

Barton House
HALSTEAD
Essex

March 10th 1927

Dear Mr. Elliott:-

In reply to your letter of the 4th, I must remind you that the artist is not employed by me, but by the Publishers. So I cannot do anything in the matter. You say that it is time you had a change, and that Arthur Jones has illustrated the paper for long enough. You might just as well say that it's high time a new author got on the job. The fact that Mr. Jones has always illustrated my stories is, I think, greatly to the good of the paper. Another man might take a long time in getting acquainted with my characters and scenes. And I think you will admit that Mr. Jones has recently been doing some very good work.

If you think it is time I took a rest, and gave "somebody else a go", just write and say so, and I will immediately hand in my resignation (I don't think!).

In any case, your criticisms of the illustrations should be addressed to the Editor, and not to me. So I am afraid I cannot devote a paragraph to the subject, as you ask.

Now for your queries. 1. Yes, I must plead guilty to being the author of the Waldo stories. I shall be awfully interested if you will write to me (at the above address) and let me know how you knew they were from my pen. Not merely by the mention of Chief Inspector Lennard, surely? Had you any other clue? Please let me know. 2. I cannot tell you what the future stories in the "MONSTER" will be. 3. Neither can I tell you if the Old Paper will ever have "clean-cut edges" again. These are matters which the Editor and Publisher have charge of. 4. The St. Frank's fellows are going to India in due course, but I don't think I shall have time to write such a series this year.

No, I have never had any letters from the dusky West African gentleman you mention, and I think you were quite right to ignore his letter.

With all good wishes, and hoping to hear from you often.

Cheerily,

Mr. Laurence S. Elliott



Barton House
HALSTEAD
Essex

March 14th 1927

Dear Mr. Elliott:-

Sorry you thought my advice was curt. I didn't mean it to be. Curtness is the last characteristic that I possess. I can only assume that you took my lighthearted banter in a serious vein---and that, of course, was far from my intention. Please continue to understand that I do like to receive readers' criticisms, and the more the merrier.

You have given me a bit of a job. You want a complete list of the adventures abroad series. Crumbs! Excuse me for half-an-hour while I go through my old files....

Here we are. I have managed to get the list together in twenty minutes, so I am ten minutes to the good.

South Sea Series---158 to 165, commencing with

"Captain Burton's Quest"

North African Series---213 to 220, commencing with

"The Schoolboy Adventurers"

Amazon Series---264 to 274, commencing with

"Lord Dorrimore's Quest"

Balkan Series---305 to 311, commencing with

"Adrift in Mid Air"

North West Canadian Series---320 to 327, commencing with

"The Montana Mystery"

South Sea Series---366 to 374, commencing with

"The Schoolboy Crusoes"

South Pole Series---375 to 380, commencing with

"The Golden Rover"

U.S.A. Series---424 to 428, commencing with

"Adrift on the Atlantic"

Pacific Series---429 to 432, commencing with

"The Mystery of Dorrimore Island"

Sahara Series---477 to 484, commencing with

"The Camp in the Desert"

Coral Island Series---529 to 536, commencing with

"Adventure Bound"

China Series---New Series No. 12 to 19, commencing with

"All Aboard for China"

North Pole Series---36 to 43, commencing with

"The Knights of Northeustria"

There's another series after this, but you'll have to wait for it! I shan't even tell you what it's about, although the whole series is written, and I've practically forgotten it.

With best wishes.

Cheerily,



Laurence S. Elliott, Esq.
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Barton House
HALSTEAD
Essex

March 18th 1927

Dear Mr. Elliott:-

In reply to your further letter, of March 14th, here are the replies to your questions:

1. No, I did not write "NIPPER AT ST. NINIAN'S". This was the work of the originator of the old Nelson Lee, detective stories.
2. I do not know in which paper they appeared.
3. Yes, I wrote the story you mention in the "Detective & Nugget Weekly". some years ago.
4. Yes, I am guilty of the yarns in the "Nugget Monthly".
5. No, I have only written for the Old Paper and the "Boys' Realm"---at least, about St. Frank's.
6. I really cannot tell you what I have actually written for the "Boys' Realm". It would take me too long to go through the old files, and give you a precise statement as to this.

