

THE STORY PAPER COLLECTOR

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The Phantom of Lochmuir Series

BROWSING THROUGH Volume 3 of *The Story Paper Collector* I noticed an advertisement in Number 53 by Bernard Thorne which runs:

*I wish whatever gods there be
Would of their mercy offer me
A Magnet series (three, no fewer)
About the Phantom of Lochmuir—
Numbers 828-29-30—
I offer fifteen shilling-0.*

Going on through the volume, I came to an article in Number 57, again by Bernard Thorne, entitled *Phantoms We Have Loved*. In this article Mr. Thorne describes how, while being confined to bed with bronchial asthma, he was introduced to the *Magnet* Christmas stories in the form of

the same Lochmuir series; also that at the time of writing he still had not succeeded in locating *Magnets* 828-29-30.

I was very interested in both the advertisement and the article, as almost the same circumstances applied in my own case. I was introduced to *The Magnet* at Christmas, 1923, with the Lochmuir series, also being confined to bed (in front of a blazing fire) with an attack of bronchitis.

A few years ago I managed to regain the Lochmuir series, though unfortunately without covers. I wonder if Mr. Thorne has had any luck with his yet?

— D. R. SPIERS

Tunworth, Hants.

A Different "Funny" Book

IT IS SURPRISING how one forgets some of the books of one's infant years. Recently I came upon an article in the February, 1966, issue of the *New Zealand Home Journal* which brought back vivid memories of my first hard-backed funny book. I have never seen any reference to this publication in *The Story Paper Collector* or *The Collectors' Digest*, yet it was first published in 1875 and is still selling in Australian and New Zealand bookshops today.

I refer to *Cole's Funny Picture Book*. Actually, there were three volumes, the first in 1875 and the second some years later, while a revised edition was published in 1951. This book was the brain-child of Edward William Cole, born in England in 1832 and an immigrant to Australia in 1852. He became famous as the owner of one of the biggest bookshops in Australia, *Cole's Book Arcade*, Melbourne. From there he published Number 1 of *Cole's Funny Picture Book*, sub-titled *The Best Child's Picture Book in the World*.

A double rainbow was featured on the brightly-coloured front and back covers, but the

contents were all in black and white. It has been estimated that over 900,000 copies have been sold. At first the price was 2/6d, but when last I saw one in a Wellington bookshop 12/6d was the cost.

Cole's Funny Picture Book has been described as "a haphazard collection of poems, stories, drawings, puzzles, and animals hidden in pictures." It contained just about everything that would amuse children, and there were "pieces of reading for adults," too. The *Funny Picture Book* gave more than *Chatterbox* or *The Prize* and was surely more fantastic than either. In Australia and New Zealand it must have outsold those books many times over.

When I was a boy a copy seemed to be in nearly every home. Nowadays, of course, the demand is smaller, but the book still sells after more than ninety years. This fact is worth recording in the history of those countless comic publications which have passed from sight, if not always from mind.

The only reason that *Cole's Funny Picture Book* has not become a collectors' item is, perhaps, the fact that it is still being sold and is today not so very different from what it was in 1875.

—O. W. WADHAM

Lower Hutt, New Zealand.

EDWARD OSWALD HANDFORTH

By W. O. G. LOFTS

WHEN A FEW YEARS ago a writer in a Canadian magazine suggested that a certain schoolboy character was a bully, a storm of protest arose from readers of *The Nelson Lee Library*. In the controversy which followed a friend of mine remarked, in a reciprocal article, that she would like to give the writer in question a typical Handforthian "punch on the nose." Such was the popularity of Edward Oswald Handforth, of the Remove at St. Frank's—who was at one time as famous as Billy Bunter of *The Magnet* and "Gussy" of *The Gem*; and it is no exaggeration to say that he is still fondly remembered by countless thousands of old readers.

Living in South London until his death in December, 1965, was

a writer who had made a considerable name for himself since the late 'thirties with his detective novels—written under the pen-names of "Victor Gunn" and "Berkeley Gray" (the Norman Conquest stories). Under his own name of Edwy Searles Brooks he was just as well known in the 1917-33 period for his brilliant school and detective stories in *The Nelson Lee Library*. He was the son of a Congregational minister and his unusual second Christian name was his grandmother's family name.

