

STORY PAPER
COLLECTORS' DIGEST

VOL.52

No.619

JULY 1998

WHEN PAM MADE MORCOVE WONDER

by *Marjorie
Stanton*



A
GRAND TALE
of the
Early Adventures
of
BEITY BARTON & Co of
MORCOVE
SCHOOL

1-6-39

4^d

The SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN LIBRARY N^o685



**COLIN CREWE
COLLECTORS BOOKS**

12B WESTWOOD ROAD, CANVEY ISLAND, ESSEX, SS8 0ED

TELEPHONE: 01268-693735 EVENINGS BEST

**OLD BOYS AND GIRLS BOOKS SOLD, BOUGHT AND EXCHANGED WITH ENTHUSIASM
YOUR WANTS LIST WELCOME SUITABLE COLLECTIONS WANTED**



THE COMPLETE MAGNET COMPANION 1996 EDITOR GEORGE BEAL. MINT COPIES @ £8.50 EACH
MAGNET & GEM FACSIMILE EDITIONS STOCK & CATALOGUE TO ALL HOWARD BAKER'S @ £4.50 EACH
HOWARD-BAKER VOLUMES: I HAVE A GUIDE OF OVER 2,000 INCLUDING LOTS OF MINT UNREAD COPIES FROM FROM WAREHOUSE @ £10 EACH WITH 10% DISCOUNT ON ORDERS OF 3 OR MORE. SEND FOR A COPY OF MY BUMPER LIST. S.A.E. WILL BE APPRECIATED. I WISH YOU HAPPY READING. COLIN.
TERMS: PAYMENT ON YOUR SATISFACTORY RECEIPT OF GOODS PLUS POSTAGE AT COST. 4 ROOMS OF STOCK. VISITORS MOST WELCOME BY APPOINTMENT. YOU WILL BE AMAZED.

GEMS. LOTS OF LOVELY GEMS. A WHOLE GANG OF ORIGINAL ISSUES. JOIN TOM MERRY, D'ARCY, FATTY WYNN AND ALL THE CHUMS FOR MANY AN ADVENTURE DURING TERM TIME AND THE HOLS. ISSUES FROM 1930 @ £3 EACH, BEFORE 1930 £4 EACH, 10% DISCOUNT ON 10 PLUS ORDERS:- 796, 816, 849, 893, 896, 901, 904, 905, 912, 913, 914, 997, 979, 981, 1003, 1004, 1024, 1025, 1026, 1028, 1055, 1060, 1068, 1090, 1094, 1096, 1097, 1098, 1101, 1102, 1104, 1108, 1109, 1111, 1121, 1135, 1136, 1137, 1140, 1144, 1154, 1161, 1159, 1168, 1169, 1170, 1172, 1179, 1181, 1195, 1199, 1214, 1220, 1221, 1222, 1223, 1224, 1225, 1226, 1227, 1228, 1229, 1230, 1231, 1232, 1233, 1234, 1235, 1236, 1237, 1238, 1240, 1244, 1248, 1253, 1265, 1269, 1271, 1298, 1299, 1301, 1306, 1331, 1334, 1337, 1343, 1403, 1408, 1409, 1410, 1411, 1413, 1421, 1422, 1423, 1424, 1425, 1430, 1437, 1440, 1443, 1448, 1451, 1453, 1455, 1456, 1457, 1459, 1461, 1462, 1465, 1466, 1469, 1470, 1471, 1472, 1473, 1474, 1475, 1476, 1477, 1478, 1479, 1480, 1481, 1482, 1483, 1484, 1485, 1486, 1487, 1489, 1493, 1494, 1495, 1496, 1497, 1498, 1499, 1500, 1501, 1502, 1503, 1507, 1509, 1510, 1512, 1513, 1514, 1515, 1516, 1517, 1518, 1519, 1520, 1521, 1522, 1524, 1525, 1528, 1531, 1532, 1533, 1536, 1537, 1538, 1539, 1540, 1541, 1542, 1543, 1544, 1546, 1552, 1554, 1555, 1561, 1563, 1565, 1567, 1568, 1569, 1570, 1572, 1573, 1574, 1578, 1582, 1585, 1590, 1591, 1592, 1593, 1594, 1595, 1596, 1602, 1604, 1605, 1607, 1613, 1617, 1619, 1620, 1621, 1622, 1623, 1624, 1637, 1639, 1641, 1642, 1645, 1649, 1661, **** 580, 626, 627, 632, 633, 635, 637, 644, 645, 673, 757

GEM ISSUES 1-15 OF YEAR 1907. MINT COPY IN SLIP-CASE OF G.B.C. VOL 5 LONG OUT OF PRINT LIMITED EDITION FROM HOWARD BAKER £48.00
GEM ISSUES 759-767 GBC VOL 17 MINT COPY £18.00
GEM ISSUES 334-341 & 351-353 GBC VOL 23 M £35.00
G.B.C. VOL 32 ST. JIM'S FOR EVER YEAR 1922 M £18.00
G.B.C. VOL 54 ST. JIM'S CHRISTMAS BARRING OUT £18.00
GEM OMNIBUS VOLUMES FINE/MINT. HOWARD-BAKER. 90% BRAND NEW COPIES @ £10 EACH

- Vol 1 D'Arcy the Runaway
- Vol 2 Cardew of St Jim's
- Vol 3 The Rebel of St Jim's
- Vol 4 Tom Merry and the Night Raiders
- Vol 5 The Boys of St Jim's
- Vol 7 The Spectre of St Jim's
- Vol 8 Tom Merry's Best
- Vol 9 Tom Merry's Party
- Vol 10 Gay Dogs of St Jim's
- Vol 11 D'Arcy Maximus
- Vol 12 High Jinks at St Jim's
- Vol 14 The Japers of St Jim's
- Vol 15 The Plotters of St Jim's
- Vol 16 Tom Merry's Bodyguard
- Vol 17 A Cockney at St Jim's

- Vol 18 Tom Merry's Weekly
- Vol 19 Tom Merry & Co. on Strike
- Vol. 13 Tom Merry's Enemy out of print £14.00
- Vol. 20 The Mystery of Eastwood House O/P £14.00
- THE GEM STORY. THE CHARLES HAMILTON COMPANION VOL. 6 MINT. ESSENTIAL READING FOR GEMITES £13.95**
- SCHOOLBOY'S OWN LIBRARY ALL ST. FRANK'S ISSUES FEATURING NELSON LEE THE SCHOOLMASTER DETECTIVE, NIPPER, HANDFORTH & THE CO. YOUR CHANCE TO JOIN THE MERRY CHUMS. ALL ISSUES @ £3.95 EACH 10% DISCOUNT ON 10 PLUS ORDERS**
- 212 The Foot-Boy Baronet; 216 The Wizard of St. Frank's
- 279 The Great Fire at St. Frank's; 282 The Mystery of St. Frank's
- 285 The Tyrant Head; 288 Rebels of the Remove
- 291 The Spendthrift of St. Frank's; 294 The Boy Who Bought A School; 297 The Spendthrift's Lesson
- 300 The Mystery Master of St. Frank's; 303 The Schoolmaster Spy
- 306 The St. Frank's Explorers; 309 The Lost Land
- 312 The Battle of the Giants; 315 The Kidnapped Schoolboy
- 318 The Schoolboy Inventor; 321 The Ghost of Bannington Grange
- 324 The Schoolboy Housebreakers; 333 The Crook Schoolmaster
- 336 The St. Frank's Castaways; 339 The Terror of the Tagossa
- 342 The Demon Cricketer; 345 The Schoolboy Test Match Player
- 348 The Mystery of the Roaring Z Ranch; 351 The Valley of Gold
- 354 Tyrant and Sport; 357 The Christmas Rebels
- 360 The Brotherhood of the Free; 363 Nelson Lee's Comeback
- 366 The St. Frank's Cadets; 369 Hidden Gold
- 372 The Yellow Menace; 375 The Fiends of Fu Chow
- 378 The Schoolboy Crusoes; 381 The Cannibal Invaders
- 384 The Island of Terror; 387 The Secret World
- 390 War in the New World; 393 The Ghost of Somerton Abbey
- 396 Petticoat Rule at St. Frank's; 399 Rebellion at St. Frank's
- 402 The Rebels' Victory; 405 The St. Frank's Caravanners
- 408 The Touring School; 411 The St. Frank's Tourists
- TOM MERRY & JACK, POST-WAR HARDBACKS, VERY GOOD COPIES IN ATTRACTIVE DUST WRAPPERS.**
- THE SECRET OF THE STUDY £8.50**
- TALBOT'S SECRET £8.50**
- TOM MERRY & CO. OF ST. JIM'S £8.50**
- TROUBLE FOR TOM MERRY £8.50**
- DOWN AND OUT £8.50**
- CARDEW'S CATCH £8.50**
- THE DISAPPEARANCE OF TOM MERRY £10.00**
- THROUGH THICK AND THIN £8.50**
- TOM MERRY'S TRIUMPH £9.00**
- TOM MERRY AND CO. CARAVANNERS £10.00**
- JACK'S THE LAD £9.00**
- JACK OF THE CIRCUS £9.00**
- RIVALS OF ROOKWOOD £10.00**

STORY PAPER COLLECTORS' DIGEST

Editor: MARY CADOGAN

STORY PAPER COLLECTOR

Founded in 1941 by
W.H. GANDER

COLLECTORS' DIGEST

Founded in 1946 by
HERBERT LECKENBY

S.P.C.D. Edited and Published 1959 - January 1987 by Eric Fayne

VOL. 52

No. 619

JULY 1998

Price £1.30

The Editor's Chat



SPECIAL DAYS

Towards the end of June I attended the Jennings Day organized by Darrell Swift and the Northern Old Boys Book Club at Lewes, where Jennings' creator, Anthony Buckeridge, lives. Anthony and his wife, Eileen, and several members of the family attended as well, of course, as Jennings fans of all ages and from many parts of the country. The meeting especially celebrated fifty years of Jennings and, felicitously, took place on Anthony's 86th birthday. Everyone enjoyed the rich and varied programme, which included talks, a quiz and musical items. A further Jennings Day is planned for next year.

One-day events of this nature are becoming more and more popular with hobbyists and collectors, so I give below information about some which are planned to take place in the near future.

August 29th at Barford, the RUPERT ANNUAL DAY

(Contact: John Beck, 29 Mill Road, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 2RU)

October 17th,

LOUGHBOROUGH DAY SCHOOL (on Dorita Fairlie Bruce, Elinor Brent-Dyer, Elsie J. Oxenham; speakers are Mary Cadogan, Helen McClelland, Sheila Ray and Stella Waring. Contact: Stella Waring, 53 Thirlmere Drive, Loughborough, LE11 3SX)

October 17th,

W.E. JOHNS DAY, Nottingham (Contact: Alison Thompson, Wendover, Windy Harbour Lane, Bromley Cross, Bolton, BL7 9AP)

October 27th,

FRANK RICHARDS DAY, BROADSTAIRS (Speaker, Mary Cadogan. Contact: Dept. JB., Town Clerk's Office, Pierremont Hall, Broadstairs CT10 1JH)

This Frank Richards Day is part of the Broadstairs Celebrity Connections Week (October 24th to 31st) which includes days on Jack Warner, John Buchan, Annette Mills and Christopher Stone.

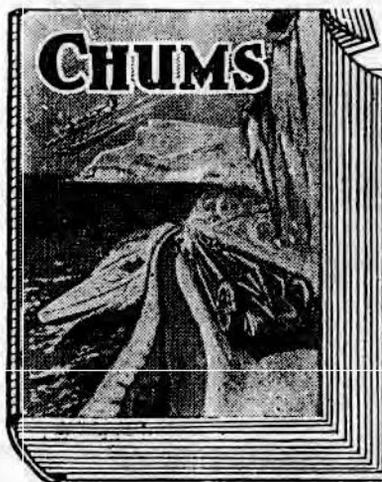
HAPPY MEETINGS - AND HAPPY READING.
MARY CADOGAN

THE BEST FIVE

by Bill Bradford

We are all familiar with the 'BIG FIVE', namely the highly successful publications by D.C. Thomson of Dundee, entitled *Adventure*, *Hotspur*, *Rover*, *Skipper* and *Wizard*. Much sought after, they now frequently command nearly three times the price of many papers published by the Amalgamated Press. I read them all as a boy, in the 1930s, and remember the first appearance of the *Skipper* and *Hotspur*.

