THE STORY PAPER COLLECTOR

OCTOBER
1948

No. 32
Vol. 2

An Amateur Magazine Featuring Articles of Interest to Collectors of British Boys' Periodicals of the Past

Fifteen Years Non-Stop Carter

The "Captain" Authors

"The Gem Library" No. 1

(New Series)
A Reproduction of the Front Cover

The Greyfriars Gallery: Part 2

The S. P. C. WHO'S WHO

No. 6: ARTHUR HARRIS

HIS HOBBY ACTIVITIES are taken seriously by Arthur Harris, and it will be seen that he is a remarkable man. Besides publishing Britain's oldest amateur magazine, *Interesting Items*, which he founded in 1904, he possesses Britain's largest collection of amateur magazines, and has been an active member of the British Amateur Press Association since 1912.

With a grandmother keeping "stacks" of Parish magazines, and a mother filing ladies' journals, surely Arthur Harris must be a born collector! It was only natural that he kept some of the comic papers shortly after he became aware of their existence back in 1902. The favoured ones were *Jester and Wonder, Coloured Comic, Puck, and Lot-o'-Fun*, but about 1908 he destroyed all except *Jester and Wonder*, the first few numbers of *Puck*, and the first two of *Lot-o'-Fun*. Nothing, however, could induce him to part with the *Jesters*.

About 1920 he revived his interest in the old comic papers by the purchase of the first two volumes of *Comic Cuts* and *Funny Cuts* and gradually realized the joy he found in having kept those *Jesters*, and lamented the destruction of the others years before. But no serious start was made to get together a comic paper collection until 1940. Since that time it has grown steadily until today it contains some 1700 copies from 1890 to 1921.

A further link with schooldays takes the form of cigarette cards, which include the (1906) "Nelson" series, a rare set; "Birds, Their Eggs"; and "Flags of All Nations."

In reply to "But is Mr. Harris a 'story paper' collector?" I would say "Yes!" and assume that we include comics under our banner. I have taken a peep at my bound Volume One of *S.P.C.*; the answer *is* "Yes!"

No. 6 in our series (and I repeat no attempt at classification has been made) hails from Llandudno and it was from there that he travelled to London for the British Amateur Press Association Convention in 1946. Introducing myself to Arthur at this "do," he proved to be a grand talker—as he had to be to keep up with me! I well remember our parting. What a hand-shake! The impression it gave me was, they have no water-taps in Wales—just pump-handles!

A Series of Short Articles About Our Contributors, Collectors, and Readers :: Compiled by H. R. C.

The Story Paper Collector

Articles of Interest to Collectors of British Boys' Periodicals of the Past

No. 32 OCTOBER, 1948 Vol. 2

FIFTEEN YEARS NON-STOP CARTER

By R. A. H. GOODYEAR

IT WAS MY MISFORTUNE to be born before Sexton Blake and Nelson Lee were brought into schoolboy fiction. When they appeared I had passed my schooldays and turned my mind to maturer reading. Thereby, it seems, I missed a rich era of lively entertainment.

I shall always deplore that when holidaymaking in Runswick Bay, North Yorkshire, I was in complete ignorance of the thrilling fact that Maxwell Scott, the writer so closely associated with Nelson Lee, was the family doctor in the neighbouring village of Hinderwell. Surely we should have had much to tell each other had we met. My memory would have been illuminated by fascinating revelations of his work and character, which it would have been a joy to pass on to his countless admirers of today.

This brings me to the subject of another popular detective of fiction whose stories I *did* read. To wit, Nick Carter. How many Sexton Blake and Nelson Lee enthusiasts revelled also in Nick Carter's exploits? I know I should never have learnt about him if yarns regarding him had not been sent to me in parcels of *The Smart Set* and *The Red Book Magazine*. These were high-quality American fiction publications which I bought for the amusement of my wife, who was condemned to spend months in bed and could never be fully supplied with library-books, of which she could read two in a day.