His first stories were published around 1910 and a little later (because of his interest in and knowledge of school stories) he wrote a considerable number of "substitute" stories featuring Harry Wharton & Co. of Greyfriars and Tom Merry & Co. of

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St. Jim's. When in 1917 it was decided to change the format of *The Nelson Lee Library* by introducing a school detective story, Brooks created the school of St. Francis—called St. Frank's for short—and a new set of school-boy characters was launched upon the public.

THE FIRST STORY in this new format was Number 112 and was called *Nipper at St. Frank's* and in it Nelson Lee arrived disguised as Mr. Peter Alvington, a House-master, and Nipper as Dick Bennett. They were in hiding from the murderous Fu Chang Tong. It was in this story that we first met Edward Oswald Handforth and his two chums, Walter Church and Arnold McClure.

The early stories, of course, centred mostly on Nipper—then making his way towards the captaincy of the Remove—and each weekly story brought a mystery for Nelson Lee (alias Mr. Alvington) to solve. At this period Handforth was shown as a rather blundering chump—in fact, he bore a striking resemblance to Frank Richards' famous character, Horace James Coker of the Greyfriars Fifth. Gradually, however, Handforth stole more and more of the limelight and as his character developed he quickly lost most of

his Coker-ish traits and became a personality in his own right.

Edward Oswald Handforth was the eldest son of Sir Edward and Lady Edith Handforth. He had an elder sister, also named Edith, who married a school-master, and another sister named Ena who went to Moor View School. He also had a younger brother, Willy—the family scapegrace and leader of the Third at St. Frank's. He arrived at the school in Number 386, Old Series, and he was singularly unlike his elder brother, being clever, astute, cheeky, and a born leader.

Handforth himself was described as "rather ugly, noisy, clumsy and aggressive—also a complete ass." Nevertheless he had many good qualities. He was very loyal to his two chums (when not punching their noses!), generous and kind-hearted and in spite of being something of a chump he always seemed to choose the right side in a dispute. He was very susceptible to the fair sex—especially to the charms of Irene Manners of the Moor View School—although he was even clumsier than usual in their presence. Unlike Coker (who couldn't even play marbles!) Handy was a brilliant—if somewhat erratic and spectacular—sportsman; he was the Remove

goalie and an indispensable member of the Junior Eleven.

In spite of this he always had a grouse about something—he should really have played centre-forward and although he considered himself an excellent bowler (he was not!) he was never allowed to open an innings. But his biggest grudge was the fact that Nipper and not Handy himself was Captain of the Remove. Although he agreed that Nipper was a good Captain, Handforth considered he was better. As a matter of fact, in Numbers 20-25, First New Series, Handforth was elected Captain of the Remove—a joke on the part of his companions which "back-fired" when Mr. Crowell, the Form-master, intervened. In this story he made such a mess of the job that he was only too glad in the end to hand the reins back to Nipper.

After the arrival of the Moor View girls in Number 436, Old Series, Handy's stock rises in no uncertain manner and from then on he was to the fore in every series. One of the finest is that which introduced Barry Stokes (Numbers 471-476) and describes Handforth's vindication of Irene when she is accused of passing drugs at the school—surely quite an advanced subject for 1925!

The last eight numbers in the

First Series, Numbers 561-568, were practically all Handforth, so appropriately his picture was on the cover of Number 1 of the new enlarged series, May 1st, 1926. He had the limelight all through a fine sports series, following this with a trip to China. Back at St. Frank's, in Number 20, Handy is practically the leading figure in every series of stories until Number 195, when the First New Series ended.

BY THIS TIME Handforth had lost much of his buffoonery and had evolved as a very real and sincere character, although he remained as obstinate and aggressive as ever. Nobody who read the four powerful stories (Numbers 76-79) in which Walter Church is thought to be dead and only Handforth stubbornly refuses to believe it, could ever forget them; and no writer has ever given a finer description of staunch friendship than Edwy Searles Brooks did in this series. If there had been any resemblance at all between Handforth and Coker (and Brooks told me personally that he did not have Coker in mind when he created the irrepressible Edward Oswald), then this story destroyed it forever.