As many of you will know, and to be



controversial, I must admit that the Thomson papers were never my favourites, although, for mainly nostalgic reasons, I now collect *Skipper*. (my Father having bought me No 1 when I was ill in bed) and Dixon Hawke Library, which I could only obtain from a back street newsagent when walking to see my Grandmother. For my taste, D.C.T. papers seemed too full of school and sport stories; only Frank Richards ever held me with school stories.

The **MILLIONAIRE STOWAWAY!**



THE **MAGNET**

On Sale Saturday, March 28th, at all Newsagen

Many of the tales were rather light-hearted and failed to grip or thrill me. My main joy was in thrilling serials (not series) and this is where A.P. scored.

To digress, some 15 years ago, at a dinner party, I sat next to Alan Badel, the late and fine actor. Talking of hobbies and our youth, he said "Do you recall the 'Wolf of Kabul' in the *Wizard*?" The conversation flowed for the rest of the evening!

However, I would like to submit for your approval (or otherwise) what I consider to have been the best five weekly issues of my youth, not necessarily in the order given, which saves me some difficult decisions.

Chums. 1892 - 1932. 2077 issues thereafter 24 monthly parts.

This I first encountered, very young, when my Father read to me from his Annual for 1908. I started taking it weekly from 1930 onwards and still cherish my first issue. From then onwards I was enthralled by the likes of S. Walkey, Geo. E. Rochester, Percy F. Westerman and D.H. Parry. If ever a paper flourished from its serials it has to be *Chums*. Earlier issues, later obtained, carried wonderful stories by Frank H. Shaw, whose 'Peril of the Motherland' and many other serials were so gripping. The action illustrations were largely by Fred Bennett, whom I usually associate with comic scenes. For many years there were also monthly parts, comprising 4-5 weekly issues and generally containing 8-page supplements, the contents of which never appeared in the relevant annual. These parts had some wonderful coloured covers. Outstanding were those by Glossop, in the 1930s, most of which I still treasure.

Magnet. 1908 - 1940. 1683 issues. There is little I can say about the *Magnet* that you have not heard before, and sales, at its peak, speak for themselves. Hamilton had the dubious honour of sending me to my Latin dictionary. I then knew nothing about substitute authors. Although I enjoyed some stories more than others, I enjoyed them all, with a particular liking for Xmas, Barring-out and holiday (U.K.) series.

FREE! 10 Big COLOURED ENGINE PLATES



GIVEN TO-DAY!
L.M.S. ENGINE
"FURY"
and Folder
for keeping
the Pictures

Another splendid picture every week for nine weeks, with

MODERN BOY

Get Your Copy NOW! - - - - - 2d.

A Top-Notch Story by Famous FRANK RICHARDS!

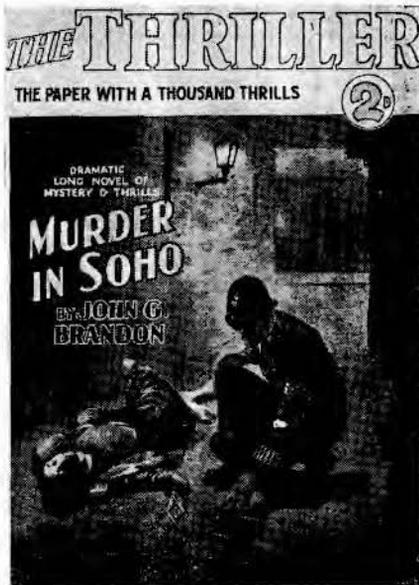


Here's a treat for all you "Magnet" readers—a rollicking school story written by your favourite author, Frank Richards. The stirring adventures of Jim Dainty & Co., of Grimsdale School, will entertain and amuse you just as those of the Greyfriars chums do in the "Magnet" every week. You'll howl with laughter at Fritz von Splitz—that's him hurling the eggs at the unfortunate fellow tied to the table. As a stunt for curing a black sheep, it proved a good 'un—but perhaps that was because the eggs were laid 'uns! Read "The Fourth Form of Grimsdale" every week in *The RANGER*. This week's issue of *The RANGER* also contains a wonderful FREE PHOTOGRAPHY PLATE illustrating "World Records We Are Proud Of!"

The RANGER On Sale Every Saturday. **2^d.**

Modern Boy. 1928 - 1939. 610 issues.

What happy Saturday mornings! No school (which I never liked) and the arrival of my copy of *Modern Boy*! Such a collection of authors and unforgettable characters. Hamilton gave us King of the Islands, Len Lex, the School for Slackers. W.E. Johns contributed the wartime exploits of Biggles, Rochester gave us Grey Shadow and Captain Justice came from the pen of Murray Roberts, not forgetting excellent stories from Percy F. Westerman and Alfred Edgar. Come to think of it, I cannot recall any other paper with such outstanding authors. Proof of its popularity is evidenced by the number of stories reprinted in the *Boys Friend Library*, 2nd Series.



Ranger. 1931 - 1935. 242 issues.

It is difficult to understand the present apparent lack of interest in this paper, other than from collectors seeking the coloured aerial plates by W.E. Johns presented with numbers 3-10. I must have found the *Ranger* in its early days as I distinctly remember 'Hells Angels' based on the film from the previous year, in which Ben Lyon had starred. This serial ran for 14 weeks; about the same time there ran nine tales of the Rio Kid, whom I had not previously encountered. There was 'Chums of the Caribbean', a five-part series by Edwy Searles Brooks, and 'Baldy's Angels' by Capt. Robert Hawke was featured intermittently for about two years. Rochester contributed two serials, 'Ghosts of the Guillotine' and 'The Black Sapper'. Finally it was here that Hamilton introduced us to the 'Fourth Form at Grimslade'.

Thriller. 1929 - 1940. 589 issues.

Although I did not discover this till my latter schooldays, it left me with a lasting memory of gripping yarns, and my first experience of more adult-type fiction. I nearly included *Detective Weekly* in my 'FIVE' but the *Thriller* has the edge, probably because it is the more readable today! Just think of the authors: Edgar Wallace, Leslie Charteris, John G. Brandon, Gerald Verner (Donald Stuart), Hugh Clevely, Barry Perowne, W.E. Johns, Gwyn Evans, Sydney Horler, Francis Gerrard, John Creasey, Ladbrooke Black and E.S. Brooks in the guises of Berkley Gray and Victor Gunn. The continuing demand for any works of some of these authors is why some issues are so hard to obtain and why prices are inflating. The menacing illustrations by Arthur Jones were a major attraction and his death in 1939 left a void which, in my opinion, even the likes of Eric Parker could not fill.

From all this you will have gathered my preference for Amalgamated Press publications, with a weakness for thrilling serials. It is, of course, very different to view, with fading vision, the papers that once fascinated you. However I find no reason to revise

my youthful choices. Only those of my generation can have known the delight and excitement of procuring your favourite 'reads' and when they were published. Younger readers, who collect and peruse the old papers, can never quite know the thrill they gave some of us so many years ago. My case rests.



LIBRARY CHAT

by Derek Ford

One mystery outside the contents of the *Sexton Blake Library* that has always puzzled me is why Amalgamated Press suddenly decided to "re-launch" the Library in May 1925. Starting in September 1915, there were 382 case-books before, suddenly, without explanation, there was Number One "New Series", with no difference from the previous issues. When "New Series" was dropped from the cover, I do not know, because there were to be 744 more issues before, in June 1941, a second "New Series" appeared, commencing with John Hunter's "Raiders Passed". I know this was dropped from number 146, coinciding with the reduction from 96 pages to 64.

Now if ever a third "New Series" was called for, it should have commenced at number 347, the November 1955 bonfire of all Library vanities - W. Howard Baker's "Without Warning". One final contribution to the old order from Anthony Parsons in May 1956, and "Blake" was a Berkeley Square hostage for the next ten years. Outside this regime was a serial in *Titbits* and a *Union Jack*-style serial "Sexton Blake and the Demon God" by John Garforth in 1978. It was a pity that this period yarn was made into a television serial when Parsons' 1951 "The Millionaire's Nest Egg" would have done so much better.

To me, Howard Baker's new generation of "Smarties" seemed a poor substitute for the "Blake Magic" I had grown accustomed to over many years. Especially looked forward to were the case-books by the principal contributor for so many years, the innovative Anthony Parsons. With the axing of his book 353, "The Mystery of the Dance Hostess", the baby seemed to have been thrown out with the bath water by Baker.

Men Behind Boys' Fiction (Lofts and Adley 1970) told me that Baker found over 40 new contributors for his *SBL* up to its closing in 1963. None of those I read appealed to me after a season in 1956/7, so I consoled myself with Sam Rogers' thought "When a new book is published, read an old one" and read no more of them. There would now be more time to read about the real Blake in the Big Three.

Sexton Blake and Tinker deserved an honourable retirement in 1955 with their editor, Leonard Pratt, who had been in charge of their affairs from 1921. I'm sure that was Amalgamated Press's intention until Howard Baker knocked on the door, and they decided on a final exploitation of the name. Had *The Magnet* been going at the time they would no doubt have let it become a comprehensive school to attract a new generation of readers, with Billy Bunter having anorectic problems!

P.M. Haydon and Leonard Pratt were the only editors of the *SBL* before Howard Baker. Undoubtedly Pratt had been too long in the chair. I remember writing to him in

1953 reminding him of the Jubilee and suggesting some small mention in the *SBL*. He typed a reply to me on an ancient machine, requiring a new ribbon, that "unfortunately efforts in the past have not met with sufficient response" to such a minor gesture. In his now joyless job he passed too many dud case-books unworthy of the talents of the Baker Street pair, by some of his regular authors. He failed to find new contributors. Only Anthony Parsons maintained the high standard to the end. Had he not been an "old hand" Parsons would have made an ideal editor, I'm sure.

But I must say that Pratt accomplished many changes in his chair - from covers to style. Reading the early case-books is now almost impossible.

In 1955, the *SBL* was just one of many time capsules in Fleetway House, that warren of a building employing over 9,000 people. Cecil King's IPC bought this 'Titanic', and ace Daily Mirror columnist Noel Whitcomb was brought in to pep up the publications. In his memoirs (1950) he wrote: "The editors of the women's publications had become very set in their ways and were frightened of change. Some of the women working on the magazines were in their eighties. Circulations were either stagnant or falling."

They were part of a force that had provided the reading matter for many generations. Of that cargo of magazines which Cecil King bought, only three still survive. Victims of that torpedo television, story-papers are no longer part of our education. Had the *SBL* survived, you would now be purchasing it at the supermarket with your groceries, and the corner newsagent, like your Library, would be just a memory.

A final puzzle. It was a great article on Eric Parker in *A Celebration* (1994) but it failed to answer one question. Did he read every Blake manuscript through before making his illustrations, or did the Editor say: "I think the events on page 18 and 32 would make good pictures this month"? I have only twice come across his illustrations which did not coincide with the text. The time, in 1955, when the August edition came out with the cover of the third Sexton Blake Annual was unique - an improvisation of Pratt.

Oh, and would any kind reader let me know what happened to Blake on page 133 of *A Celebration* where he is falling off the top of Nelson's Column. I missed the *Knockout* that week.

WANTED: All pre-war Sexton Blake Libraries. All Boys Friend Libraries. All comics/papers etc with stories by W.E. Johns, Leslie Charteris & Enid Blyton. Original artwork from Magnet, Gem, Sexton Blake Library etc. also wanted. I will pay £150.00 for original Magnet cover artwork, £75.00 for original Sexton Blake Library cover artwork. NORMAN WRIGHT, 60 EASTBURY ROAD, WATFORD, WD1 4JL.
Tel: 01923-232383.

WANTED: Howard Bakers, £4 d/w £7 slipcase.
W.E. Johns 1st editions, all magazines, *Modern Boys*, ephemera, books in d/w published by John Hamilton.
Bunter, Jennings, Blyton, Saville 1sts in d/w.
Please offer other hobby related items.
P. Galvin, 2 The Lindales, Pogmoor, Barnsley, S. Yorks S75 2DT.