I have no notion why the New York booksellers included the *Nick Carters* in my parcel for I never paid for them. In odd half-hours I dipped into them and had many a laugh out of them. Not that they were meant to be funny. They were appar-

ently penned in the deadliest earnest and with melodramatic intensity.

In literary merit The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, were high cliffs and steep mountains above them. One cannot be surprised at that, because the author of Nick Carter wrote a 30,000-word story about Nick every week for fifteen years, making a colossal total of 23,400,000 words in that time.

When he was no longer equal to that great strain his publishers were in despair. "Where shall we find another writer to carry on with Nick?" they asked. There was no answer. They just couldn't. No other author could reproduce that mighty and continuous effort. No other single writer could invent a fresh plot every week and spin a 30,000-word yarn around it. (Perhaps Charles Hamilton, G. Hamilton Teed, or Maxwell Scott could have done it?)

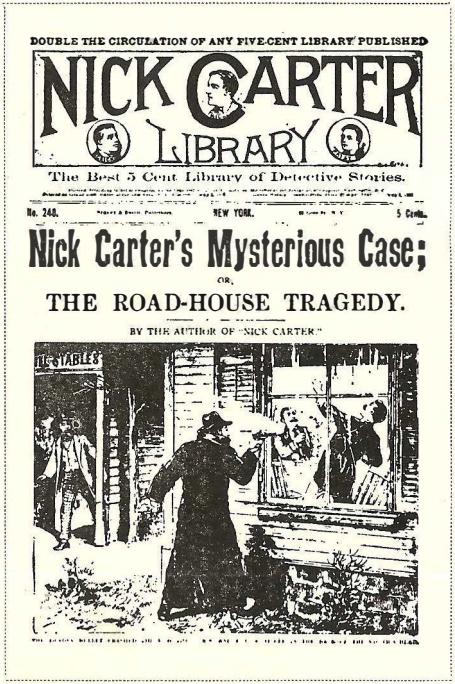
Therefore it was necessary to form a syndicate of authors to keep the astonishing adventures of Nick Carter well before the loyal youth of America, to whom he was meat and drink.

WHAT WAS the secret of Nick's widespread popularity? Why was he known in every city, town and village in the United States and Canada and far across the Atlantic as well? I think it was because the author concentrated largely on plot and swift incident rather than on the leisurely unravelling of a mystery. With guns and revolvers, daggers and ropes, Nick Carter and his men of action smashed their way through hundreds of apparently insuperable obstacles and gave their young readers heart-throbbing movement almost all the while.

I cannot honestly praise the style of the Nick Carter stories, but few boys cared about their style. If I had no time for more (being a busy boys' author myself) I usually made a point of reading the first and the last chapters at least, sure that there would be something spicy in each one and always getting a few of those hearty laughs which it was generally possible to obtain only from transpontine melodramas of the "Lights o' London" and "Face at the Window" type.

I do not know if the Nick Carter series did any harm to its juvenile readers. I never heard that it did. Probably the greatest injury was done to the author himself, on whom the constant strain of thinking out impossible themes for sensational stories must have been severe.

At any rate, Frederick Van Rensselaer Dey—for that was his


DOUBLE THE CIRCULATION OF ANY FIVE-CENT LIBRARY PUBLISHED

NICK CARTER LIBRARY

The Best 5 Cent Library of Detective Stories.

No. 248. NEW YORK. 5 Cents.

Nick Carter's Mysterious Case;

OR,

THE ROAD-HOUSE TRAGEDY.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "NICK CARTER."

No. 248 of *Nick Carter Library*, published by Street & Smith, New York, from 1891 to 1897

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name – committed suicide in New York by shooting himself. I read of his tragic death with a shock of surprise and profound regret, and it would have been poignantly revealing to learn what drove him to such a drastic step. Possibly poverty in the end, for it is a sad fact that the payment of such popular authors has seldom been generous or even adequate.

