STORY PAPER COLLECTORS' DIGEST

Vol. 58 No. 663 SEPTEMBER 2004

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STORY PAPER COLLECTORS' DIGEST

Editor: MARY CADOGAN

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W.H. GANDER

COLLECTORS' DIGEST
Founded in 1946 by
HERBERT LECKENBY

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Between Friends

This edition of the CD is dedicated to the memory of three very distinguished and much loved men of letters, Eric Fayne, Anthony Buckeridge and William Gander, whose works have given pleasure to book collectors throughout the world.

Eric was born on 11th October 1904, so we are celebrating the Centenary of his birth. (The annual luncheon Party of The London Old Boys Book club has also made Eric's centenary its theme.) For this issue of the C.D. Bob Whiter has written a tribute. I would also like to draw your attention to an attractive 26 page Newsletter published by the Old Modernians Association (former pupils of Eric's school – the Modern School at Surbiton). This contains many tributes to, and information about, Eric's life and work. It is rather strange to see him referred to as Ralph George Page (or 'Sir') but, of course, though we all know him as Eric Fayne, this was only his pseudonym.

If you would like a copy of this publication, which is called New Excelsior Newsletter No. 14, October 2004, it can be obtained from Ian Whitmore, 38 Lois Drive, Shepperton, TW17 8BE for £5, which includes inland first class postage.

This issue of the C.D. contains 2 tributes to Anthony Buckeridge, one written by Jonathan Cooper, who organizes the annual Jennings Day, and the other by Brian Doyle. When Anthony died recently many newspapers published heartwarming obituaries. His Jennings books have appealed to several generations of readers and

will, I feel sure, long continue to do so. Anthony had a very special place in our collecting circle, and was the Vice President of the Northern Old Boy's Club. Our deepest condolences and loving thoughts go out to his widow, Eileen, who a year or two ago was the guest of honour at a London O.B.B.C. Luncheon.

I am delighted to inform C.D. readers that Peter McCall has produced a facsimile edition of the first five numbers of the **Story Paper Collector**. These were originally published in 1941 by William Gander, in Canada. Fragile and small papers as they were, not many copies have survived, and Peter McCall and I felt that collectors would welcome the opportunity of acquiring them now in facsimile. The booklet comprises 52 pages, plus a full colour cover, and a page of photographs of Bill Gander. In my introduction to the book I express my admiration of his patience, dedication and determination in establishing this pioneering "old boys" paper. When we reflect that it started early in 1941, during the Second World War when German U-boats were a constant threat to shipping and postal services, we can only wonder at his success. He managed to distribute his magazine all over the English speaking world. As you will all probably know, Bill Gander's **Story Paper Collector** had a long life, and was eventually amalgamated with the C.D.

Eric Fayne

Copies of this facsimile edition can be obtained from Peter McCall at £5.50 each, which includes UK post and packing. (See the advertisement on our inside cover for Peter's address, and also for details of the various C.D. Indices which can be obtained from him.)

Happy Browsing! MARY CADOGAN

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OFFSHOOT GREYFRIARS

by Brian Sayer

SHEER coincidence! I had almost completed the following piece when I discovered and read Margery Woods' enjoyable article, A Slight Sense of déjà vu!, published in the March 2004 Collectors' Digest issue and focusing on the Hilda Richards stories in the Mascot Schoolgirl Series of the 1940s. This item is about the Mascot and similar library stories for boys.

THE PUBLICATION in 1947 of *Billy Bunter of Greyfriars School*, the first hardback book to feature all the heroes of *The Magnet* in one story, was surely the post-war highpoint in the authorship of Frank Richards.

In an enterprising flash of genius, publisher Charles Skilton brought about a revival of Billy Bunter and lighted the trail that led to many other books and annuals with tales written by Charles Hamilton under his various pseudonyms.

Many of the young readers of the Skilton books probably knew the Owl of the Remove only through the cartoon strips in the Knockout comic.

Once permission to use the copyright characters had been granted by Amalgamated Press, stories of Greyfriars, St Jim's and Rookwood flowed happily from Hamilton's Kingsgate home on the Isle of Thanet.

Until then, the author had been seeking other outlets and, with the gates of Greyfriars closed, he created other schools.

Readers of his new stories were often beckoned by an announcement on the covers that the writer was 'the author of Billy Bunter'.

Before the fortunate arrival of Mr Skilton, Hamilton had been unable to write about the boys and the schools his amazing imagination had produced.

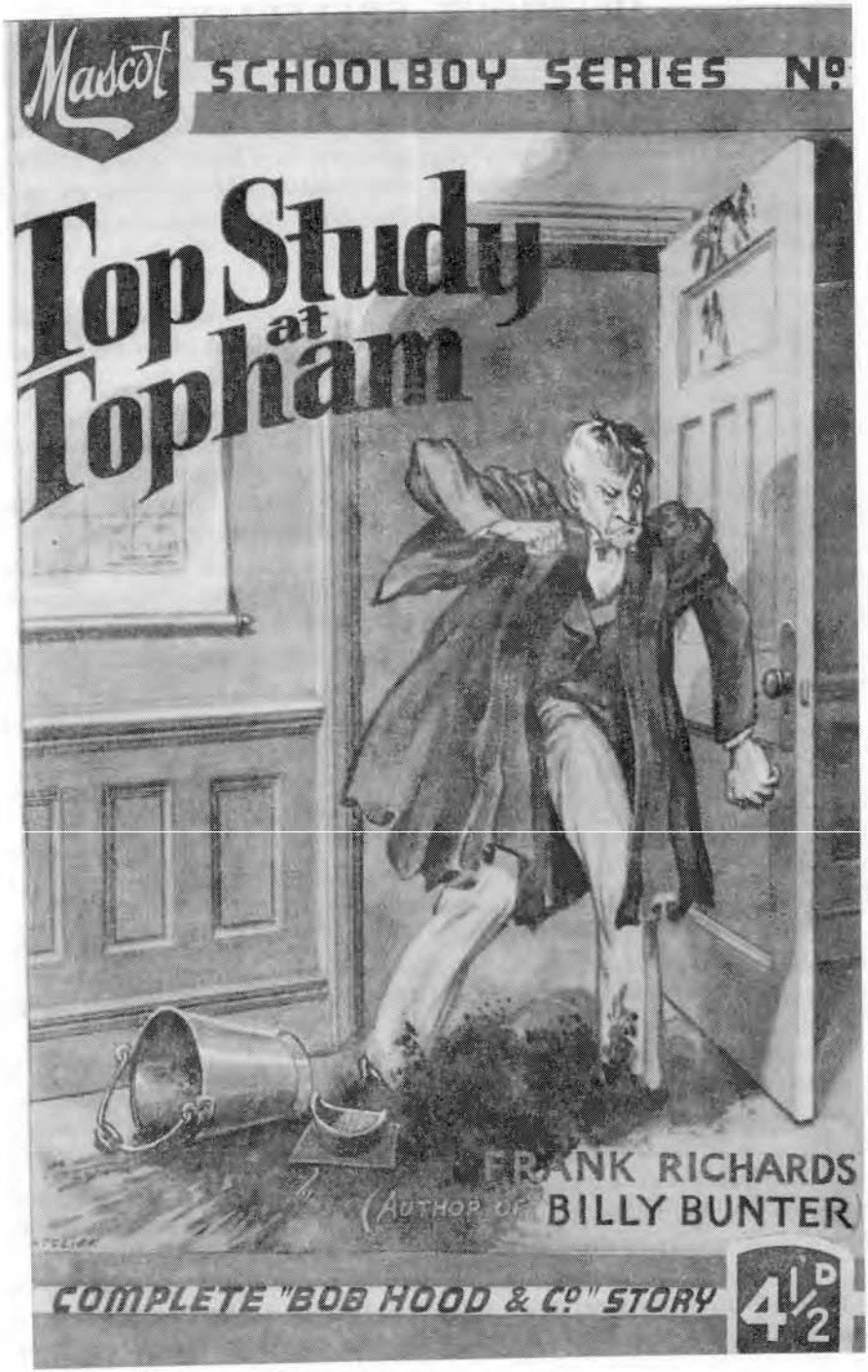
He was shackled by copyright. Biographers have stated that the author sold the rights of his characters to his main publisher, Amalgamated Press. However, the 'new boys' and incidents in their adventures had the familiar Hamilton stamp.

In the Forties, an attractive booklet/library, appeared with a blue and red cover. This was number one of the Mascot Schoolboy Series, priced fourpence-halfpenny. It was published by John Matthew Ltd, of Blomfield Street, London, and printed in Bishopsgate.

The title was *Top Study at Topham*. A blurb on the cover announced that it was "a complete Bob Hood & Co story". The cover shows a master, in customary scholastic gown, staggering after a bucket of soot fell on him as he opened a door. (The artist's pail, lying on the floor, looked as if it could well have caused serious injury!)

Twenty pages of close type introduced the chums of Topham. The plotting and characters could be substituted for those of better-known Hamilton schools but he was, after all, writing for a new generation of young readers.

The choice of the hero's name, Bob Hood, is interesting in that Hamilton's housekeeper for many years was Edith Hood. Was the Topham pupil's name a suggestion or a bit of gentle humour? The tale starts in a cheery, familiar way. New


Mascot
SCHOOLBOY SERIES No.
Top Study at Topham
FRANK RICHARDS
(Author of BILLY BUNTER)
COMPLETE "BOB HOOD & Co." STORY
4½D

boy Harry Vane tries to board a train but is told by Hood that there is 'no room'. By page two, a fat schoolboy called Bunny Binks is found hiding under a carriage seat because he does not have a ticket.

The story so far will be familiar to readers of *The Magnet*. Vane's form-master is Mr Carfax, 35 years a schoolmaster, and cast in the Henry Quelch mould. Vane, through no fault of his, is soon in trouble with Carfax.

He is "planted" in the so-called Top Study with Hood and Binks but his presence is resented.

The tale flows effortlessly in Hamilton's well-known style, interspersed with jolly japes.

Story number two in the Mascot series has the title *Bunny Binks on the Warpath*.

Harry Vane 'stars' again and in the opening chapter is inquiring about a missing cake. He had been willing to share the cake with his study-mates although Bob Hood still wants him to move out. Bunny Binks displays evidence of having had the cake. Accused of scoffing it, Binks denies that he touched it but, in a Bunterish way, says: "It was nothing like the cakes I get from Binks Park. No marzipan on it... and hardly any plums either." There is a classroom sequence, presided over by the stern Mr Carfax, when Binks translates *At pius Aeneas, per noctem plurima volvens* as "in the night taking many turnings". (Did not Bunter somewhere construe this same line as "Aeneas was turning over in bed"?)

Binks, who like Bunter, is an atrocious speller, lands in trouble with Mr Carfax and, unreasonably, blames Harry Vane for this.

He tries to take revenge but it all ends in comedy for the reader and sorrow for Binks.

Number three in the Mascot series, called *The Dandy of Topham*, introduces readers to Randolph Picton-Brown of the Remove.

Who, with a fictional name like that, could be anything but the school's bad hat?

The tale starts in a recognizable way with Picton-Brown asking to be let off games-practice. The valued player explains that his father is coming to see him. He is, however, being economical with the truth because he has an appointment at the Spotted Dog. Harry Vane is given his place in the team. Randy cuts up rusty and makes Vane a prisoner to prevent him playing in the match. Number four in the series has the title *Sent to Coventry* but it is not in my collection.

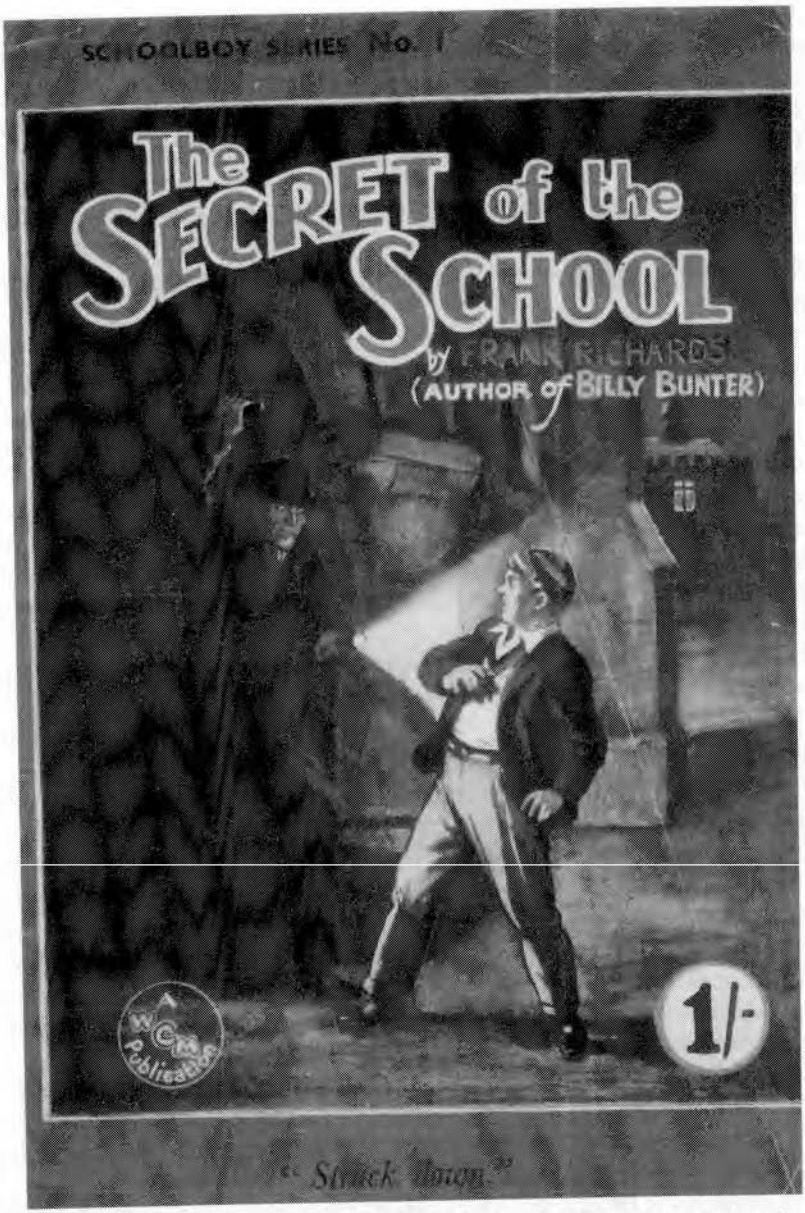
Mascot also published a School Series in a similar format, written by Hilda Richards who is described on the cover as "authoress of Bessie Bunter". These were complete Pam Duncan & Co tales. I have only number two, which is called *The Stranded Schoolgirls*.

The school is St Olive's and May Carhew, the sweet-tempered but thoughtless friend of Pamela Duncan, plans a trip out of bounds to Monks Island.

They have to take shelter on the island at night after their boat vanishes and then two burglars turn up with their plunder.

I believe the third issue is called *The Jape of the Term*.

