

# STORY PAPER COLLECTORS' DIGEST

VOL 42

AUGUST 1988

Number

500

59p

SPECIAL ENLARGED ISSUE

H.W.



TO CLEAR: 700 Boys Magazines (The pink one), 10 copies for £7.50, 1920s and '30s, assorted lots (usually £1.50 to £2 each).

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MY HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS ON C.D.'s 500th ISSUE

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# STORY PAPER

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# 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 Fayne

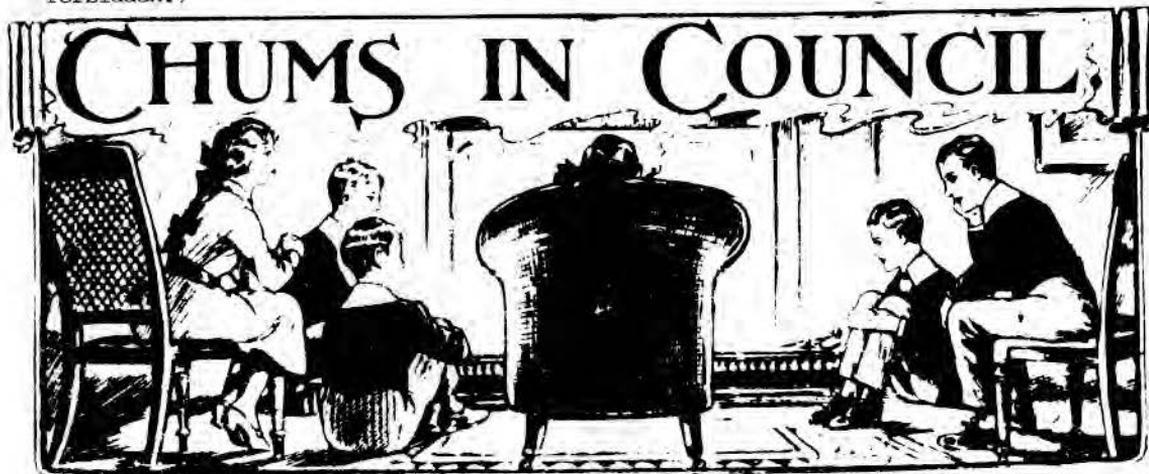
VOL. 42

No. 500

AUGUST 1988

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## A CELEBRATION AND AN APPRECIATION

Our enlarged 500th number is, of course, of a celebratory nature, and I echo the satisfaction expressed by readers and contributors, and their hope that the C.D. may long continue to function and flourish. I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to you all for your loyalty and support, and for sending me so many appreciative letters.

My special thanks go too to my predecessor, Eric Fayne, whose wonderful work for the hobby and the C.D. was, and still is, a shining light to us all. My thanks are also due to all those contributors,

both authors and artists, who have fuelled the C.D. from its early days until now, over forty years on, when, happily, the flow of interesting material for publication remains undiminished. I am particularly grateful to Henry Webb for providing our celebratory 500th cover, and to Terry Wakefield and Evelyn Flinders, whose illustrative contributions not only brightly adorn our present issue by represent direct links with the past because of their (and Terry's father's) work for the old papers. And last - but of course very far from least - I should say how much I appreciate the unswerving and long lasting co-operation of our printers, York Duplicating Services, whose staff are always friendly, pleasant to deal with and ever-ready to make extra efforts on our behalf, despite their extremely full work schedule.

I wish you happy reading of our 500th C.D.!

MARY CADOGAN

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**FIVE HUNDRED MONTHS ON**

By Maurice M. Hall

I am certain, that in those early days of the Collectors' Digest, nobody dreamed that the magazine would be going on to complete a magnificent 500, not out!

The chances are that all of the early collectors who joined together with Herbert Leckenby, Maurice Bond, Len Packman and Robert (Bob) Blythe, only considered a hand-to-mouth possibility for a magazine about the collecting of 'old boy's books'.

Herbert's knowledge, was, in itself, profound. He could write about the old comics, the editors, the authors and the illustrators, adding little touches from his personal experiences of many years in the hobby. Maurice Bond was the Sexton Blake enthusiast, and, largely speaking, only had the great detective to worry about, while Herbert covered the whole remaining spectrum.

Herbert was a telephone operator at the Central Registry, Northern Command in York. He had his mail directed to this address and there must have been a huge number of letters, as the Collectors' Digest soon started to become a success. He was following in the footsteps of The Story Paper Collector, published by Wm. H. Gander of Transcona, Manitoba, Canada. (This little, occasionally issued magazine (normally 4 a year) first saw the light of day in March 1941.)

The Collectors' Digest started in November 1946, and was to cover a period of illness which had struck down Bill Gander, who later fortunately recovered, so that for a long period there were two excellent amateur magazines available for a growing army of collectors. All of Herbert's spare time was applied to the hobby and soon the new magazine became the focus of his life. The first copy was safely out, therefore the second must be begun. How much copy was in hand? How much would he have to write? These questions, and many others, have been the bane of an editor's life from time to time, and it was no different for Herbert in these early days. Each copy of the C.D. was like a little gold-mine. It was the era of information released to all those many collectors who had wondered where they would ever find answers to their endless questions about the old papers. There were lists of Magnet titles, Union Jack titles and dates of beginnings and endings of nearly all those papers we loved so well. The Collectors' Digest was alive and thriving.

At long last the inevitable happened. A meeting was arranged at Len and Josie Packman's house in East Dulwich, London SE 22,

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for Sunday, 29th February, 1948, at 6.00 p.m. This meeting created the London Old Boy's Club. Other clubs soon started, and flourished. The two prime movers of this first historic meeting were Bob Blythe and Len Packman, and it is fair to say that the future of the O.B.B.C. could not have fallen into better hands. Bob loved the Nelson Lee, and actually had a complete set back in those far off days. Len Packman's major interest was the Gem and, in his opinion, Tom Merry was ahead of Harry Wharton as a character.

The Collectors' Digest started in November 1946. The second copy appeared in January 1947, the third in March 1947. Although there was a note on the cover saying "next issue May 1947", Herbert Leckenby had sufficient copy to produce issue No. 4 in April 1947, particularly important, as there had been a number of swindlers pretending they had copies of papers to sell, when they did not. Herbert brought the problem to readers' attention with issue 3a, and further pointed out in issue No. 4 the pitfalls that lay in the path of an unwary collector!

From the moment that C.D. No. 4 went out, to this present day, copies have been dropping through our letter boxes, month after happy month, full of marvellous and exciting fare. This extraordinary record has even beaten the Magnet, which lost one week's copy in the general strike of 1926 (Magnet 955 refers).

Above all, the Collectors' Digest is a team effort, and what an effort! My index of the authors and articles shows that for the 500 copies issued there have been over 400 authors contributing articles. Some wrote just the one, others like Bill Lofts and Roger Jenkins etc. appear in very many copies. The artists do their bit, for there have been many new and original pictures to delight our eyes. The editor must of course guide the ship, the printers must print on time and the Post Office deliver to your door. If I have missed any part of this team, it must be the loyal and loving readers, many of whom have been with the magazine from its birth.

The C.D. was and is, sometimes, a little late, but it never fails to arrive, and that represents an enormous tribute to the editors, Herbert Leckenby, Eric Fayne and now, Mary Codogan. What a task you have taken on Mary, but if you get the back-up which contributors and readers have always given, it is on to the 1000th copy... and why stop there!

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Dear Mary,

On behalf of the members of the London Old Boys' Book Club, I send you our warmest congratulations on the occasion of the 500th issue of the "Collectors' Digest". This is a marvellous achievement for any publication but, for any amateur magazine, it is also an incredible one! Our first thanks must, of course, go to Herbert Leckenby, Eric Fayne, and your goodself. We have been fortunate, indeed, in our Editors. They have seen us through times of crisis, when the future of the magazine must have been in doubt, to these more hopeful times when we can look more boldly to the future.

We must justly voice our appreciation for the willing and gifted band of contributors whose many and varied articles make the magazine the joy it has always been. In this connection, the London Club is particularly proud to pay tribute to those writers from its own membership who regularly inspire, inform and amuse with what they have to say, some of whom, like Roger Jenkins and his "Do You Remember?" column, have been entertaining us for years. Long may they continue so to do. At the same time, encouragement has been given to those who take up their pens for the first time - adding a freshness of approach on which the hobby and the "Collectors' Digest" have prospered for these 500 issues. Our grateful thanks to you for ensuring this happy state of affairs in the present. Our best wishes and support are pledged for your efforts in the future.

