a "lobsterous wheeze". But he is soon chastised by his chum for being an "ignorant bazooka" for not knowing that he has to sit backwards if he wants to row forwards. Even when that difficulty has been overcome the boat "swirls round like a soap-sud going down the bathroom waste-pipe." Jennings' attempt to reinstate order with a hearty "Heave-ho! In...out...in...out... in...out...!" is met with the peevisish response "I haven't come out after going in the first time yet." Darbishire is not, I fear, a Steve Redgrave in the making.

As a half miler in the school sports Darbishire takes his role seriously. When he reads that "the muscles are stimulated to greater degrees of activity by the maintenance of an optimum body heat", he dons two sweaters, a blazer and a rain coat on a swelteringly hot day. He tops off his preparations by gorging on five apples and four bananas: having been informed that keen athletes should be bursting with vitamins. In the event, he is caught for posterity on film crossing the finishing line at the front of the pack. Since he is actually struggling to complete the previous race, it just goes to show how the camera can lie.

On another occasion, Darbishire is forced to run cross-country. The prospects are bleak. As Jennings puts it, "You only move at four minutes a fortnight, and even then you get a stitch about every six inches." His fears are not unfounded. "Darbishire floundered along some yards in the rear, his knees bent, his shoulders hunched, and his forehead furrowed in a frown of concentration." He is not helped by one of his shoes, which keeps getting stuck in the sodden ground. Like the Plataeans in the third book of Thucydides, Darbishire struggles through the mud with one foot unshod. "I'm at the end of my tether" he wails, to which Jennings retorts, "I'm not surprised. You've been running as though you're tethered to something from the start". In the end, the race is given up as a bad job, and the intrepid duo take a bus instead.

The boys' main use for tennis rackets seems to be as a device for firing dysfunctional tennis balls on to the gymnasium roof. True, Darbishire could not have departed the Olympics much earlier than our current crop of tennis players, but they, at least, tend to keep their rackets in one piece.

Sydney 2000 was a disappointing Games for Britain's swimmers, and Darbishire's early pool performances suggest he is not about to buck the national trend. Despite patenting his "famous new air-screw, peddle-steamer stroke, an entirely new sort of contra-rotating butterfly stroke, with jet-propelled ankle movements," he is revealed as a fraud who has to put one foot on the floor every three strokes. Ultimately he is forced to take the plunge, and discovers to his joy and amazement that he is able to swim out of his depth after all.

So the prospects for CEJD: Olympian look pretty grim. "Speed isn't everything", he opines before the cross-country. "When the hare and the tortoise had a race, the hare went to sleep, so I keep going at a steady jog-trot". This philosophy, one imagines, would guide Darbishire's whole future existence. However in a race against two of his literary contemporaries, the Williams Bunter and Brown, Darbishire might perhaps stand a chance. If, that is, there were to be a large leafy tree on the course under which Bunter might doze and into whose branches "Just William" might be tempted to search out adventure. Lots of ifs, but never underestimate the tortoise...

\*\*\*\*\*

**COLIN CREWE CATALOGUETTE . NUMBER 11**  
**BOYS' AND GIRLS' STORYPAPERS, COMICS AND BOOKS,**  
**THE SECRETS OF THE SHELVES AND BOXES REVEALED**  
**MONTHLY IN STORYPAPER COLLECTORS' DIGEST.**  
**12B WESTWOOD ROAD, CANVEY ISLAND, ESSEX SS8 0ED**  
**TELEPHONE: 01268-693735. 9AM - 9PM DAILY**



**AN EXCITING CATALOGUETTE OF CAPTAIN W.E. JOHNS' MUCH LOVED STORIES FEATURING BIGGLES, WORRALS, GIMLET and CO. in REPRINT FORMAT MAINLY TO INTEREST COLLECTORS ON A BUDGET. CHOCKS AWAY - HAPPY FLYING, COLIN.**

**OXFORD BIGGLES REPRINT HARDBACKS**

Biggles in the South Seas 1951. Vg.	£7.50
The Rescue Flight 1951. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles Flies North 1951. Vg.	£6.50
Biggles Flies West 1952. Vg.	£6.50
Biggles in the Jungle 1947. Vg.	£10.00
Biggles in Spain 1950. G.	£5.00
Biggles in the Baltic 1951. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles Flies South 1950. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles Hits the Trail 1951. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles In the Jungle 1949. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles Goes to War 1952. Vg.	£8.50
Biggles Air Commodore 1952. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles and Co. 1952. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles Goes to War. 1951. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles in Africa 1949. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles Flies East 1952. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles Defies the Swastika 1952. G.	£6.50
Biggles Charter Pilot 1950. Vg.	£7.50
<b>HODDER &amp; STOUGHTON, BROCKHAMPTON</b>	
<b>and OTHER W.E. JOHNS REPRINT</b>	
<b>HARDBACKS</b>	
Biggles In the Blue, 2 <sup>nd</sup> ed 1954. Vg.	£14.00
Biggles Takes a Holiday 1950. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles Makes Ends Meet. n/d. Vg.	£8.50
Biggles and the Black Raider, 2 <sup>nd</sup> ed 1959. Vg.	£12.50
Biggles of 255. nd. Vg.	£4.50
Biggles in the Gabi 1954. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles and the Poor Rich Boy. n/d. G.	£4.00
Biggles Follows On, 2 <sup>nd</sup> ed. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles Chinese Puzzle, 2 <sup>nd</sup> ed. 1958. G.	£6.50
Biggles Chinese Puzzle, 2 <sup>nd</sup> ed. 1958. Vg.	£10.00
Biggles Flies West, n/d. G.	£5.00
Biggles Air Detective, n/d. Vg.	£6.00
Biggles In Mecca 1959. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles On Mystery Island, n/d. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles On Mystery Island, 2 <sup>nd</sup> ed. 1960. V/g.	£8.50
Biggles Second Case 1950. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles and the Missing Millionaire, n.d. Vg.	£8.50
Biggles Gets his Man 1952. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles Breaks the Silence 1959. Vg.	£6.50
Biggles Goes to School, 2 <sup>nd</sup> ed. 1952. Vg.	£8.50
Biggles Fails to Return 1951. G.	£5.00
Biggles Sweeps the Desert 1950. G.	£6.50
Biggles in the Orient 1949. Vg.	£7.50
The Boy Biggles 1968. G.	£4.50

