

Collectors' Digest



Vol. 8. No 92

Price 1s. 6d.

AUGUST 1954

Buffalo
Bill

Robert Whiter
54

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AUGUST, 1954

Editor, HERBERT LECKENBY,
c/o YORK DUPLICATING SERVICES,
7, The Shambles, YORK.

From the Editor's Chair

THE DEATH OF PEARD SUTHERLAND. Just as we were going to press last month, I received a letter from Bill Gander conveying the distressing news that Peard Sutherland of Vancouver had died on June 11th. Shortly afterwards I also had a letter and a press cutting from Tex Rickard who also lives in Vancouver.

I was particularly shocked by the news because only two or three weeks ago I received a letter from Peard and an article describing his unique collection. He wrote cheerily, for though he had been in hospital, he said he felt better.

Just before I learned of the sad event I was writing on that subject of death and collections, and had remarked that it was not always the oldest members who were taken from us. Well Peard was only 52, which is only middle age these days.

Peard was a great lover of the Gem, proved by the fact that one of his two daughters was named after the river which flows by St. Jims.

Peard was born in Durham, Ontario and educated in Winnipeg. He had many activities and had been on the public relations staff of the British Columbia Telephone Company for 25 years. He also edited the Telephone Company's magazine 'Telephone Talk', a splendidly produced magazine.

He was recognised as one of the top authorities on baseball. In addition he was chairman of the Ad. and Sales Bureau of the Board of Trade.

Many members over here received cheery letters from him often written perhaps when suffering and I am sure all wish their deepest sympathy with Mrs. Sutherland, his two daughters, and his mother in their great loss.

May the earth rest lightly on your grave, dear friend.

THE GRIM REAPER STRIKES AGAIN. My heart is heavy for shortly after I had written the above came news of the passing of one I knew well, Algernon Munro, of our Northern Section, O.B.B.C., known to everyone as Jack. He died on July 14th at the age of 61.

Jack joined us just over a year ago, and attended the meetings regularly until he had to go into hospital for an operation. The last time he was with us, just a month or two ago, he told us he hoped to be back with us soon. Alas! it had not to be.

When I first met him he told me he had been searching for an organisation like ours for years and was astonished and delighted when he found there was one almost on his own doorstep at Headingley, Leeds. He was a cheery, kindly fellow and I know he was intensely grateful to members of the Northern Section, especially Harry Stables, who had helped him to renew acquaintance with the papers of his youth.

Jack was buried at Lawnswood Cemetery on July 20th and the Northern Section was represented by Gerald and Mrs. Allison.

"ANNUAL" PROGRESS. Were you aware that nearly 200 Ken King stories appeared in the "Modern Boy"? Well it was so, and until now very little has been written about them, despite the fact that they were jolly good yarns and fine examples of the art of Charles Hamilton. However, Eric Payne has remedied all that, for in the last few weeks he has read them all, with his usual thoroughness and given you the result in the grand article on the "Modern Boy" for the "Annual". There's a lot more too, thus adding greatly to the Hamilton saga.

Orders are coming along nicely, but at the moment of writing we are a little behind last year at this time. So you will get them along, won't you?

THANKS. I am grateful to the numerous friends who have wished me happiness in my 'retirement'. I quote the word (as many of you have done so also) for so far I seem to have been as busy as heretofore. I hope no one will say that suggests I can't have worked very hard for H.M. Government. Anyway so long as I have the old mag. and all it entails to think about I don't think I'm going to be bored.

Yours sincerely,

HERBERT LECKENBY.

STUDY NO. 10, VANCOUVER VERSIONBY PEARD SUTHERLAND

(NOTE. Peard's graphic description of his unique collection was received after some on the topic I have in hand, but in view of his lamented death, I am sure the members who had written them won't mind if I bring his forward. One can sense with what pride and enthusiasm it was written just a short while before he laid down his pen for ever.

One cannot help wondering what will become of this grand collection. What a tragedy it would be if it passed into the hands of some who would not appreciate the treasures it contains. Let's hope it won't be so. H.L.)

Come into my study, here in my home in Vancouver, British Columbia! For obvious reasons, I call it Study No. 10 - Shell Passage, of course.

Not all of my collection is on view, because one room just won't hold it all. But here is the most of it, certainly the heart of it.

You'll see that the walls, between the bulging bookshelves are almost completely covered with pictures. This is possibly the most interesting, definitely the most valuable, part of my collection — nearly 100 original drawings and paintings by favourite artists.

Here is a pen drawing of the Bunter brothers by C.H. Chapman and here a Warwick Reynolds original (not a St. Jim's picture, alas!). Over here is a CHUMS cover by Paul Hardy (who could draw pirates better than anyone), a MAGNET cover by Leonard Shields and a GEM cover by E.E. Briscoe. That water colour painting of Buffalo Bill is by Robert Prowse of Aldine fame, and over there are original illustrations by Gordon Browne - nine of 'em - for books by G.A. Henty. Appropriately, the Browne drawings are beside a collection of Henty books - 96 titles.

The versatile H.M. Brock, who drew for both CHUMS and The CAPTAIN, is represented here by some masterpieces for adult works - a cover drawing for Doyle's "The Hound of the Baskervilles", (this was a part of the Holmes exhibit in the Festival of Britain), and two of his pen drawings for "The Scarlet Pimpernel".

Over here, above the bound volumes of Dicken's HOUSEHOLD

WORDS, are Little Nell and her grandfather, drawn by famous Fred Barnard, and a little beyond is a Charles Green illustration for a Dickens Christmas Story. Sir Walter Scott is represented by drawings by C.E. Brock and Gordon Browne, and that water colour up there is a Maurice Greiffenhagen illustration for a book by W.W. Jacobs.

And, oh yes! We mustn't forget this pencil drawing by Sir John Tenniel, of "Alice in Wonderland" fame. And this wash drawing is by Sir Frank Dicksee, and this one by John Hassall. Here, too, are originals by George du Maurier, Tom Browne, Stanley L. Wood, Sir James Guthrie and a number of others.

You'll wonder that there's room left for any books, but there is - for more than 1,000 of them, in addition to the hundreds of boys' papers.

First to catch your eye will be the complete set of CHUMS - 48 volumes, from 1892 to 1941. And there are 43 B.O.P. volumes, including the first 36; and 25 volumes of the SCOUT, including 1 to 17. The Holiday Annuals are few, only seven, but they include the first two. An enthusiastic Sherlockian would naturally have bound volumes of the STRAND magazine, from No. 1, with the first Sherlock Holmes short stories.

There are GEMS and MAGNETS, of course, about 600 of the former, some 500 of the latter, and a varied assortment of other weeklies, such as the POPULAR, PLUCK, MARVEL, UNION JACK and BOYS' FRIEND. Yes, and there are a few Aldine ROBIN HOODS, BUFFALO BILLS and DICK TURPINS.

