The Collectors' Digest

Sept 1947

No 9

Vol.1. No.9 Price 1s.1d Post Free

SEPTEMBER 1947
Next Issue : October 1947

Editor Miscellaneous Section:
Herbert Leckenby, Telephone Exchange,
C/o. Central Registry, Northern Command, York.

FROM THE EDITOR'S CHAIR:

An apology to the veterans for a start this month, for it is probable they had a feeling they were rather neglected in our last issue. It would be a legitimate grievance, but it was for a reason beyond our control, one concerning that ever present bugbear - paper. Even our modest little Mag. had to take its share of a cut in rations, consequently, copy which was scheduled but had not been typed had to be held over at the last moment. However, we have tried to make amends in this issue.

I should just like to mention, though, that there is rather a scarcity of articles on the papers of the long ago, and in this respect we shall keenly feel the loss of that great stalwart, Frank N.Wearing. So if these of you who were lads in the days of Queen Victoria will get your pens to work

we will do the rest.

: : :

One of the pleasures of my life these days comes from reading my morning mail, and I only wish there was room for more of them in the "Letter Box". One does appear this month from a correspondent who terms himself one of the "little men". Well one of our main motives in starting the C.D. was to get the real collectors together and we think we can claim we have succeeded beyond our hopes. And in the "Annual" if everyone plays up, we will offer a complete "Who's Who". Then maybe those who are fortunate enough to possess a few duplicates will be able to scan its pages and then hold out a friendly hand to those collectors like Mr.Prime.

Another of my correspondents tells me how just over a year ago he read that very interesting interview with "Frank Richards" which appeared in "Picture Post". It brought back memories of happy days, it gave him a longing to read the old stories again. He began the hunt; the second-hand bookshops were visited in search of Gems and Magnets, needless to say without success. He then had an inspiration - he wrote to Frank Richards. He got a kindly reply, and some useful advice. Now that correspondent can gaze upon a steadily growing collection, so take heart; Mr.Prime.

I have a fellow feeling for collectors like these. Way back in 1941 feeling the effects of long hours in a place where life was hectic and grim, I too, had the longing to start collecting again. I was lucky enough to get away to a good start. Now I often sit back and marvel - in those six years I have found through the hobby more genuine friends, more jolly good fellows, than in all the other 50 years of my life which had gone before. I possess papers of my youth I would not have believed existed that day in 1941 when I made my first move in quest of a new collection. So there's no need to despair you "little men", of the clan, even though some of the papers may be in short supply.

Harking back to the "Annual", subscribers will find in this issue an order form. With ever growing costs of production we are hoping for a 100% response if we are to balance the budget with a charge of 6s.0d post free. We naturally do not wish to order more copies than absolutely necessary so we should be grateful if all intending subscribers would let us have their prders before 31st Oct. We feel confident we shall be able to offer them something never before attempted, and real good value for their money.

Yours sincerely,

Herbert Leckenby

P.S: We shall also welcome adverts. for the "Annual". Charge for these will be 2d per word.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

Single copies 1s.1d post free. Three copies 3s.3d post free. Six copies 6s.6d post free. Postal Orders to be made payable to H.Leckenby, at York, un-crossed.

ADVERTISEMENT RATES:

Small advertisements 1d per word (name and address inserted free of charge).

WANTED: Nelson Lees, Old Series, particularly 102, 103, 220, 230, also about 80 issues between Nos.1 and 271. Name your own price. Have hundreds of duplicate copies for exchange. J.Murtagh, Selwood Rd., Hastings, New Zealand.

WANTED: Sexton Blake Libraries, Union Jacks, and Detective Weeklies. W.Colcombe, 256 South Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex.

WANTED: Odd numbers any Boys Books. Please send lists. All letters answered. Henry J.H.Bartlett, Peas Hill, Shipton Gorge, Bridport, Dorset.

Editor's Note:

Here, graphically described, is a romance in real life. Where in the pages of the papers we treasure, could you find anything more moving than this true story of the boy, grown to man's estate, who from his editorial chair was able to welcome to his staff the editor he had idolised in his boyhood days. It thrills me each time I read it. So it will you, I am sure, when you learn -

HOW THE "CHAMPION" STARTED

Although the Champion first appeared in 1922, it had its origin at least sixteen years earlier, in the mind of a boy of 12 years of age living 6000 miles away from the Fleetway House!

Perhaps it originated even earlier - for it was when that boy was scarcely nine years old that he first wrote to "Arthur Brooke" (A.C.Marshall) then Editor of "The Big Budget" to tell him that the B.B. was his favourite paper. Arthur Brooke replied promptly and there then began a correspondence which was maintained until it culminated, in 1916, in a personal meeting between reader and Editor at Anderton's Hotel in Fleet Street. The reader, now a young man in his very early twenties, was on a visit to England from South Africa and went back to that country almost at once. But the friendship thus established remained unbroken to the day of Arthur Brooke's death, only a year or so ago. Indeed, on the very last occasion on which editor and reader met, barely six months before Arthur Brooke died, the latter gave him two volumes - one each of the old B.B. and the Boys' Leader - as souvenirs.