BLACK, WHITE AND GRAY

by Mark Caldicott

Part Seven - Fullwood's Social Adjustment

In his former days, Fullwood would have sneered at participation in any sort of sport except insofar as it presented the opportunity for placing a bet on the outcome. All this has changed, and Fullwood is about to achieve his new ambition - he is to take part in the school match against River House School ("Fullwood's Uphill Struggle", *Nelson Lee Library*, OS 540, 10-Oct-25).

But there is a problem. Fullwood is wrongly accredited with partaking in an after-hours gambling party, and the school in general are ready to believe that he has reverted to his caddish ways. He had gained the respect of those fellows he is now happy to call his friends - Clive Russell, Nipper, Handforth & Co., but that respect is threatening to disappear because of this apparent backsliding. To make things worse, Fullwood is suffering from a worsening fever, the symptoms of which are mistaken for a hangover.

He has come to recognise a growing attachment to Winnie Pitt, Reggie's sister, of Moor View School, who has shown unwavering faith in him, and who has promised to come to watch him play football. Winnie knows the truth of the present situation, and this is some consolation, but in general Fullwood is being shunned.

Nipper faces a deputation asking that Fullwood be removed from the team in view of his misdeeds. Before deciding whether or not to do so, Nipper sees Fullwood and, accepting his word that he is innocent, leaves him in the team. Doyle refuses to "play with the cad", but Nipper, believing that a fellow is innocent until proven guilty, and accepting Fullwood's word of honour, drops Doyle and substitutes McClure, who is happy to take the skipper's word. Boots and De Valerie drop out in support of Doyle, but Nipper stays firm and substitutes them.

Nipper has now put himself on the line for Fullwood, for if there is a heavy defeat, and if Fullwood is after all proved to be guilty and therefore unworthy of his place, Nipper's leadership, and his exclusion of Doyle, Boots and De Valerie, will be in for some criticism. Fullwood is aware of this, and is grateful to Nipper for his support. It increases his determination to do well. Despite this resolve Fullwood's worsening fever is having its effect. In the first half, whilst he isn't playing badly, he is not at his best and, with the weakened side, St. Frank's trail 1-3. In the second half Fullwood's vision becomes blurred, and he thinks he may have to leave the field. River House make it 1-4 and, this being in the days before substitutes, Fullwood knows that if he leaves the field defeat will be certain for a side down to ten men. He stays. Nipper and Trotwood, a substitute, pull it back to 3-4 and then Fullwood suddenly finds he has regained full strength. He recovers his form and scores twice to give St. Frank's a 5-4 victory. But the effort has been too much, and Fullwood collapses. He is taken to the sanatorium unconscious and in a dangerous condition.

His recovery coincides with his exoneration from the scandal which had caused the school to turn against him. Being confined to bed, however, he is not able to keep his bargain with the real Clavering. Clavering is no longer a prisoner, but has remained in the priory expecting Fullwood to have forced his cousin to flee, and for Fullwood to be arriving to tell him - Clavering - that it is safe to present himself at St. Frank's. Carey doesn't know this and, realising Fullwood is confined to bed, visits the priory ("His Cousin's Dishonour", *Nelson Lee Library*, OS 541, 17-Oct-25). Carey is surprised to see Clavering is free - and Clavering is surprised to see Carey. At the same time Nipper has organised another exploration, and arrives at the priory. Carey, in trying to elude Nipper, forces Clavering into another part of the priory ruins where the luckless newcomer falls down a deep hole. Carey, believing he has fallen to his death, flees, and return to St. Frank's, telling Fullwood that Carey has run away.

While Nipper and Co. had failed to find anyone in the priory ruins, Willy Handforth has better luck, for his own investigations end in his plucky rescue of Clavering from the bottom of the chasm. Clavering learns the truth about Fullwood from Willy, and returns with Willy to St. Frank's without revealing his name. Willy then finds Fullwood some clothes and the three - Fullwood, Clavering and Willy - seek out Carey. When Carey sees Clavering he is so shocked that, in his drunken state, he plunges through a closed window in an attempt to escape, only to be captured and held.

The truth is told. Carey's father arrives, gives Eustace a public thrashing, and announces he will be sent to Mexico to look after a farm. He is finally out of Fullwood's life, and Fullwood is at the end of his trial.

On the opposite page to the final words of the story, in "Between Ourselves", we note the words: "That little essay on scenery is excellent, Albert S. Hughes . . .". Master Hughes is apparently still a steady contributor in October 1925. His original suggestion for the reform of Fullwood appeared in May 1925, and one of the more remarkable features of that reform is how subtly and carefully Brooks laid the foundations for Fullwood's motivation to change. The motivation for Hart to change was simple - he had been expelled, and he had to start again from scratch. Fullwood could not be expelled, so a different motivation was more appropriate. Furthermore, the world had moved on a little way. The high morality of Hart's reform, the idea of renunciation of evil, rather like the renunciation of the evils of drink in a Victorian Temperance Society meeting, is no longer appropriate in the mid-twenties. And so a notion more in tune with the times is introduced - the notion of reform through good influence.

Fullwood is separated from evil influences by embarking on a voyage to the South Seas in which he is estranged from his usual crowd, and in the company of companions not the slightest bit interested in gambling, drinking and the fast life. The negative influences being removed, he struggles with the fact that he might enjoy joining in with the healthy pursuits the others are so patently enjoying. Initially, he identifies this as a weakness, and maintains his sneering cynical views which are expressed most clearly in his prejudice towards Russell. Russell sets a supreme example of friendliness, openness, honesty and selfless courage in his attitude to Fullwood; and eventually in the saving of Fullwood's life at the risk of his own. In such traumatic circumstances Russell's example strikes deeply into Fullwood's conscience, and is the turning point. Called to reciprocate the deed,

Fullwood discovers his own courage, and gains the respect of others, perhaps for the first time.

Brooks also introduces an element which would not have been appropriate in 1919, the time of the Hart episode - the idea of emotional attachment to girls. Moor View School was opened in 1923. And, that being the age of emancipation, the girls are allowed to take a more active role in the proceedings. In 1919 girls appear as decorative features. In the twenties they are allowed to develop independent personalities. And it is Winnie Pitt's growing friendship with Fullwood which is the other key influence in his motivation to reform. He is attracted to her, and therefore is influenced by her views. When Winnie says she is pleased with his efforts to turn over a new leaf he takes notice, and does not react with the same anger as he had when Nelson Lee said the same thing. Moreover, Winnie's own feeling for Fullwood means she has faith in him which, when the rest of the world is against him, gives him strength to fight on.

Not only can one feel that such emotional attachments would not have been appropriate at the time of the Hart episode, but also that change brought about through the power of good example, including the feminine influence, is more of a twenties idea. It is more quasi-psychological than, as with Hart, quasi-religious, and, of course, it was in the twenties that psychological theories began to surface into popular thought. It could be claimed, therefore, that Fullwood's reform, at least in its motivation, was essentially of its time. Indeed, it was around this time that Brooks, a great collector of ideas, spent some time in America where psychologists were propounding a science of "social adjustment".

However, although motivation for reform is accounted for differently between Hart and Fullwood, the progress of their reform is broadly similar. It involves the denunciation of the checklist of evils. It then involves an unforeseen circumstance which will cause the reformer to appear to his new friends to be acting in his old caddish ways, whilst at the same time being of such a nature that he is not able to explain his actions.

There is, in addition, one important feature common to both Hart's and Fullwood's reform. The transition from evil to good is total. Fullwood's own words, at the end of his ordeal, make this clear:

"This is my first term at St. Frank's!" he told himself softly. "There was another fellow here before that, but he's dead now - and good riddance to bad rubbish!"

When we next meet Fullwood, in the Ezra Quirke series, he is indistinguishable, in his moral outlook, from all the other decent fellows. He was totally evil, and now he is totally good. The clear separation of good and evil is a continuing feature of the St. Frank's stories. Fellows are either one or the other. If they reform, they change sides, as it were.

Which is why Vivian Travers is so interesting . . .

(To be continued)

PRIVATE COLLECTOR EAGERLY SEEKING:-

Geo. E. Rochester * Talbot Mundy * P.F. Westerman * W.E. Johns * Collectors' Digest
Monthlies/Annuals * All John Hamilton/Ace series * All aviation fiction. DAVID
BRADLEY, 19 ST. HELENS GARDENS, LEEDS LS16 8BT. TEL: (0113) 267-8020.

They don't want money, but work, brother and sister Tom and Edna Morgan assure Etta Hargrove, having approached her in Barncombe. They are agreeable to do anything at all. Their parents are dead and they have no permanent home. The soft-hearted Morcovians have no experience of con artists and, thinking of ways they might help this (so they believe) "deserving pair", suggest to Pam Willoughby she might be able to have a word with her parents who live in not-too-faraway mansion "Swanlake" to employ them on the estate staff. Pam agrees until the names of the "worthy" couple are revealed and wipe the smile from her face. She says she can do nothing to aid them. Consternation in the Form! Why ever not?

Pam has received a worried note from Leila Morgan who is nursemaid to two little children in a house just outside Barncombe, the county town nearest to Morcove. A good position with a pleasant mistress, with only one cloud to mar the pleasing prospect: the sudden arrival of her older brother and sister in the neighbourhood. Leila is afraid that when Tom and Edna find out where she is working they will carry on as they did when Leila worked at Swanlake. They imposed on the Willoughbys, hence Pam's rejection. Edna had spurned a good situation for a dishonest living which included poaching with her brother.

While Leila and Pam are conferring in the barn on the Morcove Road, the Study 12 chums, who have been to Barncombe to talk with the older Morgans, cycle past. The two worried girls are appalled to hear snatches of conversation in which Study 12 state they are going to ask Morcove's headmistress whether jobs could not be found at the school for the (un)worthy pair. Miss Somerfield, quick to back up her girls in their good-hearted intentions, enthusiastically agrees. She offers Tom outdoor work in the grounds and games field, and work for Edna inside the school. She also offers them an old cottage inside the Morcove grounds to live in which Tom can do up himself.

The Fourth-formers are jubilant at the success of their do-gooding but are puzzled at Pam's comment that introducing the Morgans into the school may turn out to be a mistake. Had they overheard the brother and sister after moving into the cottage, they might have realised that Pam knew the pair better than they did. Tom stigmatises their gift home as a "mouldy old place". The Head has given him the wherewithal to purchase paint and other materials to put it in liveable condition but he says: "I'm blowed if I'm going to bother myself putting it in order". Edna comments on what a fine lot of stuff Miss Somerfield has in her study. If Tom is employed outside he could not be accused if any of it went missing. What kind of young people are these, sizing up a place for removal of portable property not five minutes after being presented with a place to live and jobs for them to make an honest living?

Tom feigns an injury to his wrist to stop any refurbishing jobs around the cottage and complains of a weakness in health to stop his getting on with too much of the outside work. Naomer, the greater feeder-upper of the Study 12 coterie, decides he hasn't been getting enough to eat and slips nourishing comestibles to augment whatever there is in the cottage larder.

Pam observes the antics of the Morgans and realises that they haven't changed and nor do they intend to. The fears expressed by their younger sister are still valid. She feels she

must tell Miss Somerfield what a pair of unscrupulous rascals she is harbouring at Morcove. The Morgans too have observed Pam's steely looks and far from friendly attitude. They fear that as they have been employed at Swanlake and discharged for dishonesty, Pam will inform the Head who will then dismiss them from Morcove.

Pam realises that their hate campaign against her has begun when Miss Somerfield tells her, upon her return, that one of the maids - Edna Morgan - noticed a smell of burning in her study. The Head investigates and finds one of the curtains smouldering. A carelessly-dropped cigarette lies nearby on the floor. Pam assures her that she never smokes. But Miss Somerfield is appalled at the possibility that the ladylike Pam has taken up this unpleasant habit.

Leila has asked Pam that her erring siblings be given a little more leeway to discover if the kindly influences at Morcove may intercede. Pam feels she must discuss the Morgans with her parents and departs for a weekend at Swanlake leaving a note for the Head as both Miss Somerfield and Miss Massingham have gone out. Edna, cleaning the Head's study, sees Pam's note on the Head's desk and destroys it.

Pam's visit home results in a worried phone call from Miss Somerfield asking if she is there. The Morgans receive a letter from Pam's mother saying that their past record precludes their staying and imposing on the Headmistress's good nature. Mr Willoughby offers to advance them money to emigrate to Canada if they wish! The Morgans regard this letter as an example of upper-class cheek and decide to continue getting around Miss Somerfield and the girls. Tom can repair a chair broken by Betty Barton and refuse any payment and Edna can continue to get herself into the good graces of the housekeeper by being especially eager to help. In the meantime they can celebrate their independence by finishing off a cake which Edna has purloined from Study 12 and for which Naomer has been searching in vain!

