

# Bob Whiter:

## A Legend of the *London Old Boys' Book Club*



Len Cooper - Online Meeting 11<sup>th</sup> July 2021

**CD March 1947**  
**No: 3**

**and**

**April 1947**  
**No: 4**

**and**

**August 1947**  
**No: 8**





CD May 1947  
No: 5

and

July 1947  
No: 7

MAY 1947  
Next Issue  
June 1947

# THE COLLECTORS DIGEST

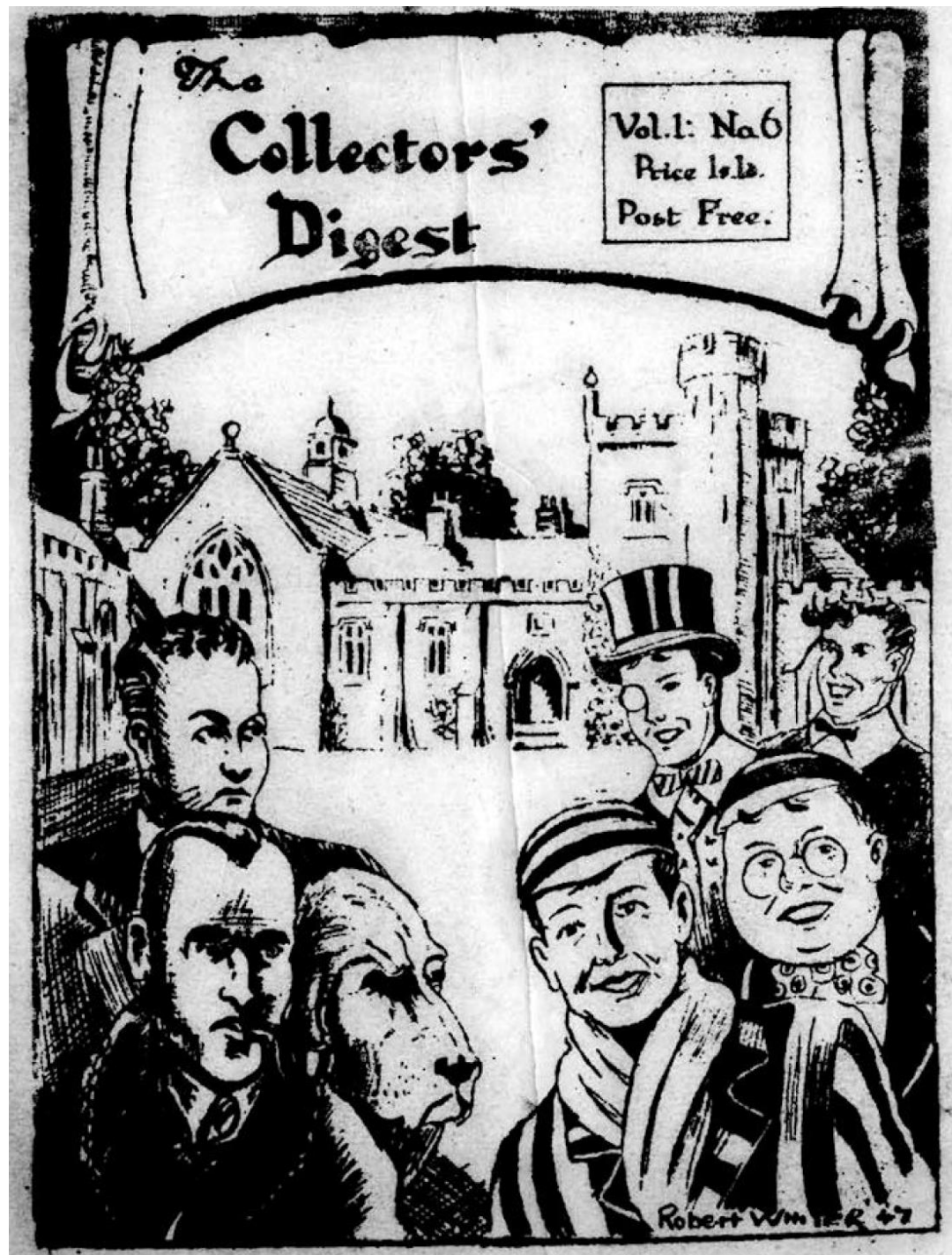
Vol.1: No.5.  
Price 1s.1d.  
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CD June 1947  
No: 6