As most fans of Charles Hamilton are aware, after the demise of *The Magnet* and



The Gem, he created Sparshott School. (The much earlier school of boy detective Len Lex was Oakshott.) Sparshott featured in another little book with a format similar to the Mascot series. Schoolboy Series No 1 was called *The Secret of the School* - again, "by Frank Richards, author of Billy Bunter".

Priced one shilling and with a red border, it was printed for and published by William C Merrett Ltd., of City Road, London.

The cover of the first issue is captioned Struck Down. A sinister- looking man shines a torch beam on a startled schoolboy he is about to strike with a cosh.

The story opens with the form clown Plum Tumpton preparing to leave the dormitory at midnight to visit the Keep, last remnant of a Norman castle, as a result of a dare.

The war is almost over but in the darkness Tumpton encounters someone speaking in German. Has he discovered a spy?

The story has evocative references to air raids, young masters being called up, blackouts, fire-watching, the 'Bad Man of Berlin' and Churchill.

The fourth-formers seem younger than Harry Wharton and Co. To prove that he has been to the Keep in the blackout, Tumpton is expected to collect a catapult left there.

I cannot imagine Bob Cherry with a catapult!

There is little doubt, after only a few pages, as to the identity of the German spy but the story is enjoyable.

After the first issue, the strapline changed from Schoolboy Series to Sparshott Series. The title of number six was *Pluck Will Tell.*

This is a pleasing, flowing tale which focuses on Louis Merrick, a new Anglo-French boy, small and inoffensive, who is bullied mercilessly by his thuggish study-mate.

Billy Bunter rolls into this story. Unfortunately, there are no dates on the booklets. Perhaps this one appeared about the time the copyright problems were solved.

Merrick proves he is no coward and, indeed, is brave when he risks his life by plunging into a fast-flowing river to rescue Bunter who has fallen in.

Ah, those river rescues...

Valentine Barnes-Paget, an urbane fellow who might well be a close relative of De Courcy, the Caterpillar at Highcliffe, happens to be nearby in his boat and saves both of them. Impressed by Merrick's valour Barnes-Paget decides to teach him boxing.

Bunter turns up again to express his gratitude, telling Merrick that his study is a bit poky and inviting him to Greyfriars so that he can see "what a really first-class public school is like."

These charming but, alas, scarce little story-books are an interesting episode in the history of Charles Hamilton's post-Magnet work.

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A FEW WORDS OF DEFENCE

By Eric Hammond

Stead's portrait of Biggles

On July 24th this year it was brought to my notice that a two page article had been published in the *Daily Mail*, which the informer knowing my interests, felt I should read. The article printed in a prime position was entitled "Biggles Pulls a Fast One", written by Guy Walters. Beneath the title came the introductory eye catching build up, which perfectly set the tone of the article. I quote, "His books evoke an heroic age. But the creator of Biggles was a fantasist who destroyed more British planes than German ones, spurned his only child and had a secret mistress for over 30 years".

With this lurid introduction I was prepared for what followed. So I was not surprised in my expectation, but sadly disappointed that a daily newspaper, that claims a certain reputation, as a responsible middle-of-the-road conservative tabloid, should stoop to this level.

Although a fragrant attempt at character assassination it added nothing to what had already been printed, examined and mostly refuted or explained in the excellent biography "By Jove, Biggles!" by Peter Beresford Ellis and Jennifer Schofield, which was updated and published as a limited edition by Norman Wright last year. In this the accusations of lying, war-mongering, racialism and sexism were all fully covered and explained.

In the article under discussion great play was made of his adulterous way of life, his heartless abandonment of an invalid wife and sickly son. An exaggeration, because he maintained his wife for the rest of her life and also paid for her medical needs, and he visited his son on numerous occasions. Never-the-less this side of his nature was not mentioned but much was made of his duplicity at covering up his life of sin. The current attitude of the time made it almost obligatory to try and cover up a breakdown of marriage.

At this distance in time we are unlikely to know or be able to judge the pressures that made Johns take the step he did, nor have I ever read that he tried to excuse his actions. In our more permissive society what he did would hardly warrant a comment, in fact a long and happy marriage would probably be more newsworthy.

I feel that the writer of the article (because he was not aware of Johns' character, which included an acute sense of humour causing him to write many things with tongue in cheek) did not realise why Johns was so often misunderstood. Here and there fact and fiction may have been a little blurred at the edges, but this was due to his fertile imagination and his sense of fun, rather than a desire to lie. At worst his embellishments were no different from other pilots, who in the war were said, when thought to be exaggerating, to be "shooting a line", and not taken seriously. Certainly

it was never suggested that "line shooters" were congenital liars.

I imagine the reason for the article was provided by the news that the entire list of 96 Biggles books are to be reissued by Red Fox. I suppose the fact that a publishing house has decided, presumably after a rigorous trade survey, to take such a step means they have decided the reissue is financially viable. This after numerous editions and over 30 years after the author's death. Obviously not interesting enough for Mr Walters, so he has had to find some scurrilous material to satisfy the less discerning readers of the DAILY MAIL. The bottom of the barrel has been truly dredged.

It was not enough to list Johns' achievements, and these were many. He wrote over 160 books, countless articles, edited two extremely successful aeronautical magazines, was a very much admired and talented artist and a renowned gardener. He created one of the best loved and most celebrated characters in children's fiction, the

immortal Biggles, who has been depicted on the big screen and also on radio in this country and in Australia.

Johns was also a fearless and outspoken critic of the appeasing government in the 1930s, especially at the time of the debacle of Munich. The agreement then made was a surrender to Hitler at a tragic cost borne by Czechoslovakia.

Both Johns and Winston Churchill voiced their disgust at the government's betrayal of an ally, and they were far from being alone. Each was considered 'persona non grata' by the authorities, but their views were shortly to be vindicated. In spite of the few voices of reason being correct, the government's annoyance took longer to

subside. The jibe of 'war-mongers' often directed at this small band of patriots, especially Johns, could not have been farther from the truth. If their views had been heeded, instead of ignored, it is possible that the Second World War would not have taken place.

In the article under discussion none of the above was considered, and certainly not measured against the allegations that have been made before and after his death, because it would have been proof that W.E. Johns was essentially a good and wise man. But good men are not the stuff that sells newspapers!

Let Guy Walters have the last words, "It seems a sad epitaph that despite 96 Biggles books and more than 70 other novels to his name – Johns' greatest work of fiction turned out to be himself".

* *

LIBRARY CHAT

by Derek Ford

Whenever I read about the late Roy Lichtenstein being awarded millions of pounds for one of his comic-book paintings, known as "pop art", I think how appropriate is that line of Kipling's "while better men than we go out...". Practically all the A.P. artwork disappeared into skips years ago. Only comparatively few Billy Bunter originals by Chapman have surfaced. Dudley Watkins' Desperate Dan for D.C. Thomson's Dandy *has* been seen at auction, also sheets of Dan Dare by Frank Hampson for The Eagle.

An exception was in 1975 when the son of the late William Radford, creator of Weary Willie and Tired Tim, sold original ink drawings by the cartoonist ranging from 1906 to 1942 at Sotheby's in 55 lots. The Fleetway Picture Libraries archive, including proof sheets and artwork mostly produced overseas, was sold by Surrey auctioneer, John Nicholson, in 2001. A Hodder and Stoughton archive of original work for dust-jackets and illustrations was sold by Phillips in 1998; a lot of 75 jacket designs of the 1920s and '30s, all for detective stories or thrillers, sold for £3200. Sadly, no original artwork by Eric Parker from his long period of illustrating the Sexton Blake saga has been recorded, and it now must be presumed that it perished with Fleetway House and the new brooms, or fire.

Which brings me to a cover by Parker I would have liked to hang in my library – minus the sinister frogman, of course. It was one of 24 covers he did starting in 1948, in a new style without the author's name. It fronts a case-book by Walter Tyrer, of the murder of Edgar Catchpole, fishing in competition alongside the canal, when he is snatched by that sinister frogman. Sexton Blake, delayed by a puncture being repaired by Tinker, notices the gap in the ranks. Also a gap in the evidence at the inquest he attends aroused by Catchpole's "widow", later found gassed. We are treated to a

nice little cameo when Tinker, following up this "suicide", finds himself in Mr Shannon's museum of stone age junk. Tyrer could lumber Blake with some pretty mediocre cases but this was a special, also his *Mystery of Three Demobbed Men*, mentioned in E.S. Turner's *Boys Will Be Boys*.

As a footnote to Bill Bradford's piece on John Hunter, I have always regarded Hunter as the Punch and Judy Plotter of the SBL. Always there is thug Punch and poor Judy – either murdered or abducted. In his first case-book *The Affair of the Fatal Film* (489: 1/8/35) in which Blake is on the run for a false murder, Punch is called Hermie Blusch (minor 'Punches' were Finnegan, Santacilla and Ratz) and you will find them in the rest of his SBL contributions under different names. Judy was Mary Pellington, abducted this time. A splendid Parker cover, I note.

Once you had got used to his theme you could speed-read without further difficulty, to get to the companion Anthony Parsons'. But of course you had already done that.

Look in Cherry Treebooks **The Three Crows** – serialised in **Detective Weekly** – for, I think, the first mention of Sam Trench, just off the freighter Mary Ann Trinder. J.G. Brandon was a contributor to this series and I wonder if there was a link with the SBL.

* *

THE END OF MORNINGTON

by Ray Hopkins

Valentine Mornington, once the heir to millions was now superceded by the surprising emergence of the real heir, his cousin Cecil, believed dead and ironically discovered by Mornington himself, in the shape of a penniless waif, known as 'Erbert Murphy. Mornington befriended him and received in return a touching loyalty in which the real heir would have preferred and been pleased if the well-brought-up-boy could have retained the heirship.

Mornington, to become more independent of his stern uncle/guardian, Sir Rupert Stacpoole and his unpleasant sons who give Morny bad times when his is forced to stay at what would have been his own ancestral home, has put his name up for the prestigious Latin prize given by Dr. Chisholm, Rookwood's revered headmaster. Mornington is a good student but the extra swotting that winning of the Latin prize entails has caused Mornington's usually good cricketing prowess to fall off and increased his shortness of temper.

In a house match he drops an easy catch that would have given the Classicals a one-run lead, and therefore a win, over the Moderns. This was a trial match to pick the team to travel to St. Jim's the following day. Jimmy Silver, as Captain, replaces Mornington's name on the list with that of Dick Oswald.

Mornington, exhibiting one of his unpleasant traits, calls Oswald "a pushin'

Dropped from The Team

By Owen Conquest.

Not for the first time has Valentine Mornington's headstrong, unreasoning nature succeeded in turning his chums into enemies. But never before has the black side of the dandy of the Fourth's character led him to such lengths as described in this splendid story.

cad" and tells him he won't be in a fit state to play in the St. Jim's match because he intends to fight him. The ensuing battle in Oswald's study is broken up by Jimmy Silver who beats Mornington with a cricket stump. Mornington grits his teeth and swears Jimmy Silver will suffer for his interference.

The morning of the St. Jim's match brings a telegram from Jimmy Silver's home informing him that his father is seriously ill. Jimmy appoints his vice captain, Kit Erroll, to captain the Rookwood cricket team and leaves the school immediately. Mornington approaches his chum for a place in the team and is infuriated when Erroll decides to keep this as Jimmy set it up, with Raby making up the numbers. Mornington, enraged, strikes his chum in the face and Erroll, startled and unprepared for this extravagant action, falls to the ground.

Jimmy, panting with fright over his father's condition, arrives at his home, the Priory, and almost faints when Mr. Silver obviously in the best of health, opens the door to him, having been alerted to his arrival by Jimmy's telegram saying he was leaving Rookwood immediately. He shows the telegram he had received to his father who notes it was sent from the neighbouring village of Denewood. Jimmy realises that the telegram had been the cruellest of practical jokes and perpetrated in order to keep him from playing in the St. Jim's match. But no one from Rookwood could have managed the long trip to Denewood to send the telegram. He recalls Mornington had been missing for a short time the previous evening and wonders if his hand had been the one that wrote the telegram and perhaps persuaded one of his old pub cronies at the Bird-in-Hand to make the long journey to Denewood.

Jimmy learns that St. Jim's had won the match by thirty runs when he returns to Rookwood. He confronts Mornington in his study but the latter refuses to confirm or

deny that he had anything to do with the sending of the telegram. Jimmy tells him that he will have to answer to the form. Mornington is left alone in the study with Erroll, who accuses him of playing" a rotten cowardly, dirty trick." "I've told you what I think of your conduct and it's the last thing I shall say to you." Erroll rages. "I shall not speak to you again."

The classical Fourth sets up its court to try Mornington in the dormitory after lights out. This, despite the fact that there was no actual proof that he had sent the telegram. Mornington refuses to testify one way or the other and Erroll's hesitant replies to the judge in which he is unable to state facts and his opinion cannot be admitted as evidence, convince the form that Mornington is guilty of the cruel act. The judge sentences him to a form ragging and to be sent to Coventry for the rest of the term.

But the ensuing melee is interrupted by the entrance of the Fourth Form master, Mr. Dalton, who sentences every boy to be caned for the disturbance. Naturally the form remain silent when he wants to know why they are ragging Mornington. When Erroll is asked if he will join the rest of the form in the sentence of Coventry he startles the form by telling them "Mornington and I are not friends now. He has got what he deserves and I have nothing to say to him." The following morning the two former friends come face to face. Erroll turns his back on Mornington who, "stood still, as if he were incapable of motion, looking after the receding figure of the friend he had lost for ever!"

Mornington overhears M. Monceau, Rookwood's French master, ordering Jimmy Silver to go to the French master's room in order to write a fifty-line imposition from the hated and difficult "Henriade." He is to go there immediately and remain there while M. Monceau goes to Coombe in order to have his valuable gold watch repaired. Jimmy, on the way to cricket practice, decides to bat for ten minutes before writing the imposition. Mornington, blaming Jimmy entirely for this unhappy dealings by the form, goes to the French master's room thinking he might play a simple form of jape there for which Jimmy would be blamed. However, he finds that M. Morceau, notoriously absentminded, has gone to Coombe to have his watch repaired but has inadvertently left the watch on his desk.

Mornington decides to hide the watch temporarily thus causing M. Monceau to accuse Jimmy of stealing it when he returns from Coombe. However, when Mornington returns to his own study with the watch, his conscience will not let him perform the evil plan. He goes to return the watch to the master's study but is too late. Jimmy Silver is already hurrying back to the School House. Upon his return, Mossoo insists that Jimmy is searched, sure that the junior has stolen his timepiece. Jimmy, deeply hurt and insulted, asserts his innocence of the theft to Mr. Dalton who is called in by the excitable French master. The Head, also consulted, deters Mossoo from telephoning the police.

Mornington has hidden the watch in the box-room chimney intending to let it be found in Mossoo's study after Jimmy Silver has "suffered" for a few days from the suspicion and unpleasantness that he, Mornington, has been forced to submit to.

Jimmy is chivvied by Higgs, the bully of the Fourth, about watch-lifting and, unlike his even-tempered self, loses his temper and thrashes Higgs in the common-room. Mornington verbally backs up Higgs, provoking both Higgs, who says he doesn't need his help, and Silver. Mornington tells Jimmy he may be in Coventry, but he isn't a thief. The watch vanished when there was only one person there. He was found guilty of sending a false telegram on a lot less evidence than that. Jimmy, losing his head entirely, goes to attack Mornington but Lovell, Newcome and Raby push him out into the corridor.