Edna, in cleverly simulated tears, shows the Willoughbys' letter to the Head. She implores Miss Somerfield not to dismiss her and her brother. She stresses that they have honestly been trying to make good ever since they were dismissed from Swanlake. Miss Somerfield, entirely taken in by Edna's histrionics and impressed by the job Tom has done on the broken chair (and the fact that he would take nothing for his work) feels that the Morgans really are trying to reform. She decides to give them a further space of time to prove their good intentions.

Leila makes an anguished visit to Pam to tell her that the previous night there had been an attempted burglary where she works. She had surprised the burglar and recognised him as her brother. Leila tells Pam that Miss Somerfield must be told at once in case he is planning to rob the school as well! The Head, faced by this further evidence of the Morgans' perfidy, promptly tells them to pack their bags and leave the following day. Edna sends Pam a threatening, abusive letter saying they know their dismissal is due to her and they will get even with her. Pam realises she could put herself right in the eyes of the other juniors by showing them the letter, but she tears it up. She doesn't tell them about Tom's attempted burglary either. Not knowing the true facts, Naomer makes up a collection for the Morgans and presents it to them as they (acting pathetically and almost in tears) vacate the cottage so mistakenly given to them. Tom recognised his younger sister on the night of the attempted burglary, which means that they know where Leila is working and can cadge off her until they can find themselves another situation!

Pam, cycling in worsening weather to the house where Leila works, warns her that Tom and Edna have left Morcove and will undoubtedly try to sponge off her. Tom, in fact, arrives while Pam is still there and Pam, returning to the spot where she has left her bicycle, finds Edna holding it. Edna intends to steal it (but Pam is too generous to consider this possibility). It does not dawn on her that Edna had more sinister plans for the bicycle. On the way back to Morcove, Pam, blinded by the pelting rain, is flung to the ground when her front wheel works loose. She attempts to get up but a sharp pain in her side causes her to lose consciousness.

Miss Massingham, who gave Pam leave to go into Barncombe and be back by six, is alarmed when she discovers that she has not returned by eight o' clock. Betty and Co. are given permission to search along the Morcove Road on their bicycles. They find Pam's sodden body lying beside her damaged machine. Miss Somerfield drives Pam's inert body to the sanatorium and the school doctor, being called in, confines her to the san for three weeks. Her parents call in a London doctor and in the middle of one agonising night, Pam passes the crisis point in her illness and the word is spread around Morcove that she will recover. Naomer is all for building up the invalid with "calf feets jelly, prune scuffle" and "a lovely plateful of horsed duffers for ze start".

Pam goes to London for her convalescence to spend a week relaxing with her parents at the Majestic Hotel. One treat is a visit to a musical play at the Regency Theatre. Pam's father inadvertently loses his bunch of keys which contains a brass label inscribed with his name and address. It is found by the programme seller, unrecognised by the Willoughbys, though she knows who they are. She is Edna Morgan! Edna is able to tell Tom in their shabby lodgings that she overheard the Willoughbys saying they would be staying in London for another week. Swanlake will be half empty of staff and it would be a golden opportunity for Tom to burgle, even maybe to break into the safe. They could be rich for life! So, with glee, the rascally pair conspire to get their revenge on the Willoughbys.

Pam returns to Morcove ahead of her parents and encounters Leila at Barncombe. She tells Pam the police had called inquiring after Tom and Edna. Her employer has given Leila notice to quit, feeling that someone related to criminals cannot have charge of her children. Leila says it is believed that they have left for Canada but before leaving Barncombe they swindled several unsuspecting people. Pam returns with Leila to Swanlake where a place will be found for her. Pam decides to stay overnight to see that Leila settles in with the help of the housekeeper. Mrs Rosewell assures the unhappy girl that she will be of inestimable use around the large estate.

During the night Pam hears noises below. Seeing a light beneath the door, she thinks her father is in the study but discovers a man kneeling at the safe. Pam gasps with horror as she realises it is Tom Morgan, supposed at this moment to be more than 3,000 miles away. They gaze at one another "in their mutual surprise and terror" when the spell is broken by the thief throwing himself out of the open window. Pam sees the keys hanging from the open door of the safe and is relieved to find that Tom had not had time to remove anything from the safe.

On the way back to Morcove on her spare bicycle, Pam wires her father in London that his keys have been found. Pam is expected back in the morning. However, a phone call from Mrs Rosewell at tea-time to let Pam know that her father had received the telegram, and informing Miss Massingham that Pam left Swanlake after breakfast, alerts the

mistress that, once again, Pam has gone missing! Miss Somerfield wires to Willoughbys to see if Pam has rejoined them in London. Pam's parents wire Morcove that they are returning home at once.

That night an old house on the moor near Morcove goes up in flames. Knowing it to be solitary and empty, Miss Somerfield telephones the fire-station at Barncombe. The Head takes Betty and Polly with her in the car, intending to drive to Swanlake, but stops first near the blazing house. In the intense heat they are startled to see two figures outlined by the roaring flames. The one attempting to give first aid is the missing Pam; the blackened one on the ground is - Edna Morgan. Edna regains consciousness and confesses that she started the fire in the kitchen stove using some stolen petrol which she thought was paraffin. This exploded in her face. "We were keeping Pam in that empty house. We wanted the keys, and were going to make her say where they were," Edna confesses to a shaken Miss Somerfield. When the conflagration began, Edna fainted and was dragged outside by Pam who managed to smash her way out of the room in which she was imprisoned when the stove blew up like a bomb.

Edna admits that she has Pam to thank for her life and says that never again will she and her brother indulge in criminal activities. Tom, returning from Barncombe, is told what his sister has decided. "Fate itself must have seen that such a lesson was needed by the couple before ever they would know the error of their ways." The story ends with Leila back at Barncombe caring for her two loveable "little mites", and Tom and Edna in Canada and making good at long last.

This meticulously plotted story can be found in *Schoolgirls' Own* 445-451, Aug - Sep 1929, reprinted in *SGOL* 685, June 1939. By the time the ten-year-old reprint appeared, Leonard Shields had totally forgotten how he had portrayed Pam in the Weekly. On the *SGOL* cover (When Pam Made Morcove Wonder") she appears as a blonde with wavy hair brushed back off her forehead and dressed in a party frock. (See the front cover of this C.D.). The title illustration inside shows Pam as she was then, and probably always will be to her many admirers, with bobbed straight hair and that unmistakable deep fringe.

No. 695.--"THE SCHOOLGIRLS' OWN" LIBRARY.

(All rights reserved, and reproduction without permission strictly forbidden.)

WHEN PAM MADE MORCOVE WONDER



By
MARJORIE STANTON.

A Fine Tale of the Early Adventures of
BETTY BARTON & Co, of Morcove School.

FORUM

Andrew Miles, NSW, Australia:

I enjoyed the first instalment of Peter Mahony's excellent study of Harry Wharton in the May CD, but would like to take issue with an important claim made - 'Nugent was often imposed upon by him - Frank had to "understand" Harry; Harry rarely tried to "understand" Frank'.

There is no denying Nugent's endless patience with Wharton, as well as his undying loyalty - from Magnet 1 to the end; Nugent does, however, impose heavily on Wharton in the matter of Dicky. How many times are the Co. left to cool their heels in the quad or the Remove passage while Dicky sits in the Study 1 armchair watching long-suffering Frank complete his (Dicky's) Latin exercise for Twigg? On one occasion the Co. must wait while Dicky finishes his lines in the Second Form Room before he can join them as guest on an excursion. Wharton never kicks Nugent Mi when he makes free with Study 1 or checks its occupants while enjoying the honour of being stood tea. Bull would gladly kick him, but Wharton always shows great forbearance - only for Nugent's sake. Wharton readily accepts the Co.'s axiom - "Frank's potty about his Minor" - and never loses patience. In the darkest days of the second "Downfall" series, Wharton has retained sufficient, latent regard for Frank to help Dicky out of being accused of theft - even at the risk of being considered guilty of leading the fag into blagging. At least in the matter of Nugent Minor, Wharton fully understands Frank Nugent and makes every effort to accommodate him.

Roy Whiskin, Cambridge:

A word of encouragement for all hobby members who are looking for those elusive books and papers from our childhood. This week I found a small booklet that I had been searching for. The last time I had seen a copy was 50 years ago!

Ray Hopkins, Oadby:

Referring to Mr. Edwards' FORUM query in a recent C.D., I can state that I saw the film *Boys Will Be Boys* sometime in 1935. I left early in 1936 and might say that my homesickness for London family environs would have been considerably lessened could I have had access to British films. When I enquired why there were none on show in Seattle I was told people would not be able to understand what was being said. So I lost, at one fell swoop, not only Gracie Fields, Jack Hulbert and Cicely Courtneidge but also Will Hay and Gordon Harker, whose lugubrious features and muttered grumbings were added joys in *Boys Will Be Boys*. I am amused at what I was told then when I now realise that the appalling mumblings which emanate from the characters of *Eastenders* are apparently understood without any difficulty anywhere in the "Newnited" where this series is shown. Was it the so-called "cut glass" accents used by English thespians in the thirties that was the problem, I wonder? But television has made the colloquial accents used all over Britain familiar everywhere. A relative in New York tells me that the series *Are You Being Served* runs nightly on one of the channels. It has been so for some time and when all the series have been shown they go back to the beginning of the first one and show them all over again. That must cheer the actors in this series a great deal.

Have been enjoying Mark Caldicott's series and am glad he is keeping the ESB flag flying. His articles based on the rarely seen *Boys' Realm* stories are of great interest because not available to the rest of the St. Frank's devotees. Amazing how new subjects keep on turning up all these years later.

Colin Partis, Great Grimsby:

In the article many years ago in *Picture Post*, on Frank Richards (at least I think it was in this article) it said that he would be writing of two new schools, "Oakhurst" and "Ferndale" for Sankey Hudson Publications in Manchester.

Now over the years I have read stories of Carcroft, Sparshott, Headland House, Topham, St. Olive's, Felgate etc., and articles referring to them in C.D., but never once have I seen the slightest reference to Oakhurst or Ferndale, or discovered a solitary story of them. I remember it said that one of these schools would have a D'Arcy-like character called St. Leger (name repeat again). The only publications I have ever come across (and still possess) by Sankey Hudson is a series of history books of Britain through the ages in black and white drawings, sold exclusively by Woolworths when I was a boy.

Did the whole project fall through? Perhaps someone can throw some light on it.

My second question is why in the "Bunter Court" series did Frank Richards use the name "Lord Combemere" which is the real life name of a respected British peer. Such an unusual name, and a peer at that, seems more than coincidence. Or is it possible that he saw the name Lord Combemere in a newspaper and retained it at a subconscious level?

Does anyone know the answers to these two Charles Hamilton mysteries?

Ian J.R. Bennett, Sapcote:

There is little doubt that the old A.P. produced the 'top market' papers in the old days, but I would think that probably towards the end of the thirties D.C. Thomson, with their five notable titles, *Adventure*, *Wizard*, *Rover*, *Hotspur* and *Skipper* were formidable rivals in the circulation war . . . Personally when *Modern Boy* was 'resting' Captain Justice, I was quite willing to buy a D.C.T. title . . . although it wasn't till the advent of Odhams *Modern Wonder*, with its full-colour covers and brilliant cut-away drawings of mechanical marvels in the centre pages (early 1937) that my personal devotion to A.P. began to waver . . . So here's my suggestion: what about more on the D.C.T., Odhams and Newnes publications?

Another suggestion - in days gone by, Bill Lofts and Derek Adley compiled wonderful records about our much-loved old papers and annuals. We've had Brian Doyle's fine contributions too. Has anyone ever thought of a 'combined op?' (a committee of contributors) for a CHARACTER INDEX (including 'series') or something similar?

(*Editor's Note*: Suggestions about co-operative reference books on the hobby have been made from time to time: the vital question is always WHO will organize and sustain group-work of this nature?)

WANTED. Cigarette and trade cards, particularly football, golf, cricket, boxing and baseball related. Also football memorabilia. I have for exchange nearly all Howard Baker *Magnet* volumes and Howard Baker Annuals.

