

The

Collectors Digest.

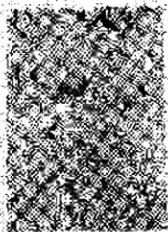
Recognised organ of the London Old Boys Book Club

Vol. 3.

February, 1949.

No 26.

Facsimile of front
page Boys Realm
June 8th, 1907.
Scene from -
Charles Hamilton's
serial - "King
Cricket" - -



WANTED

NELSON LEES (Old Series):

1	-	112	114	-	122	124	134	136	140
141	-	142	148	-	149	151	-	153	157
172	-	175	177	-	179	181	-	182	191
211	-	230	234	-	245	248	-	249	250
267	-	273	-	275	281	283	-	285	290
294	-	296	305	-	312	314	-	322	324
329	-	330	331	-	332	334	-	337	342
345	-	346	347	-	348	352	-	354	357
360	-	361	363	-	370	373	-	384	388
403	-	406	423	-	424	425	-	428	433
437	-	438	439	-	440	443	-	445	453
465	-	466	467	-	468	469	-	470	476
479	-	480	484	-	498	500	-	521	525
538	-	539	540	-	541	558	-	560	563
									-

FIRST NEW SERIES:

8	-	11	-	19	21	23	-	28	30	-	49
53	-	70	-	76	-	79	81	100	111	-	114
115	-	134	-	150	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

J. P. WOOD,
"Nostaw",
Stockton Lane,
York.



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Next Issue March

Editor, Miscellaneous Section

Herbert Lockenby, Telephone Exchange,

C/o Central Registry, Northern Command, York

FROM THE EDITOR'S CHAIR

Thanks, Jack! There's quite a lot about the great event, the York exhibition, in other pages; here I must say in my first sentence that a great deal of the credit for its inception goes to Jack Wood, journalist and staunch member of the clan. In fact, if it hadn't been for him it may never have happened at all. Let me explain.

For a long time I had toyed with the idea, but I had never got to the point of approaching the powers that be. Then something happened. One day last September Jack Wood took a stroll down York's ancient Stonegate. Just a stroll, but it had important results. In the window of the duplicating agency he spotted a copy of the C.D. Being interested for a reason that will soon be apparent, he wrote to me, and invited me to tea. I accepted with alacrity, and lo! and behold! I found two miles away from my own home a fellow enthusiast with a fine collection, the Nelson Lees predominating. (Just fancy, he'd been collecting for 20 years, yet we had known each other not.)

Well, those of you who have met me will guess what happened next.

Anyway, at our second meeting I happened to mention the idea of an exhibition. Jack thought it a good one and offered to put it to the Chief Librarian with whom he had a business acquaintance. I jumped at the proposal. A few days later Jack rang me up, said the Librarian was favourably impressed, and would like to talk it over. Then things moved quickly. As soon as I produced some specimen copies the Librarian exclaimed, "Why, yes, I'll be delighted to make a display of them. What a good idea!" Didn't my heart give a bound! A date was fixed straight away, and at subsequent talks the Librarian showed as much enthusiasm as any of us could have done. And that, briefly, is how what has been called a unique display and the first of its kind came into being.

But that isn't all Jack Wood did, for a good many of the papers on show came from his collection. And here let me also cordially express my gratitude to Clive Simpson, Bill Martin, Jim Shepherd, Harry Dowler, Roger Jenkins and Arthur Harris for loaning some very special items. A good company ours.

Trying to do Right by Charlie Wright. One of the highlights of my London holiday was a nine hours, dusk to dawn, non-stop chat by Charlie Wright's hospitable fireside - Charlie getting a word in now and again. On my return I repaid him by forgetting to send him one C.D.; then I missed him out of the "Collectors' Who's Who" in the Annual, even though I was often thinking about him - a case of not being able to see wood for the trees.

I promised faithfully I would make reparation in the January C.D. To my consternation nothing appeared - but this time it wasn't my fault. Charlie's a forgiving fellow - we're still good friends. Anyway, I'll see it's in this time if nothing else is. So here's what should have been in the Annual:

WRIGHT, CHARLES, 12 Ashburnham Road, Greenwich, London, S.E.10.
Age 43. . Groups 3, 5(a), (b), (c), (d).
6 (a), (b). 7.

Has been interested as a collector for about 25 years. Gave up during the war but started again about two years ago. Now getting quite a useful collection together.

Mrs. Wright is also a Sexton Blake fan.

Should St. Frank's rise again? On another page appears a very interesting letter from Mr. E. S. Brooks. One wonders though whether he is quite correct when he says the present generation of boys wants something different to the Nelson Lee yarns we know. What about the success of the Bunter books? The first has sold over 25,000. They can't all have been bought by Magnetites. So why not a "Ripper of St. Franks" on similar lines. What do you think? Anyway, you have plenty of opportunity of reading E. S. Brooks, even if he's disguised as Berkeley Grey or Victor Gunn.

Yours sincerely,

HERBERT LECKENBY.

THE YORK EXHIBITION A GREAT SUCCESS

"SOMETHING UNIQUE" IS THE VERDICT

By Herbert Leckenby

I've had some thrills during the last two years - I certainly got another one when I entered the 'Bunt Room' at the York Public Library on the first evening of the 'Exhibition of Old Boys' Books' (January 17th - 29th 1949). Picture a spacious room, big enough to hold an audience of several hundreds. Right down the centre two rows of cases; along the walls newspaper stands - not showing the Times, Daily Mirror, Yorkshire Post and the rest of the dailies, but the papers we talk about year in and year out. There they were, from the Boys' Own Paper to Fox's Spring-Healed Jack; from that very first Sexton Blake story in 1893 to the January 1949 Sexton Blake Library; 3d Gem and Magnet cheek by jowl with a 7/6d Bunter Book; Number 1 of the Nelson Lee Library and the first St. Franks; Plucks and Pilots - Marvels and Modern Boys; Boys of England, Big Budgets and Boys' Friends; Scouts and Skippers; Comrades and Chips; Black Bess and Boys' Standard; all these and hundreds more. Verily as more than one was heard to say: "There's never been anything like this shown in public before."

It was a treat to hear some of the comments: for instance, the couple with white in their hair, pulling up before a Boys' Friend of 1902. Said the husband: "Sithe, I used to buy that

when we were coorting" - and his partner replied with a laugh, "Aye, the did, and I used to think you thought more about it than the did about me." A railwayman, with whom I got into conversation, said, "Is there a 'Surprise'?" - I pointed out a copy of that paper, with its fantastic stories; a broad grin spread over his face as he said, "Gosh! I remember buying that very copy on my way to school." A schoolboy exclaimed, "Ooh! Look, a comic for a ha'penny" - and a chap in his twenties looked at a "Magnet" and sighed, "I wish it came out now." These were just a few of the comments I heard.