Mornington, now really angry, and deliberately cancelling his earlier plan to return the watch surreptitiously to Mossoo's study, removes it from the box-room chimney and plants it in the End Study cupboard (Jimmy Silver's study) rolled up in a piece of brown paper. Inevitably it is discovered when a search party, consisting of Dr. Chisholm, Mr. Dalton and M. Monceau come to the End Study. "Your Form-master deemed you incapable of theft; I shared his opinion. You have deceived both of us!" Jimmy is sentenced to expulsion and is to be taken home the next morning by Bulkeley, Rookwood's captain.

With the coming of a new day, Mornington suffers a revulsion at his actions of the previous day. He leaves his breakfast and hastens to Mr. Dalton's study, knowing that Silver and Bulkeley will still be on their way to the station and that he will be able to save the expelled junior at the eleventh hour.

Mr. Dalton is consumed with horror at the thought of the evil deed when Mornington tells his Form-master that he had planted the purloined watch only an hour before it was discovered. "One rotten thing leads to another," says Mornington: the sending of the false telegram in revenge for being dropped from the team, and the sending of him to Coventry, his best chum (Erroll) turning against him with the rest, all conspired to increase his hatred of Silver. He only wanted Silver to go through the same misery that he had been subjected to: the dislike of the entire form. He hadn't wanted Silver to be expelled.

Mr. Dalton warns the unhappy boy that his confession can only result in his own expulsion. Mornington is taken to Dr. Chisholm to repeat his confession and a sixth form prefect is sent to ride to Coombe on his bicycle and catch Bulkeley and Silver before they board the train. "In his happiness, Jimmy could spare a thought of compassion for the wretched junior who had wronged him, but who had repented at the eleventh hour."

Jimmy approaches Dr. Chisholm hoping the Head will let the expelled junior stay. "He did the right thing at the finish." But Dr. Chisholm is adamant: Mornington must go. He could not take a chance on Mornington's acting in a similar fashion again and he might not be found out the next time.

Jimmy and Mornington shake hands as he leaves, both saying they wished things hadn't conspired to stop them getting along more amicably. Erroll, too, realising this is the last chance he will have to let Mornington know that he regrets the loss of Mornington's friendship, approaches him. They shake hands, knowing they are parting as friends, though they may never meet again.

There is a pleasant little epilogue to the disappearance of Mornington from the Rookwood scene. The final story in this series has Jimmy Silver and the Fourth-Form cricketers travelling the fairly lengthy distance from the Hampshire school for a match with Highcliffe in Kent. At Latcham Junction where they changed trains from Coombe, Lovell treats the team to tarts and scones, realises that he has left his change on the buffet counter, returns to retrieve it, and misses the train in consequence.

The next train is not for two hours and Jimmy realises that he will have to play a man short when they reach Highcliffe. Frank Courtenay, the captain of the Highcliffe junior team, offers the loan of a player, but Erroll spots a familiar face in the crowd of spectators and joyfully returns to his team-mates dragging Mornington, urging Jimmy to let his old chum play for Rookwood. He had written to Erroll saying he was going to Folkestone for a short holiday from his unpleasant Stacpoole cousins and remembered that Rookwood was to play Highcliffe and couldn't resist turning up to see the match, never dreaming that he would find himself a member of the team. Mornington is not out at the end of the match giving Rookwood a win by several runs. A satisfying end to a troubled series of events.

The above series appeared initially in the weekly BOYS' FRIEND (2nd Series) 1094 to 1099, May-July 1922, and was reprinted in SCHOOLBOYS' OWN LIBRARY 104, July 1929, entitled "Dropped from the Team.")

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BRIEF ENCOUNTERS

by BRIAN DOYLE

Some more random memories of notable people in several fields whose paths I have crossed fairly briefly, as opposed to working with such celebrities for a lengthy period of time on a film or whatever. The encounters may have been brief but they were invariably interesting and often memorable.....

Bill Haley: One evening in 1968 in my hotel foyer in Dublin, I was preparing to leave for a session of night-shooting on the major Paramount film 'Where's Jack?' which starred Tommy Steele and Stanley Baker, among others. A small, plump rather round-faced man in a loud check jacket came up and asked: 'Excuse me, sir, are you Mr. Brian Doyle, the Publicity Director on the motion picture being made here?' I confessed that indeed I was and he asked in a polite American accent if it would be all right if he 'and the boys' could come out and visit the location and maybe meet Mr. Steele. As I looked at him, I couldn't help noticing the trade-mark little 'kiss-curl' of hair on his forehead and a light dawned. 'Aren't you...?' I began to ask. He grinned and thrust out his hand. 'You've got it – the name's Bill Haley – glad to know you, Brian.' And thus I met the man who introduced and popularised rock 'n roll music to the world. That had been back in 1955 when his record *Rock Around the Clock* ('One, two, three o'clock, four o'clock rock...' first featured in the film *The Blackboard Jungle*) was a huge hit, became a landmark piece of pop music, and sold more than a million discs.

Bill, and his group 'The Comets' (derived from Halley's Comet!), who were appearing in Dublin, duly came out to the night-shooting, watched filming and met Tommy Steele, who had been known to have sung and recorded a few rock numbers early in *his* career in the 1950s! Haley struck me as a nice, ordinary American chap, then in his early 40s, who seemed friendly and easy to please (he told me during one of our chats that he had started his career as 'a yodelling cowboy'!). He told me to be sure to come round and see him if I happened to be anywhere he was appearing in the future, and gave me a brooch depicting a clock surrounded by small rocks. 'Now you be sure and wear that whenever you feel like it, Brian', he instructed me with a parting grin. I never wear brooches. But it was good to meet such an historic legend from the world of popular music and a man who changed the face of pop for all time. Not that I really approved of that. But then I'm just an old square...

Moira Shearer: I had seen her dance many times at Covent Garden (I was a fervent 'balletomane' in the mid-to-late-1940s, though only from the dizzy heights of the front-gallery!) and of course I had seen her in the fabulous film *The Red Shoes* a dozen times or more (it's my second favourite picture of all time and I know most of the dialogue by heart). One day, in 1960, during my early Pinewood Studios days (I worked there as a Rank publicist for my first four years in the film business), I was

Moira Shearer - a moment of leisure for la ballerina

waiting at the studios' main entrance for a car to pick me up and had just received a message to say that it would be about half-an hour late. I noticed that the aforesaid red-headed vision Moira Shearer was also awaiting her car and that her transport too would apparently be late (she was making a film called *Peeping Tom* at the time). We knew one another from around the studios and to say 'Good Morning' to, so I said 'It seems we're in the same boat, Miss Shearer' and she smiled with sympathetic resignation. In those days there was a small café adjoining a garage opposite the studios and after introducing myself, I asked her if she would like a cup of coffee while we waited. She said yes and the upshot was that we sat for half-an-hour or so, chatting away like old friends.

It helped that I knew her work well through my visits to Covent Garden. I told her that I had been at the First Night of Frederic Ashton's ballet *Cinderella* when she had danced and indeed created the title-role so magnificently. Margot Fonteyn had been due to dance the role but had suffered an injury and Shearer had taken over at short notice. 'Almost like a sequence in *The Red Shoes*' I remarked smiling. 'But this was for real and in front of 2000 people with no one to shout 'Cut'! so that one could

have a rest and a tea-break', she recalled, pulling a face. Naturally, I asked her about *The Red Shoes* and she was quite forthcoming with some fascinating anecdotes about its making (also at Pinewood) and the intriguing fact that, apparently, she and her co-star, Anton Walbrook, didn't get on at all well and didn't even chat between scenes. She was delightful company and I cursed the time when our respective cars arrived! After that, we often chatted when we bumped into one another around the studios and in the restaurant. Today, of course, Moira Shearer is 'Lady Kennedy', being married to Sir Ludovic Kennedy and, I believe, writes occasional book reviews for the *Daily Telegraph*. She must be all of 78 now – but to me and many others, she remains the 22-year-old ballerina, Vicky Page of *The Red Shoes*.

Elizabeth Taylor: For my money (and always excepting Vivien Leigh) the most beautiful actress ever to hit the silver screen. Especially in *A Place in the Sun* (my third favourite picture of all time), *Suddenly Last Summer* and *Giant*. At the beginning of 1960, I think it was, Taylor was at Pinewood Studios every day rehearsing and doing camera, costume and make-up tests for the huge new film *Cleopatra* in which she was to star with Peter Finch and Stephen Boyd. I met her two or three times in the Pinewood bar and was hypnotized by her literally violet-coloured eyes. Her language was as colourful as her eyes and she was downing her favourite vodkas with evident enjoyment.

The trio of stars was becoming impatient with various hold-ups on the preparations for *Cleopatra* – especially Finch, or 'Finchie' as he was known to most people who knew him. The more drinks he consumed in the Pinewood bar the more unpredictable his mood and temper became. He tended to leave proof of this as he wended his way during his 'tired and emotional' periods and one evening put his fist through the face of a venerable portrait which hung on one wall of the bar and on another occasion he kicked the head clean off one of a matching pair of stone dragon-like figures which stood either side of the massive ornate doors of the main house at Pinewood. Speaking of Finch reminds me of the occasion when I was very nearly beaten up by the said distinguished Australian-born actor. He had developed a habit of keeping my very blonde and pretty secretary, Susan, in the bar over drinks until well after the lunch-hour was over. Eventually I went over to bring her back to her duties and also gently remonstrated with Finch. He acted like one of his screen characters, literally grabbed me by the jacket-lapel and hissed: 'Look, Brian, I like you, but I'm going to punch you right on the nose, and hard, if you don't go away!'. (I've cut the more colourful language.) But I took Susan by the hand and pulled her away.

Next morning, Finch came into my office, shook me by the hand, offered profuse apologies and swore undying friendship (this was to happen again on at least three future occasions over the years!). I liked 'Finchie' a lot and he was a fine actor (remember that marvellous voice of his?) but, as I say, he *was* somewhat unpredictable...

But to return to Elizabeth Taylor. That particular production of *Cleopatra* was cancelled for various reasons (despite the huge and elaborate sets that had already

been built on the studio back-lot) and the film was eventually made, of course, in Rome, with Taylor 'staying put' as Cleo and Richard Burton and Rex Harrison taking over the roles of Anthony and Caesar. And marking the beginning of Taylor and Burton's infamous 'grande affaire' (as Burton always referred to it when I later did two pictures with him (and he married her twice too!). The next time I met Taylor was at the Royal Film Performance Premiere of *The Taming of the Shrew* in which she co-starred with Burton (a wonderful, much-underrated picture which is never, for some reason, ever shown on television). I was Press Officer with Columbia Pictures at the time and had helped to organise the occasion. Again I was hypnotized by her purple orbs – or were they violet? (Did someone mention one 'Violet Elizabeth'!) Years later, in the mid-1970s, I was offered the chance of working on the film version of the famous children's story *The Bluebird*, to be shot entirely in Russia. One of the many stars was Elizabeth Taylor, but I turned the job down. I had just returned from a 4-month's location in Morocco (on *The Man Who Would Be King*) and didn't want to go away again so soon. Also I didn't really fancy a long location in Russia. Not even for Elizabeth Taylor...

Donald 'O'Connor: I met O'Connor when he paid a flying visit to the set of the 007 James Bond film *For Your Eyes Only*, which I worked on as Publicist in 1980-81. I had always been a fan, especially of his dancing in such films as *Singin' in the Rain*, *There's No Business Like Show Business* and *Call Me Madam* (when he partnered the enchanting Vera-Ellen so perfectly). He wandered quite casually on to the set at Pinewood Studios (I almost expected him to dance on!) and at first no one seemed to notice him. I walked over and introduced myself and we chatted away happily for quite a while, until Roger Moore and producer 'Cubby' Broccoli joined us. O'Connor was more round-faced and generally plump than he had been in his Hollywood prime in the late-1940s/early-1950s, but still looked amazingly youthful, though he was then in his mid-50s. He was affable and friendly and seemed quite eager to answer the one or three questions I raised. How had he arranged and performed the complicated routines in his *Round the World* sequence in one of my favourite movies of his, *I Love Melvin* (in which he co-starred with Debbie Reynolds)? He explained in some detail and seemed delight that I had remembered this, in what was one of his relatively minor movies.

Was it true that he had improvised most of his brilliant, hilarious and classic *Make 'Em Laugh* solo number in *Singing in the Rain*? 'Quite true – I improvised and planned all of it', he grinned, 'and we shot it in one 'take' after a preliminary 'blockin-in' rehearsal. But you know what happened?' he said, pulling a wry face. 'The next day they found there had been a technical fault in the camera, and I had to shoot that big, big number, probably the most difficult and complex I'd ever done, all over again two days later! Was the air blue?!'

I asked him if he had finally become fed-up with doing all those *Frances the Talking Mule* movies, in which his many talents were wasted. 'Yes and yes again', he laughed, 'though they did. I suppose help to make my name in a sort of bizarre

Producer Cubby Broccoli, Brian Doyle, Donald O'Connor and Roger Moore

way. But I thought it was time to move on after making six of the series and I discovered the mule was getting more fan-mail than I was!' I later had the pleasure of lunching with O'Connor, Moore, Broccoli and a couple of others and I told him that one of my favourite pictures was the 1939 *Beau Geste* in which he played Beau (Gary Cooper) as a child. 'Now you're going way back – I was 12 and I guess that was one of the very rare movies in which I *didn't* dance!' Then he added, sensing a fellow movie-buff: 'Since we're going back to those childhood days, do you know who played Huckleberry Finn in a 1938 picture called *Tom Sawyer, Detective*?' I shook my head and he pointed, laughing, at himself. 'Who played Tom Sawyer?' I asked. 'A guy called Billy Cook, who was also with me in *Beau Geste* as one of the kids. He also turned up in *Gone with the Wind*, but he didn't really continue with his acting career, as I recall', said O'Connor. One film I *didn't* mention was *The Buster Keaton Story* (1957), in which he played the title-role. It was a massive flop, sadly, and virtually destroyed O'Connor's screen career. He didn't dance in that picture either: maybe he should have done. He spent his later years doing TV, stage and cabaret work, including a season or two at Las Vegas, and putting in an occasional 'straight' movie role now and then. He died two or three years ago. And it was sad that what had been a great though relatively short movie career had rather fizzled out. But, and it's not generally known, O'Connor had yet another career, apart from singing, dancing and acting. He composed and conducted his own 'serious' orchestral music. Though it wasn't always serious. His best-known work was *Symphony for Comedians*. It was apparently recorded in Belgium. 'I'll send you a copy' Donald O'Connor promised. But he never did. And, after years of trying, I've never succeeded in tracking a copy down.

Lord Snowdon: A famous and accomplished photographer, of course, as well as being at one time, Princess Margaret's husband and the brother-in-law of Queen Elizabeth II (which he was when I met him in 1976). When I was working as Publicist on Ken Russell's film *Valentino*, about the life of the great silent screen romantic hero (played by ballet-dancer Rudolph Nureyev), Lord Snowdon rang and said he would like to visit the set at Elstree Studios and take some photographs of Nureyev. He had already photographed him, so there was no problem with Nureyev, who at once agreed, when I asked him. I had once met Snowdon when he was plain old Tony Armstrong-Jones in the bar at Pinewood Studios in the late-1950s and he had seemed pleasant enough then.

