



THE STORY

CHRISTMAS
1944

No. 20.

Vol. 1.

PAPER

COLLECTOR

Printed and published by Wm. H. Gander,
P. O. Box 60, Transcona, Manitoba, Canada.

--In This Issue--

Schools In Juvenile Fiction

By HERBERT LECKENBY

*The Story Of The Third-
Oldest British Comic Paper*

By WALTER DEXTER

Stories To Remember

By T. W. PUCKRIN



: : AN AMATEUR MAGAZINE : :

SCHOOLS IN JUVENILE FICTION

Do You Remember Them?

SCHOOLS! Their names are legion. To try to mention all that have appeared in the pages of schoolboy fiction during the past fifty years or so would probably fill more than one issue of *The Story Paper Collector*, even if I confined myself to papers like *The Boys' Friend*, *Pluck*, *True Blue*, *The Champion*, *The Magnet*, and others of a similar type. It is true, many of them made but a brief sojourn, then passed on into the limbo of forgotten things, but others became famous and known to millions.

Needless to say, there is no need to remind one of St. Jim's and Greyfriars—their names are immortal. They were so real that thousands of boys were honestly convinced they really existed somewhere in Sussex and Kent, and many set off in quest of them. Yes, their names will never die.

But do you remember Ravenscar and Greyminster, Wycliffe and St. Basil's, Haygarth and St. Kits? Grand names for schools, these, and they once gladdened

the hearts of boys who are now growing a little grey.

They were stately, noble schools—schools ruled by dignified, venerable Headmasters and men of letters; schools with great Halls and hallowed chapels, where shafts of light through stained glass windows dwelt on unruly Fourth-Formers changed for the nonce into cherubic choir-boys singing the evening hymn.

There were nice homely, care-free schools where sport seemed to predominate and learning was just an incident; schools where Classicals met Moderns in bitter rivalry, but where both were clansmen when rival schools were met on the playing fields.

There were other schools, too, incredible, cheerless sorts of schools for the sons of gentlemen to live in, to be trained for careers in the outer world; schools with Headmasters bearing names like Dr. Birchinem and ushers named Tobias Tuttlebury; schools where life was

By HERBERT LECKENBY

drear and grim, and murder oft-times stalked around.

Yes, there were all sorts of schools.

THE FIRST school story I remember was not one written for a boys' popular paper but one which first appeared in book form about one hundred years ago—Dean Farrar's "Eric; or, Little By Little." Does someone smile at that? Yes, I know it has been derided and laughed at as too goodey-goodey, that story of Roslyn School. Yet, I don't know. I seem to remember that the boys, even Eric, gambled and drank and swore, just as Cutts and Loder did in later years. 'Tis true, it was a very sad story, for King Death was very busy. I know I shed many tears when Russell died, and Eric's brother, too, I believe, and Eric himself, in the end. Yes, there were lumps in my throat when I read "Eric" even for the third time, when a child of seven or so.

Then followed the stories of the master, Talbot Baines Reed, grand, vigorous, healthy stories, full of humour, adventure, rivalries and sport—classics of their kind, models for all future school stories. "Willoughby Captains," "The Fourth Form at St Dominic's," "Follow My Leader," and "Master of the Shell"—how well I remember them, sometimes in

the B.O.P., more often taken from the shelves of the Public Library in my native city.

ONE OF THE FIRST school stories in the boys' papers I loved so well was "The Boys of St. Basil's" in the halfpenny *Boys' Friend*, about the year 1900. It was followed by a sequel, "Bob Redding's Schooldays." They were written by Henry St. John, star school story writer for the Amalgamated Press. He wrote many more stories about St. Basil's and in the after years it became his favourite school. In fact, he liked it so much that he went there himself twenty years after he had written about Bob Redding. In a story entitled "Henry St. John's Schooldays," published in the revived *Boys' Realm* in 1919, he described his tribulations as a fag in the school wherefrom so many of his heroes had long since passed out into the world. Authors have a delightful habit of playing tricks with Father Time! In this story, too, he made reference to his sister Mabel. But Mabel, of course, was only another name for Henry, one he used when he wrote stories for the feminine gender.

Another author of whose stories I have very pleasant memories was John Nix Pentelow, better known as Jack North and Richard Randolph, as already

mentioned in S.P.C. He was also, at times, Martin Clifford and Frank Richards, but with the St. Jim's and Greyfriars stories he was perhaps not at his best. Where those famous schools were concerned Charles Hamilton was king and no one dare challenge his throne.