The Librarian came round with a number of visitors, and in a chat with him afterwards he said he believed it was going to prove one of the most successful exhibitions they had ever put on at the Library.

I went home walking on air; one of my fondest dreams had come through.

Earlier on I had been interviewed by a lady correspondent of the Yorkshire Evening Press. You will see what she thought about it all.

Naturally, I got a good deal of personal satisfaction out of all this, but what pleases me most is that it is such a score for the hobby. York is famous the world over, so when the City Fathers sponsor a show like this it is an event of no little moment to us. Not long ago we were inclined to look upon ourselves as kind of Cinderellas in the collecting world - we were as shy of admitting we collected the papers of our youth, as a boy-over his first love affair. However, in the near words of the "greedy, Bessie Bunter-like girl in the late lamented 'Itms' "But it's all right now!"

Last Minute Flash: Since writing the above I have paid several visits to the exhibition. I've been bombarded with questions. I've been told dozens of times: "It's a real treat" by both men and women, in fact, I've been surprised at the interest shown by the Ladies. Yes, of a truth, we've rung the bell all right.

-o-o-o-o-o-

WANTED: Schoolboy's Own, Nos. 292, 334; B.O.P. Vol. No. 35; Captains, Chums, comics. L.M.Allen, 3 Montgomery Drive, Sheffield 7.

York Library shows Dick Barton has a long ancestral line

WHAT an ancestral line the renowned Dick Barton can boast! And how humdrum are his exploits compared with those of his predecessors—the hero of the "penny dreadfuls" and halfpenny marvels of our boyhood days. No drugs or gases for him. On his life hangs not a speck of a dagger between the blades.

A fast track to those gory days comes with a new exhibition in York Public Library this week. A large collection of "blood-dripping" books to the 18th's has been lent by the old Herbert Leggans.

Mr. Lockenby's interest in this type of fiction was kindled during long hours of duty at a search-board during the war. He began to correspond with enthusiasts the world over and now gets 40 letters a week on his hobby.

Here lawless as road and fields behind the glass show-case as a specimen butterflies, are some of the magazines which carried those thrilling tales of action and intrigue. All the heroes are here—Bartholin, the woodman, Dick Barton, the "Sant" Buffers, Dick Hawks, and so on.

Dick Turpin stories
SEVERAL Dick Turpin stories are in the collection. One is about the Dick Deeds of Paris, but another called Black

Beas, or the Knight of the Blood, which extends over 200 pages and into 180,000 words. It is a little nearer home for it reaches its climax in York.

If that sounds a lot of words, wait until you reach the South Blake section. Since he was launched into his career of delation on 20 December, 1891, Blake has been the hero of 3,000 stories told in 200,000,000 words. And he is still going strong.

The schoolboy stories were less gruesome, but just as popular. On show at the exhibition are copies of "The Magnate" with the spicless Billy Bunter, and of that "Penny Popular" with Harry Wharton, Tom Merry, Jimmy Niblet and their respective companies.

Interesting oddments

OTHER interesting oddments include an article by a gentleman named Tom Kemp, Fitzlover of the West, who at last to his home in London in York on a bicycle and hoped to complete the journey in 24 hours. After 20 miles, being his enthusiasm waned. When he reached York he was found on a train with a man branded at Stamford.

There is one of the weekly parts of a pirated version of Dickens's "Pickwick Papers" and another item of interest is a copy of the first boys' magazine to appear in colour—

was Boys of the Empire, and it came out in 1898.

It is noticeable that the titles of the magazines have changed their general theme quite frequently over the years. Towards the mid of the last century, for instance, they were going through a bout of patriotism—Young Britain, Sons of the British Empire and Sons of Britannia were typical of the titles. The "Bloods" bore in those days. Early in the 20th century it was noticed that the "Bloods" became the "War Bloods" and a writer played them innocently on violence in a more worldly kind. The "Bloods" did not fail to reflect a change.

Tantalising

THE most tantalising part about a newspaper is that some of the headlines go on behind the reading glass. A headline was become commonplace engraved in a number defying the efforts of a young lady to escape from a horrible fate. Her reached the bottom of a hole just as the beast was up there. Just as he was about to lift the glass and turn the page over he spotted the printed card "Please do not touch. Being an obedient fellow he will never know what fate befell her."

Exhibition Unique

In the war years, Mr. Herbert Leggans, telephone operator, somewhere in his attic, looked round for a principal article to 18 hours in a stop duty at his sideboard. He found it in the study of blood and "penny dreadfuls".
Now the postman delivers at least 40 letters a week on the subject in his home in Herbert Street, Hull Road. It is his own expenditure mostly mailed. He lives in every part of Britain and overseas. To return to circulation a week's direct

magazine during of the blood news on boys' marvels. The popular exhibition of "Bloods" and "penny dreadfuls"—believed to be first of its kind—opened last week in York Public Library, was Mr. Lockenby's idea. He has lent nearly 400 boys' magazines dating from early Victorian days.

Says the librarian, Mr. H. Doherly: "The exhibition is the most successful we have ever held at the public library."

Left: Extract from "The Newarstle Sun" day Sun"; 25.1.49.

above: From "Yorkshire Gazette" - 21st June, 1949.

REPORT ON THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE LONDON
HEADQUARTERS OF THE OLD BOYS' BOOK CLUB,
HELD AT 27 ARCHDALE ROAD, E. DULWICH, ON
SUNDAY, 2nd JANUARY, 1949. -

With the arrival of the New Year, came the Annual Meeting of the Club, and, in spite of inclement weather, we had a better muster than for December 1948.

We got away to a fine start at 6 p.m. with the reading and signing of the minutes of the December meeting. Mr. Chairman showed the Club the Minute Book in which all the minutes from September 6th had been written, and stated that anyone wishing to inspect it was at liberty to do so when they chose. The same applied to the Account Book.

Letters were read out, and being mostly from members unable to attend, were soon dealt with.

The Treasurer gave his report, and we were found to be still in hand with the funds. With regard to the badge, Mr. Whiter told members that the first deal had fallen through, but that he had had another idea, that of a rubber stamp and wood block. He read out the statement and this was found to be quite reasonable. Mr. Prime suggested that an extra voluntary subscription should be collected towards it, and this was seconded by Mrs. E. Whiter, but Mr. Chairman said that it would be better if we leave it over to the next meeting, and the matter can be brought up again.

The next item on the Agenda was the Election of Officers. As this was the Annual Meeting, the procedure was usual, and the same officers were elected "en bloc".

Following up Mr. Geal's idea with regard to the postcards, the Chairman showed members a specimen which Mr. Geal had had printed, and brought along. This was approved by all, and the necessary money handed over to Mr. Geal, who is to proceed with the printing forthwith.

Mr. Geal also proposed a set of rules. These were put to the Club, one by one, and were all approved as they were, except for one, which was altered accordingly. They will appear in the C.D. with this report, and in time all members will have a copy. Also

appearing will be a complete list of members, this being suggested by Mr. R. Blythe. This was unanimously agreed.