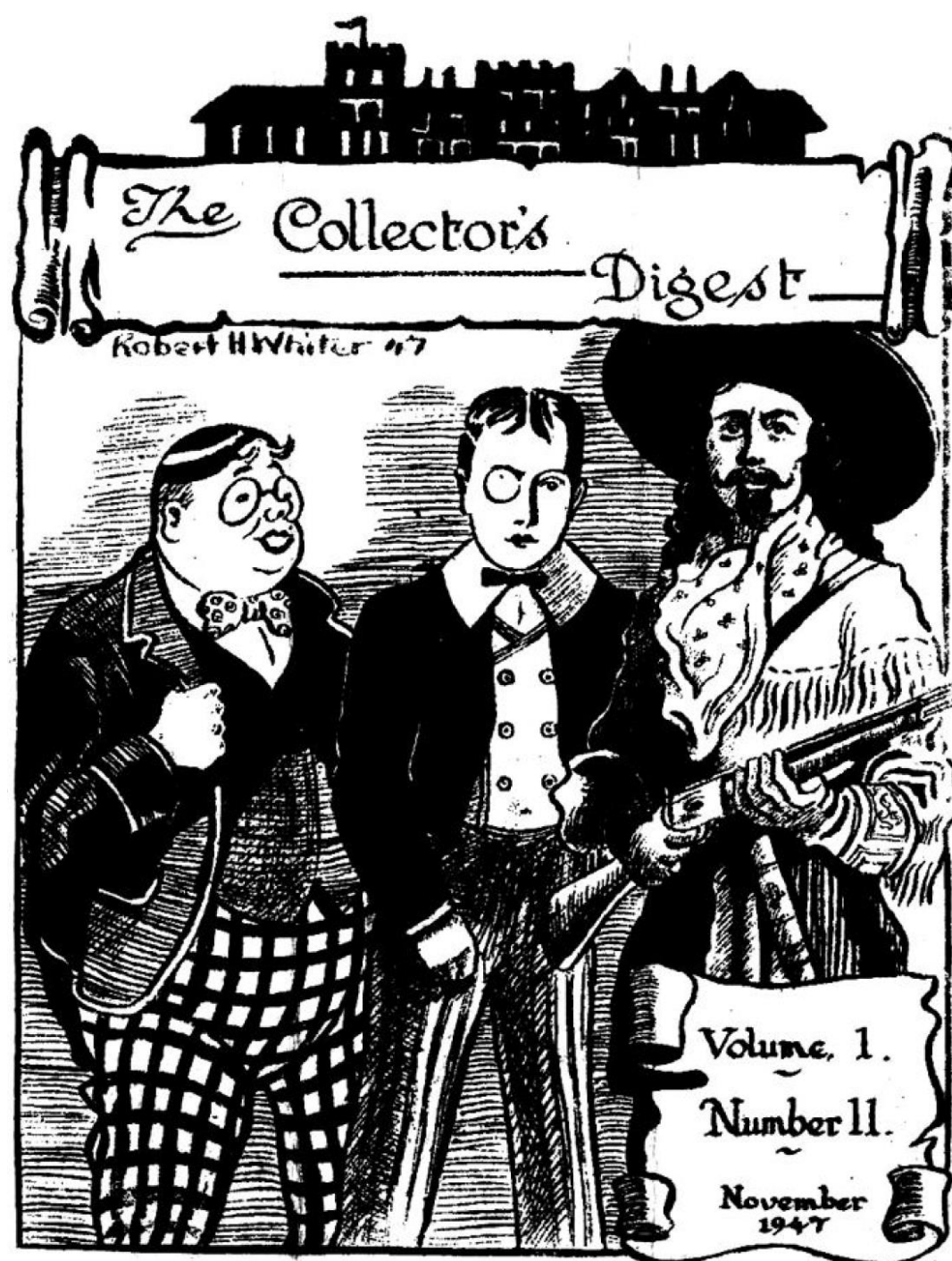
and

September 1947  
No: 9





CD November 1947  
No: 11





CD December 1947  
No: 12

## Bob's first 'article'

### I SEE THE HOME OF FRANK RICHARDS

by  
Robert Whiter

The Isle of Thanet has always been my usual holiday resort, but little did I know until comparatively recently that it was also the home of Frank Richards, my favourite author.

This year saw my wife and I once again at Cliftonville for a week, and on the Wednesday in Kingsgate - our destination, the house of the immortal man who had gripped my interest since the age of eight with his marvellous tales of those schoolboy characters, whose fame has encircled the globe.

Getting off the 'bus we walked but fifty yards when I gripped my wife's arm and pointed to a

road on our left which bore the legend, Percy Ave. Getting very excited I led the way with the name of "Rose Lawn" on my lips, you see I'd forgotten the number. Very disappointed we reached the sea front and the end of the Avenue without seeing our object. Leaving my wife on the front, I made my way back up the long Avenue, a 'phone box half way down catching my eye; here I would find the number surely. Before long, however, I stood outside the master's home and saw the front gate was open and realised why we hadn't seen the name. Lost in thought I gazed fascinated until I noticed a lady looking at me from the window, presently she spoke. "Did you want anything?". Begging her pardon, I stepped into the garden and told her the object of my presence and asked whether it was possible to see Mr. Richards. She explained that this was not possible owing to the fact that so many people called and if Mr. Richards saw one he would have to see all. Five hundred she estimated, had called that season. I was naturally disappointed, but

fully understood. Miss Wood, which I later found to be the lady's name, proved to be a very pleasant person, and I enjoyed the short talk I had with her. I finished the conversation by asking permission to snap the house which was readily granted. So wishing my kind friend a very good morning, I rejoined my wife and after taking photo's of the esteemed residence, took my leave, taking with me ever lasting memories of my grand visit to the abode of the King of Schoolboy Writers.





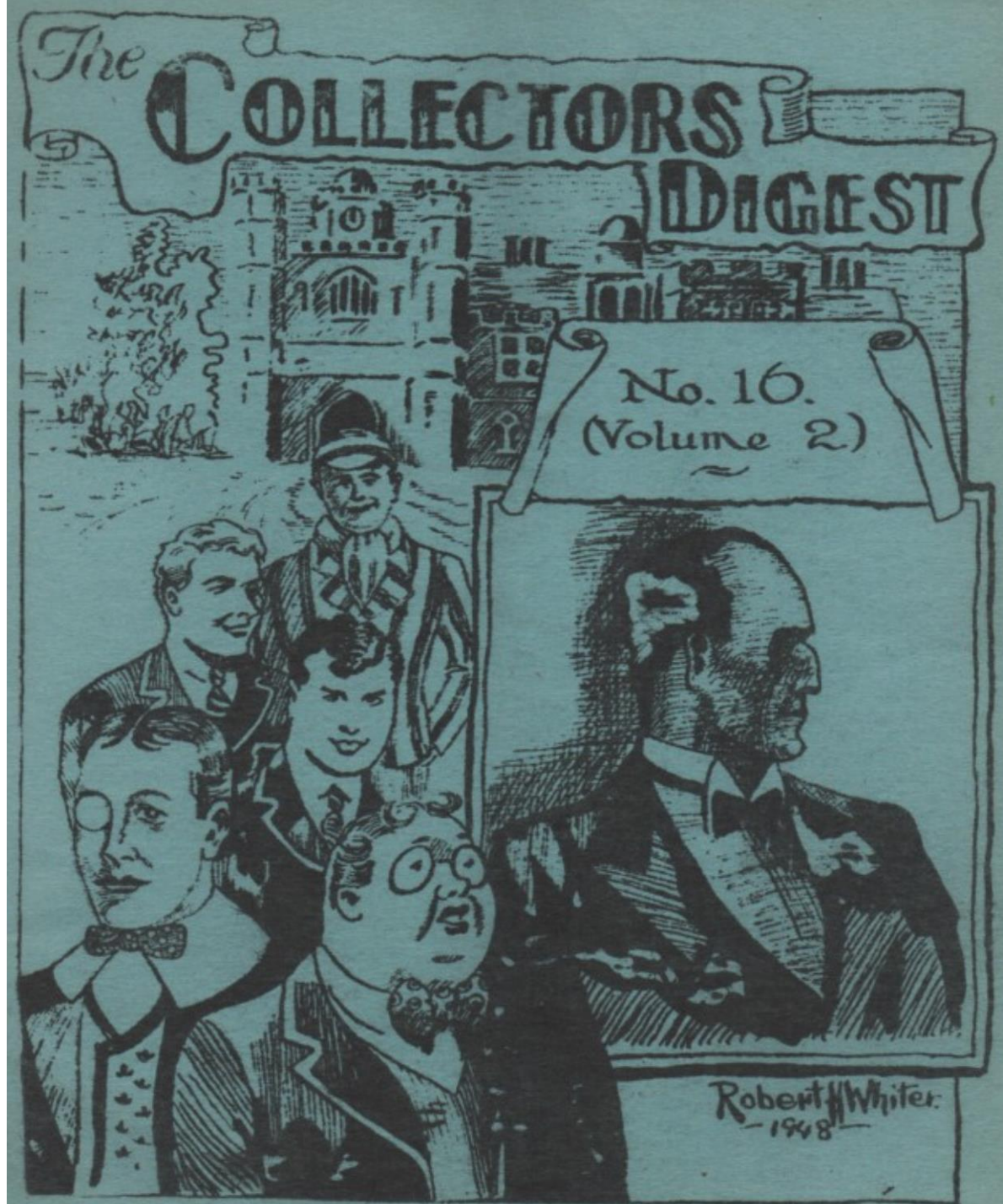
**Collectors' Digest**  
**1947 Xmas Annual**  
**No. 1**