Mr. Pentelow, however, deserves a special place in the history of school story literature for those he wrote of Wycliffe. They had quite a good run in *Pluck* and *The Boys' Friend Library*. What grand yarns they were, those telling of the adventures of Jack Jackson and his chums. Sentimental they were at times, for J. N. P. loved to sermonize, and I recall how Dangerfield died in one of them, but there was plenty of humour and adventure in them, too. I have some of them still, and I can read them with as much pleasure as I did many long years ago.

The boys grew older in these stories, just like ordinary mortals do. Mr. Pentelow told me in a letter once that he made a mistake when he made his heroes progress through life, for when they had spent some time in the Sixth Form he could write of them no more. He therefore started all over again with a new school, Haygarth. But though the boys therein had new names they were really the

same ones who had played on the fields of Wycliffe.

ANOTHER master of the craft was David Goodwin. As a writer of serials dealing with the world of school he had no superior. They were packed with rollicking fun, audacious japes, and thrilling adventure. He was adept at getting his heroes into a desperate situation at the end of an instalment, then getting them out again with a surprise development after he had kept his readers a week in suspense. He wrote many stories centred around a great school named St. Simeon's, and among others were St. Osyth's, St. Corton's, Nunthorpe, and Codrington.

Then there were, of course, St. Frank's and Rookwood. There is no need to say much of these, for in length of run they were third and fourth only to St. Jim's and Greyfriars. Edwy Searles Brooks' stories of St. Frank's appeared in *The Nelson Lee Library* from 1917 to 1933, and Charles Hamilton (as Owen Conquest) found time in some mysterious way to tell of Rookwood in *The Boys' Friend* for something like eleven years.

At one period Hamilton Edwards took the somewhat surprising step of introducing school stories by E. Harcourt Burrage into some of his papers. I say surprising because this author

of a somewhat earlier day was usually associated with papers upon which Mr. Edwards looked with a disapproving eye—those “dreadfuls” against which he was supposed to be waging a deadly war. Two of these stories I recall were “The Fensgate Schoolboys” and “Tom Tartar’s Schooldays.” Though they were boosted a good deal I don’t think they appealed greatly to the boys of that generation.

OTHER WRITERS who wrote quite a lot about school life during the first twenty years of the present century were Sidney Drew; Reginald Wray with his yarns about the Schoolboy Acrobats, Schoolboy Ventriloquist, and Schoolboy Inventor; Martin Shaw; Andrew Gray; John G. Rowe, author of the “Tufty & Co.” stories in *The Nugget Library*; Michael Storm;

Henry T. Johnson; John Finne-
more; Maxwell Scott; Allan
Blair; C. J. Mansford; Claude
Heathcote; Stanley Hearne; and
A. S. Burrage.

Appended is a list of some of the schools I recall, or which I have been able to resurrect from the papers I possess. I have made no attempt to mention the story in which they appeared for in some cases, of course, they appeared in several. The papers are those with which they were principally connected.

These schools are silent now. No longer are their playing fields the scenes of mighty battles. The boys no longer feast in their studies or plan japes therein, nor do they stroll about their quads. But we who knew them have fond memories for the pleasant hours we spent with them when we were boys.

SCHOOLS, THEIR AUTHORS, AND THE PRINCIPAL PAPERS IN WHICH THEY APPEARED

Abbotsrag	Michael Storm	Pluck
Arundle	Walter Edwards	Boys' Herald (1920-1)
Ashbourne	Allan Blair	Union Jack
Austin Towers	David Goodwin	Boys' Friend
Barrowby	Sidney Drew	Boys' Friend
Bingley	Henry St. John	Boys' Friend
Bramblemere	Roderick Dare	True Blue
Brierley Grange	Fred Wishaw	Boys' Herald
Calcroft	Sidney Drew	Boys' Friend

Castle Gaunt . . .	Henry St. John . . .	Boys' Friend (½d.)
Chilcote	Harry Strange	Champion
Cliveden	Charles Hamilton	Boys' Herald
Codrington	David Goodwin	Boys' Herald
Croft	Henry St. John	Boys' Friend
Danescliffe	Henry St. John	Boys' Friend
Danesdyke	Andrew Gray	Boys' Herald
Draycott	Henry T. Johnson	Boys' Friend
Ellesmere	George Garrish	Pluck (½d.)
Fengate	E. Harcourt Burrage	Boys' Herald
Franklingham	"Richard Randolph"	Magnet
Greyfriars	"Frank Richards"	Magnet
Greyminster	Henry St. John	Marvel
Grey Monks	Stanley Hearn	True Blue
Greystoke	Lewis Hockley	Pluck
Grey Towers	Maurice Merriman (S. Clarke Hook)	Marvel
Grimslade	"Frank Richards"	Ranger
Halliwell	Alan Edwards	Marvel; School & Adv.
Haygarth	"Jack North"	Pluck
Horton	Henry St. John	Boys' Friend
Kingsmere	— — —	Detective Library
Kingswell	Gordon Holme (Henry St. John)	Boys' Friend
Littlecote	E. Harcourt Burrage	True Blue
Lyncroft	H. Clarke Hook	Pluck
Melthorpe	Allan Blair	Boys' Realm
Nunthorpe	David Goodwin	Dreadnought
Pelham	— — —	Boys' Realm Sports Library
Ravenscar	Michael Storm	Pluck
Ravenshill	Horace Phillips	Boys' Herald
Repley	Allan Blair	Boys' Friend
Rookwood	"Owen Conquest"	Boys' Friend
St. Aloy's	Henry St. John	Boys' Friend

