

C.D.'s. Nicely bound volumes in fine condition, from £5.00 per vol. (binding alone would cost that!)

More EAGLES at last! From Vol. 2 (bound) onwards. Singles £1.25 to Vol. 13, then £1.00 per copy, each.

Stock recently purchased includes GEMS, POPULARS, STARTLER, MODERN BOYS, ALDINE HALF HOLIDAY Vol. 6 bound, and early GIRLS' FRIENDS, BOYS' FRIENDS, HERALDS, REALMS and many, many others.

Sale of 10,000 BOYS HARDBACKS, PRE-WAR, many in fine covers (callers only). Complete range of HOWARD BAKER FACSIMILES and BOOK CLUB SPECIALS, even a few out of print.

Suitable collections purchased at best prices. Your specific wants, please. With my vast stock, it is not possible to list. Sorry!

Visitors very welcome to see my "Aladdin's Cave", but please 'phone first.

N O R M A N S H A W

84 Belvedere Road,
Upper Norwood, London, SE19 2HZ.

Tel: 01 771 9857

Nearest Station: BR Crystal Palace

* * * *
* * *
* *
*

COLLECTORS' DIGEST

STORY PAPER COLLECTOR

Founded in 1941 by

W. H. GANDER

COLLECTORS' DIGEST

Founded in 1946 by

HERBERT LECKENBY

STORY PAPER COLLECTORS' DIGEST: Edited and Published
(1959 - January 1987) by Eric Favne

VOL. 42

No. 494

FEBRUARY 1988

Price 59p

(COPYRIGHT. This magazine is non-profit making and privately circulated. The reproduction of the contents either wholly or in part, without written permission from The Editor, is strictly forbidden.)

"SEND MASTER HARRY TO ME!"

Yes, it really is 80 years since those atmospheric and ever fresh words opened the first Magnet story on 15th February, 1908. They heralded not only 'The Making of Harry Wharton' but the making of the most resiliently popular boys' paper of all time. To celebrate this anniversary, Henry Webb has designed and drawn a special cover for this issue of the C.D., and Roger Jenkins has provided an interesting assessment of the early Magnet.

Many reasons can be given for the addictive appeal of Frank Richards' stories, but, in the end, they defy analysis, and simply sweep us along on the exciting tide of the author's wit and elegance

of style, and the exuberant charm of his characters. The creation of the glowing and the golden world of Greyfriars was a truly astounding literary achievement, for which we shall ever be grateful.

My introduction to Harry Wharton & Co. was, so to speak, through the back door of Greyfriars, for I read about the Famous Five and the Fat and Frabjous Owl in my brother's Magnet at a time when I was expected to stick to my own much loved paper - the Schoolgirl. My very first glimpse of Greyfriars suggested that it was touched by some strange magic, and to read about it could change an unhappy or unsatisfying moment into a truly happy one. That distinctive sense of warmth and well-being still, for me, hovers around most of Hamilton's stories about the heroes, the anti-heroes, the bounders and baddies, and the masters of Greyfriars.

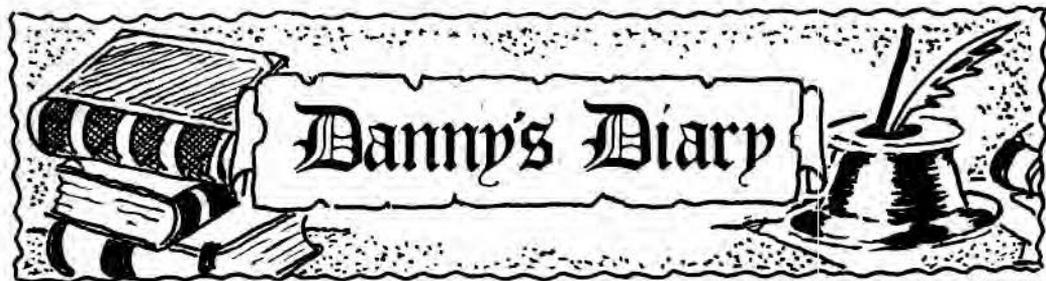
To read the Magnet is also to stir personal memories. My father introduced my brother (and indirectly myself) to both the Gem and the Magnet, which he had read during his pre-Great War boyhood, and I understand that these papers continued to inspire and comfort him during the four harrowing years in Flanders and France which were to follow for him and for so many of his contemporaries. Thus memories of my father are intertwined with the Magnet, and it is intriguing to remember that he used to read about Greyfriars in its earliest days.

Let us therefore, just like Colonel Wharton at the beginning of 'The Making of Harry Wharton', fill a glass from the decanter, hold it up to the light, and then slowly sip the contents. We can dispense with the 'dark shade of thought' which was 'upon his face' whilst this ritual was performed: we need only raise our glasses and, in whatever suits our fancy from vintage wine to fizzy ginger beer, drink a sparkling toast to the founder of so many literary feasts - Frank Richards! Long may his memory and that of the Magnet shine in our hearts and minds.

NOT FORGETTING ST. FRANK'S

Leaving aside euphoria for a moment, I would like to appeal to our many readers who particularly admire the Nelson Lee to send me some more articles about St. Frank's. It would be a sad day for the C.D. if it had to drop the Nelson Lee Column - so do please get out your typewriters or pens and put your thoughts on paper for me. If all other inspiration fails, just a note about your favourite series or character would, I am sure, be appreciated by us all.
Happy reading!

MARY CADOGAN



February 1938

I knew that something of the sort was going to happen. I felt it in my bones. Changes like this always go in threes.

First the Magnet lost its familiar cover, and reappeared like a tin of salmon. Then the Gem lost its cover and its shape, and appeared like a dwarf from outer space. And I have been waiting for the third thing. It's the Modern Boy this time. It has doubled the size of the sheets of paper on which it is printed. It is now the size of the Old Boys' Friend which lots of people remember lovingly. And its cover is white, with black and orange printing. I don't like it, but then I never like change of a much-loved thing. The Editor says it's double the size for the same money - tuppence. But I suspect it's done to attract more advertisements. A whole page advertisement in the new Modern Boy is really the same as two pages in the old one. And the paper has started again at No. 1 - new series.

This happened in the third week of the month. The two final stories of the series about the Rio Kid in Hollywood are entitled "Funk of the Films" and "Hollywood Show-Down". The secret is out that the new star making the film about the notorious outlaw, the Rio Kid, is really the Kid himself - and the Kid leaves Hollywood and takes the trail again. I enjoyed this series, but I shall always feel that the Kid was out place in the land of the Talkies. And the Kid departed from the paper with the last issue of the old style Modern Boy.

The new Modern Boy No. 1, has pages and pages of advertisements. It's a job to find the stories for the ads. There is a new Biggles serial entitled "Biggles on the Treasure Trail". The Captain Justice series has continued all the month. The over-long series about the runaway planet Nuvius ended with two stories "O'Mally Fights On", and "Smash-Up in Space". Now, in the new M.B. Captain Justice is there with "Siege of Station A" and "Clash of the Giants". Professor Flaznegel has come up with another of his amazing inventions.

Back to real life. It seems tame to record that the Exeter by-pass, the new wonder road, has been opened by Mr. Hore-Belisha. It cost the staggering sum of £230,000 to build.

Another good month in the Fourpenny Libraries. The Greyfriars one "Bold Bad Bunter" continued the series about Flip which started last month. Tip-top reading in bed.

"Harry Manners' Feud" told of a new boy named Eric Torrence, who according to Manners, was an imposter, humbug, and deceiver. There is a feud between Torrence and Manners. The St. Frank's S.O.L. is "The Schoolboy Boxer" about a schoolboy prize-fighter named Ernest Lawrence. A blackmailing master threatened to expose him at the school. The Rio Kid has finished in the Modern Boy but he is back in the Boys' Friend Library in "The Kid from Texas" - a dream of a Western yarn. In the Sexton Blake Library I had "The Mystery of the Missing Doctor" by Coutts Brisbane. This is set at home and in the West Indies and introduces Dr. Ferraro who is pitted against Sexton Blake.