That astonishing friendship, begun under such unusual circumstances, may indeed be said to have sown the seed of what was afterwards to become The Champion, because it was from his admiration of the old B.B., with its strong "personal touch", that he conceived the idea of a paper which should be as much like it as possible.

It was while he was in Salisbury, Rhodesia, em-

ployed as a very junior clerk in an auctioneer's office, that this youth solemnly declared to himself that one day he would have an office desk in Fleetway House, and would produce "another Big Budget". He mentioned this ambition to two or three people at the time and they all laughed at him. "Who do you think you are?" they said, "a mere office boy! Where's the money coming from to get you to England, to start with?" In his enthusiasm, he made the youthful mistake of constantly talking about his ambition until it became a sort of stock joke. "Still here?" his friends would say as time went on, "Thought you were going to London to start a new paper?" "I am" he answered; but was awkardly silent when they wanted to know when! It was as much as he could do to pay his way on his salary as a junior clerk - and the railway fare to Cape Town alone from Salisbury, ran into at least a score of pounds, while from there it would need something like three-times the amount to get to England. No wonder his friends laughed and taunted him!

Nevertheless, he was seated at a desk inside the Fleetway House in less than five years after he had boasted of that intention!

(Continued)

GREAT NEWS!

THE "COLLECTORS DIGEST" ANNUAL

TO BE PUBLISHED IN DECEMBER 1947.

THE ONLY VOLUME OF IT'S KIND IN THE WORLD.

Do you want to know when certain original Nelson Lee stories appeared in "The Schoolboys' Own Library"? If you do, consult the key list in the C.D. Annual.

GOOD PRICES offered for Blue-covered Gems, and Red-covered Magnets. Have some for exchange. T. Satchell, 84 Ankerdine Crescent, Shooters Hill, Woolwich, London, S.E.18.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

In our last issue we referred to the interesting article by an old reader of the stories by Mr. Hamilton, which appeared in the "Manchester Guardian" on 27th April, 1947, and promised to publish it in this number. Well, here it is. We reproduce it exactly as it appeared in that famous paper. We are sure readers will agree it looks quite effective.

YAROOH! LEGGO! BEASTS!

By R. G. Jessel

"Because my father's taste in literature was admirable the "Magnet" was not one of the periodicals delivered at home in my childhood, and it was a little late in life that I made the acquaintance of Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry, and Billy Bunter. Still, I was lucky enough to be a child within the period when Frank Richards was writing in the "Magnet", the series began before Lloyd George's first Budget and ended with the fall of France. To-day I have forgotten every word of Henty and Walter Scott, but the characters and traditions of Greyfriars School are fresh in my memory, and I believe that in most male gatherings of persons between the ages of fifty-five and twenty you will find a greater familiarity with Coker of the Fifth and Mr. Quelch than with Mr. Pickwick or Henry Esmond.

The mystery of Frank Richards has now been probed, and every ex-schoolboy knows that his real name is Charles Hamilton, that from the same venerable pen came Martin Clifford's weekly saga of St. Jim's in the "Gem," Hilda Richards's tales of Bessie Bunter in "Schoolgirl," and several other series which still survive. But for me, a staunch Greyfriars man, the fellows at St. Jim's are as far beyond the pale as a Highcliff boy. The swells from rival academies are beastly outsiders, fearfully asses, and nobody's bizney. Greyfriars (founded before 1600) is my first and only love, stern Dr. Locke is head master of my fate, and Wingate of the Sixth is captain of my school.

One's real school, compared to Greyfriars, proved rather a disappointment. Not a single boy had a fiver a week for pocket money. Prefects did not patrol the passages brandishing the eternal ashplant, and rotters were rotten in different ways. Masters occasionally took off their caps and gowns; nor did they drag one before the head on the flimsiest circumstantial evidence, easily shattered by a proved alibi. There was not quite the same social gap between the kids in the Third and the men in the Sixth. In my school we did not even bother to have a captain of the form; if an inter-form football match was played the crucial point was not whether to play the brilliant centre forward who was also a rod

but how to find a reasonable team at all.

But until 1940 any one of us could pay our tuppence and see at Greyfriars what school life ought to be. The best time to arrive on your weekly visit was during tea in Harry Wharton's study, where the Famous Five (probably still sniggling from a birching) would be devouring plates of sausages, sardines, toast, and jam roll and discussing Remove politics. Bob Cherry might have received a postal order that day from home. In a few minutes the Indian Hurree Singh would drop in for a chat; his English never got any better, but he was a loyal echo, and if one boy said "Hot" you could count on Hurree to respond "The hotfulness is terrific." Later Lord Mauleverer would join his friends, aristocratic, languid, and the shrewdest of them all. Finally the Honourable W. G Bunter would roll along. The Fat Owl of the Remove would have already eaten two study teas and had a spread (on borrowed cash) at the tuckshop.