When Lord Snowdon ('call me Tony') arrived in my office, he sat down with a cup of coffee and at once insisted that there was to be no formality as far as he was concerned. 'I'm just a visiting Press photographer – no need for any of the Royal nonsense', he grinned disarmingly. We were to have lunch before his set-visit and he said: 'Egg-and-chips in the canteen will do me fine...'. I explained that I had my regular table in the studio restaurant and we would eat there if that was all right with him. 'Fine – whatever you usually do', he said. So we sat and had lunch and a bottle of wine, and chatted, and he was good company and had a nice sense of humour. He

told me he had just been abroad on a magazine assignment. 'This terrible PR woman kept asking me how my sister-in-law was, not to mention my mother-in law, and did I get along with her!' 'Do you get a lot of that sort of thing?' I asked him. He sighed and said yes, he did, quite a bit. 'It's a bit of a bore sometimes, you know...'. I didn't know, since my wife wasn't a princess and my mother-in-law wasn't the Queen Mother, but I sighed too and sympathised.

Towards the end of lunch I saw Gregory Peck entering the restaurant (I think he had just arrived to discuss some new film). I had worked with him on a picture several years earlier, but he was a great one for remembering faces and names and I gave him a wave. He at once came over and said in that deep-brown voice of his: 'Why, hello, Brian, and how are you?'. (One of the nicest men in the film business, by the way and I always felt he should have stood for President one day – he would have romped home.) I came out with the well-remembered line (by me, anyway): 'Greg, do you know Lord Snowdon?'. They shook hands and we all chatted for a few minutes. Snowdon later did his photographic stuff both on and off the set and he was fine to work with. When 5 o'clock came I said to my new mate, Tony: 'I hope you won't mind but I have to dash off now – I'm taking my wife to the theatre this evening', (which indeed I was). Snowdon looked very put out and said that he *did* mind and that it was very unprofessional of me to leave him on the set by himself and that he needed me to arrange things, introduce him to people and so on. He became very bad-tempered about the whole thing, in fact, which surprised me as we had been getting along together very well. Eventually, I said: 'Well, all right, I suppose I can stay on for a bit, but I'll have to make a couple of telephone calls,' and made to leave the set. At this point, Snowdon burst into laughter, clapped me around the shoulders and explained that he had only been joking all the time. I dutifully ha-ha-ha'd, said my good-byes and sprinted off to my office to get my transport up to Town (two hours each way, to and from Elstree). I subsequently learned that Snowdon had a reputation for being a bit of a joker. He certainly caught me that day back in 1976, and I must say that I didn't entirely appreciate the 'joke'. But he wrote me a nice letter (complete with Royal Crest!), thanking me for the day, said he'd got some great photographs and hoped I'd forgiven him for his little 'wheeze'. Which I suppose I had by then.
(P.S. A few years later I was working on a film on location in Mexico, with Ava Gardner, when Tony Snowdon rang and said he'd like to come out and take pix of la Gardner for the *Sunday Times Magazine*. Gardner agreed and we made the necessary arrangements. Tony, who obviously had a good memory, ended our conversation by saying: 'I hope you're not going to leave me in the lurch on the set as you nearly did when we last met, Brian...' 'You know, Tony, I might just do that – Mexico can be a lonely place when you're left on a mountainside with no transport and it's getting dark...' As I put the telephone down I could hear him laughing...)

(to be continued)

* *

WINDOW ON GREYFRIARS

By Ted Baldock

Life's but a series of trifles at best...
A laughing schoolboy, without grief or care,
Riding the springy branches of an elm.

Keats. Sleep and Poetry

"They were awfully manly decent fellows, Harry Wharton and Co."

Noel Coward

It was one of those summer afternoons when a boy having lunched well, his attention is rather difficult to achieve. The eye-lids develop a tendency to droop, the head to nod, and Morpheus is in his most friendly and expansive mood. Sunbeams and flickering shadows assume an irrepressible power to mesmerize and it becomes the easiest thing in the world to ... drift.

It was a warm August afternoon and the atmosphere in the Remove form-room left much to be desired. To most members of that form it was stifling. The dim dusty old room was, in the majority opinion, no place to be on such a splendid afternoon. Never had the call of the open spaces been so insistent. What a joy it would be to be out on the playing fields, in action or lying in the shade of the great trees, or to be up on the breezy heights of Courtfield Common among the furze and heather doing nothing except enjoying one's self, or sauntering along Friardale Lane. Any outdoor activity would have been preferable to the heat and discipline of the form-room under the gimlet eye of Henry Samuel Quelch.

Never had the Punic wars seemed so boring – and completely unnecessary! Surely the Romans and Carthaginians should have been left in peace on such an afternoon. So thought the greater part of the Remove. Should a consensus of opinion have been taken on the point there is little doubt that every battle of that long drawn out conflict would have been confined to oblivion.

Harold Skinner, lounging at his desk with the drone of Mr. Quelch's voice as a background accompaniment, was following the flight of a large bee as it sailed slowly above the heads of the other fellows. It seemed to prefer the studious (?) atmosphere of the form-room, for all the windows were open and it could easily have flown out.

Bunter's fat head was nodding and his eyes were closed. Ancient history meant little to the Owl, his interests were of far more immediacy. The next meal looming on the horizon meant more to him than the most famous of classical battles. He cared not a straw who were the victors. The acquisition and demolition of tuck were surely of far greater moment than events which occurred in the dim and distant past. There were perhaps not a few other members of the Remove who would – for once – have agreed with him.

In the fullness of time, as was inevitable, the gimlet eye of Mr. Quelch fell upon

Bunter, drawn by Bob Whiter

the slumbering Owl. Thereafter events moved with alarming swiftness.

"BUNTER."

It was a roar of tremendous resonance; it echoed round the old form-room and beyond, bringing every member of the form to a state of immediate attention in direct contrast to its former somnolent state.

"Bunter, step this way at once."

There was a world of menace in the Remove master's tones and, as Billy Bunter duly stepped, albeit slowly, he suspected that his initial fears were about to be fully realised.

Mr. Quelch reached for his cane which was always handily placed upon his desk. "This is not a dormitory, Bunter, as I shall now endeavour to appraise you – Bend Over!" The command was rather like a rifle shot.

"But, I say, sir..."

"You need say nothing, Bunter."

"But, I – I say ..."

"BEND OVER."

Even the Owl's limited intellect grasped plainly that there was nothing else for it but to comply. Mr. Quelch stood waiting, swishing his cane in a most distressing

way. In the lowest of spirits and gloomiest of anticipations Bunter complied. His forebodings proved to be well founded. They were fully realized, much to his anguish.

Thereafter, with much wriggling and suppressed groaning, he managed to give a semblance of attention to the gems being distributed by the Remove master. The Romans and Carthagians became, almost, recognisable characters to him.

Lord Mauleverer had been even more deeply reposing in the arms of Morpheus that afternoon. Fortunately he was sheltered to a certain degree by the fellows occupying the desk to his immediate front.

Later after class Bob Cherry, grinning, clapped him on the back, saying, "You had a narrow escape this afternoon Mauly, old man. Bunter caught the full fury of the storm while you cruised through without detection. Fortune favours the drowsy, what", to which remark Mauly acquiesced with a nod of his noble head. "I always seem to listen and absorb facts far better with my eyes closed, Bob. It cancels out all other distractions you know. I thoroughly enjoy ancient history you know." To which Bob Cherry, still grinning remarked "Good old Mauly", and left his Lordship to settle himself down on the sofa in his study where, closing his eyes once more, he was better able to ponder upon the scholarly information imparted by Henry Samuel Quelch!

Many and diverse have been the ploys and stratagems practised by William George Bunter to obtain credit from Mrs. Mimble at the school tuckshop, that little paradise located in a shady corner of the quadrangle at Greyfriars. But that good lady, who possessed a very wide experience of boys in general, with their many idiosyncrasies, had yet to be confounded by the Owl. Expected postal orders from titled relations have made no impression upon her. Orders from on high, from Dr. Locke, no less have been assessed 'NO CREDIT' under any circumstances. And Mrs. Mimble, like a good soldier, believes in – and obeys – orders leaving no margin or loop-holes for discussion.

The Owl's perennial efforts to raise the wind up and down the Remove passage and beyond invariably produced a negative result. Yet they were not entirely fruitless for he never failed to collect quite a number of kicks and missiles. These were many and various, including boots, cushions, ink wells and books. Currency of the realm, however, seemed always to be at a discount.

One may well imagine the frustration and anguish caused by being cashless with all credit banished while the window of the tuckshop displayed a most attractive selection of all manner of pies, tarts (of all flavours) cakes and much else of a comestible nature so dear to the heart of a penniless Owl, so necessary to his comfort and well being.

As the poet Hood remarks in *A Black Job*, 'To bring such visionary scenes to pass, One thing was requisite, and that was – Money'. A sentiment which one may be sure is complete agreement with that of Billy Bunter.

What price the elusive postal order always on the brink of arriving? It has been

said that to journey is better than to arrive, which seems upon the surface rather a contradiction, and something with which the Owl would disagree.

Potter and Green of the Fifth form at Greyfriars, satellites of the rugged and dictatorial Horace Coker, also of that form, were by any standard rather an odd group. There existed between the trio an obvious bond of loyalty and chumship which at times was not easy to understand. Open warfare had never actually broken out between them but had at times been perilously close.

It may be an injustice to Potter and Green but it would appear that the one link so strongly forged, which always 'saved the day' when rows began to build up, was a series of well stocked hampers which materialized regularly for Coker. They came in all their glory – and they were glorious in quantity and in terms of choice foodstuffs from Aunt Judy.

Aunt Judy. An odd old fashioned lady who might well have stepped straight out of a novel by Charles Dickens or Jane Austen. A lady giving no heed or concern whatever to prevailing fashion. A lady undoubtedly possessed of a heart of gold.

To Potter and Green she was a sterling character, for they knew that the hampers emanating from her were the chief reasons for their toleration of their self-imposed leader.

"Your Aunt Judy is a brick, Coker old man. She certainly knows how to cater for a fellow. You wouldn't be prepared to exchange her for one of my aunts, I suppose?" "Don't be an ass Greeny!" Potter and Green would exchange surreptitious winks and grins behind Coker's back.

Seeing Horace Coker surrounded by and being attacked by a horde of laughing juniors – as was frequently the case – one is reminded of Landseer's great painting, 'The Stag at Bay'. He would put up a prolonged and valiant defence and inflict no small damage but finally under the weight of numbers would go down with thrashing legs and arms. It would seem to be Coker's fate, and all part of the days work.

Well might the fifth form-master boom in his attempts to instil some rudiments of knowledge into Coker's head. This was a laborious and uphill undertaking which often proved beyond the capabilities of that gentleman. His boomings would become deeper, and almost in exact ratio, Coker's ability to assimilate facts would become beautifully less.

In this respect Billy Bunter of the Remove and Horace Coker of the Fifth form had one characteristic in common. They were convinced that they were correct and that their respective masters were ever in error.

Horace Coker, prize ass, but a great character. Without him, Potter and Green would surely sink into near obscurity, and the Greyfriars story would be a degree less epic. A situation rather akin to Paris without the Eiffel tower, or Venice minus the canals.

It has been said with a fair degree of accuracy that every flock, every community and school possesses its small coterie of 'Black Sheep'. It would seem to be an unavoidable phenomenon. Sad to relate Greyfriars is no exception.

The relationship between Gerald Loder of the Sixth form and established authority has always been of rather a tenuous nature. In the Remove he enjoys the doubtful privilege of being classified as a 'dark horse', a less than reliable fellow where rules and regulations are concerned. Exercising an iron rule, and a ready Ash, over the lower forms, he has several character aspects which leave much to be desired in one holding an official position in the school as a guardian of order and discipline.

One sees the silent shadowy figure moving swiftly across the moonlit quadrangle, breathlessly pausing beneath the elms as he strives to catch the faintest sound, with every nerve taught and a mind ill at ease with itself. Yet Loder and other 'heroes' of a like ilk seem to derive satisfaction in such pursuits. The thrills of evading detection and flouting the laws laid down by the school seem to have an uplifting effect.

The enjoyment of a brief hour or so in the dingy smoke-laden atmosphere of the billiard room of the *Three Fishers*, with the 'hangers on' at that house of doubtful pleasure, plus the uplifting sense of being 'Doggish', results invariably in Loder being a deeper in the clutches of Joseph Banks, the evil encourager of himself and other black sheep at the school.

Then comes the nerve-racking return to Greyfriars in the small hours, tired, and dispirited with himself. The silent approach and carefully raised window and the feeling – even Loder has experienced this – of being a complete 'outsider'. And an idiot of the first water.

In retrospect Gerald Loder's career at Greyfriars has been distinctly negative. Yet gleams of a better self are not lacking. Alongside Wingate, Gwynn and Sykes and other stalwarts of the first eleven he measures up almost to their standard, and seems – in flashes – a loyal and decent fellow.

We all enjoy having a villain upon whom to heap our derision, someone we may hiss! At the same time we should not lose sight of the fact that there are worthy facets to be found in the least likely characters.

It may be said that Loder is his own worst enemy in that he knows his conduct and habits fall far short of those which may be safely assumed in a decent fellow – most certainly in a Greyfriars 'Man'. Perhaps at the end of the day we should be magnanimous and give Loder the benefit of the doubt.

The Rectory garden at Friardale on that warm summer afternoon seemed a most desirable place in which to linger in a deck chair beneath the shade of an ancient elm tree. Thus did it appear to Henry Samuel Quelch, the master of the Remove form at Greyfriars.

He had been spending a few quiet hours with his long-time friend, the Rector of Friardale, fulfilling a custom of very long standing. Mr. Quelch regarded these all too brief periods as an 'escape' from the manifold duties which fell to his lot during the

term. Also, a fact which he considered a matter of no small importance, it enabled him for a brief hour to be beyond the reach – and the boom – of Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth form. Although they were firm and long-standing friends, there were not infrequent moments when he found his colleague over-powering in his opinions and demands.

These all too brief interludes in the tranquillity of the Rectory garden were highly valued by the Remove master. At the moment, peace and quiet reigned supreme. Few sounds reached the tree-surrounded garden from the village street beyond. Friardale was, at the best of times, a very quiet and rustic retreat. On summer afternoons it was practically deserted – and silent. In the distance, should we have cared to look, we might have espied the stalwart blue-clad figure of P.C. Tozer, the local arm of the law, standing as still as a statue beneath the awning of one of the few village shops.

Mr. Quelch sat and mused the while. All too soon he would encounter Mr. Prout when he returned to the school. The spell would be broken. For the moment he sat and gazed long over the well-kept lawn and neatly cultivated flower borders ablaze with colour and at the tree-framed back of the old Rectory building. He savoured to the full the all too fleeting hour or so spent in such peaceful surroundings...