NICK CARTER, DETECTIVE

NICK CARTER, of whom Mr. R. A. H. Goodyear writes in this issue, was created by John Russell Coryell in 1886 for Street & Smith, publishers of *The New York Weekly*. The first story, "The Old Detective's Pupil, or, The Mysterious Crime of Madison Square," a serial, commenced in No. 46 of Volume 41, September 18, 1886. Two others followed, "A Wall Street Haul" and "Fighting Against Millions." These were later reprinted in the book-sized *Magnet Library*. The demand for Nick Carter stories led S. & S. to start *Nick Carter Library* in 1891. It ran to 282 numbers. John R. Coryell, Eugene T. Sawyer, and Thomas W. Hanshew were among the authors at this time.

In 1897 the *Library* was replaced by *New Nick Carter Weekly*. Later "*New*" was dropped, then used again. In 1904 Frederick Van Rensselaer Dey began to write the stories, and contributed most to the building up of Nick's reputation. *New Nick Carter Weekly* ceased in 1912, being replaced by *Nick Carter Stories*, which ran to No. 160. Other writers of Nick Carter stories were Frederick W. Davis, W. Bert Foster, George C. Jenks, and Mr. Spaulding.

Ainslee's Magazine printed five Nick Carter stories during 1900-1901, while others appeared in S. & S.'s *Detective Story Magazine* in 1926-27. Many Nick Carter tales were reprinted in *Magnet Library* and *New Magnet Library* which, under the latter name, continued until 1933, a total of 1369 numbers. Forty issues of *Nick Carter Magazine* were published from March, 1932, to June, 1936. These new stories were by Richard Wormser. Later, shorter stories were run in Street & Smith's *Clues Magazine*.

[Source: "Nick Carter in Print," by J. Edward Leithead, in *Dime Novel Roundup* No. 181, Oct., '47.]

THE GREYFRIARS GALLERY

Reviewed by WM. H. GANDER :: Part Two

BILLY BUNTER'S portrait adorns the Greyfriars Gallery page (Number 8) in No. 472 of *The Magnet Library*, which is dated February 24th, 1917. *The Magnet* had now been reduced in pages to twenty, including the cover pages, and the familiar make-up of two wide columns to the page had given place to the new, three-column page.

Bunter is pictured much as one has come to imagine him: grossly fat—what an outsize in collars he must wear!—his small, "piggy" eyes behind his glasses, and a self-satisfied smirk on his face. The portrait is autographed and one notes with a feeling of surprise that Bunter, poor speller that he is, can write his own name correctly.

"William George Bunter, to give him his full name," commences Mr. Pentelow. "And it is rather a mistake to omit the George, for it only needs one letter dropped to have a considerable bearing upon what may be styled Bunter's principal industry."

"It is not too much," he continues, "to claim that Billy Bunter's name has penetrated wherever the English language is spoken. He must be ranked with Sherlock Holmes, Captain Kettle, Sexton Blake, Don Q, and other characters who have captured the popular imagination."

"None of us admires him," says J.N.P., "but he amuses us—and that counts for a great deal." Mr. Pentelow goes on to recall some of the stories in which Bunter has played a part, and they are many. "He is greedy, vain, dishonest, cowardly, snobbish, foolish." What a list of virtues! But *Magnet* readers will remember that on rare occasions the "old fat man" has gathered together from somewhere, well hidden though it is, a spark of courage.

"He will come to a bad end, one fears. But not for a long while yet, one hopes. It is easier to despise Billy Bunter than to do without him!" And all followers of the Greyfriars saga will agree with J. N. P.

ANOTHER WEEK PASSED, and it was the turn of Frank Nugent (Number9). Frank is one of the original Greyfriars characters, being at the old school when Harry Wharton arrived there on that February day in 1908. As he, or

anyone else, couldn't help doing, Frank quarreled with Wharton—perhaps one should say the reverse was really the case. But Harry Wharton saved Frank from drowning and there commenced a friendship that was never to be broken for long and which later expanded to include the other three members of the "Famous Five."

Good-looking—Frank has taken the part of a girl in plays put on by the Remove—he is good at games, as Mr. Pentelow points out. "When resolution is needed he is not found wanting—physical resolution, that is. He has less moral resolution. He is, for all his real charm, for all his lovable qualities, essentially the weakest of that little brotherhood of five." The reader of the very earliest Greyfriars stories will remember that in them Frank is depicted as rather more sturdy and a better fighting-man than he appeared to be later.