The first Gem this month is called "Manners Minor Makes Good", and relates the further adventures of the new boy, Manners Minor. He attacks Mr. Selby in the dark, and his older brother takes the blame. But when the older brother is to be expelled for the act the youngster proves that he is of the right stuff and steps forward and owns up. I think the office boy did the illustrations for this one. They are awful.

The next Gem is "Big Business Gussy". Good fun when Gussy gets in a tangle by re-furnishing Study No. 6 on the never-never instalment system. Macdonald is back to illustrate this one. Next, "The Artful Dodger" is Trimble. The Head promises a flogging to any boy in the Fourth who fails an exam in Latin grammar. Trimble knows he will fail, so sets about trying to miss the exam. Fairly amusing in parts.

Final of the month is a tip-top yarn, "The Thief". It deals with the return to the St. Jim's district of Tickey Tapp, the scoundrel who runs a gambling den. It is Gore who gets in the toils, and he is the pincher of the title. Lovely tale, this one.

The old Greyfriars tales at the back of the Gem are lovely. This month a schooner is set up for auction in Pegg, and Bunter, the ventriloquist, lands Wharton with its purchase. This one is running under the title "The Greyfriars Sailors." An earlier one in the month featured Ionides, a foppish sixth-former. He is a fine character study. I wonder what became of him in later times.

Some lovely outings to the cinemas in the town this month. A seat in the ninepennies and half a pound of Packers Chocolate Crispets - my idea of Heaven. All the same "Parnell", starring Clark Gable and Myrna Loy, about an Irish politician, was tedious and the stars were really miscast. But I loved "Kid Galahad", a boxing picture, starring Edward G. Robinson, Bette Davis, and Wayne Morris. An hotel bellhop is groomed to be a prizefighter.

I also liked a lot a lively seafaring drama "Souls at Sea", starring Gary Cooper. Then "The Big City", a story of a taxicab driver who stood out against corruption, was good. It starred Spencer Tracy.

Most gorgeous of all is Will Hay in "Oh, Mr. Porter", based on the play "The Ghost Train". Not one dull moment in this one. Finally a good backstage film is "You Can't Have Everything" which has Alice Faye singing some lovely songs. Seeing "Oh Mr. Porter" at the Cinema reminds me that the new Modern Boy gave away a film-star Album with the first issue, and it has Will Hay, as the railway porter, on the cover. It is a nice album, worth keeping.

All through the month in the marvellous Magnet we have had the continuation of a new series about Arthur Carter who is trying hard to disgrace Billy Bunter

**48-page Photogravure Film Book
FREE Today**

with



of the New

MODERN
OUT TODAY



★ This gift book contains over 70 large portraits of film stars, with many interesting facts about every one of them.

The greatly enlarged, new MODERN BOY contains its old favourite features and a host of new ones, with 8 grand stories and many exciting articles.

Special in No. 1: Grand CAMERA and WATCHES - Don't miss it!

BOY 24

On sale at all Newsagents and Bookstalls

in the eyes of his rich uncle. Bunter and Carter are rivals as possible heir to rich Uncle Carter's wealth. First tale of the month is "Bunter's Big Bluff". Bunter is flashing a fiver around. The question is, where did he get it? Next comes "Getting His Own Back". When Arthur Carter nearly causes the expulsion of Vernon-Smith, the Bounder is all out for revenge on Carter. Then "The Schemer of the Remove". Carter burns most of Mr. Quelch's manuscript of the History of Greyfriars, and intends to land the blame on his cousin Bunter. This is a lovely tale. The best of the series so far. Then, final of the month, "A Ventriloquist's Vengeance". Bunter gets his chance to get his own back on Carter - and Carter has a startling time. This series continues next month. It is a long one. I am enjoying it very much. Roll on next Saturday which is Magnet publication day.

WOULD LIKE comics stories about Robot Smasher, Captain Q. and Black Sapper. Will buy or borrow at your price. Also have Magnets to exchange. Watson, Olympus, 1 Cartbridge Close, Walton on Naze, Essex.

ERIC FAYNE Comments on this Month's DANNY'S DIARY

S.O.L. No. 325 "Bold Bad Bunter" comprised the middle three stories of the Magnet's 8-story Flip Series of early in the year 1932. S.O.L. No. 326 "Harry Manners' Feud" comprised the 2 stories of the Torrence series which had been the first 2 Gems of the year 1925. Also in this S.O.L. were two single stories featuring Manners from a year or so earlier in late 1923, one of them being the memorable "Manners Holds His Own".

With the departure of the Rio Kid from Modern Boy we really came to the end of the Rio Kid saga. After the war Hamilton wrote one or two short pot-boilers introducing the Kid, but they are hardly worth consideration. B.F.L. No. 609 "The Kid From Texas" came originally, of course, from the Popular. It had been published, under the same title, in the B.F.L. some 5 years earlier. There was just one more of these Rio Kid B.F.L.'s to come.

The 1938 Gem "Manners Minor Makes Good" had been entitled "The Right Stuff" in the Spring of 1916. "Big Business Gussy" had been "D'Arcy's Debt" a few weeks later in 1916. The Trimble story "The Artful Dodger" was an astounding selection, for it came from the year 1927 when it had been called "Trimble Tries It On". The next tale in 1938 "The Thief" was a big leap back to the Spring of 1915 when it was entitled "The Path of Dishonour". It is possible that I myself might have been responsible for the publication of this one, for in those days there were a number of occasions when I drew Mr. Down's attention to a good tale which had escaped the net, and, invariably, he went back and published it a few weeks later.

The film "Kid Galahad" was made again some 25 years later with Elvis Presley playing the boxer of the story. The re-make was a travesty of the original, as so often happens with re-makes.

We don't know for certain what caused the A.P. to change the format of Modern Boy in February 1938, but Danny's guess is almost certainly the right one. Modern Boy always carried lots of advertisements, and firms which had previously taken one page would probably now take double that space. The only other instance I can recall of a paper increasing its measurements in this way was in the case of the "Firefly". The Firefly started as a Magnet size paper and changed to what, in those days, was orthodox size for comic papers. When I was a child my favourite comic was the Firefly until, due to paper shortage in the middle of the first great war, it amalgamated with the Butterfly. I remember T.E. Dunville (a music hall comedian of the day) being on the front page of the Firefly for years. I still have a few copies tucked away.

In the case of Modern Boy, the large-sized format was evidently not too popular, for only about 6 months were to pass before there was another change in format, and the large-sheet Modern Boy had passed into history.

Hundreds of early Magnets, Gems, Nelson Lees, Sexton Blakes, S.O.L.s for sale.
Make offers for issues wanted. J. Murtagh, 509 Windsor Avenue, Hastings, New Zealand.

AT THE TOP OF THE TREE FOR BOYS' SCHOOL STORIES!



EIGHTY YEARS ON

By Roger M. Jenkins



It seems astonishing to someone who remembers buying the Magnet in youth to realise that the paper was first published eighty years ago this month. That halfpenny publication made its debut on Tuesday, 11th February, dated Saturday, 15th February, 1908. 'The Making of Harry Wharton' began with those famous words "Send Master Harry to me!" as Colonel Wharton began on his decanter of after-dinner wine, presumably vintage port. Colonel Wharton had returned from India to find his nephew running rings round Aunt Amy, and he decided to send Harry to Greyfriars. It is well-known how he met Nugent on the train and fought with him (the champion boxer of Greyfriars!) and how, after further vicissitudes the last paragraph stated "The two juniors - friends now, and for life henceforth - shook hands upon the compact".