With best wishes.

Cheerily,

EDWY SEARLES BROOKS

L. S. Elliott, Esq.
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Barton House
HALSTEAD
Essex

June 4th 1927

Dear Laurence:-

Your letter dated May 27th only reached me on Tuesday, the post-mark on the envelope indicating that it was posted the precious evening---7-15 p.m., May 30th. And this is the first opportunity I have had to reply.

Robert W. Comrade was a nom-de-plume that I used some years ago, and I wrote several stories---mostly serials---under that name. They included "Canvas & Caravan", "Scorned By The School", "The Cad Of The School", and one or two others. Several, I believe, came out in the **BOYS' FRIEND LIBRARY**, but I very much doubt if they are available now---though they might, of course, be knocking about at some of the second-hand book shops.

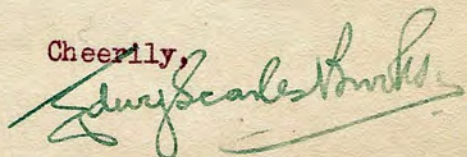
I don't remember at the moment, but I have an idea that only three yarns of Zingrave and the Green Triangle came out in the **BOYS' FRIEND LIBRARY**. But, of course, there were dozens of them in the Old Paper, in the early days.

If you are very urgently in need of those 4d books that I wrote under the name of "Robert W. Comrade", it is just possible that I may have one or two copies by me. But if I sent them along to you, I should want your definite promise that you would read them, keeping them perfectly clean and unsoiled while doing so, and then let me have them back afterwards. I generally make it a rule not to lend any books at all (since they very seldom come home to roost), but I am always ready to make an exception.

Don't worry about the "brusqueness" of your letter. As a matter of fact, it wasn't brusque at all, and I am only too pleased to answer your queries.

With all best wishes.

Cheerily,



Mr. Laurence S. Elliott.
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Barton House
HALSTEAD
Essex

June 20th 1927

Dear Laurence (or should it be Stanley?):-

Your letters of June 6th and 8th duly reached me. Please forgive delay in replying. Your letters were just two among hundreds, and I'm bunged up with work---po~~l~~ishing off my correspondence, and (incidentally) writing the St. Frank's yarns, a serial for the "Boys' Realm", an Archie Glenthorne serial for the Old Paper, and what not.

However, in accordance with my promise, I now hand you six of my old tales, which I have hunted out for you:

THE KIDNAPPED SCHOOL
SCORND BY THE SCHOOL
THE CAD OF THE SCHOOL
CURTIS OF THE FIFTH
THE STOWAWAY'S QUEST
and
IN TRACKLESS SPACE

and shall be obliged if you will return these to me after perusal, and thus keep your own promise.

Here's my dial in exchange for yours. Yes: I certainly have said, more than once, in "Between Ourselves", that any old photo would do. But it's a bit thick to expect me to be satisfied with a picture taken ten years ago. (In the photo you're at the age of 10, and I suppose you're 20 now?). I didn't expect to be taken as literally as all that! However, it's gone into one of my special albums, kept for readers' photos, and I've left an empty space beside it, which I shall expect you to fill in due course with an up-to-date picture of yourself. So don't let that space remain empty too long, will you, old man?

Best wishes.

Cheerily,



Mr. Laurence Stanley Elliott

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Phone
Halstead
75

Edwy Searles Brooks
Barton House
Halstead
Essex

December
6 th
1927

Dear Laurence:-

As it is not policy to make public such information as you ask for in your letter of September 16th (which I have only just got down to) I am unable to reply to your queries under **"Between Ourselves"** in the Old Paper. So I'm shooting off this line or two to you instead.

Yes: I wrote the **Castleton Series** in both the **Gem** and the **Nelson Lee Libraries**.