Yours sincerely,  
**LESLIE ROWLEY**  
 (Secretary)

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**THE GREYFRIARS CLUB**

Kingsgate Castle, Kent

The next meeting of the club will take place at KINGSGATE CASTLE, Kent on Sunday, 21st August, at 2.30 p.m., where weather permitting, members will be shown over the castle including the secret smugglers tunnel in the cliffs deep underneath the castle from where the tunnel is entered, in true Frank Richards style in his stories. Remember - do ring your Courtfield hosts to advise attendance as places are limited. Nearest station Broadstairs, where one of your Chariman's/host's cars will pick you up, if you make the journey by rail.

R.F. (Bob) Acraman, Tel. Kingsgate Castle 0843 64460

Chairman/Sec./Treas: or Stevenage 0438 352930

LETTER FROM A GREYFRIARS PUPIL

(Forwarded to C.D. by LES ROWLEY)

Youse telling this guy that a mere five hundred issues of your pesky magazine is cause for a celebration? You must surely be kidding! Mind you, I must allow that it might be news for a one-eyed leettle burg with the quaint name of Beckenham, situate in this sleepy little island, but it would cut no ice, no ice at all, in wide-awake, up to the minute, little old New York. As one who cut his eye-teeth right there in the Big Apple, I can readily opine that five hundred numbers of such an itsy-bitsy publication would not raise a breeze on either Broadway or the Bronx. Any mag that could only reach that target would be ready for skids, yessiree!! But this is your lucky day, ma'am!! Help is right there at hand, just like the U.S. Cavalry in the old days! Yup!

All you gotta do is contact the real live wire as is penning this script and let him in on the ground floor and give him the welcoming fist. Let him sit for a while in the editor's chair and then look for earthquakes!

Betcha never devined the impact of a page of real, all fired racing tips in that little old mag. Nope? Where is it that you've been living? Right here at my elbow I can call upon the combined expertise of the firm of Loder, Carne and Walker to give the avid reader the low-down on the Wapshot and Lantham races. At the same time, Professor Skinner, late of Black Dog County, will write constructive articles on "How To Win At Cards". Readers' Investments Guidance will be covered by little me, whilst for the gals there will be a Cookery page by our gourmet chef, W.G. Bunter. And all that's just for starters. Pep! Zip! and Zow! will put your puny mag right on the map. And will the greenbacks roll in, youbetcha! Just employ the feller what knows, and the rake-off will be so great that you'll be making it with the Guggenheimers on Park Plaza in no time. All this for just ninety eight per cent of the takings!

Move over, sister! Salvation is at hand. Write: Fisher T. Fish, Study 14, Remove Passage, Greyfriars School, Friardale, Kent.



"I'll mention that sharing is just where I live," said Fisher T. Fish. "I'll be sure pleased to show you guys a thing or two." "Go it!" said Bob Cherry. Fisher T. Fish went it. He was, he slipped, he groined on one leg, and he yelled "Aw! Give a guy a hand - waks toaks! Yarsooh!"

LINKS AND ECHOES

By J.E.M.

For at least one adolescent schoolboy in the City of York, the 1930s were a period of intensive learning - dare one say cramming? Apart from the questionable delights of Latin (including the 'joys' of Caesar's Gallic Wars and Virgil's Aeneid) and the problems of making those curious honking noises needed to speak French correctly, I was also being introduced to the mysteries of Chemistry - well-named as "stinks" (other readers will doubtless recall the rotten-eggs smell of Hydrogen Sulphide or the even deadlier whiff of Chlorine, then being cheerfully manufactured in laboratory "practicals" in schools everywhere!). About that other science, Physics, also thrust before me, I remember virtually nothing, alas. I do recall from English lessons the rigorous dissection - one might almost call it vivisection - of Shakespeare's plays, and I have a good memory of lighter explorations provided by those two friendly twins, History and Geography. With Maths, Music, Art, compulsory games and PT (now known as PE) thrown in, it all made for a pretty breathless life - even if it was not quite that of Greyfriars or St. Jim's!

But, if education is a voyage of discovery, I was indeed on the high seas, for I had also just lighted on - Sexton Blake! (This, of course, was no thanks to my school.) It was 1933 when I discovered Blake at first hand in the Detective Weekly but I soon learned that an earlier and much more exciting story-paper, the Union Jack, had been celebrating his exploits since the beginning of the century - and that second-hand copies of this now defunct paper were to be found not far from York's great cathedral, the Minster, in the musty, dusty and dimly-lit shop of a lady called Mrs. Walker. She dispensed the UJs, with their lovely Eric Parker covers, at one (old) penny a time and dozens, if not hundreds, of copies must have found their way into my school satchel to rub uneasy covers with Kennedy's Latin Primer or Henry the Fourth (Part One).

Mrs. Walker's shop, I later learned, was regularly patronised at that time by Herbert Leckenby, the founder and first Editor of this magazine. Alas, I never met Mr. L. either then or later but there were to be other links with the hobby and its magazine. Youth passes all too swiftly and within two or three years I had left Sexton Blake and many other heroes from the old papers far behind - at least for the time being. By the outbreak of war in 1939, I had sold my first serious writing for the literary pages of a journal that still survives. And though this made me a "professional" writer of a sort, I could not yet afford a typewriter. My earliest efforts were put into typescript for me by a small, elderly gentleman - and truly he was a gentleman - who ran a small typing and duplicating shop in that quaint mediaeval York street called The Shambles. This courteous, even courtly, stenographer, whose name I have shamefully forgotten, passed on but his little business continued and, with a number of important changes and new owners, finally became the firm which still prints the Digest.

Sadly, I did not learn about the existence of the Digest itself until the middle 1960s, when of course I promptly became a permanent reader but, as you can see, my connections with it, however tenuous, go back to a period much earlier than that: a happy, heart-warming thought.

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A SECRET PLACE

By E. Baldock

We all have within our memories hidden doors opening on to secret vistas. In some minds these may be more deeply hidden and less accessible than in others. There is one particular secret door through which we may escape from time to time and travel back through the decades to our youth, and to Greyfriars school once again. To join for a brief period Harry Wharton and Co., Smithy and Redwing, and of course, Billy Bunter. We may even exchange amicable greetings with Harold Skinner and Co. and, should we be fortunate enough (or the reverse) to run into Cecil Ponsonby and Co. in the vicinity of the "Three Fishers" we would naturally deal faithfully with them in strict accordance with ancient tradition. And should Mr. Quelch, in his whisking gown, cross our path, we would add a degree of dignity to our step and politely "cap" him, he while assuming our most innocent expressions and keeping an extremely wary eye upon his cane. Nevertheless it would be very jolly to see him, acidity, grimness, gimlet eye and all, once more. For Mr. Quelch, in common with all our friends at Greyfriars, is an echo, a very special echo, from the past, a time which happily refuses to become obliterated.

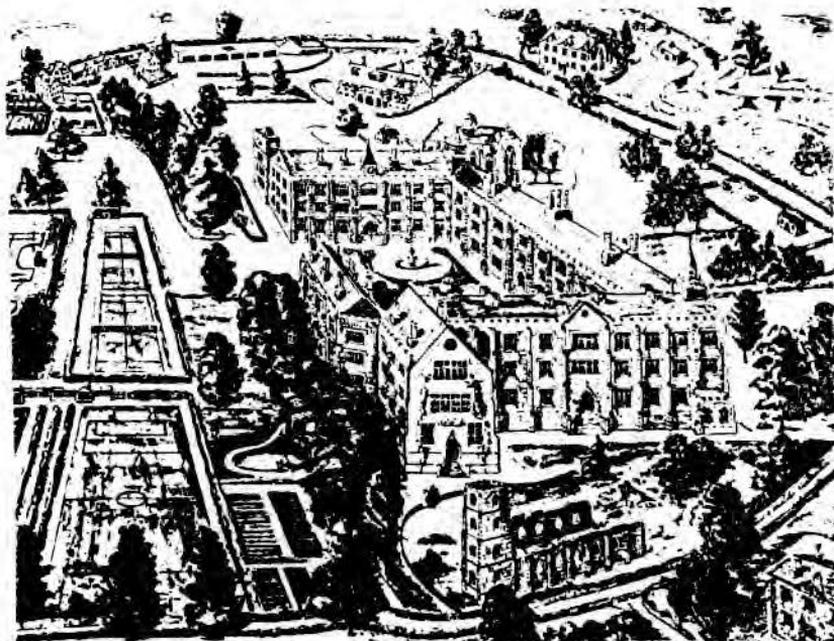
Sooner or later we are bound to hear Potter and Green in an endless, and losing, argument with their gallant leader Horace Coker. Their ructions are a leit-motiv throughout the Greyfriars saga. The mellow boomings of Mr. Prout provide a fairly melodious background to the sharper cadence of his colleagues in the familiar "chin symphony" ever playing in masters common room, while in the background, never intrusive, largely silent, the benign presence of Dr. Locke presides with an old world dignity over the teeming life of a great school.