Two members were mentioned as being behind with their subscriptions, and one other member has been scratched from the Club being four months in arrears.

Jottings were discussed next, and Rookwood was included, Master Ian Whitmore being the only member to deal with that school, but Mr. Peckman said that he would give him a bit of help, by doing some himself. Mr. B. Whiter, who is in charge of Sexton Blake, also took charge of the Rookwood jottings.

The next meeting has been fixed for Sunday 6th February, at 706 Lordship Lane, Wood Green, N.22, and it is hoped that as many members as possible will attend, as this is the first birthday of the Club. As a little celebration we shall have an early tea, so can members arrive by 4 p.m. There will be a short meeting, and a few games to mark the occasion.

It was suggested by Mr. Blythe that books which are known well to everyone should be brought to members' notice by readers of some selecting a story, i.e. comical or mysterious, and, being given about $\frac{1}{2}$ hour, should do a short precis of it. Mr. Blythe will start with the Nelson Lee Library.

It was also suggested that Mr. E. S. Turner should be asked to become a member and that Mr. Herbert Leckenby should be asked to become a Vice President. This was carried.

Subs were then collected.

A Quiz which had been compiled by Messrs. Wright and L. Peckman followed, and this was won by Mr. Robert Whiter, with Mr. Ben Whiter second, proving that they are not only capable of compiling "Quiz's" but of winning them. Mrs. J. Peckman was third, and Mr. Robert Blythe fourth.

The meeting closed at 8 p.m.

Attendance: Mr, Mrs and Miss Peckman, Mr and Mrs. F. Keeling, Mr. and Mrs. C. Wright, Mr and Mrs. R. Whiter, Miss L. Butcher, Messrs. R. Blythe, J. Geal, B. Prime, and B. Whiter.

EILEEN WHITER (Hon. Secretary)

Late News: The February meeting of the Old Boys' Beck Club is unavoidably postponed until Sunday the 13th inst.

OLD BOYS' BOOK CLUBRULES

- 1) NAME The Club shall be named the "Old Boys' Book Club".
- 2) OBJECTS
 - (a) To promote and encourage the hobby of collecting Old Boys' Books.
 - (b) To do all such lawful things as may be conducive to the Attainment of the above Object.
- 3) MEMBERSHIP
 - (a) Any person interested in the Pastime of collecting Old Boys' Books shall be eligible for Election as a member of the Club.
 - (b) Candidates for Election must make application on the Form Prescribed, and give such undertakings as may be required. The Power of Election shall rest with the Executive, who may refuse to Elect any person without assigning a reason for doing so.
 - (c) Honorary members may be Elected.
- 4) SUBSCRIPTIONS
 - (a) Subscriptions shall be at the rate of 1/- per month.
 - (b) Any Member whose subscription shall be Two (2) months in arrears, and after notice has been given, be a further month in arrears, (making THREE (3) months in all) shall cease to be a member.
- 5) OFFICERS
 - (a) The Executive of the Club shall consist of President, Chairmen, Secretary and Treasurer.
 - (b) These Officers are to be Elected Annually, at the Annual General Meeting, by Members present at the Meeting.
 - (c) Any member of not less than THREE (3) months standing shall be eligible for Election.
 - (d) The Executive shall be in control of, and responsible for all affairs carried on by, or on account of the Club.
 - (e) The Executive shall appoint Committees to undertake various sections of the work for the Club. Each Committee shall be responsible to the Executive.
 - (f) Nominations of members for the Official Positions may be handed to the Secretary at the A.G.M.

- (5)(g) THE CHAIRMAN The Chairman shall preside at all meetings, and shall be responsible for the prompt execution of the business appertaining to the Club.
- (h) THE SECRETARY. The Secretary shall record the proceedings of the Club in a Minute Book, kept for that purpose.
- (i) THE TREASURER. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the funds of the Club, and provide such statements of receipts and expenditure as may be required.

6) MEETINGS

- (a) The Annual General Meeting shall be held in January.
- (b) Special General Meetings of the Club may be called at any time by the Executive, or on the written request of TEN (10) Members.
- (c) Seven (7) clear days notice in writing of the A.G.M. and any S.G.M., shall be sent to each Member.
- (d) Ordinary meetings shall normally be held on the First (1) Sunday of each month, at premises decided by the Executive.
- (e) No business shall be transacted at any meeting save that which is stated on the Agenda.
- (f) Reports of all Meetings shall be Printed in the "COLLECTORS' DIGEST".

7) RULES

Alterations and (OR) additions to these rules shall be made at any meeting for discussion at proposed meeting.

Advortise in the C.D.



IT IS GOING TO BE LIKE OLD TIMES!

January 13th, 1949.

Dear Herbert Leckenby,

Thank you for your letter, as well as your last. I am quite ashamed that I have not sent on the note for the show; I was waiting to write a letter with it: but here it is anyhow. The fact is that Billy Bunter, Bessie Bunter, Tom Merry, Jimmy Silver and Co., and the Carcroft fellows, have been literally swarming over the typewriter, and correspondence has had to go by the board. Even "King of the Islands" has come into his own again!

Many thanks for the delightful Annual too. This is a real feast. But there will be a lull in the sea of words shortly, and then I will write you at greater length about the Annual: I have quite a lot of things to say about it and the good things in it. In the meantime, best of luck with the show, and with kind regards.

Yours sincerely,
FRANK RICHARDS.

FROM AN OLD, FAMILIAR FRIEND

To The Editor,
Collectors' Digest.

Dear Sir:-

In order to dispel any misapprehension which might exist in the minds of your readers regarding my attitude towards the old St. Frenk's stories, which I wrote for so many years, a few remarks from me seem to be indicated. So here goes.

I am always delighted to receive letters from the faithful

Old Timers who still have a soft spot in their hearts for my school stories. Indeed, I receive letters quite regularly from a number of them, and from all over the world. It gives me great pleasure to know that these old St. Frank's stories, although officially dead, are still very much alive to a certain loyal following. My own attitude with regard to St. Frank's can be summed up in a very few words: at the time of writing these stories I virtually lived with the characters, and to me they were very real and human; and every now and again I am gripped by a nostalgia to take my pen in hand and bring them all back to life. It was great fun, writing about ram-headed old Handy and his sturdy chums, and all the other chaps, too numerous to mention here.

Unfortunately, I just haven't time. Also, I doubt if there is a worth-while market for these leisurely, happy-go-lucky school stories. The present generation of boys is more interested in snappier, faster stuff. A new Nelson Lee Library would undoubtedly please many of the readers of your excellent journal, but the great masses of the schoolboy public would probably give it the go-by. So, even if such a resurrection were possible, I doubt if it would be a financial success. And, after all, I've got to live.

