


THE STORY PAPER COLLECTOR

APRIL, 1952
No. 46 :: Vol. 2

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No. 61. PUBLISHED EVERY TUESDAY. 11.

BILLY BUNTER'S CELEBRATION

A STORY OF TAFFY LLEWELLYN'S SCHOOLDAYS,
By H. Philipott Wright.



The stricken one collapsed like a house of cards.

Here's That Other Billy Bunter! But It Would Be Difficult To
Locate Him On The Vanguard Library No. 61, June 6th, 1908

The Story Paper Collector

WHO'S WHO

No. 19: BEN WHITER

POPULAR SECRETARY of The Old Boys' Book Club, London, Ben Whiter is, appropriately enough, a native of that city, although he went to school in Kent—not, he regretfully reports, to Greyfriars. When at school he knew Charlie Wright. After that their next meeting was at an Old Boys' Book Club gathering twenty-one years later!

Ben's earliest collection was of comic papers, about 1916, and he purchased a copy of *The Rainbow* No. 1. But he read all the Charles Hamilton papers of his time and was allowed to read his parents' *Union Jacks*, *Frank Reads*, and *Jack Wrights*. At school *The Captain*, *The Boy's Own Paper*, *Nelson Lee Library*, and *Young Britain* were favorites.

Later, he worked at Margate and on visits home read younger brother Bob's *Magnets* and *Gems*. During one family holiday he took a snapshot of Bob who, unknown to Ben, sent a print to

Jack Blake, c/o *The Gem*. It was reproduced in No. 1619 of that paper.

Came the war, and while on active service Bob sent him *S.P.C.* and *Hutchinson's Pie*—the latter no doubt because of the Carcroft stories by Frank Richards. Peace, and home again. One Sunday in February of 1948 Bob asked Ben to go with him to the famous first meeting of the Old Boys' Book Club at East Dulwich. His interest was aroused and a year later he became Secretary of the Club.

In this capacity he has written thousands of letters to all parts of the world, thereby, says he, getting in touch with many good fellows. Ben has a set of *The Story Paper Collector*, which he regards as a good reference library, he has copies of all issues of *The Collector's Miscellany* of recent years, and a small collection of the current series *Sexton Blake Library*.

Ben is a keen amateur photographer, a philatelist, and is interested in railways, nature study, and the Sherlock Holmes stories. All of which, plus his duties as O.B.B.C. Secretary, must keep him busy, for we imagine that he has to earn a living, too.

Wilfried Myers, 69 Walnut Street, Struthers, Ohio, U.S.A.,
would like to obtain any or all copies of *S.P.C.* Nos. 1 to 37.



Gold Hawk Books No. 1 — Published February, 1952

See overleaf]

[To face page 276



Not *Gem Library* No. 1664—But

GOLD HAWK BOOKS No. 1

THERE WILL NEVER, alas, be a No. 1664 of *The Gem Library*, but for those who have long missed Charles Hamilton's weekly stories of St. Jim's there now is consolation. It lies in the new series of *Gold Hawk Books* now being issued at the rate of two a month, each containing a long (112 pages) new story of the famous fictional Sussex school, written by "Martin Clifford." The St. Jim's yarns published in hard covers by Mandeville Publications have been very welcome indeed and it is hoped that they will continue to appear. But it will be good to have two St. Jim's stories each month in "pocket size" format and attractive color-printed, varnished covers. The publishers, Hamilton & Co. (Stafford) Ltd., 1 & 2 Melville Court, Goldhawk Road, London, W. 12, England, will supply copies of *Gold Hawk Books* to readers in the United States and Canada at 25¢ each, including postage.