**Caption:**

Where "Billy Bunter of Greyfriars School"  
was written. Drawn by Robert Whiter



CD April 1948  
No: 16





"THE BIG BANG AT GREYFRIARS"

By Robt. H. Whiter

Such was the title of November 5th week of the Magnet 1937, No. 1551, one of the many excellent stories written around the glorious "fifth" at Greyfriars School. Certain types of stories always had a strong appeal for me, and the Guy Fawkes episodes were an example. Of the '30s the one that stands out in my mind more than any of the others was the famous "Secret Seven" series. With the Headmaster away and Mr. Prout in his place, things were bound to happen. Hoodwinked by Loder, Prout makes him head prefect, with the result that the juniors have a bad time of it. Lickings, lines, detentions are the order of the day. When Mr. Quelch, master of the Remove, intervenes, Loder engineers his temporary retirement following hot words with Prout. Thus was the "Secret Seven" born. Shell, Upper Fourth and Remove banded themselves together so that whilst one lot of seven juniors were carrying out retaliation, prominent members of the various forms were always in view. Disguise was affected by the wearing of bulky overcoats and Guy Fawkes masks, members had a secret code, invisible pencils and a thumb print recording



CD December 1949  
No: 36





**Collectors' Digest**  
**1948 Xmas Annual**  
**No. 2**



**Nine impressions**

# CD November 1949

## No: 30

### LEONARD SHIELDS

#### A Tribute

By Robert H. Whiter

In Putney, South-West London, last January died Leonard Shields, famous for his illustrations in the Magnet. Thus have we, the collectors of that very fine periodical, lost a great celebrity of wide renown in the circle of schoolboy fiction. Mr. Shields, as far as I can make out, commenced drawing for the Greyfriars stories in the twenties, but it wasn't until the early thirties that his work assumed the brilliant craftsmanship that distinguished it from his contemporaries. Many people have in

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the past mistaken his work for that of Mr. C.H. Chapman, the other famous Magnet illustrator, certainly there is a resemblance, but in the writer's opinion Chapman was never in the same street as the subject of this article. Chapman's drawings suffered from several faults; his figures were always too angular, their feet never looked natural, whilst the whole lay-out generally gave one a feeling of haste on the part of the artist in completing the picture. Shields always looked to detail, the background whether town or country always had an appealing look about it. The scenes in Courtfield with policemen or passers-by shown were always drawn with meticulous care. Who can ever forget his river scenes, the banks with ferns, and fences running down to the edge, with the island in the distance most enticing on a June day, the famous five rowing lazily down its course, keeping an eye open for Sir Hilton Popper!

Shields drew the inside illustrations until the second story in the Poker Pike series, No. 1473 May 9th 1936, when Chapman took over, leaving Shields in the most part to do the covers. The last time we were treated to his drawings as interior artist was during the Holiday series on the Thames with Shifty Spooner after the Water Lily. This unfortunately was only for a week or so, Chapman once again taking over, with Shields doing the covers, a combination which lasted until the Magnet's final close down. Shields did illustrations for many other books, including the Holiday Annual, Film Fun etc. He also did the first drawings of Bunter's famous sister, Bessie of Cliff House. He did not of course create Billy Bunter as an artist; that distinction must go to Arthur Clark from the descriptions of his real creator, our own incomparable Frank Richards.



**Collectors' Digest**  
**1949 Xmas Annual**  
**No. 3**

Cardew of the Fourth





# CD November 1950

## No: 47

### C. H. Chapman in 'The Cyclist'

Some time ago alert Bob Whiter spotted some sketches by C.H. Chapman in "The Cyclist". As the famous artist has been out of the limelight since the Magnet closed down, Bob sat up and took notice. He wrote to Mr. Chapman through the paper, and to his delight got a reply and an invitation to visit Mr. Chapman at his home. Needless to say Bob promptly accepted. He had a very happy time and I cannot do better than quote him in his own words.

"Mr. Charles Henry Chapman is 72 years of age. He started life as an architect. When 28, drew for Pearson's 'Big Budget'. In 1910 or 1911

(to the best of his memory) took over the Magnet illustrations on the death of A.H. Clarke. He confirms that he was told to copy Clarke's style. He also worked on "Ally Slopers Half Holiday". From 1912 to 1928 he illustrated the Magnet covers and interiors doing all his work in a hut in an orchard at his home.

He and Leonard Shields were great friends. Leonard Shields could not always cope with the work sent him by the A.P. and he would sometimes send uncompleted drawings to Mr. Chapman to finish.

Mr. Chapman also said Frank Richards in his estimation was the finest author the A.P. ever had. He could type off a story with the typewriter on his knee, smoking and chatting at the same time. "An amazing fellow".