It might be well to note here an error in numbering that commenced with the issue in which Frank Nugent's write-up appeared and continued until No. 12, Lord Mauleverer, in *Magnet* No. 476, when the necessary correction was made. Thus, as printed in *The Magnet,* there are two No. 8's, Billy Bunter and Frank Nugent, Herbert Vernon-Smith is No. 9, S. Q. I. Field is No. 10, and there is no No. 11. In this review the numbers will be used as they should have appeared.

NUMBER TEN in the Gallery, Herbert Vernon-Smith, has long been known as "the Bounder," not only during his early, unregenerate days, but through the period of his reform and down the years since, when he had slipped back to a position of of half-reformed. "Smithy" is without doubt one of Frank Richards' most popular characters. There is something about the cool, cynical, hard-headed and rather hard-hearted Smithy that endears him to a great number of readers. Except that in the earlier days it is doubtful if he had any admirers, when he came to Greyfriars the selfish, spoiled, unathletic only son of a purseproud millionaire father. That phase passed, and he became one of the Remove's best athletes and altogether more likable.

At the time J.N.P. was writing Smithy was still a fully-reformed character and as such was not taking a very large part in the stories. Perhaps it was so that he would provide better material for stories that Mr. Richards let Smithy fall back into an intermediate position, neither reformed nor completely unre-

formed. He is probably much better liked by readers that way. His portrait suggests the cynical hardness of his character, but still is not like the Smithy we came to know during the 1920's and 1930's.

Well remembered by readers of the early *Magnet* stories are those in which Smithy was striving to oust Harry Wharton from the captaincy of the Greyfriars Remove. As Mr. Pentelow says, "Easily among the best stories which have ever appeared in this paper have been those which told of the long contest between Harry Wharton and Herbert Vernon-Smith for the supremacy of the Remove." Smithy managed to bring about the expulsion from Greyfriars of all of the Famous Five except "Inky." But Bob Cherry refused to go and was instrumental in exposing Vernon-Smith's plotting.

Eventually Smithy saw the light and became almost a model character. "He is dead straight now. With such resolution as he possesses, backsliding is for him almost unthinkable." But it became thinkable enough for him later, so it is just as well that the word "almost" was included. "The Bounder is quite the 'widest' fellow in the Greyfriars Remove," says J.N.P.; and he remains so to this day.

THE GALLERY was now appearing every week and in the next issue (*Magnet* No. 475) S.Q.I. Field took his place in it, being No. 11. He is the first of the overseas boys to be included in the Gallery. Known as "Squiff" because, as Bob Cherry said, life is too short to say Sampson Quincy Iffley Field —though one wouldn't use all his names in speaking to or of him, and Squiff is no shorter than Field—he early carved out a place for himself in the Remove, and it wasn't an unimportant one. He plays a leading part in many stories, though in later years his role is more in the nature of a supporting one.

"'A Cool Card' was the title of the story in which Squiff came to Greyfriars; and a cool card Squiff is. He has more than ordinary skill in the devising of japes, and he never lacks the audacity to carry them through. But he is something more and better than that. . . Squiff is as good a fellow as one might hope to meet in a long day's march—cheerful, plucky, good-tempered, ready of brain and hand."

So Mr. Pentelow writes about Sampson Quincy Iffley Field of Australia, and I will let it go at that, for if every character in The Greyfriars Gallery is given

the attention that has been given those already dealt with this "review" will run on for a long, long time.

ONE MORE WEEK and the Earl Mauleverer makes his appearance in the Gallery (No. 12). As a long-time resident in Canada, where titles are frowned upon, it might be supposed that I have little sympathy with his noble lordship. However, I regard him with kindly feelings of fellowship, for "Mauly" (I feel I know him well enough to call him by the name he tolerates from his friends) likes to take things easily, lounging his way through life in a "don't-bother-me-I-want-to-take-a-nap" manner. That is the way I'd like to do it, even though a daytime nap doesn't appeal.