St. Anne's	Cecil Hayter	Boys' Herald
St. Basil's	Henry St. John	Boys' Friend, B.H., etc.
St. Corton's	David Goodwin	Boys' Herald
St. Dunstan's	S. Clarke Hook	Union Jack (½d.)
St. Esmond's	S. S. Gordon	Boys' Realm
St. Frank's	Edwy Searles Brooks	Nelson Lee Library
St. Jim's	"Martin Clifford"	Gem
St. Kilda's	Martin Shaw	Champion
St. Kit's	"Clifford Clive"	School and Sport
St. Kit's	Charles Hamilton	Pluck
St. Ninian's	Maxwell Scott	Boys' Herald, B.R., etc.
St. Osyth's	T. C. Bridges	Boys' Realm
St. Osyth's	David Goodwin	Boys' Realm
St. Simeon's	David Goodwin	Boys' Friend, B.H., B.R.
St. Stephen's	Henry St. John	Boys' Friend
St. Winifred's	"Owen Conquest"	Greyfriars Herald
St. Winifred's	Charles Hamilton	Pluck
Slapton	John Finnemore	Boys' Realm
Stormpoint	Maurice Merriman (S. Clarke Hook)	Gem
Swishall	Claude Heathcote	Boys' Friend (½d.)
Thirlestone	"Jack North"	Pluck
Welstead	"Jack North"	Pluck
Westbourne	Chas. J. Mansford	Boys' Realm
Winbury	— — —	Boys' Herald
Wycliffe	"Jack North"	Pluck

[NOTE—Martin Clifford, Owen Conquest, and Clifford Clive are pen-names of Mr. Charles Hamilton, while Mr. J. N. Pentelow wrote as Jack North and Richard Randolph.]

"BLOODS" OF THE PAST

Occasionally a contributor to the professional press draws on his memories of the story papers of the past when writing an arti-

cle. An instance noted lately was "Bloods' of the Past," by Colin Milne in *The Glasgow Herald* for April 7th, 1944.

The Wonderful Story Of The Third-Oldest British Comic Paper

THE WONDER was the third of the cheap comic weekly papers issued by the brothers Harmsworth. (The two prior publications were *Comic Cuts*, May 17th, 1890, and *Illustrated Chips*, July 26th, 1890, both still running.) It has lived for fifty-two years and is still "going strong"; but, owing to war-time needs, it is published fortnightly, and its price is twopence. It has had a most interesting life; its name has been slightly altered on several occasions, and its price has ranged from a halfpenny to twopence, reductions as well as increases being made as circumstances demanded.

The British Museum Catalogue (the papers themselves are not at present available) although quite correct in its listings, was not quite clear to the writer, as *The Wonder* got mixed up with its offspring *The Jester* in a peculiar fashion when it was ten years old.

However a visit to the offices of the Amalgamated Press soon

put the writer in touch with Mr. Percy Kent of the back-number and binding department, who, hearing that old readers were so interested in the publication, most kindly delved into the hundred odd volumes in the library store, and produced in due course the accompanying table of the life and adventures of *The Wonder*.

This table clearly shows the many stages in the paper's fifty-two years' history; its many names; its offspring; its different prices; and especially its peculiar numbering. For a periodical to have been issued weekly for close on half a century and to bear No. 1444 at the end of May, 1942, when it had actually had over 2500 issues, was a little puzzling. But it is now made clear that the present numbering dates back only to March, 1914.

The intersection of *The Jester* in 1902 may also be puzzling and need a little explanation. In 1902 the Amalgamated Press thought *The Jester* would be a good name for a comic paper, so to preserve

By WALTER DEXTER

the copyright in it, and seemingly not being ready to publish a separate paper, they tacked the new title on to the older one, first as a secondary name (for two weeks) and then as the primary name. As such it continued for ten years.