Sergeant Bigglesworth C.I.D. 1950. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles Foreign Legionnaire 1955. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles Hunts Big Game 1951. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles Delivers the Goods 1949. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles - Curse of the Condor, n/d. Vg.	£4.50
Biggles - Flies to Work, n/d. Vg.	£4.50
Biggles of the Camel Squadron, n/d. Vg.	£4.50
Biggles Pioneer Air Fighter, n/d. Vg.	£4.50
Biggles of the Special Air Police, n/d. Vg.	£4.50
Biggles Flies Again, n/d. Vg.	£4.50
Biggles and the Black Peril, n/d. Vg.	£4.50
Biggles Works it Out, 2 <sup>nd</sup> ed. 1952. Vg.	£8.50
Where the Golden Eagle Soars, xlib. Vg.	£6.50
Worrals on the Warpath 1950. Vg.	£7.50
Worrals Flies Again 1949. Vg.	£7.50
Worrals Goes East 1950. Vg.	£7.50
Worrals of the Islands 1950. Vg.	£7.50
Return to Mars, n/d. G.	£5.00
Worlds of Wonder 1962. G.	£6.00
The Death Rays of Ardilla 1959. Vg.	£7.50
The Man Who Vanished with Space. Vg.	£12.50
Gimlet Goes Again 1949. Vg.	£7.50
Gimlet Lends a Hand 1951. Vg.	£7.50
Gimlet Comes Home 1949. Vg.	£7.50
Gimlet's Oriental Quest 1950. Vg.	£6.50
Comrades In Arms, 2 <sup>nd</sup> ed. 1951. Vg.	£12.50
Gimlet King of the Commandos 195. Vg.	£14.00
The Biggles' Book of Heroes, 2 <sup>nd</sup> ed. 1960. Vg.	£12.50

**'WORRALS', A WOMAN OF WIT, COURAGE AND RESOURCE - A WORTHY 'SISTER' TO BIGGLES A GREAT GIRL AND A GRAND AIRWOMAN! SET OF ALL ELEVEN BOOKS PUBLISHED BY HODDER and STOUGHTON and LUTTERWORTH PRESS, GENERALLY IN VERY GOOD CONDITION. PRICE FOR WHOLE SET OF 11 TITLES** £95.00

Worrals Goes East, 1 <sup>st</sup> ed. 1944. Vg.	
Worrals Investigates, 1 <sup>st</sup> ed. 1950. g/vg	
Worrals On the War-Path 1948. Vg.	
Worrals Carries On 1950. Vg.	
Worrals Flies Again 1949. Vg.	
Worrals in the Wilds, 1 <sup>st</sup> ed. 1947. Vg.	
Worrals of the W.A.A.F., 2 <sup>nd</sup> ed. 1942. Vg.	
Worrals In the Wastelands 1950. Vg.	
Worrals Down Under, 1 <sup>st</sup> ed. 1948. G.	
Worrals Goes Afloat, 1 <sup>st</sup> ed. 1949. Vg.	
Worrals of the Islands 1950. Vg.	

W.E. JOHNS. A FINE SELECTION IN PAPER-BACK FORMAT INCLUDING VERY SCARCE TITLES. HIGHLY COLLECTABLE!

Biggles Investigates. Vg.	£8.50
Biggles and the Dark Instructor. Vg.	£12.00
Orchids for Biggles. Vg.	£6.50
No Rest for Biggles. Vg.	£5.00
Biggles Takes It Rough. Vg.	£6.50
Biggles Buries a Hatchet. Vg.	£6.50
Biggles Takes a Hand. Vg.	£8.50
Biggles and the Black Mask. Vg.	£12.50
Biggles and the Penitent Thief. Vg.	£15.00
Biggles and the Blue Moon. Vg.	£10.00
Biggles and the Little Green God. Vg.	£18.00
Biggles in the Blue. Vg.	£12.50
Biggles Sorts it Out. Vg.	£10.00
Biggles Sees Too Much. Vg.	£12.50
Biggles in the Terai. Vg.	£18.00
Biggles and the Plot that Failed. Vg.	£8.50
Biggles in the Underworld. Vg.	£15.00
Biggles komt to hulp	£2.50
Biggles the Movie. Vg.	£6.50
Biggles and the Lost Treasure. Vg.	£7.50
Return to Mars. Vg.	£4.50
Kings of Space. G.	£3.50
Now to the Stars. Vg.	£5.00
Biggles in Spain. Vg.	£4.50
Biggles Goes to War. Vg.	£4.50
Biggles in the South Seas. Vg.	£4.50
Biggles Defies the Swastika. Vg.	£5.00
Biggles Flies West. Vg.	£4.50
Biggles the Rescue Flight. Vg.	£4.50
Biggles Flies South. Vg.	£4.50
Biggles Flies North. Vg.	£4.50
Biggles in the Jungle. Vg.	£5.00
Gimlet Takes a Jab. Vg.	£6.50
Gimlet Bores In. Vg.	£7.50
Gimlet King of the Commandos. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles Works it Out. Vg.	£4.50
Biggles Follows On. Vg.	£5.00
Biggles in Mexico. Vg.	£6.50
Biggles in the Orient. Vg.	£5.00

Biggles of the Interpol. Vg.	£6.50
Biggles in the Antarctic. Vg.	£7.50
Biggles Chinese Puzzle. Vg.	£6.50

**PRE-WAR BIGGLES in the MODERN BOY:** I am delighted to offer over 30 issues of this famous Flagship Boys' Paper all in very good condition, each containing adventures of Biggles by W.E. Johns in pre-war format with superb illustrations. Priced at £7.50 each.

258. "Peril Over the
259. "Fighting Mad"
260. "The Duneville Sausage"
261. "The Blue Demon"
262. "The Mystery Gun"
265. "Secret Orders"
268. "Battle of the Flowers"
269. "The Flying Arsenal"
270. "The White Feather"
271. "Lost in the Sky"
284. "The Flying Professor"
286. "The Bridge they Could
287. "The Boggle Bombers"
288. "Biggles Plays Tit for Tat"
289. "The Funk"
290. "The Wing Riders"
291. "Biggles on the Trail"
292. "Quits"
296. "Scotland Forever"
298. "Biggles' Last Fight"
323. "Biggles Learns to Fly"
324. "Biggles' First Flight"
325. "Biggles the Scout"
326. "Spy in the Sky"
327. "Crashed Flyers"
328. "Knights of the Sky"
329. "The Laughing Spy"
330. "Biggles' Bullseye"
331. "Biggles Buys the Sky"
332. "Biggles' Big Battle"
333. "Biggles' Surprise Packet"

**WANTED TO PURCHASE: COMPLETE COLLECTIONS AND GOOD RUNS OF CASSELL-SKILTON BUNTER BOOK ORIGINALS, V/GOOD IN DUSTWRAPPERS.**

**HOWARD BAKER MAGNET OMNIBUS VOLUMES V/GOOD IN DUSTWRAPPERS.**

**HOWARD BAKER GREYFRAIRS BOOK CLUB VOLUMES V/GOOD IN SLIPCASES.**

**GREYFRIARS HOLIDAY ANNUALS ORIGINAL EDITIONS 1920-1941 INC.**

Sexton Blake Library, Boys Friend Library, Dixon Hawk Library, Schoolboys Own Library, Schoolgirls Own Library, Union Jack, Thriller, Detective Weekly, Modern Boy, Gem, Popular, Beano, Dandy, Rainbow, Tiger Tim, Film Fun, Radio Fun, Knockout, Champion, Rover, Wizard, Hotspur, Skipper, Adventure, Eagle, Jingles, The Schoolgirl, Schoolgirls Own, Schoolfriend, Girls Crystal, many early film magazines.

