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COLLECTORS DIGEST

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STORY PAPER COLLECTORS' DIGEST

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THE EXQUISITE BURDEN

I have just had the pleasure of reading a book which is a delight from start to finish. Entitled "The Exquisite Burden" by A. A. Thomson, it was published by the Herbert Jenkins firm in 1936. I pass the details on to you, for there is always the possibility that you might come across it in a second-hand book shop, or you could put it on order from one of those firms which obtain copies of out-of-print books.

The book, which I have just finished with a sigh, was lent to me by Mr. Eric Lawrence of our London Club, and I am very much indebted to him for drawing this real treat to my attention.

Like the golden age of Richmal Crompton's "William", this one is a story about childhood, written for the enjoyment of adult readers. It is the story of a Yorkshire family, and a special bonus for Yorkshire

readers is found in the superb characterisation of those sturdy northerners, plus the Yorkshire patois which rings as true as the church bell.

It is set in the early years of this century, a great deal of it in Edwardian times. Charles Hamilton once wrote that, despite modern sneers about that age, it was a splendid time in which to live, for most people. I am sure he was right.

It is the story of young Philip. He is brought up by maiden aunts, and his aunts and uncles provide a gorgeous variety of characterisation. Philip starts off at a dame school, which he has to leave owing to an outburst of rudeness to one of the ladies who run the school. He goes to the local council school. He wins a scholarship to the Grammar School, and finally goes off to college. His head is full of Mr. P. G. Wodehouse's marvellous school stories, and his great ambition is to play in a 'Bop' match. A Bop match is one of those cricket matches in which the hero wins the game for his school, like the heroes did in the Boys' Own Paper serials. In his last term, after many vicissitudes, his Bop game becomes a reality.

But the real joy of it is the constant reminders one gets of one's own childhood and early life. Like the concert parties, alfresco, which had their summer seasons in a great many towns in those far-off days. In my own home town in Kent, they had concert parties every summer on the promenade, with popular favourites coming back year after year. Those concert parties carried on until late in the twenties, when they were killed off, partly by the cinemas, but mainly from a succession of very bad summers.

You paid 3d. or 6d. for a chair in the enclosure, but if you stood outside the railings, someone would come round with a collecting bag, into which you might drop your penny.

In the story, Philip dropped into the box the threepenny bit which had been given to him to put in the collection plate at church the next day. He asks for a "special request" song to be sung: 'T'll be your sweetheart, If you will be mine.'

There are countless reference to old songs, and old hymns - they pluck at the heart strings all through the tale.

The young rascals go out, knock at a door, and ask, guilelessly: "Please, does Mr. Winterbottom live here?"

I remember doing the same thing as a troublesome child who should have known better. One day I went up to a smart house, all ready to ask glibly: "Please can I speak to Mr. Blake, the manager of the Tramways. I believe he lives here." I rang the bell. The door was opened by a somewhat aristocratic and distant friend of my mother's. I lost my voice and stood staring at her, unable to decide whether to launch into the "Mr. Blake" gambit. I never went out on that racket again.

The chapel the family attends invests in an American organ. Philip, who plays the piano not very well, is pressed into service as the chapel organist. He is reluctant, pointing out, quite rightly, that there is a vast difference between playing a piano and performing on an organ. For his voluntaries - the bits played while the congregation is assembling - he strayed into popular strains of the day, with snatches from "The Pirates of Penzance".

That carried me back to Surbiton days, where, for countless years, we always had a school Cricket Week every Summer. A different match every day; the Old Boys' versus the First Eleven on the Saturday, with the Old Boys' Dance in the evening. But, at the start of the week, on the Sunday morning, there was always the Rally Service at church, when present boys and girls, old boys and girls, past and present parents, staff, and anyone we could gather in, packed the big church to the roof.

We had one master who played the organ. One year he asked me whether it would be possible for him to play the organ for the School Rally Service. I arranged it with the regular organist. I remember him using as his voluntary "My Little Grey Home in the West". It sounded beautiful, for he was an accomplished performer on the organ. Later, he played the organ at that church on many occasions for the normal services.

Philip, in the book, loved cricket. He went off to Leeds to watch Yorkshire play Gloucestershire. Just as you and I went off to watch the county games when the venue was near enough. There is a delightful chapter "The King of Games" introducing so many of the great cricket names of Edwardian times - and Philip even bowled to one of them.

And then comes the time when they go off by train to take their Matriculation Exam. What memories it brought back! Today one never

hears "the matric" mentioned. You had to pass in five subjects - and one of the five had to be English, and one had to be Maths or a Science. I don't know what drawbacks it had, if any, but anyone in those days who matriculated had proof that he was reasonably well educated. I remember the fortnight or so when I went off to take my matric - by train to some centre in London - and one day I bought from the station bookstall a copy of the new paper "Rovering" which contained a splendid cricket poem named "The Rover's Choice". Years later I used it for a scenic item in one of our school Revues.

I remember, in the earlier years of my teaching career, often going to London with groups of my boys to see them safely into their Exam centres. Then, meeting them after the morning sessions, and taking them off to lunch in Lyons or an ABC. In later times, we had our own Centre at school, but those earlier visits to external Centres live on in the memory.

The final chapters of the book take one behind the scenes at some of the music halls. Bijou, the fair-haired little girl whom Philip had adored from the time they were small, ran away to go on the stage, and Philip, taking a long tram-ride from College, where he was training to be a teacher, visited Bijou back stage at the theatre.

Another memory-booster for me. I used to go to the dress rehearsals of the Gracie Fields - Archie Pitt shows at the Alexandra Palace Theatre near Wood Green in London. I made many friends in the shows, and, when they were touring, I made many visits back stage at music halls in and around London.

The story ends in 1914 with the Great War. Philip, with a number of his school comrades, joins up. The book ends with the information that six names from that time appear on the Grammar School Honours Board, commemorating the six who joined up in 1914. Only one of them came back, says the author. He doesn't tell us whether it was Philip.

THE EDITOR

WINTER MORNING

by Mrs. Irene Radford

14th January, 1982

I woke to a bitterly cold, dark morning, a very hard frost and still plenty of snow and ice outside.

I tried to turn on the bedroom light - no electric. I found a torch and went downstairs, lit two candles and turned on the kitchen tap for a drink of water - no water coming out of either hot or cold taps, they were frozen up. I was cold and fed-up. Life was definitely flat, weary, stale and unprofitable.

Just after 8 a.m. the electric came on. 8.10 a.m. the milkman came, then at 8.15 a.m. to really cheer me up my eagerly awaited C.D. came through the letter-box. I made a boiling cup of coffee with milk, turned on two bars of the electric fire and I sat at the kitchen table to really enjoy myself reading the C.D.

