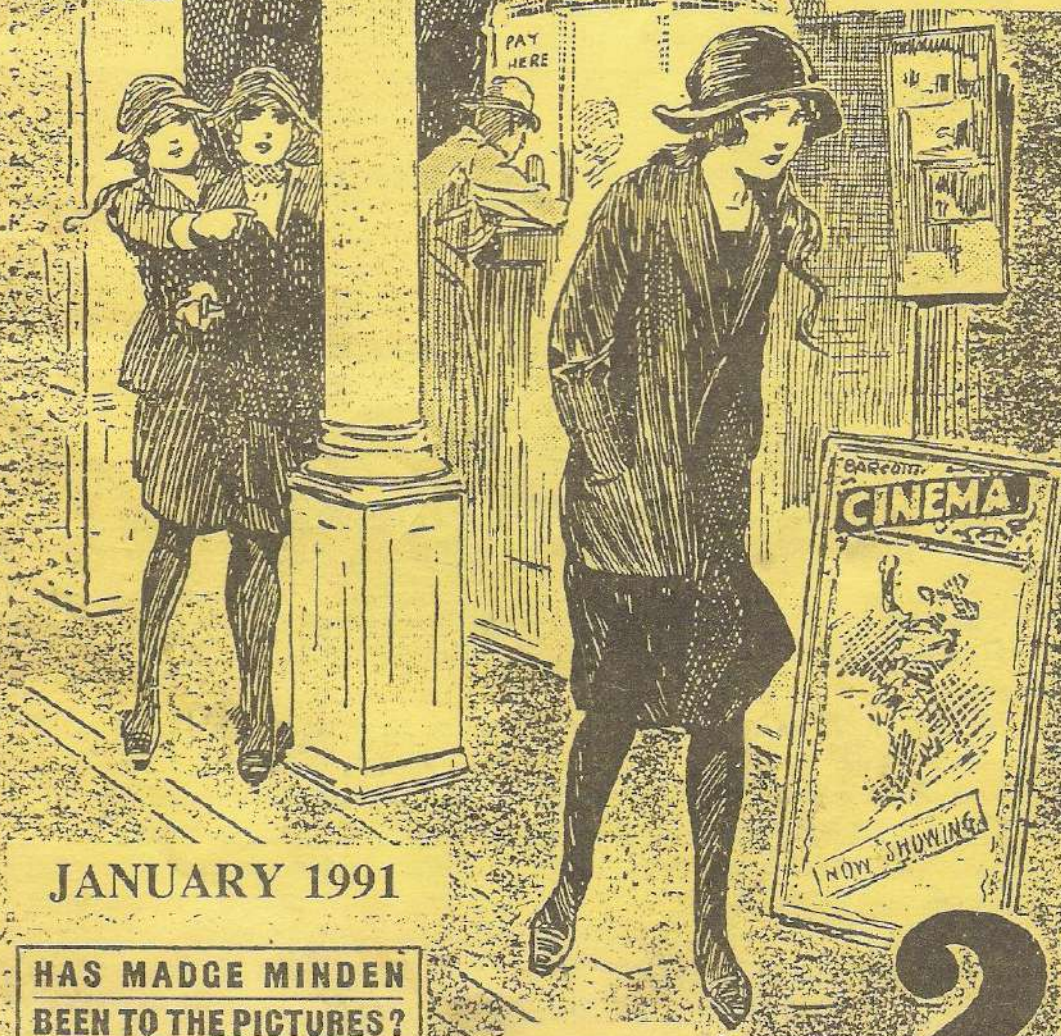


# The Schoolgirls' Own

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**HAS MADGE MINDEN  
BEEN TO THE PICTURES?**

(An incident from "Misjudged by Her Chums!" the grand school story in this issue.)

86P

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[Week Ending June 25th, 1921.]

and other surgical aids in the windows of 'medical shops' in London's Soho, Charing Cross Road and seedy side-streets - are here revealed by Mr. Kirkpatrick to have been written by one Aubrey Fowkes, a pseudonym for the sinister though aristocratic-sounding R. Vere Cripps. They were published between 1937 and 1954, mainly for an adult audience, by the Fortune Press (ribadly dubbed by the knowing of the time as the 'Gay-Friars Press...')

Browsing through the long and exhaustive lists in this book is a joy, as well as being entertaining, informative and amusing. All sorts of 'records' leap out at the reader. The most prolific author of boys' hard-cover school stories (omitting the incomparable Charles Hamilton and Esmy Searles Brooks) is R.A.H. Goodyear with a total of 45 published books in the genre. Next in order of productivity are Gunby Hadath (43 titles, if you include books written under his pseudonym of John Mowbray), Avery (41), Cleaver (33), Poole (28), Bird (23), Buckeridge (22) and Judd (18). Remember, these are their boys' school stories - many wrote books of other types as well.