Who could fail to recognise (after a lifetime's infliction) the famous squeak in the vicinity of the tuck-shop: "I say you fellows, these tarts are prime, have one on me. I am expecting a postal order by the next post from one of my titled relations you know...", or the more strident, fog-horn tones of another notorious fellow in the annals of Greyfriars: "Shut up Potter, shut up Green, give a fellow the chance to get a word in edge-wise. Never did I see such fellows for jawing - jaw, jaw, jaw...". Add to these a hundred other characteristic utterances which we are immediately able to attach to individual fellows, and we begin to get pictures of a school which dominated our youthful reading, and which have

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left an indelible impression on our minds. Such sharply etched pictures are brought forth by stray thoughts or circumstances from the regions beyond the secret door in our memories.

In these later days we may well have donned the toga virilis, but deep inside we remain the young readers who pursued avidly, week by week, the adventures of a great throng of Greyfriars "men" in the "Magnet".



This picture of Greyfriars School, by Norman Kadish, embodies his image of Frank Richards's most celebrated school. Mr. Kadish wonders whether readers will spot all the features of this illustration such as the Head's house, Gosling's Lodge, the gymnasium and the Remove class-room. And there are the beginnings of those pathways to so many adventures - Oak and Friardale Lanes, Courtfield Road, etc.

**500 NOT OUT**

By E. Grant McPherson

A bit trite perhaps, but the 500th copy of our paper is certainly a occasion for a little celebration!

I can think of no better picture to adorn this milestone number than the cover of the 500th number of the Nelson Lee, a very attractive one in full colour (and the story inside that issue is as excellent as the picture).

Just think! This is the 500th number of the Collectors' Digest. If it were a weekly it would be well over number 2000, so our little magazine has been running longer than the Lee, Magnet or Gem. Not bad for a bunch of amateurs, surely?

OUR 500<sup>TH</sup> NUMBER THIS WEEK!





## THE STILL RESILIENT SLEUTH

By David Jacques

I have not as yet seen any mention in C.D. of a book which was published last year by Galley Press, which is associated with W.H. Smith the bookseller. The book in question is "The Sexton Blake Casebook", and contains innumerable printing errors, some of which require the reader to be something of a detective!

There are five stories in the book, four of which are from the Sexton Blake Library of the 1920s and are as follows:

The Mystery of Glyn Castle, 31/1/1923.

The Case of the Society Blackmailer, 31/8/1925.

The Crime in the Wood, 30/7/1927.

Down and Out, 3/1/1929.

The final story in the book is "The Missing Millionaire", which was the very first Sexton Blake story published in the Halfpenny Marvel of 13.12.1893, and reference to this is made on page 106 of the C.D. Annual of 1985, together with a summary of the story.

In the C.D. of November, 1987, there was a short article by Raymond Cure entitled "What Now Sexton Blake?" He said: "As regards the media and publishing world Sexton Blake is "redundant". Our Editor added a note referring to Jack Adrian's 1986 book "Sexton Blake Wins", and in view of that and the book "The Sexton Blake Casebook", it would appear that there may be a new lease of life for the detective. Maybe others will follow.

Of course, all the recent books have been reprints of earlier stories. As far as I know, no new stories have been written since the early 1970's. Dare one suggest that some budding writers might get busy and surprise us?

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DANNY'S DIARY
August 1938

So, with the first issue of the month, Modern Boy has changed its format again. It is now half way between the big sheeted paper of recent months and the smaller sheeted paper of earlier times. I don't care much for the change.

The latest King of the Islands series continued with "Heave Ho, Dandy Peter" and "The Ghost of the Sand-bank". So, with the second issue, Ken King has left Modern Boy. The programme now is a series about a school with a flying corps, "The School Squadron"; also a motor-racing series about a boy speed king; a G.E. Rochester series about Scotty and Grey Shadow; and a Biggles serial "Biggles Flies North." Nothing to write home about, any of it.

It has been a very, very hot summer, which suits me all right, but is too much of a good thing for Mum and Dad. For weeks the temperatures have been in the eighties. Sunlight by day - and daylight by night, as it were. Lots of towns are now being equipped with street lighting which is pale blue and like daylight. Hence - daylight lighting. Actually it is a new invention of a very economical form of neon lighting which, though giving better light, will use only about half the amount of electricity.

I have, of course, had all the Schoolboys' Own Libraries this month. The Greyfriars one is "Harry Wharton & Co's African Adventure" - a clumsy title. Mr. Vernon-Smith is going to Kenya on business, and invites the Bounder and his chums to go with him. So they decide to go hiking in Kenya. And they find themselves hiking in the jungle with a gorilla about. It's yet another holiday travel series, and it continues next month. The Gem S.O.L. "The Saving of Selby" is excellent. Early on the Third-Formers try to put their form-master in a good temper by presenting him with a lovely cake on his birthday. But Trimble eats the cake, and replaces it with an old boot. Then the story develops into a dramatic affair with Mr. Selby being blackmailed by a rascal named Sneath, who holds a cheque forged by Selby's rascally nephew.

The St. Frank's S.O.L. is a cricket tale entitled "The Schoolboy Test Match Player" in which Jerry Dodd is chosen to play for England in a Test Match against Australia. So there's chance for me yet. I made 19 not out in our last match of the term.

I had a B.F.L. entitled "The Robot Rivals", a Captain Justice science fiction tale. And in the S.B.L. I had "The Case of the Poisoned Pen" by Gwyn Evans, which introduces Splash Page, the press reporter, along with Sexton Blake.

Things are looking a bit ominous in Europe. Old Hitler and Musso and Franco seem to make a kind of terrible three, and we wonder if there is any end to their ambitions. In Germany, all Jews are forbidden to hold any office. Even Jewish doctors have had to give up their work. Thank goodness there is still the Magnet to take one's mind off things.

In the Magnet, Harry Wharton & Co are well away with their trip to the South Seas - the second holiday travel series in the year. The month's first tale is "The Outcast of Kalua." Lord Mauleverer and his friends are looking for the black sheep of his family, Brian Mauleverer, his cousin. He is more commonly known now as Ysabel Dick, the beachcomber. Next comes "The Schoolboy Crusoes". The chums find themselves stranded on a desert island. Then came "The

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Beachcomber's Secret". Lord Mauleverer is kidnapped by his enemy and held a prisoner in a dungeon beneath the ruins of an old temple on Kalua Island. Final of the month is "The Scuttled Schooner", where Mauly, in another battle with his enemy Ysabel Dick, is left with his friends to drown on a sinking ship. And at the end of it they take to a raft and hope for the best.

There is a new William book out this month - "William, the Dictator". You can't get away from dictators these days. Doug bought it for 7/6 and let me read it. It contains 10 lovely tales, the best of which are "Agnes Matilda Comes to Stay" and "William and the Old Man in the Fog". The latter is very funny indeed.

It has been a typical summer month in the cinemas. Hot outside but not so hot on the screen, as it were. Shirley Temple in "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm" was awful. Mum, who has read the book, says they changed the story and murdered it. "Bluebeard's Eighth Wife", in spite of having a big cast with Claudette Colbert, Gary Cooper and David Niven, was feeble. All about a woman who married a millionaire who had already had seven wives, in order to teach him a lesson. Fairly passable was "South Riding", with Ralph Richardson and Edna Best, about a schoolmistress who exposed the shady deeds of a corrupt councillor. Mum liked "The Divorce of Lady X" with Laurence Olivier and Merle Oberon, a British picture in technicolor. A tame musical was "Hollywood Hotel" with Dick Powell. A fairish skating film was Sonja Henie in "Happy Landing". "Mad About Music" was a modest musical with Deanna Durbin about a girl who adopts a visitor to her school as her father. Not too bad was "The Last Gangster" with Edward G. Robinson. He is a prisoner released from Alcatraz who seeks revenge on his wife for deserting him. And finally the best one, though not too hot, "The Big Broadcast of 1938" starring W.C. Fields.

Just now, for my money, the Gem, with its lovely programme of St. Jim's, Cedar Creek, and the Benbow, is the star paper in the shops. The gorgeous caravanning series has continued all through the month. "The Rebel Caravanner" was Gussy. The chums said "No" to Gussy's extensive wardrobe, and so he sent all his pals to Coventry. Terrific fun. Next, "The Uninvited Caravanner" was Baggy Trimble. "Ructions on the Road" occurred next week when they met up with their old enemies, Cutts & Co. Finally came "Looking After Gussy". Cutts & Co. get Gussy to stay with them at St. Leger Lodge where they are on holiday, with the idea that Gussy is a pigeon to be plucked. The whole series is a dream of delight, and it goes on next month.