Bunter's broad check trousers, his spectacles, and podgy face would be irresistible; a couple of lies, some boasting, and the request for a loan would soon land him in trouble, followed by squeals of "Yarooh! Wow! Leggo! Beasts!" These prolegomena concluded, the real 15,000-word story could begin, told in the dateless Greyfriars vernacular. It was an ideal world for the 14-year-old Removite, constantly threatened by a minority of lying rotters and cheeky fatheads. A beak's whopping or expulsion was often round the corner, but good form and honour mattered more than either. Greyfriars had (and needed) no school chapel, and there is no record of it winning a university scholarship; otherwise Arnold of Rugby would have had nothing but praise for it.

Frank Richards was wise not to monkey with his gallery of immortal characters. Not even three decades of public-school life blurred their individuality. Claude Hoskins went gamely on composing his Fantasia in D minor and Harold Skinner went on sketching; young Hazeldene's character never grew any stronger. Greyfriars survived the first world war and two Labour Governments without trimming its sails. It is true that Etons made way for blazers and a few minor characters faded away; but I cannot remember a single member of Dr Locke's staff being appointed to a head-mastership.

One wonders what would have happened to the boys of the Remove if they had lost their immortality and come to adult status. Where would the Nabob of Bhanipur be to-day? Did he captain All-India at cricket, or become a trusted friend of the Viceroy? Perhaps modern Bhanipur is studded with a dozen dusky Greyfriars. One likes to think that Fisher T Fish is on the Senate's foreign relations committee, tireless propagandist of Britain and profligate sender of parcels. Billy Bunter, one fears, is still a big noise, this time in the black market. Harry Wharton would be high up in his uncle's business, learning to curb his dislike of controls and of some members of his joint production committee. Bob Cherry, Dick Nugent, and Johnny Bull surely became aces in the R.A.F. Vernon-Smith, "the Bounder," tried but failed to join the Army (unfortunately his father could not spare him) and to-day is richer than ever, heading uncertainly for the House of Lords or Wormwood Scrubs. Mark Linley is a schoolmaster in Yorkshire. But the boys I would most like to meet as men are the rotters and cads like Loder. Some at least must have sailed into smoother waters and given up sneaking, low company, and "the gees." Perhaps one or two entered Parliament and even reached Cabinet rank. It is easy to change one's name, and the details in "Who's Who" are often incomplete. If we must have a National Transport Board, one would like to see a couple of Greyfriars fellows smuggled on to it.

Letter Box

JUST A FEW DAYS MORE:

As will be seen from Mr.Hamilton's letter, published below, there was a further postponment in the publication of the Bunter Book, but we are confident this is the last; our readers probably know it is illustrated by R.J.Macdonald, and we can reveal that it contains 240 pages, so his loyal admirers will be in for a good long read.

9th August, 1947.

Dear Herbert Leckenby,

Thank you for your letter. August has arrived but Billy Bunter is late - not a surprising thing in Bunter, perhaps, who never was punctual. Paper difficulties having been overcome, the bookbinders are slow in delivery: and September 12th is now fixed as the day of issue. No more news of the film - everything in these days is not merely late but lentissimo.

I am now getting busy on the second Bunter volume. You would hardly guess how merry and bright life seems to Frank Richards when he is writing Greyfriars - I have written dozens of other things, but come back to Greyfriars like a homing pigeon.

With kind regards,
Yours sincerely,
Frank Richards.

:: :: ::

A PLEA FOR THE "LITTLE MAN":

43 Mayfield Road,
Sanderstead,
Surrey.

8th August, 1947.

Dear Mr.Leckenby,

Since the forthcoming "Annual" is much in the news at the present time, and ideas are about, I thought I'd butt in with a few facts concerning myself and collecting. Magnets and Gems are the books I collect but I have not been at it for any appreciable length of time. Truth to tell I find the hobby discouraging, as try as one may, one (this "one" at any rate) cannot get some of the early numbers one wants.

Re facts of collection - and I think you said you'd welcome a few - I have such a terribly meagre number - about 21 Magnets and no Gems, you must perhaps think I out Mauly, Lord Mauleverer himself in general lassitude. I assure you, sir, I don't.

Of course, none of us need be ashamed of meagre collections, but some of us collectors who are "very poor" would, I think, welcome a little more help and encouragement from contributors who may happen to possess good collections. I want to make a plea for a more "chummy" attitude among our little fraternity. I do hope the "Annual" will secure this and other benefits as well.

