

# THE STORY PAPER COLLECTOR

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Christmas Gem Library for 1916, No. 458, dated November 18

## The 1916 Gem Library Christmas Number

WHILE THE Christmas issue of *The Gem Library* for 1916, Number 458, had fewer pages than had earlier double numbers, there still were forty of them, plus the four cover pages. So it was a nice plump issue.

The extra-long St. Jim's story, *In the Seats of the Mighty*, ran through thirty-five pages, and included six large illustrations by Warwick Reynolds—and quite striking illustrations they are. What artist did the cover illustration I do not know. Not Mr. Reynolds, I would judge, but my judgment may be at fault.

This tale, *In the Seats of the Mighty*, has, with the story in Number 457, *All the Winners*, long intrigued me. For while the double-number story was written by John Nix Pentelow, *All the Winners* was written by Charles Hamilton and the ending of it was in the nature of a prologue to the Christmas story.

At the end of *All the Winners*, the St. Jim's juniors are seated in a train at Laxham Station, on their way from the school for the Christmas vacation, and have just ridded themselves of

the company of Baggy Trimble by pretending to accept his invitation to spend Christmas at the mythical Trimble Hall. The opening chapter of *In the Seats of the Mighty* finds the boys still seated in the train—but, as already stated, this story was written by Mr. Pentelow.

Following the long tale in the Christmas Number there are some extracts from *Tom Merry's Weekly*, and *Our Weekly Prize Page*, humorous storyettes submitted by readers. This *Week's Chat* occupies the second cover-page. Here there is a letter from "Stars and Stripes," supposedly an American reader who, among other things, objected to the way Fisher T. Fish talked. A year later a similar letter, if it was printed at all, would have been given a different kind of reply.

THE SERIES of *Magnet Library* Christmas Double Number cover-page reproductions which have appeared in *The Story Paper Collector* annually, except for one year, since January, 1949, has ended. This is due to the fact that our copies of the Christmas Numbers of *The Magnet Library* for 1915, 1916, and 1917 are in bound volumes, and it is not convenient to have cuts, or blocks if that's what they are to you, made of them. That is why there is a *Gem Library* front cover on this issue. A good substitute.

# The Story Paper Collector

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No. 61—Vol. 3

Priceless

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## BERKELEY GRAY, MEET MR. BROOKS!

By BERNARD THORNE

*Sombre yew trees arose on either hand, and the wind was whistling mournfully through the branches. A more desolate spot could hardly be imagined . . .*

I LAID THE Norman Conquest thriller on one side and ruminated. Where had I read those words before? They seemed vaguely familiar, and the more I repeated them in my thoughts the more certain it became that I had read *Cavalier Conquest* before, or someone was guilty of a mild form of plagiarism. With the words still chasing each other through my head, I rose to my feet and walked over to the bookshelves. *Yew trees . . . wind whistling mournfully . . . a desolate driveway . . .* I had it! Handforth Towers! The Nelson Lee Library! I glanced

along the shelves on which rested my Lee collection, checking the number index. There it was! On page seven of the First New Series, Number 34:

*There were bleak yew-trees on either side . . . The increasing wind was whistling through the barren branches . . . That drive was hardly the spot to be in at night . . .*

In a moment I had left Berkeley Gray's *Cavalier Conquest* and was speeding back through Time to his predecessor—a Berkeley Gray who called himself by his correct name, Edwy Searles Brooks. It was still Christmas, but the scene had changed from Yorkshire to Norfolk and it was 1926. A band of St. Frank's juniors and Moor View girls were trudging wearily along a

snow-laden driveway towards the gloomy walls of Handforth Towers.

*There were two sentinel towers standing out against the background of sky, and the whole building looked more like a prison than anything else. There were mullioned windows, and most of the walls were overcrowded with clinging ivy.*

What a Christmas that had been! The old ruined Towers without light or heating. The bare panelled walls of the corridors without even a picture to break up their bareness. The rooms furnished with rotting tapestries and mildewing furniture. The snow drifting into the ruined North Wing. The weird happenings of that night when Irene and Co. vanished from their bedrooms, followed by the terrible screams that sounded from the ruined wing; and finally, the appearance of the spectral Lady of the Tower.