GEORGE HOARE, 13 BURNSIDE, WITTON GILBERT, DURHAM DH7 6SE.

TEL: 0191-371-0558

It helps the C.D. if you advertise your "For Sales" and Wants in it. The rates are: 4p per word, £5 for a quarter page, £10 for a half page and £20 for a whole page.

HOME AND ABROAD & SGOL

by Dawn Marler

There have been books about travel almost since printing began, and books of foreign places have proved very popular. The prospect of going abroad became especially tantalizing in the 1930s because it was almost within easy reach. In this period the genre developed; writers of children's books contributed to it, as well, of course, as authors for the Amalgamated Press story papers. *School Friend*, *Girls' Crystal* and both series of the *SGOL* carried travel stories; several authors wrote of the



exciting prospect of holidays and adventure both at home and abroad.

In the first series of the *SGOL* there are a large number of titles which indicate adventures abroad in the 1930s; such titles as "Diana's Voyage of Thrills" (478); "Her Voyage of Mystery" (527); "Morcove's Desert Holiday" (635); "Valerie's World-Wide Quest" (679); "Babs & Co. in Egypt" (688); "Their Thrilling Riviera Holiday" (695); "At School in the South Seas" (703). It has to be remembered that in those days almost none of the readers would ever have been abroad (or only a small portion of them) but some would have relatives who had travelled, perhaps with their work. Children at school would have learned a lot about geography and the British Empire, in which many countries written about were situated; so stories like these would have a highly romantic appeal - romantic in the sense of "imaginative" or "fantastic". Above all, the stories would have given a feeling of excitement, and an eagerness to travel to these foreign places.

During the Second World War the *SGOL* was suspended, as indeed were other A.P. girls' publications due to the paper shortage. Only the *Girls' Crystal* continued, although very much reduced in size. After the war, in 1946, the second series of the *SGOL* began and during its run (1946-1963) there were numerous stories on travel and adventure at home and abroad. In real life organised travel by sea and air gathered momentum; jet travel lay ahead with the first B.O.A.C. Comet. As a result foreign lands were much nearer, so the travel genre was updated by the authors of the second series of the *SGOL*.

Competitions began to appear in the *School Friend* in 1953 for a chance to fly on the Comet. These were aimed at the children, the travellers of the future.

The second series of Libraries appeared with titles as colourful and exciting as the first series. The stories were rich, and skilfully written. Readers became deeply involved in them. Here are a few titles, picked at random, to whet your appetite: "The Jungle Girl's

Secret" (38); "Her Thrilling Continental Tour" (83); "Her Holiday with Ling Min Yo" (94); "Their Voyage of Strange Perils" (167); "Jean and Josie in Mystery Jungle" (191); "Their Swiss Holiday of Skating Thrills" (196); "Hostess of the Touring School" (305); "Jill on Holiday Cruise" (312); "Ken and Joyce in Africa" (348); "Glamour Cruise" (366).

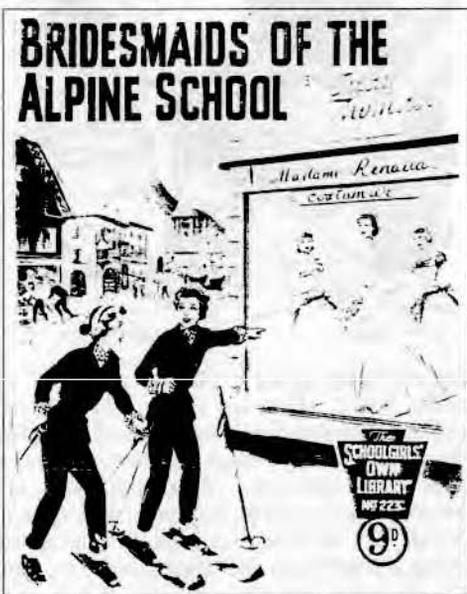
Settings included Switzerland, Canada, Italy, Holland, Egypt, South America, the Riviera, China, the South Seas, Australia, Mexico, Majorca, Arizona, Texas, Africa and many other countries.

Some school stories were also set abroad, such as "The School in the South Seas" (First Series, 703); "The School on Castaway Island" (102), another tale of school and adventure in the South Seas, and "The Impostor at Rocky Mountains School" (168), an exciting story of school set in picturesque Canada. "The Rodeo Riders of Prairie School" (193) again featured Canada. It introduces the reader to a group of new friends and brings all the fun and excitement of preparations for a rodeo. The school is in a ranch house. Similarly "Her Exciting Schooldays in the Rockies" (234), is a story in which Linda Eastwood was eagerly looking forward to her first term at Beaver Lodge School, although she little expected the surprises that were in store for her.

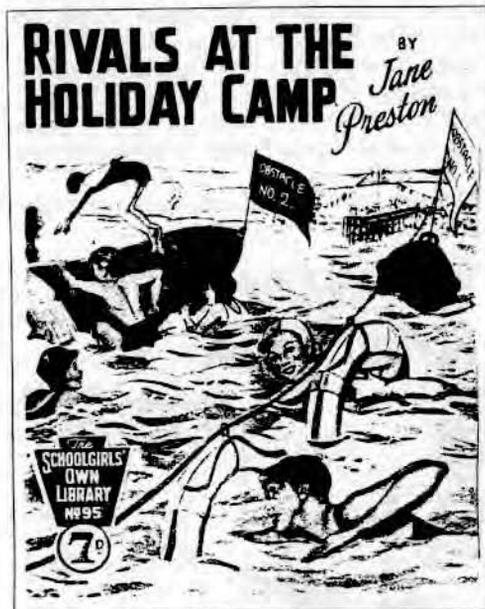
(Editor's Note: One wonders whether Charles Hamilton's celebrated adventures of Cedar Creek School were influencing authors of these girls' stories.)

"The Rival Schools in Switzerland" (247) tells how, because their own school had been burned down, Carol Charlton & Co. were sent to the school of their greatest rivals. Fun, winter sports thrills - and an intriguing mystery - are combined in this lovely story. The story in 223, again set in Switzerland, has a touch of romance, for Audrey Ross and Sheila Hartley were to be the bridesmaids of their Form-Mistress, Miss Marriott, at her wedding to Rex Alan, the winter sports coach. They readily rallied round to help when someone at Edelweiss School threatened their teacher's happiness. The above titles are just a few picked at random, and there are many others. There are also a few school stories set on board ship, such as "Kitty of the Cruising College" (189), where thrills and mystery abound in the adventures of Kitty Carstairs and her friends as they sail for Australia; another good tale is "The Cruising Co-Eds" (407).

There were also exciting exploits with U.K. settings, a number of which featured Holiday Camps (those who watched *Hi-De-Hi* on TV will have some idea of the atmosphere of those camps in the late 1940s and 1950s!) The *SGOL*, of course, added mystery and suspense to this. There are many exciting titles, including "Holiday-Maker Without A Memory" (70), an intriguing holiday-camp mystery; "Dolores the Mischief-Maker" (111), an enthralling story of fun, mystery and adventure at a holiday camp; "Dulcie and the Hooded Pirates" (156), a story of a feud between cheery young holiday-makers and a mystery Secret Society at a holiday camp. "The Idol of the Holiday Camp" (218) is a sparkling tale of holiday fun and adventure. Julie Delmar receives an invitation from a Miss Paget to spend a holiday with her at a holiday camp, called Haley. But, apparently, Julie had never seen nor heard of a Miss Paget. On the



journey to the camp Julie receives a note from a mysterious man, warning her not to go there. She ignores the warning, but, when she arrives, discovers that no booking had been made for her, and that the mysterious Miss Paget has not arrived. However, with the help of the holiday-makers Wendy Rayland and Kay and Gerry Briscoe, who befriend her, Julie is able to stay at the camp. Later Julie receives another note asking her to go to Cliff Gate. On her way there she is suddenly seized, and dragged towards a car by the man who had been sending her the notes. The actual mystery surrounds a fan which Julie had found hidden in her luggage. Who was Miss Paget and where was she? Read the story and you will find the answers.



There are holiday adventure stories with settings very different from holiday camps, such as "Freda's Daring Double Role" (131), a story of a girl on holiday with her aunt Sarah, who becomes involved in a mystery surrounding a group of boys; to be accepted she pretends to be her own twin brother. "The Unknown Holiday Trickster" (118) is a story of rivalry between two small holiday hotels: Castle House, run by a Mrs Castle and her daughter Joy, and Fairlie House Private Hotel, a big "boarding-house that Sandbury had boasted to date", run by a young chap called Alan. Both hotels took youngsters, and various competitions were arranged between the two establishments. Another suspenseful mystery adventure is "Their Houseboat Holiday of Strange Surprises" (212), set on the Norfolk Broads.

I have so far covered the holiday and adventure stories, but there is another aspect to the genre 'Home and Abroad': the stories with characters coming from foreign lands,

and characters going to other countries, for example to school. This applies to both series of the *SGOL*. Here are a few titles from the first series: "Gwen from the Golden West" (255); "That Amazing Dusky Schoolgirl" (532); "The Morcove Girls in Canada" (537). In those pre-war days black and brown faces were, of course, exotic and rare in Britain, so such characters were either princesses or queens in their own country. Naomer of Morcove, for example, was an African Queen. This carried on into the second series of the *SGOL*. By this time travel was becoming increasingly easy, and stories feature characters going abroad from, and coming home to, Britain. "That Strange Schoolgirl from the East" (5); the schoolgirl was a princess in her own country coming to school in England; it is a school and mystery story; "The Schoolgirl Artists in Paris" (231) features a lively group of girls who go to a school in Paris and become involved in a strange and intriguing mystery there. "The Amazing Schoolgirl from America" (285) introduces Suzella Quenten, a pop-singer, film and TV star. In fact she was the most surprising new girl St. Pat's had ever known. "Her American Schooldays" (317) is an exciting story of an English girl's adventures in a school in America; "T.D.: Mystery Girl from Paris" (325) is one of Trixie's entries in her famous diary series in which she relates "the unexpected and exciting happenings which transpired when she suddenly resolved to swot French - and the strange mystery that she was enabled to solve". "Paris Comes to Queenscourt" (382) - it's Co-Eds now! But Kitty, Steve and Co. find themselves overwhelmed on meeting the exchange

students from Paris. Among the guests are a self-styled beatnik, a wealthy aristocrat and a junior Maigret. The story has plenty of laughs.

"Their Strange Task in Holland" (171) is a tale of a visit to the land of windmills that held unexpected thrills for Jean Seymour and her brother Laurie. It is the first example of an exchange system in the *SGOL*: Jean and Laurie were exchanging with a Dutch brother and sister, Rosa and Jan Praag, who had been their pen-friends; for three months Rosa and Jan were to live as guests at the home of Jean and Laurie in England and attend their own school there, while Jean and Laurie were to live as guests in Rosa and Jan's home and attend their school in Holland. The mystery surrounds an old lantern which had been dug up on the Praags' farm.

Each story is an adventure on holiday, at school, on some tropical island or ship, or in a holiday camp, and there is always also a thrilling mystery, which holds readers rigidly on the edge of their seats. From experience I know how deeply we became involved with the characters and their locations. I am a keen reader of the *SGOL*, *School Friend* and *Girls' Crystal*, and often feel unable to put them down, although I have to of course! They really are a good read; with a lot of depth and detail. This article is my tribute to the authors who wrote these stories so well; they are unbeatable.



NEWS FROM THE OLD BOYS' BOOK CLUBS

LONDON OBBC

A cheery crowd of members assembled for the June meeting at the home of Eric and Betty Lawrence in Wokingham, for the 37th year running!

Eric began the meeting by tickling the ivories with customary skill in his ever popular piano quiz, as well as closing it with his unique "Build Up" word quiz. In between, Derek Hinrich discussed hobby-related books, Ray Hopkins entertained us with a *Gem* reading, Bill Bradford led us down Memory Lane and Roger Jenkins skilfully evoked memories of Greyfriars as he spoke about the Greyfriars Masters.

Like one of Coker's hampers, the meeting was jam-packed and filled with good things! The next meeting will take place at Bill Bradford's house in Ealing on 12th July.