The C.D. is a great little paper. Long life to it. I should be pleased if you could publish this letter in the C.D. in course of time, and perhaps accept an article on our hobby at some other time in the future.

Yours sincerely,
Bernard Prime.

:: :: ::

MAKE SURE OF YOUR COPY OF THE C.D. ANNUAL, NOW!!!

3, Croft Lane,
Hollis, Whitefield,
Lancs.

Dear Editor,

I note with great pleasure the letter from Mr.Frank Richards in which he mentions the publication of a song "Tell me, what is Love". It is over 25 years (I write from memory) since I tried to obtain a copy of the song, and no music dealer I asked had a copy.

I cannot just remember the story in which it appeared, but I can remember the words and who sang them. Marjorie Hazeldine and Harry Wharton sang the song as a duet and they come to my memory as fresh as yesterday.

"Tell me - tell me what is Love,
That sets the world asighing,
That makes a maiden shyly smile
Or dims her eyes with crying."

The words awoke in these days the first pangs of calf love, at an age when we were young and all the world was bright.

So it seems that after a generation I shall be able to obtain a copy of a song, the words of which have lingered in my memory for so long, without even guessing the identity of the writer I thought it was written in one of his stories.

All the best from,
Yours sincerely,
Granville T. Waine.

Advertising Rhymes, Slogans and Drawings done. Documents, Dinner Plans and Tickets written out in Copperplate style handwriting. Posters, Bills and Designs neatly executed. All work done to your instructions and satisfaction. Write to: Vincent A. Baxendale, 1, Vincent Street, Openshaw, Manchester, 11.

In our No.3 we had the great pleasure of presenting an article by Mr.R.A.H.Goodyear, famed for his splendid stories for boys. We expressed a hope that we should soon be able to give our readers more from the same pen and this was echoed in many of the letters we subsequently received. Therefore, we feel sure that all our readers will, with us, be delighted with this, his latest contribution to our pages.

AUTHORS AND ARTISTS I DISLIKED

by

R.A.H.Goodyear.

Fond memory warms my heart with admiration whenever I recall the names of the many authors who enlivened my boyhood and the artists who illuminated it. I have been privileged to praise bygone authors and artists in collectors' magazines devoted to old-time papers for boys, but I think readers of the Digest will agree that one need not always be a "yes" man, and that an honest selection, set down without malice and from deep conviction, of writers and illustrators I did NOT like is quite permissible on the "hear both sides" principle.

Authors and artists I liked outnumbered those I didn't like twenty to one, but first among those who gave me little pleasure was Jules Verne. As they say in East Yorkshire, I "couldn't get away with his "Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea", and his "Clipper of the Clouds" though in adult years I realised that each story was sensationally prophetic of things to come - the submarine and the aeroplane. I wonder he didn't write a tale forecasting the atom bomb. Perhaps he did; I wouldn't know.

I could never read through to the end, any serial story or gift book by George A.Henty, Harry Collingwood, Dr.Gordon Stables, Max Pemberton, or R.M.Ballantyne (no, not even his famous "Coral Island", which bored me stiff). I found Max Pemberton's "Iron Pirate", which started serially in the first number of "Chums", hard and dull reading,

while my mates were consuming it with avidity. My eyelids drooped sleepily over George Henty's history lesson thinly disguised under such titles as "Through the Sikh War/, or "At Agincourt". These were almost as repellant to me as sugar-coated pills.

Charles J.Mansfield, whose series of "Shafts from an Eastern Quiver" were such a success in the Strand Magazine - they followed on Sherlock Holmes I believe - wrote school stories for "The Boys Friend" which I deemed deadly dull and uninspiring. Charles Edwards contributed stories to Cassells Saturday Journal and "Chums" which consisted of unexciting forced plots and short, staccato sentences with no colour or music in them, though that very excellent editor of both publications, Ernest Foster - himself the author of a charming autobiography, "In an Editor's Chair" evidently thought otherwise. Seldom did a month go by without at least one full-page short story by Charles Edwards appearing in both "Chums" and "C.S.J."

A goodly number of your readers will doubtless say I "didn't know a fine thing when I saw it" - I merely state facts and make no apology for my youthful impressions, which to me were very real. I saw little merit in the illustrations which Paul Harby contributed so regularly to "Chums" and other Paul de Sauvage publications. Always I thought them coarse in line and of a wearisome sameness; he seemed incapable of drawing a handsome man or a lovely woman and to me nearly all his characters were lanky in limb and unprepossessing in features.

Almost as disappointing to me as an artist was Charles Harrison, whose drawings all looked alike to me, though they were evidently most welcome to the editors who bought them. It would, of course, be blatantly stupid of me to deny that both Hardy and Harrison were artists of distinction in their time. As a boy, however, I was impatient of their frequent appearances in my favourite weeklies and they did much to damp my enjoyment

of the letter-press.