The Nelson Lee Library continued with various changes in format and with different editor-

ship; finally very much shorter. St. Frank's stories appeared and even reprints. The last issue of *The Nelson Lee Library* was Number 25, Third New Series, dated August 12th, 1933, when it was incorporated into *The Gem*. St. Frank's stories featuring Handforth still appeared, however, in *The Gem* for a short time and when they finished it looked as though readers had seen the last of Edward Oswald, except for *The Schoolboys' Own Library*, which were reprints of earlier series.

Incidentally, Handforth also appeared in *The Gem* for four weeks, in conjunction with Numbers 109-112, First New Series of *The Nelson Lee*. In this series he was falsely accused of stealing and although his innocence was proved Handforth, in disgust, "wiped the dust of St. Frank's" from his feet and repaired to St. Jim's. These stories were also penned by Brooks and as he had already written many *Gem* stories he was able to portray Tom Merry & Co. as faithfully as he portrayed his own St. Frank's characters.

Long after *The Nelson Lee* had finished, The Amalgamated Press—always ready to experiment—introduced a new series of school stories in *Film Fun*. The first,

which appeared on May 6th, 1961, was entitled *The Yellow Hand*, and was in fact an old *Nelson Lee* story, first published in 1926. It was revised and rewritten for the new generation of readers and the central character was, naturally enough, Edward Oswald Handforth. But the stories did not catch on with the present-day readers and finally disappeared in November of that year.



THIS WAS THE LAST KNOWN of Handforth. Undoubtedly he enjoyed a tremendous popularity in his day—so much so that for many years, when *The Nelson Lee* was at its heyday, he ran an "Answers to Correspondents" column which often ran into two or three pages. And when *Nipper's Magazine* came into being many of the contributions—especially the Trickett Grim detective stories—were Handy's.

Big, clumsy, aggressive—but with the heart of a lion; a sportsman with a weakness for detective work and the writing of highly diverting if unsuccessful plays; a firm friend and a thoroughly human boy—that was the unforgettable, the one and only HANDY.

DON'T DESPISE THE DUSTBIN!

By JACK OVERHILL

FOR YEARS, I looked in vain on secondhand bookstalls for bound copies of *The Magnet* and *The Gem*. In my innocence, I thought there was the chance of a find. Then, it dawned on me that secondhand booksellers were astute men, not likely to part with treasures of that sort for sixpence or a shilling.

More hopefully, I looked at the books in salerooms. Perhaps, auctioneers were less interested in the value of books than furniture and household effects. I found I was mistaken.

I went into a saleroom the day before a sale to look round. The entire contents of a house were being sold—it was one of those occasions when you come across heartbreaking things like personal photos and Sunday school prizes—and the lots were being numbered. Rootling about, I found an album of picture postcards that I identified with some I had read of as coming out in the 1880s.

"What number is this lot?" I asked the auctioneer.

He eyed me sharply.

"They're not for sale," he said.

With his remark went my hopes of ever finding bound volumes of old boys' books in salerooms. Auctioneers, like secondhand bookdealers, were too wideawake and knowing.

Cutting out the secondhand bookstall and the saleroom, what other prospects were there of coming across bargains in old boys' books? I could see none. Again, I was mistaken.

I stood on Cambridge railway station waiting for the train to Norwich. A man stopped in front of me and said:

"Why, if it isn't Jack Overhill! Shades of St. Paul's evening classes, 1917—do you remember me?"

I didn't until he told me his name. He had attended evening classes the year before I did and was up to the halving principle in Pitman's shorthand when I started. That had made me look up to him. We travelled to Norwich together and, with a carriage to ourselves, swapped memories of old times. Suddenly, he said:

"I was always a careful sort. I even kept all my *Magnets* and *Gems* and only sold them the other day."

"How much did you get for them?" I asked.

"A shilling each," he replied.

A shilling each! Somebody had got a bargain! He seemed happy over the sale, so I said nothing to spoil his pleasure.

A FEW WEEKS LATER, I went to the dentist. The weather was fine and as car parking was difficult in the vicinity of the dentist's, I walked the last half mile. I was nearly there when I saw several bound yearly volumes of *The Boy's Own Paper* on top of a dustbin* outside a house. I stopped and looked at them. The binding of two of the volumes was coming away, but the B.O.P.s—dated round 1890—were in excellent condition.