Vic Pratt

LIVING WITH EAGLES

The Life and Times of Marcus Morris, by Sally Morris and Jan Hallwood

Published by The Lutterworth Press at £25.00

reviewed by Norman Wright

Eagle comic had a greater influence for good on more youngsters during the 1950s and 1960s than any other publication. It came into being just as the paper rationing, which had nearly crippled the publishing industry and caused the demise of so many long-running pre-war comics and story papers, was beginning to be relaxed. *Eagle* was something different; more than just another 'funnies' comic, for it offered its readers not just cartoon strips but a mix of well-thought-out fact, fiction and features by first class authors and illustrators printed on quality paper. That one word - quality - sums up the whole ethos of *Eagle* and for the formative and halcyon days of its run the man responsible for 'The National Strip Cartoon Weekly', as it always called itself, was Marcus Morris. Morris was a visionary with the drive and determination to push his visions to fruition and this book, *Living With Eagles*, is the story of his life and work.

Those of you who have read my own book, *The Dan Dare Dossier* (Hawk Books 1989), will know that I have always been a great enthusiast and admirer of *Eagle* comic but up until now it has been difficult to gain a clear and accurate picture of the formation of the comic and the man responsible for its foundation. Therefore I eagerly awaited the publication of this book in the hope that it might answer some of the many questions that I and other 'Eaglers' had regarding the paper, its editor and the rest of the publications in the Hulton family of comics. Now that I have had a chance to dip into it I can see that *Living With Eagles* is all that I hoped it would be. As yet, with the time constraints of getting this review written, I have not had time to read thoroughly and take in and absorb all the information contained in its three hundred fact-packed pages but straight away I was able to see that this is a book that I will not only read from cover to cover but one to which I will return again and again when I want to refresh my memory on some aspect of the *Eagle*. Another joy of this book, and one to which I will frequently return, is the section of colour illustrations depicting, amongst other things, the front cover of the *Eagle* 'dummy' that Morris carried round to show publishers and several strips that were in the dummy but never made it to the finished comic - including 'Chaplain Dan Dare'. These alone make the book worth having as I, along with most other *Eagle* enthusiasts, thought that these had long since vanished.

Before he created *Eagle* Marcus Morris, while vicar of a parish in Birkdale, Lancashire, had cut his editorial teeth as it were on the *St. James' Parish Magazine*, which he transformed from a four-paged leaflet to a magazine entitled *The Anvil* which he hoped would enjoy a national readership. Reading the chapters of *Living With Eagles* concerned with Morris' efforts to get backing - and paper - for *The Anvil* we can see what a dynamic and determined man this vicar was! Despite his best efforts circumstances, coupled with red-tape and the bloody-minded attitude of some of his clerical brethren conspired to prevent *The Anvil* from being the success he had hoped for. Yet it was the very failure of *The Anvil* that led Morris to the idea of producing *Eagle*. Once his ideas were formulated and Hulton Press were persuaded to publish the weekly there was no holding Morris and his innovative ideas made *Eagle* the most successful boys' weekly of the nineteen fifties; a success that really only came to an end when Hulton Press was taken over and Morris was forced to make changes that were not to his liking. After leaving Hulton's Marcus Morris went on to work for the National Magazine Company. He died on 16th March 1989.

Living With Eagles is a fascinating and informative book that should be on the bookshelf of everyone who has more than a passing interest in *Eagle* or the British comic scene of the 1950s. It is also an excellent biographical study.

Editor's Note: I also received a review of Living With Eagles from ROGER COOMBES and as his and Norman's accounts complement each other, I am publishing Roger's below.

The long-awaited biography of Marcus Morris, the Southport vicar who founded the Hulton Press children's magazines *Eagle*, *Girl*, *Swift* and *Robin*, in the 1950s, has been published. Written by two of his daughters, Sally Morris and Jan Hallwood, it is a frank and honest portrayal of a man many have regarded as a publishing genius, yet who was difficult to get on with and widely seen to be eccentric.



"Editor and daughters in the garden at Epsom - the girls never seen so tidy before or since".

Marcus Morris with his daughters, from 'Living With Eagles'

successful career which Marcus carved for himself after he left Hultons, shortly before they were consumed by Odhams, to join the National Magazine Company, a subsidiary of the American Hearst Corporation, publishers of *Cosmopolitan* and *Vanity Fair* among many titles, as Managing Director. He was later to say that he was as proud of his time running Nat. Mags as he was of launching *Eagle*: "I felt I'd got somewhere running adult publications". In his twenty-four years the company's turnover rose from £1.5 million to £50 million.

Marcus retired from the Managing Directorship in 1982, remaining as Deputy Chairman for a further two years. He was awarded the O.B.E. in 1983. He died of thrombosis in 1989.

The picture we see here is of a man who probably should never have followed his father and grandfather into the Church, filled as he was with doubts and reservations which remained with him throughout his life, particularly when his only son was killed in a car accident at the age of 17.

Yet this was the man whose high moral code was appalled by the cheap and nasty American comics which flooded Britain after the Second World War, and who became enthused with a mission to create entertaining yet morally uplifting comics for children using the strip cartoon approach which was so clearly replacing the pre-war story papers for the post-war generation.

Marcus's early life and his preparation for ordination are told here, together with the story behind the *Eagle* and its companion papers, their decline in the 1960s as television drew the next generation away from comics, and Fleet Street publishers fought each other for the dwindling readership in a dog-eat-dog battle for survival, and the

This fascinating study of their father has taken the authors almost nine years to produce. When one reads it one can see why. This is no portrait seen only through their eyes: it is a painstakingly researched study which led them to interview over 300 people who knew Marcus and to sift through his papers, of which little had been discarded over the years. They have not sought to sanctify their father: there are details of his private life - extra-marital affairs, an alleged illegitimate child (later disproven) and drinking - which must have been painful to reveal. One is reminded of Cromwell's instruction to his portrait painter: "... warts and all".

The 312 pages contain many photographs never seen before (some of which are surprisingly frank!) and the colour section contains some real gems such as the front page of the first dummy *Eagle* and the first page of "Chaplain Dan Dare of the Interplanet Patrol" - destined to change to "Dan Dare, Pilot of the Future" - and other stories which were never to appear, like "Pop Milligan", a story of a large family by Norman Thelwell (who, of course, instead drew the little boy "Chicko" throughout most of *Eagle's* life and found fame with his other (separate) creations of Penelope and her idiosyncratic ponies).

This is not just a history of *Eagle*, nor should it be. It is the life of the man behind *Eagle*. I, for one, am grateful to Sally and Jan for writing it.

HARRY WHARTON Part III

by Peter Mahony

Twice in his school career, Harry Wharton was the victim of plots. In *Magnets* 1059-67, he was the unwitting rival of Captain Eric Marker (Indian Army) for the fortune of Mr Cortolvin, a rich Bombay merchant. The terms of Cortolvin's will made Harry heir to £50,000 (big money in 1928), provided he did not 'come a mucker' at school - as, apparently, Eric Marker had. If Harry proved to be untrustworthy, then Marker would scoop the jackpot.

Not surprisingly, the enterprising captain set out to bring Wharton down. He enlisted the services of Mr Gedge, a seedy Lincoln's Inn solicitor, and of Arthur Da Costa, an impecunious Eurasian orphan. Da Costa was enrolled at Greyfriars - at Marker's expense - expressly to 'frame' Wharton for expulsion. An enthralling series ensued.

The plot was 'blown' in the very first episode, when the eavesdropping Bunter overheard Gedge briefing Da Costa in a railway carriage. When Bunter accused Da Costa at Greyfriars, the Eurasian coolly denied the whole thing. Wharton & Co., knowing Bunter's propensity for exaggeration, did not believe him - with one exception.

Hurree Singh, much more worldly-wise than his friends, had an instinctive distrust of Da Costa. (Frank Richards' chapter about the caste system in India and the 'pariah' status of children of mixed parentage is a masterly exposition.) 'Inky', asked by Quelch to show his 'compatriot' the Greyfriars ropes, found the task distasteful - a Prince of Bhanipur asked to 'take up' a half-caste! Once Bunter had questioned Da Costa's *bona fides*, Hurree Singh took a keen interest in the new boy's activities.

Da Costa, a curious mixture of good and bad, proved to be a brilliant cricketer. Consequently, he became well-favoured by Harry Wharton, who, as Remove Captain, wanted to strengthen his team. Having distinguished himself against Highcliffe, Da Costa rebelled against treating Wharton treacherously. Mr Gedge soon brought him back in line, and Bunter, busybodying as usual, created an opportunity to bring Wharton down. Ragging

Quelch - a dangerous business - Bunter abstracted a watch from Henry's desk and hid it in Wharton's study - temporarily. Da Costa, prying in Harry's desk, discovered the watch. When Quelch started enquiries, Da Costa accused Wharton of theft. Bunter owned up - he had meant to hide the watch in Quelch's Sunday hat! - and Harry was exonerated.

Unfortunately for Da Costa, his duplicity was now evident. Ostracism by the Famous Five resulted. Wharton, for once, did not indulge his passionate temper: he preferred to give the Eurasian the scornful cold shoulder.

The next move also stemmed from Bunter's activities. Dr Locke placed Popper's Island firmly out of bounds - with floggings for those infringing. Unluckily, the Famous Five had already sent Bunter there, complete with picnic, while they met the Cliff House girls to escort them to the island. Harry, despite a direct warning from Dr Locke, went to fetch Bunter. Da Costa followed on his bicycle and set Wharton's skiff adrift, stranding the pair on the island.

Enter Sir Hilton Popper. With Joyce, his gamekeeper, he discovered the intruders and decided to 'take them into custody'. Harry and Bunter took refuge up a tree; in trying to bring them down, Sir Hilton fell into the Sark. A non-swimmer, he would have drowned if Wharton had not dived to the rescue. All was forgiven - and no-one at Greyfriars need have known about the trespass. Da Costa, flummoxed by the failure of his knavery, sneaked to Quelch. Henry Samuel, much to the Eurasian's surprise, showed him that that was not the English way. Six on the pants for 'tale-bearing' was Da Costa's reward!

The next move was even more sinister. Da Costa, a good student, faked 'faintness' and was allowed out of class to get some fresh air. He purloined a letter for Wharton, steamed it open and inserted a fiver which he had previously filched from Lord Mauleverer's study. The idea was that Wharton would take the fiver as a tip from his uncle, spend it, and then be charged with theft when it was traced back to him.

Luckily for Harry, Hazeldene was up to his ears in debt again. As usual, Hazeldene paraded his woes to the Famous Five. He was being dunned by a bookie; it wasn't his fault; he didn't want sermons; he wanted £5. Again, as usual, Wharton came to the rescue - he didn't want Marjorie worried. For once, noble concern for his girlfriend did not lead to difficulties - it actually saved his bacon. Hazeldene paid Spratt, the bookie, and the fiver disappeared from Greyfriars without trace. Da Costa was not having much luck with his schemes!

Of course, it did not end there. Da Costa set gossip going about the 'lost' £5. Quelch heard about it and made extensive enquiries. Nothing transpired - except that Mauleverer was caned for carelessness about money! (He had left it 'safe' under the inkstand on his study table!) Mauleverer, generally placid, took a dim view of Da Costa's gossip and gave the Eurasian a hammering in a stand-up fight.

The number of the missing fiver had been obtained from Sir Reginald Brooke, Mauly's guardian. Hazeldene recognised it as the note he had paid to Mr Spratt. With true Hazeldene sensitivity, he accused his Good Samaritan, Wharton, of theft! Then, to complicate matters, Colonel Wharton wrote to Harry, denying all knowledge of the £5 tip. The Co. were completely mystified - except for Hurree Singh.

In a superb final chapter (*Magnet* 1062), 'Inky' confronted Da Costa and let him know that he had deduced the plot. If the matter was taken further, 'Inky' promised that he would press for a full investigation of Da Costa, Gedge and Captain Marker. In effect,

Bunter's 'gossip' about that train journey would be set against Da Costa's gossip about the fiver. Baffled, the Eurasian dropped the topic.

His next move was to enlist Mr Spratt to write a letter to Wharton about backing horses. Quelch saw the letter; Harry was taken before the Head. He denied all knowledge of Spratt; the matter was left open. The Co. settled the issue by enticing Spratt to Greyfriars. (Bob Cherry 'pinched' his hat.) Once there, they challenged him, before the Head and Quelch, to identify Harry. Due to some misleading remarks by Johnny Bull, Spratt picked out Bob as 'Wharton'. Villainy failed; Harry exonerated. Poor old Da Costa! Sad for Captain Marker!