Avery notches up the longest writing career with 43 busy years, followed by Hadath with 40 years, Cleaver with 30 years, and Buckeridge (who is happily still with us at 78) with 27 writing years (his writing career seems to have ended in the 1970s after turning out all those 'Jennings' books).

The most popular words in boys' school stories in hard-cover titles seem to be 'School' 'Boy(s)', 'Captain' or the name of the leading character. Michael Poole is outright winner with 'School' appearing in no fewer than 22 of his book-titles.

There is much more I could mention, especially about the many plays and films based on school stories. But space precludes this.

**BULLIES, BEAKS AND FLANNELLED FOOLS** is an outstanding and unique contribution to the field of juvenile literature research and is packed with fascinating and useful information. For anyone who enjoys - or ever has enjoyed - reading boys' school stories, and there are about 3,750 listed here, Robert Kirkpatrick's book is a must. It provides hours of enjoyable, fruitful and nostalgic browsing and it also constitutes an important and unique new literary Bibliography (and the first in its field).

Kirkpatrick, R.J., of the Sixth, gets his school colours, is awarded the Cock House Cup, and is herewith elected Captain of the (Boys' Fictional) School...!

✧ **FLASHMAN AND THE MOUNTAIN OF LIGHT** - George MacDonald Fraser (Collins Harvill). Reviewed by Mark Taha.

As a devout Flashman fan, I always waits impatiently for the next Flashman book, and it's always worth waiting for! This latest one is no exception; following on from the 1977 "Flashman's Lady", it covers his experiences in the first Sikh war of 1845-46 and, as usual, makes me want to read up more about it. Mr. Fraser confirms his standing as a historical novelist, not just a fiction writer, as he involves Flashman with political intrigue in the Punjab, the incredible Maharani Jeendan, one of those "modern Messalinas" he's always coming across (e.g. Lola Montez in "Royal Flash", Raneek Lakshmbai in "Flashman in the Great Game", Queen Ranavalona in "Flashman's Lady", Empress Yehonala in "Flashman and the Dragon"), her maid and sidekick Mangla, the unbelievable-if-not-true "Tartan Pathan" and "Man Who Would Be King", and the Sikhs' equally incredible Army, almost land pirates in their democratic structure, discipline and efficiency in combat, and general

depredations, the Khalsa. With historical characters like these, creating fictional ones would be superfluous. We almost meet again characters from the original "Flashman" General and Lady Sale, George Broadfoot, and Major Henry Havelock.

Flashy is his usual self: cad, womaniser, doing his best to stay out of danger and finding himself, scheming himself, even-up to his neck in it, the pawn of people in authority who believe his reputation; this time, he actually does some good service! I suppose that being adviser to an enemy general on how to "throw" a battle was right up his street; I always thought a clever coward like him would make an excellent general.

It's hard to recommend this book too highly; Mr. Fraser is my favourite living writer, Flashman my favourite character. I hope the next Flashman book will concern the American civil War; how even he managed to serve on the staffs of both sides... incidentally, the Mountain of Light is ... read the book!

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#### THE MYSTERIOUS MR. EDWARDS

by Len Hawkey



MR. EDWARDS OF LONDON.

Throughout their lives the Harmsworth brothers were staunch supporters of the British Empire, and the House of Windsor, and this was reflected in all their publications, whether adult or juvenile. This strong vein of patriotism is evident in many of the stories featured in their boy's papers, and on innumerable occasions the Monarch - in the shape of Queen Victoria, King George the Fifth, or George Vith - rewards some daring young Britishers for saving the world, climbing Everest, flying to Mars, or some equally fantastic feat of "derring-do". Tribute must also be paid to the illustrators who invariably captured a clear likeness of the royal personage involved.

As well as Sherlock Holmes and Sexton Blake, other detectives were called to higher service, occasionally, but possibly the most intriguing introduction of royalty was in the Boy's Friend in 1921. Here, the boot was on the other foot, so to speak, as the royal personage - albeit somewhat veiled - was always performing some gracious service for a less fortunate subject.

These tales were about "The Mysterious Mr. Edwards, of London", and according to the Editor, in Issue No. 1057, they dealt with "a splendid character who is always out to help the everyday people with whom he comes in contact". The author was never named, tho' from the style it might have been either Cecil Hayter or Walter Edwards, both of whom were B.F. regulars, at that time. "Mr. Edwards" is described as follows:- "A slim figure in light-grey tweeds, with a soft-felt hat, set at a slightly rakish angle, - a young man of healthy well-poised stature, with tanned face, and an alert, eager, expression".