As they were on a dustbin, I was tempted to walk off with them. That didn't seem the right thing to do, so I knocked on the door and asked the young woman who answered if I could have them.

She smiled: "Certainly."

Picking them up, I carried them to my car. My word, they were heavy! Dumping them in the car, I set off again to the dentist who, happily in the circumstances, made appointments to suit himself rather than his

patients, who often had long waits.

The illustrations in the B.O.P.s, especially the coloured ones, were excellent; the stories were awful. At last, I knew why I hadn't liked *The Boy's Own Paper*. The hero dived into a river to rescue a drowning person; there followed long paragraphs on the art of natation and ways of rescuing and resuscitating the apparently drowned; then, almost as an after-thought, the author came back to the story and whisked the drowning person out of the river in a couple of lines.

At home, the volumes remained on a shelf. They were there some time, taking up a lot of room, and at last I responded to my wife's protests and pleadings and put them on our dustbin. I was sorry a little later. I broadcast a talk, "Magnets" and "Gems," on the B.B.C. Home Service and one of the listeners—Tom Porter—wrote and told me of *The Story Paper Collector* and *The Collectors' Digest*. I knew then that there were readers of both who would have been glad of those volumes.

I will not stress the point—it's plain enough. If one modern young woman can dump granddad's "old rubbish" now he's gone, so can others.

And maybe . . .

*For we North Americans: a garbage can.—Editor.

HUMOUR IN STORY WRITING

By HENRY ADAMS PUCKRIN

*Whatever is too silly to be spoken,
may be sung.*

SO RUNS THE WITTY French saying. The inference is that any farrago of rubbish, if clothed in a mass of words or pleasing musical sounds, can be put over on a long-suffering and not too understanding public. This was so at the beginning of the last century, when "bel canto" in music and declamatory bombast in acting were brought into the realm of dramatic fiction. It was not long before every branch of reading was smeared with this meaningless rubbish, but fortunately a reaction for the better soon set in.

This was the introduction of the comic element, which showed itself on the Stage and in the realm of popular storytelling. Aided by the famous clowns Joseph Grimaldi and Joe Miller, there soon arose a taste for humour in its best form, and then genuine fun became the order of the day.

A notable instance of this kind of writing was a work called *Dr. Syntax in London*, by a writer named John Combe. This told of the adventures of a

simple but good-hearted country doctor in search of the picturesque in London and elsewhere. Though sometimes taken in by Cockney wit and dry humour, the doctor's task was fulfilled and the result was a highly-amusing work which has been read by many.

Charles Dickens soon cashed in on this new trend and his various works, beginning with *Pickwick Papers*, are of course extremely well known. Thomas Moore, that prince of lyric writers, also tried his hand and the result was a work called *The Fudge Family in Paris*, written in a style much like that of W. M. Thackeray in *The Yellowplush Papers*.

Even that master of the macabre, Edgar Allan Poe, copied this style in a short story called *The System of Dr. Tarr and Professor Fether*. This was Poe's only entry into the field of humorous fiction. It told of an impressionable young man, visiting a private mental asylum in France, having his leg well and truly pulled by the inmates who, after overcoming the attendants, played "Old Harry" with them by giving them a good supply of

the "system" suggested by the title of the story.

PERHAPS THE BEST example of humorous but caustic wit is Dean Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*. The simple (and to some simple-minded) Lemuel Gulliver, ship's surgeon, finds the vessel he is on in danger of being wrecked and tells of the Captain's attempts to save it by means of a multitude of marine expressions which are a puzzle to everyone.

Once more the spell worked, but the humour soon turned into a savage and bitter attack on human institutions in general. This, together with his failure to obtain preferment, was no doubt the main cause of the insanity which darkened Swift's closing years.

The next writer who comes to mind is the famous Lewis Carroll (Charles Lutwidge Dodgson), who produced the delightful humorous satire *Alice in Wonderland*. All who have read this work will remember the nonsense poem, *Jabberwocky*, which is an ingenious travesty of the solemn and dramatic, consisting of parts of words cunningly joined.

Going further, Ireland, the traditional home of wit, is represented by Samuel Lover. His

best-known work is the famous *Handy Andy*, which deals with the adventures of the blundering but good-natured and kind-hearted character of that name. All who read this story will be convulsed with laughter at the bizarre and comical situations in which Andy often finds himself.