I should say in conclusion that artists whose work I delighted in were W.Boucher, who worked for Hendersons Red Lion House papers, and Alfred H. Pearce, who excellently illustrated so many serials in the "Boys Own Paper". Earlier on Edwin J.Brett employed several artists of outstanding merit, who were sometimes far outshone the writers whose serials they adorned. I forget what the stories were about, but the clever pictures which accompanied them I can remember in vivid detail to this very day, after sixty years of close personal experience with juvenile literature.

Did you know that Sexton Blake and Tinker once went to the school of St.Tristans? The C.D.Annual will give you the name of the serial. It was a long time ago!

GOOD PRICES offered for Bound volumes of early Magnets, also loose Magnets, between 1908 and 1929. Eric Fayne, 23 Grove Road, Surbiton.

WANTED: Boys Own Paper, Volume 14; Chums 1909-10; Aldine Robin Hood Library. For Sale or Exchange - Chums, Volumes 2 and 3. Sykes, Coton Lane, Tamworth, Staffs.

WANTED: Magnets before 1933. Also Schoolboy Owns and Boys Friend. Any quantity. S.F.Bryan, [illegible] City Road, Peterborough.

WANTED: Aldine Publications, Turpins, Dorgla, etc. Landy, 4 Nuneaton Road, Dagenham, Essex.

WANTED: Early issues of Gem. Magnet, Pluck, Dreadnought, early 1914 and 1925. Eric Fayne, 23 Grove Road, Surbiton.

HOW LONG DID IT RUN? THE C.D.ANNUAL WILL TELL YOU!

POETS CORNER

Some time ago there was a little passage of arms between a champion of Greyfriars and those who were loyal to St.Franks. It ended with no real ill-feelings on either side. Now, unknown to each other a member from each camp has broken into verse, and we are sure it will be agreed, an excellent job each has made of it. We think it fitting that the praises of St.Franks and Greyfriars should be sung side by side.

H.L.

ST. FRANKS FOR EVER

(With sincere apologies to that great classic, the)
(late Mr. Rudyard Kipling's "IF")

If we could journey back through time and space
When ev'ry Wednesday brought the Nelson Lee,
And sit once more with equal pride of place
At that same desk (our twopenny on our knee);
If we could scan again with eager eye
That all familiar print we knew so well,
Nor miss a single line, nor let go by
Some passing phrase - some quip we might re-tell.

If we could yet re-tread that well worn route
Which we were wont to take oft in a day,
Absorbed in "Biff!" or "Crash" or "Shoot man, shoot"
Whilst deaf and blind to traffic (sad to say);
If we might turn again page after page,
Devouring tasty tuck in Study 'D',
Or laugh at dear old Handy in a rage,
And sip the while a welcome cup of tea.

If we could fly with Nipper on some chase,
The Guvnor steering grimly at the wheel,
And lend a hand when we were face to face
With cornered crooks - and bring those crooks to heel;
If we with all the fags might romp & jape,
(As once we did in fashion all our own),
Or see some barring-out plan taking shape
Against a tyrant-Head with heart of stone.

P.T.O.

If we in grand, united throng could meet
At that informal page close to the end
And there with outstretched hands be glad to greet
Each new found reader, voting him a friend;
If we might read "Between Ourselves" once more,
And note what others wrote in cheerful vein,
We'd reckon Wednesday next a treat in store
AND MR. BROOKS "OLD EDWY" ONCE AGAIN!

Leslie Vosper.

:: :: ::

"THE GLOOMY HEART"

You know those folk who rarely smile,
'Though one tries to amuse them.
They seem to have no sense of fun;
You really could abuse them.

Boyish deeds of fun they scorn;
They ne'er indulge in joking.
While merriment or liveliness
They find it most provoking.

They shake their heads if you should ask -
"Do you remember 'Greyfriars'?"
They have forgotten long ago
This ancient school with grey spires.

They never capture memories
Of 'Greyfriars' life and ways.
They never think that thoughts like these
Enrich the passing days.

O, that these folk would read again
Of Wharton, Quelch or Wingate.
Their life would bloom in youth again
Through F.R. down in Kingsgate!

Jack Corbett.

THE VERY THING I WANTED!

That is what YOU will exclaim when you see the Magnet, Gem, and S.O.L. key list in the forthcoming C.D. Annual.

The Late Mr. Frank N. Wearing's Collection

Special Notice

Miss M. Wearing, of 17, Worcester Road, Bootle, Liverpool, desires us to state that she knows that it would have been her brother's wish that his collection which he had got together over the last 50 years, should be distributed as far as possible among those he had correspondence with and who would appreciate the items most. The collection consists almost entirely of papers published before 1900.

After considerable labour lists have been prepared and if those genuinely interested would apply to her she would do her best to see that they received items which particularly appeal to them. She would be grateful if they would make offers which they know would have been agreeable to her brother.