The Story Paper Collector

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

No. 46—Vol. 2

APRIL, 1952

Priceless

One boys' weekly of bygone years has been more neglected in our pages than it deserved, there having been not a single article written especially about it. This omission is now in part at least atoned for with——

THE BEST YEARS OF THE BOYS' REALM

By TOM HOPPERTON

"TRUMPETER, what are you sounding now?" was never used as the editorial heading in a boys' weekly, but it would not have been inappropriate in any of Robert Hamilton Edwards' charges. He had nothing in common with that first editor of *The Gem* who buried his couple of sentences in a two-inch box on the back page: on the contrary, Mr. Edwards tootled his own horn long and lustily, and he was continually "discovering" new authors, each one introduced by a fanfare proclaiming him to be a Shakespeare for juveniles.

Hamilton Edwards, as a boys' editor, flourished before my read-

ing days, and it is therefore not from sentimental reasons that I say he had some justification for his complacency, as witness the three papers upon which his personality was most vividly impressed — *The Boys' Friend*, *The Boys' Realm*, and *The Boys' Herald*. At least, they count as three papers, although for all practical purposes in his day the last two might just as well have been issued as the pink and white editions of the original green 'un.

The Boys' Realm was a particularly good paper in its own right, and the fact that it was the first attempt to capitalize on the experience of seven years with *The Boys' Friend* adds even

more interest to it. No. 1 appeared on Saturday, June 14th, 1902, when "From Your Editor's Chair" confided what was no news to *Boys' Friend* readers—that the Editor's policy was to be "a continued and persistent opposition to that pernicious form of literature, the penny dreadful"! T. W. Holmes, who had drawn the front cover picture of the first *Boys' Friend*, was called on again and showed "The Muff of Melthorpe College" (by Allan Blair) knocked unconscious on the pavilion floor.

John Finnemore began "The Black Galley, A Tale of the Barbary Corsairs," G. W. M. Dodshon supplying pictorial accompaniment with wounded slaves being tossed into the sea to drown and the bastinado being applied to the bare soles of a captured merchant. "With a snarl like that of a thwarted beast the doctor vaulted lightly into the window sill" is the caption of a picture of the acrobatics of a suitably bestial doctor attached to Reginald Wray's "The Quest of the Scarlet Star." Another has soldiers killing a white-bearded priest and stealing the Scarlet Star (seven enormous rubies) from an idol. Really, Mr. Edwards!

Incidentally, the artist on this last pair was H. M. Lewis, who

puzzles me considerably. He drew adults and backgrounds admirably, yet as soon as he was turned loose on boys a strong streak of the grotesque showed up which was rather in keeping with the somewhat eccentric denizens of Henry St. John's schools, but which sadly marred the many *Gems* he illustrated.

A NATOMICALLY, speaking with the tongue in the cheek is difficult or impossible: figuratively, I fear that Hamilton Edwards performed the feat with the greatest of ease in his repeated fulminations against "the penny dreadful and the halfpenny horrible." Consider Charles Peace, who filled ninety weekly parts of a dreadful in the early 'eighties and was still being serialized two or three years ago in, I think, *The Red Letter*, although it is difficult to conceive why such a sordid little scoundrel has held the public imagination for so long. There is one place, however, where one would not expect to find him, and that is in *The Boys' Realm*, but lo! in No. 111 began "A Boy's Cross Roads, The Boyhood of Charles Peace," eventually disclosed as being by Ernest A. Treeton, which ran and ran for 24 weeks, more than twice the length of the normal serial.

Edwin Harcourt Burrage was then past sixty, and for 32 years

had been a—perhaps *the*—leading contributor to the Emmett, Fox, and Aldine bloods. In No. 119, under banner headlines, "The Wang River Pirates" hit the front page, re-introducing Handsome Harry of the Fighting Belvedere, Ching-Ching, Eddard, Samson, and the whole crew. These complete Ching-Ching stories ran for quite a while, interlarded with panegyrics of Harcourt Burrage.

Nor can I see much difference between the Galloping Dick and other highwaymen stories which ran for months on end and the Aldine *Dick Turpins*. Why swell the indictment, either from *The Boys' Realm* or from its companions? Notwithstanding the continual stream of unctuous and highly moral advice Hamilton Edwards poured out, there is strong presumptive evidence that he was not above hypocrisy when it suited him.