Mr. Brooks gave us thrills in plenty, with a secret vault beneath the North Tower and a skeleton draped over an ancient treasure chest, for good measure. Then, in the next issue, had come the cleverly planned climax when Handy and his chums discovered that the whole affair was an elaborate hoax prepared by Willy Handforth and his Uncle Gregory. Soon

afterwards came the Christmas party in the real Handforth Towers—a fine modern manor-house half a mile away. It was a masked fancy dress party in which Handy appeared dressed as Porthos, and got himself into quite a spot of bother deciding whether a certain Pirate Chief concealed the identity of the fair Irene or the mischievous Willy.

I TURNED AGAIN to the bookshelves and took down the Christmas series of 1924, a Christmas spent at Glenthorne Manor.

*There was a sound of revelry by night,*

and of carols in the snow as Archie Glenthorne and his guests serenaded Irene and Co. But mystery crowned their efforts as Lucy Minns, the daughter of the Manor lodge-keeper, came running, panic-stricken, up the snow-covered drive and collapsed, sobbing with terror, at their feet.

They carried her into the hall and, when she had recovered, she told the startled guests of mysterious noises that had sounded in her bedroom at the lodge; of strange creakings and muffled knockings, and ghostly whispers that seemed to come out of the air. Lucy was assisted upstairs to a spare bedroom and

the sceptical guests retired to their interrupted rest. But the juniors had scented adventure, and a party of them, led by Reggie Pitt, spent the following night in the lodge bedroom. They, too, experienced the ghostly incidents of which Lucy had complained. The noises, muffled though they were, seemed to come from beneath their feet—from the very earth itself. And it was then that Archie recalled the existence of an old tunnel, built in Cromwell's day, that ran from the Manor Armoury underneath the lodge. They decided to explore the tunnel the following day.

**B**UT THE FOLLOWING day was Christmas Eve, and there was much to be done. The ballroom had to be decorated, and in the afternoon there were winter sports, so that it was after tea before the first opportunity came. Then the boys entered the Armoury and Archie crossed to the panelled wall and manipulated some ornamental knobs set in the skirting. The next moment a section of the paneling swung back revealing a black cavity beyond. Torch in hand, Reggie Pitt led the way through the opening and the juniors found themselves in a stone corridor floored with oak planking that was black and

worn with age. They passed along the passage in single file, down a flight of stone steps, and along a tunnel constructed of stone blocks. Finally, they came to a halt at a spot where the roof had apparently collapsed. Around them were stacked a number of shovels and pickaxes, and it was clear that someone was endeavouring to penetrate the fallen debris to the tunnel beyond. Archie suddenly realized that they must be somewhere beneath the lodge, and the mysterious noises of the previous night were explained.

"Do you know where this tunnel leads to, Archie?" Pitt asked, curiously.

Archie recalled that the tunnel led to the ruined Bannington Abbey that lay almost in the middle of the town.

"Then this must go right under the High Street," said Reggie, with a whistle. "That's interesting—and significant, too!"

"Significant?" Handforth had echoed.

"Yes," replied Pitt, quietly. "In that part of the High Street nearest the lodge is a bank. Do you understand, my sons? A bank!"

And significant it proved to be. For as the tale unfolded, it was seen that the tunnel did, indeed, lead under the vaults of the London and Home Counties

Bank. Four bank robbers, with the assistance of forged references that had secured their entry into Glenthorne Manor as servants, were in the process of digging their way to the bank vaults. Luckily, Reggie Pitt and Co. were able to foil their plans. One by one, the men were pounced on as they left the tunnel, some while later, and handed over to the police. With the mystery of the lodge solved, Christmas at Glenthorne Manor was once more a gay and joyous occasion.

WITH BERKELEY GRAY forgotten, I once more rummaged among the bookshelves, jumping back over the years to 1922. This time the boys of St. Frank's were invited to Somerton Abbey for the Yuletide, but without the young ladies of Moor View, as that scholastic establishment had yet to come into existence.