Few readers of the Gem would have realised that Martin Clifford and Frank Richards were one and the same person. The early Gems had a lightness of touch and a serenity of outlook that were in marked contrast to the sombre atmosphere of the first two Magnets, and even the jokes about Bunter's extreme short-sightedness seemed to fall somewhat flat amid that dramatic tension. Who would have believed that the creator of the sunny-natured Tom Merry was also the author who described Wharton thus: "Handsome indeed was the face, with its well-marked features and large, dark eyes. But there was a cloud upon it, and in the dark eyes a glint of suspicion and defiance. The whole manner of the boy was one of suppressed hostility". In that short description was encapsulated the character of Harry Wharton which was to come to the surface again and again over the thirty-two years of the Magnet's run. Here was a hero with a difference, indeed.

Magnet No. 2 was entitled 'The Taming of Harry' but this was hardly an appropriate title. It recounted the arrival of Bob Cherry and the way in which Hazeldene's mischief-making caused a quarrel between Wharton and the newcomer. The climax came in a fight at the end, much to Hazeldene's delight, and Bob Cherry's skill at boxing enabled him to overcome his opponent with ease. It ended with Wharton still having only one friend, Nugent, and the final words of the story were "Harry Wharton had yet to learn that pluck must be allied to chivalry".

After these two memorable opening numbers, the tempo relaxed a little. Harry Wharton, after refusing to attend games practice, then showed up as a very able footballer in No. 3, and Bob Cherry helped Nugent track down Hazeldene as the villain of the piece who nearly cheated Wharton of the Seaton D'Arcy Latin prize, but the following week it was Wharton who was defending Hazeldene against Bulstrode, and Wharton was still inclined to be resentful towards Bob Cherry, though this gradually wore off.

What Charles Hamilton was attempting to do in these early numbers was to assemble his cast of players, and describe the changes in Wharton's character against this moving background. Harry Wharton's suspicions and resentments were to some extent kept in check by Nugent, and his status as a hero was gradually being achieved. In real life, such changes take a long time to come about, and so they did in the Magnet, but there can be no doubt of the compelling interest these early stories arouse. The early Greyfriars group of characters was much superior to the early ones at St. Jim's, and in these first few Magnets the sure foundation for the paper's success was well and truly laid.

* * *

WANTED TO PURCHASE: Biggles, Bunter, William, Brent-Dyer hardbacks. Howard Baker volumes. Comics Annuals: Tiger Tim, Rainbow, Film Fun, Radio Fun, Knockout, Champion, Wizard, Rover, Adventure, Hotspur, Magnet, G.H.A.'s, S.O.L.S., Beano, Dandy. Some duplicates for Sale. Please state titles wanted. Contact: Colin Crewe, 12B Westwood Road, Canvey Island, Essex. Tel. 0268 693735 after 7.30 p.m.

* * *

THE
Magnet ^{1d}/₂

No. 1. LIBRARY Vol. 1.

The
Making of
Harry Wharton

COMPLETE
SCHOOL
TALE

By
FRANK
RICHARDS



HE TORE HIMSELF FREE AND CLARED AROUND!



Editors of The Sexton Blake Library

No. 1: William H. Back.

By W.O.G. Lofts

The famous Sexton Blake Library published by the Amalgamated Press Ltd., ran from September 1915 until June 1963.

There were three series made up as follows:

| | |
|---------|-------------|
| 1915/25 | 382 issues. |
| 1925/41 | 744 issues. |
| 1941/63 | 526 issues. |

Making in all a grand total of 1,652 issues.

When William Howard Baker took over the editorship at number 347 (third series) dated 20th November, 1955 with the story "Without Warning" from his pen, it was deemed that the 'new look' Blake had commenced. Although there was no change of numbering it was considered that this was the 'fourth series' till the end.

Consequently, when Mayflower Books Ltd. revived The Sexton Blake Library in 1968 in a new format of paperback (the last four issues in hardback) it was classified as the Fifth series. This issue had a total of 50 issues being numbered up to No. 41. The final issue being published in January 1970. So altogether the Sexton Blake Library had a magnificent run of 55 years with a grand total of 1,702 issues. Only one complete run is known to be in a collector's hands.

The man who thought up the idea of The Sexton Blake Library was William H. Back a Managing editor of Amalgamated Press. "Willie" as he was affectionately called had, some eleven years earlier, been instrumental in having the Baker Street detective appear weekly in the Union Jack. So popular was the character with its world wide sales, that book length stories were obviously a certain money-spinner. Most unfortunately by the time the first number appeared in September 1915 the First World War had been in full force for many months; consequently most of the staff had been called up for War service. Only a skeleton staff remained, so he had to run the

Libraries himself, the Boys' Friend Library, Nelson Lee Library, and the new Sexton Blake Library, assisted generally by office boys including the comical, cigar-smoking tiny Will Gibbons.

"Willie" Back by all accounts was a very clever and competent editor, and according to H.W. Twyman who later edited the sister paper the Union Jack, he also would have made an excellent detective. Indeed in this respect he was the model for Ferrers Locke the famous Charles Hamilton creation. W.H. Back's clear cut and keen type of features made an impression on all who met him. On one of his rare visits to Fleetway House the great author had spotted W.H. Back in one of the corridors and had never forgotten this.

Unfortunately biographical details of "Willie" Back are almost nil, as in 1922 on a trip abroad he died suddenly. This being so unexpected, and with no deputy, it was a considerable time before anyone could be found to replace him. Such was his expertise in handling all the papers under his command.

The very first number of The Sexton Blake Library was entitled 'The Yellow Tiger', and has been proved to have been written by the Canadian G.H. Teed, who was considered to be the best writer at that period. It should be explained that all stories were anonymous until June 1930 when No. 241 (Second Series) "The Mission of Doom" carried the author's name of Gwyn Evans.

The first number illustrated by Arthur Jones was priced 3d (old money), had 120 pages, and was considered by the old readers to be one of the finest stories ever written in the Blake saga. Although at least a dozen are known to exist today, copies are quite valuable, prices ranging from £50 to £150 according, of course, to condition - the latter price for an almost mint copy.

The end of the Great War in 1918 quickly saw most of the editors returning to their old jobs at Fleetway House, or new papers made for them with the end of paper rationing. It was then that "Willie" Back was able to put an editor in sole control of the Sexton Blake Library who curiously was actually christened "Willie" - certainly not the first time that the curious duplication of names or initials came to be associated with the Sexton Blake Library.

* * * * *

Numbers 13 and 30 Greyfriars Book Club, mint condition. Half-price £8.00 each.
J. Thompson, 122 Chapelhill Road, Moreton, Wirral. Tel. 051 678 4484.

Cliff House Corner

by Margery Woods



February can be a month of impatience.

The British winter tends to drag on and on, and yet the burgeoning of spring and dormant life newly astir brings a restlessness to many. The Cliff House girls are no exception to this and ideas are often sought for means of enlivening evenings still long and chill and dark.

When Leila Carroll the American junior, suggested reviving the Fourth Form Debating Society there was an enthusiastic response. A time was fixed for the first meeting, topics or questions were invited, and a panel was chosen to lead the debate, consisting of Babs and Leila and Janet to argue in favour, and Clara and Mabs and Jean Cartwright to oppose. Jemima Carstairs was the natural choice to preside. The names of those submitting questions were drawn from a hat and the chosen were to read out their questions to the assembled members.

There was a great deal of mirth when Bessie Bunter's name was the first drawn, and there were very few straight faces when Bessie marched up on to the dais and unfolded a sadly blot-bestrewn piece of notepaper.

"Quiet please!" Jemima rapped sharply with her gavel. "Allow the proposer to read out her topic for debate".

Bessie shuffled importantly, adjusted her big glasses on her snub little

nose and began.

"Before Christmas the shops and mail-order catalogues are full of expensive electronic gadgets and silly fripperies that are no better than glorified toys for adults".