This brings us to the era of the comic journals, which have had full justice done to them during the years of the last and the present centuries. Nothing more worth noting occurs to the writer except perhaps the nonsense verses of Edward Lear, which may be entitled to a certain claim to recognition.

It may be wondered why none of the boys' journals which have flourished over the years have been mentioned. The reason is, that the aforementioned characters can be found all over the world in various guises.

Whatever the reader of this article may think, one can safely conclude by saying with Goethe:

*Only by mass, you touch the mass,
for any
Will, finally himself, his bit select.
Who offers much, brings something
unto many,
And each goes home, content with
the effect.*

WILLIAM WALKER—To announce your discovery would give our readers the horrors.—*The London Journal*, April 10, 1858.

School Tales and Science-Fiction

READING *The Story Paper Collector* continues to give me great pleasure and I find it contains quite invaluable information and sometimes keys to hidden treasures. This is well illustrated, I feel, by a personal experience.

Tom Hopperton, in his article *The Lower Branches* which appeared in Number 88 mentions a story, *The School Bell*, which first ran in *Chips* and was reprinted in the 1920 *Young Britain* as *Just Boys and Girls*.

I had never heard of *The School Bell* before, but I have a run of *Young Britain* from 1919 to 1921. I bought these mainly because I had very vivid memories of an early science-fiction story by Leslie Beresford entitled *The Purple Planet*, which commenced to run as a serial in the July 30th, 1921, issue.

In particular, the cover of that issue, picturing a silver spherical space-ship rising in the dusk with the Thames Estuary and part of East England and the North Sea beneath as seen from a great height, made an indelible impression on me when I read the story at the age of nine or so.

After I acquired the volumes of *Young Britain* I found, as only

too often is the case unfortunately, that most of the other stories, which of course I had forgotten, were almost unreadable. In any case, there were too many serials in the paper.

Having read Mr. Hopperton's article, I took out the *Young Britain* 1920 volume and read *Just Boys and Girls*. I agree that it is well above the level of most of the stories in the paper. I can well understand that such a story could awaken nostalgic memories, although its setting is rather before my time. Mr. Hopperton does not say when it first appeared, but I suppose it would be about 1910.*

On the subject of science-fiction: one of S. P. C.'s expert contributors might perhaps write an article on this type of literature in the "old boys' books." Or has this already been done? I can remember quite a few s-f stories which appeared in the 1920s. There was the one already mentioned, and others by Leslie Bedston, I believe; e.g.: *Scud the Eternal*, which appeared in *The Boys' Friend* weekly, and some in *Boys' Magazine*: e.g.: *The Raiding Planet*, written by Brian Cameron.

These stories seem to have

* Reportedly, in 1915.—Editor.

been very popular, but they are very ephemeral and "date" much more than do the classic school stories. In my own case, I "graduated" to *Amazing Stories* in 1927, no doubt feeling that boys' papers were too juvenile. I little thought that I would revert to them thirty years afterwards!



I WAS INTERESTED in Maurice Kutner's comments in *The Story Paper Collector* Number 93 under the heading *They Will Not Return!* Although it is true that the re-appearance of papers devoted purely to school stories is very unlikely, and that they would probably have little appeal to modern youngsters, it can hardly be said that tales of adventure in space and wars of the worlds are of recent origin and have supplanted the school tales.

Both types were to be found in boys' periodicals in the past—in the "glossy" type such as *The Boy's Own Paper* and *The Captain*, and in their humbler relations like *The Boys' Friend* (weekly and "Library"), *Boys' Magazine*, *Rover*, and *Wizard*.

It would seem, rather, that the enormous strides made in science and technology, plus the increasing mechanization of our lives resulting therefrom, have fostered and encouraged the

science-fiction type of story, while school life has gradually lost its appeal as a framework for juvenile fiction.

I feel, too, that the love of *The Magnet*, *The Gem*, and others in those who read them during their youth is now largely nostalgic, but not completely so, since in many cases one finds stories in other papers—and even those by "substitute" authors in *The Magnet* and *The Gem*—to be unreadable.