One section is devoted to school stories in book form - T.B. Reed, Gunby Hadath, Hylton Cleaver, Alfred Judd, Harold Avery, P.G. Wodehouse - and naturally, Messrs. Clifford, Richards and Conquest.

Below it is the adventure section, dominated by S. Walkey, with eight books bearing his by-line, but also including such authors as Herbert Strang, Robert Louis Stevenson, Captain Frank Shaw, R.H. Ballantyne, D.H. Parry, W.H.G. Kingston and Gordon Stables.

There's not much in the way of modern, popular fiction, but old friends as Jeffery Farnol, Baroness Orczy, Max Pemberton, John Buchan and "Sapper" are well represented. There's a proud array of classics, both poetry and prose.

I mustn't forget the autographs. Accompanying a large number of the books are the authentic autographs of the authors. I can't list them all, but they include; Conan Doyle, Charles Kingsley, Lewis Carrol, Rider Haggard, R.D. Blackmore, William Ernest Henley, John Masefield, Rudyard Kipling, Theodore Roosevelt, John Drinkwater, Bulwer-Lytton, Maurice Maeterlinck, Harriet Beecher Stowe and Richard LeGallienne.

Photographs - oh yes, there are portraits on the wall, most of them autographed, of Martin Clifford, S. Walkey, H.M. Brock, Paul Hardy, Gordon Browne, Conan Doyle, Mark Twain, and a number of others.

In limited space, one cannot fully describe, or even itemize, the contents of this Study No. 10, Vancouver version. Obviously, it holds a hodge-podge of literature and art, juvenile and adult pictures and books that have delighted the present occupant of the study - and continue to delight him "forty years on".

One final note; occupying the place of honour over the desk is a portrait by Warwick Reynolds of the dominant spirit of the study, the finest fellow I know - Tom Merry of St. Jim's.

BLAKIANA

Conducted by JOSEPHINE PACKMAN

27, Archdale Road, East Dulwich, London, S.E.22.

Many Blakiana (and other) readers will, I know, be pleased to know something about that fine illustrator of current Sexton Blake Libraries, Eric Parker.

Eric Parker who, as many of you remember, created the original model of the Sexton Blake Bust, has been turning out first class work for many years, and as one who has had the pleasure of meeting him at an O.B.B. Club function, I can tell you that his personality is characteristically delineated in his artistry.

Our thanks are due to Anthony Baker for the information which will be found in this issue.

Here is another interesting item. I recently had sent to me a copy of the Sexton Blake Library printed in Spanish. It is published in Buenos Aires as "El Nuevo Magazine Sexton Blake", and this particular copy, No.185 is entitled "Con Intenciones Criminales". According to my husband this is a very good translation of our current series No. 220 "With Criminal Intent" by Rex Hardinge. The date of the Spanish one is April 1952, although the English version was originally published in July 1950. Thus it would seem that they are somewhat behind the times with their issues! However, it is most pleasing to know that the popularity of 'our Blake' is such as to warrant a regular monthly publication in the far off Argentine.

Solutions to the Blake Circle Quiz have started coming in. They are, of course, all being kept together until the end of August at which time the Circle Committee will meet to check the results.

I should also like to make it clear that the answer to question number 26 could be one of two names. This was not intentional, and either name will be accepted as the correct answer.

Next month's Blakiana will contain, amongst other things, a somewhat controversial article on 'Anthony Parsons'. It is very good and will be published just as written, although I for one do not agree with all that the writer maintains. When you have read it perhaps some of you will let me have your opinion!

JOSIE PACKMAN.

* * * * *

ERIC PARKER

(From "Our Note Book" in the BOY'S OWN PAPER. Vol. 35. No. 46, dated 16 August, 1913).

A CLEVER LONDON SCHOLAR

Master Eric Parker a London County Scholar attending the Northwold Road School, has given such evidence of unusual artistic ability that he has puzzled the authorities what to do with him. The Council has no school sufficiently far advanced to give him the scope he requires, so the Education Committee met and decided to award him a special art scholarship and a maintenance grant to cover the cost of travel, etc. It is rarely, indeed, that such advanced ability is met with in the Council Schools. The future of this clever young scholar will be watched with undoubted interest. (There is a photograph accompanying the paragraph).

(From CHUMS, dated January, 1934).

YOU MUST MEET YOUR FAVOURITES!

No. 13 Eric Parker

Study the illustrations to "An Awfully Big Adventure" and you will see the work not only of one of one of "Chums" favourite artists, but also one of the most brilliant men drawing today. Eric Parker, short, sturdy and breezy. He is popular with everyone who knows him, even his fellow-artists - and I could tell you some tales that would add to the significance of that fact!

Straight from school, Eric Parker went to an art school and he was just getting along nicely when somebody was thoughtless enough to start the Great War, and Eric's art studies were cut short whilst he served with the Bucks Hussars. After the War, he resumed his art work, this time for a living, and he has been free-lancing ever

since for a variety of papers.

He can draw anything and make it live, but has has a particular liking for old-time stuff, especially that of a military nature. He's a perfect marvel at that. He can draw a Napoleonic soldier so that every button is accurate, which is no mean task. One of Eric's hobbies is groping round museums examining uniforms for the specific purpose of adding to his knowledge about old-time military matters.

When he is not portraying furtive-looking villians being captured by square-jawed detectives, he likes to motor, sail, ride or swim. He also owns a bag of golf-clubs, but I gather that his handicap is the way he plays! He can hit a golf-ball hard and he can hit one straight - but rarely at the same time. He is an avid reader of anything intelligent, with a special liking for biography and books adapted from the Norwegian, and he is also a film fan, with Mickey Mouse and Wallace Beery as his favourite stars. Another pet hobby is model-making, particularly old-time forts. And he confesses to a queer ambition. He wants to own a country inn, with a little pig-farm at the rear of the premises. A grand artist and a grand fellow. That's the man behind "E.R.P." ("An Awfully Big Adventure", referred to above, was a short story which appeared in this particular issue of CHUMS).

A. BAKER.

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THE ADVENT OF THE COLOURED COVER

The heading of the front cover of UNION JACK No. 886, dated 2 October 1920, reads: 'No.1 New and Enlarged Series'. Instead of the old familiar pink cover, we now had a white background with red and blue colouring - a combination appropriate to the title of the paper.

Like myself, no doubt many others viewed the 'change over' with mixed feelings, but I think most people will agree that the stories themselves were, for several years to come, some of the finest to be written for the UNION JACK.

Let us take a brief glance at Nos. 886 to 937 (24 September 1921) and see what a fine variety of authors and their creations were featured during the first year of this 'new' series.