STILL, LET ME keep the picture in perspective. The pseudo-dreadful type of serial was well in the minority. New stories began every three or four weeks, mounting into a formidable list which it would be neither useful nor, in the space available, even possible to catalogue. Indeed, as David Goodwin, Henry St. John, Allan Blair, Maxwell Scott, T.C. Bridges, Reginald Wray, Robert Leighton, Murray Graydon, and

many more of the then elite of the pen contributed in the first three years, the standard was obviously a high one and it is by no means an easy task to single out stories for special comment.

Among those of which the fame endured for many years, however, were "Nelson Lee's Rival" and "The Hidden Will" by Maxwell Scott, Henry St. John's "In Nelson's Day" and "Not Guilty," the second fitting in with the then-current craze for convict tales, David Goodwin's "St. Simeon's" and such sea and mill yarns as "Gunfleet Jim" and "A Lancashire Lad," Murray Graydon's version of the Buffalo Bill myth, "The King of Scouts," and Reginald Wray's Rockhampton series dealing with the Schoolboy Acrobats, the Schoolboy Inventors, the Schoolboy Ventriloquist, and the rest of that quaint collection of scholars. "The School in the Backwoods" rings a particularly familiar bell, even to being set in Canada, but it was by Allan Blair, not Martin Clifford, and with wild Indians continually whooping around it was a vastly different place to Cedar Creek.

I MENTIONED the first three years purposely, because *The Boys' Realm* changed its character as time went on. I say nothing of the small Third

Series—in fact, the less said about that the better!—but during the latter part of the First Series it was labelled “The Great British Sports Journal,” and the Second Series (1919-1927) again laid the emphasis on sport. There were dozens upon dozens of outstanding stories of all types featured during this period, and, in a purely reminiscent vein, my personal prejudice is for 1919 to 1922, when I devoured the Blue Crusaders, “From Chopping Block to Champion,” and “Henry St. John’s Schooldays.”

Viewing the entire paper as dispassionately as possible, however, there can be no gainsaying that the opening years set a standard which was not subsequently maintained. Hamilton Edwards promised in No. 1 that he would provide stories to compare with the best of Kingston, Jules Verne, Marryatt, and Stevenson. The promise was perhaps typical Edwardian “big talk,” but—my oath, Miss Weston!—he came very close to keeping it.



MORE NOTES ON CHIPS

THE FIRST ISSUE of *Chips* was dated July 26th, 1890. At that time, it was a 9x12" paper, but in this size it lasted for only six weeks. On September 6th a New Series began with another No. 1, this time with the same size pages as the other comic papers. A copy of No. 1 of both series is in my collection.

Weary Willie and Tired Tim, the famous front page pair, made their initial appearance in the issue dated May 16th, 1896. They were then known as Weary Waddles and Tired Timmy. It

was a few weeks later (July 4th) that they became Weary Willie and Tired Tim—the title that has remained with them now for well over 50 years—the longest run of any comic characters.

As with other collectors, there are long gaps in my set of *Chips*. The earliest I have with our friends Weary Willie and Tired Tim in it is No. 414, August 6th, 1898, the serial stories being “The Fatal Seven,” by the author of “Convict 999,” and “The Roman Rose,” by Guy Ronald.

My collection of comic papers now includes 192 copies of *Chips*.

—ARTHUR HARRIS



THE BOYS' REALM

First Series—1902 to 1916

THE SECOND of Hamilton Edwards' "Big Three" boys' journals, *The Boys' Realm* came into being as a result of the great and doubtless still growing popularity of his original boys' weekly, *The Boys' Friend*, and shared in large measure that popularity. No. 1 was dated June 14th, 1902, but the number and date of the last issue have proved elusive. At first the paper was a pink edition of *The Boys' Friend*, but after a few years its course was diverted so that it presented many sports stories and features. There came a time when it was promoting football leagues for boys' teams in various districts. After H.E. left the editorial chair in 1912 *The Boys' Realm* continued with little if any change. The war-time paper shortage caused its suspension in 1916 with, probably, the issue dated March 25th or April 1st. That the paper was still considered a good proposition is proven by its revival in a new series early in 1919.

