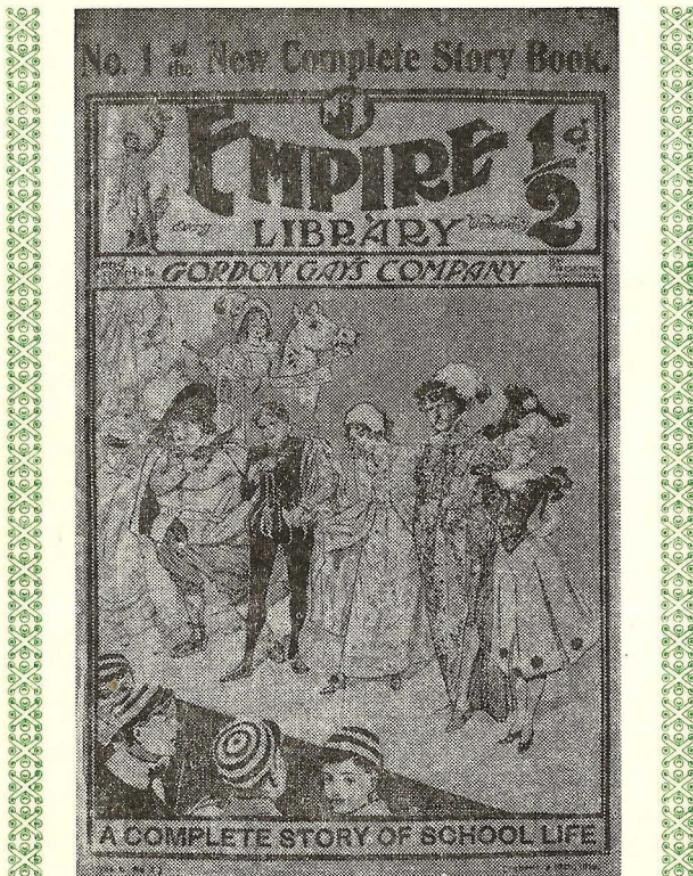


# THE STORY PAPER COLLECTOR

OCTOBER 1956  
No. 60 :: Vol. 3



Number 1 of The Empire Library, Dated February 19th, 1910

# JACK, SAM, AND PETE AND TOM MERRY & CO.

ROGER JENKINS' comments on the 1920 *Holiday Annual* in *The Story Paper Collector* Number 58 reminded me strongly of those days in 1919 when one of the major problems of my young life was how to obtain the necessary five shillings for this innovation, a "bumper Annual." I obtained it by running numerous errands and performing a full quota of menial tasks.

It was a long, slow process and until the whole five shillings was complete I used to press my nose to the shop window where *The Holiday Annual* was displayed, feasting my eyes on that shiny coloured cover by that superb artist Warwick Reynolds. As an anti-climax, after weeks of self-denial and endeavour, I read the monster, bumper *Annual* in two days!

While on the subject of "looking backward," I found George

Cecil Foster's article on Jack, Sam, and Pete very enjoyable. When I was young I liked the stories of S. Clarke Hook, and I thought J. A. Cummings' illustrations were fine examples of an artist's work for low-priced periodicals: economy of line, firmness of contour, and good tonal values. Pete always appealed to me for his great strength, powers of endurance, his loud laugh, and always being on the side of the angels.

Martin Clifford did send the St. Jim's boys to London, not to do some Christmas shopping but to look for Tom Merry. That story (Gem Number 150, *The Search for Tom Merry*) introduced Jack, Sam, and Pete to Gem readers. It was one of a series of stories in which Tom went to London to try to earn his own living. Joe Frayne was one of the results of this series.

—MAURICE KUTNER

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## MAGNETS REQUIRED

To COMPLETE our set of *The Magnet* we need copies listed below. Any help, even one copy, will be very welcome.

Nos. 1x to 6x, 90, 100x, 110x, 163, 207, 217, 263, 273, 283x, 288x, 308x, 312, 334, 664, 668x, 880, 942, 948, 973, 974, 992. ("x": a copy in better shape required.)

—W.H.G.