Further, all the **Waldo** yarns in the **Union Jack Library** are from my pen---or perhaps I should more correctly say, my Dictaphone and type-writer.

Just at present I have no other stories running in any paper ---either without a name or under a nom de plume.

I have dealt with your previous letter---dated Sept. 7th---in **"Between Ourselves"**. Many thanks for it. It was very important that the idle rumour about the St. Frank's voyagers to the moon should be squashed.

Every good wish.

Cheerily,

Mr. Laurence S. Elliott

Phone
Halstead
75

Edwy Searles Brooks
Barton House
Halstead
Essex

February
16th
1928

Dear Stanley (or are you called Laurence?):-

Yes: I have been responsible for many of the **"Gem"** and **"Magnet"** yarns in the past, and it's more than likely that I shall write some more in the future. (In fact, I'm engaged on a series for the **"Gem"** now). And it's more than likely that my coming yarns will inter-associate the sports of the schools---anyhow, those of **St. Frank's** and **St. Jim's**. But all this is quite confidential, since it is the policy of the Amalgamated Press to keep up the fiction that **"Martin Clifford"** and the others are real personalities. It's different with the **St. Frank's** yarns. These are solely written by me, under my own real name. I'm trying to find time to write a **St. Frank's** tale for this year's **Holiday Annual**. But, if I can't manage this, it's fairly certain that **St. Frank's** will be represented in one or more of the **Annuals** from the following year onwards.

I can't tell you exactly when the Map of **St. Frank's** will be coming along, but I don't suppose it'll be a great while after I receive a fine up-to-date photo of you. At present, I've only got a mental picture of you as a 10-year-old youngster in knickerbockers, with a coat over one arm and a stick under the other. You see, I'm well after a proper likeness of you, and I shan't be satisfied till I get it!

With every good wish.

Cheerily,

Mr. L. S. Elliott

Phone
Halstead
75

Edwy Searles Brooks
Barton House
Halstead
Essex

February
20th
1928

Dear Stan:-

Thanks for your letter of February 17th (which I only received this morning), and for your definite promise to let me have a proper up-to-date photograph of yourself "very shortly". This is the best news in your letter, and I shall look out for the picture.

The rest of what you say is much more difficult to answer---especially as I am so pressed for time that I've got to put it all into the fewest possible words.

As regards the "U.J." tales, you mustn't take it for granted that everything in these necessarily appears in print exactly as originally set down by the author. An editor wrecks his will upon them. And I'll leave you to imagine just what happened in the particular instance you specify.

Perhaps it was unwise of me to give you the confidential information I did regarding my past work for the "Gem" and "Magnet", since you are now returning evil for good by wishing me to undertake the endless task of looking up their numbers and titles for you. These particular stories, of which there were a great many, did not appear under my own name, and I made them conform, as nearly as possible, to the

standard set for each particular journal in which they appeared. Consequently, I do not take the same interest in them as I do in my **St. Frank's** yarns, in which I can be far more individual and original. The trouble is that I have let you into a secret, which it is the policy of the Publishers to keep a secret. And, if you're a reasonable chap, you'll agree with me that it's a very poor return for you to wish to shoulder a lot of heavy research work upon me (just to please one only, mind), when I'm already sadly overburdened with work---very much of it research work---designed to meet the wishes of the great body of my readers.

I don't wish to appear unappreciative, or ungracious (nobody can justly accuse me of being either); but I think you'll quite see that I've got to draw the line somewhere. And, in your case, I really must ask you to be content with the special and exclusive information which I have already, in confidence, imparted to you.

Trusting you will understand, and not take offence at, my plain speaking; and with every good wish as of old.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Edward Leach', is written over a long, sweeping horizontal line that extends across the right side of the page.

Mr. Laurence Stanley Elliott
147 Katherine Road, E. C.