STOP PRESS

We have great pleasure in reproducing a letter received from the publishers of the Bunter Book, even though it does announce another slight delay.

We are pleased to say also that we shall have a few copies available for subscribers and we should be grateful if those requiring a copy would apply as quickly as possible. Price 8s.0d post paid.

Charles Skilton Ltd.,
50 Alexandra Road,
London, S.W.19.

27th August, 1947.

CPS/ES.

Dear Mr.Leckenby,

Many thanks for your letter of 13th August, together with a copy of Collectors' Digest which I found exceedingly interesting. It is a very creditable venture.

I am afraid that holidays at the binders have held up completion a little and it will not be

published on 12th September as had been hoped. Nevertheless, publication will take place in September. You may be interested to know that I have already referred several people to the Collectors' Digest for advertising purposes.

Yours sincerely,
Charles Skilton Ltd.

FORTHCOMING ATTRACTIONS:

Sentiment in Schoolboy Fiction ..	Tom Armitage
The Shylock of Greyfriars	Roger Jenkins
Those Were the Days	F.W.Webb
Masters of Greyfriars	T.W.Puckrin
These We Loved in the Old Days ..	Frank Osborn
Tim Pippin and Giantland .the late	F.W.Wearing
Purple Periods	Tom Armitage
Amalgamated Press Artists	..Nemo
Old Boys Books	Geo.C.Foster
Marjorie Hazeldene & Co. ..	Gordon J.Kirby (Australia)

ALDINE DICK TURPIN TITLES
(Continued)
Compiled by Eric R. Landy

No.28, The Thief-tamers Plot, or Staunch Friends against Inveterate Foes; No.29, Turpin's Great Peril; No.30, Left for Dead; No.31, A Dastardly Deed, or Dick Turpin's Great Haul; No.32, A Race for life, or Dick Turpin's Adventure with the Bloodhounds; No.33, Hunted for His Life, or The Penalty of a Crime; No.34, Warned of His Doom, or Beset with a Hundred Perils; No.35, Dick Turpin's Challenge, or against Terrible Odds; No.36, With Sword and Spur, or a Story of the Great North Road; No.37, Sentenced to Death; No.38, Horrors of Newgate; No.39, On the Track of Turpin, or the Outwitting of Filby Bilby and His Men; No.40, At the Risk of His Life, or the Great Exploits of Peters and Beetles; No.41, Marked for Vengance, or the

Ups and Downs of a Life on the Road; No.42, Running the Gauntlet, or More Adventures on the Great North Road; No.43, The Snare of Justice, or In and Out of the Clutch of the Law; No.44, Who Goes There? or The Challenge, and How it was Accepted; No.45, With Bullet and Blade; No.46, A Deed of Darkness; No.47, On the Wings of Night, or The Gatekeepers Secret; No.48, Staunch and True, or Dick Turpin to the Rescue; No.49, Face to the Foe, or the Knight of Malta to the Rescue; No.50, In the King's Name, or Turpin the Avenger; No.51, Caged in a Madhouse, or Dick Turpin Trapped; No.52, An Accursed Life; No.53, The Secret of Turpin's Cave, or Turpin Chased for his Life; No.54, The Great Night Attack, or Filby Bilby's Great Attempt to keep his Vow; No.55, The Invincible Seven, or Loyal and True to the Leader; No.56, A Gunpowder Plot, or Dick Turpin in his True Colours; No.57, Fighting for His Life; No.58, In the Clutch of the Press Gang, or How Admiral Trunion Captured Dick Turpin; No.59, Among the Wreckers, or Chosen Captain of a Lawless Band; No.60, A Midnight Raid, or the Coming of the Devon Men; No.61, Flaunting the Fates, or Dick Turpin at Bow Street; No.62, Dick Turpin's Double, or In the Jaws of the Lion; No.63, A Wild Dash for Liberty, or the Further Exploits of the Masked Riders; No.64, The Sword of Fate, or Turpin's Great Fight on Shooter's Hill; No.65, A Life for a Life; No.66, A House of Shadows, or Dick Turpin again to the Fore; No.67, The Trail of Fire, or Up in Arms against Dick Turpin; No.68, The Flying Horseman, or Dick Turpin Face to Face with His Foes; No.69, Traitor's Gate or Dick Turpin's Revenge on an Informer; No.70, The Signpost of Death; No.71, Caught in the Toils, or the Misfortune that befell Dick Turpin; No.72, Sworn to Vengeance, or a Wild Chase after Dick Turpin.

- MORE LATER -

Make Sure of your Copy of the C.D. Annual NOW! Nothing like it has ever been attempted before. Packed with Facts - Figures - Fiction !!

All Correspondence to
H.M.Bond, 10 Erw Wen, Rhiwbina, Cardiff.