The child was slow in learning to walk, but early in January, 1912, *The Jester* stood well on its own feet; taking with it, it will be observed, the serial number of its parent! Two weeks later,

The Wonder, recovered from its operation, again burst forth, a rejuvenated No. 1, and, under various names, ran concurrently with *The Jester* for more than twenty-eight years. And then, when the occupation of Norway by the Nazis caused an acute shortage of paper, *The Wonder* and *The Jester* were again united, but only for less than two years. Then *Jester* was jettisoned from the title and *The Wonder* sailed on supreme.

START-STOP NUMBERS AND DATES IN THE CAREER OF "THE WONDER"

The Wonder ($\frac{1}{2}$ d.)—No. 1, July 30, 1892-No. 27, Jan. 29, 1893.

The Funny Wonder—No. 1 New series, Feb. 4, 1893-No. 109*, May 25, 1901.

The Wonder ($\frac{1}{2}$ d.)—No. 110, June 1, 1901-No. 133, Nov. 9, 1901.

" " (1d.)—No. 1, Nov. 16, 1901-No. 25, May 3, 1902.

The Wonder and Jester (1d.)—Nos. 26 and 27, May 10-17, 1902.

The Jester and Wonder (1d.)—No. 28, May 24, 1902-No. 533, Jan. 20, 1912.

The Jester (1d.)—No. 534, Jan. 27, 1912-No. 856, March 30, 1918.

" " ($1\frac{1}{2}$ d.)—No. 857, April 6, 1918-No. 998, Dec. 18, 1920.

The Jolly Jester ($1\frac{1}{2}$ d.)—No. 999, Dec. 25, 1920-No. 1090, Sept. 23, 1922.

" " " (1d.)—No. 1091, Sept. 30, 1922-No. 1163, Feb. 16, 1924.

The Jester (1d.)—No. 1164, Feb. 23, 1924-No. 2010, May 18, 1940.

Incorporated with "*The Funny Wonder*"—see below.

The Penny Wonder—No. 1 New Series, Feb. 10, 1912-No. 46, Dec. 21, 1912.

*There is a discrepancy here. From Feb. 4, 1893, to May 25, 1901, there would be something like 426 issues. In *Chips* No. 468, Aug. 19, 1899, *The Wonder* is advertised as "the new pink comic," while a copy I have of *The Funny Wonder*, printed on white paper and dated Sept. 18, 1897, is No. 242. It appears that there was yet another "new series" of *The Wonder*, unaccounted for in this list.—W.H.G.

- The Wonder* (1d.)—No. 47, Dec. 28, 1912.
 “ “ “ —No. 1 New Series, Jan. 4, 1913-No. 64, Mar. 21, 1914.
The Halfpenny Wonder—No. 1, March 28, 1914-No. 39, Dec. 19, 1914.
The Funny Wonder ($\frac{1}{2}$ d.)—No. 40, Dec. 26, 1914-No. 162, April 29, 1917.
 “ “ “ (1d.)—No. 163, May 5, 1917-No. 210, March 30, 1918.
 “ “ “ ($1\frac{1}{2}$ d.)—No. 211, Apr. 6, 1918-No. 444, Sept. 23, 1922.
 “ “ “ (1d.)—No. 445, Sept. 30, 1922-No. 1365, May 25, 1940.
Funny Wonder (1d.)—No. 1366, June 1, 1940-No. 1374, July 27, 1940.
 and Jester ($1\frac{1}{2}$ d.)—No. 1375, Aug. 3, 1940-No. 1412, Apr. 19, 1941.
 “ “ “ “ (2d.)*—No. 1413, Apr. 26, 1941-No. 1443, May 16, 1942.
The Wonder (2d.)—No. 1444, May 30, 1942-fortnightly to date.

*Fortnightly.

MR. WALTER DEXTER

It is with regret that record is made in these pages of the death of Mr. Walter Dexter, writer of the article on *The Wonder* in this issue, which occurred on May 16th last.

Mr. Dexter was a devout and indefatigable investigator of everything pertaining to the great writer, Charles Dickens. From 1908 to 1925 he was treasurer of the Dickens Fellowship, and he edited *The Dickensian* from 1925.

Mr. Dexter took a leading part in securing for the public Dickens' house in Doughty Street, London, which was opened as a museum in 1925. He was the author of several Dickens plays and chief organizer of the Pickwick

Centenary celebrations in 1936. His books include "Dickens to His Oldest Friend"; "The Love Romance of Dickens"; "The Origin of Pickwick," in collaboration with J. W. T. Ley; and other works of Dicksonian interest.

He came in contact only recently with collectors interested in the old story papers, following the publication in the December, 1943, *Chambers's Journal* of an article from his pen, "Boys' Periodicals of the 'Nineties." He had, in the short time since, been most helpful with suggestions and information pertaining to the hobby, and news of his passing was received with sincere regret by his new friends.