Barton House
HALSTEAD
Essex

February 22nd 1928

Dear Stan:-

In reply to your letter of Feb. 20th, which I only received this morning, I cannot help admiring your persistence. I also appreciate the very sensible remarks which you make in this letter. So, although I cannot at present even approach the task of looking up the information you asked for in your previous letter, I have made a mental note to let you have it at some future time. When that will be, I can't say. But when I have nothing better to do (and goodness alone knows when that will be!) I will make a list, for my own reference, of everything which I have written from the start. And as I started writing shortly after leaving school—and as practically everything I have ever written has been published (some, of course, only after I had established my footing)—you'll see that I've got a huge leisure-time job in front of me. But if I ever do get that leisure time—if I ever do delve back into these records of the past—then you shall have the details you want.

As to your other two queries, "Owen Conquest" is also a nom de plume, and up to the present I myself have not written any "Rockwood" yarns.

Best wishes.

Cheerily,



Mr. L. S. Elliott
147 Katherine Road
EAST HAM, London, E.6

Barton House
HALSTEAD
Essex

December 29th 1931

Dear Jimmy:-

In return for your P.O. 2/10d. to hand this morning, here are 9 and 10 of "Monster Library" and "S.O.L." 27 — "The River House Rivals", as requested.

You've floored me over "Nipper at St. Ninian's". This story never appeared in the Old Paper, nor was it written by me. Nelson Lee and Nipper are the only two characters at St. Frank's who are not my own; and this early story of Nipper was, I believe, written by Mr. Maxwell Scott, who originally introduced Nelson Lee and Nipper. But we're going back now into the dim ages of the past, and I'm afraid the story, "Nipper at St. Ninian's", is now unobtainable. So far as I am aware, I don't even possess a copy of it myself.

"Jack Grey's Temptation" appeared in No. 396 of the Old Paper, dated January 6th, 1923.

Here are the eight titles you ask for:

Old Series—"N.L.L."

- =====
- 117 THE CLUE OF THE DECOY LETTER
 - 123 THE ISLAND STRONGHOLD
 - 124 THE COMPACT OF THREE
 - 151 THE BARRING-CUT AT ST. FRANK'S
 - 159 THE SCHOOLBOY STOWAWAYS
 - 176 THE CLOSING OF THE NET
 - 177 THE SERPENT'S REDEMPTION
 - 178 THE BOY FROM BERMUNDSEY

All good wishes again.

Master H. J. Sutcliffe
C/o PLANT, Milton House, London Road
SOUTH BENFLEET, Essex

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Cheerily,

Edmund Beales Brooks

POLLARDS:
4849

"Caxton",
26, Briar Road,
Pollard's Hill. S.W.16.

October 14th. 1939

E. S. Lawrence, Esq.

Dear Mr. Lawrence:-

Guilty, my lord! Yes, in reply to your letter, which the editor of the "Thriller" forwarded on to me, I've got to confess that you've rumbled Victor Gunn. But keep it dark! Not that it is capable of being kept very dark, if my style of writing gives me away so easily! I prefer to think that you are one of the more perspicacious readers. How the dickens did you know that I was Berkeley Gray, too?

It's grand to hear from you, and to know that you have followed mystories since the old "Nelson Lee Library" days. You certainly are a novelist's dream come true! I wish there were a few million of you!

Yes, "Footsteps Of Death" is new, in so far as it has never appeared in the "Thriller", and never will. Here's the other information you want. Harrap's published two books of mine---"The Antlered Man" and "The Grouser Investigates". Rich & Cowan published a Western novel called "Ghost Gold" (this time by Robert W. Comrade!) and Collins have so far published, in the following order, ✓"Mr. Mortimer Gets The Jitters", ✓"Vultures Ltd.", ✓"Miss Dynamite", ✓"Conquest Marches On", ✓"Footsteps Of Death", and, ✓"Leave It To Conquest"---all at 7/6d. The first one, "Mr. Mortimer" is just being put out at 3/6d.

It will give me much pleasure to autograph any books you care to send---but I'm afraid it's going to be an expensive business for you! Better wait until they all come down to two bob!

Kindest regards and best wishes,