THE ROUND TABLE

I see that, for the first time in 15 years, the Sexton Blake Library has had a reduction in the number of pages. When No.325 of the second series, together with it's three companion volumes for March 1932 appeared on the bookstalls we were very elated, for not only did it mean that we were to have more Blake for our money but also that our eye-sight was not to be strained to the same extent as hitherto. The change over was much publicised and after a few months had passed we were so used to the new fromat that a return to the old type library would have seemed quite a degradation. At that time we had no idea of an impending conflict between nations and it became a ritual to collect our four 100 page novels from our newsagent on the first Thursday of each month. When the war did arrive, however, we had our Blake rations cut by half and I, for one, accepted this reduction as inevitable. It

was gratifying to note that two volumes, identical in every way with the format of the four volumes, were available and so it continued right throughout the war indeed right up to until July of this year, the only major change being the elimination of the two column type page and the re-introduction of the original "right across the page type" which the S.B.L. used in it's early stages from 1915 onwards. Now, in one fell swoop, and without any warning, we are back to the 64 page, two column issue, and although this reminds us of the good old days it is rather disturbing, for we now wonder if this is the first stage to even greater cuts. But I am concerned not quite so much with this return to the old format so much as with the policy of the present editor. Surely we could have done without the familiar "Magazine Corner" for one month in order that he might tell us about this change. It wouldn't even have needed the space that the "Corner" takes up in each issue. Unfortunately, no amount of pressure seems to affect the unconcerned A.P. staff these days, and I suppose we are lucky to be able to buy two copies of the S.B.L. each month still illustrated by the old master E.R.Parker. With a regretful sigh we must "count our blessings".

I have just received word that a member of our Blake circle, Mr.William Colcombe, 256 South Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, who unfortunately had to dispose of his collection of S.B.L's. and U.J's. earlier this year is now able to start collecting again, and it has occurred to me that some of you might like to give him a helping hand. This disposal of his original collection must have been heartbreaking to Bill, but it was necessary at the time and personally I can quite understand how he felt when valued old copies had to be packed up and sent away. It will probably take him a very long time to form a collection as good as the old one but some of us might be able to "speed it up" a little. One thing is certain, Bill is going to get quite a thrill out of this new venture. Look out those duplicates you have and let our friend know!

Thanks for many compliments on the first instalment of the Satira story. I hope you will like episode two.

I have more good news regarding forthcoming attractions too. Rex Dolphin, our star contributor, has submitted yet another S.B. Crossword for you to solve. This will appear in our October issue. He has also written a really smashing article entitled "Friends at the Yard" in which he reviews such characters as Coutts, Martin, Harker, Widgeon and Venner. This last contribution is a rather long one and might entail spreading over two issues, but I can assure you that you will enjoy every word of it. Good work, Rex!

Lastly, I should like to appeal to Blake fans for contributions for the forthcoming Annual. The "Blakiana" Section of this publication will be, I hope, most interesting, but there are a few spaces that need to be filled up. So out with your pens and paper!

Cheerio for now,

H.M Bond

PORTRAITS OF BLAKE
by Rex Dolphin

This is not an attempt to tread on "Nemo's" toes, just to express my appreciation of my favourite portraits of the great detective. Portraits which have a special place in my own Blakiana collection.

Foremost is Eric Parker's head and shoulders line drawing which formed the cover picture of U.J.1128 containing the Zenith story "A Problem of Proof". This portrait, although picturing Blake in a thoughtful mood, with lean fingers around pipe and pipe in mouth, gives an impression of rugged determination. It is really remarkable for its combination of Blake's two selves, the thinker and the man of act-

ion. It is by far the most virile of all the Blake portraits, surpassing even the numerous brilliant action-shots that Parker has given us. Several times since its first appearance, it has been used, in reduced form, for advertisements and minor page-headings.

Had I the S.B. bust, perhaps that would come first in my estimation. But I haven't. So Number Two on my list is the "portrait of a portrait" - the photograph of the bust which appeared on the cover of U.J. No.1169 (Story - "The Case of the S.B.Bust") This is about the nearest thing one could have to a photo of the man himself.

Next, another photograph, this time of Arthur Wontner, from the cover of U.J. No.1422. A.W., it will be remembered, played Blake at the Prince Edward Theatre in 1930. He makes a good Blake insofar as facial features go but there is none of the Blake character in his expression.

Many Blake fans do not rate very highly the work of Arthur Jones. There is a certain stiffness about it; a preoccupation with the vertical lines and dark shadowing; all characters wearing slouch hats and long raincoats ... yet Jones was really king until ERP. came along, and he did practically all the SBL. covers from 1920 to 1927, not to mention a lot of U.J. work. And he has given us one or two good portraits of Blake. Number four on my list is his excellent profile-type portrait of S.B. in an easy-chair examining a piece of evidence, the cover picture to U.J.No.650, "The Clue of The Khaki Armlet". Date - March 1916. A rather Sherlock Holmesey portrait, but quite recognisable as our own detective.