**WILLIAM and BIGGLES books in d/ws**

**TERMS: PAYMENT ON YOUR SATISFACTORY RECEIPT OF GOODS PLUS POSTAGE AT COST.  
4 ROOMS OF STOCK. VISITORS MOST WELCOME BY APPOINTMENT.  
YOU WILL BE AMAZED.**

# BOOK REVIEW

by Bill Bradford

Murray Roberts' Captain Justice stories a Bibliography compiled by Ronald Hibbert and Ian Bennett. Edited and Printed by R. Hibbert, 30 Alton Road, Ross on Wye, Herefordshire, HR9 5ND. Price £9.00 including packing and posting.

Between 22.11.1930 and 14.10.1939, Captain Justice stories appeared in over 300 issues of *Modern Boy*. Of these 24 were reprinted in the *Boys' Friend Library*, and there were three short stories that appeared in *Modern Boy* annuals.

Like Ron Hibbert, whose year of birth I share, I encountered Captain Justice around 1932 and was 'hooked' thereafter. The *Modern Boy* owes much to its serials by popular authors, including W.E. Johns, Charles Hamilton, Percy F. Westerman and George E. Rochester. The Justice stories, credited to 'Murray Roberts', were mainly written by Robert Murray Graydon.

Commencing in 1994, Rona has reprinted all the Captain Justice stories in 30 volumes. Apart from the difficulty in obtaining original copies, the sheer physical effort has been a true labour of love. This Bibliography lists and describes all these stories and is generously illustrated; indeed it seems to cover everything you could wish to know. Finally, Ron has written a short Justice story which is most imaginative.

THE SECOND EDITION, revised and with additional material is now available.

ALL THE EPISODES, and there are 320 of them, of the 34 MODERN BOY series are listed along with story outlines. And ALL 24 BOYS' FRIEND LIBRARY versions of the stories and the three short stories which were written for THE MODERN BOY'S BOOK OF ADVENTURE STORIES (1935) and the 1937 and 1938 MODERN BOY'S ANNUALS are listed too.

BOTH IAN BENNETT and RONALD HIBBERT were devoted readers of THE MODERN BOY in the 1930s.

IAN BENNETT, who compiled the lists over decades, has written a lengthy and factual appreciation of the Justice Saga, and an article on his buying, and enjoying, THE BOYS' FRIEND LIBRARY adventures sixty years ago.

RON HIBBERT whose main responsibility, has been layout and presentation, has written the Introduction, and has compared THE MODERN BOY series with those of THE BOYS' FRIEND LIBRARY. And he's wondered, as you do, what became of Captain Justice after his last recorded adventure in the very last MODERN BOY (14/10/1939).

THE 52 page, A4 sized book has more than 120 illustrations, mostly by ERNEST IBBETSON. THE COST, packing and postage included, is £9.00. Please make cheques out to :

R. HIBBERT, 30, ALTON ROAD, ROSS ON WYE, HEREFORDSHIRE, HR9 5ND. (01989 464512)

## READY NOW

MURRAY ROBERTS'  
CAPTAIN JUSTICE  
STORIES



A BIBLIOGRAPHY  
compiled by  
RONALD HIBBERT & IAN BENNETT

## JOHN BRIDGWATER WRITES:

As in several other nights of recent times I have had to arise from my bed for various reasons and find myself thoroughly awake. During these hours (2 to 4 am mostly) I have "discovered" Buffalo Bill. I have always been fascinated by the little Newnes New Redskin Library books and the Aldine Buffalo Bill novels, mainly by the cover pictures, and always kept a few in a drawer, but never read them. The only Buffalo Bill story I ever read until a few weeks ago was the *Union Jack* "3 Buffalo Bills" Sexton Blake story. However, in "the wee small hours" I tried the "Sachem of Saginaw" a NNRL tale. In spite of the microscopic print, the weird dialogue (the characters called each other "pards" and had names like Little Cayuse and Piute) and utter impossibility of the story I enjoyed the tale enough to on to "Buffalo Bill and the Red Hand", an even more impossible story about a giant mechanical hand coming out of the side of a canyon and whipping riders off their horses and disappearing back into the canyon wall with them. I was surprised to find the mystery element and detective theme in both yarns and this probably is why I enjoyed them, being a Blake fan. I now, at long last, understand why my three uncles who survived the 1914-1918 war enjoyed them. I can still remember at age 5 finding a discarded NNRL of theirs in my Grandfather's "woodshed" at the bottom of his backyard, buried in a heap of "John Bulls", "Ideas" and "Leaders". Unfortunately, it did not survive WW2. At present I am on an Aldine BB Novel *Dakota Dan the Ranger*, but it has not the charm of the NNRL's (not yet any way).

I am wondering – does the time of day or night – make any difference to one's enjoyment of a story? I enjoyed Buffalo Bill in the wee small hours but I found Leslie Charteris' story "The Property of the Deceased" (Thriller No. 157) practically unreadable at 3 a.m. I enjoyed Gerald Verner's "The Ghost of Rufust Manners" (Thriller No. 307) at the same time of night but thought it not thrilling. By contrast I found both "Agatha Christie's Miss Marple" and "Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot" both by Anne Hart (biographies of Marple and Poirot) absolutely fascinating and did not want to stop to go back to bed. On the other hand I found Joseph Conrad's "Chance" compelling to read, but very easy to put down, and to return to bed. Now I used to find Charteris a really lovely read and thoroughly enjoyed "The Last Hero" and "Meet the Tiger" (titles correct?) and "Enter the Saint" – also "The White Rider" and "Saint Overboard" (read as a serial in the *Daily Mirror* long ago). But "Property of the Deceased" struck me as being written in a frivolous manner, straining after a light, amusing effect after the style of P.G. Wodehouse and failing dismally. I wonder if anyone else has experienced the influence of the night spoiling the enjoyment of a well-loved author? It spoiled Charteris for me but not the weird dialogue of Buffalo Bill's pards! I do like P.G. Wodehouse very much. In fact, in the last few months have read the Ukridge stories and "Thank You Jeeves" with great enjoyment.