Life was worth living once more.

* * * * *

STOP-PRESS EDITORIAL

Just as this issue of our magazine goes to press, I have received, early this morning, the news of the death last night of Mr. Ken Gore-Browne of York Duplicating Services. I can only say that I feel utterly shattered.

I have known for some time that Ken was ailing and considerably handicapped, but never dreamed that anything like this could happen. With the aid of his splendid wife, Margaret, who drove him, early every morning to his office, he was able to carry on with his work which he loved and did so well. He was at his desk on Friday last. Now, Tuesday, I hear that he has been taken from us.

It was Ken who, 23 years ago, rang me up to tell me that Herbert Leckenby had been found dead. As arrangements had been made for me to take over C.D., I had been in touch with Ken before that day. I first met him when I went to York for Herbert's funeral. We have been close friends ever since.

The very best type of Yorkshireman, Ken gained the respect and friendship of everyone who knew him. For me, he leaves a gap which will never be filled.

Obviously there would have been advantages for me had C.D. been printed locally in the south. But I liked the idea of leaving it in the grand old town of York where it originated, despite the drawback of the distance and the ever-rising cost of parcel post and telephone calls.

Ken, himself, took a great interest in the magazine. Several times a month we exchanged letters, and every so often we were on the telephone to one another. Sometimes the directions I gave to him were last-minute and probably inconvenient, but he always carried them out. In the 23 years that we were close friends, there was never one harsh word between us. We never fell out. He and his lovely family visited me at Surbiton.

As Editor of C.D., I have, since mid-December, lived through worrying times. As you get older you bother about matters which you would have shrugged off in the days when you could run for a bus. This loss of dear Ken is a blow indeed.

* * * * *

Danny's Diary

MARCH 1932

Cambridge has won the Boat Race by five lengths. This is the ninth year in succession that Cambridge has won. In the shops they still sell light blue and dark blue "favours" which people wear for the few days before the race. Actually I only wore my light blue one for a day or two, for a chap at school sneered at me and said I only wore it to be on the winning side.

The Modern Boy had an article on the Boat Race but, of course, they didn't know, when it was printed, that Cambridge was going to win yet again.

The Modern Boy, which has been permanently enlarged to 32 pages, doesn't vary its programme much. Captain Justice is in series where he joins the Foreign Legion; the "Grey Shadow" goes on with his spying tricks in the Great War; and Alfred Edgar's stories about a group who are building a bridge in Manchuria - they all carry on, plus John Hunter's serial "Adventure Camp".

The Schoolboys' Own Library is now permanently enlarged to 100 pages. I don't suppose the stories are any longer, for the print is larger, so it is easier to read. Yet, somehow, I think I rather liked the smaller-print copies better, but I dunno why. The stories this month

are "The Bruiser of Greyfriars" in which a new boy named Dury is an ex-professional boxer; and a St. Jim's tale "The Cardew Cup" which has a bit too much football in it, but has plenty of good moments - as when Cardew pawns the Cup which his grandfather has presented. So it gets called the Pawnbroker's Cup. Good fun in parts, and a winner on points.

In Australia the magnificent Sydney Bridge has been completed and opened for traffic. The opening ceremony was performed by Mr. Lang, the Premier of New South Wales.

At the pictures this month we saw Ramon Novarro in "Ben Hur" with music and sound; I have seen it twice before, and like it more each time, though I really liked it better with the big live orchestra. A new star, Robert Montgomery was in "Shipmates", and I liked this, and I also liked the new boy in it. Marlene Dietrich and Victor McLaglen in "Dishonoured", which is a spy story, and I found it very heavy-going, but it has made Marlene, a German star, very popular in America and Britain. Edmund Lowe in "Transatlantic"; George O'Brien and Sally Eilers in "A Holy Terror"; James Dunn and Sally Eilers in "Bad Girl"; Robert Montgomery, back again, in his second picture this time, entitled "The Man in Possession"; Ramon Novarro in "Son of India", and with this one there was a new Laurel & Hardy two-reeler "Laughing Gravy". Then Gracie Fields, Ian Hunter and Florence Desmond in "Sally in our Alley", which has a lovely new song called "Sally" which Gracie sings beautifully, though it is really a man's song. Finally, Loretta Young and Jean Harlow in "Platinum Blonde". A jolly good month in the cinemas, all told.

A simply magnificent month in the marvellous Magnet. Doug read that, and he says, in his toffee-nosed way, that it is an example of alliteration at its awfulest. But it's how I feel, and I like it.

Lovely first tale in the Magnet, "The Complete Outsider". The outsider is Ponsonby of Highcliffe. At the end, Harry Wharton comes on a piece of a letter in his uncle's handwriting, and it reads: "No man can be expected to bear for ever the burden of a thoughtless, selfish, utterly ungrateful nephew —"

And that shatters Wharton's world. Next week, it is Harry Wharton who is "Down On His Luck". Wharton decides to become

independent of his uncle and he falls out with his friends and with his form-master. Then "Harry Wharton's Down-Fall", with the Remove clamouring for a new captain.

Final of the month, "Bounder and Captain". For a long time, Vernon-Smith has cast longing eyes on the junior captaincy, and thought he would make a much better captain than Wharton. Now the Bounder becomes captain in Wharton's place, and soon finds out that being top man in any walk of life at all is anything but a bed of roses.

This terrific series continues next month. I love it.

Easter is early this year, with Good Friday falling on 25th March.

Strange things seem to be happening in the Nelson Lee Library.

The opening story of the month is "The Hidden Foe", and this is the final story in the series about the new boy, Tony Cresswell, whose father was apparently a gangster, though it turned out he was really a Secret Service man. And with this tale, St. Frank's dropped out the Nelson Lee Library for the time being. Then came "The Quest of the Silver Dwarf", followed by "The Trail of Fortune" and "The Missing Heir", all detective and adventure stories. Rummy, I think. The series continues next month.

Edgar Wallace, the writer of crime stories and plays, died recently in Hollywood. His body has been brought back to England, and a memorial service has been held in London. His latest - and it turns out to be his last - play, entitled "The Green Pack" has just opened in the West End at Wyndham's Theatre in Charing Cross Road. My brother, Doug, still has the copy of Thriller No. 1, for which Edgar Wallace wrote a tale called "Red Aces".

In the Ranger, the paper which, alas, replaced the Popular last year, they have just started a series of stories about Jim, Buck and Rastus. Jim is a Britisher, Buck is an American, and Rastus is a happy-go-lucky negro. They are wealthy, and seek big adventures. Doug says he feels sure they are old stories of Jack, Sam and Pete with the names altered.