Those are my special favourites, the four portraits between them giving a well-rounded impression of Blake's appearance and character.

Apart from these, I have a number of odd portraits which are or particular interest for one reason or another. They are:-

S.B. in white propical kit against a background

of Gibraltar, the Parker cover to U.J.No.1049, "The Straits of Mystery", by G.H.Teed.

Blake compared with an antique-looking American 'tec "Fenlock Fawn", from the cover of U.J.No.170, "The Case of The Rival Detectives". A very young-looking Blake in drainpipe trousers - but recognisable. Artist - H.M.Lewis.

A two-colour presentation plate of Blake seated in an armchair before a fire. By Arthus Jones. Hardly recognisable as the man we know, and of interest solely because it is the only thing of its kind and marked the Thousandth Number of the U.J.

An ERP original drawing showing Blake in action presented to me by the U.J. editor when he was giving away originals in exchange for interesting letters. I've only one grouse - it doesn't bear the ERP signature!

ANSWERS TO SEXTON BLAKE QUIZ No.3

1. Rex Hardinge. 2. The two-seater roadster owned by "Splash" Page. 3. The Moonslayer. 4. Two naval "raggies". Joe and Mike. Stanton Hope. 5. "In the Night Watch" and "Raiders Passed". Waldo and Captain Dack. 6. H.Gregory Hill, Coutts Brisbane and Anthony Parsons. The character was Gunga Dass and his originator was the first named author, H. Gregory Hill.

Time is getting on - have you sent details of YOUR Collection for the Annual yet?

THE STORY OF DR. SATIRA
by H.M.BOND.
Part Two

Apparently, some years before the arrival of John Fade and Dirk Dolland in Khurdan, Dr.Satira

had discovered the race of ape-men and found them to be in possession of a large quantity of diamonds, rubies and emeralds. By sheer force of personality he gained the confidence of this peculiar half-human people but was unable to make them part with the stones, which were quite unique both in size and brilliance. He managed, however, to have a small replica of the god Darsha made, and persuaded the creatures to encrust this with the best of the valuable stones. Thus Satira hoped that it would be easier for him to secure and make off with what must have been worth at least a million pounds. The jewelled replica of the ape-god was placed in a nitch at the foot of the original statue and there it stood, still awaiting removal by the master crook, when the two adventurers unwittingly stumbled across the strange community. Satira, proud of his mastery over the ape-men and gloating over the jewels he knew should be his, could not resist the temptation to show the jewel encrusted statue to his prisoners. Dolland, who was as light fingered a gentleman as ever walked in two shoes, took quite a fancy to Satira's prize and a little later, when the two of them were able to escape by means of an underground stream (in a boat which Satira had had placed ready for HIS getaway) he "lifted" the valuable item right under the doctor's nose and so, when they eventually arrived in London, "little Darsha" accompanied them.

Now Satira had quite a rough time with his "subjects" after the escape of Fade and Dolland, but he determibed to retrieve his prize and finally tracked them to England. He brought with him, several of the more intelligent of the ape-men and started a campaign of jewel robberies that were unprecedented in the annals of crime. His ape-men were able to climb up to dizzy heights and enter buildings that were beyond the scope of the ordinary cat burglar. Of course his main aim was to get hold of the jewelled ape, but as he went along he picked up jewels from all quarters and caused more than a headache for Scotland Yard. In short space of time Satira was able to recoup himself for the loss of the ape but still

he continued to prey upon society and it was thus that he first came up against Sexton Blake. One of his ape-men crushed a man to death and almost murdered a young police constable. At first Blake was quite "in the dark" about the whole affair, for it was not until after he had encountered the ape-men that he heard all about Satira from John Fade. One night he was attacked by one of the creatures while in his bed at Baker Street and only by prompt action was his life saved. Later his clothes were impregnated with a certain potent scent which had the effect of enraging animals of all types. This resulted in him being attacked by Pedro and also by a horse. One could imagine all this being bewildering to the detective, as indeed it was, for Satira, at that time was quite an unknown quantity and his attacks were quite unorthodox. However, Blake baited Satira with the jewelled ape itself. He was lured to John Fade's London house together with one of his ape-men and during the subsequent sensational happenings the latter was taken prisoner after supposedly killing it's master. This was a fluke, however, for when the "body" of Satira was examined it was found that it was that of an unknown man wearing a mask that was a replica of the vile features of the crook doctor. Was this unknown man really Satira? Did the Doctor habitually wear the ugly mask to conceal his true features? These were baffling questions for Blake, but it was eventually discovered that the answers to them were in the negative, for Satira soon made his presence felt again.

:: :: ::

Part Three will tell of some of the amazing encounters Blake had with the menacing Dr. Satira.

Make sure of your copy of the C.D. Annual now! Nothing like it has ever been attempted before... .. ..