

THE STORY PAPER COLLECTOR

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COMIC PAPERS OF THE PAST

By LEONARD PACKMAN

PART THREE

Micky Mouse Weekly—One of the very best produced coloured publications on glazed paper. Succeeded in January, 1958, by Walt Disney's Mickey Mouse with a different publisher. Original series 920 issues (8.2.1936 to 28.12.1957). Published by Odham's Press.

Monster—Companion to Golden Penny and every bit as good. As with the latter, many of the stories were illustrated by Eric Parker. The late Hugh W. Fennell wrote for both these publications, one of his pen-names being "Henry Leonard." 383 issues (23.9.1922 to 25.1.1930). Published by Fleetway Press, Ltd.

My Favourite—A coloured production of pleasing appearance, one which catered for children of various ages. Edited by a girl, Silvey Clarke. An editor of The Amalgamated Press at that time told me that printers used to have fun 'phoning her: "Are you My Favourite?" 351 issues (28.1.1928 to 13.10.1934). Published by Amalgamated Press.

My Funnybone—Similar to the early Larks. Mostly cartoon jokes but good value. 86 issues (4.9.

1911 to 22.4.1913). Published by Belvedere Printing and Publishing Co.

Picture Fun—Printed on pink paper. So far as cartoon characters are concerned one of the best of the earlier publications. Contained stories by "Frank Drake" (Charles Hamilton) and, as with the early Larks, much sought after on that account. 595 issues (16.2.1909 to 3.7.1920). Published by Trapps, Holmes & Co.

Playbox—An excellent publication, coloured, of the junior type, another of the more recent casualties—for no obvious reason. Had a good run, one that was well deserved. 1279 issues (14.2.1925 to 11.6.1955). Published by Amalgamated Press.

Puck—One of the finest coloured productions of all. Wonderful value for money (at least until 1916), even allowing for the much greater purchasing power of a penny at that time. As for the monster Christmas Double Numbers—I can only say they were superb until the year 1917. Until recent years copies of this paper up to 1917

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The Story Paper Collector

No. 69—Vol. 3

Priceless

PLEASING EVERYBODY!

By MAURICE KUTNER

LIKE ALL WELL-RUN profit-making organizations, The Amalgamated Press, in *The Magnet* and *The Gem*, tried to please as many customers as possible and, except in one instance, as far-flung as the English-speaking world would permit. Australian readers could find no fault with Squiff² and, even if they considered at times that he was a far better candidate for the captaincy of the Greyfriars Remove than Harry Wharton, they supported *The Magnet* and revelled in every story in which Squiff played any part at all. He set an example for all the "Colonials," decent, sport-loving, and full of fun.

The *Gem*, too, was fully supported by Scottish readers who were given full value for their

money by having such a character as George Francis Kerr to admire and hero-worship. It was no secret that Kerr was the brains of the New House juniors. No-one, except Redfern, would think of deposing Figgins from the leadership, and the Scottish reader must have been proud of Kerr's loyalty to his chief, his cleverness in solving intricate mysteries, and his capacity for theatricals and impersonations.

The A.P. policy of pleasing everybody worked very well in Scotland, and the introduction of fine and lovable characters into the stories, such as Eric Kildare for Ireland and "Patty" Wynn for Wales was a sensible policy, and furthered the cause of *The Magnet* and *The Gem* in these various countries.

The one exception to the general rule was Fisher T. Fish.

²Sampson Quincey Miley Field.

The American reader was badly served by having "Fishy" on his plate, although there was one series in the 1930's when the introduction of Putnam van Duck gave them better value for their money. However, Putnam van Duck was just one of those ships that pass in the night, and the American reader was left with Fisher T. Fish as a glorious example of his country's youth. It is difficult to guess why this should have been so. Perhaps Charles Hamilton never could forget the "we are too proud to fight" attitude taken up by the Americans at the beginning of the First World War, or perhaps the sales of *The Magnet* in the U. S. A. didn't amount to much, in which case there was no very great reason to study their likes and dislikes.

Another sideline of the A.P. policy of pleasing everybody was to blazon forth the fact that decent characters like Johnny Bull and Jack Blake hailed from Yorkshire, whereas shady characters, like Mellish and Snoop, seemed to belong to no particular county, which automatically cut regional complaints down to a minimum.