—W. H. G.



Now, having read about the best years of The Boys' Realm, let us consider the case of——

THE Boys' Herald

SINCE 1871

THERE HAVE BEEN, according to available records, three different professionally-published papers for boys that were called *The Boys' Herald*. Many of our readers who are actively interested in "old boys' books" will know at once (even without considering the "Since 1871) that the title-design shown on this page belongs neither to *The Boys' Herald* of 1903-1912 nor to the paper that began in 1919 as *The Greyfriars Herald* and finished in 1922 as *The Boys' Herald*.

That being so, their thoughts may turn to that much earlier *Boy's Herald* published in the 1870's by a Mr. Dick. But that could not be the right one, for Mr. Dick did not begin trying to persuade boys to exchange their pennies for *The Boy's Herald* until 1877.

Actually the design is used on an American amateur paper that has a history going back to the year in the slogan, 1871, which should make it the oldest ama-

teur journal. But this must be qualified by the explanation that during the 81 years since this *Boys' Herald* was founded by two young amateur journalists, Lewis H. English and Edward E. Hall, Jr., of New Haven, Connecticut, it has had eleven renewals of its lease on life at the hands of various publishers. There were intervals, one as long as fifteen years, during which it was dormant.

In 1904 the paper was adopted by Edwin Hadley Smith, who used it to interest former amateur publishers in contributing copies of their magazines and papers to his collection. This grew into the Library of Amateur Journalism, now housed in the Franklin Institute located at Philadelphia.

Mr. Smith continued issuing *The Boys' Herald* until 1915, when it was taken over briefly by George Julian Houtain. Then it lapsed until 1930, in which year Mr. Smith again breathed new life into the paper and kept it

going until 1944. The last period of dormancy was from 1944 until January of this year, when the torch of *The Boys' Herald* was rekindled and raised aloft once again, this time by Wilfried Myers of Struthers, Ohio. The apostrophe following the "s" in "Boys," already missing from the title design, seems now to be completely lost, for the name of the paper has become *The Boys Herald*.

While there have apparently been only three professionally-

published boys' papers to carry the name, it has been a popular one among amateur journalists. There are records of its having been used in St. John, New Brunswick, Canada, in 1876-77; in Danville, Indiana, 1882; in Augusta, Maine, 1883-1884; and in Dyersburg, Tennessee, 1897. All of the places named are, it will be noted, in North America, and the papers were other than revivals of *The Boys' Herald* published "Since 1871."

Mr. Myers distributes The Boys' Herald, "America's Oldest and Smallest Boys' Magazine," to members of the National, United, and American Amateur Press Associations through the Mailing Bureaus. Non-members may subscribe: 50 cents for 12 issues, \$1 for 24. Write: Wilfried Myers, 69 Walnut St., Struthers, Ohio.

THE COLLECTORS' DIGEST

A Magazine for Collectors of "Old Boys' Books"

Published Monthly: Single Copy, 1/6d. Six Issues, 9/-.

*Herbert Leckenby, Telephone Exchange, c/o Central Registry,
Northern Command, York, England*

-Courtesy Advt.

The following is reprinted from *The Baker Street Journal*, the official magazine of *The Baker Street Irregulars, Inc.*, Volume 3, Number 3, July, 1948. As originally printed there are two dots over the "o" in "Schmokers." There being a dearth in our printshop of letters equipped with extra dots, we have had to dispense with said dots, hoping that it doesn't matter but fearing that it does. The item lacking a heading, we will label it—

THE SEXTON BLAKE FAKIRS

MR. JOHN P. ULRICH, of New Haven, Conn., writes to tell us of an association to which he belongs which is, apparently, something like the Baker Street Irregulars, "except that we look upon Sexton Blake as the real successor of Holmes."