My night reading has not neglected Sexton Blake. I have been running through my *Detective Weekly* collection and have come to the conclusion that it does not completely deserve the low opinion in which it seems to be held these days. It gets scant attention now, and the rather unpleasing yellow of its covers is not entirely to blame. It did commit the almost unforgivable sin of dropping Sexton Blake after No. 130. However, on close scrutiny one finds it did try to make amends and blossomed into what is almost a "Golden Age" starting with No. 310 of 28 January 1939. The covers took on a "*Union Jack* type

glow" making them very special and pleasing as do a series of splendid reprints of *Union Jack* stories interspersed with *Sexton Blake Library* Second Series tales. There is an issue No. 321 which appears to be related to *Thriller* No. 519. This "Golden Age" lasted till No. 341, 2 September 1939, after which the covers contained, the first few paragraphs of the story, though the fading "wobble" started a little earlier, following No. 338 of 12 August. I do recommend all Blake fans to take a serious look at this period of *Detective Weekly*. It offers recycled versions of such delights as the Paul Cynor series, Berkeley Gray's radio serial "Enter Sexton Blake", Zenith, Waldo, Huxton Rymer, G & E Hales, etc. These notes on *DW* hardly begin to do justice to the last year of this paper. There is much material for a very interesting long article on the closing "Golden Age" of *D.W.*

\*\*\*\*\*

## FORUM

### From J.R. Hammond:

I wonder if any of your readers could give me any information regarding the artist Bip Pares? He illustrated several of James Hilton's novels, most notably *Goodbye Mr. Chips*, and was a well known illustrator in the 1930s and 1940s.

I have been unable to find any mention of him in any of the usual reference books and would greatly appreciate any details of his life and work.

### From Sheila Patterson:

It was with enjoyment and nostalgia that I read *Princesses and the Gothic Story* in *SGOL*. How well I remember those stories and *School Friend* and *Girls' Crystal* were eagerly awaited every week.

### From Dennis Bird:

I enjoyed Dawn Marler's article on the *SGOL* in the September *C.D.* – but may I make a small correction? *Carol – the Last of the Lincolns* was one of Hazel Armitage's best stories, but it did not, I think, end with Carol inheriting her grandfather's farm. In the very last instalment it turned out that her boyfriend Andy Felton was in fact her long-lost cousin Terence Lincoln, thought to have been drowned as an infant. So by the rules of primogeniture, Andy/Terence would have inherited. Unfair by today's standards!

### From Ben Bligh:

Regarding the request last month from Terry Beenham for the address of Edwy Searles Brooks. I have copies of several letters sent out by E.S.B. and on all of them the address is simply: **Barton House, Halstead, Essex**. All are dated 1931, and as a point of interest, his phone number was Halstead 75.

### From Ernest Holman:

Many years ago, when Hamilton's Post War books were being published, I am quite sure I saw a mention of a hard back book of Carcroft school, to be entitled *Who Shall Be*

*Captain*. It was to be the story of how Harry Compton finally made it as Junior Carcroft Captain.

I tried some years to get a copy but with no luck. I cannot recall now who the publishers were but it would have been at the time of the 'Jack' books etc. One dealer called it 'very rare'; another said it was never published by any of the post war publishers of Hamilton's stories. Several dealers had never even heard of it and I am now wondering if it was ever, in fact, published. Was it another manuscript like the 1940 Magnet stories that never saw the light of day? Perhaps some readers may know something about it. Unfortunately, I cannot now recall just where I saw the item announced.

### From Des O'Leary:

The interesting articles were there again in the September *C.D.* Dawn Marler underlined the way young people's fiction is always, or nearly always, closely linked with adult genres, although, of course, few of us young readers would have been aware of that at the time. It's one of *C.D.*'s functions to point out these connections, I think, and to stimulate new aspects of our appreciation.

Andrew Miles's speculations on possible continuations of the unfinished *Magnet* series got the mind working, even for me, although I am not a great connoisseur of the Greyfriar's stories.

Readers' letters on Tony Cook's articles on John Buchan reflected my own favourable opinion, though I do agree with Dennis Bird's reservations on the Buchan films. I've recently been re-reading some of this author's short stories and very good they are too.

Finally, the "Rocket" pieces by Ron Gilliatt and Roy Hopkins were one of *C.D.*'s strong points – a factual answer to one of those little questions which can tease for years.

The illustrations were not only finely reproduced, especially the Eric Parker, but essential to grasping the article's points.

Incidentally, I noticed two names which will be familiar to adult science-fiction readers of the day, John Carnell and William Temple.

One small point where I would not necessarily agree with Ray Hopkins. He writes that Amalgamated Press and D.C. Thomson were inserting strip stories in their favourite periodicals by the early 1950s, "thus hoping to wean youthful readers away from all-stories-to-read weeklies". (My quotation marks.) Surely it was the relentless march of TV, particularly after ITV's launch in 1955?

\*\*\*\*\*

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.

\*\*\*\*\*

Let him spend his time no more at home...  
 He cannot be a perfect man, not being  
 Tried and tutored in the world.

*Two Gentleman of Verona*

'Ease makes children, it is difficulty that makes men'. Quoting this dictum from Samuel Smiles, Uncle Bob commences his 'fatherly' talk to his young nephew, Frank, upon the advantages of going to a good school. 'A fellow must rough it a little to bring out the merit in him you know, and an English Public school is just the place in which to refine the good metal from the dross'.

Uncle Bob had a fine turn of phrase upon occasion and he desired above all to stiffen the resolve of his young nephew who hitherto had led an extremely sheltered existence with his widowed mother and two adoring sisters. Such education he had so far received had been assimilated in this gentle company.

Frank absorbed those pearls of wisdom from his Uncle in a thoughtful silence. But, so my old Sergeant-Major was wont to say, 'He'll do, there's good stuff in him'. He realised that if he were to scale any heights, however modest, he would do well to fall in with this plan arranged for him to go to a real school. The preliminaries are soon completed, the good-byes said, a few furtive, yet not unmanly tears shed and Frank, together with sundry trunks, cases and – of no small importance, a 'tuck' or play box, is en-route to Stonefield school. Before him, a new world of adventure, work and sporting endeavour.