Now Cedar Creek. First of the month is "A Grizzly at Cedar Creek" - something new in visitors. Then "The Snob of Cedar Creek" which tells of the arrival of a new boy named Vere Beauclerc. Next, "Loyal to His Enemy". Beauclerc knocks out Bob Lawless, and then saves his life from a murderous rustler. Finally "Rounding Up the Rustler". A Mexican rustler invades Cedar Creek, and Frank Richards shows the Mounties how to get their man.

Now the Benbow. "The 'Sap' of St. Winifred's" is Jack Drake, who loses the first round in his effort to make good on the school ship. Then "The Final Flutter" in which Drake breaks bounds at night to try to gamble his way out of debt. Next "Jack Drake's Despair" in which Drake awaits the result of that last gamble. And final of the month, "Fallen Fortunes". Jack Drake finds himself

not wanted by the bucks of the Benbow when they find out that he is no longer rich.

Good old Gem. Top of the bill.

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

After under 6 months, Modern Boy, in August, 1938, changed its format once again, the editorial excuse being that readers found the large-sheeted periodical less convenient for reading. Yet it had been the same size as the papers of the Hamilton Edwards' empire - Boys' Friend, Boys' Realm, and Boys' Herald which had run successfully for many years. One can only assume that the programme of stories had not been entirely satisfactory, and the stories were the main thing. My only criticism of the large-sheeted papers is that they were less easy to preserve for posterity, but that aspect did not occur to us at the time. And, in about another year's time, there was to be another change of format for Modern Boy.

S.O.L. No. 343, "Wharton & Co's African Adventure" comprised the first 3 stories of the Magnet's 9-story Kenya series of late summer 1931. S.O.L. No. 344 "The Saving of Selby" comprised an excellent humorous Selby story from the Gem of the Spring of 1923, plus two dramatic Selby tales from the Gem of the autumn of 1925. The 3 yarns slotted well into the S.O.L. medium. Now to Danny's 1938 Gem. "The Rebel Caravanner" had been "The King's Highway" in the summer of 1919. Then, inexplicably, a story of the 1919 series was omitted. Danny's "The Uninvited Caravanner" had been "Trimble on the Track" in 1919. "Ructions on the Road" had been "Foes of the Fifth" in 1919. "Looking After Gussy" had appeared under the same title in 1919.

Of the Cedar Creek stories "A Grizzly at Cedar Creek" had been "For Life or Death" in the Boys' Friend of September, 1917. "The Snob of Cedar Creek" had been "The Remittance Man" in 1917. The next two bore the same titles in 1938 as they had in 1917. The stories ran consecutively. Of the Benbow tales, "The Sap of St. Winifred's" had been "Jack Drake's Ordeal" in the Greyfriars Herald of November, 1919. "The Final Flutter" of 1938 had been "The Last Flutter" in 1919. The last two stories bore the same titles in 1919. All ran consecutively.

"The Dig Broadcast of 1938", seen by Danny at the cinema in August, 1938, is notable as Bob Hope's first film.

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WANTED: Bunter's Postal Order; Bunter's Christmas Party, firsts, dust-wrappers. Any others. Richmal Crompton's William The Lawless; any others. Books by Elsie Oxenham, E.M. Brent-Dyer, Dorita F. Bruce. FOR SALE: Greyfriars Holiday Annuals (originals), Magnets, Gems, Nelson Lees, S.O.L.s, Boys' Friends; also Williams with dust-wrappers. James Gall, 49 Anderson Avenue, Aberdeen, Scotland. Tel: Aberdeen 0224 - 491716.

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**ANOTHER No. 500**

By Tommy Keen

So we arrive at No. 500 of the Collectors' Digest! Congratulations to all those people, past and present, who have succeeded in keeping our excellent little magazine going for over forty years - an amazing record.

No. 500. It made me think! I wondered what MAGNET No. 500 was about... and the GEM. Could I trace anything about the stories appearing in those issues of so very long ago? Well, I tried, but alas, MAGNET No. 500 was unavailable at the British Museum (all volumes from 1914 to 1920 were away for rebinding), but, at least, I was able to peruse the GEM. (Not in my opinion, a very good GEM.) The issue was for week ending 8th September 1917 (well into World War I days), and the title, "A Queer Bargain". It certainly was a very queer story.

Briefly, a cycle race was in progress between Figgins & Co. of the New House, and Tom Merry & Co., and Blake and his chums from Study No. 6. Speeding along the road from Wayland, they pass Cardew of the Fourth, who attempts to attract their attention, but they ignore his shouts. Shortly afterwards all of their cycle tyres are punctured by tacks spread across the road. Cardew catches up with them. "I tried to warn you", he said. He had been to the Ironmonger's shop for nails, and had been informed by the shopkeeper that two St. Jim's boys, addressing each other as 'Figgins' and 'Kerr' had bought a large amount of tacks. Back at the school, trouble brews between the School House and the New House juniors. However, Cardew has suspicions!

Into the story comes another drama! An old lady, Mrs. Kemp, has told D'Arcy that unless she can find £80 before the following week she will be turned out of her cottage. Gussy promises to supply the amount needed. The feud with the New House is soon over, and Gussy is able to collect £45 for Mrs. Kemp, and asks Cardew if he could supply the balance. Cardew agrees to obtain the money, on the strange condition that Tom Merry will allow him to edit and supply all the articles for 'Tom Merry's Weekly' for just one week. Tom, though amazed and dubious, agrees.

Cardew discovers, through Trimble's silly talk, that the fatuous Baggy and Mellish were the tack-laying culprits, evidently doing this nefarious work at Racke's instigation. One problem solved!

The morning arrives of the day when Mrs. Kemp is due to be ejected, and, although Cardew had written an imploring letter

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to his uncle, Lord Reckness, for the necessary money, so far it is not to hand. But at the last moment all is well, and Cardew is able to collect £40 from the local Post Office. The money had evidently been sent there by Lord Reckness. Study 6 and Study 10 cycle madly to Mrs. Kemp's cottage, and are able to hand over the £80 'just in time'. According to the story, Mrs. Kemp 'fell upon Tom's neck, and hugged him'. Problem two solved!

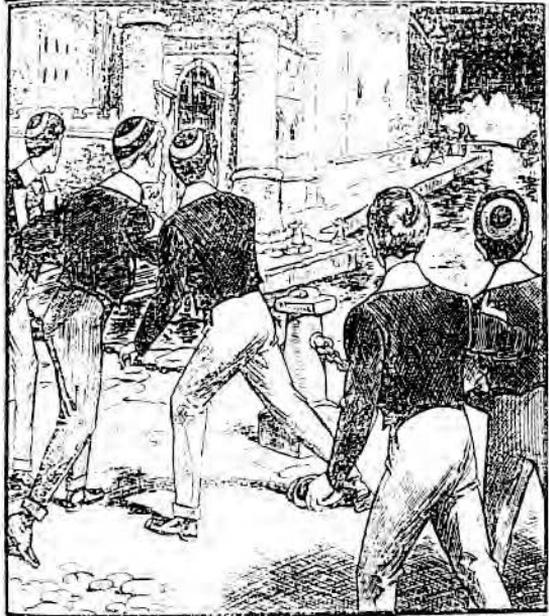
Cardew's 'Weekly' arrives from the printers, and to Tom Merry's horror, the issue is full of sarcastic and insulting articles regarding various characters at the school, especially Mr. Ratcliff, and Mr. Selby. Also an article appeared about the Ironmonger in Wayland, quoting 'Crooked ways' and 'on the Racke of suspense till our queries are answered'. Oh dear, this is rather too

much, and, in any case, Baggy had of course confessed to the tack crime. In haste, Tom Merry (or maybe it was Jack Blake) cycles to the Printers and collects the rest of the issues, which are then kept from Cardew's clutches, therefore saving him from, presumably, a severe flogging.

A most peculiar story, and by a sub writer, H.C. Hook.

The story in the MAGNET'S 500th issue, "The Schoolboy Inventor", was also by a sub, in this case R.S. Kirkham, but there was no special reference made at the time regarding these No. 500s, (as there would be when No. 1000 came along).

Although I was unable to trace the MAGNET STORY, I did, however, possess a copy of the cover, which, maybe like some of the stories of so long ago, looks rather quaint.



BUNTER IN THE DUCKING-STOOL!

## D

from Ernest Holman

Contrivance not being an unknown element in Hobby stories, the List below may appear to come under that heading. Stay, however - jump not to obvious conclusions! It was ACHIEVED as follows:

Reference to OLD BOYS' BOOK CATALOGUE of Messrs. Adley and Lofts; turning to section dealing with Boys' papers; taking only Publications of Amalgamated Press and D.C. Thomson; including completed years of all Papers that lasted at least until their first twelfth month; utilising continuous runs only, without change of Title; operating inclusively from the first Boys' Paper (11.11.1893) until that momentous 'cut-off' date (18.5.1940).