Lewis Jackson started the series with "The Case of the Bogus Judge", a story featuring Leon Kestrel. A good yarn this, and one

that I always enjoy reading. Robert Murray was next on the scene with one of his Criminals' Confederation stories "The Dog Detective", in which Pedro also played a major part. Then came E.S. Brooks with an excellent Waldo story "The Human Link", followed by A. Skene with one of his popular Zenith yarns "The Case of the Crystal Gazer". The next two issues, Nos. 890 and 891, "The Mist of Sleep" and "The Case of the Paralysed Man", were both Kestrel stories; these were followed by "The Case of the Chinese Antique", "A Bid for Billions", "The Strange Case of the Elsingham Legend" and "The Extreme Penalty", featuring Waldo, The Confederation, Zenith and Confederation, in that order. Then came "The Mystery of Littlethake Cottage", a story which, although not featuring any well-known character, was good, coming as it did from the pen of that fine author Cecil Hayter. The next two stories featured Kestrel and Zenith, and were entitled "A Price on His Head" and "The Case of the Toxic Tulips" respectively. In the next issue, No. 899, "The Turkish Bath Mystery", two more old favourites - Kew and Lawless - created by Andrew Murray, were well to the fore. Two non-featured stories "The Drington Bank Mystery" and "The Soho Cafe Mystery", with a Confederation yarn "Crooked Evidence" in between, and then, in No. 903 "Iron Island", by Sidney Drew, another old friend, Ferrers Lord, re-appeared. In the next issue F. Addington Symonds introduced The Raven and Claire Delisle. The story entitled "The Raven's Prey" was the first of a set of four to appear featuring these characters. Nos. 905 to 908, "The Case of the Governor's Son", "Trader and Chief", "The Menace of Ryland's Manor" and "The Crooks of Monte Carlo" were non-featured stories, and then came the second of the Raven stories in No. 909 "The Case of the Chinese Hypnotist". Another Confederation story "The Black Duchess", introducing Isabel de Fere, and the non-featured "The Green Eye" brought us to another old pair of favourites, Sir Richard Losely and Lobangu, in No. 912 "The Terms of the Wager" by Cecil Hayter. Leon Kestrel turned up again in the next issue "The Kestrel's Prey", to be followed by "The Judge's Experiment" a non-featured story whose authorship I could not be sure of, although I have a good idea. Then came the first of Pierre Quiroulo's Granite Grant stories to appear in the UNION JACK. The title was "Granite Grant's Mission". Nos. 916 to 936 were as follows: "The Fourth Witness" (Confederation); "The Wager of Death" (non-featured); "The Affair of the Exiled Princess" (the third of the

Raven series); "The Case of the Thirteenth Bowl" (featuring Nihil another of A. Skene's creations); "The Convict's Cipher" (non-featured); "The Strange Case of the Edgware Recluse" (non-featured); Kestrel's Intrigue"; "The Raven and the Ruby" (the fourth and final story in the Raven series); "The Radium Thieves" (Granite Grant); "The Saracen's Ring" (non-featured); "The Artiste of Traverne" (non-featured); "Mr. Reece's Million" (Confederation); "The Return of Zenith the Albino"; "Prince Pretence" (Kestrel); "Dr. Braxland's Experiment" (non-featured); "The Case of the Ampur Carpet" (non-featured); "The Clue of the Missing Volume" (non-featured); "The Treasure of Kao Hang" (non-featured); "The Money Flood" (non-featured); "The Case of the Channel Swimmer" (non-featured) and "Lobangu's Ju-Ju". Then, quite fittingly to wind up the year's issues, Zenith was featured in "The 'Cornor' in Quinine".

The 52 issues comprise: 7 featuring Kestrel, 7 the Confederation, 5 Zenith, 4 The Raven, 2 Losely & Lobangu, 2 Granite Grant, 2 Waldo, 1 Ferrers Lord, 1 Nihil and 1 Kew & Lawless.

The remaining 20 non-featured stories were mostly written by Cecil Hayter, Michael Poole, Edwy Searles Brooks, Pierre Quiroule, Lewis Jackson, George Hamilton Teed and L.H. Brooks.

Tribute must also be paid to the many fine illustrations by the following: H.M. Lewis, Val Reading, Harry Lane, E.E. Briscoe, Arthur Jones, Sid Pride and C.H. Blake.

Many other authors with their fine creations were to appear in the years that followed, but for variety I consider the above 52 consecutive issues (one year in effect) and the three succeeding years to be one of the best periods in the life of the UNION JACK.

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THE SEXTON BLAKE LIBRARY - JULY ISSUES

Reviewed by Josie Packman

No. 315 "The Riddle of the Invisible Menace". R. Hardinge.

Written in Rex ^HHardinge's inimitable style, this yarn is a good one. Not only is it interesting, it is easy to read, for it is not overloaded with too many characters.

No. 316 "The Mystery of the Five Guilty Men". J. Drummond.

Another good story, with Tinker more like the 'nice' Tinker of old. Incidentally, this is the first yarn we have had from John Drummond's pen for a very long time. We could do with more

of his work.

Both recommended - even though the price has gone up to 9d. a copy (in spite of the fact that the cost of paper has gone down!!)

AVAILABLE: 250 "Gems" between 1-440, 100 449-999, 200 1000-1500. Bound Volumes: 1-26, 958-1033, 1458 to End. Boys Friend Weekly almost complete 1901-1915. 100 Boys Friend 3d. Library's, 300 1918-1940. Boys Realm, complete 1911-1916. 500 Marvels 1893-1922. 300 Union Jacks, 1894-1932. Dixon Brot 4d, 1-12. 100 Plucks 1897-1910. 50 Scraps, 1884-1892. 50 Populars 1912-1916. Greyfriars, St. Jims S.O.Ls. Skippers, Rovers, Wizards, Triumphs, Adventures. 1930's 7/6 Dozen. Modern C. Hamilton Books, Half-Price. Sexton Blakes, First, Second, Third Series. Further details gladly supplied (S.A.E. Please). Satisfaction or Full Refund. Exchange Suggestions Welcomed. Offers of Books for Sale always appreciated. (Most types of Pre-1940 Magazines Required). T. LAMBERT, 347 GERTRUDE ROAD, NORWICH.

WANTED: SEXTON BLAKE LIBRARY (1st & 2nd Series Only). Please send me details of any you have for disposal. (Price, Series and Serial Numbers). JOSEPHINE PACKMAN, 27 ARCHDALE ROAD, EAST DULWICH, LONDON, S.E.22.

WANTED: 'CHATTERBOX' 1914, FILM PAPERS, COMICS, 1914-1921 GEMS, YOUNG BRITAINS, before 1922, NEWSPAPERS, WEEKLIES, MAGS. 1920 any quantity. SPOT CASH, IF REASONABLE PRICES, EVERYTHING CONSIDERED, LETTERS ANSWERED, T. ARMITAGE, 205 BATLEY ROAD, ALVERTHORPE, WAKEFIELD, YORKS.