Mauly's page in my copy of *Magnet* No. 476 seems to have been worn somewhat from reading by previous owners of it, so I will copy his indolence by quoting a brief passage and letting that suffice. I am sure Mauly will forgive me, for he is a retiring sort of chap who usually shuns the limelight. "A good fellow, for all his slack ways—one of the very best! That's Mauly."

Leaving Mauly to enjoy his little nap I pass on to No. 13, who is Harold Skinner. I would just as soon ignore him, for his virtues are so well hidden by his vices that they are extremely difficult to discern. "One does not see much chance that Skinner will ever become decent." He hasn't. "Yet (he) has had gleams of the light at times. They have never lasted long; but they have been enough to show him not utterly vile. . . Skinner is a curious mixture of cleverness, cowardice, envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness." Yes, that sounds like Harold Skinner, and with a little shudder of aversion I hurry on.

NUMBER FOURTEEN, in *Magnet* No. 478, is someone just about the exact opposite: Tom Brown of New Zealand, "the land of the waiting springtime," in the words of Rudyard Kipling. We are told of Tom's many adventures at Greyfriars, but little about Tom Brown himself. The following, however, will tell something of him: "He has done more than good service in the cricket and footer fields. . . He is a good fast bowler and a fast field. . . A sturdy back, too, never afraid of hard knocks, and able to kick with the best. . . A representative of whom his island home may well feel proud!"

"Poor Alonzo!" Almost any reference to Peter Todd's cousin, who is so like Peter in looks and so different in most other

ways, could be started with those two words, and they are the words with which the article on him begins. Alonzo Todd (No. 15, *Magnet* No. 479) arrived at Greyfriars before Peter, but Peter stayed on while Alonzo vanished from the scene almost entirely for many years before the end came for *The Magnet*, though he continued to be included in the Remove Form list which appeared occasionally in that paper's Editor's Chat page. We were given to understand his health was not equal to the strain of the rough-and-tumble of school life.

"Was ever another fellow made the butt of so many japes as he? He was a destined victim from the first." Both Alonzo's copy of "The History of a Potato" and his Uncle Benjamin, whom he delights to quote, are very familiar to early *Magnet* readers, but unknown to those who came in late. Alonzo is simple-minded, to be sure, but he is a genuinely good fellow with nothing but kind thoughts for everyone. More such in the world and it might be a better place in which to live!

"IT'S IMPOSSIBLE!" said Bulstrode. "Don't talk to me about open scholarships! Why, the chap's father keeps a bootshop in Friardale here!"

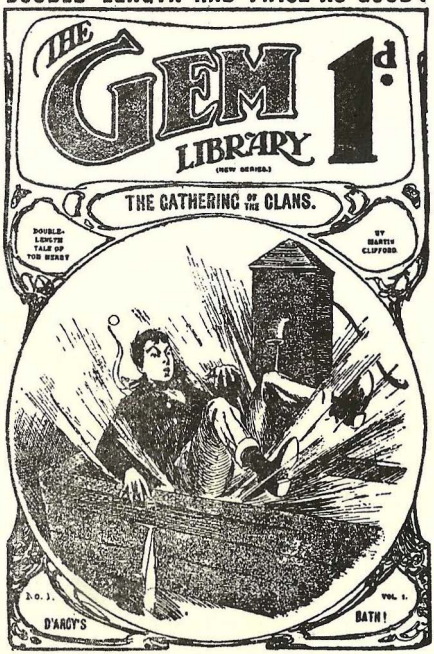
"Dick Penfold, the kid who brings our boots back when we have them soled!" said Hazeldene. "Oh, it's too thick!"

"Too thick" it might be, but the opposition of the black sheep of the Remove had no effect. Dick Penfold, son of the Friardale cobbler, had won a scholarship, he came to Greyfriars, and he is No. 16 in the Gallery.