Finally, making truth stranger than fiction, there do just happen to be 52 Publications (what more appropriate for a year?).

18	ADVENTURE	11	MODERN BOY
10	ALL SPORTS	18	NELSON LEE
20	BOYS' CINEMA	5	PENNY POPULAR (1st)
32	BOYS' FRIEND	12	PENNY POPULAR (2nd)
8	BOYS' HERALD (1st)	2	PILOT
1	BOYS' JOURNAL	21	PLUCK (1st and 2nd)
25	BOYS' REALM	1	PLUCK (3rd)
1	BOYS' REALM of SPORT and ADVENTURE	1	PRAIRIE LIBRARY
3	BULLSEYE	4	RANGER
18	CHAMPION	1	REALM of FUN and FICTION
1	CHEER BOYS CHEER	1	RED ARROW
1	CHEERIO	1	ROBIN HOOD LIBRARY
21	CHILDREN'S NEWSPAPER	3	ROCKET
2	CHILDREN'S PICTORIAL	18	ROVER
1	DETECTIVE LIBRARY	9	SKIPPER
7	DETECTIVE WEEKLY	16	SPORTS BUDGET
3	DREADNOUGHT	2	STARTLER
1	EMPIRE LIBRARY	1	SURPRISE
1	FIREFLY	11	THRILLER
8	FOOTBALL and SPORTS FAVOURITE	15	TRIUMPH
2	FUN and FICTION	38	UNION JACK
32	GEM	2	VANGUARD
1	GREYFRIARS HERALD (2nd)	1	WILD WEST WEEKLY
6	HOTSPUR	17	WIZARD
32	MAGNET	1	WONDER
28	MARVEL	5	YOUNG BRITAIN

So; will you take my word for it - or work it out for yourself? (At least, please provide it with a total!)

(Editor's note: Even non-arithmetical people like myself will soon realize the connection between Mr. Holman's piece and the celebratory theme of this issue of the C.D.!)

WINNIE (at the Victoria Palace, London)

Reviewed by Mark Taha

This is an excellent night out, and not just for the nostalgia. Set in Berlin in 1945, it deals with 'putting on a show' about Churchill - and I reckon the great man would have loved it.

Robert Hardy impersonates Churchill again, this time for laughs, which he fully deserves. He is supported by Virginia Mackenna, whom I've never seen better, and who seems to have discovered the secret of eternal youth; Frank Thornton, his usual excellent self; Barry Howard of 'Hi de Hi' fame making a welcome comeback, and may I add the names of Toni Palmer and a beautiful, talented blonde named Lesley Duff? Musical director Cyril Ornadel does two excellent jobs, both as director and songwriter of two first-rate new numbers, 'That's Our Winnie' and the hilarious 'Colonel's Complaint'. Sheila O'Neill's choreography is also excellent. Of course we hear the old songs. 'Kiss Me Goodnight Sergeant Major' becomes a hilarious dance number, and 'We'll Meet Again' still brings a lump to the throat. All in all, this is a good, old-fashioned, rousing night out, and I hope to see the name Lesley Duff in lights some day.

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PARADISE REGAINED

By Marion Waters

I had been working in the reading room of the British Library. I had been studying some juvenile periodicals of the 1960s, rather poor stuff, but necessary to fill in the gaps in a research project. I had a couple of hours to spare, so I requested to see some volumes of 'Schoolgirls Weekly' from the early 1930s. I had just finished reading 'The Lady Investigates' by our Editor, and I wished to follow up some of the stories mentioned in this book, I had some knowledge of pre-war boys papers, but I had never seen a pre-war girl's paper, and it was only fairly recently that I had discovered that such publications existed.

To examine the old papers in their bound volumes was a most pleasant surprise. They were beautifully produced, and full of interest. I found the stories fascinating, on the whole they were far better than much present day adult fiction. Only the Girl Guide stories seemed slightly 'dated' and they were still interesting. There were no picture strips of course, but there were plenty of fine illustrations for all that -- how wonderful to see work by Evelyn Flinders as far back as 1931! I found the illustrations fascinating -- every woman and girl was correctly dressed with hat and gloves, even small girls were wearing 'cloche' hats. The only girls seen wearing trousers were aviators and similar specialists.

I could only devote a couple of hours to the old papers, but I now realize that there is enough material in the British Library to keep me busy for many years to come. I wonder what present day girls would think of the pre-war stories? I suspect, most of them would find the old papers far too 'heavy', but their quality reflects very well indeed on the standards of education and intelligence of the schoolgirls of those days.

This was certainly an experience for me; this hobby gets more interesting all the time!



The Silent Three in the 1950s Schoolfriend, drawn by Evelyn Flinders, must have been the most popular of all fictional schoolgirl secret societies, and we are delighted to receive congratulations from this charismatic trio. (Miss Flinders, who is a longstanding C.D. subscriber, was also, of course, an occasional illustrator of the Morcove stories in the Schoolgirls' Own, and a regular contributor to the Schoolgirls' Weekly and several A.P. girls' Annuals.)

SCHOOL-MASTERS REMEMBERED

By Norman Kadish

No. 5 Mr. Delafield

I remember him as a long, large-boned, bored teacher. Although he did not teach me anything he at times 'stood-in' for another teacher. He had a partly bald head and often sat at the desk with long legs protruding, seemingly to project to the other side of the room, they were so lengthy. His principal subject was Spanish.



## No. 6 Mr. Davies

Another language teacher known as Taffy Davies or "Taffy", a French language-master, his French always having a slightly Welsh flavour. He often sat on the desk and at times was known to kick the panels of this as he talked, on one occasion pushing the panel right in!

On one humorous occasion he was "standing-in" for the Maths master; we had to work out some compound interest sums, I think, and we were obliged to write "Check" at the bottom of each sum for the purpose of doing so. I wrote "cheque" instead, with the reply coming "Just like old Kadish, always thinking about his financial solvency!"



No. 6. Mr. Davies

**No. 7 Mr. Fox**

He was a tall Maths master with a military moustache, and always sporting greyish spats, worn at that time to finish off his general neat appearance.

The chief thing I recall about this master is that I could not remember the contents of the Euclid theorem from memory in a test, and so used one of my artistic skills at that time by writing the whole of the theorem in about 2 square inches of paper, which I encased in the palm of my left hand, easily hidden as "Foxy" walked past.

Such are the misdemeanours of youth, often brought about in those days by the fearsome aspect of the pedagogical profession. It was quite a work of art and finesse, although I say so!





**ROGER M. JENKINS** (Havant). I was interested in Bill Lofts' piece about William Pike, but I wonder if that editor's memory about the popularity of the Rookwood stories was all that accurate. According to Charles Hamilton, he voluntarily decided to give up writing Rookwood stories when the green Boys' Friend left the Magnet and Gem stable and went to a different editor, and this was out of loyalty to the editor of the Companion Papers. The Boys' Friend continued for nearly a year after Rookwood ceased, and then folded up. Charles Hamilton, commenting on all this, wrote to me "Whether the loss of the Rookwood stories had anything to do with that, I am too modest to affirm".

Rookwood's second life, after 1926, was longer than its first existence. It continued in the Popular, Schoolboys' Own, Gem, and Holiday Annuals, featuring in the last edition dated 1941 - not a bad record for an allegedly unpopular school!

**J.E.M.** (Brighton). I enjoyed the account of your success in tracking down a long sought-after book. Every book lover will empathise with your pleasure; many of us have known that long search and the great joy when it ends in triumph.

I also liked Tommy Keen's piece on Johnny Bull, long a favourite of mine (no doubt because he came from the same County!). Incidentally, "When Johnny Comes Marching Home", which Mr. Keen tentatively links with the First World War, is, of course, an American Civil War ballad from half a century earlier.

**DARRELL SWIFT** (Leeds). Bill Lofts' article in the June C.D. 'Publicity - or No Publicity' was extremely relevant, and readers should heed the wise advice given... Only a year or so ago, a reporter from a national newspaper contacted me asking if he could attend the forthcoming William Meeting. Experience demands wariness when I hear that some report of activities is required by the media. I was right in this instance: the reporter not only believed that attenders of such a meeting would dress up in William garb, but he actually had the temerity to suggest that he could take pictures of people so dressed - complete with tomahawks! My emphatic response that he certainly would not be made welcome at our meeting if those were his ideas put him firmly in the picture.

Take heed of Bill Lofts' comments, and be very wary of any publicity. The recent report of the unveiling of the plaque at Ealing confirms our warning!