**J.W. GEAL (Hampton, Middlesex):** The C.D. goes merrily on - good as ever! I am pleased at the increase of illustrations... they reproduce splendidly. The fine Louise Gunnis ones in the November issue have come out very well. I never, over the years, cease to be amazed at the quality of drawings in Victorian and Edwardian boys' books. There were some truly great artists at work in those days. More of the same, please!

**J.E.M. (Brighton):** Congratulations on November's C.D., such an outstanding issue that it is almost impossible to identify any highlights, such is the total effulgence!

However, I must say how much I enjoyed Len Hawkey's piece on Louis Gunnis - a truly masterly account - as well as Len's little poem by which I was genuinely moved.

Bill Lofts on Martin Steel and his ladies was a delight, as was Jack Greaves' nostalgic look at the old dance band days: a lovely and much appreciated departure, this.

Finally, what a joy all the illustrations were. Again, selection is invidious but since I always had a soft spot for Shields, a special thank you for the Morcove drawings (pp. 4 and 32). Altogether a star issue.

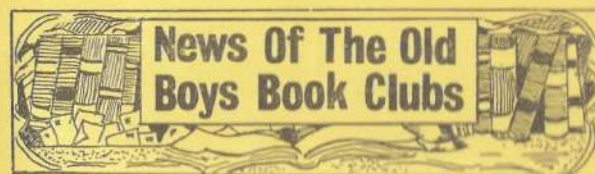
**MISS E. KEYLOCK (Litherland):** I was amused to read Ernest Holman's article 'Going Up!' in the November C.D. as my own thoughts have often strayed to what might have happened if Frank Richards's heroes had been allowed to move up the school as naturally as we in the local Grammar schools did... My chief speculation halted at Temple and Co.'s reaching the Sixth while the heroes of the Remove became Fifth Formers. What would have happened in the vote for Head of Games? I can't imagine the Removites serving under Temple, while such candidates as Wharton, Vernon-Smith, Squiff and Tom Brown were available! I should think Hamilton would have produced a splendid series on such a theme: but it remains in the realms of fantasy, as the Amalgamated Press editors would have been loth to allow their money-spinners to retire into oblivion at the age of eighteen or nineteen. As it was, after an initial puzzlement, at the age of nine, that these characters remained fixed in time, except for changes in fashion of apparel, I took it in my stride for the next seven years, when preparations for public examinations interfered with my weekly Magnet and Gem.

**MARK TAHA (London):** I read with interest Edward Holman's speculative article on which Remove fellows would have got into the Sixth Form. I've always enjoyed this kind of speculation... However, I cannot entirely agree with Mr.

Holman's "predictions": I can see Bob Cherry becoming another Gwynne, Hazeldene another Valence or perhaps Walker, Bolsover or Skinner as potential Loders - but Vernon Smith a future prefect? I can't help agreeing with his own words, in 1939 - "I've no doubt I will eventually be turned out by the Head. He won't put up with me forever".

Also I've always thought these should be some "flashback" stories, dealing with the seniors in younger days - for instance, how did Loder manage to get as far as the Sixth without being bowled out?

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#### CAMBRIDGE CLUB

As it is now the seasonal tradition of the Club, we met at the Trumpington home of Vic Hearn once again.

Vic presented a musical memories quiz concerning the decades from the 1930s to the 1950s. Later he showed several short films from the past (well, the 1970s), viz: the 1973 London Club visit to the Cambridge Club and the Club's visit to Dick Turpin's Hempstead. The Christmastime get-together continued with a miscellany of items including a Frank Richard's reading from Robert; seven Christmases, in Comics, from Howard, and in Annuals from Paul. A Keith Waterhouse reminiscence of Christmas comic's of his past, was read by Tony, and to round off the meeting, Keith showed the "Christmas with Tom and Jerry".

ADRIAN PERKINS

#### LONDON O.B.B.C.

Regardless of the snowy conditions, a good turnout was recorded for the Christmas meeting at Bill Bradford's home in Ealing.

Roger Jenkins gave us his Christmas reading from the Polpelly series. Full of atmosphere, and ghost to boot. This regular reading that Roger gives us every year is one of the most popular items at the London Club. The host, Bill Bradford, gave an illustrated quiz with the titles of various periodicals blocked out. Chris Harper, possibly with x-ray vision, saw through this test to win with flying colours.