"Get on with it, Fatima---it's supposed to be just a question, not a full blown lecture".

"Ha ha ha."

"I am gig-getting on with it! Shut up, you kik-cats. Now where was I?"

"We know where we wish you were," said an unkind voice from the floor.

"Ha ha ha."

"Can't you read your own spelling, Bess?"

Indignantly Bessie found her place and continued: "In the aftermath of the Christmas festivities, which now seem ages ago, there are loads of toys and gadgets given at Christmas now thrown into cupboards or garages to wait for the next jumble sale. Lots are unwanted, and lots were returned after Christmas for exchange. Some are broken already, and lots wouldn't work".

"Get to the point, Fatima!"

"I have!" Bessie glowered. "I'm talking about the things grown-ups give each other. Some of them are put away and given to other grown-ups next year for presents. I want to know if you think grown-ups should be allowed to have toys and silly things for Christmas."

"Don't know how you propose to stop 'em," said the same unkind voice.

After an accusing, self-righteous glare at the convulsed audience Bessie went back to her seat.

"That's a silly one to start off with," grumbled Clara.

"No it isn't, said Diana Royston-Clarke from a prominent seat in the front row. "My father was given a sort of robot hand thing that you set on the table and it walks towards you but doesn't fall off the edge. It's very clever and it cost the earth but it's really for adults to play with, and so it's a toy."

"And somebody brought my brother a sort of coffin with cigarettes in and when you open it a skeleton pops up. I think it came from Spain," said a girl at the back of the room.

"Yes---and my sister's boyfriend gave her a furry puppy that barks and runs round in circles when you wind it up."

They were interested now and began to recall various items presented to older members of their families which when pared down to basics were toys in expensive guises for grown-ups.

Jemima gave them a few minutes, then rapped for silence. She looked at Clara. "Will you begin?"

"Yes," said the Tomboy. "I think toys for adults are a load of piffle and a waste of money that would be far better spent on worthier causes. Animal welfare, for instance."

"I don't agree, although you have a very good point there, Clara," said Babs seriously. "After all, Christmas is a time of giving, and if the gifts bring harmless amusement what does it matter what form they take?"

"No," disagreed Jean Cartwright, "it can't be harmless if it's thoughtless and wasteful. What about poor children who do not receive any toys at Christmas,

while some adults with more money than sense indulge themselves with novelties that would mean so much to youngsters who are denied an important part of childhood."

"Point taken," said Leila, "but those adults would just buy something else. I guess they wouldn't save their money, or buy dull but sensible gifts."

"They'd just buy things like perfume or cigars or ornaments," put in Janet.

Jemima looked enquiringly at Mabs. "Your words of wisdom, oh golden-haired one."

"I think it betrays a shocking lack of intelligence in adults," said Mabs firmly. "Both in the adults who give these things and the adults who amuse themselves with such toys or gadgets which fulfil no sensible purpose."

"Hear hear!"

Jemima's gavel came into play again. "Will you sum up for the in-favours, Babs?"

"Yes." Babs looked almost as though she wished she were on the opposing side. "I think it is possible to take this matter too seriously. There may be adults who had deprived childhoods, and only at Christmas are they able to satisfy that sense of childhood loss without fear of being laughed at. Also, I think it shows they have a sense of humour, are young at heart, and probably kind enough to contribute to the needs of children without toys, if they are told of them. And haven't fathers, from time immemorial, played with their sons' train sets? And haven't mothers enjoyed helping their daughters to make pretty clothes for their dolls?"

"A fair argument," conceded Clara, "but I still think it's silly of adults to waste their money on stupid novelties which, if they were honest, they'd admit they got most pleasure out of showing off to their friends. A sort of going one better than the Joneses."

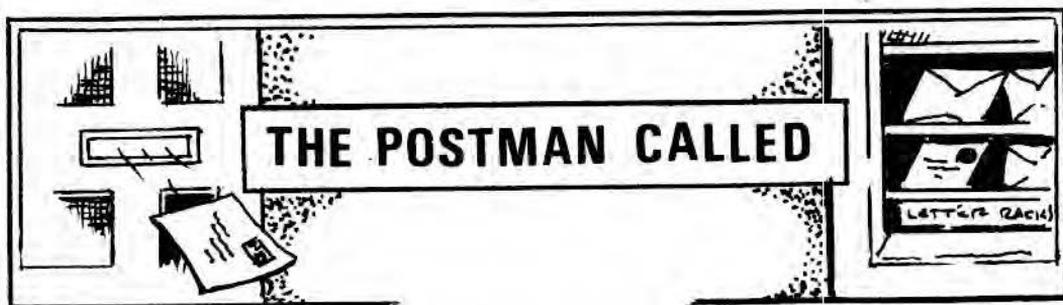
"Five minutes discussion among yourselves," instructed the chairwoman, "then we'll take a vote."

The first meeting of the Fourth Form Debating Society finally gave Bessie her answer by a very narrow margin. Grown-ups shouldn't be illogical and expect the best of both worlds, but if they really wanted toys they should not be deprived of them.

Jemima declared the meeting closed, and all over the world grown-ups who in their most secret hearts had never quite grown up could breathe freely again.

But do you agree with the Cliff House girls?

GRANGE BINDERS: Rose Villa, Inkerson Fen, Throckenholt, Nr. Spalding, Lincs. We are currently running a 20% discount offer (for the next month). If you wish to find out more about this very special offer, phone John Naish on Wisbech (0905) 700758



P. STURDY (London): Congratulations on the C.D. and its very varied contents. I must also extend my very warm thanks to Mr. Lofts, Mr. Adley and Mr. Cyril Rowe for making possible a difficult task re. the B.F.L. index. It took me nine years to compile only one half of the titles of the Boys' Friend Library, and then I had some numbers wrong! May I point out that at one time the B.F.L. had 120 pages; for example, a copy of 'The Air Raiders', No. 326, February 1916. The B.F.L. never returned to such large issues after these finished later on in World War One.

(Editor's Note: A reminder to readers that the splendid BOYS' FRIEND LIBRARY CATALOGUE is still available, and can be obtained from Mr. W.O.G. Lofts, 56 Sheringham House, Lisson Street, London, NW1 5NY. £4.00. Post free.)

BARRIE STARK (Lewes): I have several times thought that people coming along now and in the future especially will not understand or appreciate the £.s.d. currency in the context of their times. We could appreciate Dickens's references to money because we were using the same currency, and similarly, when reading about Greyfriars, when for example as in one story Bunter shows a handful of coins, we know the value, what they looked like and what they would buy - even though in the post-war years, money was losing value. But who today would understand the meaning of 'eleven three' and a packet of pins for change from a shilling, if they are too young to remember this? One day, someone is going to have to research and publish a 'Study of Yesterday's Currency - What it would Buy, and a Dictionary of Terms'. Otherwise allusions to 'Bobs', 'Tanners', 'Joeys', 'Quids (in)' etc. will be meaningless. And as for eight gobstoppers a penny - well, for ever-more!

BRIAN DOYLE (Putney): In her article "Journey to Oz" (December issue) Margaret Winterbottom ends by saying that she is seeking information as to how to obtain missing OZ books in her collection. The American paperback publishers, Del Rey, have been (and are still) publishing many titles in the series, including, so far, all the original Baum titles and most of those by Thompson. These are excellently produced with all the original illustrations and superb colour covers (I have 25 of them myself). They cost around 6 dollars each and if she writes to a bookshop in New York with her query they will send her a list of what is available. The address is: Books of Wonder, 132 Seventh Avenue at 18th Street, New York, NY 10011, USA. I have been to the shop twice myself and it is indeed a wondrous book-store, specializing in OZ books and other material, as well as other books dealing with fantasy and magic. There is also the International Wizard of Oz Club, based in the States, of which I have been a member for several years, publishing a marvellous regular OZ magazine, profusely illustrated, often in colour. I can supply fuller details if she writes to me.