Situated near the town of Somerton in Somerset, Somerton Abbey had its being in the true Brooks tradition—an enormous ducal residence surrounded by thousands of acres of park and farm land, and supporting a staff numbering hundreds. For centuries its turrets and grim stone battlements had known the tread of the Somertons; they

were one of the oldest English families and their ancestry dated back to Saxon times. The youthful Duke was a member of the St. Frank's junior school and he took great pride in having his school fellows with him at the family seat. Somerton Abbey had its own ghost, he explained, a ghost that was reputed to haunt the North Wing, a part of the Abbey no longer in use by the family. In this wing there was a mysterious room which was always kept securely locked. Tradition had it that each Duke of Somerton, on reaching the age of fifteen or acceding to the title, must enter this room and remain in solemn and lonely vigil. This custom, as Mr. Brooks was careful to mention, bore a resemblance to the famous legend of Glamis Castle.

Glancing once again through the pages of that Christmas tale I fell under the spell of the Abbey's deserted north wing; the eerie stillness of those wide corridors illuminated at intervals by shafts of pallid moonlight that filtered through the tall, mullioned windows; the stone-flagged passages, damp and musty, that echoed sharply to the lightest footfall; the thick, oaken doors, arched in stone, that creaked and groaned to the touch.

The ghost appeared during that holiday and was duly laid by the schoolboys, but the Sealed Room remained shrouded in mystery. On the second day, the young Duke of Somerton attained his fifteenth birthday and underwent his ordeal in that room. Nipper's description of that ordeal helped little in solving the enigma:

*We saw nothing of it—and it is quite impossible for me to set down what Somerton saw behind that iron-studded door. It was a secret which he could never tell—so I can't set down any record of that interesting event.*

*I can only say that the young duke was looking pale and shaken after he came down. And, incidentally, he was not himself for two or three days. He went about looking thoughtful and grave . . .*

FOR SOME TIME I continued to delve into those old, discoloured *Nelson Lees*, spending Christmas after Christmas in the company of the boys of St. Frank's—at Dorrimore Castle in 1925, Raithmere Castle in 1928, with the Handforths at Travis Dene in 1929, and at Parkington Grange in 1930. And always there was the flickering firelight throwing grotesque shadows on panelled walls, while the snow-laden wind whined and howled round turret and battlement, and the ghastly wraiths of a score of ancestral warriors floated silently down wide Dickensian staircases. Finally, with a sigh, I laid aside the tales of my beloved Edwy Searles Brooks and returned, without much enthusiasm I regret to say, to Norman Conquest and his Ladies in Distress.

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## Empire Library Number 1

PICTURED on the front page of *The Story Paper Collector* Number 60 was Number 1 of first series *The Empire Library*. This paper was the short-lived younger brother of *The Gem* and *The Magnet* Libraries, and it

proved correct the adage about two being company and three a crowd. At first the stories, by Prosper Howard, were about Gordon Gay and Co. of Rylcombe Grammar School, located near St. Jim's of *The Gem*, but soon the program was varied. There were 26 issues in the first series, and 36 in the new series. Then *The Empire Library* was merged with *The Sports Library*.

# THE WONDER LIBRARY

NEARLY ALL COLLECTORS of old boys' papers are familiar with *The Boys' Friend Library*, but how many are aware that in 1915 The Amalgamated Press issued a very similar publication entitled *The Wonder Library*? The same size as *The Boys' Friend Library* and priced at threepence, it had 120 pages. It is reported that all the stories were reprints of serials which had appeared in *Chips* and *Comic Cuts*.

There were only 14 numbers issued, but the stories were really good. In my collection I have a copy of Number 1, *The Red Rovers*, a football yarn. No authors' names were given to some of the stories, but the *Red Rovers* story in Number 1 was written by E. Newton Bungay. The titles for Numbers 15 and 16 were advertised but never did appear. The full list of titles follows:

No. 1—*The Red Rovers*, by E. Newton Bungay.

No. 2—*The Prison Chaplain*, by H. B. Richmond.

No. 3—*The Blue Lamp*, by John Edmund Fordwich.

No. 4—*The Pride of the Potteries*. Author not known.

No. 5—*The Outlaw Princess*, by John Edmund Fordwich.

No. 6—*It's Never Too Late*, by John Edmund Fordwich.

No. 7—*The Girl From Gaol*, by John Edmund Fordwich.

No. 8—*Hinton of the Rovers*, by E. Newton Bungay.

No. 9—*The Heart of No-Man's Land*, by John Edmund Fordwich.