**LESLIE S. LASKEY** (Brighton). I was interested to read "Danny's" comments (Diary, July 1988) on John Brearley's story "Allison of Avonshire" which appeared in the "BOY'S FRIEND LIBRARY" in July, 1938. This story had originally been published in "THE MAGNET" as a long serial during the summer of 1933 (issue nos. 1318-1337) and it was an excellent story. One feature of it, which appealed to me at the time, was the use of real cricketers' names instead of fictitious names. When Avonshire played against Yorkshire, Bill Allison struck a ball from Bill Bowes far into the crowd for a "six". The author related how "on the boundary the immaculate Sutcliffe backstepped into position, watched the ball with longing eyes, then waved his hands resignedly".

By the time that this story went to its second edition, in the B.F.L., Herbert Sutcliffe's great Test career had come to an end, and "the immaculate Sutcliffe" became "the immaculate Hutton" in the reprint. This was a timely bit of publicity for the young Len Hutton. Only seven weeks after the B.F.L. publication, Hutton compiled his new record Test score of 364 at Kennington Oval against Don Bradman's Australian side.

Anyone who enjoys a crime story with a cricket background would be recommended to read "Allison of Avonshire".

\* \* \* \* \*

# OUR BOOKSHELVES



**HAPPIEST DAYS: The public schools in English fiction by Jeffrey Richards (Manchester University Press, £29.95) Reviewed by Mary Codogan.**

I would urge every C.D. reader to buy, beg or borrow HAPPIEST DAYS, which is a superbly balanced study of the school story genre, to devour, to delight in and to dream over. Jeffrey Richards is Reader in History at the University of Lancaster so he tackles his vast theme (the influence of the public schools on society, and the role of the school story in reinforcing this) with scholarly precision. Happily, however, he also presents his findings with wit and warmth, and a perceptiveness which makes HAPPIEST DAYS the most satisfying exploration

of schoolboy friendships, rivalries, sporting endeavours, character-formation, rites of passage, and so on which I have yet encountered. Unfortunately there is not space enough here for a full review or outline of the contents of the book, except to say that it traces the development of the genre from Thomas Hughes's TOM BROWN'S SCHOOLDAYS to the pre - and post - Second World War flowering of Greyfriars. Frank Richard's work comes, appropriately, under the heading of 'Paradise Regained': need I say any more to whet your appetites for this most welcome and definitive appraisal?

**"HURREE SINGH'S PERIL" By Frank Richards (Howard Baker Book Club Special: £18. Reviewed by Eric Fayne**

This volume comprises 6 consecutive Red Magnets from the early summer of 1915. Each story is complete in itself. Though the stories of this period of Magnet history had but little of the power of the long series of later times, they were compactly plotted and well-told. The opening yarn is a sub effort, probably by the young Samways. Entitled "The Mystic Circle" it is melodramatic, telling of the blackmailing of Loder over some event in his "past". The blackmailer is one, Lucas Judd, who announces his presence with a large circle, enclosing the letters L.J., chalked on the school wall. It caused more sensation in those days than it would now when we have grown accustomed to the activities of mindless vandals with "spray guns". The story is interesting as an early sub effort, before some of the subs seemed to try to make their own imprint on the famous series. It is probable that Samways came the nearest in understudying the famous creator of the characters.

The rest of the stories in the volume are genuine Frank Richards. "The Schoolboy Acrobats" tells of the arrival of one of those new boys who were here to-day and gone to-morrow. This one was Chungum, whose gifts as an acrobat started a peculiar craze at Greyfriars.

The story "Hurree Singh's Peril", which gives its name to the volume, is a thriller, with melodramatic overtones. The Remove amateur actors are rehearsing "The Rajah of Bang", but a genuine sinister Hindoo comes on the scene to bring peril to the genuine Nabob of Bhanipur.

"Heroes of Highcliffe" is a pleasant story to please all fans. A burglary takes place at highcliffe, and Pon & Co cast suspicion on the chums of Greyfriars. And then the delightful De Courcy takes a hand.

"The Punishment Policies" is a Fisher T. Fish story, well remembered over the years in early days. Always on the make, Fishy starts the Pro Bono Insurance Co, in which he accepts weekly payments from his customers, with the guarantee that we will pay them for every punishment they receive in class. His motto is "Ninepence for Fourpence", a tag well known in those days in memory of some real-life Chancellor of the Exchequer. I think the latter may have been Lloyd George. So it becomes profitable for the insured to merit plenty of punishments, something which Fishy had not foreseen. A lovely chunk of nostalgia, this tale.

Finally "The Slacker's Eleven", another wallow in nostalgia, the best in the volume. Greyfriars juniors have a cricket fixture with Rookwood, and they know what a weary, incompetent team Smythe, junior skipper of Rookwood, always puts in the field. So Wharton turns over the Remove eleven, for the occasion,

to the captaincy of Lord Mauleverer. (Not a courteous gesture, one would have thought, had one bothered to think.) But what Wharton did not know was that a new young athlete named Jimmy Silver had come to Rookwood, and had transformed the state of the Rookwood game. A real delight, this one, carrying us back to the days when Rookwood had not long started in the Boys Friend.

We could add that the advertisements for the Boys' Friend throughout the volume will moisten your eyes a little, maybe while warming your hearts. A beautiful book to add lustre to your collection.

\* \* \* \* \*

**SALES**

- 39 Modern Boy 1928/36, Lot £55:
- 31 Nelson Lee 1919/33, Lot £50:
- 26 Puck 1912/16, Lot £75:
- 80 Boys Realm 1920/25, Lot £150:
- 57 Knockout 1960/61, VGC £50:
- 40 Film Funs 1953, N/Mint £75:
- 40 Radio Funs 1953, N/Mint £75:
- 40 Knockouts 1953, N/Mint £65:
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- The Billy Bunter Picture Book £3. Tom Merry's Own Book £2.
- The Story of 25 Eventful Years in Pictures £2. The Sexton Blake Library 1954, 17 copies 50p each. Reprint Magnet 1079 50p.

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# CONGRATULATIONS No. 500



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### NEW BOOKS FOR 1988

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## The Greyfriars



Book

Club

#### BUNTER'S BANKNOTES

by Frank Richards (Club Vol. 78)  
Magnet issues: No. 365, *Bunter the Blade*, No. 367, *The Last Plunge*, No. 368, *Counted at Last*, No. 369, *Tom, Dutton's Triumph*, No. 370, *Through Fire and Flame*, No. 371, *Bunter's Bank Notes*

A collection of single stories, plus a two-issue series recording Johnny Bull's dramatic departure for Australia

Publication Date  
MARCH 1988

#### THE GATHERING OF THE SCHOOLS

by Frank Richards (Club Vol. 79)  
Magnet issues: No. 372, *The Iron Hunters*, No. 373, *Carried Away*, No. 374, *The Fall of the Fifth* (Double Number), No. 375, *Special Constable Coker*, No. 376, *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*

The double-sized, colour-covered issue No. 374 features a large gathering of the schools at Eastwood House, including the stalwarts of Greyfriars, Sir Jim's, Highstile and the girls at Cliff House

Publication Date  
MAY 1988

#### HURREE SINGH'S PERIL

by Frank Richards (Club Vol. 80)  
Magnet issues: No. 377, *The Magic Circle*, No. 378, *The Schooboy Accidents*, No. 379, *Hurree Singh's Peril*, No. 380, *Heroes of Highstile*, No. 381, *The Punishment Column*, No. 382, *The Starboard Clew*  
Mystery, adventures, peril from the East. Fishy's latest scheme crumbles! Long, complete stories

Publication Date  
MAY 1988

#### LORD MAULEVERER'S BEWITCHMENT

by Frank Richards (Club Vol. 81)  
Magnet issues: No. 383, *Fifty Pounds Reward*, No. 384, *The Scout's Victory*, No. 385, *The Old Boy's Challenge*, No. 386, *Mauley's Filtration*, No. 387, *The Schooboy Lesson*, No. 388, *The Mystery of the Gables*  
Among other things, Fishy and Bunter are in pursuit of a £50 reward — by infernal means. And Lord Mauleverer falls for the delectable charms of Miss Bella Buntbury, the grocer's daughter

Publication Date  
JULY 1988

#### THE GREAT GREYFRIARS REBELLION

by Frank Richards (Club Vol. 82)  
Magnet issues: No. 389, *The Mysterious Mr. Mobbs*, No. 390, *Sportmen All*, No. 391, *The Master Who Stayed at Home*, No. 392, *Schooboy's Never Shall Be Slaves* (Double Number), No. 393, *Pontony's Plot*

A rousing party on Poppy's Island for Harry Wharton and Co. — plus a surreptitious smoking party on Court Field Common for Harold Skinner and his cronies — both discovered by the detective Sir Hilton Pupper, now School Governor — lead to troubles at the school. This volume includes nine single-sized, colour-covered issue (Nos. 392) together with a collection of single issues