Hazeldene, still convinced that Harry had stolen Mauly's fiver, came to blows with Wharton. Thoroughly trounced, he lay recovering in Friardale Wood - and overheard Da Costa and Gedge reviewing their scheming. For once Hazeldene did the right thing and told the whole dirty tale to the Famous Five. Da Costa was ostracised. Hazeldene was even prepared to expose the plot to the Head - a very unusual resolve for the cowardly Peter.

Da Costa made one last attempt to bring Wharton down. Bunter 'borrowed' Harry's bike - and left it up the river! Wharton broke dormitory bounds to go and fetch it. Da Costa followed and shut the box-room window - locking Wharton out of the house. Hurree Singh followed Da Costa - and locked him in the box-room! Then he helped Harry back indoors via another window. Da Costa spent a sleepless night in the box-room. Being a sportsman, 'Inky' let him out just before rising-bell.

Chastened by this experience, the Eurasian began to change heart. Surprised to be selected for the Rookwood match, he played well - and was pleased to be back on good terms with his form-fellows. (Wharton's charitable attitude here is more like Tom Merry than like the Wharton of old - and later. Kickers over of the traces like Vernon-Smith, Ralph Stacey, Arthur Carter and Gilbert Tracy received much shorter shrift in matters of team selection. Harry really tried to save the Da Costa brand from the burning! Passionate resentment - with every justification for it - was conspicuously absent. Well done, Harry!)

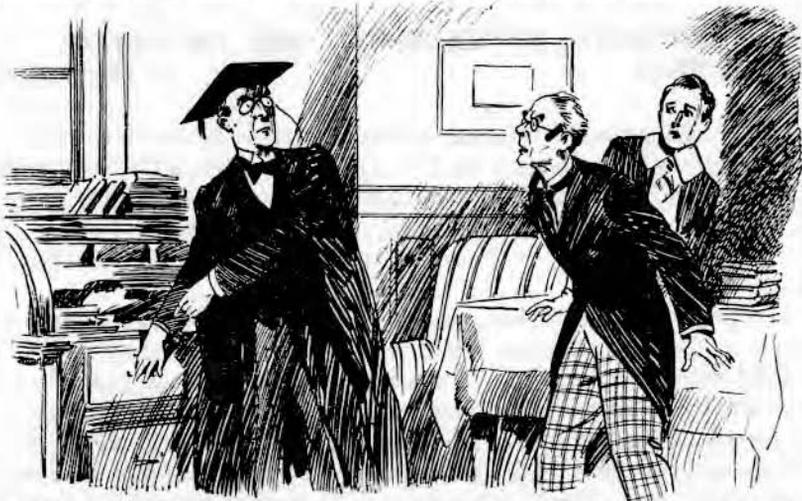
Da Costa turned his back on Gedge and Captain Marker. The Famous Five frightened Gedge off - by ducking him in a pond! Marker turned up from India and took over the plotting. He enlisted the help of that perennial delinquent, Cecil Ponsonby. At night, Marker broke into Greyfriars and 'planted' Ponsonby's diamond tie-pin in Wharton's desk. Then Pon visited Greyfriars, picked a scrap with Harry, and was thrown out. Back at Highcliffe, he reported the matter to Mr. Mobbs, claiming to have been robbed of his pin by Wharton.

Meanwhile, at Greyfriars, Bunter had rifled Wharton's desk. (He was looking for a betting book which Harry had confiscated from him.) Finding the pin, Bunter tried to trade it with Harry for his betting book. The Famous Five and Da Costa realised the seriousness of the 'find' and took the pin to Quelch. Bunter verified that he had found the pin - they had recognised it as Ponsonby's - before Pon picked the fight with Wharton. Henry Samuel took charge of the pin - and waited.

Right on cue, Mobbs and Ponsonby arrived from Highcliffe to accuse Harry. In a superb chapter (*Magnet* 1067) Quelch played the precious pair like an angler landing a difficult fish. After Ponsonby had committed himself irrevocably, Quelch produced the pin

- and Bunter's evidence. Poor old Mobby was thoroughly deflated; Ponsonby, more seriously, was threatened with arrest.

The implacable Quelch reduced the usually arrogant Pon to a gibbering supplicant. To avoid arrest, he agreed to write a complete account of his dealings with Captain Marker. Quelch and Mobbs witnessed his statement, which was retained by Quelch as evidence against the Captain. A chastened master and pupil returned to Highcliffe.



Mr. Quelch picked up the diamond pin, dropped it into a drawer, and snapped the drawer shut. "That pin, Mr. Mobbs, remains here until a constable arrives to take official charge of it. You are at liberty to depart as soon as you please, but I shall detain Ponsonby until a constable arrives to take him into custody."

Wharton's claim to Cortolvin's fortune was now almost secure. However, the wily Captain had a shot left in his locker. He waylaid Harry on Courtfield Common and attempted to kidnap him. Da Costa, who had spotted Marker earlier and had lain 'doggo', chipped in and was brutally assaulted with a 'life-preserver'. Wharton, taking advantage of the diversion, floored Marker, grabbed the weapon and stunned the captain. The unfortunate Eurasian junior had to be taken to hospital, where he spent some weeks recovering. Marker, regaining consciousness, rapidly fled the country. Colonel Wharton, taking a rather belated hand in the matter, arranged for Da Costa to return to India to complete his education and enter the legal profession. The crooked Eurasian had become straight, mainly through the Christian example of a good-hearted English boy.

Harry Wharton emerged from this fine series with his reputation enhanced. He had endured a number of tense trials with patience and fortitude. In the true sense of the precept he had 'loved his enemy'. If he had indulged his inclinations for petulance and lofty pride, Da Costa may well have remained implacable and - sooner or later - made Harry come a cropper. After nearly 1100 *Magnets*, Wharton was beginning to mature.

Unfortunately, the maturing was transient. In the "Hollywood" series (*Magnets* 1092-1107), Harry played a leading role and retained his new-found patience and common-sense through some tense and dangerous episodes. He was also to the fore in the Courtfield Cracksman and Lancaster series; in China and Kenya; in the Brander barring-out saga; and, to a lesser extent, the "Tatters" and "Flip" series. Sadly, this long run of the 'better'

Wharton came to an end with the second "Downfall" series (*Magnets* 1255-69) which we considered in last month's article. That back-sliding - as we shall see next month - was aggravated in the "Rebel" series (*Magnets* 1285-96) - arguably the greatest of all the "Wharton sagas" from the pen of Frank Richards. Watch this space!

OTHER FAVOURITE DETECTIVES: MR PINKERTON AND INSPECTOR BULL

by Derek Hinrich

Over the years a number of American authors of detective fiction have settled in this country and have written novels set in the UK. One thinks of Paula Gosling and Marian Babson and, of course, pre-eminently, of John Dickson Carr (or Carter Dickson, as the case may be). All these authors absorbed the change of scene to a greater or lesser degree, though to my mind something very American always clung to Dr Fell and Sir Henry Merivale.

In recent years a number of American ladies, not regularly resident in this country, have taken to writing detective stories with British settings. These generally tend to be of the kind that American critics call "cosy". I do feel, however, that those modern works of this type which I have read, however rich and strange they may be (and some are decidedly exotic) do not ring as true in their setting as the books I wish to discuss did in their day.

Of these modern visitors, Martha Grimes who gives her books titles taken from the more outré names of pubs - *I Am The Only Running Footman* and so on - has, to my mind, such a vision of Britain as I think never was by land or sea, except, perhaps, in '30s and '40s Hollywood.

Elizabeth George's books feature as principal investigator a Scotland Yard detective officer who is also the 8th Earl of Linley. They are as long as Victorian three-deckers and are much taken up with the private lives of the Earl and other distractions. My wife enjoys them, though she finds them a trifle, indefinably, foreign. They do obtain favourable reviews in this country, however, as well as in their homeland, and have won prizes in the USA and Germany. But I still think they are somehow out of kilter. I know there was recently an Irish peer who earned his living as a plumber, and one hears of other penniless peers from time to time (but these seem usually to be the second or third generations of recent creations without the inheritance of broad, or any other acres): but her Earl is not penniless, just a little too good to be true. An 8th Earl - in the Met! Now if it had been the Blues . . . Ms George was also daring enough to make one of her murder victims England's star Test batsman, which entailed some cricket of a curious kind in the book (she lives in California, not Philadelphia).

I have not as yet tried any of the works of Ms Deborah Crombie who writes police procedurals set in the UK, but I believe she still thinks that "Scotland Yard Called In" is a common headline in provincial murder cases.

Besides these ladies, a number of American writers like to bring their characters to London from time to time and have them become involved over here with greater or less realism, usually less. Scotland Yard, for instance, seemed extraordinarily tolerant of Robert

B Parker's Spencer wandering round with a gun under his arm. Nothing about his feet not touching or "Not in my Manor, Sunshine".

There was, however, one American detective story writer who carried off the British scene quite triumphantly in the inter-war period. Her name was Mrs Zenith Jones Brown and she wrote as David Frome. Her husband was an American academic who spent some time at one of our universities and she absorbed the British atmosphere so thoroughly that after they returned to the States she produced a number of detective novels set most convincingly in this country. Later, too, under the name Leslie Ford she also wrote many mystery stories set in the social whirl of Washington and Maryland, where she and her husband subsequently resided, but it is her British-set books I wish to discuss.

As David Frome, Mrs Brown wrote 18 novels and one short story. I have them all, though one only in an abridgement which is, I think, the smallest book in my library (about 4" x 3")! One of the novels is a singleton, *That's Your Man Inspector (Scotland Yard Can Wait!* in the USA) which possibly owes something to Edgar Wallace. Three others are concerned with the cases of Major Gregory Lewis, an ex-soldier and former MP turned Private Detective to the Nobility and Gentry (one of these, however, is set in Maryland where Lewis is on holiday and is narrated in epistolary fashion by various participants after the manner of *The Moonstone*). The other 14 novels and the short story are all concerned with the adventures of Mr Pinkerton and Detective Inspector Bull of Scotland Yard.

Mr Pinkerton is a preternaturally timid little Welshman of indeterminate years, much traumatized, as we say now, by years and years of being bullied. He was brought up by two tyrannous maiden aunts, sought further hell by becoming a schoolmaster and then condemned himself to further purgatory for years by marrying a miserly dragon of a boarding-house keeper in Golders Green who used him as the boots and household drudge of her establishment. He is fortuitously rescued from this life of misery by her death from a heart attack just after she has won, some time before 1930, £75,000 upon the Football Pools, but has had no time to make a will (if these were a slightly different kind of novel Mr Pinkerton would have had a hand himself in his sudden good fortune but these are straightforward whodunnits: Mr Pinkerton is not a forerunner of Tom Ripley, let alone another Crippen or Armstrong, though the American portraits of him are reminiscent of those distinguished habitués of the Chamber of Horrors).

Mr Pinkerton when we first meet him in *The Hammersmith Murders* is called David, but in all the other books he is Evan. Well, authors sometimes have second thoughts. Ross Macdonald's Lew Archer was called Lew Arless in the original edition of his first adventure. Then I suppose he changed his name. Presumably they have deed polls in America.

Mr Pinkerton is a rabbit grey little man, with grey hair, grey eyes, grey suits and a pallid complexion. The only colour about him is his brown bowler hat and the purple tie round his scrawny neck and celluloid collar, the tie so old it looks like string. He seems to wear the same clothes for over twenty years. His only joy in life is his friendship with Detective Inspector Bull of Scotland Yard.

Mr Pinkerton met Bull when he, as a fresh-faced young constable in the Met. just up from Wiltshire, took lodgings in the late Mrs Pinkerton's establishment. Bull is a big flaxen-haired florid-complexioned pipe-smoker with child-like blue eyes and a deceptively

naive and stolid appearance who generally dresses in cinnamon-coloured tweeds. I suppose Pinkerton and Bull are stereotypes – but then some people are. The other day I saw the photos of four prominent criminals awaiting sentence. They were former bank robbers turned drug dealers and they all looked as if they came straight from Central Casting.