No. 10—*All Sorts*, by H. B. Richmond.

No. 11—*The Ticket of Leave Man*, by John Edmund Fordwich.

No. 12—*The Heart of the Slums*, by H. B. Richmond.

No. 13—*The Grand Adventure*. Author not known.

No. 14—*The River Police*, by Harry Hughes.

Starting in July, 1932, The Amalgamated Press issued, for 26 numbers, *The Boys' Wonder Library*, in a smaller size page. These were all reprints of earlier stories, the first one being *The Squadron of Death*, by George E. Rochester. —W. O. G. LOFTS



TO AVOID DELAY in the mailing of this issue very few letters will be written to accompany copies. Correspondence will be attended to later. In the meantime, thanks for letters received since Number 60—and Season's Greetings to all our friends in many countries! —W. H. G.



# EDWARD LLOYD AND HIS PENNY "BLOODS"

By STANLEY LARNACH

EDWARD LLOYD was born at Thornton Heath, Surrey, in 1815. After his parents moved to London, and while quite a boy, he opened a shop in Curtain Road, Shore-ditch, where he sold books and newspapers. His first venture as a publisher appears to have been *Lloyd's Stenographer*. He had the introduction printed but wrote the symbols with his own hand. He commenced to publish penny "bloods" in 1836 and continued to do so for two decades, the last appearing in 1856. In addition he published the following periodicals:

*Penny Weekly Miscellany*. A second series also was published.

*Lloyd's Entertaining Journal*.

*Lloyd's People's Periodical and Family Library*. This lasted only one year, but is notable because it contained, as a short serial, the first version of *Sweeney Todd: The String of Pearls; or, The Sailor's Gift*.

*Lloyd's Penny Atlas*.

*Lloyd's Illustrated London Newspaper*. Going through several changes in its name, this finally

became *The Sunday News*, and in 1931 was combined with *The Sunday Graphic*.

Finally, he bought *The Clerkenwell Gazette* for £30,000 and spent £150,000 to establish it as a London newspaper, *The Daily Chronicle*.

In time Mr. Lloyd became somewhat ashamed of the origin of his fortune and sent agents to the old coffee-shops and cheap circulating libraries to buy their stocks of his penny publications in order to pulp them at his paper mills. He died a very wealthy man on April 8th, 1890.

Many of Lloyd's penny number "bloods" first appeared as serials in his periodicals. The stories were of three main kinds: historical romances, Gothic horrors such as *Varney the Vampyre*, and "domestic" romances. "The high proportion of the last," says John Medcraft, "was due to an extensive feminine following among the readers and in deference to their 'gentler' natures Lloyd eliminated highwaymen and vampires, added an innocuous title, and confined himself

to the milder themes of pirates and smugglers, murder and rape, seduction and abduction. Blood, however, was a factor common to all the Lloyd items."

**N**EWSPAPERS and others who ran the cheap circulating libraries used to buy a quantity of the penny numbers and have them bound in volumes of from 15 to 20 numbers. These were lent out at from one penny to threepence a week. Usually a deposit was required to cover the value of the volume. There were eight pages to each penny number, except the last which had less. As compensation a title-page, preface, and frontispiece went with the last number. As a rule the first number was given to those who bought the second.

George Augustus Sala, who for a time made drawings for the wood-cuts used in the Lloyd publications, has said that one author, Thomas P. Prest, wrote half the 200 "bloods" published by Lloyd. From this statement has grown the legend that there were 200 Lloyd "bloods." No one has been able to list as many as this. John Medcraft stretched out his list to 200 only by including re-issues as separate items. Without claiming that my list is complete I have been able to include 186 items, apart from

re-issues. Of these Prest is listed as author of 61, Errym of 16, and Elizabeth Caroline Grey of eight. Other authors were responsible for fewer. Most of the titles were issued in demy 8vo, but a few were larger. Usually the first editions were printed in single columns and the re-issues in double-columns and fewer parts, with fewer illustrations, all or some of which were new.

In many cases the problem of authorship is difficult. As examples of information given on title pages we may note that *Susan Hopley* is "by the author of *Kathleen, The Hebrew Maiden, etc.*" and *The Black Monk* was written "by the author of *Ada, the Betrayed, Jane Brightwell, Blanche; or The Mystery of the Doomed House, etc.*" Even this information must be used with caution, as at the time of publication there was some confusion as to the authorship of certain books and both Prest and Errym were occasionally credited with the same books.