All too soon he was brought back to earth and the reality of his duties at Greyfriars. "Ah, there you are Quelch, my dear fellow, I have been looking for you." Mr. Prout stopped, completely blocking Masters passage to any chance traffic wishing to proceed. "May I have a word, Quelch", he boomed. Mr. Quelch sighed and stopped (he had little option) and replied somewhat impatiently. "You wished to see me, Prout, kindly be brief, I have much to attend too." Mr. Prout reddened a little. "I will not detain you long", he replied a trifle nettled by his colleague's brusqueness of tone. "A matter of discipline, sir, boys of your form, sir, kicking a football and causing much unseemly noise in the quadrangle. Have we not playing fields, sir, for such activities?"

Old 'Pompous' was getting under way. He continued, "There is another matter, sir, the boy Bunter of your form, I discovered him devouring cakes from a paper bag under the elms this afternoon, a most unedifying spectacle, sir, hardly befitting a Public school quadrangle. Suppose ..." What Mr. Prout was about to suppose must remain a mystery, it never materialized. Mr. Quelch, with somewhat less ceremony than befitted a master, swept – or rather – pushed by Mr. Prout leaving that gentleman in mid-utterance as it were, and with distinctly ruddy features in the process!

It is difficult to comprehend, but very satisfying to record that following such incidents, which were not infrequent, these two senior masters could soon be observed chatting amicably in the common room over coffee as though there had never been even the suggestion of a cloud upon the horizon such a short time before. Such was the bond existing between the masters of the Remove and the Fifth form.

To the observant reader, following such incidents, there may well be a lesson to be learnt.

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GLYN THE GUY MAKER

by John Graham Leigh

Here's a short piece about a *Gem* which I particularly enjoyed recently. I hope your readers will enjoy it too.

I'm not normally very keen on Guy Fawkes' Night stories, which tend to be a bit "samey": but the one I've just read, "Glyn the Guy Maker" in *Gem* 821 (1923) had me laughing out loud. Unfortunately it was not reprinted by Howard Baker, so here goes with a summary and a couple of extracts.

Mr Selby is unpopular, as usual. Wally D'Arcy and the other leading Third Formers decide to make a guy in his image for Guy Fawkes' Night - as Martin Clifford explains, this is often done but usually the alleged effigy is so unlike the subject that masters and prefects remain in blissful ignorance. This time, however, Mr Selby is instrumental in bringing about undeserved punishment for Bernard Glyn, the inventor of the Shell, who swears vengeance and makes a really lifelike effigy - a waxwork head on a stuffed body dressed in an old suit of Mr Selby's. The effigy is all ready and in Glyn's study when Levison rushes to warn Glyn that Mr Selby, suspicious of the chuckles and murmurs which have surrounded him for days, is coming to investigate. Glyn hurriedly removes his effigy to the box- room and Mr Selby, finding the study empty, sits down to wait for Glyn's return. Then a crowd of juniors arrives to admire the effigy, which they've just heard is ready...

"Six grinning juniors hurried along the Shell passage to Glyn's study. They looked in at the open doorway, and fairly gasped at the sight of the figure in the armchair. Kangaroo and Dane had seen the effigy in the process of construction, and had seen it growing more and more like Mr Selby; but they had not yet seen the final artistic touches Glyn had given it. They were prepared for something that looked very like Mr Selby. But they were hardly prepared for this - a figure that was exactly like the Third Form master, and that stared at them with Mr Selby's own grim, suspicious frown.

"Bai Jove! Isn't it wemarkable?" exclaimed Arthur Augustus.

"Beats the whole giddy duck!" said Kangaroo.

"Selby to the very life!" said Manners. "Look at that nose - if you call it a nose -"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And that mouth, to call it a mouth -"

"Bai Jove! You can see its eyes move, you chaps -"

"My hat! Blessed if I know how they work!" said Kangaroo. "It's jolly clever! The eyes are actually moving - fairly glaring."

The boys then attempt to move the "effigy", which of course objects strongly and takes them to Mr Railton, who canes them and gives them a thousand lines each for insulting and assaulting a master.

Wally D'Arcy then takes a hand - resentful of the Shell fellows appropriating the lead in his great scheme, he and his friends sneak the effigy out of the box-room but

have to abandon it on the stairs when Mr Lathom approaches. Mr Lathom, seeing the effigy on the dimly-lit stairs, takes it for Mr Selby apparently seriously ill or drunk, and rushes to get help. He comes back with Knox, the prefect, to find that the "body" has gone. A chase follows, culminating with Knox bursting into the Housemaster's study in a state of wild excitement:

"Mr Railton -" he gasped.

"Knox - what -"

"They've murdered Mr Selby!"

"What!" roared the Housemaster.

"It's true, sir. I know it's horrible. They're burning his body in the bonfire!"

When the authorities arrive at the scene, the effigy has been burnt. Mr Selby himself arrives and is infuriated that Knox apparently mistook a guy for him. Some coolness persists for some time between Mr Selby and Knox, to the delight of the juniors.

Great fun!

* *

ANTHONY BUCKERIDGE 1912 - 2004

by Jonathan Cooper

Anthony Malcolm Buckeridge was born in London on 20th June 1912. His father, a bank clerk and poet from whom Buckeridge perhaps inherited a flair for language, was killed in the First World War. The bank's 'orphans' were swept up by a charity and sent to board at Seaford College, a school on the Sussex coast, where Buckeridge remained between the ages of eight and eighteen while his mother went out to work. Thus it was that, like Jennings, Buckeridge received his schooling at a Sussex private boarding school. Seaford, having "about 70 boarders", was about the same size as Buckeridge's great fictional school. Had his father lived, Buckeridge would have gone to a day school. Whilst at school, Buckeridge played rugger for the First XV ("his speed serves him well as a wing three-quarter, but he does not tackle low enough and his kicking is poor" reads the school magazine), became first president of the debating society and played Mrs. Gushington-Nervesby in a play entitled *Browne with a E*.

On leaving Seasford, Buckeridge worked for a short spell in his father's bank. The experience convinced him that he was not cut out for a career in finance. Buckeridge went on to study at London University; but was unable to take his degree as he failed his Latin paper. Anthony, newly married to Sylvia Brown, turned to teaching. He worked at a Suffolk preparatory school for a couple of years before becoming headmaster of Vernon House School in Brondesbury, London, in 1938. The following year the school was evacuated to Little Houghton in Northamptonshire. Anthony joined the auxiliary fire service which, as it required him to come on duty in

the evenings, meant that he was still able to run the school. When, later in the war, his commitment to the fire service became full-time, he surrendered his teaching duties completely.

At the end of the war, Buckeridge became Head of English at St. Lawrence College in Ramsgate. It was here, although he had written a play, *Industrial Front*, whilst in the fire service, that Buckeridge discovered he had both an enthusiasm and a knack for story telling. The seeds of his humorous writing had been sown when he himself had been a pupil at school. Buckeridge recalled: *"During my first term at school, the boys of my form were told to write a story. Mine was tragic... unfortunately, when the master read it aloud the whole form rocked with laughter, and I was so taken aback that I decided my next literary effort should be a comedy. Then if people still wanted to laugh, they might do so with perfect freedom."*

Buckeridge's first audiences for his stories were his pupils at St. Lawrence's. The tales were promised as an inducement for the boys to do as they were told (*"Get into bed in thirty seconds flat and I'll tell you a story"*). The nature of his first audience combined with a fear of being inadvertently funny perhaps made it inevitable that the stories should be amusing and set in a boys' prep school.

Buckeridge recalled: "I cannot remember when the first Jennings story was told, for the character was never consciously created. He evolved gradually until he had become the hero of all the stories which I used to tell, evening after evening, in the dormitory. After that, his own personality took control, and all I had to do was to outline a situation and leave it to Jennings' peculiar methods of reasoning to work things out to their logical conclusion. The Jennings stories are humorous: and this is because there is so much humour to be found in studying the reactions of the juvenile mind to the corporate life of a school. Boys frequently do the most fantastic things, for reasons which the average adult is unable to appreciate. I could never have guided Jennings through his school career if I had not myself been a schoolmaster; for no author can write convincingly unless he is so familiar with his background that every undercurrent has an authentic ring".

The name Jennings was taken from one of his contemporaries at school[1] who was, in his words, "a bit of an oddball...cheeky and boisterous". A couple of the early fictional Jennings adventures were based on adventures experienced by the real-life Jennings.[2] It was from this that Jennings' character developed: a keen, eager,

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[1] In 1998, through the energies of the investigative journalist Michael Crick, this model for Buckeridge's most famous character was tracked down. Diarmaid Jennings had emigrated to New Zealand and become a marine engineer. He lived an eccentric life, and even in his ninetieth year had his hair in a tremendous pony tail and, pirate-like, wore a pair of ear rings.

[2] As Buckeridge remembered in 1998, "Once he captured a spider, which he pretended was poisonous and released it in the dorm, causing great consternation. We were all too scared to get into bed. He then made himself the hero of the hour by recapturing what was obviously a harmless creature. Another time, he went missing from school, hunting, he said, for a lost glove. After a while, when he didn't come back, a search party was sent out for him, which he spotted and joined the back of. It was too dark to see him. That was typical!" The stories based on these incidents appear in *Jennings Goes to School* and *Jennings and Darbishire*.

sometimes impetuous boy with strong qualities of leadership and a definite thirst for adventure. The characters were all drawn from a mixture of various people known to the author. Following his successful submission of radio plays for the Wednesday and Saturday Matinee, Buckeridge sent BBC Drama Department a script for a radio play about his Jennings character. The Drama Department passed the script to the producer of Children's Hour who liked it so much that he not only accepted it for broadcasting, but also immediately commissioned five more tales of life at Linbury Court School.

The first broadcast, *Jennings Learns the Ropes*, appeared on Children's Hour on 16th October 1948. The first series ended on 5th February 1949, and a second series began on 1st October 1949, but even before the second series had commenced, Jennings had appeared in a Children's Hour Request Week, for which a new script was written. Indeed Jennings was to head the polls every time the listeners of Children's Hour were given the opportunity to air their views thereafter. All this time, Buckeridge, who certainly had not set out to create a series that would last him a lifetime, was still teaching full-time and fitting his writing round his work. He was not the swiftest writer: a 35-minute play would take him two weeks to write. Most of the solid writing had to be done during the school holidays.

In 1949 Buckeridge sent a batch of the radio scripts to the publishers William Collins with a suggestion that they might be incorporated into a book. Collins readily agreed, and the resultant book, *Jennings Goes to School*, was published in 1950. Shortly afterwards Buckeridge gave up his job and became a full-time writer, although he would go back to St. Lawrence's to teach drama once a week. Until 1961, he wrote the stories first as radio plays, then converted them into novels. Each one took between three and four months to complete. A novel appeared roughly annually. Novels continued to appear even after the plays had ceased. The 'joins' between each original play in the novels are extremely skilfully done, so that although one can perceive a pot-pourri of different adventures in one book, it forms a cohesive unit in itself.

Buckeridge would write in long hand and then a secretary would type the final draft. Altogether 62 plays – a total of eleven series plus some special editions – were written, the last being broadcast on 24th March 1962. There was often a considerable time lapse between a story appearing on the radio and being woven into a novel. *Jennings and the Gift of Tongues*, for example, was first broadcast on 10th January 1957 as a radio play, and was eventually incorporated into *Especially Jennings*, published in 1965. *Jennings Abounding*, published in 1967, was the very first book to contain no material that had previously been used on the air. This was the case thereafter.

Buckeridge's *modus operandi* was to take a genuine situation that a young reader could empathize with, but then let it develop a step further than it would in reality. Margery Fisher recognizes Buckeridge's sleight of hand to ensure verisimilitude both in *Growing Point*, "(Buckeridge) cleverly pushes the absurdities of real prep schoolboys so gingerly over the line of probability that the most literal-minded reader

has no chance to measure real against fantastic", and in her *Who's Who in Children's Books*, "The varying attitudes and tactics of the people swept into the orbit of Jennings satisfactorily distract our attention and prevent us from examining too closely the plausibility of this disarming and destructive schoolboy".

There were obvious difficulties about stretching the adventures of a single schoolboy over so many years. Elinor Bent-Dyer, the celebrated girls' school story writer, had allowed her Chalet School characters to move with the times and brought in new characters to replace them. Buckeridge, by contrast, effectively invited the reader to place Jennings outside the normal passage of time: to wipe clean the slate of previous Christmas, Easter and Summer terms he had spent in Form Three. Jennings remained in Form Three throughout the series[3] Broadly speaking, one term was covered by one book. A book about Christmas term adventures would follow with a book about Easter term adventures, and so on. Occasionally two books would cover a single term. There are occasional cross-references in the text to earlier adventures. Buckeridge did, however, take into account social change as the series progressed. Decimalization comes to Linbury Court, as does a degree of political correctness.

Buckeridge subtly changed the style of the books as the series progressed. The earlier books contain far more of what Buckeridge called word-quibbling and verbal nonsense. He regarded the later books as "not so rumbustiously funny. The style does change, and I think it's probably because I was learning the job as I did it. The early ones possibly went over the top, rather, became slightly too farcical at times, which means you can lose in other directions. I think the style improved as some of the farcical elements have been toned down a bit."[4] The Jennings books were hugely successful. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s the children's sections of bookshops throughout Britain and overseas contained copious supplies of Buckeridge's work. 1957 was Buckeridge's most successful single year. In twelve months he sold 117,000 hardback books. Like the work of latter-day phenomena J.K. Rowling and Philip Pullman, the Jennings books, as Buckeridge had hoped and intended, were popular with readers of all ages and types.

Spin-offs were to appear as the popularity of the books increased. Besides regular appearances on Children's Hour and the novels, short stories about Jennings were inserted into annuals. A television series was broadcast. Jennings clubs appeared in schools. One school, whose headmaster was himself called Jennings, banned the books. This action, of course, just led to the books' increased popularity. Usefully,

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[3] Buckeridge dealt with this problem, in answering a query from a reader, in the *Radio Times* of 13 November 1953: "The time which Jennings spends at school has little bearing on the time which it takes me to tell the story. His misadventures always seem to happen when I am too busy to write them down; and by the time I have sorted out the facts and recorded them it is more than likely that he will already have become involved in some further unfortunate misunderstanding (or *hoo-hah*, as Jennings would describe it). Keeping pace with the boys of Linbury Court is no easy matter!

[4] When asked which was his favourite Jennings book, Buckeridge used to reply that his favourite was always the one being worked on at the time. Despite that, he was known to have expressed a strong preference for *Jennings in Particular*.

the son of the Head of BBC Light Entertainment, Frank Muir, was at the school. The controversy brought the Jennings books to his attention and he commissioned a new television series. Later on there were to be further appearances on radio, television and on record and cassette tape. A Jennings musical, *Jennings Abounding*, with lyrics by Buckeridge and music by Hector Cortes and William Gomez was produced and later published by Samuel French.