"In some ways it was worse for him than for Mark Linley. . . Mark was from far-away Lancashire. Penfold was a Friardale lad, well known to the school. Why, they knew his old father—a mere village cobbler, as the cads said. 'And a jolly cobbler, too!' said Bob Cherry."

Dick succeeded in establishing himself at Greyfriars, though he had plenty of difficulties to overcome. He does not play a great part in the Greyfriars saga but he is there, very popular with the better element, who, after all, are greatly in the majority.

PART 3 WILL APPEAR IN THE NEXT ISSUE



Front Cover of Number One, New Series, of *The Gem Library*, dated February 15th, 1908, from the reproduction of it in No. 1000 of *The Magnet Library*.

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NOTES BY A READER

I WAS INTERESTED TO learn that a copy of the famous old *Bow Bells* had come into the possession of the Editor of *The Story Paper Collector*. It dates back a long time, for it was started in 1862 and ran to 1864, when a new series commenced, 1864-1887. It was then continued as *Bow Bells Weekly*, 1888-1897, and then another new series started, of which only four numbers appeared. In all it was published for thirty-five years.

A FAVOURITE HERO of our young days was Bonnie Prince Charlie, the Young Pretender. Many boys' stories featured him and he was always depicted as a gallant young prince. It comes, therefore, as a bit of a shock to read in Arnold Bennett's novel, "The Roll Call," that he was a confirmed drunkard at thirty and just a "violent brute." Poor old Charlie is "debunked." He is introduced into "Black Bess," where Turpin, with his pals, take part in the 1745 rebellion. How Dick Turpin could have done so is a puzzle, for he was hanged in the year 1739!

A STORY I HAVE READ recently is "Alone in the Pirate's Lair," by Charles Stevens, in Volume 1 of *Boys of England*. Quite a famous yarn, this, and it was adapted for the Toy Stage. It was even mentioned in *Ally Sloper*. A cartoon depicted an errand boy poring over "Alone in a Pirate's Lair" and absent-mindedly posting a letter in a dustbin. *B. O. E.* started with a terrific splash in 1866. Fourteen hundred prizes were given away, among them two Shetland ponies and fifty dogs. What enterprise! I also read "Chevy Chase," by John Cecil Stagg, in the same volume. It introduces Harry Percy—Percy Hotspur, as he was called by his bitter enemy, Douglas. It is quite a good, readable tale.

I HAVE SECURED A COPY of "The Life of George Barnwell," written by Edward Lytton Blanchard and published by Thomas White, 59 Wych Street, Strand, London, 1840. It is of interest to note that Wych Street was where Jack Sheppard worked for the carpenter, Wood. In "Blueskin" the carpenter is named John Roots, but I think "Wood" is a better name for a carpenter. I would, however, be inclined to say that the name of the carpenter in "Jack o' the Mint" is the best—Simon Sawdust!

But I am getting away from George Barnwell. The period when Barnwell lived has long been a subject for doubt. In

most cases it is given as the 18th Century, but we are told that the Ballad of "George Barnwell" was printed in the early 17th Century. Ritchie in his "New Newgate Calendar" places Barnwell in the reign of James I and the year 1603. He says George was born in the reign of Queen Elizabeth.

George Barnwell stood at the shop door,
A customer hoping to find, sir.
His apron was hanging before,
But the tail of his coat was behind, sir.
A lady so painted and smart
Cried, "Sir, I've exhausted my stock o' late,
I've nothing left but a groat,
Could you give me four penn'orth of chocolate?"

Her face was rouged up to the eyes,
Which made her look prouder and prouder.
His hair stood on end with surprise,
And hers with pomatum and powder.
The lady, who wished to be more rich,
Cried, "Sweet sir, my name is Millwood,
*And I lodge at the Gunner's in Shoreditch."**

In "Tim Ne'er-do-Well," by Vane St. John, George Barnwell also stood in a shop, but it was a blacksmith's shop, and the lady's name was not Millwood and she did not want four penn'orth of chocolate. Her name was Lady Lucretia Lennox and she came in a swagger carriage which had broken down, and thus she meets George. "Weighing him up," she decides that he is the man to do her dirty work, so poor George is "booked." When I started reading *The Boy's Standard* in 1892 it was to read "Claymore and Dirk," but eventually I got more interested in the doings of Barnwell.