Thomas P. Prest (circa 1810-1879) was the most prolific writer for Lloyd. He is said to have been a talented musician and song-writer. Practically nothing is known of his life. He died near London in 1878 or 1879.

"Malcolm J. Errym" was a pseudonym for Malcolm J. Merry,

which was considered a rather too jovial name for an author of "bloods." It is easily seen that his pseudonyms of "Errym" and "Rymer" are anagrams of his real name. According to Sala he was known to his associates as "Ada, the Betrayed" as he had written a story of that name, but

*which after running through four successive numbers of The Weekly Ghoul came to a sudden termination. The owner of The Ghoul eloped to Texas and "Ada, the Betrayed" like Lord Ullin was left lamenting.*

This story is apocryphal. *Ada, the Betrayed* ran for almost a year in *Lloyd's Miscellany* and on completion in that journal came out in penny parts. It was, however, written by Merry. One source of his income as a freelance was due to his reporting the details of the latest murder, and Sala described his appearance as he prospered during the famous Manning case. He

*blossomed into a brand new coat of Newmarket cut, new pantaloons, a glossy silk hat shone upon his head, Wellington boots adorned his lower extremities, and the bows of a satin necktie floated on his chest. The only thing he lacked was a waistcoat, but alas! the Mannings were hanged ere "Ada, the Betrayed" had secured that much coveted vest, and*

*afterwards, murders being rare, he drifted gradually into his old and normal condition of seediness.*

Mrs. Elizabeth Caroline Grey (1798-1869) was a niece of Miss Duncan, the popular actress. She and her sister kept a school for girls, but after her marriage to Grey, a reporter on *The Morning Chronicle*, she became general editress of his publications. In 1846 she won Lloyd's One Hundred Guinea Prize with her romance *Ordeal by Touch*.

REFERENCES:

Frank Jay: *Peeps Into the Past*. (A series of articles in the supplement to *Spare Moments*. London, 1918-1921.)

John Medcraft: *Bibliography of the Penny Bloods of Edward Lloyd*. (Dundee, 1945.)

G. A. Sala: *London Up to Date; Life and Adventures of George Augustus Sala*. (London, 1896.)

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THE ABOVE ARTICLE is reprinted from *Biblionews*, a monthly letter to members of The Book Collectors' Society of Australia, Volume 6, Number 1, January, 1953. It originally appeared under the heading of *Towards a Bibliography of the Penny "Bloods" of Edward Lloyd*. Some slight changes in wording have been made, and a few sentences omitted.

## I WISH---

—to obtain a copy of *The Story Paper Collector* Number 25.—W. Hall, 46 Walder Road, Hammondville, via Liverpool, N.S.W., Australia.

—to obtain Numbers 1, 2, 15 of *The Empire Library* in good condition.—The Editor.

—to purchase Volumes 14, 23, 28 of *The Captain*.—Leon Stone, 28 Elgin Street, Gordon, N.S.W., Australia.

—to obtain a copy of *The Story Paper Collector* Number 48.—The Editor.

—to purchase a copy of *The Fossil* Number 18; for a good, complete copy \$5 is offered.—J. W. Martin, 4 Meadow Lane, Redwood City, Calif., U.S.A.

—to find a purchaser, at a low price, for *The Black and White War Budget* Numbers 1 to 13, 15 to 51, 1899-1900 (South African War); a few covers loose, a few missing.—The Editor.

PERIODICAL CASUALTIES in 1956 include *Answers*, the A.P.'s first-born, and *The Quiver*, a monthly magazine originally published by Cassell but taken over by The Amalgamated Press in the late 1920's.

CIRCUMSTANCES completely beyond our control—because we have been unable to identify them—have prevented us from printing more than twelve pages every three months. But it is hoped that our readers will agree with us that twelve pages are better than no pages. —w.h.g.

CORRECTION *re* the brief item about *The Empire Library* on page 155: How it happened we will never know, but the length of run of both the first and the new series are completely wrong as given. The correct figures: first series, 36 issues; new series, 28 issues.

## THE STORY PAPER COLLECTOR

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