I am living in rather a different kind of world now — writing, under the name of "Berkeley Grey", about a daredevil character called Norman Conquest. His adventures are related in a series of novels, published by Messrs. William Collins, Sons & Co., Ltd., at 8/6d. There are 20 of these books in the libraries, and, I give you my word, it takes me all my time to keep up with this novel writing, which is much more exacting than my earlier work. Perhaps some of your readers are not aware of my present activities, and if they are really keen on the kind of work I turn out, here's a chance for them to get re-acquainted. If they liked my school stories — which, after all, had a distinct detective flavour — they might like these. Or they might like "Ironsides Cromwell of the Yard" even better, for, of course, Bill Cromwell is a real detective, whereas Norman Conquest is a buccaneer kind of adventurer.

What's all this about Cromwell of the Yard? Yes, quite. I forgot to mention that I also write under the name of "Victor Gunn" — but please keep this under your hats. I'm telling you this quite unofficially and off the record. My "Ironsides Cromwell" books, now numbering over a dozen, are also published by Messrs. Collins, and at the same price. They are in all good

libraries, too — even the Public libraries. So if you Old Timers have been labouring under the delusion that I've been a slacker, just pop round to your local bookshop and take a look at the shelves! Actually, I hope you won't see any of my books on those shelves — because, if you do, it'll mean they're not very popular. The point I'm getting at is that I've been working like steam ever since the dear old St. Frank's stories faded out, and I think you will agree with me that I haven't much time, these days, for reviving my old kind of work.

I would like to conclude by thanking my hosts of old and faithful readers through the medium of this happy little journal of yours; and I hope they will continue to enjoy my work in the newer medium. It is only fair to myself to say that my position is very different from that of the inimitable Mr. Charles Hamilton, whose brilliant stories I enjoyed reading as a boy, for he is still writing school stories, and is therefore able to keep his old characters alive. I have branched off into a different field, and it is only natural that this new field should claim both my interest and my time.

Wishing all success to Collectors' Digest, and with my kindest regards to all your readers,

Sincerely,

EDWY SEARLES BROOKS.

A CHAMPION OF WARWICK REYNOLDS

Bristol. Dec. 23rd, 1948.

Dear Mr. Editor,

Eric Payne's article dealing with the Christmas Double Numbers of the Gem and Magnet, appearing in the Annual, is undoubtedly an excellent effort. However, I do feel that I must take up the cudgels on behalf of Warwick Reynolds, the Gem artist of days gone by.

Mr. Payne makes the statement, and in no uncertain terms, that a design executed by Reynolds for the Gem Christmas No. of 1917 was "hideous".

I happen to possess this particular number, and, curiously enough, have always considered it to be one of the best covers ever drawn for a Gem Double Number. To achieve the desired effect in two colours, red and blue, is no small feat, particularly when one considers that this was produced over 30 years ago.

Most artists, I am sure, will agree that the drawing of the dog is excellent, drawn in a technique in which Warwick Reynolds excelled, and the tenseness in the attitude of Levison minor as he holds the lamp aloft is very well portrayed. The whole colour scheme is first rate, and, as I remarked earlier, makes for a first class cover.

Certainly, everybody is entitled to his own opinion where art is concerned. Unfortunately, opinions are frequently expressed from people whose knowledge of commercial art is limited. Most commercial artists will tell you that one of the worst features of making drawings for general publication is the business of trying to please everybody, and, of course, the customer can't be wrong.

Reverting, however, to this particular drawing of Reynolds, I disagree wholeheartedly with Mr. Payne's "hideous", and writing as a trained commercial artist, would like to comment that I consider Warwick Reynolds' work by far the best which ever adorned the pages of the Companion Papers.

Yours truly,

P. A. WALKER.

This is the sort of article which makes one say, "Why, it might have been me." I know when I read it I had to smile at the description of the prize-giving and Pilgrim's Progress, for I had almost exactly the same experience. Nevertheless, despite stern parents, they were happy days when a penny was wealth to a boy at school. - H.L.)

"THE MISTY CORRIDORS"

By Frank Snell

It is often said that old age is more concerned with childhood days and memories, rather than with the immediate present and coming future. One reason being that youthful memories and escapades stand out crystal clear, whilst the present and future are but dimly seen through the misty particles of obscurity.

No doubt, this most peculiar feeling about the present and future is the unhappy lot of most of us today, thanks to the powers that be who just simply add, deduct, multiply and divide

the main necessities of life as though they were dealing with a flock of sheep. As for the present and future as far as I am concerned, well, I am like one of the lambs in that vast flock, bleating for the good old days. It may be due to the times, or it may be that I am growing old whilst still in the early stages. Nevertheless, my mind is very often on a journey through the misty corridors of past memories. Happy days! Glorious moments when time seemed to stand still and all that mattered was the thing in hand. If it wasn't school, it was sport, and if it wasn't sport, then it was books and periodicals. For the purpose of this article, it is the latter I am concerned with, as they gave me more pleasure, and landed me in more trouble than anything else I remember.

Compared with youngsters of today, I certainly think I lived in a golden age, that is, as far as reading matter is concerned. A few odd coppers was often the sum total of weekly wealth, and these would send me post haste to the newsagent. To quote but just a few of the periodicals as they occur to my mind, I can vividly recall the "Boys' Realm", prominent for its sporting and adventure yarns. "Chums", that glorious long standing publication which used to appear annually before the war, and now alas! completely vanished from our ken. Its pages were gilded with school, sporting and thrilling adventures, and oft-times provided a peep at the Spanish Main and the swashbuckling, buccaneering days of old. "The Scout", with its slightly more serious, but splendid stories nevertheless, appealing to the best that lay in latent youth. Adventures, sporting yarns, tales of heroic deeds, and articles with a thread of moral uplift running through them. The "Union Jack" containing happy memories of the "evergreen" Sexton Blake, together with Tinker, Pedro, Inspector Coutts and quaint old Mrs. Berdell. The "Boys' Friend" and Boys' Friend 3d Library; Nelson Lee's, and a whole host of other publications, including the dear old Magnet and Gem.

In view of the shortage of shiny coppers, how was it then that I was able to indulge in this formidable array? Mainly due to the "lease and lend" arrangement, popularised during the war, but very much in evidence and uppermost even in those far off days.

My chief interest lay in school yarns, and this having been stimulated by the Magnet and Gem, was further aroused by the discovery of Talbot Baines Reed, whose stories of Public School life

only whetted my youthful appetite for more. Strange to say, other avenues explored by T.B.R. left me completely unmoved. Titles like "The Adventures of a Three Guinea Watch" and others of similar nature, savoured too much of essay writing at school. I was much more at home with "Tom, Dick and Harry", "The Cook House at Fellsgerth"; "The Fifth Form at St. Dominica"; "The Master of the Shell", etc.