BILL THURBON (Cambridge): I was interested in the article on Robinson Crusoe (December C.D.). Several of the comics just before, or during the 1914-18 War had Robinsonade stories. To my mind by far the best of these ran in Chuckles for a long period around 1927-28. I am pretty sure its title was 'Adventure Island'. This had everything! It began with a shipwreck, which resulted in the members of a circus party (no girls unfortunately) being cast away on a desert island. Happily the ship survived, with its cargo, which contained a great deal of material which had been intended for a new colony. The 'Crusoes' included the circus acrobats and the ringmaster. They gradually acquired extra castaways, including a Zulu, a tame South Sea Islander and an Irish sailor. From the cargo of the ship they built a railway, and their adventures were many. Then a damaged German cruiser reached the island, and captured most of the castaways. The Zulu came to the rescue - but I never got the ending! I missed two or three Chuckles, and when I bought the next one, alas, 'Adventure Island' had ended. So I never discovered how events worked out! Chuckles had some splendid serials including one 'Martian' story, and one which had done a great deal of pirating from Rider Haggard's 'Queen Sheba's Ring'. Incidentally some of the characters in this latter serial had appeared a year or so earlier in the Boys' Friend in a lost world' serial, which owed a great deal to Conan Doyle's

'Lost World'.

(Editor's Note: The article by Margery Woods on Robinsonades has inspired a great deal of interest, and the following intriguing article by Mr. Beal.)

ROBINSONADESby George Beal

I found Margery Woods's piece 'Crusoes Ahoy!' very interesting, because Robinsonades have always held a great fascination for me, so perhaps I could be allowed to enlarge on her theme. When Defoe's book appeared in 1719 it was a runaway success, not only at home, but on the Continent. As Mrs. Woods says, there were dozens of imitators, many anxious to show their own nationals as equals, if not superior, shipwrecked mariners to the English.

It is usually said that Defoe based his story on the true one of Alexander Selkirk, a Scot. However, there is no evidence that Defoe ever met Selkirk, although he must have heard about him. Selkirk's story has been told many times. The Real Robinson Crusoe by R.L. Megroz appeared about 1940, but there was also one by the Rev. H.C. Adams published in 1879 called The Original Robinson Crusoe. This last-named, is not, I am afraid, very accurate.

Robinsonades have been published ever since the original appeared in 1719. In 1898, Dr. Hermann Ullrich produced a book called Robinson und Robinsonaden, in which he listed all known editions of Robinson Crusoe [then numbering 196], 110 translations, 115 versions with modified or altered contents, 233 imitations, which he calls Robinsonades, and 44 described as Pseudo-Robinsonades, which are not really on the desert-island castaway theme at all, but merely include the words 'Robinson' or 'Crusoe' in the title to encourage sales.

The important point about a Robinsonade is that the theme should be about a castaway who lives alone on a desert island, fending for him- or herself and using intelligence to survive. This can, of course, be extended to include a few people, but once the island is peopled with any greater number, the whole essence of the theme is lost. A true Crusoe - as with the Castaways in radio's 'Desert Island Discs' - must have little or no help from the outside world. The radio castaways are pampered, supplied as they are with the Bible, Shakespeare and a pile of gramophone discs.

Probably the best of all the modified Crusoes was that written by Joachim Heinrich Campe in 1779-80, Robinson der Jungere. This closely follows Defoe, but makes Crusoe a young man. However, the best-known Robinsonade was The Swiss Family Robinson, which, although published in 1820, had been told to his children while out on walks by a Swiss pastor named Johann David Wyss. His son, Johann Rudolf Wyss [who had become a writer - and author of the Swiss national anthem] wrote the story down. There are a number of editions of this book, the texts of which vary considerably.

Fascinating though it is, the Robinsons' island is an impossible place, appearing as it does to have been a microcosm of the world's animal and vegetable life. Here lions live cheek by jowl with tigers, camels, llamas, monkeys and kangaroos. The book so infuriated Captain Frederick Marryat that he set himself to write a logical version of the story, in which the family's zoological encounters had some basis on ecological fact. His book is called Masterman Ready.

Another author fascinated with the Crusoe theme was Jules Verne, who wrote what must be the definitive Robinsonade of all - The Mysterious Island which appeared in three volumes, and was translated into English by W.H.G Kingston in 1875. Verne was not content with that, however, producing L'Ecole des Robinsons in 1882 and Seconde Patrie in 1900, a continuation of The Swiss Family Robinson.

W.H.G. Kingston, as Mrs. Woods says, produced his own story The Rival Crusoes, and was also one of the translators of The Swiss Family Robinson.



THE
L I F E
AND
STRANGE SURPRIZING
ADVENTURES
OF
ROBINSON CRUSOE,
OF *TORK*. MARINER:

Who lived Eight and Twenty Years,
all alone in an un-inhabited Island on the
Coast of AMERICA, near the Mouth of
the Great River of OROONOQUE;

Having been cast on Shore by Shipwreck, where-
in all the Men perished but himself.

WITH
An Account how he was at last strangely deli-
ver'd by PYRATES.

Written by Himself.

L O N D O N;

Printed for W. TAYLOR at the Ship in Peter-Nefter-
Row. MDCCLXIX.

There had been others who continued the Swiss Family Robinson story. Willis the Pilot appeared in the late 19th century, and was 'translated' [according to the title-page] by Henry Frith. Exactly who wrote it, and in what language, is not stated.

Mrs. Woods refers to the book The Dog Crusoe [presumably that by R.M. Ballantyne]. The story is, in fact, about a dog whose name is Crusoe, and comes under Ullrich's heading of a pseudo-Robinsonade. The libretto of Haydn's opera L'Isola Disabitata was written by Pietro Matastasio, and the opera was first performed on 6th December, 1779 at the Esterhaz Palace in Hungary. There were other operatic attempts on the Crusoe story, one being written by F. Fortescue, and published in Boston, USA in 1822. Whether it was performed or not I do not know, but another was the comic opera Robinson Crusoe by Jacques Offenbach [libretto by Eugene Cormon and Hector Cremieux, based on Defoe's book]. This was certainly staged, its first performance being at the Opera Comique in Paris on 23rd November, 1867.

I append a list of a few Robinsonades of comparatively recent vintage:

The Nameless Island, by Percy F. Westerman [1920].

Castaway Island, by Perry Newberry [1920].

The Crater, by James Fenimore Cooper [1847].

The Canadian Crusoes, by Catharine Parr Traill [1858].

Lost Island, by H.P. Holt and Ralph Henry Barbour [1919].

The Two Castaways, by Lady Forence Dixie [c1890].

The Island Home, by Richard Archer [1858].

Wonder Island, by Gunby Hadath [1928].

The Castaways of Disappointment Island, by the Rev. Escott-Inman [c1910].

Perserverance Island, or The Robinson Crusoe of the 19th century, by Douglas Frazar [c1885].

The Castaway's Home, by Janet Gordon [1886].

The Boy Castaways, by Lieut.-Comdr. Taprell Dorling [1915].

The Castaways, by Thomas Mayne Reid [1870].

The Boy Scout Crusoes, by Ray Saville [This is an Aldine paperback inscribed as being about 'The Chums of Fellgate', being No. 7 in the Boys Pocket Library, published at 2d about the 1930s.]



* * *

* *

*

LETTERS FROM THE GREYFRIARS ARCHIVES

Selected by Les Rowley

The Library at Greyfriars is the repository of weighty tome and dusty calfskin: of black letter manuscripts and other aged and cracking parchments. They provide the source from which that erudite scholar, Henry Samuel Quelch, can compile and collate material for his 'History of Greyfriars School'. To that gentleman I can, with confidence, leave a monumental work which eventually will set the academic world by its eyes if not its ears.