An Amateur Magazine :: Published Since 1941

# The Story Paper Collector

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No. 60—Vol. 3

Priceless

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## BROWNE OF THE FIFTH

By BERNARD THORNE

**F**IVE YEARS LATER—in Second New Series *The Nelson Lee Library* Number 29 to be exact—William Napoleon Browne was again to the fore in what was one of the greatest hoaxes in the school's history. St. Frank's, rebuilt, was to have as the guest of honour at the reopening the Right Honourable Lord Pottlebury, Minister of Education in His Majesty's Government. Fate had taken a hand when the dignitary's car broke down some miles from the school, and My Lord was deftly sidetracked by Browne and Stevens, who happened to be in the vicinity. Browne, with his love for practical joking, disguised himself as the Minister and in a hired Rolls-Royce

arrived at the school. Introduced to the school's governors and the Mayor of Bannington, the bogus peer organized a procession from the school to Bannington Town Hall. The procession is best described by Edwy Searles Brooks:

"There were gleams of red and gold, with an occasional glimmer of brass as the sunshine caught the instruments of the Bannington Brass Band. Overhead the sun blazed down with a concentrated intensity.

"The band itself was remarkable; but what followed was astounding. First of all the guests, even including a number of ladies. Most of the gentlemen were dressed in morning coats

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PART TWO

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and toppers, and there was many a collar wilting in the heat. Then came the St. Frank's masters, their expressions grim, sinister, and forbidding!

"After them the Sixth; then the Fifth, the Remove, the Fourth, the Third, and finally the household staffs. It was the longest procession Bellton had ever seen, or even dreamed of.

"Briefly, it was the Big Parade!

"In all that concourse there was only one individual who seemed to be enjoying himself. 'Lord Pottlebury,' at the head of the procession, was in his glory. He paid no attention to the hot sunshine; he ignored the stuffy waves of heat which arose from the tarry road; his stride was as brisk as that of a youngster. Which was really not so surprising!

"It was Browne's crowning triumph.

"The news spread fast, and long before the parade reached Bannington, the town was ready. Motorists and cyclists had carried the word along. And Bannington turned out en masse! Through the cheering, gaping multitude the procession marched on its weary way to the town hall."

Slowly the parade filed into the town hall, where Browne, in his lordly role, was to speak. The

gathering, after its exhausting three miles march, sank into the seats with a sigh of relief. But the hall had been closed all day, and the torrid sun beating on the roof had made the interior as hot as an oven.

And so, perspiring and groaning, the assembly waited for Lord Pottlebury to appear. The minutes dragged on. They waited and waited, but his lordship had made good his escape, and his victims perspired and groaned in vain. Browne had stayed not upon the order of his going but had swiftly "made for the hills"!

Afterwards, there were many who believed him to be the instigator behind the hoax, but the point was never proved and his daring went unpunished.

**T**HIS NARRATIVE would be incomplete without recounting the meeting of two of Edwy Searles Brooks's most famous characters: Archibald Winston Derek Glenthorne, youngest son of Colonel Glenthorne, V.C., D.S.O., and William Napoleon Browne. It took place in the London flat of Archie's brother:

"Archie flung open the door.

"A tall, immaculately clad young man stood on the mat.

"Good gad!" said Archie.

"I agree entirely," said the other, "Out of all the words in the English language, you took those two out of my mouth! What strange trick of Fate is this? I may possibly be wrong, but have we not met before, brother?"

"Why, dash it! You're Browne!" ejaculated Archie.

"The result of loitering in the sun!" admitted the other, apologetically. "I trust the weather-beaten appearance is not too pronounced? No, I breathe again!"

"But look here! I mean—"

"Were I to disregard such a cordial invitation, I should, indeed, be boorish!" said Browne graciously, stepping into the hall. "Thank you, brother! Yes, I will certainly enter and explain the nature of my visit in detail."

In a daze, Archie escorted his caller into the flat. Browne sank into the easiest chair in the room, and beamed at Archie benevolently.

"I feel that an apology is due from me," he observed. "I must confess that your name escapes me. Can it by any chance begin with "G"?"

"My name is Glenthorne—Archibald Winston Derek Glenthorne," said Archie with dignity. "You saw me at St. Frank's, dash it! You're the frightful cove

who dashed well fooled the school on April the First!"

"I rather pride myself on that hot piece of work," Browne said. "And so, Brother Glenthorne, we meet again! Another proof of the smallness of the terrestrial globe!"

"He helped himself to a couple of sandwiches from the side-board, and taking up his position on the hearthrug, regarded Archie with kindly interest.

"And now," he said, "for a little elucidation work. I came here, I must confess, on a mission of some gravity."

"Oh, absolutely!" replied Archie feebly.

"I have a story to unfold that has great dramatic moment."

"What do you mean, you frightful fright?"