The story I remember most vividly of all, and which stirs the misty corridors of my memory to the extent of being surrounded by the most pleasant of memories was that written of Harrow by H.A. Vechell, entitled "The Hill". The book is still in my possession, and every time I turn the pages over, a flood of memories comes surging back. I was on holiday from school at the time, staying with relatives, whose only form of reading material was confined to "The Lamplighter", "Swiss Family Robinson" and the usual serious semi-religious type of those days. Frankly, I was bored, and I hid myself to the nearest bookshop and in a thin, piping voice, asked for a school yarn. The assistant turned to a shelf containing a complete row of books usually presented as Sunday School Awards. Having already had some samples of these, I think my heart must have shuddered, for I well remember saying, "It must be a school story!" The assistant evidently knew what she was about and what she was looking for, for she immediately pounced on a blue covered book, and almost reverently placed same in front of me. "There," she said, very obligingly, "that's the best of the whole bunch." H. A. Vechell and "The Hill" conveyed little to me at the time, but the fact that it was a school yarn was sufficient, and I remember racing down the hill (strange coincidence, but it was so) and returned as fast as my legs would carry me.

It was the most magic day I ever remember. A school story that was completely different. No startling adventures, but the simple tale of a fight for a boy's soul. Even now, I am still intrigued with John Verney, Caesar and The Demon. Needless to say, "The Hill" was my constant companion throughout those wonderful summer days.

Some time back, a newspaper article referred to the inattentiveness of choir boys, and the vicar of the church concerned hit on the brilliant idea of allowing the boys to read detectives and other yarns to occupy the sermon period. The incident reminded me of many years ago when sermons were dry as the very dust, and

in company with two more bright sparks, I was utilising this unwanted period in reading a Magnet; safely hidden as I thought by the height of the then termed horse-box pew. Alas! for our hopes of about half an hour's delight. The preacher possessed a gimlet, piercing eyes of the quality of our old friend, Mr. Quelch. He soon spotted the "unforgiveable" and denounced the three of us as miserable sinners. I forget now the actual words he used, but needless to say we caught it in the neck. If only the circumstances could be transferred to the present day, I should probably still be reading the Magnet, and if the preacher was an old enthusiast like myself, I am sure the sequel would have meant an exchange of views, a pat on the back, followed by a "lease and lend" arrangement of Magnets and Gems.

Another tragic occurrence I well recall with much sorrow and pain! A distribution of Sunday School Awards at a period when I was full of the Magnet, Gem, Buffalo Bills and the bloodthirsty epoch. One book I saw was a school yarn; another of adventures. What was the fate in store for me? The Superintendent, evidently under the impression that I was lacking in spiritual guidance, presented me with a gaily attractive book of huge dimensions. My thrill of eager anticipation was soon dashed to the ground when I saw the title - "Pilgrim's Progress". To say I was disappointed is to say the very least. In fact, I must have had a dash of "The Bounder's" spirit in me that day, for I swapped Burven's masterpiece for two or three Boys' Friend Threepennies. Oh, yes, I got it all right when I duly arrived home. I failed to produce anything solid in the way of literature, but my father produced something much more solid which left me in a state of much sorrow and pain.

The monthly edition of the "C.D." and the occasional issues of the "Collectors's Miscellany" always send my thought scuttling backwards. Titles of the old periodicals conjure up magic recollections. A glance down the list and a certain title strikes a chord of memory. I am on the verge of a great discovery, but am finally beaten by its elusiveness. It is as though I catch a slight glimpse of a picture, some vague mixture of figures and colour, and just when I am about to look at its completeness, the canvas becomes a blur and I am left alone with the mists. Perhaps I gather some threads of a story, peopled with characters of long ago, but at the precise moment when I am about to put tongue to the names, the mists blow up again and I am left with a faded

page covered with schoolboys, pirates, adventurers, footballers and cricketers. Although there is nothing that I can definitely term as tangible, there is an approach to a pleasant feeling of pulling aside a curtain and visualising a stage of well remembered characters. The only solution I can see at the moment is to try and get hold of some of these books, and then perhaps I shall place the picture, name the character and relive the story.

A glorious reality in my possession, however, is a treasured collection of Magnets and Gems, and the constant turning back of the pages provides me with "Peter Panish" youth. In spite of the increasing years, there exists for many of us a dual personality, an existence whereby we retain our present day values and powers of thought, yet at the same time, revelling as it were in memories of the youthful, happier and sunnier days. Part of this cause has been brought about by Frank Richards, who recently revived the flagging hopes of numerous enthusiasts, with the re-introduction of "Billy Bunter" and that academy sword for famous schools - "Greyfriars".

Those of us who possess treasured collections, have a lot to be thankful for and envied, judging by the revelation of the C.D. Annual. For my part, I just turn back the pages and a few paragraphs quickly transport me into the schooldays of the green-and-pleasant-land variety.

"Frank Richards!" The most colourful personality of all those golden days, and now the misty corridor of time has revealed his identity, his personality has become more colourful than ever. When I think of what he is turning out today, together with that of olden days, and take into consideration the tremendous competition for pride of place provided by boys' books in the days prior to the first world war and after, I cannot help but echoing the sentiments expressed by other C.D. writers, who constantly refer to the pedestal of honour he rightly occupies.

Not wishing to be involved in the merits of the Old Papers, I may say the Magnet was, and still is, my "beau ideal" of Mr. Hamilton's happy family. This is a personal opinion and as such, I must add that the Magnet has given me the greatest pleasure of all. Putting aside H.A. Vechell's publication "The Hill", which must be classed in a different category, the Magnet with an existence of thirty odd years, provided for me at any rate, the best obtainable in school yarns. Its well known characters have been living monuments of the gayest, rarest and refreshing emotions

that ever pulled the strings of human interest. Through the medium of an elder brother, I first made the acquaintance of the Magnet around about 1912. I hadn't arrived at the purchasing stage then, and had to be content with a "second hand" experience. I can't remember any particular story in detail, but I have a very strong recollection of the Chinese - Wu Lang, also his younger brother, being involved in some escapade. I distinctly remember the cover, depicting the two Chinese approaching a large house. What they were doing there or what the story was about, I haven't the faintest idea. The misty corridors of my memory have defied all attempts at solving the mystery, so I am living in hopes that one day I shall obtain the copy, which should then put my mind at rest. Apart from the artist, the definite impression of the characters was well and truly provided by Frank Richards. Admitted, the artist gave the character a speaking likeness, but this was in no way to be compared to the depth and lasting strength as portrayed by Frank Richards. He made them real, alive. Characters that sort of lived with you, as it were, and you shared their emotions, triumphs and set-backs, so that you became a part and portion of the atmosphere. The fact that I still remember, after all these years, speaks volumes for itself.