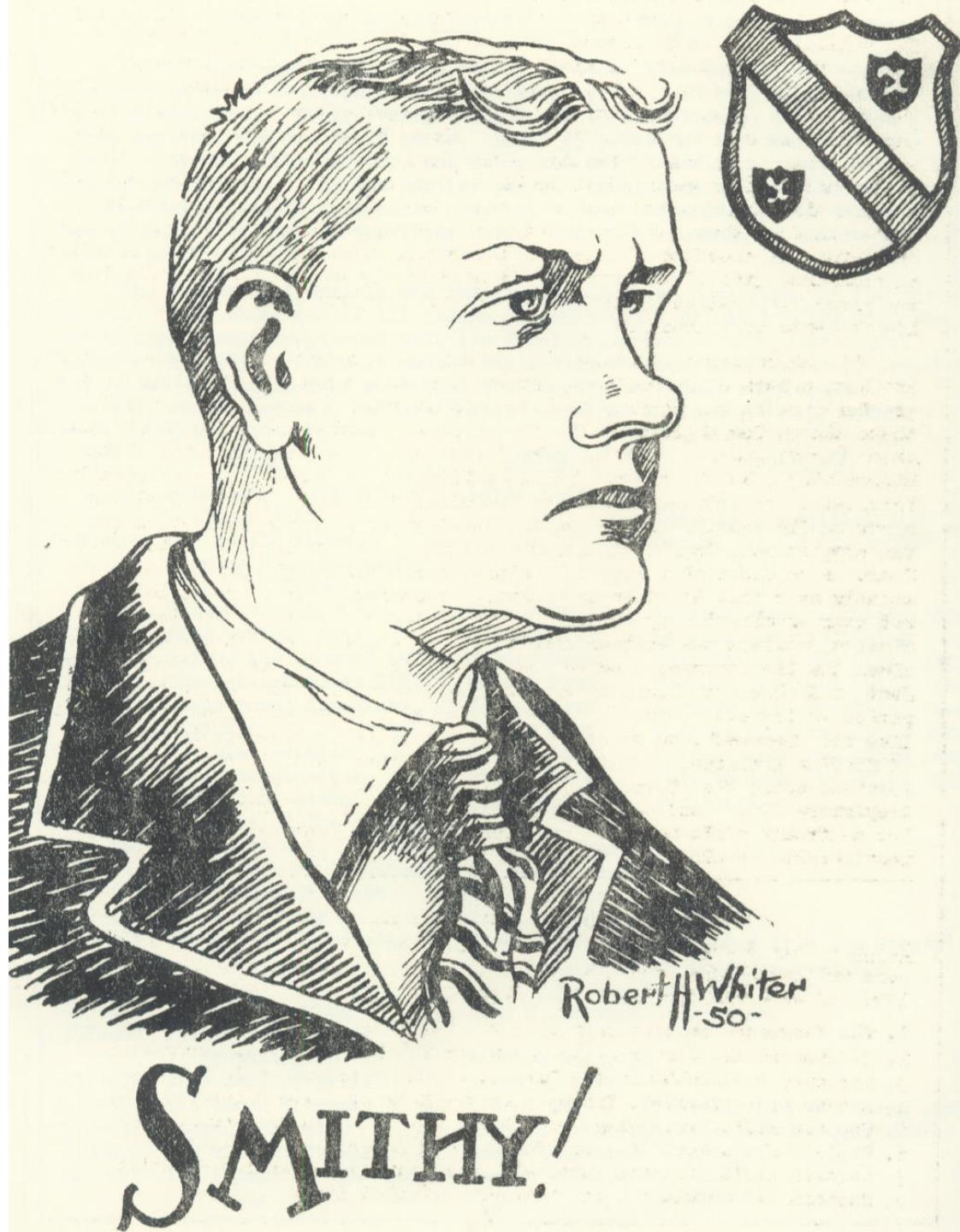
Mr. Chapman is a charming man, full of energy, twinkling blue eyes, and a keen cyclist. He is a brilliant artist, his rooms being covered with paintings of all descriptions.

He is no relation to S.H. Chapman, whose work appeared in the "Champion" and other A.P. papers".

Congrats. Bob. Through your keenness you've provided Hamiltonia with some fine copy. That's particularly interesting about Mr. Chapman completing work for Mr. Shields. It explains why one was sometimes puzzled as to which one had been at work.