"I am astonished, Brother Glenthorne, that such terms of reproach should pass your lips—Ah, ginger ale, I perceive! My favourite intoxicant!"

"Help yourself, old cheese," said Archie, with slight sarcasm.

"Too late!" sighed Browne. "I have already done so—not that your invitation is not cordially appreciated. Let us be brief. Enticed by the tranquility of the evening, I summoned my attendants, and my Rolls-Royce was harnessed and saddled—"

"Oddslove! Rolls-Royce!" exclaimed Archie, with awe.

"A mere figure of speech," Browne said, carelessly. "To be exact, my Morris Oxford. But why quibble? As I say, we ventured out upon a blithesome trip in the evening balm."

"A dashed good scheme!" said Archie. "A party of you, what?" [Archie, like many others, was a little puzzled by Browne's frequent use of the first person plural.]

"No, we went quite alone!" Browne replied. "There is nothing we enjoy more than the solitude of the great wilds. It is there, amid Nature, that we chew over the great thoughts of life. To resume: Pottering homeward, at peace with the world, what happened?"

"Eh? I mean—what?" queried Archie vaguely.

"Ah! What indeed! A considerable quantity of pig wandered into the road!"

"You mean pork?"

"To be exact, it was pig. It became pork soon afterwards. I will proceed to throw a shaft of light into your cranial cavity. Upon catching sight of this pig—who was more or less sprightly, not knowing that he was going to an untimely death—I naturally drew in the rein with vigour."

"Oh, absolutely!" said Archie, only dimly understanding.

"At this very moment a crimson object shot past me, and bounded ahead with all the vim of a six-month Kruschen addict."

"I mean to say—all this—"

"The crimson object was a car," declared Browne.

"But dash it all! I don't quite see—"

"Hush! I will explain all. The unfortunate pig, in attempting to nibble a stray tuft of asparagus, was decapitated in one foul blow."

"I say!" ejaculated Archie, with concern.

"I can understand your natural horror," said Browne. "Happily, Brother Porker knew absolutely nothing. But I regret to say that the executioner in the crimson juggernaut sped on into the gloom."

"The chappy ought to have been arrested!" declared Archie hotly. "I mean, whizzing on like that, after killing a pig."

"A blistered specimen of the most pronounced type!" agreed Browne. "Without wishing to offend you in any way, I must acknowledge that I took him to be your brother!"

**B**ROWNE'S REMARK caused Archie some concern, as may be imagined. There is not space here to recount the sequel to Browne's motoring adventure, but readers who are interested

can find the whole tale in *The Nelson Lee Library Number 514, Old Series*, entitled *Archie's Easter Picnic*.

We would, however, like to conclude with another quotation that ends the above dialogue:

"Browne rose to his feet.

"Then we must make our excuses, and retire with that gracefulness for which we are celebrated," he said benevolently. "Should we awaken when the milkman deposits his daily quart, we will arise and wander round for another chat—for we must

confess that we find your hospitality both charming and delightful."

"Oh rather!" said Archie. "Trickle round any time you like, old tulip! I mean, you're practically a St. Frank's chap anyhow, what? When you're passing—pass! I mean—that is—"

"Say no more," pleaded Browne. "Being modesty itself, I find these pressing invitations somewhat embarrassing. But as you insist with such gusto, I shall make a point of honouring your hearth with my person at the earliest opportunity!"

## THE EARLIEST SEXTON BLAKE STORIES

By RONALD ROUSE

IT IS NOW many years since the first story of Sexton Blake was put before the reading public. It did not appear in the second issue of *The Union Jack* in 1894, as stated by The Amalgamated Press long after. It was in *The Union Jack*'s older companion paper, *The ½d. Marvel*, publication of which was commenced about six months before that of *The Union Jack*.

The very first Blake story was

entitled *The Missing Millionaire, The Story of a Daring Detective*, and appeared in No. 6 of *The Marvel* during the month of December, 1893. On the cover credit for writing the story was given to Hal Meredith.

In this first story of 63 years ago, Blake's office was situated at a location given as The New Inn Chambers, and he had a partner named Jules Gervais, a French detective.

The next week, in No. 7, there was published a kind of sequel, though actually each story was complete in itself. Most of the characters in the first yarn were also in the second. This, incidentally, was the Christmas week issue, and was so marked on the front cover, but it was just the same size with the usual attractive price of one halfpenny. The title of the story was *A Christmas Crime, The Mystery of the Black Grange*, and it also was written by Hal Meredith.