So, it is not to valued volume or ancient manuscript that I now wish to address the earnest reader's attention, but rather to correspondence of more recent date. A correspondence not without its modicum of interest. A correspondence that may provide an intriguing insight into the day-to-day running of a great public school.

Mr. Henry Samuel Quelch to the Manager, Chunkley's Stores, Courtfield.

Sir,
Your account for the previous month is to hand, but before I forward a cheque in settlement kindly delete the item referring to Wednesday, 27th June. No goods were ordered by me on that date and the charge of 25/- for goods from your Provisions Department was not, therefore, incurred.

Yours &c
H.S. Quelch

From the Manager of Chunkley's Stores, Courtfield, to Mr. Henry Samuel Quelch.

Dear Sir,
The point raised in your letter regarding last month's account is not understood. The item referred to was one of our family size rich fruit cakes with marzipan icing and was requested by your goodself by telephone.

I have questioned our delivery man who is most emphatic in confirming that your instructions were explicitly carried out. As these instructions now seem to elude your memory it would, perhaps, be useful for me to repeat them here. The cake (you directed) should be delivered to your study at Greyfriars School between the hours of two-thirty and four in the afternoon, when you would be absent, and the item was to be left on your desk ready for your return.

Wednesday afternoons are, I understand, half-holidays for the scholars. Nevertheless, the delivery of the cake was witnessed by one of the boys who was in the Masters' corridor at the time, and you may wish to question him in order to verify delivery. Our delivery man has described the boy as being rather stout and wearing spectacles.

Trusting that the foregoing will close this matter to our mutual satisfaction and assuring you of our best attention at all times.

I am &c
W.E. Stingham (Manager)

From Mr. Samuel Bunter, Bunter Villa, Reigate to Mr. William George Bunter.

Dear William,

I hope that the castigation administered by your form master was as severe as it was deserved.

The burden of taxation at eightpence in the pound is sufficient burden in itself without my having to settle bills for costly commestibles. It is too late in the term for me to recover the amount by stopping your allowance so the loss must be reconciled in some other manner.

In your last letter (received without the courtesy of a stamp) you inform me that you have received invitations from Lord Mauleverer and the Hon. A.A. D'Arcy to spend the summer vacation at their homes. You suggest that I should augment your going away money to cover first class travel by rail and refreshments en route to whichever of your hosts you choose to visit.

I understand that it is normal custom for both of these boys to be collected at the school and taken to their homes by car. In the matter of Mauleverer the question of your travel costs will not arise, as he will doubtless wish to avail himself of the pleasure of your company for the journey. If your choice is D'Arcy I suggest that you put the position to him as diplomatically as possible and am confident that he will accommodate such a long-standing friend as you claim to be.

In either event you will receive no travelling money from me, the resultant saving going partly to meet the cost of the cake you ordered from Chunkleys.

Your father

W.S. Bunter.

(Further letters from the archive next month)

FOR SALE: S.O.L. No. 324 "Schoolboy House-Breakers" (St. Frank's); No. 326 "Harry Manners' Feud" (St. Jim's); very nice copies, £2.00 each. UNION JACKS: 1014, 1015, (both Huxton Rymer), 1016 (Yvonne), 1017 (Rymer), 1021 (Gunga Dass), 1022 (Zenith): £10.00 for the 6. 2 rare Collectors' Items: Bound copy of PLOCK No. 120 containing one of the earliest St. Jim's stories "Mutiny at St. Jim" (early 1907) £10; Bound copy of MARVEL No. 185 containing rare Netherby story (with Hurree Singh) "The Mysterious Mosscoo" plus "Pete the Mayor". (mid 1907). £7.00. P. & P. extra on all items. Write Eric Fayne, Excelsior House, 113 Crookham Road, Church Crookham, Hants, GU13 0NH.

WANTED. Nelson Lees, Old Series. Numbers 1 to 110. Single Copies or Bound volumes.

Betty Hopton, "Karunda", 79 Scalpcliffe Road, Burton-on-Trent, Staffs. DE15 9AB.
Tel. 0283 65806

"THE CRUISE OF THE FAMOUS FIVE"

Frank Richards
(Howard Baker Book Club
Special: £18.00)

OUR BOOKSHELVES



Reviewed by Eric Fayne.

Unlike the recent couple of volumes in this superb series, this book contains one of the great "classics" of the earlier Magnet. A very famous story in its day, it has lived on down the years. This is "Surprising the School", the one where Billy Bunter reforms under the influence of Cora Quelch, the plump niece of the Remove Form Master.

Bunter had once before shown an unexpected side of his character when, quite a few years earlier, he had suffered mild concussion from diving into an empty swimming-bath. Now, in "Surprising the School" we have another memorable Greyfriars masterpiece. Bunter and Cora, besides admiring one another's ample anatomical

proportions, have a mutual interest in the art of Cookery. And, under the influence of Cora, Bunter becomes a gentleman and a hero. Delightful all those years ago, the story has lost none of its gentle charm and joyousness.

There are 5 other Red Magnets in this volume, all from the opening weeks of the year 1915. The first tale in the book is "Skinner's Scheme". Ferrers Locke, the detective, is having a restful holiday at Greyfriars, as the guest of his relative, the Headmaster. Skinner plans a few fake occurrences to show up the visitor as a dud detective. But a real robbery takes place. In this tale we are introduced to Reginald Cecil Bertie Fitzroy Mimbble, called "Nosey" for short, the son of Mrs. Mimbble of tuckshop fame. To have a very young son like "Nosey", Mrs. Mimbble must have been younger than we usually assumed. I cannot recall that Nosey Mimbble was ever referred to again in the Magnet.

Then comes "The Rival Ventriloquist", a sub story. The actual writing is competent enough, but the story is an interesting example of what unbelievable plots the subs often churned out.

A ventriloquist is at work - one who can imitate voices and throw his voice. Bunter is blamed, after several absurd episodes. Then Vernon-Smith finds a bill which reads: "Harold Skinner Esq. To lessons in ventriloquism. Two guineas". We accepted always that Bunter had an unusual gift, far-fetched though it was. But that Skinner could become equally proficient in the art after two guineas worth of lessons is something that only a sub writer would ask readers to credit.

Next comes a run-of-the-mill football story "The Fight for the Cup". The "Cup" is the one which Coker provided for competition in Magnet No. 300 - 61 weeks earlier.

Then the title tale "The Cruise of the Famous Five" which is typical Red Magnet melodrama. The Famous Five are taking photographic shots from a moored barge at Pegg. The Highcliffe cads cut the barge loose, and the Famous Five are carried out to sea where naturally, in 1915, they meet up with Germans.

"The Schoolboy Auctioneer" is a Fisher T. Fish tale which brings the volume to a close. Fish, the native of a then neutral country, provides much nostalgic fun with his latest money-making scheme, and plenty of British patriotism gave heart to the youth of 1915. And, need we say, it all brings joy to the young in heart a long time on, in 1988.

So! Another gorgeous volume, magnificently bound in the way that Howard Baker does so well, with Billy Bunter surprising the school and delighting the reader.

A WOMAN OF PASSION: The Life of E. Nesbit.

By Julia Briggs

(Hutchinson, London. £16.95)

Reviewed by Brian Doyle

In the comparatively short span of 14 years (1899 to 1913) E. Nesbit wrote 16 of the best books for children (indeed for any age) ever published. (There was a 17th, published posthumously, in 1925). Some of their titles will surely revive golden memories: "The Story of the Treasure Seekers", "The Phoenix and the Carpet", "Five Children and It", "The Railway Children", "The Enchanted Castle" and "The Magic City", among others.