July 22nd, 1944. —W. H. G.

"Boys Of The Empire" --- Issue No. 4

[Learning that a copy of No. 4 of Boys Of The Empire, dated February 27th, 1888, had come into the possession of the Editor, Mr. Henry Steele is prompted to write as follows.]

AM PLEASED to hear that you have obtained No. 4 of *Boys Of The Empire*. It is only one number, it is true, but it is sufficient for one to realize how Brett endeavoured to provide the boys of that day with something worth reading and, also, something worth keeping, for surely no boy would have torn up a journal like that, the most ambitious and enterprising effort that the history of boys' literature of that period has known. Brett knew that it was worth preserving and in No. 38, on the back page, we find an illustration of the first volume of B.O.E. in its gorgeous binding and illuminated cover.

Let us have a look at No. 4. The colours are lovely and the paper superfine and as good today as when published fifty-five years ago. There is a large front page illustration in colours of the leading serial, "The Master of the Sword." The "Master" is in the picture but he is not taking a very active part. He is just standing idly by while that hefty giant Paul gives David Latimer a piece of his mind. But

the Master of the Sword is not quite so docile in some of the pictures; we find him living well up to his name and giving his enemies a taste of cold steel.

Now let us turn to the inside pictures. On the left we have an incident from the serial "From School to Battlefield" depicted. Two of the boys are out for a practical joke, no less than to cut off the whisker of the Irish master. The author of this story was Vane St. John. It was a great surprise to me when I first learned this. I had always associated him with tales like "The Link Boy," "Jack o' the Mint," and "Tim Ne'er-do-Well." This school story bears not the slightest resemblance to any of these.

Now for the third serial, "Forecastle Tom." As a boy I used to pronounce the word as it is spelt, but a sailor would smile if he heard it pronounced that way instead of "Folksell Tom." However, it was the first pirate yarn that I sampled. When you look at the illustration you see it is really well drawn. The expression on the faces is convincing

and there is movement and action in the picture.

A word about "The Progress of the British Boy," a copiously illustrated and well written history of England. I am afraid that, as a boy, I was more interested in the stories than in this part of the journal.

Then there is "Our Fireside Corner" with its little company of story-tellers who assembled every evening at The Hunter's Rest, that fine, old-fashioned, cosy hostel with its wide porch and diamond shaped windows. The genial landlord was always at hand ready to serve the foaming ale. In this issue the story is, I see, "The Twin Spectres of Twigton."

On the back page we find an alluring advertisement about the coloured plates which were presented. With reference to this I would like to remark that for a long time only advertisements in connection with *Boys Of The Empire* itself appeared in the paper. Brett did not advertise his other journals in it, at least not in the first three volumes or so.

The heading of the journal is attractive and dignified. We see Britannia seated with trident and a lion close by. On each

side of her kneels a representative of the Army and Navy, not forgetting the Volunteers. Education is represented by a young gentleman in "mortar board" and gown. Two classic-looking ladies at each end round out the picture.

It is a great pity that this gorgeous production in colours only survived twelve months (two volumes) and then lapsed into a mauve tint and then finally the usual black print. The only reason I can advance for this is that the price, three-halfpence, was too much. I am afraid I found it a bit of a strain on my modest twopence weekly. How different things are today, when one sees boys getting five shillings pocket money, and in some cases more. Only think what I could have done with that amount! . . .

I did not know at the time, but some of the items in *Boys Of The Empire* were reprinted from Volume 1 of *The Boys Of England*. "From School to Battlefield" was "Who Shall Be Leader?" which started in No. 1 of *The Boys Of England*, as also did "The Progress of the British Boy." That accounts for the illustrations to "From School to Battlefield" being, even for 1888, somewhat old-fashioned.



BOOK REVIEW

The English Public School

THROUGH the kindness of Mr. C. F. F. Rickard, Vancouver, B.C., I have had the pleasure of reading "The English People: Impressions and Observations," by D. W. Brogan (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, N.Y., U.S.A., 1943). It is a most interesting book, written with the idea of making Americans better acquainted with the English, their good points and bad, strengths and weaknesses, as seen by one who is not himself an Englishman, but of Scottish and Irish descent. (By the way, when Mr. Brogan writes "English" he means just that, he explains, not British.)