The next *Marvel* containing an adventure of Sexton Blake was No. 11, *A Golden Ghost; or, Tracked by a Phantom*. This story was without Jules Gervaise, who had appeared in both earlier ones, and was stated to have been written by Harry Blyth.

Following this, there was a jump from No. 11 to No. 33 before the appearance of the next Blake story. Written by Hal Meredith, it was *Sexton Blake's Peril*, and again introduced Jules Gervaise.

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### WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

FOR 62 YEARS with The Amalgamated Press, and having a hand in the production of many of their periodicals, H. J. Garrish is dead at the age of 78.

**I**N THE INTERVAL between the publication of these last two  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. *Marvels*, the halfpenny *Union Jack* had started publication. In No. 2 of this paper there was *Sexton Blake, Detective*, the first story in *The Union Jack* about Blake, and it was written by Harry Blyth.

The last number among the early *Marvels* that carried a Blake story was No. 48. Entitled *The Accusing Shadow*, it was a story of Jules Gervaise, Detective, and Blake was only mentioned by name at the beginning and not again throughout the story. So this cannot really be considered a Blake number.

What is more important is that it was stated to be by Harry Blyth, which is a conclusive proof, if one were needed, that Harry Blyth and Hal Meredith were one and the same, and we have Mr. Blyth to thank for the origin of that famous detective we know so well, Sexton Blake.

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AN ESTEEMED MEMBER of our "old boys' books" group, Percy North, of Basingstoke, Hampshire, passed away in August last.

ANOTHER LOSS to our ranks occurred July 29th, when Hugh W. Fennell, one-time contributor to A.P. papers, passed away.

# CAPTAIN JUSTICE: ADVENTURER

By MAURICE HALL

DURING an eventful life in the pages of *The Modern Boy*, Captain Justice touched upon almost every type of adventure, beginning with a life at sea (hence the title "Captain"), through being a pirate, serving in a revolution, fighting various villains on this earth, and travelling to other planets to combat still more scoundrels.

We first met Captain Justice as an ordinary seafaring captain, but conditions swiftly changed when a trumped-up charge threatened to disgrace and possibly hang him. Captain Justice naturally did not wait to be "shot at"; he quickly retired from the scene to have his revenge upon his accusers.

In *The Modern Boy* Number 146 Captain Justice turned modern pirate to extract from his enemies much-needed supplies and some gold bars to be used at a later date.

In the next few issues the Captain kept up a piratical outlook on life and avenged himself, after which he headed for a warmer climate. In this episode,

the first of the mechanized giants appeared in the shape of a fine yacht called *The Flying Fish*. After twenty-one instalments the affair was satisfactorily closed after Captain Justice had been proclaimed President Justice—an honour which he declined.

The stories from here on find the right background—that of a scientific nature, mainly inspired by the recruiting of an eccentric genius, Professor Flaznazel, who became responsible for almost every weird device that was used. The rest of the Captain Justice company consisted of Doctor O'Mally, a big, jovial Irishman, a small, red-headed, freckly-faced youngster nicknamed Midge, and Len Connor, who was the wireless operator.

Inside the covers of *The Modern Boy* Number 243 we were introduced to *The Flying Cloud*, which proved to be an immense airship equipped with all modern devices. During the years which followed, *The Flying Cloud* came along time after time with a new invention fitted to combat danger.

Starting in *The Modern Boy*

Number 271 was a story entitled *Captain Justice versus the Earthquake Maker*, and it proved to be an exciting serial. The Earthquake Maker had discovered how to cause an earthquake wherever he fancied; imagine the result if he caused one beneath the Bank of England! The downfall of this villain came when Prof. Flaznazel equipped *The Flying Cloud* with a ray similar to the one the Earthquake Maker was using, and the battle was fought over London as the two rays fizzled and flared until the Professor demonstrated that he had the greater power.

**S**HORTLY AFTER THIS the best of all the Captain Justice yarns commenced in *The Modern Boy* Number 282. Professor Flaznazel had for some time been building something behind a protective fence until at last, when he had completed his project, he calmly told Captain Justice that he had discovered a new planet and had built a rocket to visit it. At that moment a hurricane sprang up and threatened to heel the rocket ship over, so without wasting time Captain Justice and his pals embarked on a five million mile journey through space.