THE coming of the Jewish juniors, Monty Newland to Greyfriars and Dick Julian to St. Jim's, gladdened the hearts

of Jewish readers who were amongst the most loyal *The Magnet* and *The Gem* ever possessed. Their delight in reading a story in which either of these juniors was the central character knew no bounds, and they were proud of the fact that Newland's and Julian's names were always associated with such decent fellows as Bob Cherry, Squiff, Tom Merry, and D'Arcy.

The arrival of Monty Newland and Dick Julian at their respective schools brought to the forefront certain difficulties, similar to those experienced by Mark Linley and Dick Penfold. In each case the snobbish and caddish section of the juniors gave full rein to their miserable feelings. On the one hand was a feeling that the admittance of scholarship boys would lower the tone and standard of their respective schools, and on the other the baser instincts of the eternal persecutor were allowed to rise to the surface, if only momentarily.

There were fellows, like Bunter and Trimble, who, being not particularly interested in scholarship boys or Jews, voiced their objections loudly and frequently as a sop to their own feelings of inferiority. Incidentally, Mark Linley found the going much harder than did Redfern, Owen, and Lawrence, the inference be-

ing not that the St. Jim's juniors were more tolerant than those at Greyfriars, but that the eternal persecutor is happier when the opposition is not too strong.

DICK JULIAN'S arrival at St. Jim's was marked by a temporary fall from grace by Monty Lowther. Monty, the eternal humorist (not persecutor) was struck by an idea for a jape on the new chap, and so keen was he to carry it out that one would have thought it important enough to be called the jape of the term. The jape was a simple one, merely consisting of annoying and irritating the newcomer by the process of making him spend money, and no Jew liked to spend money, reasoned the humorist of the Shell. With this highly moral motive in mind, Monty tried to enlist the aid of the decent element, but the "plan" (which was by now coming under the category of "plot") was cold-shouldered by his nearest and dearest friends, who couldn't see the point. Monty, still full of enthusiasm, was forced to find his allies among the cads.

The jape worked—in reverse: the Jewish junior soon proved that he didn't mind spending money, even if he thought it was being squandered unnecessarily, and he proved, too, that

Lowther and the caddish "Co." found no pleasure in being spendthrifts themselves. Of the cads, Mellish had no money to spend in the first place, and, as he was on the receiving end from both sides, he had no complaints. For him, the "jape" worked very well.

Monty Lowther, like many another humorist, failed to see the joke when he found himself owing a small sum of money to Dick Julian, a debt which the Jewish junior was quite willing to forget. Monty so far fell from grace as to offer Dick cent. per cent. interest on the loan, and this insult led to a fight between them, a fight which ended with a beaten Monty on his back refusing the proffered hand of conciliation. All ended well, however, when Dick saved Monty from drowning, one of those life-saving anticlimaxes which are frequently found in the pages of *The Magnet* and *The Gem*.

Readers who liked Monty Lowther were no doubt disturbed at such signs of weakness in his character, but when one remembers those stories when he was stage-struck and film-struck, perhaps the story of Monty Lowther versus Dick Julian may not have been altogether out of character. That weakness in his nature was shewn when he was film-struck.

He ran away from school, and the furthest he got to the film set was to play the part of relief pianist to Horatio Carll at a small cinema, and living with the drink-sodden Horatio in the meantime!

MONTY NEWLAND and Dick Julian were different in character. Monty was content to remain in the background, coming to the fore with good advice whenever some junior was involved in financial difficulties with some outside financial shyster. Dick had a keen brain, too, but also had the makings of a natural leader, and a potential rival to Jack Blake for the leadership of the Fourth Form, although he and Jack were always on the best of terms.

Both Monty Newland and Dick Julian served the purpose of some excellent chapters in *The Magnet* and *The Gem*, usually entitled *Going to the Jews*. A Bunter or a Trimble would corner either in his study with a request for a loan, which, when politely refused, brought forth the generous offer of cent. per cent. interest. When this new turn in the proceedings was received with a long, steady look and an ominous silence, whilst a hand strayed towards a five-bat or cricket stump, the would-be borrower, taking the Jewish

junior's silence as a sign of favourable cogitation, would rattle on, generously increasing the rate of interest to most tempting, if not amazing, proportions, possibly because the would-be borrower had no intention of repaying the loan, anyway. A sudden jump in his direction would make him bolt out of the study and, with the door tightly shut, apply his mouth to the keyhole and shriek "Shweeny!" A quick movement in the study would send the loanless and luckless one scurrying breathlessly up the passage, and that was usually the end of that chapter.