"We call ourselves the Sexton Blake Fakirs," he says. "The society was formed by a group of American and British residents of Berlin back in 1932, who were unable to digest German *Schmokers* and had to rely on imported penny-dreadfuls for their detective fiction. The *Sexton Blake Library* was the answer, and how we looked forward to receiving the four books a month from dear old Blighty! It was on the Reichstrasse, in Berlin's exclusive West End, that the Sexton Blake Fakirs were born, and we met twice a month to read and discuss the latest adventure. With the advent of the war, our circle

was broken up and scattered, but we have since reorganized and hope soon to file incorporation papers. We have our regular luncheon club at Nova Scotia Close, and read from the works of Sexton Blake, the new Apostle of Sherlock Holmes. We reverence Holmes as the possible father of Sexton Blake, to be reconciled and interwoven with him, in much the same manner as the Old and New Testaments.

"*The Baker Street Journal* is an instrument for the diffusion of knowledge of those writings that are the keystone of modern detective literature, and we of the Sexton Blake Fakirs are proud to place it in our archives."



[If you like the stories of Sherlock Holmes you would revel in *The Baker Street Journal*, which is published quarterly by *The Baker Street Irregulars, Inc.*, Room 1800, 1775 Broadway, New York 19, N.Y., U.S.A.—EDITOR.]

A CHAT WITH THE CHIEF*

A LONG-ESTABLISHED feature of *John o' London's Weekly* is "Letters to Gog and Magog," a weekly "letter" signed "John o' London." The present writer of these "letters" is, we believe, Frank Swinnerton.

In the issue of *John o' London's* dated December 7th, 1951, Mr. Swinnerton writes in his "letter" about the ability, or lack of it, of present-day youth to read, and in one paragraph refers to the reading-matter commonly available in his young days. In part this paragraph reads:

"Our opportunities for getting bound books were few. They did not compare with those given now by school and public libraries. All the same, we did know how to spell; we did know how to read; and we eagerly seized upon the Jack Harkaway stories, Harcourt Burray's 'The Lambs of Littlecote' and 'The Island School' (published in penny parts), and the halfpenny *Marvel*, *Union Jack* and *Pluck* libraries. These led naturally to Clark Russell, Mayne Reid and Talbot Baines Reed, as well as the other writers I have named; and brought us uphill, with enthusiasm, to the greatest writers of all. We could read; we read for enjoyment; we formed our own taste."

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MR. SWINNERTON'S views on "penny dreadfuls" appear to be remarkably like those of George A. Henty and George Manville Fenn when they replied to inquiries of the then-youthful R. A. H. Goodyear in long-ago days that probably were about the time of which "John o' London" writes. This will be seen by referring to Mr. Goodyear's contribution to our pages in *S.P.C.* No. 31, July, 1948.

☆THIS HEADING was used by Hamilton Edwards for his editorial page in No. 1 of *Cheer Boys Cheer*, which was dated May 25th, 1912.

WE ARE INFORMED by Wilfred Darwin that *The Boy's Magazine* actually ran about twice as many years as Tom Hopperton gave it credit for in his article in *S.P.C.* No. 44. The last issue was No. 620, January 20th, 1934.

IN *S.P.C.* No. 43 we had to spell out "pounds" because of a lack of pound signs. Later we told Tom Hopperton that we had hoped someone would take the hint and send a few along. Tom promptly came to our rescue by air mail: £££. Those pound signs are printed by type that has flown the Atlantic. We have already had occasion, in No. 44, page 250, to use one

of them, and doubtless will do again. Thanks, Tom!

Wanted: Magnets!