Thus does Harold Avery's 'Frank's First Term' begin. Of course in his innocence he falls into all the time-honoured snares and japes thoughtfully prepared by the old hands and perpetrated upon 'greenhorns' since time immemorial. However, quickly the 'good stuff' in him rises to the surface and he soon blends in with the general scene and makes a very fair impression in his first term.

Being thrust into the rough and tumble of public school sport proves a somewhat traumatic experience for Frank, whose previous acquaintance with cricket had been confined to playing with a soft ball with his two sisters on the lawn in front of the house, and being bowled 'under-arms'. Thus his confrontation with the hard reality, vigorous bowling and much shouted advice, to say nothing of a 'real ball', may be well imagined. Yet he acquitted himself not at all badly, having always in his mind one of Uncle Bob's last injunctions, namely: 'Face up to it boy and you will win'.

The episode of rescuing the flag by Frank and his friend 'Flycatcher' on the Head's birthday is not without its symbolism, although very briefly narrated. It is a telling little vignette in the progress of our hero into full acceptance by the school at large. The motif running through the entire story is "Play the man and Play the game". How terribly dated and old fashioned this appears today, but never becoming too intrusive it is ever present, an under-current in all the adventures and situations which befall Frank and his companions.

Avery began his writing career at a time when many of the established authors of school stories tended to wax over-sentimental, with the result that much of their work has

a maudlin tendency which for many has proved to be unacceptable. He, however, cannot be accused of this failing.

Cowper has reminded us in his 'Conversation' that – 'A tale should be judicious, clear, succinct, the language plain, and incidents well linked'. Few would disagree that Harold Avery fulfils these precepts admirably. There is about his writing a freshness of style which was breaking free from the restrictive nineteenth-century inhibitions and helping to establish the new and more robust standard which we have since come to expect and admire in the modern public school story.

Many echoes of Greyfriars are to be found in this tale of Stonefield – although it precedes that ancient foundation as a school by several years. March, the captain of Stonefield, has many of the characteristics of George Wingate. He is described as having 'hands hard and horny with cricketing corns' – Mr. Kean, Frank's Form-master, although rather less crusty than Mr. Quelch, and who appears not to have had the wearing daily experience of a Billy Bunter, obviously fully understands boys and all that motivates their behaviour.

John Lord, or, as he is known to his friends 'Lord John', is a composite blend of Vernon Smith, and Angel of the Greyfriars fourth form, while Cobb, the school porter, is inflicted by many similar failings to dear old Gosling, being addicted to amiability only towards the end of term when possible 'tips' are in the offing.

*Frank's First Term* is in the great tradition of public school stories. In it one finds echoes of Thomas Hughes' *Tom Brown*, and less admirable suggestions here and there of Dean Farrar. The odd blemish may be easily overlooked; the whole presents a first class tale of school life in the late nineteenth century.

Avery belongs to that exciting era in the development of the modern public school story, his writing spanning roughly 1890-1920, when the field was open, fresh and ripe for inventiveness and experimentation – as Charles Hamilton once remarked referring to his own youth; 'In those spacious days there was ample room for everyone'.

Born at 'Headless Cross' in Worcestershire in 1867, Harold Avery died at Evesham in the same county, where he spent most of his life, in 1943. He was educated at New College at Eastbourne, where doubtless he absorbed much atmosphere which was later to be put to such good use in his school stories.

Outstanding among his large literary output are *The Dormitory Flag*, *Off the Wicket*, *Heads or Tails* and *The Triple Alliance*. His work may be viewed as a great contribution to that peculiarly British genre, the public school story.

\*\*\*\*\*

## BOOK REVIEW

by Brian Doyle

**“Frank Richards: the Chap Behind the Chums”** by Mary Cadogan. Swallowtail Books, 3 Danesbrook, Calverley, Shropshire, WV5 7BB. Paperback. (The following prices include postage and packing costs: £9.95 for U.K. readers. £10.95 if sent abroad by surface mail, and £12.95 if sent abroad by air mail.)

You all know about Frank Richards, don't you? Of course you do, or you wouldn't be reading this copy of the *SPCD*. I'll just qualify that slightly. You may *think* you know all about Frank Richards – but perhaps you don't know *all* about him. But you surely will after reading and enjoying this excellent paperback reissue of Mary Cadogan's essential, informative and entertaining book about the literary phenomenon called Frank Richards – a true literary phenomenon of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

It's been a long wait – 12 years since this marvellous and definitive book was originally published in hard back in 1988 to fine and heart-warming reviews and sales to gladden a bookseller's displays and tills.

Now it's back in a superlative paperback edition from Swallowtail Books with a joyous front-cover by the one-and-only C.H. Chapman, showing ‘The Master’ himself, framed by a smiling group of his famous schoolboy creations (plus one rather plump schoolgirl, for who could keep Bessie Bunter, sister of Billy, out of such an occasion?).

And, even if you have the original edition, it's still well worth investing in this new version, since it has the happy bonuses of a new, long Introduction by Jeffrey Richards, and a new Foreword by Una Hamilton Wright (Frank Richards' niece, though he was always ‘Uncle Charlie’ to her – Charles Hamilton (1876-1961) being, of course, Frank Richards' real name).

The book also has 20 photographs and a host (80) of delightful black-and-white illustrations, including many reproductions of the original magazine drawings. The photograph (facing page 147) of a small boy raptly listening as Frank Richards reads a Greyfriars story to him (with both faces, young and old, in full close-up) is remarkable and touching.

The drawing (by Savile Lumley on page 62) of a long line of eight



Frank Richards and his most famous creation portrayed by *Magnet* illustrator C. H. Chapman.

Rookwood boys bending over as Mr. Dalton (described, ironically, as 'a popular master') prepares to cane them all, may send the current 'PC' brigade apoplectic with disapproval! And, on a 1909 *Magnet* cover, the delectable, sweet and pretty Miss Amy Locke, sister of Dr. Locke, the Headmaster of Greyfriars – and a keen suffragette – is depicted by artist Arthur E. Clarke standing in the school quad. "The suffragettefulness is terrific!" comments an impressed Hurree Janset Ram Singh to Bob Cherry as they espy her. So, by all appearances, is Miss Locke.

Mary Cadogan, an expert in the field, takes us through every aspect of Frank Richards' life, background and writing career, including his own education (he didn't attend a majestic public school such as his own Greyfriars or St. Jim's) which was supplied by several private day schools in Ealing and Chiswick in West London. She discusses what appears to have been his only 'vice' – gambling (he was a regular and enthusiastic loser at 'the tables' in such places as Monte Carlo – despite his several 'infallible' systems), the development of his literary career, which made him the acknowledged best writer of school stories in the English language (probably in *any* language...), as well as being the most prolific (he used more than 20 pseudonyms, created almost 100 fictional schools and published well over 72 million words of fiction, or the equivalent of 1000 novels).