Publication Date  
SEPTEMBER 1988

#### AT WAR WITH GREYFRIARS

by Frank Richards (Club Vol. 83)  
Magnet issues: No. 394, *The Follow-Whip Book*, No. 395, *At War with Greyfriars*, No. 396, *Beating the Hunter*, No. 397, *Coker's Canadian Cousin*, No. 398, *A Lancashire Lad's Luck*, No. 399, *Champion of the Oppressed*

A new series at Greyfriars. A visiting visitor for Coker. Competition frenzy in the Remove. Loder at his most 'loose' — until the juniors find an unexpected Champion of the Dow issue — the unlikely shape of the duffer of the F-Bo

Publication Date  
NOVEMBER 1988

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(Editor's Note: It was the Howard Baker facsimiles which first brought me, and many other collectors, into the hobby, and now browsing through some early, and some recent, Greyfriars Book Club volumes I continue to be thrilled at the high standard not only of their contents but of their presentation. What superb value for money they offer! They have, of course, been most ably reviewed for the C.D. by Eric Fayne, but let me whet your appetite further by reproducing the cover of 'Bunter the Blade' (from the volume BUNTER'S BANKNOTES). I suppose my favourites of all the Greyfriars Book Club productions are BOB CHERRY - SWOT and the wonderful India Series - but I've also recently very much enjoyed THE FIRST BOYS PAPER OMNIBUS which has happily collected together specimens of the MARVEL, YOUNG BRITAIN, CHAMPION, TRIUMPH, THRILLER, BLACK BESS LIBRARY, BOYS' CINEMA, POPULAR and SCOOPS. A unique volume.)

# BUNTER THE BLADE!

Grand Long Complete School Tale of Harry Wharton & Co. in This Issue.





### MIDLAND O.B.B.C.

Ten members were present at our June meeting and we were pleasantly surprised at the attendance of Joan and Vin Loveday. Our Chairman had again been rushed to hospital, after a fall, and there were also apologies from Joe Marston and Joan Golen. Correspondence was received from Bill Lofts and Johnny Burslem. There were only two items of entertainment because of the time spent on a new Greyfriars Happy Families game invented by Vin Loveday. Our acting Chairman Geoff Lardner gave us a quiz using the Christian names of the Greyfriars masters.

Refreshments, liquid and solid, were provided by Betty Hopton, Christine Brettell, the Lovedays and Ivan Webster. We appreciate the generosity of these members. We are certainly a generous club, £2 still being our yearly subscription.

There will be no July or August meetings because of holidays. We shall meet again on September 27th, when we hope the "new term" will be well supported.

JACK BELLFIELD

### CAMBRIDGE O.B.B.C.

Our late-Spring meeting was held at the City home of Edward Witton. Visiting speaker George Sewell reintroduced many of us to the delights of the Rupert Bear saga. Using some Annuals from his extensive collection, he demonstrated the evolution of Rupert from Mary Tourtel's 1920 designs for the newspaper cartoon-strip, through the inventiveness of the prolific artist Alfred Bestall, to the work of the present day illustrators. Reference was made of the Lofts/Adley Rupert Index, the Nutwood fanzine and the vast Rupert merchandising operation.

Keith Hodgkinson then discussed children's magazines as entities distinct from comics or boys' and girls' story-papers. We examined many specimen issues.

The final meeting of our 1987/88 season was held at Howard Corn's Northampton home. After lunch (kindly provided by our hosts) Howard talked about his favourite films, illustrating them with video excerpts. Paul Wilkins then tested our "Mastermind" cells with a general knowledge/Trivial Pursuit-type quiz. Then again the stage was Howard's. He talked about the Mickey Mouse Weekly comics of the early 1950s, his collection of these and the cartoon-strip film adaptations they contained. He compared these with the animated and live action Disney films,

using video extracts from ALICE IN WONDERLAND, ROBIN HOOD, PETER PAN, SWORD AND THE ROSE, ROB ROY, 2,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA and DAVY CROCKETT.

ADRIAN PERKINS

### LONDON O.B.B.C.

Twenty five members graced the June meeting held under Bill Bradford's hospitable Ealing roof. It was good to see Bill so improved after his recent illness and to greet, once more, Roy Parsons and Brian Simmons after their respective absences. The Secretary reported an interesting exchange of letters with one of the curators at the Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood regarding the Maidstone Charles Hamilton Museum and the history and aims of the Club.

The question of a celebratory luncheon meeting was waived, and the offer of Mrs. Audrey Potts to arrange a buffet for us was gratefully accepted. The August meeting will now be held at the home of Chris and Suzanne Harper, Sydney House, 23 Algers Road, Loughton, Essex on Sunday, 14th August. A full tea will be provided. Please let your hosts know in good time if you will attend (01 508 4770). The Buffet meeting will be held at the Horticultural Hall Larkshall Road, North Chingford on Sunday, 18th September, at 2 p.m. with the Buffet at 5 p.m. (Cost: £3.50 per head, which can be paid at the Loughton meeting when firm notice of attending the Buffet Meeting should be given.) Please note in your diaries the changes of venue for these next two meetings, and the fact that the 18th September Buffet meeting will for that month replace the usual second-Saturday-of-the-month meeting.

After business formalities, the meeting was shown a well-produced programme for the musical "Bunter", in production at the Northcott Theatre, Exeter. Norman Wright gave an interesting quiz on artists. Roger Jenkins produced an Elimination quiz, and Tony Potts gave an account of recent proceedings at the Northern Club, followed by three quizzes from their members.

LESLIE ROWLEY

### NORTHERN O.B.B.C.

Our Secretary Geoffrey Good and his wife Vera welcomed sixteen from our Club, as we assembled for our July meeting on a fine, warm, summer's evening in the grounds of Thorne's Vicarage, Wakefield. We were sorry that Harry Blowers was in hospital, and everyone hoped he would soon fully recover. This was an informal gathering, and David and Elfrieda Bradley had brought along a barbecue. During the evening we had plenty of time to socialise and talk about the hobby and again, to explore our Secretary's wonderful library.

After the barbecue, we adjourned to the large living room to hear the talk "Jennings" presented by Catherine Humphrie and Eric, her husband. She had first encountered the stories when she was a girl and immediately began to prefer them to tales of Harry Wharton & Co. Anthon Buckeridge, the creator of Jennings has a fine sense of humour and his stories of Lindbury Court School gave us an insight into relationships between boys and masters. Catherine was warmly applauded for her presentation.

The evening finished with Vera kindly providing coffee and cakes, and it

was 10.15 p.m. when the last member departed. Thank you, Geoffrey and Vera, for a very fine and enjoyable evening. Next Meeting: Saturday, August 13th, at our usual venue.

JOHNNY BULL MINOR

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FROM ONE YOUNG OLDSTER -  
TO ONE OLD YOUNGSTER!  
- and DENIS GIFFORD -

Editor's Note: How interesting that ACE (the journal of the Association of Comics Enthusiasts) has now achieved its first century. Let's hope that like the C.D. it will also one day be celebrating its 500th issue.

**C O N G R A T U L A T I O N S !**

to our dear Editor Mary Cadogan on the splended achievement of the 500th edition of the Collectors' Digest.

We must not forget the remarkable work of our past Editor Eric Fayne who was in the Chair for so many issues of our hobby magazine.

We at HAPPY HOURS UNLIMITED are delighted to be associated with the COLLECTORS' DIGEST

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Our Number 11 of hobby books and papers promises to be a bumper edition with lots of "goodies". It will be published in September, 1988, and a copy will be sent to all who ordered from our number 10 issue. Otherwise, 4 x 13p stamps will ensure you receive a copy

**HAPPY HOURS UNLIMITED**

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England

BABS AND CO AND THE  
GROTTO OF MYSTERY:

PART ONE

By Margery Woods.



"All aboard?"

"All present and correct, ma'am. All we await is the pantechnicon."

"Pantech---?"

"With the travelling snack for our hungry Bess."

"Jimmy---you idiot!"

Abrim with holiday gaiety, seven chums of the Fourth Form at Cliff House stowed their belongings in the racks and scrambled to win corner seats in the compartment they had bagged to themselves. Blue-eyed Barbara Redfern, their captain, laughed deliciously as she won her place and Mabel Lynn, her fair-haired lieutenant, squeezed into the opposite corner a fraction of a second before Janet Jordan, the Fourth's star swimmer, while Jemima Carstairs of the elegantly styled Eton-crop and jaunty monocle collided somewhat painfully with plump Bessie Bunter in the competition for corner three. Jemima won, but at painful cost as Bessie, losing her balance, collapsed on the slim Jemima's lap.

"Help!" Jemima gasped. "You're---ouch! Get up, Fattikins!"