THIS MAGAZINE was launched primarily as a means of publicizing our *Magnet Library* and *Boys' Friend* "want lists," but it has been a long time since we used it for that purpose. Here for a change we do. Our set of *The Magnet* was begun in 1937 and now it is very close to being complete. For copies we still lack we would be pleased to pay any reasonable price, or even a slightly unreasonable one, provided such copies are in condition suitable for binding. Here is a list of required numbers. Among them are some of which we actually do have a copy, but in poor condition. Such numbers are followed by an "x."

Magnet Library Nos. 1x to 6x, 90, 100, 106, 110x, 163, 207, 217, 263, 264, 266x, 273, 283, 288x, 308, 309x, 312, 334, 343, 377x, 382x, 393, 411x, 413x, 417, 429, 439x, 449x, 664, 668x, 672x, 775, 880, 941, 942, 943, 948, 973, 974, 975, 992.

Can anyone help? Even one copy will bring us that much nearer our goal of a complete run. . . . Our set of *The*

Boys' Friend new series is not quite so near completion but we may list the numbers we need another time. They are in Volumes 1, 2, 3, 4, 14, 15, 16, and 23 to the end.

TURNING ASIDE for a minute from old boys' books, let us reflect upon *Chatterbox*, that old-established juvenile weekly and "annual." What happened to it? Was it another casualty of World War II, or had it previously outlived its popularity?

Chatterbox was first published in 1866 (we read somewhere) and we have a copy of the 1925 volume in the U. S. A. edition. This edition was printed in Boston from British plates, but with end-papers on which are advertisements of other books issued by L. C. Page & Co., the American publishers.

In this 1925 volume is a serial story, "The Wooden Heads," by C. L. Hales, which was the subject of an inquiry in the Questions and Answers page of *John o' London's Weekly* last year.

There comes to us a memory of a *Chatterbox* that was just an "annual," not a volume comprised of a year's set of weekly issues, and it held little appeal. Was that the fate of this famous old "juvenile"?

P.S.: Does anyone wish to have that 1925 volume at a

modest price? You may decide what the price should be!



The Book Nook

SEVERAL NEW ITEMS of Hamiltoniana have been added to our collection since the last issue of S.P.C. First to come along was the Greyfriars story, "Billy Bunter Butts In," by Frank Richards (Charles Skilton Ltd., London: 7/6d.). Here we find Harry Wharton's "streak of obstinacy and temper" leading him to the contemplation of actions which in calmer moments he would disdain even to consider. Someone else is ahead of him and Wharton is under suspicion of being the culprit. It is Billy Bunter's butting in that clears him. Highly recommended to all who like a good school story.

GREYFRIARS and St. Jim's fans have given up all but the slightest sliver of hope for regular weekly publication of stories by their favorite author. But the inauguration of the Gold Hawk series of St. Jim's yarns by Martin Clifford is a long step in the right direction, provided they receive the reception they deserve: two long stories a month

are just about as good as four shorter ones! The first two titles: "Tom Merry's Secret" and "Tom Merry's Rival." (Hamilton & Co. [Stafford] Ltd., London: 1/6d. each; to U.S.A. and Canada, 25¢ postage paid.)

WE HAVE BEEN dreaming for a long time of the day when we could read "The Autobiography of Frank Richards," and lo! that day has arrived! Very good reading it is, too, even though, along with other collectors, we mourn for the portions that are locked in that drawer. But we are comforted by what we do have, so much so that, as Tom Hopper-ton says in his review of the book in *The Old Boys' Book Collector* No. 1 (Supplement), "One arrives at the last page with regret." (Charles Skilton Ltd., London: 10/6d.)

IN BRIEF—Herb Leckenby and his contributors gave us, in the 1951 *Collectors' Digest Annual*, the best yet! . . . No. 1 of *The Old Boys' Book Collector*: received from Tom Hopperton just in time for mention on this page. It's good! —W.H.G.

‡ Note re binding present volume: picture of Gold Hawk Book to face p. 276.

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