As well as his superb school tales, he also wrote adventure and sea yarns, Westerns, humour and detective mysteries, and much else besides. His work appeared *The Magnet*, *The Gem*, *Boys' Friend*, *The Popular* and dozens of other boys' papers, as well as in the regular *Greyfriars Holiday Annuals* and the many post-World War II 'Bunter books'. He apparently wrote two-thirds of all the *St. Jim's* stories in *The Gem* and 1,380 of the 1,683 Greyfriars stories in the *Magnet* (both weeklies). The tales that Richards (or 'Martin Clifford', his *St. Jim's* pen-name) had not written were contributed by 'substitute writers' and he hated them, calling them 'toads' and their imitative work 'muck'! These 'sub.' yarns were used when Richards' work was 'held up', mainly by his travels in Europe and for other good reasons. But Richards wrote the vast bulk of the material that appeared below his name (or his other 'aliases').

Frank Richards himself comes across as 'a good egg' and a warm and extremely likeable man. You feel you would like him as a friend, a good man to go on a long hike with, or spend a day with at Lord's. The sub-title of this book might well, in fact, have been *The Chum Behind the Chaps...*

It's good to see the definitive and highly-entertaining study of one of the immortals of 20<sup>th</sup> century popular fiction for the young of all ages back again in this very attractive and beautifully-produced new paperback edition – and all credit to Swallowtail Books for the look of the new volume. Mary Cadogan (the worthy editor, of course, of the *SPCD* – and what would we all do without her or indeed it?) might well perhaps be dubbed *The Chapess Behind the Chap Behind the Chums*; she is obviously a knowledgeable devotee of Greyfriars, St. Jim's, Cliff House, the Rio Kid, Ken King of the Islands, and the rest of Hamiltoniana (or should it be Richardsiana?). Her warmth, understanding and expertise – and indeed her genuine love for her subject – shine through her every paragraph. Cricketers go to 'Wisden', clergymen go to 'Crockford' – in future, admirers of Frank Richards, or those seeking information about him and his work, will doubtless go to 'Cadogan'.

And we – readers old and new – surely cannot, like the tuscans of old, forbear a cheer, as we welcome an old friend in new clothes – this fine new edition of a major book that seems certain to become a classic in its field. Even Billy Bunter's eyes would have gleamed hungrily behind his fat spectacles as he anticipated the joys and riches within its enticing covers.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **BERYLL CHOLMONDELY WRITES:**

I am very pleased to be renewing my *C.D.* subscription for another year, particularly so as I was very seriously ill during the first half of this year and wondered if I should ever be renewing anything! However, I am very pleased to have confounded medical opinion and made an excellent recovery.

While I was ill ... my only pleasure, indeed my only occupation was, of course, reading – the first pleasure and the last. It was more than a pleasure though – it was a life-saver.

I found that what I most wanted to read were the popular favourites of my youth – *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, Dornford Yates, Biggles and then, in contrast, fairly heavy history and biography. And, of course, the story-papers and *C.D.* There must be a great many people, like myself, who wait for each monthly issue of the *C.D.* with eager anticipation and who feel that they owe you an enormous debt of gratitude for all the work you put into it...

I have always found 'long ago and far away' a wonderful palliative, and for me a combination of the warmth and comfort of the beloved old stories and some of the heavier stuff I have indicated makes a complete shield when the world is harsh.

Escapism? So what!

**(Editor's Note:** I was extremely interested in Beryll's comments and, when my husband and I had to leave our house recently and put most of our things in store during the underpinning process, I was struck by the nostalgic quality of the comparatively few books and papers I took with me to our temporary home. Like Beryll, I found that to see me through this difficult time I had chosen pretty well only books enjoyed from my youthful days – stories of Cliff House and Greyfriars, *Just William*, *The Scarlet Pimpernel* the *Dimsie* and *Nancy* books of Dorita Fairlie Bruce, all Jane Austen's novels – plus a generous dollop of Tiger Tim's adventures in *Rainbow*, *Tiger Tim's Weekly* and the associated Annuals. Beryll says that 'it would be interesting to hear of the reading experience of other invalids or refugees from underpinning or those suffering other pain and distress'.)

\*\*\*\*\*

# NEWS OF THE OLD BOYS' BOOK CLUBS

## SOUTH-WESTERN O.B.B.C.

After a Holmes-like hiatus of nearly a year, nine of us met on 25<sup>th</sup> September 2000 at the Uphill home of Tim Salisbury.

Una Hamilton-Wright began the afternoon with a delightful selection of cine film, transferred to video, of what were evidently happy childhood days in the company of her family and friends – and her uncle, Charles Hamilton. Wonderful silent vignettes, brought to life by Una's commentary, of the period 1929-31 with evocative beach and party scenes at Kingsgate; and charming boating scenes on a home-made lake, with artificial island, next to Rose Lawn. Laurence Price read from *The Wheels of Chance* by H.G. Wells being the adventures of Mr. Hoopdriver, a draper and pioneer cyclist like Wells himself, together with an extract from a short story sequel by Laurence called "Mr. Hoopdriver's Honeymoon".

A break for the usual excellent tea took place, provided as always, by our very own "Mrs. Mimble", Mrs. Salisbury. It always perfectly compliments the meeting and seems to get better and better on each occasion!

Andrew Pitt, of Swallowtail Books, who are republishing classic detective stories, told us of the excellent plan to reprint Mary Cadogan's *Frank Richards: The Chap Behind the Chums*, with a new introduction by Jeffrey Richards and a foreword by Una Hamilton-Wright. Then he spoke of his love of Greyfriars, and of the famous criticism by George Orwell. The very reasons that Orwell gave for disliking the stories were what made Andrew want to enter that unchanging and stable world; and also gave, he felt, a sense of values and decency to all boys, not just public school ones. A view with which we all conquered.

The meeting closed with a talk by Laurence Price on the author, James Hilton, and particularly his great book *Lost Horizon*, followed by an amusing piece from Johnny Hopton about Bunter – and some tarts!

LAURENCE PRICE

## NORTHERN O.B.B.C.

### September Meeting

Chairman Joan opened the meeting, and we were delighted to have Donald Campbell and his son Timothy with us. Timothy spoke on *Mad*, his affection for the satirical and amusing magazine which he first discovered when he was 8 years old. Alfred E. Neuman was the character on which it was based – a fictitious chap to whom Prince Charles as a young boy bore a striking resemblance! Timothy brought this magazine, based on spoofs, politicians and people in the news, to life with slides. No longer published here, it still appears in the U.S.A.