Edith Nesbit's (though she always preferred just the 'E' on the title-page) children's books fall into two groups: the family stories and the magical adventures. And how very real her child-characters were! Not surprisingly, since most were based loosely upon first her own brothers and sister, and later upon her own children. Though I personally loved all the books when I was young (and still do) I always had a preference for the 'magic' stories. The combination of magic and fantasy with ordinary everyday proceedings and extremely likeable, realistic children - and how, so often magic can 'go wrong' - made enchanting and memorable tales which were not easily forgotten.

Though she sometimes liked to present herself in the guise of the child-characters' devoted, placid and wholesome Mother (as, for instance, in "The Railway Children") in reality she was indeed 'a woman of passion' who had an intense (if unconsummated) love affair with Bernard Shaw, and a string of affairs with younger men. She was, it is true, married to a compulsive womaniser, Hubert Bland, but nevertheless... Both Edith and Bland were enthusiastic founder-members of the famous socialist Fabian Society (she even named one of her sons Fabian) and mixed with leading socialist figures of the day, including Shaw and H.G. Wells.

She was, by all accounts, a creature of many moods, flying into a rage one moment then, an hour later, spreading warmth and love towards all. She was something of a Bohemian, throwing wild parties, smoking cigarettes (daring in those days for a woman) going for cycle-rides, and bending the ears of anyone who would

listen (and some who would rather not) with her Left Wing views and theories (somewhat reminiscent of at least two distinguished contemporary actresses I might name!). She also encountered personal tragedies in her life, as when her son, Fabian, died at 15, and when she had two still-born babies.

Engrossing though Nesbit's life was, and Julia Briggs' fine biography is, I think I would rather know and remember her through her children's books (though she was a prolific writer and produced countless other books, novels, short stories, articles and verse). Who can forget the bad-tempered 'Psammead' who grants the children wishes in "Five Children and It?" Or the vain Phoenix who grants similar magical favours in "The Phoenix and the Carpet?" Or the Ugly-Wuglies' (grotesque creatures made by the children from old brooms, umbrellas, coats and so on) who come alive and pursue their creators in "The Enchanted Castle"? This last book, together with "The Magic City" (about a boy and girl who shrink to the size of the city they have built from household articles and ornaments and have many exciting adventures there) remain my own personal favourites. This book taught me much that I never before knew about E. Nesbit - including the fact that her grand-daughter, Pandora (my own daughter's name, incidentally!) became a successful ballet-dancer with Pavlova's own company...

THE PRINCESS SNOWEE'S CORNER

It is quite a long time since I put paw to paper, but there have been stirring times in my kingdom. I was a bit wobbly some time ago so my Man called in my medical adviser. He looked me over and said "She's gone blind". My Man went as white as the cover of that blue Gem he is always talking about. My medical adviser said he would call again.

He did, with some strange thing which he shone in my eyes. "Yes", he said, "she's gone blind. Her retinas are detached".

I wondered what I'd lost, and looked round, but my tail was still there. "Is there nothing that can be done?" asked my Man, as noble as the hero in a sub story (whatever that is).

"Nothing", said my medical adviser, "but here's my bill for the two visits".

My Man fed me up on the fat of the land, and made a rare old fuss of me. He has a Friend in High Places, and asked for this Friend's help every night on his knees. And, really, I don't know what all the fuss was about. I romp over my territory, eat plenty, and ramble out at the back and in at the front. My Man says he doesn't blame my medical adviser. He just thanks that Friend of his. Friend of ours, of course, really.

My Man said he wouldn't leave me at Christmas, but I'm sad to say that he did. He was away on Christmas night. Of course the people in the nearby country, Necksdore, are kind, and looked after me well.

I was sitting in the hall when My Man came in on the evening of Boxing Day. I looked very aloof. I said "So you've come back. Well, now you can take yourself off again". But I relented. And he stayed.

ANSWERS TO MARGERY WOODS' CHRISTMAS QUIZ

1. St. Nicholas, St. Wenceslas, St. Francis
2. J. C. Horsley, 1843.
3. Dr. Clement Moore
4. a) Sir Walter Scott
b) W. Shakespeare. (Love's Labour Lost)
5. The letter A
6. Insatiate
7. a) We Three Kings of Orient Are.
b) Christians Awake
c) O Come All Ye Faithful
d) Angels From the Realm of Glory
e) O Holy Night
f) It Came Upon a Midnight Clear
g) Hark the Herald Angels Sing
h) The First Noel
i) While Shepherds Watched their Flocks by Night
j) O Little Town of Bethlehem
8. A Sweetmeat and love motto wrapped in pretty paper
9. Persephone
Early in the morning
10. a) Mark Twain
b) W. Shakespeare (Twelfth Night)
c) Cervante (Don Quixote)
d) Martin Luther
e) Fitzgerald/Khayyam
11. a) Bobby Shafto
b) Wynken Blynken and Nod
c) Anthony Rowley/The Wooing Froggy
d) Soloman Grundy
e) Yankee Doodle
f) The Lobster (Carroll's)
12. 1879
13. Miss Dorothy Fielding
14.

| | | | | |
|---------------|------------|---------------|----------|------------|
| CHUMS | CHUCKLES | CHUCKLER | CHIPS | CHAMPION |
| COMIC CAPERS | COMIC CUTS | EAGLE | GEM | GIRL |
| HORNET | HOTSPUR | KINEMA COMICS | KNOCKOUT | MAGNET |
| MONSTER COMIC | LION | LARKS | NUGGET | NELSON LEE |
| PALS | PLUCK | PUCK | RATTLER | ROCKET |
| SCRAPS | SPARKLER | SPARKS | SMASH | SMILES |
| SCHOOLGIRL | TARGET | TINA | TIGER | TOPPER |
| TIP TOP | | | | |

MORCOVE MINIATURES



POLLY LINTON
By TOMMY KEEN



Polly Linton, for the entire run of the Morcove saga, was Betty Barton's closest and dearest friend. When Betty arrived at Morcove, and was 'Scorned By the School', it seemed as if she was fated to be friendless, but in No. 3 of the SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN, a girl (who, it was explained, had been away for a short while to attend a wedding) returned to the Fourth Form. Although her first encounter with Betty was not very encouraging - "You might fetch in my things from the cab" - (as if Betty was a domestic) by the end of the No. 3 story, Polly proved that she was not at all pleased with the way that Cora Grandways, and her set of snobs, were treating Betty. She almost immediately suggested that she should move into Betty's study, a previously unused room at the end of the Fourth Form passage. Polly and Betty then vowed eternal friendship, and, as described in the SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN, 'Betty Barton and Polly Linton. Two names to figure prominently in the as yet unwritten history of Morcove School'.

Polly previously had shared a study with, of all girls, Ursula Wade, a sneak, a liar, and even in Betty's brief encounter with Morcove, a thief. Therefore Polly had no hesitation in moving in with Betty, into a room which in time would become the famous Study No. 12. Polly was a merry, boisterous girl, and as more members of the Fourth became drawn to Betty (girls such as Madge Minden, Tess Trelawney, and Paula Creel) Polly became more high spirited, and took the utmost delight in teasing the aristocratic and delightful Paula. Betty Barton, by this time, had been elected Form Captain.

In one instance, when Madge Minden was misjudged by the form, and only Betty stood by her, Polly, not agreeing with Betty, moved out of Study 12. All misunderstandings however were cleared up, and Polly moved back. From then on, nothing marred their friendship.

During the first Christmas series, the girls spent Christmas with Polly, at her home, Linton Hall. They were introduced to her brother Jack, said to be a young man of about eighteen, although a few years later, when Grangemoor School for boys came into the stories, he lost two or three years, and became about one year older than Polly. Naturally, Jack was at Grangemoor, and his close chum, Dave Lawder (a quiet, studious boy) became, in spite of her constant teasing, Polly's "boy friend".