JEWISH READERS were fortunate in having, not only Monty Newland and Dick Julian, but Solly Lazarus, too. Solly was the son of the local pawnbroker and was a great friend of Dicky Trumper and the boys of the Courtfield Council School. Like Dick Julian, Solly had the makings of a leader among his peers, and a great fighting man. He who insulted Solly Lazarus, whether because of his race, his larger-than-life-sized nose, or his lisp (which often made it hard going for the reader), was not met by the calm, steady look, or the ominous silence. Solly knew little of the tactful or reasonable reply, but he knew he was a

mighty man with his fists, and this fact was soon discovered by his opponent. The size of the opposition had no terrors for Solly. In an age when they could boast, in real life, of a Kid Lewis and a Jack (Kid) Berg, it was no wonder that the Jewish reader considered Solly Lazarus to be the boy for his money, and took to his heart the genuine-hearted fighting Maccabee of Courtfield!

HE WAS NOT so happy, however, with the adult Jewish characters who flitted at various times through the pages of *The Magnet* and *The Gem*. In the main, they were sossy money-lenders and spoke with a lisp, and any doubt concerning their unprepossessing appearance was soon dispelled by the various illustrators, who proved that the names and appearance matched very well. This was all somewhat puzzling to the Jewish reader, because in the world in which he moved, breathed, and had his being, the professions of pawn-broking and money-lending were the monopoly of the Gentile, and the lisping tongue was rarely met with in real life among his compatriots.

These gentlemen sometimes cropped up in all sorts of outlandish places. There is one

Cedar Creek story which dealt with Chunky Todgers' belief that he was the heir to an inheritance. To pursue this belief to its delectable conclusion, Chunky needed some financial backing and, like so many a Bunter and Trimble before him, approached a money-lender for a loan. That his request was refused need not fill us with compassion for Chunky Todgers; our compassion might be reserved for the Hebraic gentleman who hopefully set up in business between the Thompson Valley and Kamloops. Surely one of the lost tribes of Israel!

A few, like Dick Julian's uncle, did eventually see the error of their ways and, in their remorse and reformation, did much good charitable works. But if the adults were set, more or less, in the same mould, this could not be said of the junior characters. In the best Charles Hamilton tradition they were fine character studies, and first-class writing at that, when one remembers that it sometimes dealt with delicate situations where a thoughtless word could have been an embarrassment.

All in all, *The Amalgamated Press* overlooked very few sections of their readers in the difficult art of pleasing everybody.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

JUDGING by the many letters received by both myself and the Editor, it appears that the photograph reproduced in *The Story Paper Collector* Number 65, January, 1958, showing a group of Amalgamated Press staff members at a luncheon in a Fleet Street restaurant, was one of the most interesting features ever to appear in the magazine.

Many readers requested further information about various people, mainly to the effect of what are they doing now? Some, of course, regretfully are dead, whilst many of the others left *The Amalgamated Press* years ago, and it has not been easy to trace their movements since then.

After a lot of research I am happy to report that I have now completed my investigations on this interesting group of people and the results will, I hope, satisfy many readers who may have wondered, "Where are they now?"

Back Row, Standing, Left to Right

1—G. H. Teed—After a long illness died in London Hospital about 1940.

2—H. McDowell—Now on the administrative side of *The Amalgamated Press*. I met him some time ago.

3—J. E. McKibbin—Now a free-lance writer, mainly for *The Schoolgirls' Own Library*.

4—E. J. Wass—Second in command of *World Digest*.

5—Bill Groves—Retired from *The Amalgamated Press* in 1958 because of ill-health.

6—H. T. Cauldwell—Now a free-lance writer. I have had correspondence with him. Lives in Sussex. Brought out a boys' paper, *New Venture*, a few years ago, but it was a failure, running for just two issues.

7—Alfred Edgar—After writing some very successful stage plays for the West End, including *The Amazing Dr. Clitterhouse*, went to live in the U.S.A., where he has made a name for himself as a very good script writer. Lives under the name of Barré Lyndon, and strangely enough prefers not to discuss his Amalgamated Press days.