Donald then gave an excellent presentation, with many memories of things past. Remember the old department store with its highly polished furniture and chairs for customers? The overhead 'railway' for despatch and receipt of cash from the cashier? Also pink sealing wax and string for parcels to be tied in slip knots by the sales assistant, and books by Jeffery Farnol or Baroness Orczy, or the science fiction of papers like *Astounding*, with their dramatic covers. Donald revived many more memories for us.

## October Meeting

The Club's Golden Anniversary was well and truly celebrated with a luncheon party at Leed's Hotel Metropole attended by many members and guests, including our President, Mary Cadogan, Una Hamilton Wright and Brian Wright, Gillian Baverstock, Willis and Valerie Hall, and Audrey and Tony Potts, originally from Yorkshire and now members of the London Club. We were particularly pleased that our most senior member, Harry Blowers, was able to attend. Greetings from the other Clubs and various friends were read out, and a good time was had by all.

In the evening, at our usual venue, Una Hamilton Wright treated us to a view of old home movies (now on video) of her family and friends during her childhood. These featured her uncle, Charles Hamilton, in relaxed holiday and party mood. Then Betty and Johnny Hopton presented an entertaining account, with lively visual aids, of their amazingly large and varied collection of *Noddy* books and memorabilia. We enjoyed their many amusing anecdotes, both about their collecting experiences and their own early 'show-business' days.

We felt that the Club had marked its 50 year Anniversary in fine style, and now we go on in strength, hopeful of a further 50 years.

## CAMBRIDGE CLUB

Our President Mary Cadogan attended the October meeting at Tony Cowley's home in Longstanton. She gave us an extremely lively and entertaining talk about two of her favourite authors, Baroness Orczy, the creator of *The Scarlet Pimpernel*, and Richmal Crompton who, of course, created *Just William*. Mary read extracts from the books, and also played audio tapes of both authors talking about their now world-renowned, almost legendary, characters.

Howard Korn then showed us an excellent video called *Future Perfect* which celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of *Eagle*. This programme, made by Granada TV, was shown originally only in northern parts of the country, so members particularly appreciated this opportunity of seeing it.

## LONDON O.B.B.C.

In the absence of Chairperson Mary Cadogan, Roger Jenkins welcomed 20 members and guests to the October meeting at The Thai Experience Restaurant in West Byfleet.

Members were shocked and saddened to hear of the sudden death of Peter Mahony, who was a long-standing member of the London O.B.B.C. until illness forced him to resign. Peter was the host of many a happily remembered meeting, a keen cricketer and a prolific contributor to the C.D. It was agreed that a contribution would be made to charity on behalf of the Club in his memory.

The meeting began with a quiz. Bill Bradford asked those present to name the authors associated with a list of fictional characters. Some were well known, others less so, leading to an engaging mind-boggler.

Next was an entertaining reading by Roger Jenkins from *Gem 797* in which miserable Mr. Selby lashes out with a cane when he's pestered by tapping at his study door, only to chastise the wrong man - Knox of the Sixth.

Bill Bradford next presented an interesting selection of *Desert Island Books*.

Tea followed. Members sampled a popular "starter", prawn crackers, as well as more traditional fare. For the afternoon, the walls of the restaurant had been adorned with items of Hamilton memorabilia for members' perusal. These included a list of pen-names typed and signed by the great man himself.

Following tea, Derek Hinrich entertained members with two poems about London and an intriguing newspaper cutting about the idiosyncrasies of United States toilet flushing regulations.

Next, Roger Jenkins presented a grid-puzzle version of "Hangman" featuring Hamiltonian characters.

Roy Parsons then read from *Magnet 1237, Widders on the Warpath*. Another great sequence featuring the character studies of schoolmasters that were central to Hamilton's genius. Gloating over Prout's embarrassment when a former pupil returns to school to "thrash" him, Capper comes unstuck; or, rather, stuck, as he falls victim to a chair with a large quantity of gum on the seat.

Alan Pratt was up next to present a well-researched and wide ranging quiz about his area of expertise, The Western. If you knew the difference between a caboose and a calaboose you were in with a good chance.

Finally, Bill Bradford led us down Memory Lane as he read from Newsletter 336, which dealt with the October 1980 meeting.

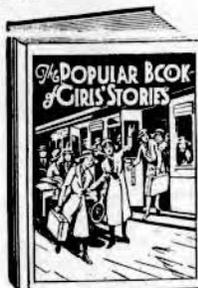
\*\*\*\*\*

## ANNUAL TIME IS HERE AGAIN!

And it brings you these four old favourites. Remember that Barbara Redfern & Co. of Old House School appear again and again in "The School Friend Annual." This and the other three Annals will provide you with hours of enthralling reading.



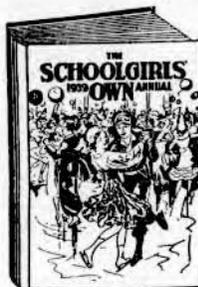
3/6



2/9



3/6



6/-

# The GREYFRIARS GUIDE



## THE DAILY ROUND. 4 p.m. DISMISSAL

(1)

The clock is on the class-room wall,  
We watch its hands; they slowly crawl  
Towards the hour of four.  
And after centuries of time  
We hear a sweet and mellow chime  
Which means that work is o'er—  
Except for fellows in detention  
(Of which I'm one, I needn't mention!).

(2)

Dick Rake and Skinner share my grief,  
For us the hour brings no relief—  
We're there till half-past four.  
The other fellows stream outside,  
And happy shouts ring far and wide  
Outside the class-room door;  
While we poor wretches go on churning  
A load of literature and learning.

(3)

We hear the clack of bat and ball,  
And now we hear a prefect call  
Some fag to get his tea.  
We seem to smell his sausage rolls,  
And there's a yearning in the souls  
Of Skinner, Rake, and me—  
Until with song and shout and whistle  
(One each) we welcome our dismissal!

## AFTER SCHOOL HOURS The Wreck of the Desperate!



It was the schooner Desperate  
That sailed the angry Sark,  
And bravely went to meet her fate,  
A proud and sturdy barque,  
And Coker looked on her with pride—  
He'd made her out of wood.  
She seemed a trifle swivel-eyed,  
But Coker thought her good.

But horrid doubts smote Potter's breast,  
And fearful doubts smote Greene;  
They thought her the unearthenest  
Affair they'd ever seen.  
They clung in anguish to the thwarts,  
And wished themselves at school;  
And both called Coker several sorts  
Of fatuous fooling fool.