WANTED: Volumes of "Chums" (bound) in good condition. Years 1912-1920. A.S. MATHESON, 11 ACKERGILL STREET, WICK, CAITHNESS, SCOTLAND.

I Offer 5/0 Each for any of the following Detective Library numbers in good condition. 10/- for No. 1: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17, 19, 21, 24, 29, 31, 33, 35, LEONARD PACKMAN 27 ARCHDALE ROAD, EAST DULWICH, LONDON, S.E.22.

AVAILABLE. MAGNETS 1918-23, 100 No's, also 150 issues 1933-40. GEMS 1917-22, 80 No's, 1934-40, 120 No's. GREYFRIARS HOLIDAY ANNUAL 1929, 33, 36, 38. S.O.LIBS. 20 St. Franks, 12 Greyfriars, also Rookwood issues. Greyfriars Heralds, SEXTON BLAKE LIBS. 2nd & 3rd Series NELSON LEES, 1924-33, 500 No's. POPULARS, 1919-22. S.B. ANNUAL, pre-war Adventures and Rovers 6/6 per doz. UNION JACKS,

YOUNG BRITAINS, LONDON JOURNAL, 6 very early mint Vols. BOB'S FRIEND LIB. 11 Diff: RIO KID, also others, ALDINE ROBIN HOODS 1903-4 30 Different. PUCK ANNUAL 1940. HAPPY MAGS, 1920's. TIT-BITS, Mint 1909-16 6d. each. AMERICAN SCIENCE, CRIME, PHOTOGRAPHY, STAGE, SPORT, FILM, etc. etc. All kinds of items (1750-1950). Also over 20,000 rare American and English Cigarette Cards, (1881-1910) Back No's of C.D's and Annuals Wanted, also all kinds of books, such as Magnets, Gems, Penny Dreadfuls, etc. Your reasonable price paid, exchanges considered, S.A.E. State Wants. RONALD ROUSE, 3 ST. LEONARDS TERRACE, GAS-HILL, NORWICH.

HAMILTONIANA

Compiled by HERBERT LECKENBY

Bunter's return to the T.V. screen seems to have been well received. Here is what Mark Johns said in the Daily Sketch before the event:-

"I can see myself rushing home to cock an adult eye and ear at children's TV this evening. That fat sneak Bunter will be at it in another adventure, especially written by Frank Richards.

Gerald Campion will again be the eternal Billy. I am glad to see Kynaston Reeves will fix on us the gimlet eyes of Mr. Quelch. It wasn't quite the same when he was replaced in the last episode.

But, I say, I want to know what silly ass among planners thinks this is only a children's TV romp. Put it on at 7.30 and let us all join in the fun."

And these comments appeared in the Yorkshire Evening Post and the Yorkshire Evening News afterwards:-

"The Fat Owl of the Remove waddled his greedy way across the TV screens to put the clock back for thousands of fathers, and maybe to make new conquests among the young to today.

But this depends on how conditioned they have become to blood and thunder and the American comics. "Bunter Won't Go" had no "bad men," no killings. No shot or strangled body appeared on the Greyfriar's carpet. The only suspense was "When will Coker confess?"

We knew all along he would. Nobody is really a cad in the inexhaustible works of the remarkable, 82-year-old Frank Richards. But his writings have always upheld the great virtues which go to make up the indefinable stuff of esprit de corps. Here is the shining goal of his exuberant, unruly characters. And this is a very fine aim in any author.

These things, plus a hefty nostalgia, appealed to me in this rather ridiculous charade. And now I can almost hear those "beasts" from the Remove chanting: "Yarroo nostalgia my foot." - R.E.W.

"Quite a few fathers, I imagine, hurried home for Children's Hour. Reason? The return to the screen of their boyhood favourites, Billy Bunter and the Famous Five of Greyfriars.

The title of the new play, "Bunter Won't Go," is most appropriate. Eighty-two-year-old Frank Richards has been writing about the escapades of the Owl of the Remove for over 40 years.

And it seems that even in this jet age many children like him, even though neither his habits nor appearance have changed a jot.

Full marks to Gerald Campion for looking and acting the part so well and to producer Joy Herington for resisting the temptation to modernise the story in any way."

The following by Philip Hope-Wallace, always a stern critic, appeared in "The Listener":-

"We have had a dose of school from television this week. By Sunday night I was ready to join the little beasts of St. Trinian's, saw pedagogues into sections, put a match to the 'stinks' labs, and chalk 'Down wiv skule!' across the crest. I do not of course refer to the compulsory games-watching; hour after hour of stultifying ball games. I refer simply to the drama which this week has been scholastic in subject if in no other way. Even the kiddies had school. A laborious excerpt from the Greyfriars saga, showing the usual hounding of Billy Bunter, the 'fat owl of the Remove'. I watched this with great fascination: it is a wonderful fantasy world, an idea of school which school life (in the odd way in which nature copes art) often manages to live up to. Such a school! The sarcastic, sadistic, cane-brandishing 'beaks' and the obese,

~~but-drawing~~, cheeky 'scholars': where did it all spring from? From Stalky and Co. misunderstood? Kipling's schoolboy fantasies make very odd reading to a generation more psychologically aware of motives. Whatever the origin, Frank Richard's Greyfriars has established one of the mass male myths of our national life. Its importance cannot be overstressed and these Bunter episodes should be made compulsory holiday tasks. Meeting Bob Cherry and Harry Wharton again (still the same age though forty years on) was a queer experience. But Bunter is much less tormented these days. We only heard him being beaten, hardly saw him kicked at all. Why so gentle? But it is probably for the best. Obese boys - how one recalls their cries, and sad, diabetic voices - have a bad enough time at school, anyway, without any encouragement on television."

And among our own members, John Shaw said:-

"I much enjoyed the recent Bunter play on television. "Bunter Won't Go", which dealt with his expulsion and subsequent attempts to return to the school. The production and acting were outstanding, Gerald Campion being a most realistic Bunter and Kynaston Reeves once more a Mr. Quelch who might have stepped straight out of the pages of the "Magnet". The plot was one with which we are all very familiar.

An interesting line in the dialogue was when Dr. Locke referred to Mr. Quelch as being Coker's "housemaster". Has Greyfriars become a multihouse school."

Quite a number of fans spotted that mistake, and it seemed to be the general opinion that Coker was miscast, someone saying he appeared smaller than any of the "Famous Five."

However, the majority view is evidently that Frank Richards should be instructed to get busy on another episode.

* * * * *

You will all remember that delightful article by Raymond Jones a few months ago. Well in response to many requests he has come along with another one. All will agree that he hit the high spots again. You will enjoy it all the more because of the apology of a summer we have suffered under so far.