The relationship between Buckeridge and his publishers had always been harmonious. He would submit the script to their offices and they would reproduce exactly what he had written. Quite suddenly, in 1973, after *Speaking of Jennings*, William Collins decided to stop the series, and instead produce paperback reissues of the existing books under the Armada imprint. Buckeridge, who would have been quite happy for the series to continue, did write one paperback original for Armada, *Jennings at Large*, which appeared in 1977. By the end of the 1970s, all the Jennings books had gone out of print. However, in the early 1980s, John Goodchild began to issue new editions of the books. These had updated language, terminology and ambience. For instance, references to smoking were stubbed out. Subsequently Pan Macmillan published sixteen of these revised editions in paperback. The fourteen year drought was broken only in 1991 when Macmillan Children's Books requested Buckeridge to write a new Jennings book in order to boost sales of their own paperback reprints. The result was the publication of *Jennings Again*. The publishers were sufficiently satisfied with the response to this new title that it was followed three years later by *That's Jennings*. Buckeridge was 82 when this book was published, and it was to be the last in the series.

As an actor, Buckeridge would have had a natural suspicion of all critics. Yet, in the main, critics, whether writing contemporarily or retrospectively, have been kind to Buckeridge's work. Isabel Quigly, in her history of the school story entitled *The Heirs of Tom Brown*, puts the continuing success of Buckeridge's stories down to their setting *"No old-style public school could be used in a contemporary setting. The dimmest reader would know that teenage boys like that no longer existed. But Jennings with his 'Pease sir, yes sir' and the tireless routine of cricket matches and comic disaster, is still acceptable.."* It is certainly true that, despite the computer age that has come to stay and revolutionised youth's (anti)social and academic lives, the younger age group has been affected less in spirit than their teenage contemporaries. For those who agree with Humphrey Carpenter and Mari Prichard, writing in the "Oxford Companion to English Literature" that *"Buckeridge writes in the tradition of P.G. Wodehouse...he is a slick farceur with a command of verbal wit"* it can be testing when critics go overboard in their imitation of Buckeridge's idiosyncratic slang. Thus, although Stephen Pile's sentiments, when writing of the books' temporary abandonment by publishers, are laudable, the style soon becomes trying and gives a false impression as to the quality of Buckeridge's writing: *"And what gratitude did the world of publishing show for these decades of entertainment? Some crazed bazookas (as Jennings himself would put it) decided that these joyous books were old hat. Crystallised cheesecakes! What were these cloth-eared clodpolls doing?"*

There is more to Buckeridge than jolly japes, as is evident from any close reading of his text. Overcoming homesickness, gaining and maintaining acceptance within a group, resolving conflict and identifying good intentions: all are important life lessons.

In "Modern Children's First Editions", Joseph Connolly describes Buckeridge as *"creator of the funniest and best-written schoolboy books, bar none"*. His reaction to the "updating" that went on for the Goodchild editions, *"Did they update Shakespeare? Jane Austen? What has become of period charm?"*, despite having the whiff of polemic about it, makes a very salient point. The Jennings stories do not rely on empathy with the particular situation. They communicate with audiences of all ages in every culture because the humour is timeless, and the characters' emotions and the situations in which they find themselves are universal. Buckeridge's comedy on the page is as timeless as Chaplin's on the screen. Show "The Gold Rush", as has been done, to crowds in African villages or South American shanty towns and the reaction is huge. The crowds empathise with and laugh at the little tramp. The fact that he comes from a completely difference place and time makes no difference. It is the same with Jennings. It is no coincidence that his creator was an actor and student of the theatre. As Margery Fisher notes in *Who's Who In Children's Books*, *"slapstick and farce must have an inner stability if they are not to become wearisome. The stories of Jennings are carefully and formally structured, with two or three story-lines prolonged, developed and intertwined until a final reckoning brings them all together and halts Jennings' impetuous course"*.

Buckeridge undertook one other major series. This was about Rex Milligan. These yarns about a London grammar school boy first appeared in *Eagle* comic, and were later published by Lutterworth in four volumes. There was also a one-off adventure story, *A Funny Thing Happened* about the Bligh family and based on a series of radio plays he had written, and a small number of short stories with "one off" characters. Buckeridge also edited three compilation volumes of boys' stories. Over the years, he had many plays broadcast on the radio, aimed at both young and adult audiences. In 1999 he wrote a short memoir, titled with typical modesty and pessimism *While I Remember*.

Anthony had two children, Sally and Tim, by his marriage to Sylvia which ended in 1962. In 1963 he married Eileen Selby with whom he had a son, Corin. The following year they settled in the tranquil village of Barcombe Mills, near Lewes in East Sussex. In addition to writing, Anthony, a keen amateur actor who had been in a couple of early sound films, took small walk-on parts in the world-famous Glyndebourne theatre. Anthony's attitude to boarding schools *per se* was perhaps rather surprising. He was totally opposed to sending children to boarding school in order to have rough corners knocked off them, and said *"I am not terribly in favour of them at all. The only reason for sending children to them is if they can get something there that they can't get at home"*. Two of his three children went to day schools, and the third boarded only because it offered greater musical opportunities. Buckeridge was a dedicated Labour voter, as well as a strong advocate of nuclear disarmament.

In 2002 he turned 90 and the occasion was celebrated with a Latin Adoration in *The Times*. The following year Anthony was awarded an OBE in the Queen's New Year's Honours List. This came to him as a complete surprise, particularly as in 2001 when J.K. Rowling had received the award, he had said on a radio interview that appointing a children's author to an OBE was "way over the top". Anthony Buckeridge, who had enjoyed huge acclamation and a couple of gin and tonics at the annual Jennings Meeting six weeks earlier, died peacefully at home on 28th June 2003. He was 92.

(Editor's Note: Jonathan Cooper succeeded the late Darrell Swift as the organiser of the Annual Jennings Day.)

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ANTHONY BUCKERIDGE

by Brian Doyle

Mary Cadogan, David Davis, Anthony Buckeridge and Brian Doyle

I first met Anthony Buckeridge after he wrote to me in 1970, making a nice comment about my piece on him in my book *The Who's Who of Children's Literature* and asking if I could help in interesting a producer in putting on his stage play *Happy Christmas Jennings!* He had heard that I worked in the film business and had also worked in the theatre and thought I might have a few useful connections. I contacted a film producer I knew named Martin Schute, who also happened to live in Putney. He said he knew and liked the Jennings stories and could I arrange a meeting?

So it was that Anthony and Eileen Buckeridge, Schute and myself had an enjoyable and convivial lunch at a well-known Soho restaurant and discussed the matter. Everyone was enthusiastic and optimistic. But, to cut a longish story short, things didn't work out, mainly due to the question of financial backing, I seem to remember. But Anthony and I exchanged several more letters and I always found him friendly and full of ideas.

Several years later, Anthony Buckeridge wrote the book and lyrics for a new stage musical *Jennings Abounding!* (with music by Hector Cortes and William Gomes, with additional music and arrangements by Nigel Carver). The show subsequently became available as a musical play published by Samuel French Ltd., London, and I believe that this has been produced by local theatrical companies, though it never, sadly, reached London.

I next met Anthony at an 80th birthday party arranged in London by his publishers, Macmillan's in 1992, to which I was invited by Mary Cadogan. Anthony and Eileen were their usual charming selves and it was a great personal pleasure and honour for me to meet and chat with David Davis, Head of the BBC's radio *Children's Hour* for many years (and possessor of the perfect voice!). It had been Davis who had produced the original Jennings radio plays.

The last time I met Anthony was at a Roehampton Children's Books one-day Conference titled *School Stories: from Bunter to Buckeridge*, when he gave a delightful talk and also read from one of his Jennings books. I chatted with him and also had the pleasure, and indeed honour, of introducing him (then 86) to another veteran author, whom I already knew, Ernest Dudley (then nearly 90 – and still happily with us, by the way). The two obviously knew one another's work and their conversation was lively and fascinating. A case of 'Jennings Meets Dr. Morelle...'!

In my *Who's Who* book, published in 1968, I said that Jennings had joined Tom Brown and Billy Bunter as the most famous schoolboys in fiction. I have enjoyed Jennings' small but enjoyable adventures ever since hearing those original radio plays and reading the books. I'll leave it to others to discuss and praise his literary skills, immense good humour, comic episode and authentic pictures of young schoolboys at work, play, sport – and at school.

I'll just refer to a conversation on the last page of the very first Jennings book, *Jennings Goes To School* (1950). Mr. Carter is advising Jennings and Darbishire about writing something for a magazine:

"What could we write about then, sir?" Jennings asked.

Mr. Carter considered.

"Well, think of all that's happened to you since you came here, and try describing your first term at school."

"Oh, sir, that'd be silly", objected Jennings. "Nothing ever happens at school: no murders, no crooks, never anything exciting; and everybody here is so ordinary. We never get a change to do anything worth writing about."

"Oh, I don't know", replied Mr. Carter. "You think it over. You might call it – er – something like *Jennings Goes To School*".

(Later Jennings and Darbishire expressed their views on Mr. Carter's shortcomings as a literary critic):

"I think he's crackers", said Darbishire.

"He's worse than that", said Jennings. "He's super-bonkers squared. Why, I bet you a million pounds nobody in their senses would ever want to read stories about chaps like us!"

On the other side of the door, Mr. Carter smiled as he filled his pipe.

"Wouldn't they?" he murmured. "I'm not so sure."

How right the far-seeing Mr. Carter was...

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ERIC FAYNE

by Bob Whiter

My memories of Eric go back a very long way. I had been in correspondence with him for some time (the 1932 Holiday Annual still in my collection came from him) so that when my brother Ben and I hosted the second meeting of the London Old Boys Book Club meeting at our house in Wood Green, I wrote and invited him to attend. I'll never forget opening the door – there he stood resplendent in his Modern School blazer with a cheery smile on his face. I had a mop of blond hair in those days, and he did me the honour of saying I reminded him of Bob Cherry, with a touch of Tom Merry thrown in for good measure! At the end of the meeting, which he had obviously enjoyed, he said he'd like to host the 3rd meeting at his school in Surbiton. When I saw him to the door he asked if I could come early to lunch with him and another enthusiast from Brighton. What a lovely day that was – I soon realized I had made what proved to be two wonderful friendships. Eric himself and the gentleman from Brighton (John Robyns) the latter soon to be known to all and sundry as "Red Magnet Robby." I might add that it was at that third O.B.B.C. meeting that we were treated to our first quiz set by Eric. From that day on the Modern School became one of our regular meeting places and it goes without saying one of the most popular! What with dear Madam and her staff looking after the inner man, Eric's games and quizzes and the film show with which he always ended the get together – how could it have been otherwise? Eric was always so full of new ideas. Who of those who attended the early meetings can forget: "Down You Go!" and how about those lovely club drinking glasses, engraved with Greyfriars characters he had had made for prizes for the winners of the aforesaid games and quizzes. Although the actual names of the shows escape me, his appearances on one or two B.B.C Radio Shows, of course, as a school teacher, also gave much pleasure and were looked forward to! Although I gave up smoking long ago, I still have the pipe Eric gave me together with the inscription. "To my star artist" – one of my prized possessions! When Marie and I were blessed with our children, he always sent floral tributes. When our twins

Heather and Barbara came along the sheaf of flowers bore the legend, "The Best Double Act in Town!"

When returning to the homeland it was always a must to visit Eric and to have lunch at the Oatsheaf. What wonderful memories are conjured up – I know that along with fellow collectors and readers of the jolly Collectors Digest I treasure his memory and will never forget him!

How proud we all felt when he was awarded 'This England's' Silver Cross of St. George!

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BOOK REVIEW by Brian Doyle

"Chin Up, Chest Out, Jemima!": A Celebration of the Schoolgirls' Story. Written and Compiled by Mary Cadogan. Girls Gone By Publishers.

FRIENDS OF MY YOUTH—*Where are you?*

'Three little maids from school are we.
Pert as a schoolgirl well can be.
Filled to the brim with girlish glee....'

Substitute three hundred for three in that excerpt from the chirpy ditty from Gilbert and Sullivan's 'The Mikado' and you have the delightful essence of Mary Cadogan's book 'Chin Up, Chest Out, Jemima!', which is all about British fictional schoolgirls of all shapes, sizes and types, from blondes and redheads and brunettes, from the good (mostly) to the not very nice (a few) and the whole lot of them (what's the group-noun for a large bevy of schoolgirls? A giggle? A femininity? A madcap? Whatever....) make fascinating, engrossing and (as they might say) ripping entertainment. A stunning collection of stories and articles about, and wonderful

Illustration from *Dimsie Moves Up Again*

pictures of, the schoolgirls to be found at such schools as Cliff House, Morcove, the Abbey, the Chalet, the Jane Willard, Sprindale and St. Kit's (not forgetting the Girl Guides!). The popular authors covered include Angela Brazil, 'Hilda Richards', Elsie Jeanette Oxenham, Elinor Brent-Dyer, Dorita Fairlie Bruce, 'Ida Melbourne' and others. There are also articles about the 'gym-slip genre' by the great Arthur Marshall (an hilarious glance at the St. Trinian's saga of Ronald Searle), movie star Terence Stamp (who was, believe it or not, a 'Dimsie' fan!) and Denise 'Daisy Pulls It Off' Deegan.

This book is a revised and expanded edition of the original title which appeared in 1989 to great acclaim ('vastly entertaining' said the 'Daily Mail') and this brand-

Cover picture of The Cliff House Girls by T. E. Laidler

new version (beautifully produced by the 'Girls Gone By' Publishers who have been doing sterling work on behalf of girls' literature of yesterday over the past few years) now contains the complete and unabridged items that had to be slightly shortened originally for reasons of space, as well as concentrating more upon the weekly girls' papers and magazines than before. A new and welcome section gives details of computer websites dealing with various writers in and around the genre and should prove very useful to today's readers. I was particularly amused by the one on author L.M. Montgomery ('Anne of Green Gables', etc.) which reads: 'www.tickledorange.com/LMM/index.html.' Work that one out!

One of the highlights for me (and I should think for many other readers too) is a lovely article by Mary Cadogan herself (well-known, of course, as the worthy and tireless editor of the 'Collectors' Digest') about her own schooldays and schoolgirl reading. This also incorporates a graphic and heart-warming account of the day-to-day life of a young schoolgirl during the uncertain days of World War Two. (Mary and I are roughly the same age and I can vouch for the authenticity of her memories, which certainly rang a few nostalgic bells for me too – though I hasten to add that I attended a boys' grammar school and not the girls' equivalent – though this, I suspect, might have been rather more fun!)

She also recalls a true-life story about a doll and its eventual fate, which is worthy of a classic horror tale!

The many illustrations are, as they say, worth the price of admission alone. The original edition had some 150 black-and –white pictures. This new version has over 200 (yes, 200!) plus (and it's a big plus) four delightful full-colour plates; the most striking one is right at the beginning of the volume and hits you like a marvellous lump in the throat, showing Thomas Laidler's cover for the 1937 'Schoolfriend Annual' depicting a Christmas scene of Bessie Bunter, at her nicest, being dressed up as Father (Mother?) Christmas by a smiling group of her Cliff House Friends. This was, I believe, Mary's very first girl's Annual Christmas present, and it has great nostalgic memories for her.