The most outstanding memory of Magnets and Gams was the long awaited Christmas Double Numbers. One could always depend on Frank Richards and Martin Clifford turning out a series of ghost stories or thrilling adventures that lasted from a period before Christmas and long after, until vacation days were over, followed by a boisterous return to the ancient portals of Greyfriars and St. Jim's. I wonder if ever again we shall experience such a delightful feast for Christmas fare? Who know? Perhaps this very important question will be duly answered when the misty corridors we call "time" reveals all its precious secrets. But as this means several years hence, here's hoping that Frank Richards will continue in his "evergreen" state, for the years unfortunately take their toll, and with them the friends we can ill afford to spare. Coupling your sentiments with mine, let us drink a toast to Charles Hamilton and wish him "good health" and all the very best for many years to come.

The Nelson Lee Column

Conducted by Robert Blythe
81 Alton Road, Holloway, London, N.7.

As you have probably read, the London Book Club have embarked upon a venture which will be of vital importance to collectors. I refer of course to the research work in connection with the compiling of an index of the Nelson Lee, Magnet, Gem and Sexton Blake. As will be realised, it will be no easy task, and we in London estimate that a couple of years will be needed before it is anywhere near completion. The more there are taking part in this research, the quicker it will be finished, and therefore I would like to take this opportunity of inviting you to take part. It is hoped to have the information printed in book form, or feeling this, duplicated on the lines of the Annual. So if you would care to join us in the research, just drop me a line and I will let you have full details of the way in which we are tackling it.

Should there be anyone whose interest lies mainly in the Magnet, Gem or Sexton Blake, and who are just reading this simply because they have read everything else, but would like to work on their favourite paper, I would suggest that they write to the respective members of the club responsible. These are John Geal (Magnet), Charlie Wright (Gem) and Ben Whiter (Sexton Blake).

Mr. Webb, of Sparkhill, Birmingham, asks me whether I could supply the Author's name with the titles list. As a matter of fact, I gave a complete list in the April number of last year, but as a lot of new readers have joined since then, it will not come amiss, I think if I repeated it for the newcomers' benefit.

Here they are then, up to this month's list. After the last title this month, all the books are by E.S.B.

No's 16, 21, 23, 27, 28, 29, 32, 33, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42, 44, 45, 47, 49, 50, 51, 53, 54, 57, 59, 60, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 68, 70, 72, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 80, 82, 84, 85, 87, 88, 90, 91, 93-106, 109 and onwards were written by E.S. Brooks.

No's 2, 15, 17, 19, 22, 24, 26, 30, 31, 34, 36, 40, 43, 46, 52, 55, 56, 58, 61, 67, 69, 71, 73, 79, 81, 83, 86, 89, 92, 107, 108, were by G.H. Teed, and No's 1, 4, 11, 12, 14, 20, were in all probability written by William

Murray Graydon. No's 3,5,6,9,10,18,56 all show similarities with W.M.Graydon, but the authorship is not certain. It has occurred to me that it may be of some help to you when buying copies of the old paper, to know just what are first and last numbers of the various series. From this month onwards I shall give 10 series at a time. It should take about 8 months to complete, so it won't be long before the series in which you are particularly interested will appear.

No's 112-120 (with the exception of No's 113,115,117,119)

Nipper at St. Frank's.

121-131 (excepting No's 121,123,124,127)

Complete School Stories.

132-141 Introducing De Valeris, Yakema and Circle of Terror.

142-147 Nelson Lee V. Circle of Terror.

148-157 Hunter the Ham.

158-165 St. Frank's in the South Seas.

166-169 Complete Stories.

170-177 Introducing Reggie Pitt.

178-186 Intro. Jack Grey. The Boy from Bernardsay.

187-196 Colonel Clinton.

Finally this month's list.

No. 91 A Mystery of the Footlights.

92 The Man Hunters.

93 The Brass Bound Box.

94 The Monk of Montessor.

95 The Secret of Crooked Reef.

96 Nipper's Notebook.

97 The Manor House Mystery.

98 Fenge of Steel.

99 The Mystery of the Grey Ger.

100 The Clue of the Twisted Ring

101 Behind the Door.

102 The Secret of Nalsey Island.

103 The Sheriff of Blasing Walsh.

104 The Hovering Peril.

105 The Ivory Seekers (intro. Lord Dorriemore and Unlosi)

106 Cast on the Shore.

107 Lot.

108 The Kidnapped Stockbroker.

109 The Case of the Crimson Feathers.

110 The Affair of the Duplicate Door.



ABOVE
St. Frank's
Crest and
Motto

PRAISE FOR THE ANNUAL

There was a splendid response to our request for opinions on the Annual. I have a stack before me, and they are still coming in. It is quite evident all were well satisfied, quite a few declaring it was better than last year's, though one of my friends was of the reverse opinion.

The reception of one article was rather curious - I wish which one it was. One or two put it first, several praise others, to be candid, didn't like it at all.

We should like to have more views on the articles which were liked best, so a little later on we propose circulating ballot papers asking you to place, say, six, in what you consider order of merit, thus giving us something to work on when preparing next year's.

Here are just a few comments taken at random.

"An extremely capable piece of work and you are to be congratulated. Something for everybody in it; you go from strength to strength." - Peter Welker, Bristol.

"Even better than last year's, and that is certain saying a lot." - J.F.B. Stewart-Hunter, Nottingham, S.E.9.

"Congratulations on another excellent Annual. How Maurice and yourself ever managed to get it together is beyond me. I am now looking forward to the third!" Robert Blythe, Holloway.

"The Annual was exceedingly interesting. Many of the articles, particularly that on the 'Libraries', having a real permanent value." - John R. Shew, Camberwell.

"I thought the Annual was a wonderful job of work, even better than last year's. The article I liked best was Bill Gender's. Another grand effort was Maurice Bond's 'Post-war Christmas at Baker Street.'" Wm. Colcombe, Southend.

"Enjoyed Annual immensely. 'Dwellers in the Remove' interested me most. A great amount of research work must have been spent on all articles, and the authors of them deserve praise." - James Dow, Aberdeen.

"Absolutely first-rate. Considering amount of work that has gone into it, price exceedingly reasonable." - Eric Lendy, Dagenham.

EXCHANGE: Sale. Offers, Blake Detective Weeklies; H. L. Hilly Annals. Many others. Wanted: Fantasy Books or? - Henry J. H. Bartlett, Pass Hill, Shipton Gorge, Bridport, Dorset.

WANTED: Any back numbers Collectors' Digest. W. Martin, 93 Hillside, Stonebridge Park, Willesden, London, N.W.10. Phone, Willesden 4474.

WANTED URGENTLY: Populiers (1924) 298 and 299. Will exchange for Magnets or pay good price. L. Peckman, 27 Archdale Road, East Dulwich, London, S.E.22.

WANTED: Alline Publications, Turpins, Levels, Robin Hoods, etc. L. R. Lenny, 4 Nuneston Road, Dagenham, Essex.