Lots of light school adventure in the Gem all this month, and I have enjoyed it. In "The Terrors of Huckleberry Heath", Miss Priscilla is afraid of burglars, so Tom Merry takes a party of his friends there for a few days. They capture the burglars, and meet Uncle Frank, an Anglo-Indian who is a conjurer and a hypnotist. Next

week "The St. Jim's Magician" in which Uncle Frank visits Tom at the school and gives an entertainment. Next "Showmen of St. Jim's" in which we meet Towser, Herries's bulldog, plus Skimpole's pet which is a hedgehog, and the boys put on an exhibition of their pets.

Finally, "Priscilla, the Peacemaker" in which Miss Fawcett goes to St. Jim's to end the rivalry between the School House and the New House. She doesn't succeed. This one is a double-length story.

All light stuff this month, but lovely reading before the fire.

(EDITORIAL COMMENT: S. O. L. No. 167, "The Bruiser of Greyfriars" comprises the first three stories of the 6-story series about the Game Kid, a re-run, and a little too close to it in detail, of the Gem's Schoolboy Pug's series. The Game Kid series started in the Magnet at the opening of the year 1927. S. O. L. No. 168, "The Cardew Cup" comprised the 5-story Gem series of the autumn of 1922. In the middle of the series the Gem changed to its popular red, white and blue cover and the price increased from 1½d. to 2d.

The 1932 Gem stories, "The Terror of Huckleberry Heath", "The St. Jim's Magician" and "Showmen of St. Jim's" had originally been entitled "Danger Ahead", "Tom Merry's Guest", and "Pets of St. Jim's" and they had brought the halfpenny era to a close.

"Priscilla the Peacemaker" in 1932 had once been "Miss Priscilla's Mission" and was the second of the double-length 1d. Gem stories in February 1908.

The Nelson Lee stories, read by Danny exactly 50 years ago, had originally been "The Silver Dwarf" and "The Missing Heir", long serials by Maxwell Scott in the Boys' Friend of 1902. One would think they were pruned a little for the Lee. Both introduced the character Jack Langley, who had appeared in the first Lee serial "Birds of Prey" in the Boys' Friend of 1901. It was reprinted as a serial in the Gem about 1911. It seems to have been omitted from the Lee in 1932, and one wonders why. Of course, the reprinting of stories 33 years old in the Lee at this time was a big mystery.)

* * * * *
EXCHANGE: Magnets 1456, 1470, 1562, 1568, 1572, 1621, 1624, 1631, 1655; Rovers 305/6; Skipper 146 (all fair); C. D. 238 - 264 (good); "Boys Will Be Boys" (hardback); "Housemaster's Homecoming"; Nelson Lee Bibliography (good) FOR Wizard, Adventure, Hotspur 1928 - 1934.

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BLAKIANA

Conducted by JOSIE PACKMAN

I am happy to say that my pleas for Blake material have been answered, but that does not mean I don't want any more, far from it. No doubt many of you have taken advantage of the time necessarily spent indoors during December and January, to have a good read of your Sexton Blake collection. This may have given you an inspiration to write a little article on what you found most interesting, I would be most grateful for anything which comes into one's mind. I know that after 35 years and thousands of words being written it must be difficult to find a new slant on writing something for Blakiana, but it could happen.

I hope that by the time you read this item the snow will have disappeared, the trains running properly again and everyone looking forward to the Spring weather.

EARLY BLAKE STORIES

by John Bridgwater

I was most interested to read D.H's article. I have recently read the first Blake stories in order of publication - Marvels 6, 7, 11, U.J. 2, Marvel 33, U.J. 15 and 194, also Marvel 48 as a related story of Blake's early partner, Jules Gervaise. Now Harry Blythe made Blake rather contemptuous of Scotland Yard, though friendly with one or two officers. He is also quite regardless of the law, offering to allow wanted criminals to go free if they give him the information he wants. Incidentally he is called "Sexton" both by other characters and the author on a few occasions. This familiarity was certainly dropped in later years, though it seems to have persisted up to 11.8.06 (Marvel 133). Odd names appear in all the very early stories, Blake's first crook being Calder Dulk. Others are Jasper Chripps, Jock Hatchett, Nipperty Chris and a very nasty-natured prize fighter with a famous surname - Tony Quelch. Gaspard Sellars and Joe Tax are a bit out of the ordinary too. A well-named pair are Jabez and Justin Forge - a swindling solicitor and his son.

The little sketches of the characters are very interesting in the Marvel. Blake looks like a rather old-fashioned gentleman farmer and Jules Gervaise reminds me strongly of the very latest Dr. Who (Peter Davison). I think the very best of the early stories is Sexton Blake's

Triumph in U.J. 15, a story of the locked room variety (a locked house in this instance) my favourite type of story. D.H.'s discovery of a "bitter Blake" looks like one of those very odd one off's with an author doing a story right out of the main stream; rather like that famous occasion years later when the author W. Shute "killed off" George Marsden Plummer, a character belonging to someone else, i.e. G. H. Teed of happy memory. This reminds me of something I wrote years ago about a Blake author not liking Blake and taking him down a peg whenever opportunity presented itself. Perhaps Paul Herring did not like Blake and made the most of his chance to 'have a go at him'. It certainly says something for Blake's popularity that such detractors as he had merely added to the fans interest in him.

FIGURING SEXTON BLAKE

by Cyril Rowe

First I must disclaim that these figures are absolutely correct. I may not have all the information that could be available and has not been recorded, and I may have miscounted and miscalculated. But here are appearances in all the journals I know.

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>No. OF ISSUES</u>	<u>REPRINTED</u>	<u>NETT FIGURES</u>
The Marvel	4	0	4
½d, Union Jack	47	0	47
Boys' Friend Weekly	5	2	3 (B)
Boys' Realm Weekly	6 or 7	6	1
Boys' Herald Weekly	?	?	?
The Jester	1	0	1
Union Jack 2nd series	1453	37	1416 (A)
Boys' Friend Library	40	4	36
Penny Pictorial	253	0	253 (B)
Answers	155	0	155 (B)
Sexton Blake Library 1	382	26	356
" " " 2	744	111	633
" " " 3-4	526	0	526
" " " 5	45	1	44
" " Annuals	4	0	4
Dean Hard Backs	4	4	0
Dreadnought	8	8	0
Pluck	2	0	2
Boys' Journal	2	1	1
Champion	2	0	2
Detective Weekly	262	88	174 (B)
Detective Library	25	0	25
The Popular	221	221	0

cont'd ...

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>No. OF ISSUES</u>	<u>REPRINTED</u>	<u>NETT FIGURES</u>
Howard Baker Hard Cover	4	0	4
" " Omnibus	8	8	0
	4203	517	3686

The 517 reprints represent around 12% of the total.