8—E. L. McKeng—Perhaps better known to readers as that popular writer of yarns for *The Champion* and *The Thriller*, "Fat Haynes" and "Jack Maxwell"; wrote numerous girls' stories and most of the Colwyn Dane detective yarns. Have met him a number of times. He is now Editor of *Schoolgirls' Picture Library*.

9—Balfour Ritchie—Believed to be living in retirement in the Richmond area in England. He came into a large family business a few years ago.

10—Clive R. Fenn—Was known to be alive a few years ago, but no other information available.

11—E. Fearn—Now Editor of *Girls' Crystal*. Perhaps he will be better known to readers as "Herbert Macrae" of war stories in *Triumph* and *Champion*.

12—G. M. Dodshon—Died in the late 1930's.

13—Bernard Smith—Now Editor of *Lion*.

Front Row, Sitting, Left to Right

1—L. H. Pratt—Retired from The Amalgamated Press some years ago after 50 years service. Now lives in the Southend area.

2—J. H. Valda—Died around 1940.

3—H. W. Teyman—Left The Amalgamated Press about 1935. Now lives in Surrey in semi-retirement. I have met him quite a few times. Writes occasionally for the American "true crime" magazines and for English newspapers.

4—Ernest Harris—Still at The Amalgamated Press editing women's picture Libraries.

5—Hedley O'Mant—Was re-

ported killed in a flying accident some years ago, but not confirmed. Was well known as a flyer in World War I. This report may be true as he has not been seen for many years.

6—S. Rossiter Shepherd—Famous as travel expert on the *Sunday People* and Theatre critic. Was at one time Feature Editor of that paper but now lives in semi-retirement. Have met him several times; he is a very fluent and interesting conversationalist; has a most striking personality.

7—W. Stanton Hope—Went to Australia and formed a correspondence school. Several Australian readers have met him. A very successful free-lance writer and author. Now in England.

8—Harold May—Retired from The Amalgamated Press in 1928; news very scanty since. Last seen in poor circumstances just after the war. Present whereabouts unknown.

9—H. Wright—Not with The Amalgamated Press now, but still in journalism. Said to be Editor of a tobacco magazine, but no other news available.

10—Non-A. P.

11—Arthur Aldcroft—Now in a Government department. Has not been seen for years.

—W. O. G. Lotts

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COMIC PAPERS OF THE PAST

(Continued from Page 267)

—in good condition—were almost as scarce as sovereigns, but following the death of my friend John Medcraft a quantity of his mint copies have become available. These are rapidly becoming absorbed, and it is a certainty there will never be another lot like it. 1867 issues (30.7.1904 to 11.5.1940). Published by Amalgamated Press.

Rainbow—Rightly considered to be one of the most popular and beloved of comic papers. Who has not heard of "Tiger Tim" and all the other "Bruin Boys"? Like Puck, in a class of its own. 1898 issues (14.2.1914 to 28.4.1956). Published by Amalgamated Press.

Rattler—Well produced, green paper. Featured a pair of cartoon characters, "Rock and Roll"! 269 issues (19.8.1933 to 15.10.1938). Published by Target Publications.

Rocket—Another Bath publication and just as good as Dazzler and Rattler. Printed on pale blue paper and, as with Dazzler, containing *The Ovaltine's Own Comic*, printed on green paper. 157 issues (26.10.1935 to 22.10.1938). Published by Target Publications.

Scraps—Similar in appearance to a number of issues of *Ally Sloper's Half Holiday*. A good paper of its kind, enjoying a long run. 1394 issues (7.9.1883 to 30.4.1910). Originally published by Henderson.

Skits—The caption on the front page reads: *The Best Comic Journal on Earth*. 4d. Similar type of paper to *Scraps* and good value for money. Length of run not known, but at least 10 issues (No. 10 dated 27.6.1891). Published by British Publishing Co.

Sparkler—Printed on pink paper and as good as its companion *Merry Midget*. Length of run not known, but at least 16 issues (No. 16 dated 26.12.1931). Published by Provincial Comics, Ltd.

Sparkler—A coloured production. Mainly picture-stories in serial form. 251 issues (20.10.1934 to 5.8.1939). Published by Amalgamated Press.

Sparks—For the first year or so good value for one halfpenny. The Christmas Double Number for the year 1915 certainly held its own with any other. Deteriorated in 1917 as a result of the War. 198 issues as *Sparks* (21.3.1914 to 29.12.1917). Published by Henderson.