As the ship sped through space, Professor Flaznazel told the Captain that a rival German

scientist had stolen his plans for the rocket and had been building a ship in an endeavour to reach the planet first, hence the Professor's secrecy. Alas, Captain Justice and his friends landed to find that the Professor's rival had arrived first. Still, not disheartened, they ventured out to explore. When some miles away from their rocket they were dismayed to see some fast-travelling silver shape go whizzing across the sky from the direction of their own ship. They hurried back but discovered that their sole means of transport home had disappeared.

Professor Flaznazel suggested that the only thing to be done was to follow in the approximate direction taken by the silver shape, so off they went. Soon they discovered that the planet was teeming with life. First, a crowd of squat natives, then a lot of small, red-skinned men. When all seemed lost, they were rescued by a horde of robots, sent to bring them into the presence of Dynamicus the Destroyer, ruler of the planet.

Dynamicus had defeated age with doses of electricity to keep him alive and enable him to run his giant robots and other equipment. But he was dissatisfied with his planet and would like to take over ours. With this in mind he attempted to alter the

position of the magnetic poles of the planet to enable it to swing closer to the earth in a new orbit. He overreached and killed himself, allowing Captain Justice and Company to recapture their rocket and push off for home.

This serial proved to be so popular that when it was completed in *The Modern Boy* Number 301 another story, *The Secret Kingdom*, started in the next issue, the scene being set in the remote Amazon River country. Once again *The Flying Cloud* was brought into use, but even this mighty ship was dragged down into the Secret Kingdom by a magnetized Sphinx, and Captain Justice and his party were made prisoners. All came right in the end, after they had partaken of a poor Christmas dinner in the hands of the enemy.

**I**N *The Modern Boy* Number 325, *The Black Terror*, our planet was smothered by the gases from a comet's tail which, although not poisonous to breathe, had the effect of causing a worldwide blackout that had been anticipated by Professor Flaznazel. A set of crooks, having fitted themselves with special goggles, went around making a collection of gold and jewels before being stopped by Captain Justice and Company. The gas gradually

dispersed and vision returned to the people.

A not-so-original theme was used in *The Modern Boy* Numbers 452-462, when Captain Justice went on a trip to the South Pole to discover a hidden land of hot geysers and prehistoric monsters. Professor Flaznazel equipped *The Flying Cloud* as a flying zoo and came back to England with a motley array of dynosaurs. Murder was let loose when one or two monsters escaped and frightened half London to death.

Then came a trip to China, a visit to Tibet, a trip to a new planet called Nuvius, and a fight with a gang of robbers who had a paralyzing ray. This story began in London with the whole of the capital held in an immovable grip and worked its way out to the robbers' headquarters in the Sargasso Sea.

Last, we had an Arab Sheik who discovered that by feeding insects with a drug he was able to increase their growth a hundredfold. Soon he had an army of ants, spiders, and scorpions which he directed by radio waves to capture any city or town that he took a fancy to. As usual, a grim battle developed between Captain Justice and Sheik Hussein before the Arab was destroyed by his own Insect Army.

Throughout the Captain Justice stories an unusually high

standard of imaginative drawings were done by Sidney Ibbetson, to which these stories by Murray Roberts must owe some of their fame. Certainly Captain

Justice and his little group of adventurers are missed by those of us who have read the stories and remember them.

## THE CAPTAIN LIBRARY

**P**UBLISHED BY George Newnes, Limited, *The Captain Library* got its name from the same publisher's famous magazine for boys, *The Captain*, but it is not known if they expected the *Library* to be as successful as its namesake. In any case, the *Library*, which seemed to be an attempt to rival *The Boys' Friend Library*, was shortlived as only twelve issues were published. The price was threepence, each number contained 120 pages, and they were published in the year 1910. Some of the stories were classics, as will be seen by the following list:

No. 1—*The Scalp Hunters*, by Captain Mayne Reid.

No. 2—*The Last of the Mohicans*, by J. Fennimore Cooper.

No. 3—*Tommy of the "Wobblers"*, by R. Andom.

No. 4—*The Indian Scout*, by Gustave Aimard.

No. 5—*The Three Musketeers*, by Alexandre Dumas.

No. 6—*Jack Manly*, by James Grant.

No. 7—*The Boys of a Lonely School*, by Bart Marland.

No. 8—*The Freight Patrol*, by Francis Marlowe.

No. 9—*Twenty Years After*, by Alexandre Dumas.

No. 10—*The Secret Brotherhood*, by Sidney Reade.

No. 11—*The Pathfinder*, by J. Fennimore Cooper.

No. 12—*The Mystery Under the Sea*, by F. A. Atkins.

—W. O. G. LOFTS



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