Readers of *The Story Paper Collector* will be very interested in Chapter 2, "English Education: The Rift in the Lute," in which Mr. Brogan devotes much space to the Public School "system," and their attention will be particularly directed to his remarks about the school story in juvenile literature. There may be some of our readers who will be unable to obtain copies of "The English People," and the passages in Chapter 2 that would most interest them are quoted

here. On page 45, in a footnote, referring to "the old school tie," Mr. Brogan writes:

"The number of ties is so great, schools, colleges, and athletic clubs have so glutted the market, that all but the most famous serve merely to identify their wearers to other old Greyfriars boys."

And, turning a leaf, the following is found on pages 47-48:

"The hold of the public school system on the English mind is revealed in its literary aspect, the school story. This is a purely English phenomenon. All literatures have stories of youth and adolescence which may include some account of formal education. But they are not like the classical English school stories which are marked by the acceptance of the values of adolescence; the author is not explaining the kind of man he is by telling us the kind of boy he was; he is treating the boy as an end in himself, his own final cause. In this willing return to the standards, the joys, the achievements of adolescence, the author and the reader reveal something charming or irri-

tating about the English mind; its simplicity or sentimentality, according to taste. There are almost as many English school stories as there are English detective stories, and from "Tom Brown" to "Mr. Chips" they are marked by an acceptance of the four or five adolescent years, which in most other countries are remembered with distaste, as the most important years of life. That the public-school system should achieve this for its own sons is miracle enough, but far more astonishing is the success with which this literature is sold to boys and girls who have no first-hand experience of the system at all. Yet the annual crop of public-school stories finds markets far wider than those provided by the old or present or prospective public-school boys."

At the end of the above paragraph the reader is referred to another footnote, on pages 48 and 49, which reads:

"The most remarkable example of this general interest in the system is provided by the long life and success of *The Magnet*. This was the most successful of a series of weekly boys' papers. Its never ageing heroes were boys at a public school, Greyfriars. Although most English boys, at some time or other,

have read of Harry Wharton and Billy Bunter, the main market was in areas and classes where entry to a public school was not even a dream. Without jealousy or rancour tens of thousands of boys destined to be labourers or machine-tenders read of the very different lives led by the boys of Greyfriars School. It is true that school life in the ordinary sense, classroom japes and hard-fought cricket-matches, provided only part of the materials for this endless epic. The boys were allowed to leave school and visit Texas and central Africa and spend a good of their school-time foiling American gangsters and Italian spies. But it is noteworthy that these standard boys' adventures were somewhat arbitrarily fitted into the framework of a rather out-of-date picture of public-school life. In the years before this war careful observers noted a decline in the popularity of this type of boys' magazine. Its cricketing and football heroes could not compete with young aviators in the affections of a machine-minded generation. Yet *The Magnet* continued to flourish and it was the object of an able attack in *Horizon* by Mr. George Orwell, who naturally regarded this sexless, classless, uncritically patriotic narrative as clouding the social

consciences of the proletarian boy. The author of the thirty-year-old cycle, Mr. Frank Richards, answered Mr. Orwell with great ability. Immediately after it made the pages of *Horizon*, *The Magnet* (and its companion papers) died. That its owners should have chosen to sacrifice this type out of their numerous boys' papers to the paper shortage is possibly significant."

Enough has been quoted to demonstrate that Mr. Brogan deals with his subject very thoroughly, and this applies to the entire book. But the possible significance which he sees in the publishers choosing "to sacrifice this type out of their numerous boys' papers" does not really exist at all, because in fact the

Amalgamated Press, publishers of *The Magnet*, sacrificed, between September, 1939, and May, 1940, every one of their weekly boys' papers, school story or not, with the lone exception of *The Champion*.

"The English People" makes very engrossing reading, and would, if widely read in the United States, do much to clear away misconceptions of the English in the minds of Americans, and, if read by Englishmen, would enable them to see themselves as others see them.

—W. H. G.

◇ ◇ ◇ ◇ ◇
CORRECTION—On the previous page (p.256), col. 2, line 19, please read "and spend a good deal of their . . ."

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir:—Following publication of my article on Arthur Budge in No. 17 of *The Story Paper Collector* I received a number of inquiries about him, so I resolved to get in touch with him again if I could. Consequently I again telephoned the postoffice of his old village home. I deeply regret to say, however, I did not get the same reply as on that other occasion, for I was told that he died about a year ago. I was later

able to get through to his brother who told me Arthur's death occurred on May 28th, 1943, and that he had been in bad health for some time. He was apparently still interested in cigarette card collecting, for he left about two hundred thousand of them. He left some papers, too, but they had been contributed to one of the salvage drives.

H. LECKENBY.

April 30th, 1944.