(A) 1531 Union Jack 2nd series were issued but the first fifty were not Blake tales, in fact only 23 of the first hundred, which reduces the tally to 1453.

(B) Some of the Penny Pictorial tales were reprinted in Detective Weekly but Blake's place was usurped.

A few one or two-page tales in Boys' Friend Weekly or Boys' Realm Weekly or as fill-ups in Boys' Friend Library and Sexton Blake Library when the main tale ran short may come from the same source, but I have no record or knowledge.

A further discrepancy unsolved are the tales which were reprinted in hard back books with Blake removed and a different detective installed. Authors who did this, or allowed their tales to be so altered were G. H. Teed, John G. Brandon, Gwyn Evans, John Newton Chance, Gerald Verner, E. S. Brooks, i.e. Waldo as Conquest, John Hunter and maybe others which have so far not been discovered. My second table is of character appearances, as I think this may be fresh although authors that must have shown up in many articles over the years.

<u>CHARACTER</u>	<u>TIMES</u>	<u>CHARACTER</u>	<u>TIMES</u>
G. M. Plummer	115	Wu Ling	26
Huxton Rymer	75	Gunga Dass	22
Zenith	70	Roxane Harfield	21
Criminal Confederation	70	Vali Mata Vali	20
Yvonne Cartier	53	Dirk Dolland	
Kew & Carlac	47	(The Bat)	20
Leon Kestrel	46		
Waldo	46		
Gilbert & Eileen Hale	33	Total	664

I did not choose to weary myself in calculating reprinted tales. Anyone interested and possessing the Catalogue can speedily study the nett appearances of his favourite villain. This total is some 16% of the Saga. When one adds the character appearances taking 3 as minimum, the total percentage would certainly double. When one adds the frequent

appearances of Blake's friends such as Sir Richard Losely, Hon. John Lawless, Splash Page, Trouble Nantucket, Ruff Hanson, Granite Grant, Will Spearing, R. S. V. Purvale, Captain Dack, the single appearance crimes can be only around half of the total Saga.

P.S. To show that I am not a male chauvinist I figure female criminals - 3 appearances being the minimum, to be 205. This would be 21% of the total Saga.

* * * * *

Nelson Lee Column

A LETTER FROM ST. FRANK'S

by Jim Cook

First there was the ad hoc committee arranged by the Board of Governors; nothing definite came from this.

This was followed by a sort of "Head's Conference" in the study of Dr. Stafford at St. Frank's. And it is this latter I am writing about. The subject at both meetings was Economy. Or how to cut down the ever-increasing high cost running a public school.

Where the Board of Governors had failed to find a solution it was handed over to St. Frank's to find a way to beat the Inflation. And so Dr. Stafford had called in all members of his staff for ideas. Some of which were weird and wonderful. Most looked to Mrs. Poulter, matron of the Ancient House and oldest female member, for suggestions that could lead to cuts in the kitchen food being the most expensive item. Mr. Barnaby Goole, the East House master who was a vegetarian, wanted to cut out meat from the menu. He got no support for that. And M. Leblanc put forward ideas that would have been more suitable for a French restaurant.

Mr. Crowell and Barry Stokes had no thoughts on the matter at all. But Mr. Pyecraft's tentative plan to cut out supper on a trial basis resulted in many shaking their heads.

Mr. Pagett, the Fifth-form master, ventured to suggest they were all wasting their time since if the government couldn't cure inflation it was hardly likely schoolmasters can.

Schemes to reduce the high and expensive running of St. Frank's

were tossed to and fro but all were found unsuitable. Outside in the Triangle the boys were at Break and their thoughts - if they had any - were certainly not germane to the matter in the Head's study.

After all, the problem is a world-wide one, and St. Frank's like all other similar institutions, were feeling the pinch. But how like the Board of Governors to pass the ball into Dr. Stafford's court! Even the dear old head hadn't the faintest idea how to approach the puzzle since just raising the fees wasn't sufficient and which had already been rejected enmasse. And it must have been obvious that the Board had already explored all avenues before washing their hands of it and getting Dr. Stafford to find ways and means.

But although the head has powers to dismiss his staff it is questionable if his functions come within the range to practise economy running a big school like St. Frank's. Surely, one master opinioned, that was the duty of the Board. But the old head had called his staff together to at least explore the possibilities, and this he had done although knowing at the outset the difficulty of a worthwhile solution.

As I mentioned, Mrs. Poulter was questioned about her kitchen staff and maids. About the cost of food the school used. Whether some little economy could have been used in that direction. Fatty Little might have supplied that answer!

The impasse which followed almost caused the meeting to be abandoned until the arrival of Nelson Lee who had been late attending. All the points having been repeated for his benefit, the schoolmaster-detective agreed there wasn't any good sense to be made from them, but that he did have a plan that might work. It was a venturesome scheme that hadn't, as far as he knew, been applied in any other boarding school.

At this point in time I am not quite sure whether Lee's plan was adopted. But it was surely revolutionary! And one that the great majority of the boys would welcome with open arms!

Well, it was this: St. Frank's was to shut down each weekend, and all the boys would go home Friday afternoons and return Monday mornings. The effect on saving electricity, food, overtime rates to staff ... and so on was obvious.

Who ever thought the five-day week would come to St. Frank's?

The question of boys who came from overseas homes was easily

settled - they would be invited to the homes of their chums.

Nelson Lee's suggestion was conveyed to Sir John Brent, the present Chairman of the Board. Hopefully for his approval. And there I must leave it. It will be very interesting to see how it all worked out. Perhaps other big schools may benefit and copy the plan.

TITLE TREATMENT

by R. J. Godsave

There is no doubt that alliteration plays an important part from the advertising point of view in the matter of names, book titles, etc. The repetition of the same initial letter makes for easy memorising and easy speech.

Generally, the old series did not make much use of alliteration in the titles of the Nelson Lee Library. It was rather more noticeable in the Hunter the Hun series than any others, and then only used now and again.

In many cases the use of this repetition was - to use a modern term - to make a 'Snappy' name or title. The 2nd New Series of the Lee certainly made the most of alliteration in order to achieve this state of affairs. Such titles as No. 26, Handy's Helping Hand and No. 31, Archie's Awful Aunt bears this out.

Whether such a change from the normal tends to cheapen the title, and incidentally the contents, is open to question. This could be one of the reasons why those of us who were brought up with the Old Series find it difficult to show the same enthusiasm with the New Series.