WANTED: Early Issue of Gem, Magnet, Pluck. Brag brought. A few Magnets and Gems for disposal and Red-covered Magnets for Exchange only. Eric Payne, 23 Grove Road, Surbiton, Surrey.

WANTED URGENTLY: Collectors' Digests Nos 15, 16, 17, and 21. Milson Writer, 706 Lardship Lane, West Green, London, N.22.

WANTED URGENTLY: Magnet Libraries (Henderson's) containing the "Tufty & Co." stories. No others required. John Robyns, 41 Frier Road, Brighton, 6.

WANTED: Any publications 1908-1918. For sale, 200 "Victorians" 3s each; "Jack Harkaway Among Indians" 4s.; "Kath the Betrayer" 5s.; "Strands"; "Plucks"; "Gems", 1s; H.A.'s, 1925, 1927, 1928, 8s.6d. E. V. Hughes, "Caswell", 25 Hillsboro Road, Bognor Regis.

WANTED: Schoolboy's Own Nos. 292, 334; B.O.P. Vol. N. 35; Captains, Chums, comics. L. M. Allen, 3 Montgomery Drive, Sheffield 7.

Wanted Urgently: Gems, Nos. 356, 358 and 359. Top prices paid. Leonard Peckman, 27 Archdale Road, East Dulwich, London, S.E.22.



All Correspondence to

H. M. Bond, 10, New Wen, Rhiwbina, Cardiff

THE ROUND TABLE

Quite a number of letters have arrived from readers since I completed the January Round Table. Some of them were critical and some were praising. That is just as I want it, of course, but I was a bit disappointed that not one useful suggestion was forthcoming. It must have been obvious to most Blake fans that I have been short of material for Blakiana for some months now despite repeated urgent requests for articles. Were it not for one or two faithful members of our band this section would have been an all-Bond effort, which might have given me a deal of pleasure, but would have been a bit tedious to many readers. I know that there are many regular readers of this section of the C.D. who are as keen as mustard on Blake. May I again appeal to them to air their views in these pages. We want contributions from everyone. Criticisms will then be more welcome than they are at the moment. One letter (which was addressed to my co-editor incidentally) praised my articles in the 1948 Annual, but expressed distaste at my Dr. Satire articles. It was my intention to conclude this series in the near future and I would like to know if this is desired by readers in general. Nobody has suggested that it has been a long time since the last Satira

article appeared, and this rather indicates that few are interested in the series. Shall I do as this one letter suggests and stop them? This same letter suggests that I am rather inclined to confine my articles to my own special favourites. Quite right. The writer of the missive has done quite the same on several occasions, in fact, he has repeated himself so much that we have been left in no doubt that HIS own special favourites WERE head and shoulders above all others. Here is one more reason why we should have more articles from a greater number of readers.

Another reader suggested that I had made an error in my "Post-War Christmas At Baker Street" item. I referred to "splash" Page as having been upset at the death of John G. Brandon, whereas the reader thinks it should have been Gwyn Evans. In one sense he is correct, I suppose; it should have been Gwyn Evans, in fact I originally intended it to be so, and then I thought to myself that if it were indeed true that John G. Brandon passed away some years ago it would make the whole thing sound better if the character should be upset by his death. It would, in fact, rather stress that authors and characters were part of one big happy family within the Blake circle. In other words, I could just as well have said that "Splash" was affected by the death of G.H. Teed or Robert Murray. Brandon's name just came to my head first and so it was that the feature appeared as it did. I think it can be safely said that Mr. Brandon is deceased. Can any reader confirm this, please?

Lovers of the work of Coutts Brisbane, creator of Dr. Ferraro, may be interested to know that this author has just published a new novel entitled "Wheels of Fortune" (Nelson 7/6.) which is a historical adventure story dealing with the uses made by two young men of a wonderful steam coach in the fight against Napoleon. Coutts Brisbane recently published a thriller entitled "The Memory Men" in the same series. It is apparently a very good yarn, for most of those reading it have liked it. Being a librarian, I can tell you this with confidence. It might be a better criticism of the book than by any other means.

What do you think of the revelation by Rex Dolphin this month? Please drop me a line and let me know your views. I must confess that his latest article rather intrigued me. And what do you think of the S.B.L. title lists series?

Cheerio for now,

H. M. BOND.

Once again we are able to give you an article from the pen of one of our most versatile Blake fans.

TRACKED DOWN!

or DOUBLE IDENTITY

by Rex Dolphin

The above title serves to introduce, not, as might well be imagined, a Sexton Blake story of the older type, but a short factual article about Blake authors and their pseudonyms.

Most of the aliases are now well known, and this is in no sense a list of them (for such a list the reader should consult the Author's Who's Who in The Collectors' Digest Annual for 1948). It is rather a series of incidents showing how I discovered some of these hidden identities myself - more, I hasten to add, through the publishers' carelessness than any Sexton Blakery of my own!

They gave John Hunter away by issuing one Sexton Blake Library under the name of Peter Heriton. The style of writing was identical with Hunter's. Even some of the characters' names were the same as those in previous Hunter stories. Also, of course, John Hunter wrote of Captain Deck versus Sexton Blake in earlier stories, and Deck stories are published by another firm under Heriton's name.

I had long suspected from similarity of style that Reid Whitley was Coutts Brisbane, but this suspicion was clinched when, on the title page of "Union Jack" No. 1367 "The Judgement Men" appeared the words "author of 'The Four Buffalo Bills' etc." The story of the four "Bills" was a Ferraro story, and Ferraro was Coutts Brisbane's pet. This caption would not have been of sufficient evidence in itself, as the editor often made mistakes in these. For instance, "The Union Jack" No. 1411 "The Last of the Lynns" (C. Malcolm Hincks) is stated to be by the author of "The Hate Doctor" (Anthony Skene). And try as I may I can't see those two authors as one.

I once thought that Hincks and Donald Stuart were the same man, owing to a similarity in the type of story they favoured. But closer inspection doesn't lend any colour to this suspicion, and each author seems to have a known personal background which eliminates this possibility.

But there is no doubt that Donald Stuart and Gerald Verner

are one and the same. Several stories by Verner published by Messrs. Wright & Brown Ltd. are simply Donald Stuart's Blake stories fitted out with the Baker-Street pair under different names. In this connection another suspicion intrudes - namely that Messrs. Wright & Brown are part of The Amalgamated Press! I wonder how many people who turn their noses up at Sexton Blake are keen Verner fans? Amusingly enough, I suffered from this type of snobbery myself in an inverted form. Seeing cheap editions of Verner stories with their rather crude covers on the bookstalls I would pass them by as not worth my notice. And then one week the Detective Weekly announced a forthcoming serial by Verner. I wasn't interested - until the first instalment appeared, decorated with the author's photograph. I looked - surely that face was familiar? Turning to an old "Union Jack" I found Donald Stuart's photograph, and the case was ended. After that I bought Verner stories, but was disappointed to find that most of them were rehashes of Blake.