**Collectors' Digest**  
**1950 Xmas Annual**  
**No. 4**





CD May 1951  
No: 53



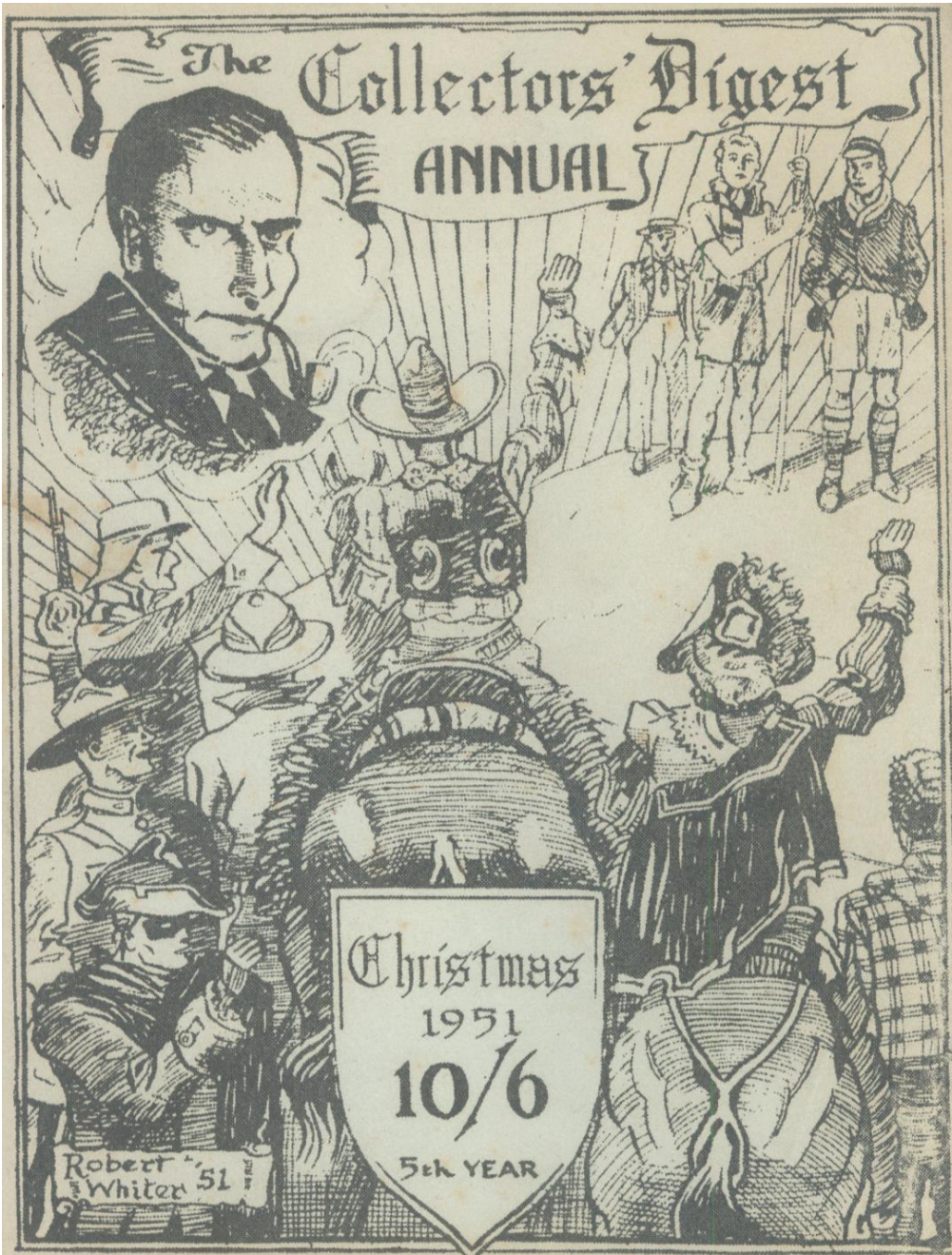


CD June 1951  
No: 54





# Collectors' Digest 1951 Xmas Annual no. 5





CD February 1952  
No: 62

The  
Collectors'  
Digest

Re-drawn from  
Union Jack No.  
1422, 17th of  
January, 1931 by  
Robert Whiter.



(Vol.6) No.62.

PRICE 1/6. POST  
FREE. FEB. 1952.

Robert  
Whiter  
'52

CD April 1952  
No: 64

# *The Collector's Digest*

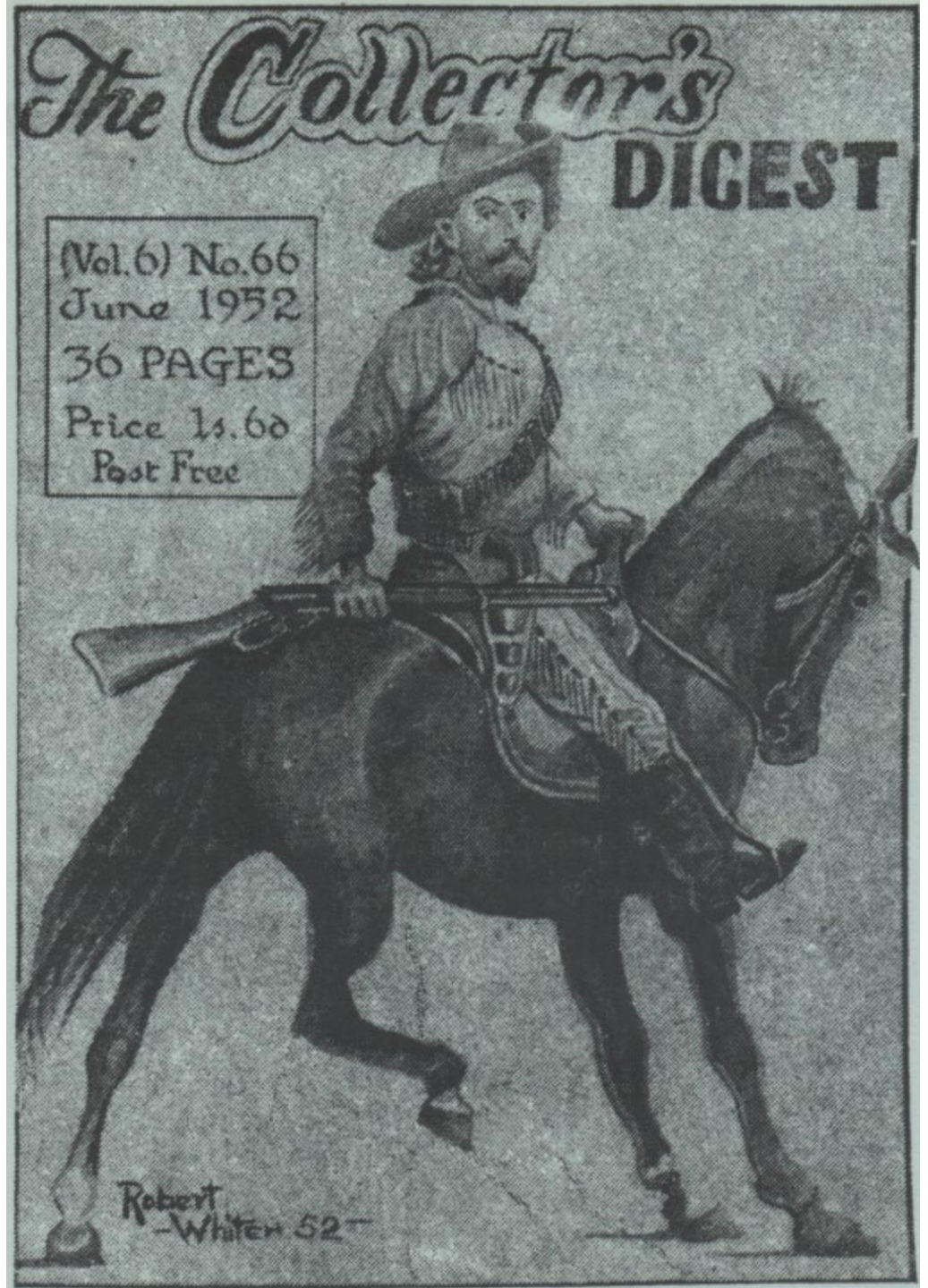


Vol.6. No.64.  
April 1952  
32 Pages.  
Price 1s. 1d  
Post Free.