I did not "take" *The Magnet* and *The Gem* when I was a boy—I read the school stories in *The Nelson Lee Library* and also in *The Boys' Friend* weekly. However, when I became interested in collecting "old boys' books" I found that I got a lot of pleasure out of reading the St. Jim's and Greyfriars classics.

I also enjoyed science-fiction when I was young, although I am not sure now whether it is a good thing that so many of the dreams of science-fiction have become realities!



I SHOULD LIKE to congratulate you on your achievement in producing *The Story Paper Collector* for 25 years. This is longer than many of the boys' papers managed to exist!

—K. C. KIRKPATRICK
Geneva, Switzerland.

THOSE CHUMS SUPPLEMENTS

By HAROLD F. GRIFFITHS

I VERY MUCH enjoyed reading Frank Vernon Lay's article *Around and About* in S. P. C. Number 94, particularly that portion of it which deals with my favourite boys' paper, *Chums*. I heartily agree with Mr. Lay when he says that *Chums* over the years contained some of the best boys' stories ever penned.

I well remember taking in the monthly parts during 1924 with the supplements dealing with Sax Rohmer's Dr. Fu Manchu, so admirably illustrated by Gordon Browne. I was not then aware that these stories had originally been published in book form several years earlier so this was my first acquaintance with them. A few years ago I discovered the Fu Manchu stories in paperbacks and acquired *The Mystery of Dr. Fu Manchu*, *The Devil Doctor*, and *The Si-Fan Mysteries*.

Such chapter headings as *The Wire Jacket*, *The Coughing Horror*, and *The Six Gates* take me back across the years to the days when I read these yarns with the same thrill of pleasure as one derives nowadays from James Bond.

Story supplements were appearing in *Chums* long before the period—"around the middle

'twenties"—in which Mr. Lay found them. I have been searching through my not inconsiderable collection of *Chums* volumes and the earliest reference to these "give-aways" I can discover is in the 1911 volume, the last weekly issue of which, Number 991, dated September 6th, 1911, contains this announcement under "The Editor Chats":

Next week's number is to have a surprise in it. Now a surprise is a surprise only if the secret is properly kept; but though usually I am good at keeping secrets, I really feel that I must "blow" on this one. Very well, then! Next week I am giving away a special eight-page supplement containing a long complete story. This story will alone be worth a penny but I shall not charge more for the whole usual copy of Chums and the supplement. The price will, as usual, be one penny. So you see this supplement really is a gift—something for nothing. This supplement is a gift only to readers of the weekly and monthly part. It will not be bound in the annual volume.

The wording of this announcement is strongly presumptive of its being the first of its kind. The last sentence, dealing with the

non-appearance of the supplement in the annual volume, was to be repeated just about every time one of these supplements was offered.

The supplement referred to above no doubt duly appeared in Number 992, the first weekly number of the 1912 volume. Again in Number 1011, dated January 27th, 1912, it was announced that the "first enlarged number for 1912 will be published on Tuesday, 13th February" (actually February 10th). This was a tale of a boy pantomime actor and was entitled *Snatched From Death*.

Again with Number 1014, dated February 17th, 1912, an eight-page supplement was included in the weekly issue and monthly part (but numbered in Roman numerals) and was a complete story of boxing by Andrew Soutar.

CHUMS Number 1030, dated June 8th, 1912, is one I would dearly like to acquire as the supplement given away with it was an eight-page complete story by my favourite author, S. Walkey, and was a Red Indian yarn called *On The War Trail*—illustrated, no doubt, by Paul Hardy.

The supplement included in Number 1044, the first weekly issue for 1913, is one I can write

about with some authority as I am lucky enough to possess a copy of the monthly part that includes this story. But here an interesting fact emerges. Of the eight pages devoted to the supplement one whole page is occupied by an advertisement for an electrical company, one to an article on how to make a fishing rod, while nearly two-thirds of another page is taken up by *Our Joke Corner*. The story which fills the remaining space is *In The Nick Of Time*, by Maxwell Scott, and deals with Martin Dale, the detective, and his assistant Jimmy.

I have one more of the weekly issues containing a free supplement, Number 1123, dated March 21st, 1914. This time two stories were offered to readers, one called *The Unsigned Will* (author not stated) which occupied five pages, and another entitled *Tit For Tat*, by Thompson Cross, described as a story of ballooning and a steeplejack, which took up the remaining three pages.