Most of the other aliases I knew nothing about until brought to my attention by others. Edwy Scerles Brooks and Berkeley Gray, for instance. I hadn't even remotely connected them.

But I have one up my sleeve, and believe it to be a brand new, hitherto unsuspected discovery. Would any reader who has them, please turn to "Union Jacks" No's 1348 and 1363 - "The Adventure of the White Salute" and "The Mail Bag Mystery". The author is one Victor Framlin, and these are his only stories, so far as I am aware. When I first read them I gave them a mental A.1. Re-reading them recently I became aware of the style of writing - the same as that of a favourite author. Staccato, ironic, incisive, and excellent on action work. A burning sense of justice. A trick of repetition as in the sentence:

"Steady," said Blake - "steady, Mr. Strickley. We must not jump to conclusions."

Closer inspection, and comparison with stories by that favourite author, strengthened my conviction that Victor Framlin was none other than Anthony Skene!

THE SEXTON BLAKE LIBRARY. - 1947

Third Series 135 - 158

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|---|------------------|
| 135. A Date With Danger | Gilbert Chester. |
| 136. The Crime On The Cliff | Lewis Jackson. |
| 137. The Secret Of The Veld. | Rex Hardinge. |
| 138. The Riddle of the Escaped P.O.W. | Anthony Parsons. |
| 139. According To Plan | Lewis Jackson. |
| 140. The Case Of The Double Event. | John Hunter. |
| 141. The Affair Of The Missing Parachutist. | Anthony Parsons. |
| 142. The Case Of The Chinese Courier. | Rex Hardinge. |
| 143. The Riddle Of The Sailing Men. | John Hunter. |
| 144. The Mystery of the Crashed Air Liner. | Gilbert Chester. |
| 145. The Man From Kenya. | Anthony Parsons. |
| 146. The Riddle Of The Film Star's Jewels. | Lewis Jackson. |
| 147. The Yellow Terror. | Rex Hardinge. |
| 148. The Euston Road Mystery. | Anthony Parsons. |
| 149. * Warned Off. | John Hunter. |
| 150. The Holiday Camp Mystery | Walter Tyrer. |
| 151. The Riddle Of The Burmese Curse. | Anthony Parsons. |
| 152. The Case Of The Fighting Padre | Lewis Jackson. |
| 153. The Man Who Lost His Memory | Anthony Skene. |
| 154. The Secret Of The Jungle | Rex Hardinge. |
| 155. The Night Of The Twenty-Third | Lewis Jackson. |
| 156. The Great Currency Racket | Gilbert Chester. |
| 157. The Man From Mongolia | Rex Hardinge. |
| 158. The Mystery Of The Whitehall Bomb. | Anthony Parsons. |

* With this issue the S.B.L. reverted to 64 pp issues with double column print.

SCOOP:

Starting in March Issue.

"Notes from the Diaries of Maxwell Scott, creator of 'Nelson Lee'." With the kind permission of his son, the Rev. J.H.M. Staniforth. Continuity by J.P. Wood.

Inside Story! Absorbing! Intimate!

FOR SALE:

Boys Friend 3d Libraries, 1st Series, Nos. 21, 41, 91, 94, 237, 481, 517, 755, 756; Prices 1s.0d to 5s.0d.

Henderson's 1d Nugget Libraries, Nos. 88, 164. Excellent condition - Offers please.

Four Gem Christmas Numbers, 197, 302, 407 and 724.

Gems (1st series) 18, 35, 38, 46. Gems: Six dated 1917, 1s.6d each; 24 dated 1917-19, 1s.3d each.

1938 Holiday Annual, 6s.0d.

John Shaw, 4, Brunswick Park, London, S.E.5.

BOY'S JOURNALS

GRANDFATHERS and great-grandfathers who still think affectionately of the "Boys" and "penny dreadfuls" that filled so many happy boyhood hours, can see these same magazines, with the modern dramatic front covers, in a new exhibition at York Public Library.

There are over 400 of them from the papers of the "Sixties" to the latest—January, 1949—advocates of Sexton Blake, the detective whose saga has run for 24 years.

In the glass showcases lie illustrated copies of such early variants as *Swallow Tail*, *Dogma*, *Hobart of Fleet Street*, *Springfield Jack—the Terror of London*, of local interest, *Dick Turpin* tale related in 1802 pages and 30 illustrations, a facsimile of the sequel, and a printed version of "Pickwick Papers."

ROYAL APPROVAL

Blackbridge Heming's chaplain, Jack Mackaway, is known to the "British Dick Barton." His adventures that a shining triumph. Royally appear to have approved of these papers, but the young Prince Arthur of Connaught was among subscribers, and King Edward VII consented to ornament the front cover of a special commemorative supplement of another popular weekly—publishing a spirited white charger.

In the days of the Boer War, the papers adopted patriotic titles, and a few years later, in 1912, the famous *Gun* series began, followed in 1908 by the equally sought-after *Magnet*. The author of both, Charles

Hartley, originally of Billy Kipper, has seen good wishes for the exhibition's success. At the top of the rival magazine, the Nelson Lee series, by Edwy Charles Brinkley, will not be disappointed. They will find copies of those stories, which have elicited acclamations of boys and been the theme of many a worthy schoolmaster in lesson time.

HERO ALWAYS WON

To the fore stands the *Boys' Own Paper*. The 10th anniversary of this religiously-inspired twopennyworth was celebrated last week-end. The "Boys of the Old Brigade," among visitors, will recall how their parents bought it for them as a substitute for the more highly-coloured juvenile literature of the 1870s.

Although in those days—as the exhibition proves—in spite of breath-taking exciting plots and villains adept at every sort of crime, it was the hero, shining personification of the major virtues, who always triumphed in the end.

Mr. Herbert Lockyer, of Herbert Street, Hall Road, York, has read the majority of the papers. As an antidote to his leisure days at a public school in the war, he turned to the study of this branch of fiction. He began corresponding with men and women at every corner of Britain, and overseas.

To-day, he gets 60 letters a week on the subject from personalities who include Mrs. Eileen White, secretary of the London Boys' Book Club, and actor Frank Pettigrew.

Rejuvenation

MR. HERBERT LOCKYER, Hall Road, York, has a collection of 400 new juvenile weeklies and magazines on exhibition at York Public Library.

You can trace back to your youth over copies of *Boys' Own Paper*, *Comic Pulp Magazine*, and other schemes of Billy Kipper, John Cherry, Arthur August Leary and Wexley White and Fred T. ... or recapture the youthful spirit of the early *Piccolini* and *Belva* ...

When I read and think of ... I can't think of ... I can't think of ... I can't think of ...

Above:
Extract
from "York-
shire Even-
ing Press"
18.1.49.

Right:
Extract from
"Yorkshire
Evening
Post" (Leeds)
24.1.49.