THE SUMMER TERMBY RAYMOND JONES

It is inevitable that if an author writes weekly for thirty-odd years about the same spot and the same characters they will become to his readers as real as many true localities and personalities. To many of us Frank Richards' summer term stories of Greyfriars contain the true essence of summer. This most beautiful season would be incomplete to us without the well-remembered pictures in our minds, pictures of the great, ivy-covered pile of Greyfriars standing in the sunshine behind the green elms, centre of a district as familiar as our own home town. It is not so much that Richards indulges in detailed descriptions of his school, or of the summer countryside, for he does not; his young readers would not stand for it. But the spirit of summer has become woven into his yarns just the same, especially, perhaps, in the days of the old "Magnet" when he had the invaluable help of first-class artists in creating the atmosphere which made those stories so unforgettable. It is true that a dripping tap will fill a bowl, and it is in the manner of a dripping tap that Frank Richards filled out the full picture of Greyfriars; a little word here, a few sentences there, a skilful word-picture elsewhere that sticks in the mind when the plot of the tale has become hazy and unimportant.

No lover of the old paper will forget the summer of 1931 when Richard Lancaster played out his fateful little piece against a background of all that is desirable of summer, and of a Greyfriars summer in particular. Who can forget that triumphant return of the cricketers from St. Jude's, where Lancaster of the Sixth had made his century and performed the hat-trick twice? They came into the Quad in the sunset, the cheering crowd of seniors and juniors alike, Lancaster shoulder high above them, and the cooling heat of the June day could be felt. Above them, at a window, was the grave face of Ferrers Locke, knowing even then at the moment of Lancaster's cricket triumph, that here came Lancaster the crook, the Wizard, the cracker of safes. Presently Lancaster was to sit alone in his study while the school celebrated in the dusky Hall, and when darkness had fallen he was to venture forth into the Quadrangle again, not this time as the hero, the idol of a cheering school, but as a reluctant cricketer. And that day was only one of many such days while Lancaster was with us. Other days and other years, were as good.

Quite apart from the grounds of the school, where white-clad figures passed from the green playingfields to the cool shades of the tuckshop, from the warmth of the fountain's rim to the somnolence of the form-rooms, apart from the school itself, each spot around and about Greyfriars has its summer memories. Popper's Island, scene of so many picnics and tiffs with Sir Hilton Popper, Loder of the Sixth, and Ponsonby and Co., really came into its own with a rebellion which gave us many scenes of rippling waters, bending rushes and shady trees. Courtfield Common was the scene of many incidents, among which were two of the famous "chases", one of Jerry the Rat from Courtfield bank to his capture at the school itself, and one of Micky the Sprat, when a chance meeting with Bunter in a deep lane off the common turned the first wheel along the road of the grand Holiday Annual series. Both of these chases were hot affairs and lead us from one familiar spot to another.

Needless to say, the inn at Woodend and the Pagoda at Lantham featured frequently in the summer stories. Picnics were many and varied among the ruins of the Old Priory in Friardale Wood, and we must not forget Bob Cherry and Paul Tyrrell who will be found whispering by candlelight in a dark recess on a fine night in 1932. The Bounder was there, too, outside the light of the candle, listening, showing us yet another facet of his many-sided character. Upon almost any "halfer" we might meet many old friends on the Sark or sailing in Pegg Bay, and Redclyffe Hill must surely still be damp from the dew of Bunter's constant and copious perspiration. Even the somewhat dull Bertie Vernon series gave us a sight of Lantham Chase and its famous woods, and even more famous view from the turret room across the woods and meadows to the tower of Greyfriars.

Perhaps not many will quarrel with the claim that most of the fine series, with one or two notable exceptions, were written during the Summer Term. Certainly it is always a pleasure to see the summer illustrations, when the shadows deepen on the old walls and fall in at the open doorways of the House, and when the flannels and blazers make their first appearance. The tuckshop seems essentially a summer institution, the Cloisters never so desirable as when the sun shines hot upon the open Quad. Big Side in winter may be the scene of stern battles, but it has none of the soft green beauty of the Big Side in summer, when the pavilion seems

erected magically overnight and the click of bat meeting ball floats across to the House and mingles with the clicking of Mr. Quelch's typewriter as that busy gentleman works at his open window. But open windows have their disadvantages, as Prout found in 1933 when his little siesta was disturbed by a flying bag of jam tarts jettisoned by a certain guilty tuck-raider. All these scenes owe everything to the happy combination of artist and writer who saw in their minds the same scene and approved of it.

It is as a relaxation that we come to Greyfriars, and as a relaxation the stories of the Summer Term read as well in January as in June, for what better than to pick up "Bunter the Inksplasher" or "Cracksman and Cricketer" upon a grim winter's day? Probably our picture of Greyfriars school is a little preposterous. We puff it up a little larger than life, as indeed it always was, but then we have enough of life-sized things everyday, and it is pleasant to order sunshine when you wish it, as an author can, and as we can when we wield the always welcome power of selection over what we read. Whether we like it or not, to those of us who regard the world of Greyfriars either as a hobby or as a daily relaxation, it will always be hard to completely dissociate memories of Greyfriars with the realities of the moment. It is difficult when on holiday and mounting a hill in a strange part of the country, a hill with woods on either side and grassy banks hard by, to still the small voice inside which says: "Really, this is like Redclyffe Hill. Does one turn right or left for Lantham?"

DO YOU REMEMBER?

BY ROGER M. JENKINS

No. 2 - Magnet No.640 "Bunter the Bankrupt"

Charles Hamilton has stated that he never works out the plots of his stories beforehand. He just sits down at the typewriter and lets the story work itself out to its own inevitable conclusion. Further, such are his powers of imagination that he can always visualise the expression on the face of each character as that character speaks, together with the intonation of each voice. There was only one occasion when all these remarkable faculties deserted him, and that was in the year 1920 when he began to write "Bunter the Bankrupt".

After he had written the beginning of the story (the theme of which, significantly enough, had been suggested by the editor), Charles Hamilton discovered that he was unable to carry on with it, and he put it aside for a while. When he returned to it he completed it on slightly different lines. In the result, therefore, the tale lacks the harmony and balance usually to be found in a Magnet story, but since it came after six solid months of stories

by substitute writers, no doubt the readers of the time found it a more welcome change.

The story revolved round Bunter's decision to settle all his debts by the ingenious method of going bankrupt. He put up a notice inviting all creditors to lodge their claims with his solicitor, Peter Todd, by the following Wednesday, and on the basis of the confidence so established he borrowed a few more sums up and down the Remove, even Fisher T. Fish rising to the bait.