Anyway, I find Bull very real and Pinkerton only slightly less so. I must confess he does become a trifle tiresome and silly in the later books, especially in the last, *Murder on the Square*, which was published after the Second World War, where the atmosphere does not seem as real as in the earlier books, perhaps because Mrs Brown's knowledge of the UK was a little out of date. But the earlier stories are good, especially the first half dozen or so, for Mrs Brown's Pinkerton novels fall into two groups (apart from the last which is an odd one out).

The first of these is concerned with crimes committed in the London area, particularly along the Thames, *The Hammersmith Murders*, *Arsenic in Richmond*, *The Eel Pie Mystery*, and so on. The later works leave London for a Crook's Tour of favourite tourist centres likely to appeal to American visitors to the UK, involving murders in Bath, Rye, Oxford, and the Brighton Pavilion.

They are written more or less to a formula. The friendship with Inspector Bull is the one bright spark in the drab little Welshman's drab little life and somehow he manages to insinuate himself into Bull's cases, whereafter the detection is then usually divided fifty-fifty between the two of them, though Bull usually has to rescue Pinkerton from at least one embarrassing and humiliating misadventure per book.

As the series lengthened, the American editions came to carry Pinkerton's name in every title. This did not often happen in the UK editions but it was a common feature of US crime fiction publishing at the time, I believe, to stress the sleuth in this way. US titles, where differing from those in the UK, often have a slightly idiosyncratic emphasis. For instance, George Simenon's later Maigret novels generally include Maigret's name in the title. The original French version of one is called *Maigret à Picrats* (Picrats is the nightclub where the crime takes place): the British edition of this is called *Maigret in Montmartre* (where the nightclub is); the American is called *Inspector Maigret and the Case of the Strangled Stripper*.

I have perhaps strayed a little from my theme, but to sum up, I have found a great deal of enjoyment from these minor works which I think give a truer picture of their time and place than that shown by the Mses George and Grimes today.

MARY ANN'S AUSTRALIANS

The Australian Tour of 1909, by Peter Mahony (one of the C.D.'s regular contributors)

England won the first test, but lost the rubber; the Australians were at odds with their board of control; England's selectors were confused and fickle; Bunter and the Magnet were one year old.

This, the only full account of a fascinating tour, features photographs never before seen in a single volume.

A number of signed copies are available from the author at £6.95 (including p&p) C.W.O. Peter Mahony, 12 Riefeld Road, Eltham, London SE9 2QA (0181-850-9316)



**COLIN CREWE
COLLECTORS BOOKS**

12B WESTWOOD ROAD, CANVEY ISLAND, ESSEX, SS8 0ED
TELEPHONE: 01268-693735 EVENINGS BEST
*OLD BOYS AND GIRLS BOOKS SOLD, BOUGHT AND EXCHANGED
WITH ENTHUSIASM YOUR WANTS LIST WELCOME.
SUITABLE COLLECTIONS WANTED.*



HIGH SUMMER ON CANVEY ISLAND. MUCH SWIMMING IN THE TIDAL WATERS, CRICKET ON THE SANDS OF COURSE, MAYBE A SAIL DOWN THE BACK CREEKS WITH SAUSAGES COOKED OVER A DRIFTWOOD FIRE, POSSIBLY A RIDE AROUND THE GRASSY SEA WALLS ON THE JIGGERS, FOLLOWED BY A PLATE OF WHELKS AND A DRINK AT THE CLUB. HOPE TO SEE A RECORD NUMBER OF YOU THIS SUMMER IN THE BOOK ROOMS. GIVE ME A RING TO ARRANGE A TIME TO JOIN IN THE FUN. HAPPY DAYS. COLIN

THE CAPTAIN BOUND VOLUMES OF THIS SPLENDID MAGAZINE FOR BOYS 8 OLD BOYS GOOD CONDITION

THE CAPTAIN VOL. 1 April - Sept 1899 £45.00

THE CAPTAIN VOL. 2 Oct 1899 - March 1900 £35.00

THE CAPTAIN VOL. X Oct 1903 - March 1904

lacks half page 239 reason for low price £10.00

THE CAPTAIN VOL. XV April 1906 - Sept 1906 £18.00

THE CAPTAIN VOL. XVII April 1907 - Sept 1907 £20.00

THE CAPTAIN VOL. XXII Oct 1909 - March 1910 £12.00

THE MONSTER LIBRARY A Complete run of all 19 issues of this famous pre-war publication as 2 handsome bound volumes red and black cloth gold lettering. 16 issues bound with covers 3 without.

2 MONSTER MONSTERS. PRICE FOR 2 VOLS £225.00

TRUE BLUE Why not add a volume of penny-dreadfuls to your collection from almost 100 years ago.

TRUE BLUE YEAR 1900/01 issues 53-78 inc. £45.00

TRUE BLUE YEAR 1905 issues 261 - 288 £45.00

TRUE BLUE 10 MORE VOLS AVAILABLE

UNION JACK A bound volume in red cloth lots of E.R. Parker covers containing the following 23 issues: 1318, 1319, 1320, 1321, 1322, 1325, 1326, 1328, 1330, 1331, 1332, 1333, 1335, 1336, 1337, 1338, 1339, 1348, 1349, 1350, 1351, 1352, 1353 £69.00

UNION JACK early bound volume of year 1910/11 in grey cloth containing the following 26 issues: 355, 356, 361, 362, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 371, 374, 375, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 383, 387, 388, 390, 391, 392, 394, 399. What treasure this is! £85.00

DETECTIVE WEEKLY Terrific bound volume in royal blue cloth containing a selection of the following 21 issues of 1933/1939: 21, 43, 73, 80, 97, 101, 104, 113, 294, 300, 301, 302, 305, 309, 323, 346, 347, 348, 350, 355, 356 £78.00

DETECTIVE WEEKLY Another superlative volume bound in royal blue cloth containing the following 25 issues: 51, 64, 68, 69, 70, 71, 82, 87, 102, 103, 115, 120, 121, 122, 123, 126, 127, 133, 134, 135, 136, 141, 142, 143, 146. 'SCRUMPTIOUS!' £95.00

DREADNOUGHT Great bound volume dark green cloth from 1912/1913 (Charles Hamilton and Sexton Blake content) containing the following 22 issues: 8, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 48, 52, 55, 56, 59, 62, 64, 66. £110.00

THE GEM Attractive bound volume from 1920 green & red cloth gold letters containing 26 issues 621 - 646 (Jan - June) £85.00

YOUNG BRITAIN almost mint volume from 1923 of this delightful paper (companion paper to the Champion) bright red cloth gold letters containing issues 201 - 232 inc £90.00

PLUCK Appealing half year bound volume from 1914 in red cloth gold lettering containing issues 479 - 504 inc. Jan - June £75.00

MRS HIPPO'S ANNUALS 1926 - 1940 A near complete run. Jolly pictures & stories for boys & girls of all ages featuring Tiger Tilly and the other girls. Sparkling red covers many by Foxwell (priced to condition)

1926 @ £10, 1927 @ £22, 1928 @ £20, 1930 @ £18, 1931 @ £18, 1932 @ £18, 1933 @ £15, 1934 @ £17, 1935 @ £16, 1936 @ £16, 1937 @ £10, 1938 @ £18, 1940 @ £10.

THE BRUIN BOYS ANNUALS 1927 - 1938 Tales to read to little people. Tiger Tim and his naughty friends have enjoyed them, so will you and the woolly boys. (Priced to condition.)

1927 @ £18, 1928 @ £16, 1929 @ £18, 1931 @ £18, 1934 @ £17, 1935 @ £18, 1936 @ £18, 1937 @ £22, 1938 @ £18, 1939 @ £22

THE SCHOOLGIRLS OWN ANNUALS 1923 - 1939

A good run from the first issue 1923 until the 2nd World War. High quality annuals from Amalgamated Press. Many covers by A.E. Bestall of Rupert fame. I invite you to join the girls of Cliff House and Morcove schools (priced to condition and year).

1923 @ £18, 1924 @ £14, 1925 @ £10, 1926 @ £12, 1927 @ £12, 1928 @ £14, 1929 @ £14, 1930 @ £12, 1931 @ £12, 1932 @ £14, 1933 @ £16, 1934 @ £10, 935 @ £18, 1936 @ £17, 1937 @ £18, 1938 @ £20, 1939 @ £20.

THE CHAMPION ANNUALS 1924 - 1939 PLUS SOME

POST WAR. Superb annuals, delightful covers (priced to year and condition): **1924 @ £35, 1925 @ £28, 1927 @ £24, 1928 @ £24, 1928 @ £15, 1930 @ £25, 1931 @ £25, 1932 @ £25, 1934 @ £25, 1935 @ £20, 1936 @ £25, 1939 @ £30, 1951 @ £8, 1952 @ £8, 1953 @ £8, 1954 @ £8.**

GREYFRIARS HOLIDAY ANNUALS 1920/1940. A complete set of original pre-war editions of this famous annual from Amalgamated Press at Fleetway House (priced to year and condition): **1920 @ £35, 1921 @ £22, 1922 @ £24, 1923 @ £22, 1924 @ £24, 1925 @ £20, 1926 @ £22, 1927 @ £20, 1928 @ £22, 1929 @ £35, 1930 @ £28, 1931 @ £22, 1932 @ £28, 1933 @ £25, 1934 @ £30, 1935 @ £24, 1936 @ £24, 1937 @ £22, 1938 @ £25, 1939 @ £25, 1940 @ £22, 1941 @ £35.**

TEDDY TAILS ANNUALS 1934 - 1940 published by WM Collins for the Daily Mail. Jolly stories of Teddy Tails and his little friends (priced to condition): **1934 @ £22, 1935 @ £22,**

1936 @ £22, 1937 @ £20, 1938 @ £15, 1939 @ £22, 1940 @ £22, all with Foxwell covers apart from 1934.

TERMS: PAYMENT ON YOUR SATISFACTORY RECEIPT OF GOODS PLUS POSTAGE AT COST. 4 ROOMS OF STOCK, VISITORS MOST WELCOME BY APPOINTMENT. YOU WILL BE AMAZED.

"You're cheeky, Wells!" he said.

"Indeed, sir!" said Wells smoothly.

"If I were boss here, I'd sack you!" said Bunter.

"Thank you, sir!" said Wells imperturbably. "Is there anything more, sir?"

"Oh, go and eat coke!" yapped Bunter.

Wells went - though probably not to eat coke.

Magnet 1662

"Hold on a minute. My bill doesn't come to much - just over four pounds," said Bunter.

"Which of you fellows is lending me the money?"

"The whichfulness is terrific."

"Well, settle it among yourselves," said Bunter. "I don't mind which, as you're all my pals.

Good-night!"

Magnet 1119

Dark night lay on Kalua-alua-lalua.

The bungalows of the white traders - the pal huts of the brown natives - were dark and silent. Midnight had passed, and long before that hour all eyes were accustomed to close on Kalua.

The white beach glimmered in the stars, the lagoon lapping on the sand with a low, faint murmur. From the barrier reef, a mile out, came the ceaseless drone of the surf, as the Pacific rollers broke on the coral. Back on the beach, tall slanting palms nodded, dim and shadowy. On the slopes of the hill, beyond the plantations, the bush lay black - tropical forest, almost as wild and untrodden as in the old days before the white men came to the Polynesian Islands.

Magnet 1592

Livy was not an author who appealed to Coker. Coker, in fact, disliked Titus Livius deeply.

The reported discovery of the lost books of Livy had left Coker quite cold. Coker would have preferred to hear that the found books had been lost.

Magnet 1415

They had only a back view of that figure - but Billy Bunter was always recognisable, seen from the north or south, east or west!

Magnet 1659

"I've got an idea for you fellows," he said. "Now you've got as far as Folkestone, why not keep on and take a look at France?"

"It's rather wet in the Channel," said Monty Lowther; "and some of us have holes in our boots."

Gem 867

"It's wathah wotten!" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy remarked. "In fact it's vevy wotten! I would not have bought my new necktie if I had been awaah that you chaps were out of cash. It's vevy careless of you, I must say!"

Gem 467

"Oh, really Cherry! Nothing to be ashamed of in being poor, you know," said Bunter, encouragingly. "We can't all be wealthy. If everybody was as rich as my pater, where would all the money come from?"

Magnet 1551

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

Editor: Mary Cadogan, 7 Ashfield Close, off Brackley Road, Beckenham, Kent, BR3 1SN

Printed by Quacks Printers, 7 Grape Lane, Petergate, York, YO1 2HU. Tel. 01904-635967