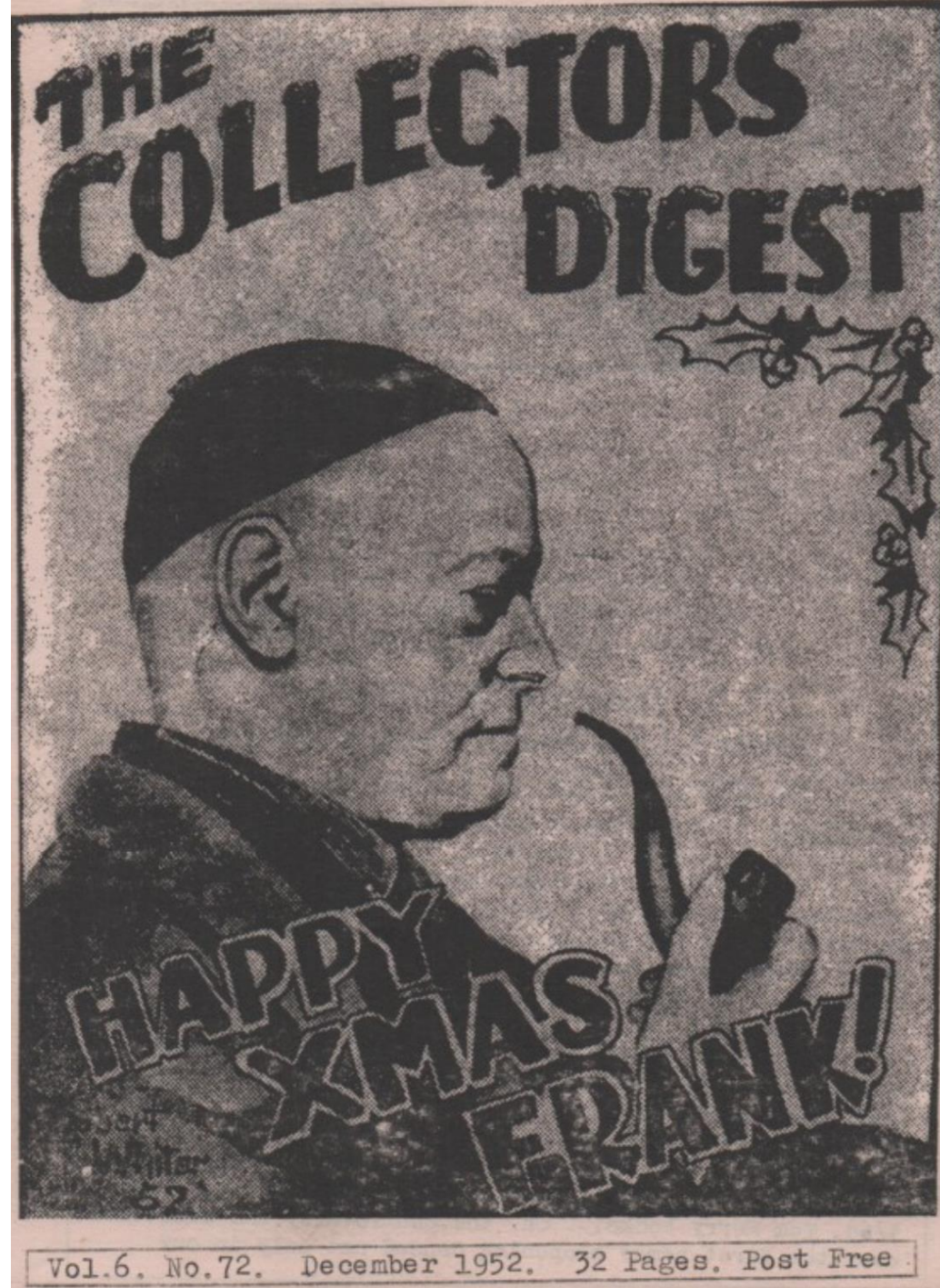
*Robert  
Whiter  
-52-*



CD June 1952  
No: 66

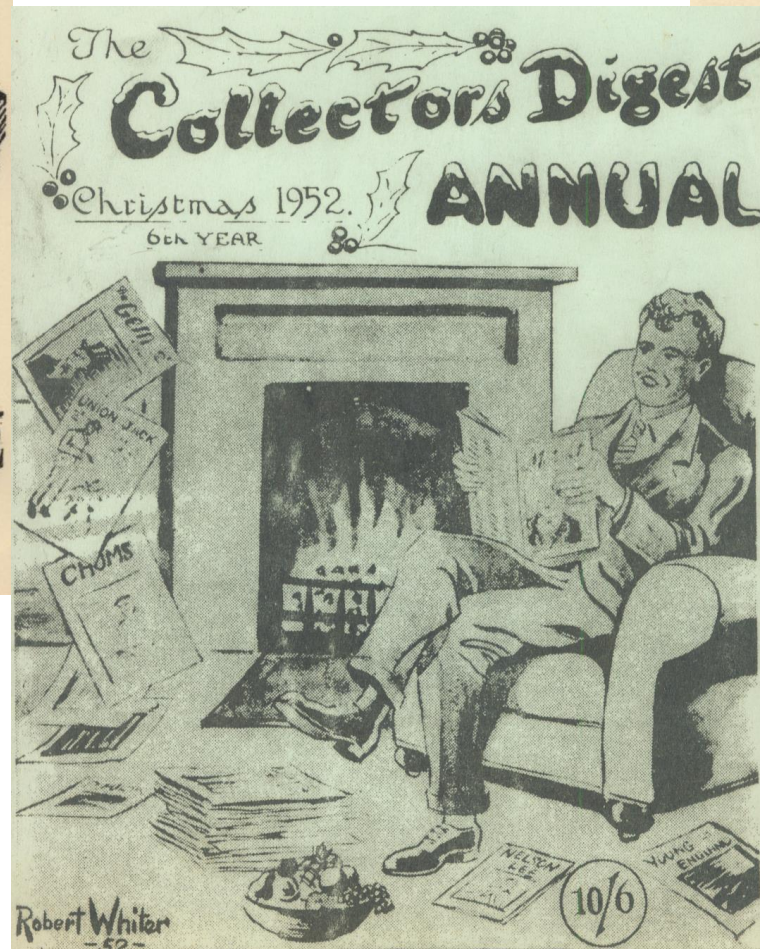


**CD December 1952**  
**No: 72**



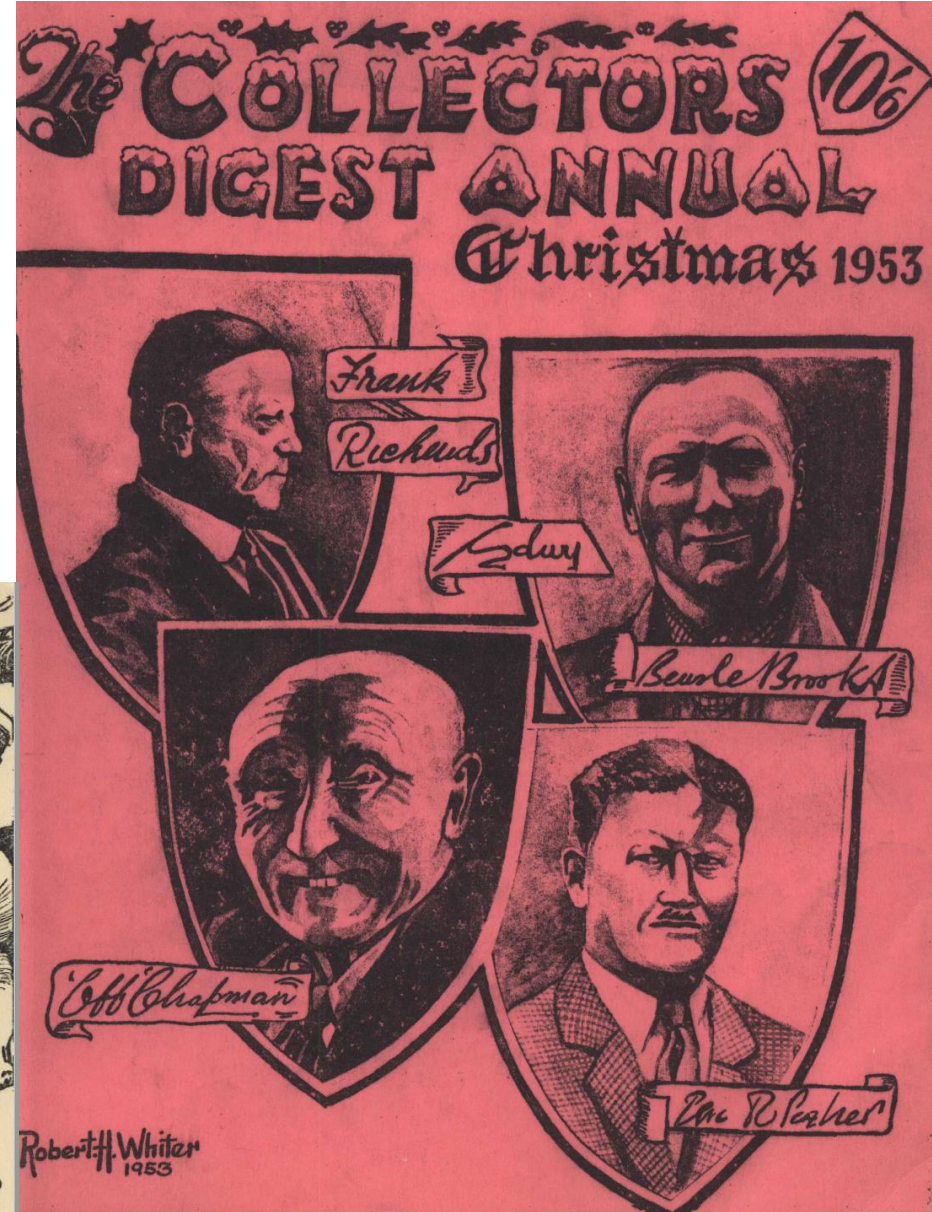


**Collectors' Digest  
1952 Xmas Annual  
No. 6**





**Collectors' Digest**  
**1953 Xmas Annual**  
**No. 7**





CD May 1954  
No: 89

# *The* COLLECTOR'S Vol. 8, No. 89. MAY, 1954. **DIGEST**



**CAPTAIN**  
Robert Whiter 54  
**JUSTICE**

Price 1s.6d.