* * * * *

THE RESERVES

by Roy Parsons

Every week some three-quarters of a million people watch League soccer being played. It is at once the most pleasing, the most frustrating, the most rewarding, the most exciting, the most exasperating of all spectator sports. From which you may gather that I am something of a devotee myself - and you would be right. Every second Saturday my young son and I walk along to the local football ground to take our seats and watch another 90 minutes of pleasure, frustration, etc. He has become another passionate follower of the game with his bedroom decorated with cut-out footballing pictures

(cheaper than wallpaper!).

He knows all the local players by sight and hero-worships them all. But perhaps the one he shouts for most is the young man whom I shall call Fred.

The point about Fred is that his is a success story. Just a few, a very few weeks ago, his name was almost unknown even to quite keen local followers of the game. He languished in the reserve side - that home of has-beens, never will be's and possibles that every club has to run. Placed on the transfer list at his own request he waited, seemingly endlessly, for another club to give him a chance. And then, almost overnight, success. Promoted to the first team as a trial he scored in his first match and his second. His non-stop all action play has made him a favourite with the crowd, and his trial period seems likely to be extended indefinitely. Fred is now known to everyone.

I was musing on this and other facts among the coco-cola and crisps during the interval of last Saturday's match. It occurred to me that in some sense Charles Hamilton ran his schools rather on the lines of managing a football club. He had his first team (I nearly said first eleven and at least at St. Jim's there were nearly that number) who featured regularly and successfully. There were the 'transfers' who arrived at regular intervals (at least in the early days) with varying degrees of success. Some, like Cardew became part of the first-team squad, others - Hammond, Newlands for example - tended to fade away after their initial presentation. Few of them however, were transferred elsewhere - Levison excepted I suppose. I rather wish that at least Trimble had been disposed of to a Fourth Division school! But in addition to those first-line performers and new arrivals there were what one might call the reserves - often formed from new-arrivals who failed to make the grade. The Peter Todds and Micky Desmonds of the Hamilton world. In many stories they played a small role or did not appear at all, but one was, as it were, aware of their existence. They played out their shadowy games, (sometimes literally in the story) as part of the backcloth to the main action. But every so often Charles Hamilton would seem to want to give them a run in the first team. And then we would have a Wibley story or two or a series with Hilton and Price or Clarence Cuffy would delight us all. However (and I hope this

is not a warning to Fred) they always went back to the reserves afterwards, having played their brief role in giving the first team time to recuperate for their next dash to India or battle with Gerald Loder.

Perhaps one of Charles Hamilton's strengths lay in the strength of his reserves. Who else was able to keep such characters (even waste them perhaps) in reserve to be used when required. Many a writer's first team would have been slaughtered by the Hamilton Reserve XI.

For my part I view these reserves with mixed feelings. Some I could cheerfully have done without, others might have been given more of a run perhaps. Still that is the supporter's privilege - to know how to run the team better than the manager. He may be right sometimes but not often. Successful team and successful boys' magazines have good managers - they probably know best.

* * * * *

RYLCOMBE FOR GREYFRIARS?

by Tommy Keen

Even as I write this, I tell myself it is quite unnecessary, for really, who could possibly be interested in a case of wrong fictional localities which cropped up in a Magnet of well over sixty years ago? An error which has probably been discovered and criticized, many times over the years, but to me, it is something I have just read for the first time.

Perusing Volume 13 of the Magnet (1918-1920), I suddenly had the impression that I was reading a Gem instead of the Magnet, and hastily looked at the front cover. Yes, it definitely was the Magnet - No. 545, dated 20th July, 1918 - the story in question entitled "Shylock of the Second", but even the cover was rather bewildering, an illustration of Dicky Nugent, Sammy Bunter, Hop Hi, and other members of the Second Form of Greyfriars, swarming over the platform at Rylcombe Station. Beginning the first chapter of the story, I had read that Harry Wharton had called at Rylcombe Station to collect a parcel which was awaiting him there, and at the station he found the unruly members of the Second Form, sent to meet a new boy for the Second, a boy by the name of Spring.

Why therefore were they all at Rylcombe Station, which shrieked

of St. Jim's? What had happened to Courtfield ... or even Friardale? Evidently Mr. C. H. Chapman had read that Rylcombe was the station concerned, so Rylcombe went on to the cover.

Dear, dear, Frank Richards had slipped up! But did he write this story? On checking with the 'Magnet Companion', I find that "Shylock of the Second" was in fact written by J. N. Pentelow, so the mistake is almost as surprising as if the story had been written by Frank Richards himself, considering the long, and surely tedious task which Mr. Pentelow inflicted upon himself by compiling the 'Greyfriars Gallery'. His knowledge was so, and at times too informative.

Just a slight mistake, and one that should not of course be mentioned so many years later, but we like to read about our favourite Schools and Papers in Collectors' Digest, and as unfortunately these now belong to the past, does it really matter how distant that past is?

Incidentally, there were no Volumes 14, 15, 16 and 19 of the Magnet. Vol. 13 (which was excessively long) was from No. 539 to 625, Vol. 17, 626-646, Vol. 18 647-701 and Vol. 20 702-730. Presumably, the changing of the volume numbers was overlooked!

* * * * *

The Postman Called

(Interesting items from the Editor's letter-bag)

BRIAN SAYER (Margate): Your correspondent, Mr. W. T. Thurbon, asked in issue 421 if Charles Hamilton took the name Herbert Skimpole from Harold Skimpole in "Bleak House".

In a newspaper interview with Mr. Hamilton (I still have my shorthand notes) he mentioned that he had intended the Gem character's name to be Simpole but through a printer's error it became the name known to St. Jim's devotees today. He added: "There is a Skimpole in Dickens".

I for one am grateful to that printer in that another irritating jokey name was avoided.

JIM COOK (Auckland): My current C.D. came this morning - much earlier than I expected in view of the snow all over Britain and the floods at York as seen on our TV news. I think it takes something more dramatic than weather ills to hold up the C.D. for long! But how lucky

we are getting it each month whatever may arrive to delay it.

FRANCIS HERTZBERG (Nr. Bebington): I have just noticed Mr. Thurbon's comment - this certainly wasn't my issue. I am puzzled exactly to what he objects in my statement that all fictional detectives must owe something to Sherlock Holmes. He quotes Dupin, Sergeants Bucket & Cuff, D'Artagnan, Zadig & The Prophet Daniel. Obviously I would accept that these gentlemen were not influenced by Doyle's detective - I of course meant those fictional detectives who came after him. If Mr. Thurbon means that these earlier detectives also are an influence, I should not deny the possibility, but would point out that this would be most likely to be because they influenced Holmes - as for example did Dupin. Apart from the magic of television in the case of Cuff, few other than readers of Dorothy Sayers's excellent Crime & Detection will have much knowledge of those quoted even where their detectival careers extended to more than one 'case'. I do not claim that Sherlock Holmes was the greatest detective (although many of his methods have been adopted by police forces), but he certainly is the best known, and therefore the one whose influence is least escapable. (For me, the charm of the stories is in the human and period elements rather than the detectival.)