"Oh, Coker, I hear a dreadful sound!  
Oh, say what may it be?"  
The angry billows lashed around  
The ship and the sailors three.  
"Oh, Coker, port your helm!" groaned  
Greene.

And Potter panted: "If  
We leave this boat alive, old bean,  
We'll knock that fathead stiff!"

And then the planks began to start  
As, with a frozen grin,  
They saw the schooner come apart  
And let the water in!  
Then from the watchers on the bank  
Arose a dreadful groan,  
As Coker's home-made vessel sank  
Extremely like a stone.

The foaming breakers round them  
Surged.

Was o'er such waves as these?  
The gallant crew were all submerged  
In water to their knees.  
They all escaped a dismal fate  
By wading to the shore;  
But Coker's schooner Desperate  
Will sail the seas no more.

## THE GREYFRIARS ALPHABET

STEPHEN PRICE,  
the Black Sheep of the Fifth.



P is for PRICE—a black sheep,  
He's callous and sunning and deep;  
He's clever at acting the fool  
And ought to be sacked from the school.  
For Hilton, his pal and his dupe,  
He often leads into the soup.  
And that, we admit, is a shame,  
For Hilton can play the straight game.  
And if he'd take Wingate's advice  
He'd jolly soon finish with Price.  
The cad of the Fifth has no pluck,  
But usually gets all the luck—  
His habits are seldom found out;  
And if, when the pre's are about,  
He's down playing cards at the inn,  
He seems to get out with his skin.

### ANSWER TO PUZZLE

Two inches. The first page of Vol. I and the last page of Vol. III—both volumes being upside-down on the bookshelf—are (except for the covers) each next to Vol. II.

## A WEEKLY BUDGET OF FACT AND FUN

By  
THE GREYFRIARS  
RHYMESTER

### GREYFRIARS GRINS

SUM FOR ARITHMETIC BOOKS.  
Bunter has 15 doughnuts,  $\frac{2}{3}$  of which belong to Todd,  $\frac{1}{4}$  to Desmond, and  $\frac{1}{6}$  to Field. How many will Bunter have for himself?

ANSWER (by those who know arithmetic): 4 doughnuts.

ANSWER (by those who know Bunter): 16 doughnuts.

When Bolsover was feeling ill yesterday we asked if anything had disagreed with him. He said yes—Queelchy had!

### PUZZLE PAR

Three volumes—I, II, III—are on the Head's bookshelf. The cover of each is  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thick, and the reading matter of each 1 inch thick. A bookworm ate his way from the first page of Vol. I to the last page of Vol. III. How far did he travel?

Answer at foot of col. 2.

We are looking forward to hearing Harry Whatton construe Suctonius on his return from Texas.—"Waal, this guy Nero was kinda horn mad, and kept shooting off his mouth: 'Gee, what mebbe this rookus, stranger?'" (Queelch faints.)

Tom Brown, who loves swimming, says he's not afraid of the river. He knows it will run!

"The Coker League" (president and only member, H. J. Coker) has been formed to kick Wingate out of the captaincy and install the said H. J. Coker instead. At the first general meeting the Coker League itself was, by some error, kicked out instead of Wingate.

There is an article in the "Courtfield Argus" this week: "How I Shot a Moose," by Paul Prout. It is, of course, a printer's error for "mouse."

When we asked Gosling why he was smiling, he said: "Well, it's like this—I'm full o' spirits to-day." We wonder what he did with the empty bottle!

## GEMS OF HAMILTONIA from PETE HANGER

"Well, this is the gratitude I get!" said Bunter bitterly. "Of course he's ratty at my bagging his show, as he calls it. Naturally it's no good him putting up his rotten ventriloquial stunts when I'm doing a better show. There's no room for two ventriloquists in one circus. Tip has had to stand down and duck it. I've got his tent and show, and he's bitter about it – actually bitter!"

"How frightfully surprising!" said Johnny Bull sarcastically. "Bagging a man's job away from him ought to please him. Mean to say that he hasn't thanked you?"

"Not a word" said Bunter, blind and dead to sarcasm. "Rotten ingratitude all along the line! He actually dislikes me."  
*MAGNET 1489*

When Bunter dropped into a bunshop, he liked to have a friend with him. Bunter knew the value of friendship – its cash value at least. But he was alone and friendless in Lantham now. Crowds of people passed him in Lantham High street, and not one of them cared whether Bunter was hungry or not. The heartlessness of the world was borne sadly upon Billy Bunter's mind. It was true that he did not bother to think whether there might be anything amiss with any passers-by. But that, of course, was quite a different matter. The beginning and end of all in the universe, to William George Bunter, was WGB. A famine that might lay waste a continent was not of so importance as the sinking feeling under his tight waistcoat.  
*MAGNET 1059*

Panting, scuffling, trampling, yelling, the two rascals gave one another severe punishment.

The uproar brought the sleepy waiter to the door of the inn. He rubbed his eyes and stared at the scene.

A ruddy-cheeked landlord joined him there and stared, and a stableman came round the building and stood staring also. The little hedge inn had seemed asleep in the drowsy, hot afternoon; but the shindy had woke it up. Three or four startled faces appeared at windows.

"It's a foight!" said the ruddy cheeked landlord, after staring for a full minute.

And the waiter nodded and replied: "Roight – it's a foight!"

To which the stableman added: "They're toight!"

The landlord stepped out.

"Here!" he said. "You can't foight here!" If you be toight, you go somewhere else to foight!"  
*MAGNET 1487*

"I've been pulling the team into good shape," said Temple. "I'm makin' the men work at it. Some of them are grumbling'."

"Let 'em grumble," said Fry. "If I were football skipper, I'd boot out the grumblers and put in triers."

It was very good of Edward Fry to give him advice, and Temple, whose manners were brightly polished, always took advice with courteous politeness. But he did not heed it. He was satisfied that what he did not know about the game of Soccer was scarcely worth mugging up. He was satisfied with his own gifts of captainship. If victories did not happen, it was perhaps irritating. But such trifles could not be allowed to disturb the equanimity of Cecil Reginald."  
*MAGNET 973*

Only one consideration prevented Potter and Greene from hurling themselves at Horace, and banging his head against the nearest tree. When that car did get going again, Coker was going to drive them down into Folkestone, and stand an expensive lunch at an expensive place. Coker was not without his uses.  
*MAGNET 1488*



I say you fellows  
this box is like the  
Annual ~ Full of  
Good Things!

Bob Whiter.

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

*Editor: Mary Cadogan, 46 Overbury Avenue, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 6PY*

*Printed by Quacks Printers, 7 Grape Lane, Petergate, York, YO1 7HU. Tel. 01904-635967*