The Removites discovered, on working things out, that Bunter owed a total of £27, and the consternation that ensued when Peter Todd solemnly announced that his client proposed to pay a penny in the pound may well be imagined. Bunter had hoped to wipe the slate clean and start borrowing all over again, but he succeeded only in making the Removites realise how much they had lent him and how little hope they had of recovering it. Mr. Todd's client was made to realise the error of his ways, however, and lived to regret the venture. And so ended a notable story, the adult humour of which enlivened a more than dreary patch in the history of the Magnet.

 POTTED PERSONALITIES No. 4 (Second Series)

TOM REDWING.

Tom Redwing made his first appearance in the closing months of the First Great War. He came under the name of Clavering, a youngster who looked older than he was and yearned to be a soldier. So Clavering joined the army as Private Redwing, and Tom came to Greyfriars as "CLAVERING OF THE REMOVE".

When matters were straightened out, Vernon-Smith persuaded his wealthy father to found a scholarship especially for Tom to win it. And the Jonathan and David friendship between the sailor's son and the millionaire's heir began its chequered career.

Many and many have been the series in which the Bounder and Tom Redwing quarreled, due to the tortuous disposition of the former. Yet, strangely enough, the theme has never become hackneyed in the same way that the Schoolboy Cracksman theme became hackneyed. There was always a fresh twist to the quarrel motive. Maybe because it is natural for friends to quarrel and make up, and quarrel and make up again.

On more than one occasion the Bounder threw that famous scholarship derisively in the face of his pal, so that Tom abandoned what he had won. But in the magnificent "BLACK PETER'S TREASURE" South Seas Series, a long, travel novel of intense power and inspired writing, second only to the China series and maybe not even second to that when holiday yarns are considered, Tom found a for-

tune and today pays his own fees at Greyfriars.

Tom Redwing figured fairly prominently in the "TOAD OF THE REMOVE" series, taking an instant dislike to Edgar Bright for the latter's cruelty to animals. But, almost invariably, we have found Tom's destiny linked with that of the Bounder in the Greyfriars Story, and we would not have it otherwise.

Tense reading was the famous Christmas series, when Tom and the Bounder were kidnapped by Soames and hidden in a cave on the sea near Pegg till Bunter discovered "THE PHANTOM OF THE CAVE", and it was Tom who instinctively knew that something was wrong when Vernon assumed the Bounder's name and place while the real Vernon-Smith was "THE PRISONER OF THE TURRET".

Some of the characters who were introduced in the middle years of the Gem and Magnet stayed on to become "dead wood", though more so in the Gem than the Magnet. But Tom Redwing was a brilliant piece of character work which has enhanced the glory of the Greyfriars story. Brightly, generously, with quiet ingenuousness, he brings the tang of the sea wafting through every yarn in which he appears.

MAGNET TITLES (Cont'd): 1311 All Through Bunter; 1312 Billy Bunter's Easter Cruise; 1313 Greyfriars Chums Afloat; 1314 Saved from the Sea; 1315 The Schoolboy Tourists; 1316 Bunter's Big Bluff; 1317 After Lights Out; 1318 Taming a Tyrant; 1319 The Deserter.

GOSSIP ABOUT ST. FRANK'S



By JACK WOOD, HOSFAM, 328 Stockton Lane, York.

While those of you who joined our conducted tour last month are recuperating from the pleasant journey into the heart of the wooded Downs of Sussex by relaxing in the little town of Helmford,

I propose to devote my article this month to publishing some of the competition entries.

First, then, Frank Unwin's leading article on "Why I prefer the St. Frank's stories."..... It is with no little hesitation that I attempt to give reasons for my preference for the St. Frank's yarns over those of Greyfriars, St. Jim's and Rockwood. To compare Charles Hamilton with E.S. Brooks is rather like comparing Tom Finney with Stanley Matthews. Both are supreme artists in their own particular styles and both have given great pleasure to countless people - I almost said schoolboys, but, like Finney and Matthews, Brooks and Hamilton continue to delight the old as well as the young.

I admire Charles Hamilton and all his works. His yarns have given me, and still give me, untold pleasure. Would that the powers-that-be recognised his sterling work for youth over the years and bestowed on him the honour he deserves. Having said that, let me venture to state that, in my opinion, the St. Frank's yarns were supreme in schoolboy fiction.

I preferred them because the Hamilton stories, though consistently good, were, in the main, rather stereotyped. Those of E.S. Brooks were equally good, yet the plots and situations were always refreshingly new. Charles Hamilton rehashed old plots over and over again; Brooks possessed a far wider imagination. In school yarns E.S.B. was superior. What has Charles Hamilton ever written to compare with the first Ezra Quirke series? In school-adventure stories Brooks was still on top. Has anything in the Magnet or Gem equalled the quality of the Sargasso Sea adventures in 1919? Then, I preferred them for their superior style. Brooks moved with the times, and schoolboy dress, language and customs at St. Frank's kept pace with anno-domini. Not so the Hamilton schools, which remained essentially Victorian right to the end, giving them that sense of unreality which St. Frank's never possessed.

Again the St. Frank's yarns were superior in characterization, not least because they never relied upon one fat and fatuous figure, of which I'm sure even the most ardent Hamilton admirer must have sickened. Too many Greyfriars series featured, as their central character, the tiresome and impossible Bunter - alias Trimble - alias Muffin - the trinity - identical in speech and character. Brooks never made the mistake of putting all his eggs in one basket.

I mention five superb Hamilton characters - D'Arcy, Vernon-Smith, Wharton, Coker and Quelch. Yet they met their superiors in Handforth, Archie Glenthorne, Browne, Travers and Nelson Lee.

In short, I preferred the St. Frank's yarns for their originality and freshness of approach, for their variety - school, school-detective and school-adventure - for their less stereotyped and more free and up-to-date style, and for those wonderful characters, above-mentioned, which are unsurpassed in schoolboy fiction.

My favourite St. Frank's character was the rugged, pugnacious Edward Oswald Handforth, the school-boy who was "real". Real because his faults were legion. He would punch his best friend as enthusiastically as he would help his worst enemy. He was pig-headed, yet could be handled like a child by those who understood him. He was painfully blunt, yet as tender-hearted as any mother; aggressive, yet generous to a fault. He was the loyallest of pals, as plucky as they made 'em, as straight as a die.

Handy is my favourite because of his imperfections. His brainwaves always came unstuck; his fond belief in his own capabilities was shared by nobody else; his reckless disregard for the opinion and advise of others led him into countless scrapes.

He was clumsy, stubborn, and unreasonable. All these things helped to make him a real, living being. His very imperfections made him my perfect character.

—oooOooo—

Second prize winner, Charles Churchill's preference, he tells us, is because.....

"I was at St. Frank's, too!!"