D. B. STARK (East Sussex): Around where I lived as a boy there were several corner shops. One of them as a forbidden newsagents where I would go on a Saturday night (they kept open until 8 p.m.) and hope to find a Thriller, or Magnet, or S.O.L. On my way home from school I'd call in at one of the shops and hope to buy nibs at a farthing each, or, better, a Waverley at $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

(EDITORIAL COMMENT: Does anyone recall the Relief nibs, which Mum used, and the Waverley nib which we used. And do you remember the old advertising jingle:

"They come as a boon and a blessing to men,
The Pickwick, the Owl, and the Waverley pen."?)

ESMOND KADISH (Hendon): I liked Tommy Keen's "jelly and stone" piece. Of course, as has been said before, one tends to rate highly the stories one read as a youngster, rather than those that came before or after. Thus, I prefer John Wheway's Cliff House tales. I have the

greatest admiration for Messrs. Phillips, Kirkham and Ransome, but, to me, their Cliff House characters don't have the life and individuality which Mr. Wheway put into his. Incidentally, Connie Jackson was not replaced by Sarah Harrigan in Mr. Wheway's stories, and was, in fact, frequently featured by him in such series as "When Connie Captained Cliff House", in the 1933 "Schoolgirl". When you come to think of it, John Wheway replaced very few of the important characters when he took over. Dolly Jobling and Augusta Anstruther-Browne were the chief examples.

Your paragraph, "The C.D. must get through" was inspiring, but why was the Princess not helping to carry the mail?

SYD SMYTH (New South Wales): I have never in my life heard the expression "Cornstalk" used. It used to puzzle me when Noble was called it in the early reprint Gems. But "Bananalander" has always been used to describe a Queenslander, as much now as when I was a kid.

GEORGE BEAL (Winchmore Hill): Referring to the 'Let's Be Controversial' piece in the February issue, 'cornstalk', according to Wilkes's Dictionary of Australian Colloquialisms, is a 'native-born Australian', and quotes a reference as early as 1827. The distinction for its use solely for New South Wales seems to date from about 1885, but its currency is obsolescent in any case.

Sidney J. Baker, in 'The Australian Language', says that Queenslanders are 'bananalanders, banana men, banana eaters, kanakalanders and sugarlanders'.

Western Australians are 'gropers, sandgropers, groperlanders, straighthairs and Westralians'.

Victorians are 'Yarrasiders, cabbage gardeners, cabbage patchers and cabbage landers'.

Residents of Tasmania and Norfolk Island, with some logic, refer to other Australians as 'mainlanders'.

Many of these terms are, of course, long since out of use.

* * * * *

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News of the Old Boys' Book Clubs

MIDLAND

After the disappointment of being prevented from having our Christmas by bad weather, it was all the more gratifying to have a New Year's Party which was a splendid success. Twenty members turned up and we had to hire a larger room and it was full to over-flowing.

We had started an hour earlier than usual. There was a real party atmosphere and the refreshments which had been prepared by the ladies, would have delighted the heart of William George Bunter.

Most of the time was spent eating, drinking and gossiping to each other and laughing, but Ivan Webster, our treasurer, collected subs. which were now due as we started a new year. Generous donations were made by Pat Hughes, Stan Knight and Harry Evans. He was rolling in money.

Only one topic of discussion was raised - a comparison of the works of Charles Hamilton and P. G. Wodehouse and the perennial question, "Where did Charles Hamilton go to school?" The great man had his own reasons for keeping it a secret and we all agreed it had to be left at that.

A new member, Keith Normington of Coventry, told the meeting that when he first looked into the Magnet as a boy he found it did not interest him, but later he read the series, "In the Land of the Pyramids" and thoroughly enjoyed it. Since then he has become a Hamilton devotee.

We had "A Lucky Dip" which consisted of trying your luck for a parcel of books brought along by members. Each member had to bring a parcel which was numbered. The bag containing the numbers was brought round and you had the parcel with the number on it which you had drawn. I had a Magnet entitled "The Feud with Cliff House".

Our meetings, in future, will start at 7.00 p.m.

The next two meetings will be on 23rd February and 30th March, when we hope for more good attendances.

JACK BELLFIELD - Correspondent.

CAMBRIDGE

We met at the home of Bill Thurbon on Sunday, 7th February, 1982. Members missed Jack Overhill, who, as also several members of his family, was unwell. It was unanimously agreed to send a message of condolence to Jack.

The ever welcome speaker was Mary Cadogan. She entertained us with a super talk on Lady detectives, spies, fliers, etc., illustrated with a splendid collection of slides, made by, and operated for this occasion by husband Alex. Among themes she developed were "Worrals", launched in the Girls' Own Paper during the war to help recruiting for the W.A.A.F.; Lady investigators, both in young people's papers, and in the comics, and spies. She mentioned the rather patronising attitude sometimes shown to girl detectives. Among comics she referred to "Keyhole Kate" and "Peggy the pride of the force". She then turned to girls' papers, including "Schoolgirl" and Jemima Carstairs of Cliff House, to Violet Elizabeth Bott of the "William" series, and to "Schoolgirls' Weekly", ahead of all the others with "Sylvia Silence". She pointed out the tendency of authors of such stories to give their heroines red hair and to have animal companions; instancing "Valerie Drew" and her alsation "Flash". She said we were first in the field with lady detectives. Mary then referred to secret societies in "Schoolgirls' Weekly" and "School Friend". After Amy Johnson's flight girl aviators rather took over from girl detectives. The song "Amy, wonderful Amy" was played at this point. With war came "Worrals" - being the G.O.P. the heroine was not allowed to smoke or to drink. At this point the talk was illustrated with some beautiful colour slides of G.O.P. covers of the War period. She pointed out that the character of Worrals tended to change, in the first two stories, Worrals apologies for shooting down Germans, but by the end of the war she was willing to kill former Concentration Camp women commandants. Of female spies Mary thought they fell into two categories: the Nurse (Edith Cavell) and the Vamp (Mata Hari). A passing reference to "Rockfist Rogan" led on the Sexton Blake, and Mlle Yvonne and Nirvana, and Nelson Lee's one time girl assistant "Eilene Dare". After a reference to the "Girls' Crystal", which, curiously for a girls' paper, had a man detective, rather a

"Peter Wimsey" type, Mary spoke of "Revelations of a Lady Detective" (1861) midway between M. Dupin and Sherlock Holmes. After a break to enjoy Mrs. Thurbon's tea, Mary resumed her talk, referring, among others, to Grant Allen's "Miss Cayley" and "Hilda Wade". Harmsworth's Magazine's wonderfully named "Miss Van Snoop"; a Mill Girl detective; Baroness Orxey's "Lady Molly of Scotland Yard", then to "Miss Silver" and "Miss Marple". Mary was warmly thanked for her wonderfully entertaining talk. The meeting closed with a vote of thanks to Bill and Mrs. Thurbon for their hospitality.