Polly featured in many series. For a while she became Captain of the Fourth when Betty had to return home. She was warned by Betty to "Watch Audrey Blain" (the then arch-villainess of the Fourth). Another time, when Mr. Linton was having some trouble with swindlers, Polly became a day girl at the school,

residing in Barncome with said swindlers. She was involved in a circus series, "The Feud of the Lintons", when unpleasant relatives, who owned a circus, were in town. Another snobbish and spiteful relative, Cissy Norton, later arrived at Morcove, and with the help of Cora Grandways made Polly's life unbearable, although Betty and Co. were there to rally round her. Actually, the Norton girl remained at Morcove for quite a time.

In 1927 Jack, suffering for another boy's crime, was expelled from Grangemoor, and became the local butcher-boy. Shrieeks, here, from Cora Grandways! Dave Lawder, however, who was a bit of a detective on the quiet, brought the real culprit to justice, and it was good-bye to the joints of meat.

In Naomer Nakara, her Serene Highness of Nakara, a pupil at Morcove, Polly found a kindred spirit. These two merry makers joined forces in teasing Paula unmercifully, who, however, apart from wailing "I'm a weck, a wuin", didn't seem to mind.

Polly Linton was an excellent character, a good contrast to Betty Barton, and their friendship was very deep; even deeper than Polly's continued and advancing friendship with Dave Lawder. Unfortunately, as time went by, he became (quite a mistake this, in my opinion) Dave Cardew, which made him the sister of a girl called Judy Cardew, who had at one time been Judith Grandways, sister to the appalling Cora. (But that needs too much sorting out!)

We will leave Polly now, ruffling Paula's hair; Naomer crying "Queek, Queek", with Dolly Delane putting the kettle on for tea, whilst Betty, Madge, Pam, Helen and Pam look on, vastly amused. Study 12 are at home!





CAMBRIDGE CLUB

Our January 1988 meeting took place at the home of Adrian Perkins in Cherry Hinton, Cambridge. After the Club business section, Adrian talked about the Dan Dare/Eagle artist, Frank Hampson, and showed some BBC videoed broadcasts from 1976 and 1985 relating to his work and that of his early collaborator, science fiction writer Arthur C. Clarke. Although the 1950/51 Dan Dare, Pilot of the Future was an S.F. cartoon strip first for them both, they nearly worked together again - in 1967 - on the poster artwork for the Clarke/Kubrick film 2001, A Space Odyssey. But it was not to be, as Kubrick asked a fellow American Space Artist, Robert McCall, to do the poster art.

Paul Wilkins then provided us with Twenty Questions about S.F. on the 40's/50's/60's film and television quiz, after which Keith Hodkinson treated us to another part of his 'Science Fiction films from Juvenile Literature' series, on this occasion dealing with Robots and Androids, with excerpts from Metropolis to Star Wars. Finally, Keith showed us the Spielberg 'ultimate pursuit' film, Duel.

ADRIAN PERKINS

LONDON O.B.B.C.

The Club met at the Liberal Hall, Ealing, on 10th January for its Annual General Meeting, with 21 members present. Phil Griffiths was proposed as Chairman by Bill Bradford, seconded by Graham Bruton and unanimously elected. A vote of thanks to the retiring Chairman, Norman Wright, was proposed by Don Webster, seconded by Brian Doyle and enthusiastically endorsed by all present. In accordance with our constitution, Norman now becomes Vice Chairman, in addition to which he is also the Treasurer. Leslie Rowley continues as the Secretary.

The formalities over, we had a Musical Quiz by Don Webster, a little item on Biggles by Norman Wright, and a reading by Mark Taha from Wodehouse's World of Psmith. Then Island Castaway Eric Lawrence gave his choice of reading for such solitude, amongst which was The Exquisite Burden by A.A. Thomson. Roger Jenkins contributed a Greyfriars rhyming Quiz, and Arthur Bruning finished off an entertaining evening with an amusing comparison between an earlier Magnet and a wartime S.O.L.

Next meeting: 14th February, Horticultural Hall, Larkshall Road, North Chingford. A full tea will be provided. Please inform hosts Audrey and Tony Potts if attending, and whether you would like a lift from Chingford (BR) station. Their telephone number is 01 529 1317.

LES ROWLEY

NORTHERN O.B.B.C

A good attendance of 13 assembled for our January 9th A.G.M. A welcome was given to Arthur Fortune returning after a long period of illness, and to our newest and youngest member, William Hirst. Keith Smith, our worthy Chairman, had decided to stand down, so David Bradley was appointed for the coming year. Other officers were re-appointed, with a vote of thanks to all who had worked so hard to make the past year such a notable one for the Club. We were particularly pleased with the standard and location of our (we hope!) permanent venue in the centre of Leeds. The future programme was discussed and approved; also the subject of subscriptions and Associate Membership, and an occasional Club Newsletter (see our advertisement in this issue of the C.D.)

After refreshments, we had the great honour of being in the company of Mr. Anthony Buckeridge, author of the Jennings books. Although not able to be present in person, he had kindly sent a cassette recording specially made for our Club. On this he talked about writing for children in general and naturally made reference to Jennings in story form, and in radio and television plays. he has kindly agreed to answer members' questions on a future cassette recording, for a later meeting. Members greatly appreciated the time Mr. Buckeridge had given to us.

A newly formed Honorary Membership has been bestowed upon Mollie Allison for her services to the Club as Librarian and Treasurer, and also to our longest standing and very faithful member, Bill Williamson, who has been with the Club since its formation in 1950.

Please note that Mary Cadogan will be visiting us for the weekend of 12th and 13th March: we should be pleased to see any potential new members.

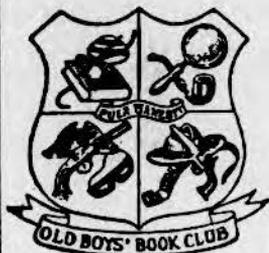
JOHNNY BULL MINOR

THE OLD BOYS' BOOK CLUB

- Northern Section -

Co-Presidents: Hubert Gregg
Mary Cadogan

Founded 1950



THE NORTHERN O.B.B.C. proudly presents its programme for 1988:

Saturday, 13th February: Book Preservation - talk by representative from Northern Library Services

"The Modern Boy" - Paul Galvin

Saturday, 12th March: Visit of Mary Cadogan - lunch in Wakefield, followed by visit to the home and library of our secretary. Evening meeting.

Saturday, 9th April: "Toytown" - Keith Smith. "Von Stalheim" - William Hirst

Saturday, 23rd April: "Just - William" Meeting - to be held in Chester

Saturday, 4th May: Visit to the home cinema of one of our members for an evening of films of nostalgia.

Saturday, 11th June: "Nelson Lee" - Paul Galvin. "A Literary Quiz" - Joan Colman

Saturday, 18th June: Annual Club Dinner

Saturday, 9th July: Barbecue at the home and library of our secretary.

"Jennings" - Catherine and Eric Humphrie

Saturday, 13th August: "Book Titles" and "The Gem" - Keith Atkinson

"Faces Game" - Margaret Atkinson

Saturday, 10th September: "Written off in The Prime of Their Lives" - Michael Bourne

Saturday, 8th October: "Questions Answered" - cassette recording made by Anthony Buckeridge. "The School Cap" - Darrell Swift

Saturday, 22nd October: W.E. Johns Meeting in Nottingham

Saturday, 12th November: A.G.M. "Robin Hood" - Keith Smith

Saturday, 10th December: Christmas Party and visit of Rochdale Players

Please send S.A.E. for a detailed programme pocket folder along with information concerning subscriptions and venue of meetings and times.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP - £4.00 per annum enabling members to attend up to three meetings per year, use of the large Club Library and receipt of the Club's occasional newsletter.

All enquiries to: The Revd. Geoffrey Good, Thornes Vicarage, Denby Dale Road, WAKEFIELD, West Yorkshire, WF2 8DW.