Spring Comic—A coloured comic of amazingly good value, priced at twopence. I have only

one copy—the only one I have ever seen. Length of run not known. Undated and probably the only one of its kind. Pre-war. Published by Pearson.

Summer Comic—Companion to Spring Comic. Everything said of the latter applies to this one. Undated but pre-war. Published by Pearson.

Sunbeam—Coloured paper similar to My Favourite but had that "little extra" which gave it a longer life. 1st series 173 issues (7.10.1922 to 23.1.1926); 2nd series 747 issues (30.1.1926 to 25.5.1940). Published by Amalgamated Press.

Sunshine—Another Bath publication and very scarce. Printed on pink paper. Deserved a much longer life. 39 issues (16.7.1938 to 8.4.1939). Published by Target Publications.

Tiger Tim's Weekly—One of the most popular coloured productions of its kind. Apart from the Bruin Boys it was not particularly outstanding—but Tiger Tim made it the success it was. The first series was a smaller size, pink on white paper. 1st series 94 issues (31.1.1920 to 12.11.1921); 2nd series 965 issues (19.11.1921 to 18.5.1940). Published by Amalgamated Press.

Tiny Tots—The ideal coloured paper for the very young—and the only production of its type

dating back to the 1920's and still running—but possibly not for very much longer. Commenced 22.10.1927. [Last issue No. 1334, 24.1.1939.] Published by Amalgamated Press.

Tip-Top—As I wrote in my *Collectors' Digest* article, one might almost call this paper a "modernized Jester." Specialized in picture-stories which, in view of its long run, was what boys and girls of that period wanted. This is one of the few comic papers with a Christmas Double Number as late as 1937. 727 issues (21.4.1934 to 29.5.1954). Published by Amalgamated Press.

World's Comic—An early publication enjoying a good run. Mainly cartoon jokes but excellent value for one halfpenny. 855 issues (6.7.1892 to 10.10.1908). Published by Trappa, Holmes & Co.

There are five other papers a copy of which I lack. For the record, here are the details:

Bo-Prep—235 issues (19.10.1929 to 14.4.1934). Published by Amalgamated Press.

Bouncer—9 issues (11.2.1939 to 8.4.1939). Published by Target Publications.

Jungle Jinks—62 issues (8.12.1923 to 7.2.1925). Published by Amalgamated Press.

Merry Moments—194 issues (12-

4.1919 to 23.12.1922). Published by Newnes.

Target—176 issues (15.6.1935 to 22.10.1938). Published by Target Publications.

Correction—Mouse, as everyone knows, spells his first name Mickey, not Micky as we have it at the top of column 1, page 260 of this number.

A Complete Set Of The Magnet: Almost, That Is!

FOR THE PAST TWO YEARS my collection of *The Magnet Library* has remained static.

Then, this March, word was received of Magnets, Scouts, and various other papers here in Canada that were available for purchase. The information was passed along, and eventually I received my reward: eight Magnets that were needed, followed a ninth. My thanks go to Mrs. Miriam Hillary, of Toronto, who owned them, and to Bernard Thorne, of West Hill (a suburb of Toronto, I think), who donated them to the good cause.

With these numbers added to my collection, only five are now required to make it complete.

They are: Nos. 90, 163, 207, 217, and 263. In addition these are needed to replace poor copies: Nos. 1 to 6, 100, 110, 308, 668, and 942.

Checking these missing issues, I found that I actually do have Nos. 163 and 263, but without covers, which means a real lack of just three numbers. It is a long time since I began collecting Magnets—22 years and some months—but the goal is now within reach—I hope! Does anyone have spare copies of the few I need? —W.H.G.

I Wish to Obtain . . .

—S.P.C. Nos. 10, 32.—A. S. Fick, Box 58, Fort Johnson, New York, U.S.A.

—S.P.C. Nos. 1 to 21, 25, 26, 29 to 38, 40 to 44.—Tom Langley, 340 Baldwin's Lane, Hall Green, Birmingham 28, England.

—*Detective Weekly* Nos. 331, 334, 335, 374, 376, 377; Dick Turpin, Buffalo Bill Libraries; Schoolboys' Own Libraries (by E. S. Brooks); any S.P.C.'s prior to No. 51.—R. W. Story, 40 Howland Ave., Toronto 4, Ontario, Canada.

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