LONDON

It was very appropriate, that after an interval of three weeks, due to the inclement weather conditions, club members met at a new East Dulwich rendezvous which Josie Packman had kindly arranged, the day being Valentine's and the get-together was very enjoyable and thus the tea break was extended so that the intimate conversations could get under way. Held over from the Christmas meeting, Roger Jenkins read excerpts from the Xmas story from the Courtfield Cracksmen's series.

Following this, the Penfold of the club, Tony Rees, read out his admirable poem that was entitled "Greyfriars in December".

Two tape recordings that Larry Morley played over were excerpts from a Hubert Gregg "Thanks For the Memory" and "Radio Memories".

Josie Packman supplied a copy of the Union Jack, 1104, that contained the story "Leopard of Droone" featuring the Wonder Man, Waldo, written by E. S. Brooks and a couple of Chapters read out by Ray Hopkins.

The second part of the Clubland Heroes tape that featured Leslie Charteris, was played over by Eric Lawrence.

During the extended tea interval, three new books were on display. These being Children's Books in England in which was a fine Magnet cover illustration, the book on Biggles and his creator, and the Dornford Yates biography.

Next meeting to be held at the Walthamstow venue on Sunday, 14th March.

Josie and her lady helpers were suitably thanked for their efforts

in making the tea.

BEN WHITER

OBITUARIES

We were much saddened to learn of the death of Mr. Leslie Morss, the husband of our Winnie in the London Club. Mr. Morss had attended club luncheons, and is happily remembered by all of us for his kindly friendliness at all times. Our deepest sympathy goes to Winnie and to their splendid family.

We were deeply grieved to learn of the death of Sam Thurbon, who, with his lovely wife, Babs, often entertained the London Club in their home. Sam, whose particular interest was "Chums", had been a loyal reader of C.D. for a great many years. Sam had been ill for some time, and was a brave man. We shall miss him very much, and extend sincere sympathy to Babs.

We were saddened most recently by the sudden death of Mr. Julius Lennard whose home was in Cheshire. He loved C.D. very dearly, and had been a keen reader since early days. He rang me up in December, and said he wanted to tell me the answers in our Song Titles Contest. I said, a little nervously: "Won't it take a long time over the 'phone?" He said "Oh, no. Got your pencil ready?" So I jotted them down. He got about half right, and I'm sure enjoyed himself immensely. He told me it was just for fun, and he knew it could not be an ordinary entry. I'm happy to think that we had that last chat. A dear old man, was Julius. Our sympathy goes to Mrs. Lennard in her great loss.

NORTHERN

Fifteen members were present at our meeting held on Saturday, 13th February. A special welcome was given to Nandu Thalange making a return visit, and to Mr. S. R. Dalton who was attending the Club for the first time.

A number of articles were passed round for perusal, including the article on The Magnet appearing in the January issue of "The Cricketer", the Cambridge Club's 2nd issue of their magazine, a recently published article by publisher Charles Skilton about Frank Richards and the early Bunter books and a recent article appearing in The Sunday Times Magazine concerning P. G. Wodehouse - who was, until his death, the President of our Northern Club.

Jack Allison gave a very interesting talk on some astronomical aspects in old boys' literature. He said it was possible through checking some of the details as described in literature, to pin-point the date. In the Magnet the stories were always relevant to the actual date of

publication and did not take place in the past or the future. Sometimes, details given in stories concerning the moon were not always correct, but Jack did say that Editorial policy could account for some mistakes - after all, Frank Richards had no absolute certainty that a particular story would appear on a particular date and the Editor could alter some minor details in the story to suit the occasion. In one story, it was amazing that the Famous Five who were supposed to be scouts, actually got lost out to sea and could not determine their position via the stars.

After refreshments, Michael Bentley presented a picture quiz with the aid of projector and screen. Showing various pictures of Old Boys' papers and comics, questions were asked re characters and the local environs.

JOHNNY BULL MINOR

* * * * *

THOSE COMPETITIONS

by W. O. G. Lofts

I was very interested in the recent editorial mention on the subject of competitions, where the lucky winner could have either £20 a week for life or a lump sum of £5,000.

I have always been a little sceptical of the genuineness of such enormous prizes. Comparing it with today's inflated rates one could say that it was £240 a week or a lump sum of £60,000.

On one occasion I mentioned my views to H. W. Twyman, editor of the Union Jack, on the subject of that competition mentioned in the extract from Danny's Diary of 50 years ago. "Twy" was a little shocked at my suggestion that his contest might be "fixed". He claimed that the prize was genuine, and had been won by a girl in Spain. Seemingly, she had won the prize, and, so far as he knew, was getting £20 a week. I later looked up the result in the Union Jack, and Twy was right. She was: Miss Antonia Canilla, Casa Colonia, Huelus, Spain.

There were no details about the winner or her background. The more one thinks about it - and I was discussing this with an accountant in the hobby - the more mysterious it really becomes. One could understand high circulation papers like Titbits, Answers, or Everybodys having such competitions, but, in the Union Jack, with its 1932 circulation of only 80,000, it does not make sense, even though entrants had to send 3d. in stamps as a fee which helped towards the prize

money. A much more realistic competition they held later had a £10 First Prize or a bloodhound similar to Pedro.

According to the accountant, with interest rates only about 3% in the thirties, the A.P. would have had to invest £37,000 to insure £1,000 a year being paid to the winner.

Editors of Amalgamated Press papers had nothing to do with competitions, which were run by "competition editors". Whilst I must accept the fact that contests run by the A.P. were genuine, it still seemed a little odd that the winner should live in Spain. Several Blake authors I know had strong connections there, owning chalets in that sunny land. Maybe too much detective work makes me suspicious by nature.

There is no question but that it was far more profitable to take the £20 a week for life rather than the lump sum that represented only five years at the same rate. But then, with a lump sum of £5,000 in those golden days of the thirties, one could buy a house, a car, and a business. All very tempting, was it not?

* * * * *
IT'S THE WAY I READ 'EM! by Len Wormull

The other day I saw a boy walking along reading a comic, and then bumped into somebody. I couldn't help smiling, for it was one of the ways I used to read, be it comic or story paper. And talking of "ways", the operative word here, have you ever stopped to think of the different ways you came to read the old papers? I have been looking at some of the dates I kept, when the motto seemed to be: Anything for a read. Where there's a will there's a way, goes the saying, and how true this was ...