Perhaps an explanation of the book's title would be in order. Jemima Carstairs was a distinctive but decent pupil at Cliff House and the first thing you noticed about her was her monocle! She had sleek, black Eton-cropped hair, was always cool, self-possessed and cheerful, was known as 'Jimmy' and was often to be seen absently polishing her monocle. (There is apparently no truth in the rumour that she once cornered the similarly-monocled 'Gussy' of St. Jim's and suggested: 'Why don't we get together and make a spectacle of ourselves?') The title is derived from something she said in a story: 'Oh, chin up...' Jemima muttered fiercely. 'Chest out, old thing. Remember the bulldog spirit.....'

This is an enjoyable, informative and delightful addition to the histories of popular fiction, a minor backwater to great literature perhaps, but one in which it is good to paddle and frolic. Mary Cadogan has done everyone a favour, especially schoolgirls of all ages everywhere. A Celebration indeed....!

'Chin Up, Chest Out, Jemima!' is a gym-slipped, long legged, tousle-haired,

pony-tailed, well-scrubbed delight, packed with nostalgic fun, pretty girls and fascinating information. 'Keep that Schoolgirl Complexion!' ran that famous Palmolive soap ad. (from 1917 onwards). You might say that this is the book with 'that schoolgirl complexion.....!'

(Chin Up, Chest Out , Jemima! can be ordered direct from *Girls Gone By Publishers*, 4 Rock Terrace, Coleford, Bath, Somerset, BA3 5NF at £13.99, which includes post and packing.)

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REVIEWS

by MARY CADOGAN

Gwyn Evans (1898-1938). A biography and bibliography by Steve Holland. Published by Norman Wright.

Once again the untiring writer, Steve Holland, and untiring publisher Norman Wright, have collaborated to produce a most interesting and useful booklet for collectors (particularly those who love the Sexton Blake Saga). This includes 9 full pages of bibliographical material and some 30 pages of biography. There is the bonus of a photograph of Gwyn Evans (it's always good to see what our favourite authors looked like!) although, reproduced from a 1932 **Union Jack**, this is a little blurry and miasmic.

I admire the dedication with which Steve Holland has gleaned and put together so much intriguing material. The biographical section contains surprising features, as its title "The Lunatic, the Lover and the Poet" indicates. His life was not long, but certainly colourful, with tragic overtones. His early demise apparently, was almost certainly brought about by alcoholism: Gwyn Evans, as Steve Holland explains, could number the great George Eliot (Mary Ann Evans) among his ancestors. Like her he could write compellingly and imaginatively. Sadly he seemed always to have been dogged by a self-destructive streak, and was his own worst enemy.

This publication can be ordered from Norman Wright, 60 Eastbury Road, Watford, Herts, WD19 4JL. Costs including postage are as follows: £5.00 in U.K., £5.25 for Europe, £6.00 for U.S.A. and Canada, £6.25 for Rest of the World.

On The Western Front: Soldier's Stories from France and Flanders by John Laffin, published by Sutton Publishing at £8.99.

John Laffin has produced several books which reflect his skill as a historian and his special interest in the First World War. He and his wife, Hazelle, visited the Western Front areas several times during the 1950s, and were subsequently determined " to

make sure that the sacrifice, suffering and slaughter of the Great War are not forgotten".

This paperback is a collection of memoirs and anecdotes from soldiers of that war. These vividly reflect life as lived "in trenches and billets", and they vary from the comic to the tragic. All are moving, and they provide a sense of immediacy, and powerful atmosphere. They convey suffering, privation, anguish and endeavour – and also the gutsy, just-getting-on-with-it mood of many of the men in the trenches. For anyone with an interest in the First World War, this is a not-to-be-missed book.

Margery Allingham: 100 Years of a Great Mystery Writer. **Published by Lucas Books at £12.99**

This is a bumper book in celebration of the Centenary of Margery Allingham's birth. She was born in Ealing on 20th May 1904 and became a published author at the early age of 13. She very soon established a reputation as a gifted crime writer, and her main sleuthing character, Albert Campion, who was launched in *The Crime at Black Dudley* in 1929, is now, like Agatha Christie's Poirot and Miss Marple, a household name – and, because of TV adaptations of the books, a household face as well.

The Margery Allingham Society has assembled a glittering cast of writers for this excellent study, including H.R.F. Keating, Jessica Mann, Andrew Taylor, June Thomson and Jennifer Schofield, (co-author of By Jove, Biggles, and a contributor to the C.D.).

Every aspect of Allingham's writing seems to be covered in a series of lively and perceptive articles. There are also biographical threads on which the literary assessments are strung, and we are given insights into Margery Allingham's development as a writer.

The book contains as well previously unpublished material from the Allingham archives, including short stories, articles, radio scripts and verse.

The distinguished American crime-writer, Sara Paretsky, has provided a warmly appreciative Foreword for this outstanding book. Let us leave the last words to her: she explains that she doesn't have a favourite Allingham character or favourite book. "I love them all, the light, early fatuous Campion, the mature, introspective Campion, even the mind-bending science fiction Campion. How sad I feel when I've read through all the books again, how jealous I feel of readers who've yet to start them...".

All the following are published by *Girl's Gone By Publishers*, and can be ordered from them at 4 Rock Terrace, Coleford, Bath, BA3 5NF.

Girl's Gone By continue their appealing selection of reprints of girls' books by celebrated authors. One of their most intriguing recent publications is *Chalet Club*

Newsletters. This is a bit of an "in" book, very much for fans of the Chalet School series, because it comprises letters written by their author, Elinor Brent-Dyer, to members of the Chalet Club. These letters appeared twice yearly, from 1959 to 1969, and at its peak the Club numbered 4000 members.

This large format book is full of newsy notes about the Chalet School stories and characters, with details of competitions, badges, club activities, and so on. But it represents something deeper, too – the feeling for international understanding and co-operation that runs through Elinor's books. What a joy it must have been for young readers to keep in regular touch with their favourite author through these letters.

Away from the Chalet School, ***Girl's Gone By*** have re-issued Elinor Brent-Dyer's ***The Lost Staircase.*** This is one of her later books (1946) with a very English setting. We meet Jesanne, a lively and attractive heroine who becomes heir to a great estate, Dragon House, near the Welsh Borders. Orphaned, she has to leave her home in New Zealand to take up residence at Dragon House with the present owner, Ambrose, her elderly cousin. A warm bond is soon forged between them, and it is interwoven with, and enhanced by, their mutual love of the house, its estate, its history and its myths.

This is a wonderful study of a house: in fact, Elinor dwells so vividly and movingly upon its colour and atmosphere that Dragon House itself seems to be the "star" of the book.

It is a mystery story, about a lost staircase and the secrets it has to reveal which throw light on significant aspects of the family history. It is also a story of friendships – of the relationship between Jesanne and Lois, her chum, and of course, between Jesanne and Ambrose. Elinor Brent-Dyer handles this cross-generational friendship with aplomb. A lovely, escapist read!

Dorita Fairlie Bruce, my favourite of the hard-back girls school story writers, is represented in a further book in the series featuring the likeable day-school pupil at Maudsley Grammar School, Nancy Caird. In some ways more believable and realistic than Dimsie (the accepted shining light of Dorita Fairlie Bruce's stories), Nancy lives up to expectations here by helping an impoverished former school-mate, and foiling some "baddies" into the bargain.

With ***Clover*** by Susan Coolidge, we've moved away from twentieth-century school tales and peeped back into the Victorian era. Following ***What Katy Did, What Katy Did at School*** and ***What Katy Did Next,*** this book focuses on the challenges presented to Katy's younger sister, Clover, in her early adult life. It's good to see ***Clover*** back in print, and to know that its follow-up, ***In the High Valley,*** will also soon be available. So often collectors have no difficulty in acquiring the first one or two books in a series but find later stories almost impossible to obtain.

* *

WANTED: American & Canadian Sunday Newspaper Comic Sections from the Toronto Star, Montreal Standard etc. BEN BLIGH, 55 Arundale Avenue, Hazel Grove, Stockport, Cheshire, SK7 5LD.

* *

FORUM

From ARTHUR REVELS:

Thanks for the summer Collectors Digest. I really enjoyed the article on Francis Durbridge. I too remember the World of Tim Frazer, although I was very young at the time. I wanted to read the book pictured in the article and I managed to track down and purchase a copy on abe books.

However what the article does not mention is that BBC 7 is broadcasting the Paul Temple radio programmes as part of the crime and thriller hour. I believe some seven serials have been broadcast and some are now in the process of being repeated. Having not heard any of the radio programmes before, I found them to be thrilling, despite their age. Some are also available as part of the BBC radio collection. I do wish the BBC would broadcast some of the old television programmes, if they are still in the archives.

From GEOFF BRADLEY:

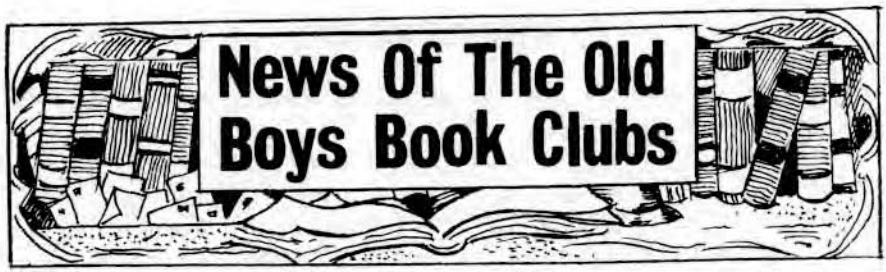
I agree in general terms with Arthur Edwards's endorsement of Laurence Price's "no remake can match the original" but would suggest that there are exceptions to the general rule. I think most people would pick John Huston's 1941 version of Dashiell Hammett's The Maltese Falcon, starring Humphrey Bogart, ahead of the worthy, but inferior, 1931 film version directed by Roy Del Ruth with Ricardo Cortez and Bebe Daniels. (I won't mention the awful 1936 version titled Satan Met A Lady.)

* *

CD CHRISTMAS SPECIAL

This publication in December, will be full of very good things with a joyous, seasonal atmosphere. I still have room for further contributions so please send me your articles, stories, poems or puzzles without delay. Don't forget to complete the enclosed order form for your copy.

MARY CADOGAN



SOUTH WESTERN OBBC

The Spring meeting was held on the 16th May with our regular 10 members in attendance.

Laurence Price started the ball rolling with a short reading from a book by George Orwell entitled "Coming Up For Air". This illustrated the theme of his talk which was the very varied life and career of Orwell; most of us remember only "1984", "Animal Farm" and of course his article criticising many of the old school stories and the subsequent exchange of 'views' with Charles Hamilton.

Following on from this Una Hamilton Wright read a very interesting article entitled "Charles Hamilton - a Man of Property (?)" which will no doubt be published in the CD.

Tim Salisbury then played a recording of the late Bill Lofts commenting on Richmal Crompton's William and he passed round a very nice copy of "William and ARP" as well as a copy of the *Yorkshire Life* of 1976, in which was a double-page spread featuring the Northern OBBC, with photos of Club members including the Rev. Geoffrey Good with part of his Magnet collection etc. and also a young Darrell Swift, whom so many of us knew.

Andrew Pitt then read from a volume of "Stalky & Co", and in the following discussion stated that this was based largely on Kipling's personal adventures at Public School.

We then had a break for our usual excellent tea and this was followed by a recording by Martin Jarvis which was made for a meeting of the Just William Society, and another short recording by Richmal Crompton.

Andrew Pitt's next offering was "What Makes a Hamilton Story" comparing Kipling to Hamilton; the former being quoted as "only able to write when his 'demon' was with him" whereas CH had to keep the flow of writing going regardless!

The meeting ended with a piece by Laurence Price featuring Ray Davies, lead singer with the 'Kinks', which included 3 recordings of his work, the lyrics of which showing how much he appreciated the England of yesteryear.

Reg and Maureen Andrews

NORTHERN O.B.B.C.

In August we visited the Grand Theatre, Leeds, where we saw *Danger in the Small Hours* by Francis Durbridge.

This month (September) we met at the home of our Secretary, Greyfriars, 147 Thornes Road, Wakefield, where we viewed two videos. The first was *A Visit to Kingsgate*, which showed the home of Frank Richards, and the second took us to a London Club Meeting, where we could join in the John Werham Celebration Luncheon.

In October our yearly luncheon (9 October) will take place at High Farm Inn, Leeds, followed by the Darrell Swift Memorial Lecture (Speakers Gillian Baverstock and Richard Burgon). In November we should be back to our usual venue at Holy Trinity, Boar Lane, Leeds (6.45 p.m. for 7.00 p.m.). 11 December is the date of our Christmas Party. Bring a bottle or some comestible item and perhaps bring an idea for a game!

Potential new members (or anyone who would like further information) contact our Chairman (Mrs. Joan Colman, 2 Grove Farm Croft, Leeds 16 (Tel. 01132 675897) or Secretary (The Rev. Fr. Geoffrey Good, Greyfriars, 147 Thornes Road, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF2 8QN. Tel. 01924 378273).

CAMBRIDGE CLUB

We met on Sunday, June 27th at the home of Howard Corn at Duston, Northampton with 8 members present. The main subjects were presented by Howard and the first was a survey of all the jigsaws which were merchandised in relation to *Eagle*, *Girl* and *Swift*. Of the 40 produced, Howard had 18, mostly in fine condition all mounted on boards in a completed state and sealed with clingfilm.

Following this Howard gave the history of the children's comic *Buster* which ran from 1960 to 2000 and absorbed such old favourites as *Film Fun*, *Radio Fun* and later ones such as *Cor* and *Whizzer & Chips*. The front cover featured the character 'Buster', supposed to be the son of Andy Capp. The stories inside were surprisingly gruesome for young children of that time but eventually in the 1990s it was a full colour comic with an all 'funnies' content.

After tea Paul Wilkins presented a video tape on *The Story of the Gun* relating to the Wild West.

KEITH HODKINSON

LONDON O.B.B.C.

36 members and guests attended our Annual Lunch Party at the Brentham Club, Ealing, on 19th September. This Eric Fayne Centenary Lunch Party was celebrated with a splendid full colour souvenir menu, produced by our President and Gail,

featuring photographs of the late Mr. Fayne, better known as "Sir", and a nostalgic group picture of the London OBBC taken in Surbiton in 1966.

John Wernham, as is traditional, led the Loyal Toast: Roger Jenkins led the toast to our guests.

Una Hamilton Wright toasted the Club, amending its title slightly to "The Old Boys' and Old Girls' Book Club"; and Mary Cadogan shared some of her reminiscences of Eric Fayne, before leading the toast to his memory.

Bill Bradford, on behalf of the Club, led a sincere vote of thanks to Derek and Jessie Hinrich for once more arranging a thoroughly cheery and enjoyable Annual Luncheon; then it was back to Bill's for some tea, cakes and chat.

Next month we return to Yateley once more, with our kind hosts Roger and Ann. Please telephone if you are planning to attend. Here's the number: 01252 879 103. Until the next time... cheerio!

VIC PRATT

* *

Please could Jamie Campbell and Naveed Haque contact
Christopher Cole
at
271 Firs Lane, Palmers Green, London N13 5QH
or: christophercole@amserve.com
to communicate

WANTED:

Nelson Lee's (bound & loose) and any novels
(e.g. Norman Conquests, Ironside)
by Edwy Searles Brookes or any of his pseudonyms
(Berkeley Gray, Victor Gunn, etc).
Too many to list, but let me know what you can offer.
ROGER COOMBES,
6 Alder Grove, Yateley, Hampshire, GU46 6EN.