A SERIAL TITLED "Dickon the Page, or, The Last of the Plantagenets," by that most excellent of boys' writers, Charles Stevens, appeared in 1891 in the *Boy's Champion Journal*. It introduced the various incidents that led up to the accession to the throne of Richard III: the execution of Lord Hastings, the murder of the Duke of Clarence, and the murder of the two Princes in the Tower of London. This story appeared earlier in *Sons of Old England* about 1883 and in *The Boy's Standard* in 1885.

AN ARTICLE on the French Revolution in a popular weekly recalls to me a story in *The Boys of England*, Volume 46 (1889), "Dick Hardy and the Dauphin

*These verses were written by James Smith.

of France." It was before I began reading that journal, but thanks to the pile of back numbers (at two for a penny) at the newsagent's at Hastings I was able to get some insight into this historical story, much to the disgust of the worthy newsagent, whose patience, like Hitler's, was nearly exhausted. Whenever I see any reference to the French Revolution my mind goes back to "Dick Hardy."

—HENRY STEELE.

THE "CAPTAIN" AUTHORS

By LEONARD M. ALLEN

BY FAR the most successful juvenile publication of the house of George Newnes Limited was *The Captain*, a magazine described as for "boys and old boys." This periodical, published monthly, struck a happy medium between the rather stilted style of *The Boy's Own Paper* and the more robust *Chums*.

The first editor, R. S. Warren Bell, was himself an author of schoolboy fiction of no small repute and the first serial story in the magazine bore his name. Many will remember his yarns of Greyhouse and the numerous escapades of Polson and Scriven, those two bright lads whose scholastic efforts suffered by the time and energy they spent on business endeavours and japes. Notable amongst Warren Bell's serials was "Smith's Week," in somewhat different vein, which described sympathetically the trials and tribulations of a junior master's first term. Warren Bell continued as editor for twelve years and left when the magazine was at the peak of its popularity. He continued to contribute until the last number some fifteen years later.

The most famous *Captain* author was that writer of best-seller "funny" books, P. G. Wodehouse. Most of this author's earlier and, I venture to say, best work was to be found in its pages. One of his finest stories, "The New Fold," introduced that famous character, "Psmith." This story was so popular that a sequel, "The Lost Lambs," rapidly followed it.

Both yarns later were combined as one complete story and published in many editions by A. C. Black Limited as "Mike."

Other Psmith serials, "Psmith in the City" and "Psmith, Journalist," followed in fairly rapid succession, the latter being based on the author's experiences in the United States. Other yarns from this talented pen were "The Eighteen Carat Kid" (again with an American flavour), "The Gold Bat," and "The Prefect's Uncle." All P. G.'s yarns were notable for the accurate descriptions of sporting events, the author being an athlete of no mean ability. The unique brand of humour also found an outlet in the short stories published concerning a Public school, St. Austin's.

EVENTUALLY Wodehouse, having deserted the ranks of school story authors for the more lucrative adult humorous fiction, was replaced as serial writer by, amongst others, Gunby Hadath, whose many excellent stories are sought today. Hadath, a University and Public school man, produced school stories of sentimental appeal with a strong undercurrent of humour. His knowledge of boys and their ways was exceptional and all his stories bore the stamp of authenticity. What was probably his most popular one covered a series of episodes in the career of a precocious youth, Sparrow, the boy in search of expulsion. These yarns were in a lighter vein but never outside the realms of possibility. This character was again introduced in sequels, "Sparrow in Search of Fame" and "Sparrow Gets Going." Neither, I believe, appeared in *The Captain*, the former being first published in the Amalgamated Press paper, *Modern Boy*.