On a cold day, wrapped in blankets and with a comic to read, I sat in the "dickie" of an old Ford car, en-route for Brighton. I soaked up the South Seas with "King of the Islands" - from the roof of a block of flats. I sat on top of a dust chute reading "Banter Court", convulsed with laughter. I took the "Skipper" with me to the dentists. Morale booster? I attempted the impossible on the village green - to read and watch cricket at the same time. I forget who won. I took "cover" behind them on buses and trams, but somehow the conductor always knew if I'd

paid or not. We had clandestine meetings in the classroom, and came out openly in the school break. "St. Frank's in the Midlands" dropped through the letter-box when I was off sick from school. We knew the peace and quiet of the churchyard, the noise and bustle of a railway station. I read "Grease-Paint Wibley" on a trip to Southend, a popular resort in those days and with the "On-Sea" tagged on. Okay, so it was a sub tale, but I was innocent then. I sat by the fountain in Lincoln's Inn Fields, reading a "Bullseye". The "Phantom of Cursitor Fields"? And I have followed Harry Wharton & Co. all the way to China - from the heart of Chinatown. I lived there!

On leaving school and working in the City (this made no difference at first), we found a nice warm spot for the winter: the Bank Underground station. The "Nelson Lee" and I became quite attached to it. Our favourite pitch was up against the rail overlooking the escalators. It's not there now, the war came along and ruined everything. On leave from the Forces, I passed by the Bank station. It had received a direct hit. Wonderful, happy days, and gone for ever. But we still keep in touch. Nowadays, perhaps, you will find us together in that grazing pasture for veterans - the British Museum.

What paths did your reading take, dear friends?

* * * * *

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A STUDY IN SAGA

by Ernest Holman

The first (silent) films of Sherlock Holmes were made between 1903 and 1911 by European and American Companies, although none of them were based on the original Saga. In 1912/13 an Anglo-French Company, Eclair, commenced a series of two-reel movies, with actual stories from the 'canon'. In 1914 a six-reel picture was made of 'A Study in Scarlet' (Holmes was played by James Bragington), followed two years later by another six-reeler of 'The Valley of Fear'. A little later, William Gillette's play 'Sherlock Holmes' was turned into a full-length film. (Gillette, who had portrayed Holmes in his own play when brought to Britain in 1899, took the name part in the film.) The story was only loosely based on items in the 'originals'.

In 1921, Stoll produced a series of two-reel films, all taken from the Cases, and featured Eille Norwood as Holmes. The same Company brought out a six-reeler with Norwood of 'The Hound of the Baskervilles'. In 1922 Norwood continued to portray the detective in a new Stoll series from the Cases. During this year, also, John Barrymore played Holmes in an American film (called 'Sherlock Holmes' there but entitled 'Moriarty' over here). The film had little relation to any actual Case. Stoll continued with a further series featuring Eille Norwood (Ian Fleming appeared many times as Watson) in 1923; the same year Norwood appeared in a six-reeler of 'The Sign of Four'. This was the last from Stoll and also the end of Holmes in silent films. In all, from 1921 to 1923, Stoll produced 38 films from the short stories, plus 'The Hound' and 'Sign of Four'.

The first sound film (in 1929) introduced Clive Brook as Sherlock Holmes ('The Return of Sherlock Holmes' by Paramount) but was not based on an original story. In 1931 Arthur Wontner made his first appearance in the role of Holmes, in a British production by Twickenham Films. This was 'The Sleeping Cardinal', claiming some affinity with 'The Final Problem' and 'The Empty House'. The same year, Raymond Massey took the detective's role in British and Dominions 'The Speckled Band'. The role of Dr. Rylott was taken by Lyn Harding, who had played the same part in the later twenties in a stage version of this story.

In 1932 Gainsborough made 'The Hound' (with some script assistance from Edgar Wallace) and Robert Rendel played Holmes. During 1932, also, three other films were made: 'The Missing Rembrandt' (very loosely adapted from 'Milverton') by Twickenham, with Arthur Wontner; 'The Sign of Four' also featured Wontner, in an A.R.P. production; and 'Sherlock Holmes' came from Fox, with Clive Brook again as Holmes and Ernest Torrence as Moriarty. The latter film was not from the Saga.

Worldwide made 'Scarlet' in 1933 and Reginald Owen, who had played Watson in an earlier film, now took the part of Holmes. In 1935 Real Art made 'The Triumph of Sherlock Holmes', once more with Arthur Wontner, with a story stated to have been taken from 'Valley of Fear'. Wontner also appeared in Twickenham's 'Silver Blaze' in 1937.

In 1939 began the long sequence of films with Basil Rathbone as Holmes and Nigel Bruce as Watson. Twentieth Century-Fox began the pairing with 'The Hound' (also introducing Richard Greene as the young Baskerville), followed soon afterwards by 'The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes', although this script had no connection with a true Case.

With the coming of the War years, Universal produced several Rathbone/Bruce films but all were 'new and updated' stories. They continued until 1951 and the two actors appeared in all twelve. The last film based on an original Case (and also the first Holmes' film in colour) came from Hammer Productions in 1959. Once again it was 'The Hound' - Peter Cushing was Holmes, Andre Morell played Watson and the part of butler Barrymore was taken by John Le Mesurier.

Over a period of years in the 1960's, B. B. C. Television produced several Holmes' series. Nigel Stock appeared in all of them as Watson; at first with Douglas Wilmer as Holmes and later with Peter Cushing taking over the role. 'The Hound' as a Television production appeared twice on the 'box' - with Peter Cushing repeating his film role for the B. B. C. and Stewart Grainger taking the part of Holmes in an American presentation.

Most of the sixty short stories and all the four long stories received dramatisation during the period covered by this article. On screen and stage the image of Holmes was, of course, inspired by the illustrations by Sidney Paget in the Strand Magazine. It is interesting to note that in July 1980, Southeby's held a sale of Sherlockiana - the property of the Rev. J. R. Paget of Midhurst, the son of Sidney Paget. The items included a silver cigarette case presented to Sidney, on the occasion of his marriage, by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, inscribed 'From Sherlock Holmes 1893'.

The Sherlock Holmes' Saga has nearly completed its century. 'A Study in Scarlet' first saw publication in Beeton's Christmas Annual for 1887. What other fictional character gave so much continuous pleasure for so long, as in the dramas from the Sherlock Holmes' Saga?

SALE: Wide Worlds, vols. 12 and 30. 1921 Puck Annual, £3 each, plus post. WANTED: The Prize, Robin Hoods, (A. P.).

38 ST. THOMAS'S ROAD, PRESTON, LANCS.