FOR SALE:

Bound volumes of the Modern Wonder comic in worn brown boards.
All covers bound in.

Vol. I No. 1 to No. 22	1937	
Vol. II No. 23 to No. 52		£50.00 per volume
Vol. IV No. 78 to No. 104	1939	
Radio Fun Annuals	1951, 1953, 1954	£15.00 each
Playbox Annuals	1942, 1929, 1936	£20.00 each
Chicks Own Annuals	1929, 1942	£20.00 each
Uncle Dick's Annual	1931	£10.00
Jolly Jack's Annual	1940	£20.00
Sunbeam Annual	1933	£20.00
Bruin Boy's Annual	1936	£20.00
Teddy Tail's Annual	1934, 1935, 1936, 1937, 1939	£20.00 each
Jolly JigSaw Book (John Lena) Books of 5 puzzles. one piece of one puzzle missing		£20.00
Hobbies Annual	1934	£8.00
Every Boys Hobby Annual	1930 £6.00 1927 (covers loose) £3.00 1932 £8.00	
Schoolgirls Annuals	1939	£15.00
Schoolgirls Annuals Vol 6, Vol 10, Vol 12. Late 1920s		£15.00 each
Daily Mail "NIPPER" Annuals 1936, 1939, 1940 and one undated		£15.00 each
Willie Waddle Book	1937	£15.00
A4 Greyfriars Herald comics		£2.00 each
Rainbow Annuals	1925, 1930, 1936, 1937, 1938	
	1926, 1947, 1954, 1929, 1932	
	1948	£20.00 each
Bubbles Annuals	1925, 1926, 1937, 1939,	
	1932, 1935, 1942	£20.00 each
Tiger Tim's Annuals	1923, 1924, 1925, 1928,	
	1929, 1930, 1936, 1937,	
	1947, 1948.	£20.00 each
	1955	£15.00
Mrs. Hippos Annuals	1933, 1928, 1934, 1935, 1936	£20.00 each
29 Boxing "Ring" Magazines	1950s	£2.00 each
10 Meccano Magazines	1930s	£3.00 each
Crackers Annual	1935	£20.00

Postage extra on all items

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55 Arundel Avenue, Hazel Grove, Stockport, Cheshire, SK7 5LD
Tel: 0161 483 7627

From ROBERT KIRKPATRICK

When I was compiling the second edition of my bibliography of boys' school stories*, I included a section of anthologies and short story collections (such as The Big Book of School Stories for Boys etc.). I was also aware that school stories regularly appeared in other boys' annuals, short story collections and one-off publications, but listing all of these would be impractical. So I simply listed the 50 or so which appeared to be the best-known, using Lofts & Adley's guides as a reference.

Since then, I have come across countless others, many of which were not listed by Lofts & Adley. The following is a comprehensive list of all those that I am aware of. It is a mixture of annuals (which appeared at least twice) and one-off publications, which were probably aimed at the Christmas market. In many cases, they were not dated - the dates given are from a variety of sources including the British Library Catalogue, Lofts & Adley, and from inscriptions inside individual copies.

If anyone can fill in the gaps, or supply details of publications I've missed, I would be delighted to hear from them.

*Bullies, Beaks & Flannelled Fools - An Annotated Bibliography of Boys' School Fiction 1742-2000. £15.00 including postage from Robert Kirkpatrick, 6 Osterley Park View Road, Hanwell, London W7 2HH.

Ace Story Book for Boys	Beaver Books	1957
Action Book for Boys	Purnell	1967
Adventure Book for Boys	Birn Brothers	1935-1940
Adventure Bound	Birn Brothers	1934
Adventureland	D.C. Thomson	1924-1941
Adventure Stories for Boys	Birn Brothers	1946
Adventure Stories for Boys	Paul Hamlyn	1967
Adventure Stories for Boys	T. Nelson	1934
Adventure Stories for Boys	Odhams	1957
Adventure Stories for Boys	Young World Productions	1969
Aldine Adventure Book	Aldine	1932
Amazing Stories	P.R. Gawthorne	
Best Book for Boys	New Century Press	1935
Big Adventure Book	Collins	1929
Big Adventure Book	C. Arthur Pearson	1936
Big Adventure Book for Boys	T. Nelson	1930
Big Book of Adventure Stories	O.U.P.	
Big Book for Boys	O.U.P.	1924-1939
Big Budget for Boys	Blackie&Son	1930-1943
Big Book of Boys' Adventure Stories	Hamlyn	1977
Big Parade for Boys	Spring Books	(?)1959
Blackie's Boys Annual	Blackie & Son	1923-1941
Blackie's Boys Story Book	Blackie	1932
Blue Book for Boys	Hodder & Stoughton	1913

Blue Book of Boys' Stories	T. Nelson	1927 - 1930
Book for Boys	Juvenile Productions	1955
Book of Boys' Stories	Golden Pleasure Books	1964
Bounty Book for Boys	Juvenile Productions	1937
Boy Scouts Annual	Collins	1927-1931
Boys Adventure Book	New Century Press	1935
Boys Adventure Book	J.F. Shaw & Co.	1936
Boys All Round Book of Stories	T. Nelson	1926
Boys Annual	Hutchinson & Co.	
Boys Biggest Book	Collins	1936
Boys Birthday Book	Literary Press	1931
Boys Birthday Book	Sunshine Books	
Boys Book of Adventure	Cassell&Co.	1912
Boys Budget	Blackie & Son	1939-1942
Boys Choice	Golden Pleasure Books	1964
Boys Favourite Book	Collins	1936-40
Boys Fun Annual	Gerald G. Swan	1954-1955
Boys Holiday Book	D.C. Thomson	1927
Boys Illustrated Annual		1894
Boys Interest	D.L.M.S.	
Boys Outdoor Story Book	Pontings	
Boys Own Annual		1861-?
Boys Own Annual	R.T.S.	1879-1940
Boys Own Annual	Purnell	1964-1976
Boys Own Book of Stories	T. Nelson & Sons	1931
Boys Own Companion	Lutterworth Press	1959-1963
Boys Own Story Book	Ward, Lock & Co.	1852-1860
Boys Realm of Stories	J.F. Shaw & Co.	1913-1936
Boys Splendid Story Book	Collins	1940
Boys Stories	Blackie & Son	1950
Boys Story Book	Blackie & Son	1949
Boys Story Book	Hodder & Stoughton	1910
Boys Story Bumper	Collins	1938-1941
Boys World Annual	Odhams	1964-1972
Boys World of Adventure	C. Arthur Pearson	1938-1940
Brave Book for Boys	O.U.P.	1940-1942
Bright Boys Budget	Sampson Low	1912
British Empire Book for Boys	Australasian Chain Stores Ltd.	
British Boys Annual	Cassell & Co.	1910-1934
Brown Book for Boys	Hodder & Stoughton	1913
Budget for Boys	T. Nelson & Sons	1933-1941
Buff Book for Boys	O.U.P.	
Bugle Call	Hodder & Stoughton	
Bumper Adventure Book	T. Nelson & Sons	1925
Bumper Book for Boys	Children's Press	(?)1950
Bumper Book for Boys	T. Nelson & Sons	1925-1941
Bumper Book of Boys' Stories	Hamlyn	1978

Bumper Book of Thrills for Boys	Purnell	1963
Bumper Book of Scout Stories	T. Nelson & Sons	1930-1935
Bumper Budget for Boys	T. Nelson & Sons	
Camp Fire Stories	O.U.P.	1922
Camp Fire Stories	Collins	1929
Captain Annual (half-yearly volumes)	George Newnes	1899-1924
Champion Annual	Fleetway Publications	1967-1968
Champion Annual for Boys	Fleetway/Amalgamated Press	1924-1942/ 1947-1956
Champion Book for Boys	Dean & Sons	1932-1940
Champion Book for Boys	Dean & Sons	1950-1952
Chums Annual	Cassell & Co./Amalg.Press	1893-1941
Collins Adventure Annual	Collins	1916-1936
Collins Boys Annual	Collins	1954-1964
Collins Modem Boys Annual	Collins	1932
Collins Schoolboys Annual	Collins	1924-1936
Commander Book for Boys	Sampson Low	1958
Commander Boys Annual	Sampson Low	1959-1960
Commander Story Annual for Boys	Sampson Low	1957
Commonwealth Annual	Bruce & Gawthorne	1959-1964
Commonwealth and Empire Annual	Bruce & Gawthorne	1954-195 8
Conquest Book for Boys	Juvenile Productions	1939
Courage and Peril	Collins	?(1912)
Crimson Book for Boys	O.U.P.	
Crusoe Annual	George Newnes	1924-1926
Daily Mail Book for Boys	Associated Newspapers	1962
Daily Mail Boys Annual	Associated Newspapers	1956-1966
Daily Sketch Modem Boys Annual	Associated Newspapers	195 9-1961
Dean's Annual for Boys	Dean & Sons	1958
Dean's Favourite Annual for Boys	Dean & Son	1957
Deeds of Daring	Collins	
Eagle Annual	(various)	1952-1974
Eagle Book of Adventure Stories	Hulton Press	1951-1952
Empire Annual for Boys	R.T.S.	1909-1934
Empire Youth Annual	Gawthorne Press	1947-1953
Every Boys Annual	T. Nelson & Sons	
Every Boys Annual	Juvenile Productions	1949-1954
Every Boys Annual	Routledge	1865-1868
Every Boys Adventure Annual	Collins	1943
Every Boys Book of Stories	T. Nelson	1932
Every Boys Story Book	Collins	1930
Every Boy's Story Book	Purnell	1965
Excitement		1830-1841
Express Annual for Boys	Daily Express	195 7-1960
Favourite Annual for Boys	Dean & Son	1957-
Favourite Book for Boys	Dean & Son	1935
Favourite Story Book for Boys	T. Nelson & Sons	1939

Fine Stories for Boys		
Fifty-two Sports Stories for Boys	Hutchinson & Co.	1935
Fifty-two Thrilling Stories for Boys	Hutchinson & Co.	1935
For All Boys	Blackie & Son	1951
Fun Book for Boys	D.C. Thomson	1937-38
Giant Modern Annual for Boys	Sunshine Press	1940
Golden Book for Boys	O.U.P.	1922
Golden Budget for Boys	Blackie	1929-1938
Gold Treasure for Boys	O.U.P.	
Grand Book for Boys	Blackie	1936
Grand Book for Boys	Juvenile Productions	1937
Great Book for Boys	O.U.P.	1926-1932
Green Book for Boys	Hodder & Stoughton	1913
Great Stories for Boys	Children's Press	1940
Herbert Strang's Annual for Boys	Hodder & Stoughton	1909-1927
Herbert Strang's Book of Adventure Stories	Hodder & Stoughton	1914
Holiday Annual	George Routledge & Sons	?
Horizon Book for Boys	Spring Books	1935
Hotspur Book for Boys	D.C. Thompson	1936-1943/1949
Hulton's Adventure Stories	Allied Newspapers	1922-
Ideal Book for Boys	Dean Son	1932-1940
Jolly Book for Boys	T. Nelson & Sons	1929-1933
Jolly Days for Boys	O.U.P.	1939
Jolly Stories for Boys	Collins	1939-1936
Jolly Tales for Boys	Collins	1930
Kingston's Annual for B	W.Kent/Sampson, Low & Co	1862-63
Lion Annual	AP/Fleetway/IPC	1954-
Lucky Boys Budget	Blackie	1926-1937
Mammoth Book for Boys	Dean & Sons	1939
Modern Book for Boys	Birn Brothers	1939-1941
Modern Boys Annual	Amalgamated Press	1931-1940
Modern Boys Book of Adventure Stories	Amalgamated Press	1936
Monster Book for Boys	Dean & Son	1930-1960
Mystery and Adventure Stories for Boys	Odhams	1962
Nelson's Jolly Book for Boys	T. Nelson & Sons	1934-1942
New Blue Book for Boys	O.U.P.	1935
New Buff Book for Boys	O.U.P.	1936
New Excitement		1838-1840
New Ideal Book for Boys	Dean & Son	1974
New Parade for Boys	Spring Books	(1950s)
New Target Book for Boys	Spring Books	1960
Open-Air Adventure Stories for Boys	Odhams	1965
Open Air Stories	Birn Brothers	1935
Open Air Stories	Collins	
Orange Book for Boys	O.U.P.	1930
Our Boys Adventure Book	Collins	1922
Our Boys Annual	T. Nelson & Sons	

Our Boys Best Annual	Epworth Press	1926-1926
Our Boys Best Of All	Renwick of Otley	1937-1941
Our Boys Gift Book	Renwick of Otley	1930-1941/1949
Our Boys Story Book	Ernest Nister	1914
Our Boys Tales	Renwick of Otley	
Our Boys Tip Top	Renwick of Otley	1930-1935
Our Boys Tip Top Annual		1917/21-60
Our Boys' Yams	Renwick of Otley	1952
Our Own Schoolboys Annual	World Distributors	1956-1968
Oxford Annual for Boys	O.U.P.	1928/1942
(continuation of "Herbert Strung's Annual/or Boys ")		
Oxford Annual for Scouts	O.U.P.	1920-1936
Peal Book of Boys' Stories	Peal Press	1965
Pick of Boys' Stories	Blackie & Son	
Pleasure Book for Boys	W.J. Gordon	1925
Popular Book of Boys Stories	Amalgamated Press	1930-1940
Popular Stories for Boys	Birn Brothers	1955
Prize Budget for Boys	Blackie	1934-1943
Purple Book for Boys	Hodder & Stoughton	1914
Rare Yams for Boys	T. Nelson & Sons	1951
Real Book of Boys' Stories	Peal Press	1960
Red Book for Boys	S.W. Partridge	1926-1929
Red Book of Boys Stories	T. Nelson & Sons	1927-1930
Red Line Adventure Book for Boys	T. Nelson & Sons	1929
Red Story Book for Boys	Odhams	1966
Ripping Stories for Boys	Blackie & Son	1941
Rousing Stories for Boys	Blackie & Son	1939
Rover Book for Boys	D.C. Thomson	1926-1942/1950-1959
Sabre Boys Story Annual	Purnell	1959
Sangster's Book for Boys	Paternoster Publishing Soc.	1914-?
Scarlet Book for Boys	O.U.P.	1920
School and Adventure Annual for Boys		1942
Schoolboy Adventures	Gerald Swan	1945
Schoolboy Stories	Birn Brothers	1943
Schoolboy Stories	Blackie & Son	1939
Schoolboys Adventure Book	Collins	
Schoolboys Adventure Book	Shoe Lane Pub. Co.	1938
Schoolboys Adventure Book	New Century Press	
Schoolboys Adventure Book	Aldine	1926
Schoolboys Album	Gerald G. Swan	1944-1958
Schoolboys Annual	USCL	1923
Schoolboys Annual	RTS	1925-1940
Schoolboys Annual	Lutterworth Press	1941
Schoolboys Annual	Collins	1924-1937
Schoolboys Annual	World Distributors	1968-1981

to be continued

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Dickey Nugent thinking up a new Dr. Birchemall Adventure

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