One of the chief reasons for my preference of the "Nelson Lee" over other papers was the fact that for so long E.S. Brooks wrote the stories in the first person. This commenced some while before St. Frank's appeared on the scene and to me, the stories immediately became more alive and real and I almost felt that I was actually involved in all the situations that arose. The fact of Nipper, one of the principal characters, telling the stories, gave them a more friendly atmosphere, just as if he was relating to me personally, all the innumerable plots and counter-plots devised by the fertile imagination of Brooks. I felt as if I was personally involved in all the dangers faced by Nelson Lee and Nipper, and when St. Frank's "arrived" I felt as if I also was a scholar wearing the

famous "Consilio et Animis" on my cap.

I know that many readers did not care for the stories written in this way and in some quarters Nipper was not too popular a character, being labelled "The Boy who could do No Wrong." I never thought this myself, the secret being I think that Brooks wrote so convincingly.

As to the plots and situations, I always preferred the style of the Nelson Lee to those of the other papers. We have been told that Brooks always wrote of events on the grand scale such as fires, floods, revolutions, etc. This, of course, is largely true, but as I also seemed to be caught up in the convulsions either of nature or man-made, I used to wallow in the good old "N.L." and from one Wednesday to the next always appeared to be an interminable age of anxious waiting to see what the next number would bring forth.

In conclusion, I return to my opening theme and over that by reason of Nipper "spinning the yarns", Montie, Tommy and the others were all such real characters that they were pals of mine as well and at times I actually felt that I resided in Study "C" listening to the "rows" from next door.

Although I also enjoyed reading the "Gem", "Magnet" and other books, I never had the same feeling of "being at home" that I experienced when reading that best of all papers - the Nelson Lee Library.

My favourite character?

Nelson Lee himself, of course. Surely we all took the "N.L." to read of the adventures of the Schoolmaster-Detective?

During the years, Brooks painted this great character in ever glowing colours. As a detective he was exceedingly clever and a match for any crook. He could be relied on to pull "something out of the bag" in the most trying and hazardous circumstances, to turn the scales of chance to victory. As a schoolmaster he was fair and just and commanded the highest respect of all. Finally, as a holiday companion, he had no equal, being always genial and a match for all eventualities.

* * * * *

Our third prize winner, Stanley Smith, went so far as to put his thoughts into rhyme, and with due reason took for his title the St. Frank's motto.....

CONSILIO ET ANIMIS

You ask me why I like to read school yarns by E.S. Brooks
 More than of Rookwood or St. Jims or Billy Bunter books?
 The question's not an easy one, for any Greyfriars' tale
 That's by Frank Richards - not a "sub" - to please us cannot
 fail.

The same with stories of St. Jims and tales of Rookwood's Four -
 The never fail to entertain and earn a loud "Encore"!

For every tale by Hamilton - as Owen, Martin, Frank -
 (No matter what the non-de-plume) we know will be first rank.
 The very names are guarantees - with that no-one has differed -
 Among the hall-marks on school yarns are Richards, Conquest,
 Clifford!

But yet, in truth, I must confess - while giving grateful thanks
 For Greyfriars, Rookwood and St. Jims - I still prefer
 St. Franks!

It's Saga is by E.S. Brooks - a most provoking man -
 For sometimes he's right in the front, sometimes he's "also ran"!
 He's like the little girl who had a curl right on her forehead,
 For, when he's good, he's very good - but, when he's bad, he's
 horrid.

To read a tale by E.S. Brooks is, in itself, adventure -
 Sometimes arousing all our praise, sometimes deserving censure!

But - when they're good they are the best of stories of their kind
 And long years after reading them, they stay fixed in our mind.
 Remember tales of Ezra Quirke? And Handforth as the "skip"?

The first yarns of Northestria? The Roman City trip?
 And when St. Franks got a bad name? And Hunter? And Miss Trumble?
 If every story was as good, we'd have no cause to grumble.

But, now and then, we must admit our author, E.S. Brooks,
 Just gave us slapstick, crude and raw, and tales of third-rate crooks.
 But that was rare and not the rule and these we can forget

And call to mind the greatness of the general standard set -
 For at his best, he's brilliant yarns earned our most sincere thanks.
 And so we say to E.S.B. - "Come on, some more St. Franks!"
 contd

ENVOI

Of all the fellows at St. Franks that in my mind stands forth,
 The one I like the best of all is - yes you're right - Handforth!
 He started in the stories as a second St. Jims' Grundy -
 But now he is as different as Saturday from Sunday.
 His character developed, fresh facets of it showed;
 The thing about our Handy is - like Topsy - he "just grewd"!
 Sincere and honest, blunt and plain, often wrong, but fearless,
 A slogger on the cricket field and as a goalie peerless.
 He'd stand by a friend right to the end through jeers or sneers
 or laughter -
 With ready fists to right a wrong - no matter what comes after!
 The burly boss of Study D is wholesome, fine and dandy -
 And so I say "Some more St. Franks" and also "More of Handy"!

Please note, our tour will recommence next month. See you
 all again then! ED.

OLD BOYS' BOOK CLUB

LONDON SECTION

Cherry Place on Sunday, July 18th was a very cheerful place. Prior to the meeting "Captain" Tom Large, from Reading, Bill Jardine from Brighton, Hylton Flatman and Roger Jenkins were entertained to lunch by the hosts, Bob and Eileen. At the usual hour other good folk arrived for a very full meeting and the usual good spread that has now become a byword at the Cherry Place meetings, thanks to the good work put in by hostess Eileen. Suitable remarks were made by chairman Len on the recent passing of our esteemed late member Peard Sutherland. A letter of condolence has been sent on behalf of all members.

A hearty welcome was afforded Ian Whitmore, who was making his first attendance at a meeting, on the conclusion of his national service in Egypt. Most of the business was quickly dealt with and the future production of the news letter was arranged.

Remben Godsave, last month's quiz winner, conducted his effort

according to custom and a popular competition it proved. Although there were not many Nelson Lee questions, Bob Blythe was the winner second was Roger Jenkins, and in third place were Hylton Flatman, Bill Jardine, Len Packman, Bob and Ben Whiter.

Roger, another last month's winner, had a hidden names and anagram test, and a triple deadheat was the verdict, Eileen Whiter, Len and Josie Packman. An excellent talk on the journey of the famous "Water Lily" was given by Eileen Whiter and judging by the applause at the conclusion it was well received.

Finally Bob Blythe indulged in his "Lotto" and this time Uncle Benjamin was first closely followed by Josie Packman and thirdly Bob Whiter and Len Packman.

August meeting provisionally fixed at Ron Deacon's Blackheath address on the 15th.

September Brighton meeting at Bill Jardine's home, 52 Kipling Avenue, Woodingdean on the 19th.

And so a very good meeting terminated but ere signing off we must not forget Arthur Lawson's "Buffalo" Bill Talk. A very good effort by the doyen of the club.