No doubt *Chums* offered further supplements to its readers until the paper shortage during the first World War reduced the size of the weekly issue to twelve pages and presumably they were not given away again until the 1920s. Further research among weekly issues and monthly parts will no doubt yield some more

examples of these bonus stories which, all in all, were very good value.

About this time *Chums* fired another of its big guns: the Editor announced that as a reward for promoting the paper's circulation he would give away "original drawings by leading *Chums* artists." You could not choose the artist you favoured, so you might find yourself with an adventure picture by Gordon Browne, a dashing drawing of pirates by Paul Hardy, or one of Fred Bennett's whimsies. It would be interesting to learn whether there is anyone today who acquired and perhaps still possesses any of these original illustrations.

Many years ago the late Peard Sutherland of Vancouver, who was an ardent Paul Hardy fan, told me by letter how he had

written to Cassell & Company to enquire whether they still had any of the original *Chums* drawings in their files, only to be informed that they had all been destroyed during the London blitz. He then wrote to Mrs. Paul Hardy, at that time still living at an advanced age, but she too had none of her husband's drawings. Peard had managed to obtain from various sources a few early art efforts of Gordon Browne and Paul Hardy and no doubt there are others in private collections.

But it would appear that the vast majority of the works of these illustrators, who were so prolific in their output, has gone the way of all things, and we are left with only the printed record of them in the pages of that magnificent boys' paper, *Chums*.

The Corner Cupboard: 13

Old Book Shops

THE JANUARY *S. P. C.* was full of good things. I was particularly interested in Maurice Hall's *Ye Olde Book Shoppe* because in my boyhood there was a similar old book and dime

novel shop—in fact there were two of them—which I haunted rather regularly. One was owned by two brothers, the other by a man who did a good side business in hand-made cigars.

I was not, then, the cigar-smoker I have become since, but I remember my father and others liked this cigar-maker's brand. The book shop of the two brothers had so many good secondhand dime novels around

that they made bundles of ten copies, various kinds mixed, and sold them for 15 cents each. I recall that they sold fast.

—J. EDWARD LEITHEAD
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, U.S.A.

Wrong Title!

PAGE 382 was already printed when we looked at Maurice Kutner's contribution in Number 93 which prompted K. C. Kirkpatrick's comments. Actually it appeared, with another short article, under the heading *Will They Return?—No!*, and not under *They Will Not Return!* This was the title of W. O. G. Lofts' article on the same subject in S. P. C. Number 92.

The Charles Hamilton Museum

An Illustrated Handbook

70pp & Cover : Postpaid, 6/-

THIS IS A LOVELY BOOK! And that statement is no exaggeration! It is filled with a wonderful selection of pictures: photos of Charles Hamilton and places where he lived; front cover-pages of *The Gem*, *The Magnet*, and *The Boys' Friend*; inside illustrations; letters and artists' drawings. This Handbook—6x8½", quality paper—is a treasure that will long be cherished. The proceeds of the

sale of it will go to The Charles Hamilton Museum. The cost in the United States and Canada would be about one dollar. Orders may be sent to: John Wernham, 30 Tonbridge Road, Maidstone, Kent, England.

Arthur Harris

WORD WAS RECEIVED in March of the death on the 15th of Arthur Harris, of Penrhyn Bay, Llandudno, Wales, amateur journalist from an early age and collector of pre-1914 comic papers. Mr. Harris, who was 73, had a fine Amateur Journalism collection, and an occasional article from him has appeared in *The Story Paper Collector*. His amateur magazine, *Interesting Items*, was published by Mr. Harris for sixty years. He was predeceased by his wife, Irene, in 1964.

I Wish to Obtain . . .

—Boys' Friend Numbers 762, 764, 780, 1042, and 1257, to complete my Rookwood period.—T. W. Porter, 1 Timbertree Road, Old Hill, Staffs, England.

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PAGE 382 was already printed when we looked at Maurice Kutner's contribution in Number 93 which prompted K. C. Kirkpatrick's comments. Actually it appeared, with another short article, under the heading *Will They Return?—No!*, and not under *They Will Not Return!* This was the title of W. O. G. Lofts' article on the same subject in S. P. C. Number 92.

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