Part Two* Of---

STORIES TO REMEMBER

AS THE WRITER peruses his welcome copy of *The Story Paper Collector* more recollections come crowding into his mind. One character, whose name is now a household word, stands out vividly: Sexton Blake. I make no apology for mentioning one who has already been spoken of in these pages. "Sexton Blake the eternal" is an accurate description of the popular detective who has rivalled even the famous chums of Greyfriars in longevity and general appeal.

My first recollection of Sexton Blake was in an old "three-penny library," the title being "The Woolwich Arsenal Mystery." It was here, I think, that the detective first came into contact with Tinker, who afterwards became almost as well known as Blake himself. Pedro, the bloodhound, and third member of the trio, must have come in last; I cannot remember when he made his debut.

Each Sexton Blake story was complete in itself. They were

*Part One appeared in *The Story Paper Collector* No. 12, April-June, 1943.

written by a syndicate of writers of varying ability and ranged from mediocre to really interesting stories. Then came a time when the "series" type of stories were introduced. I can well remember—who cannot, among those who read about them?—George Marsden Plummer, Zeno, Dirk Dolland, and Mdlles. Julie and Yvonne. These ran for many years, the various writers ringing the changes in succession. My preference was for George Marsden Plummer, and also for Cecil Hayter's "Lobangu" series, to which I referred in a previous article.

I would like also to refer to two earlier stories, written many years ago, "Sexton Blake In Vanity Fair" and "Tinker's Great Plunge." In the first-mentioned story Blake takes the part of a young man about town in his effort to solve the mystery, which I might add, has, in the years since I read it, become a mystery to me. The second story stands out as the one occasion when Blake parted from Tinker. They quarreled for the first and only time, but they were together again for the next week's issue. One somehow feels that



By T. W. PUCKRIN

Sexton Blake, popular as he undoubtedly was, would have lost much of his glamour without his assistant Tinker.

Comparisons have been made between Sexton Blake and Sherlock Holmes. My own preference is for Conan Doyle's creation, but from a youthful standpoint no doubt Blake would have a bigger appeal. A case, it would seem, of every man to his own choice.

AS IS ONLY natural in boys' papers, sport played a major part, and no one handled this theme more effectively than Arthur S. Hardy. Who does not remember "Captain Jack" and, perhaps best of all, "The Blue Crusaders"? I do not think I ever read a better football story than the latter. The principal characters were Harry Ewing, Sylward Harborough, and "Fat-ty" Foulkes, the giant goalkeeper. Sylward Harborough

was a copy of the famous Vivian J. Woodward, an amateur centre forward of international reputation. Foulkes played goal for Sheffield United and the trio between them landed both "League and Cup." Arthur S. Hardy had an unrivalled knowledge of the great winter game and there was not an ounce of "padding" in his stories. He wrote for many years; Tom Sayers, boxer and actor, was another of his many characters. Hardy had a style all his own and, as far as I know, never had a "ghost."

Certainly there was a plethora of talent in those far-off days; one wonders if the present generation will produce a like crop. There is an old saying that there are as good fish in the sea as ever came out of it. Without casting a doubt on this very trite saying I can only conclude with the hope that I live long enough to read them.



Greetings Of The Season To All!

The Red Rovers

THE ARTICLE headed "The Wonder" in No. 6 of *The Story Paper Collector* has come to the attention of the author of the Red Rovers stories, and he makes a little correction, in this wise:

"The writer of the article makes a little error when he says 'Within more recent years more Red Rovers stories have appeared in *Comic Cuts*, but all the characters were new.' This suggests a break but there was

none. What I did during those twenty-nine years was to ease fresh characters in gradually, bringing back the old ones from time to time."

The erroneous suggestion in the article referred to came about through my failure to grasp the possibility that the series—or serial—had continued without a break for so long. What is more, I never imagined that it had been written throughout by one author. —W. H. G.

CANADIAN JACK

[Looking at the coloured illustrations in his volumes of *Boys of the Empire*, a British weekly of the 1880's, Mr. Henry Steele, unofficial Poet Laureate of the little group who follow the cult of the *Penny Dreadful*, is inspired to write the lines below.]

Canadian Jack, of Saskatchewan,
 He really was a first class man.
 You see him in his fur-lined coat,
 He wore it, whether cold or hot.
 In winter or in summer scene
 You'd see him in his coat so
 green.
 In *Boys of the Empire*, Volume
 One,
 You'll find the story was begun.
 It went well into Volume Two,
 As a serial it ran through.
 Its illustrations were O. K.,
 In colours bold they look so gay.

In Canada the scene was laid
 And there the drama it was
 played.
 De Fonville was the villain
 sinister,
 Stiggins was a courting minister;
 Paule, he was a half-bred crook,
 But he was finally brought to
 book.
 They never got the better of
 Jack,
 At outwitting them he had the
 knack.