UNCLE BENJAMIN.

NORTHERN SECTION MEETING, July 10th, 1954: In the absence of J. Breeze Bentley I took the chair and had the pleasure of welcoming Cliff Beardsell who had paid us a surprise visit. I also said how pleased we were to have Harry Stables back with us again.

Gerry Allison, however, reported that another member Jack Munro was unable to be present as he was only just beginning to recover from an operation. A hope was expressed that Jack would soon be restored to health and strength.

Gerry also stated that cash in hand now amounted to the handsome sum of £36. 7. 3 which seems to suggest judicious business management.

Norman Smith gave an account of the very enjoyable York trip.

The greater part of the evening was taken up with a series of 'talks' in which every member joined. Numbers were drawn from a hat and each, in from five to ten minutes, expressed his or her views on a favourite story, series, author or some aspect of the hobby. The majority had come unprepared, yet no one 'dried up' or had stage fright.

Ron Hodgson led off with a review of a popular Gem story,

"Manners Minor"; Cliff Beardsell followed with an account of how he found the "Brotherhood of Happy Hours". He amused his listeners by telling how, some years ago, he spotted a letter in a newspaper signed "Frank Richards, Kingsgate" in which the writer spoke his mind to A.A. Milne who had expressed some fanciful views about the doing of the "Famous Five". The name Frank Richards brought happy memories. Cliff grabbed the 'phone, got Enquiries and asked for the 'phone number. He was told that no such person was listed. Cliff, undaunted, tried the slower but as it proved surer method of the post. He asked his favourite author if he had any Magnets or Gems to sell. Promptly came a reply suggesting he try a fellow called Herbert Leckenby of York who ran 'an interesting little magazine'. Cliff took that advice and it wasn't long before he was in York, meeting the said H.L.

Bill Harrison, Ernest Whitehead and Bill Williamson also told of how they came to join the gang and Norman Smith expressed his views on the Magnet series he liked best.

Gerry Allison vividly described the feast of delightful reading the Wycliffe stories by Jack North provided and Harry Stables with his amusing quips spoke of the yarns of that grand old-timer Henry T. Johnson.

I provided some recollections of Maxwell Scott's Nelson Lee and Jack Wood followed with some of his when Edwy Searles Brooks took the detective under his wing.

Mollie Allison wound up with her views on the Cliff House and other school-girl stories and produced some interesting booklets.

It proved to be a very successful evening, not the least good reason being that it covered such a wide range of views and because every single member was able to join in.

Next Meeting, August 14th.

H. LECKENBY,

Northern Section Correspondent.

-----ooOoo-----

MIDLAND SECTION MEETING, 19th July: We had a very pleasant evening with a varied programme, the major items in which were a reading, a quiz, and "two minute speeches".

After the Minutes, etc., Mrs. Corbett continued her reading from "Magnet" No. 1497, and we heard how "Harry Wharton's amazing relation" arrives at Greyfriars, (really Wibley in disguise to discomfit Harry who is unjustly suspected of anti-Semitism).

Next following an attractive Greyfriars quiz in which two ladies (Mrs. Brown and Mrs. Corbett), tied for the ladies prize and the writer's luck still held good as he managed to win the gentleman's prize for the second time running.

The highlight of the evening was undoubtedly the "two minute" speeches. We each drew a Greyfriars name and then had to speak for two minutes ONLY on the subject. This was a new idea and proved very successful indeed. Many most interesting views were expressed. To mention only a few at random, Mrs. Brown contended that Prout was important largely as Coker's Form Master. Mrs. Corbett considered that Bunter was so exaggerated as to pass all bounds of credibility; Miss Partridge thought that the Bounder had depths of character and many good points, but characteristically he would be ashamed to admit them; and our Treasurer said that Coker reminded him of a man he knew. Interesting evidence this had Coker was not too much exaggerated.

The views expressed showed very clearly the immense scope there is for discussion and debate regarding the many characters created by incomparable Charles Hamilton.

Despite our full programme we still found time to raffle an "S.O.L." presented by our Cradley friends and naturally of course refreshments were not forgotten.

NOTE - Next meeting August 30th.

EDWARD DAVEY.

* * * * *

MERSEYSIDE SECTION MEETING - 11th July, 1954: Considering the time of the year, the attendance at this meeting was surprisingly large, ensuring a most enjoyable evening from the outset. The chairman dealt with the usual section items and offered congratulations to Frank Unwin and Jack Morgan for their efforts in keeping the Section prominent in the "Digest". He also regretted the absence of two of our regulars, Norman Pragnell and Jim Burke, and hoped both members would enjoy their holidays. The secretary then read the minutes and gave details of our financial position which was passed as quite satisfactory. And so to the entertainment, which was all that the word implies.

Sir Frederick Bowman gave a long and most engrossing talk on books of the past, interspersed with many amusing anecdotes, and references to authors, editors and artists familiar to all collectors. Once again he brought us specimens of his collection,

we were interested to note that a copy of the "Favourite Comic" contained a story written by him. We were very sorry when the talk came to an end; Sir Frederick's discourses are always a pleasure to his listeners, and the chairman's thanks were heartily endorsed by all present.

Then came Mrs. Webster's game, an original one devised by herself, which was both simple and intriguing, and she must have felt pleased to see with what enthusiasm we all entered the fray. Mr. Laffey was a clear winner, with Mr. Morgan runner up, and we all look forward to another session in the near future. Our thanks are due to our chairman's wife for providing us with another happy hour.

The meeting concluded with the library business which was very brisk, as always.

Next Meeting - 9th August.

FRANK CASE - Hon. Secretary.

THIS MAY INTEREST YOU: Ronald Hunter whilst browsing in a bookshop in Ventnor recently, was shown Vols. 1, 2 & 3 of the ld. Union Jack, 1903-4, 78 copies in all, bound in separate volumes without the pink covers. They are in very good condition; price for the three, £4. 10s. If anyone is interested, the full address is A.S. HEARD, THE BOOKLOVERS HAUNT, 19 PIER STREET, VENTNOR, ISLE OF WIGHT.

LATE NEWS: Bill Lofts has spent a week-end with me in York and he brought with him the result of his labours in the British Museum delving into the records of boys' periodicals. Gosh! talk about the patience of Job!

He has unearthed information about papers hitherto unknown to any of us. For instance, who knew there was a Union Jack apart from the Henty and A.P. ones. And a strange paper called "Grip" and a "Jack & Jill" which ran for two years in the '80's. It will make absorbing reading for the Annual. (H.L.)

WANTED: C.D. Annual No. 1, C.D. No. 11, Hamilton books, readable condition, reasonable prices. FRANK BYRNE, 40 WHITEBARN LANE, DAGENHAM, ESSEX.

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