Although many of Hadath's situations would not be possible today, one in particular has a bearing on the present-day trend. Entitled "Conquering Claybury" (later published in book form as "Schoolboy Grit"), this story dealt with the problem of the lone Council schoolboy pitchforked into a rather snobbish Public school. A similar plot and problem can be found in the recent London stage success, "The Guinea Pig," by Chetham Strode. The last serial to be published in *The Captain* was by Gunby Hadath, who also wrote under the name of John Mowbray.

Another writer of serials was Richard Bird, a name that concealed the identity of a well-known author of adult fiction. Bird, a schoolmaster at a Scottish Public school, certainly knew his "lads." One's interest was captured from the first by the introduction of a mystery into the early chapters of his stories, such as the theft of a

valued trophy or school relic. Humour was predominant, however, and usually the juniors were responsible for many amusing episodes. "Bats or Boats" and "The Morley Mascot" are good examples of Mr. Bird's work. Like the rest of *The Captain* serial authors he also contributed many short school stories.

HYLTON CLEAVER was also producing serial stories at this time. These were essentially humorous and he was adept at creating eccentric masters and scholars. He had an inimitable style and was fond of giving his characters the most appropriate nicknames—for instance, in "The Old Order," new Headmaster Roe, who was intent on sweeping away old traditions, was given the appellation of "Hard" Roe and his somewhat obtuse son, a scholar at the school, "Soft" Roe. A most original yarn from Cleaver was "Lucky Lorimer," the story of a boy who had to leave school abruptly owing to monetary difficulties but, after a period as an insurance clerk, was able to return to his interrupted studies through another reversal of fortune. Cleaver takes every advantage of this unusual situation of a schoolboy with adult ideas and a "Puckish" sense of humour.

Most of Cleaver's stories were re-published as bound volumes but it is to be depreciated that in common with the publishers' usual practice with the works of most juvenile popular authors the original titles were replaced; thus "Lucky Lorimer" became "Second Innings" when it was published by Humphrey Milford. Cleaver contributed infrequently to the Amalgamated Press group of papers under the pen-name of Reginald Cundren although his work in this direction does not show the care taken with his *Captain* stories. Regrettably, today he devotes himself to fiction and journalistic efforts and we are denied the pleasure of his school stories. Short articles from his pen, mostly on sport, can be found in *Pie* and *Men Only* magazines.

Mention should also be made of another famous writer for *The Captain*, none other than John Buchan, later Lord Tweedsmuir, who wrote several adventure yarns as serials, notably "The Black General." Lord Tweedsmuir's distinguished career is too well known to require further comments.

Others who have been a delight to the "boys and old boys" are Augustus Muir, whose Pennyfarthing stories will be evergreen, Alec Waugh, world-famous author, Herbert Strang, of *Annual* memory, Capt. Charles Gilson, who also wrote for the

Amalgamated Press, Alfred Judd, Harold Avery, Capt. G. A. Hope, and Max Rittenberg.

Apart from the many school stories, adventure was also provided by the capable pens of such authors as Bourne Cooke, Mortimer Batten, whose character Birdett the Trailer will be long remembered, Frederick Watson, Capt. Bretherton, Thompson Cross, and Percy F. Westerman. It is doubtful if we shall see the like of *The Captain* again with the wealth of talent that passed through its pages, where all the stories bore the stamp of reality and, in contrast to the *Magnet*, *Gem*, and *Nelson Lee* Libraries, the schoolboy characters matured from fag to senior in a normal manner.

CAN YOU HELP?

FROM its commencement we printed enough extra copies of *The Story Paper Collector* to supply, we thought, any possible future demand. We under-estimated that demand, with the result that three issues are out of print (five would be if we had not reprinted Nos. 1 and 2) and seven others nearly so. In recent months we have been unable to supply complete sets to late-arrivals in our charmed circle. We have previously appealed for the return of spare copies of certain issues, with some result, and do so again now. Have you any of these you don't need?—Nos. 8, 9, 10, out of print, Nos. 3, 4, 6, 7, 11, 12, 15, nearly exhausted. Fellow-readers with incomplete sets of *The Story Paper Collector* will be grateful for your help.

—W. H. G.

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