—HENRY STEELE.

WANTED : EXCHANGE : FOR SALE

THIS IS AN AMATEUR MAGAZINE AND ADVERTISEMENTS
ARE INSERTED, AS SPACE PERMITS, WITHOUT CHARGE

Magnets—pre-1930, wanted, any numbers. Corbett, 49 Glyn Farm Road, Quinton, Birmingham, England.

Wanted—Plucks with St. Jim's stories; red-covered Magnets. E. Fayne, The Modern School, Grove Road, Surbiton, Surrey.

Wanted—1d. Boys' Friend, Realm, Big Budget, Boys' Leaders, 1/2d. Sports Library, early 1d. Nelson Lee Library.—H. Dowler, 86 Hamilton Road, Manchester, 13.

The Geographical Magazine
—Wanted: 3 copies of February, 1942, issue. This is the Geographical published in London, not the National Geographic. W. H. Gander, Transcona, Canada.

Wanted—Magnets and Gems, 1907-33; also Boys' Friend Libraries with stories by Frank Richards and Martin Clifford. Shaw, 6 Colney Hatch Lane, London, N. 10.

Wanted—Magnets, any age or quantity, also Gems, and any other publications with stories by Frank Richards, Martin Clifford and Charles Hamilton. C. Hanson, 30 St. Margaret's Road, Wanstead Park, London, E.12.

Wanted—English Comics, years 1892-1906. Harris, Caynton, Llanrhos Road, Penrhyn Bay, Llandudno, Wales.

"The Collector's Miscellany"
—A small 8 to 12 page paper about old boys' books, toy theatres, type specimens, etc. Copy free from J. A. Birkbeck, 52 Craigie Ave., Dundee, Scotland.

Wanted—Aldine 1d. Dick Turpins, early issues of Magnet, Gem, Penny Popular, and Comic Papers, particularly Chuckles. Also interested in old volumes containing coloured plates of wildflowers, butterflies, birds or fishes. Alfred Horsey, 60 Salcombe Rd., Walthamstow, London, E. 17, England.

Reckless Ralph's**DIME NOVEL ROUND-UP**

A monthly magazine devoted to the collecting, preservation and literature of the old-time dime and nickel novels, libraries and popular story papers of the days when you were a youngster; 8 pages full of fine articles and write-ups. Price 5d. (stamps) a copy, or will accept 4s. worth of "bloods" for one year's sub.

Ralph F. Cummings

Dept. S. P. C., Fisherville, Mass.

British Bloods and Journals For Sale

Black Bess, Blueskin, Charles Peace the Burglar, Sailor Crusoe, Nell Gwynne, Charley Wag the New Jack Shepard, Black Mask, Jack Shepard, Broad Arrow Jack, Outlaws of Epping Forest, Dick Turpin (Miles), Adrift on the Spanish Main, Frank Fearless, Boys of England, Young Men of Great Britain, Tom Wildrake's Schooldays, Lady Godiva, Island School, Merry Wives of London, Boys of the Empire, complete coloured issue, and hundreds more. **Exchanges willingly considered; similar wanted.**

John Medcraft,

64 Woodlands Road, Ilford,
Essex, England.

Wanted—Joseph Parks' "Collector's Miscellany" for 1935-6: Nos. 14 to 17. Also earlier issues and "Vanity Fair." Ralph F. Cummings, Box 75, Fisherville, Mass., U.S.A.

BRITISH BOYS' PAPERS WANTED

Gem Library—Nos. 3, 5, 6, 10, 11, first or ½d. series. New series Nos. 11, 13, 15-57, 59-61, 63-65, 67, 70, 72-188, 190-193, 195, 197-208, 214, 217-374, 375 (with supplement), 376-383, 403, 407 (with suppl.), 452, 454, 458, 510, 603, 620, 621, 623-627, 629, 631, 635-637, 639-641, 643-654, 136-698.

Magnet Library—Various numbers between 451 and 612.

Boys' Friend Library—All issues by Martin Clifford (except Cedar Creek), Prosper Howard, Frank Richards, Owen Conquest. also No. 393, by Rich. Randolph.

Pluck Library—years 1906-7, Nos. 106-122.

Chuckles (Comic Paper)—Any issues with stories of Ferrers Locke, and stories by Frank Richards and Prosper Howard. Also (and especially) the two issues with which were presented models of St. Jim's and Greyfriars, together with models.

C. F. F. RICKARD

2026 West 41st Ave., Vancouver
B. C., Canada.

19th Century Peepshow

A monthly paper no sentimental collector can afford to miss.
\$1 per year, 10c a copy.

Fred T. Singleton

2000B S.W. Red Road, Coral Gables, Florida.