"I kik-can't! I thu-think I've dislocated my---"

"You've dislocated poor Jimmy!" Tomboy Clara Trevlyn rushed to heave up the loudly protesting Bessie and release an almost flattened Jemima. And then the train gave its first snort and jerk preparing to move, throwing Bessie off balance again and into the lap of the unlucky Marjorie Hazeldene.

"We're off!" whooped Clara, driving for the window as the little branch line train snorted again and began to gather up its strength for what was to be the last lap of the girls' journey to the sea. Doors clashed along its length, a latecomer sprinted forward waving his newspaper, and the guard raised his whistle to his lips. The train juddered, the platform began to slip away almost imperceptibly, and Clara leaned through the window, revelling in the breeze whipping through her short unruly locks. Then she stared suddenly to her left. From the next carriage a dark-haired girl had leapt down and was running frantically along the platform. From the same door had descended a grey-suited man and a thin woman in a dark red dress. The woman stumbled while the man shouted and gesticulated towards the girl. Then he too began to run, followed by the woman.

The train was picking up speed now and the end of the platform dangerously near. The girl looked up imporingly at Clara. "Let me in---please!" she gasped.

"But you just got out---"

"What is it?" Babs was craning over Clara's shoulder.

"I don't know---stay back, Babs." With split second decision, the tomboy released the door catch and, heedless of danger, braced herself as she thrust

open the door against the wind. The white-faced girl made a desperate leap and caught Clara's outstretched hand. A twist of the tomboy's strong wrist, and the next moment the girl was in the compartment. Clara hauled the door shut.

"Whew!" gasped the newcomer, and managed a shaky smile at the astonished chums. "Gee---thanks!"

Clara turned back to the window. The angry figures of the man and woman and the indignant guard were diminishing in the distance. "Well, they didn't get back on the train," said Clara, looking curiously at the still breathless girl. "So what was all that about?"

"I wish I knew." The girl ran deeply tanned hands through her tousled dark curls. "I don't know those two from Adam but they seem to have been following me since yesterday." She hesitated. "May I join you here?"

"Of course," assented Babs, aware that the girl was still tense beneath her outward air of regained control. "Did you have any luggage?"

"Yes---I'd better go along and rescue it."

Clara volunteered to accompany her, but there was no sign of the strange couple who seemed to have scared the girl badly enough to cause her to leap from a moving train. When they were all settled the newcomer introduced herself as Anne Bonnard and told them she had flown in from Vancouver the previous morning. She'd had business to attend to in London---the nature of which she did not enlarge on and of course the chums did not ask---and she had first noticed the man and woman in the hotel lobby. Later they had been lurking outside the office of the solicitor she had visited, but had made no attempt to speak to her. Then she had found they were on the same train.

"They must have been on the express from London," she said tautly. "When they stopped outside my compartment just now, and then moved in I finally panicked. I thought if I jumped out and they followed I'd know for sure I wasn't imagining things. Then I got the idea of leaping back in and leaving them behind. But I'd never have made it without your help," she ended, with a grateful glance at Clara.

Jemima, who had remained silent until now, affixed her monocle more firmly. "All part of the Cliff House service, ma'am," she drawled in what the girls knew as one of Jemima's most deceptive "silly-ass" voices. "You wouldn't be the millionaire's daughter who's disappeared, would you?"

Anne wasn't the only one to stare in surprise at Jemima.

"A snatch I heard on somebody's radio at lunchtime," Jemima said smoothly, "but missed all the details, alas."

Did Anne hesitate just a fraction too long before she laughed and exclaimed, "Nothing so exciting, I'm afraid. My father is no millionaire---he lost out on his apple crop last season."

"Sad." Jemima shook her head. "May I ask whither thou art bound, daughter of blighted apple croppers."

"Take no notice---Jimmy's always like this," put in Mabs, "She can't help it."

Anne's blue eyes twinkled. "I'm bound for Lincroft Hall, about two miles from Chelcombe. It's out in the wilds, I'm told." Her brows went up. "And you?"

"Merrycombe Manor," Babs volunteered. "It's also out in the wilds, I believe,

about a couple of miles from Chelcombe."

"My father has taken it for the summer," Mabs put in. "He's researching and writing a new play. We're staying with the parents for about ten days, then---"

"I think we're there!" interrupted Clara. "Somebody wake Bessie."

"Make a noise like a jam tart!"

"Or six jam tarts!"

The train was indeed slowing and suddenly the compartment became a hive of schoolgirl activity, of sorting out luggage, of rousing a protesting Bessie, and then tumbling out on to the platform of the tiny country station. Bessie had mislaid her ticket, Marjorie had forgotten a magazine, but that was all part of the holiday fun. Major Lynn had arranged cars to meet them, and noticing Anne hanging back uncertainly, Mabs said impulsively, "Can we give you a lift?"

"If it's on your way."

"Let's find out."

Happily, Lincroft Hall was on their way, almost next door, as Mabs observed with satisfaction, and Anne piled into one of the cars with Babs, Jemima and Mabs. But when Lincroft Hall was reached Babs experienced a distinct sense of unease as she peered at the dark outlines of a big house glimpsed vaguely through the gathering dusk. No lights showed at any of its windows and the grounds at either side of the winding carriage drive appeared curiously ill-kept. Impulsively Babs touched Anne's arm. "Would you like us to see you in?" she offered.

"No---I couldn't dream of imposing on your time any more. I'll be okay, thanks."

"Sure?" Babs persisted, still uneasy."

"Sure, but listen," half out of the car, Anne paused, "why don't you all come to tea with me tomorrow? If you've nothing else planned."

"We'd love to, thank you." Still Babs hesitated. "But if you need anything... we're not far away."

Anne smiled. "You've been darlings, and I'll find you, never fear." With brisk confident steps she swung up to the heavy studded front door and fumbled with what was obviously an unfamiliar key. As the door creaked open she gave a brief wave before the gloom of the interior engulfed her slim form.

In the excitement of the arrival at Merrycombe and the joyful reunion with Mabs' people followed by a truly delightful meal, Babs forgot about Anne Bonnard. But later, snug in a cosy bedroom and realising how tired she was, Babs thoughts returned to the Canadian girl. How was she faring? Did she have family or friends at Lincroft. It had looked so deserted. Surely she wasn't alone in that old house with its heavy air of depression? The thought was disturbing, as was the one that followed it: those pursuers, the angry man and woman left behind at the junction. But what if they had followed on the next train...?

\* \* \* \* \*

TO BE CONTINUED

## THE PRINCESS SNOWEE'S CORNER

My nerves are frayed. Last night I had a narrow escape of being crushed to a pulp.

It was a warm night, and I stayed out late. My Man had been calling me for hours, and I purred as I listened to him. I had gone into the adjoining country of Necksdore. At least My Man came out with a big, heavy torch, and he invaded Necksdore. I let him find me under the bushes, and had some fun dodging about. Then, tiring a bit and getting peckish, I let him pick me up.

There he was, with heavy Me under one arm made into a cradle, and he had the big torch in the hand of the other arm. So we proceeded to evacuate Necksdore.

As we proceeded, he caught his foot - on the edge of a lawn, I think. He stagged forward a few yards. I thought his thousand pounds and fifty ounces of weight were going to crash down on me. (I'm a British Princess Puss so I speak in English, and don't use kilograms and millilitres and centipedes and the like, whatever anybody else does.) But he righted himself, and we got home safely. A terrible experience.

As well as having frayed nerves, I'm hopping mad. My Man was listening to the news, and somebody said that "the football hooligans behaved like animals." What a colossal cheek! I've never thrown a brick in my life. I drink nothing stronger than warm milk laced with Essence of Beef. And I never swear. In fact, I never watch television so I don't even KNOW any bad words. Like animals, indeed!

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### **Your Editor says—**



It helps the C.D. if readers advertise their WANTS and FOR SALE book and story-paper items, etc. in it. The rates are 4p per word; a boxed, displayed ad. costs £20.00 for a whole page, £10 for a half page or £5 for a quarter page.

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## FROM HAMMER TO LASER

The first *Collectors' Digest* was produced by typewriter characters being hammered onto a stencil. The stencil was used to duplicate the foolscap sheets one side at a time. The sheets were then hand collated, hand folded, and hand saddle stitched.

The first typewriter would be a manual one; in the early sixties these became IBM Golfballs and Executives; in the 1980's these became electronic typewriters justifying the margins. Just before the 1990's C.D. will go laser set as this little article, on an Apple Macintosh Desk Top Publishing System. The size and spacing of the characters are infinitely variable.

Our thanks to Eric Fayne and latterly Mary Cadogan for being such capable and understanding Editors. On behalf of the late Mr. Ken Gore-Brown, myself and colleagues, we congratulate you all on your 500th edition. Why not show it to your friends and even give them a year's subscription. C.D. will go on to its 1000th edition more easily with a few more subscribers.

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