CD July 1954  
No: 91

# The Collector's Digest

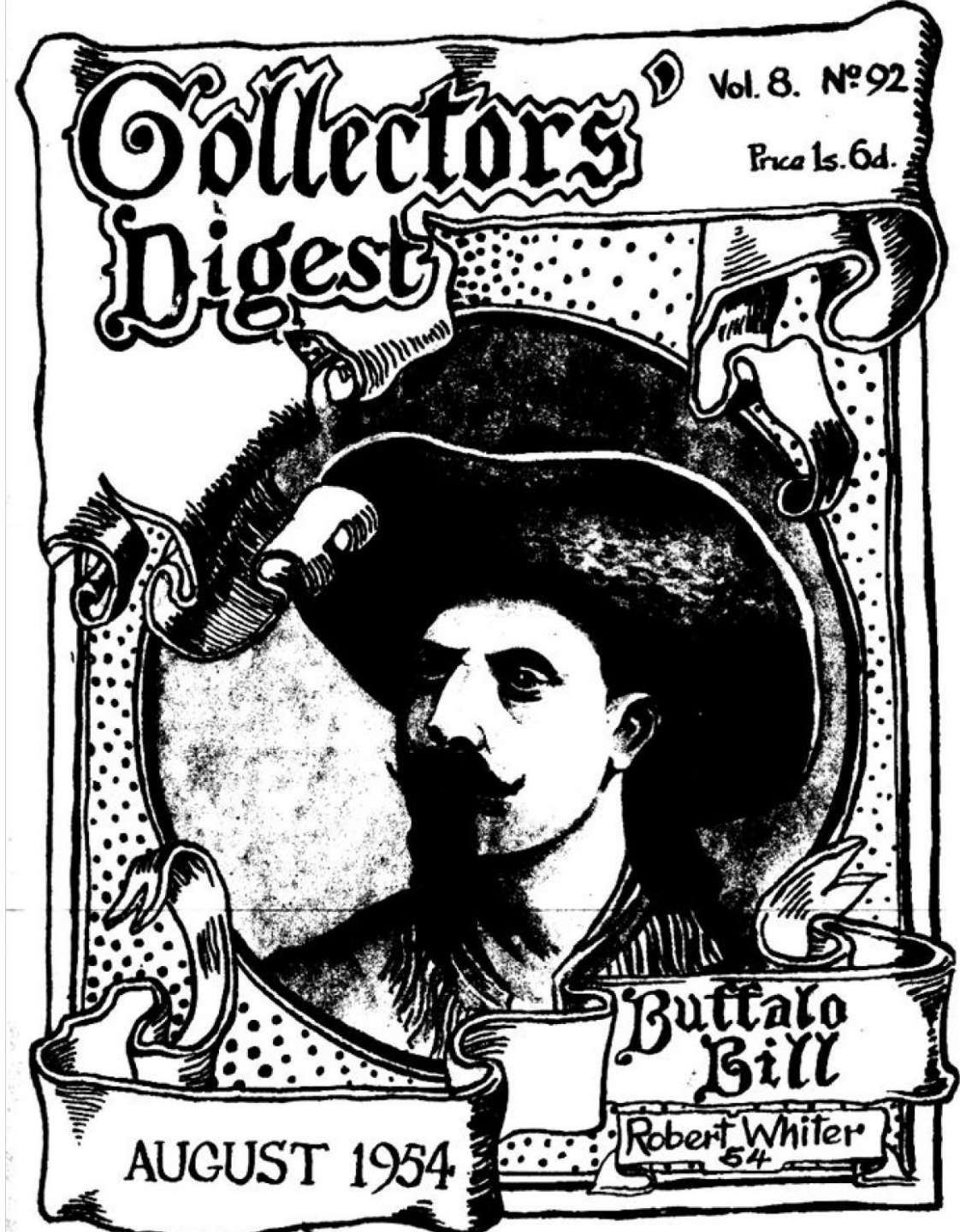
Vol. 8. Nº 91.  
JULY, 1954

Price 1s. 6d.





CD August 1954  
No: 92



CD October 1954  
No: 94

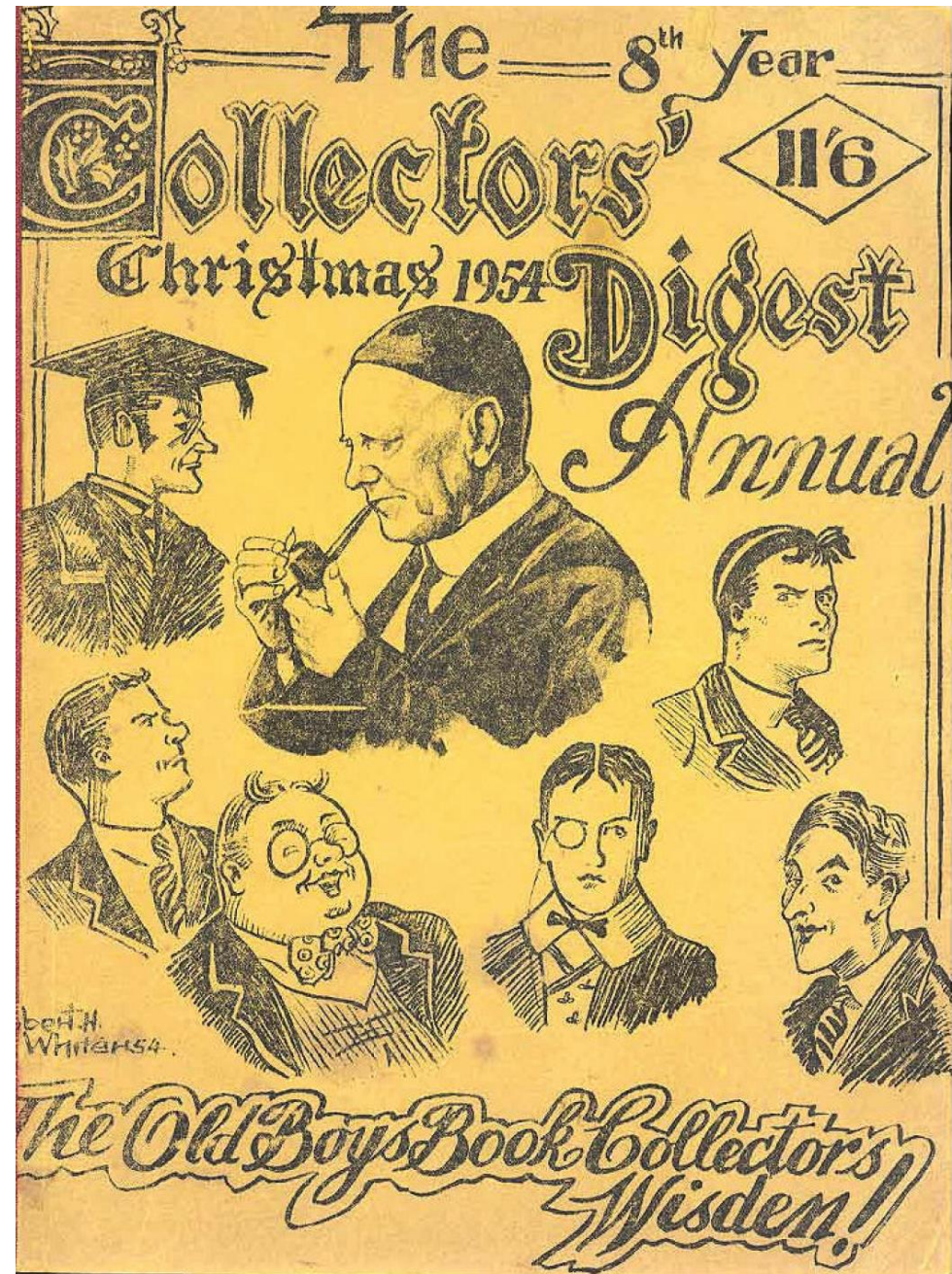
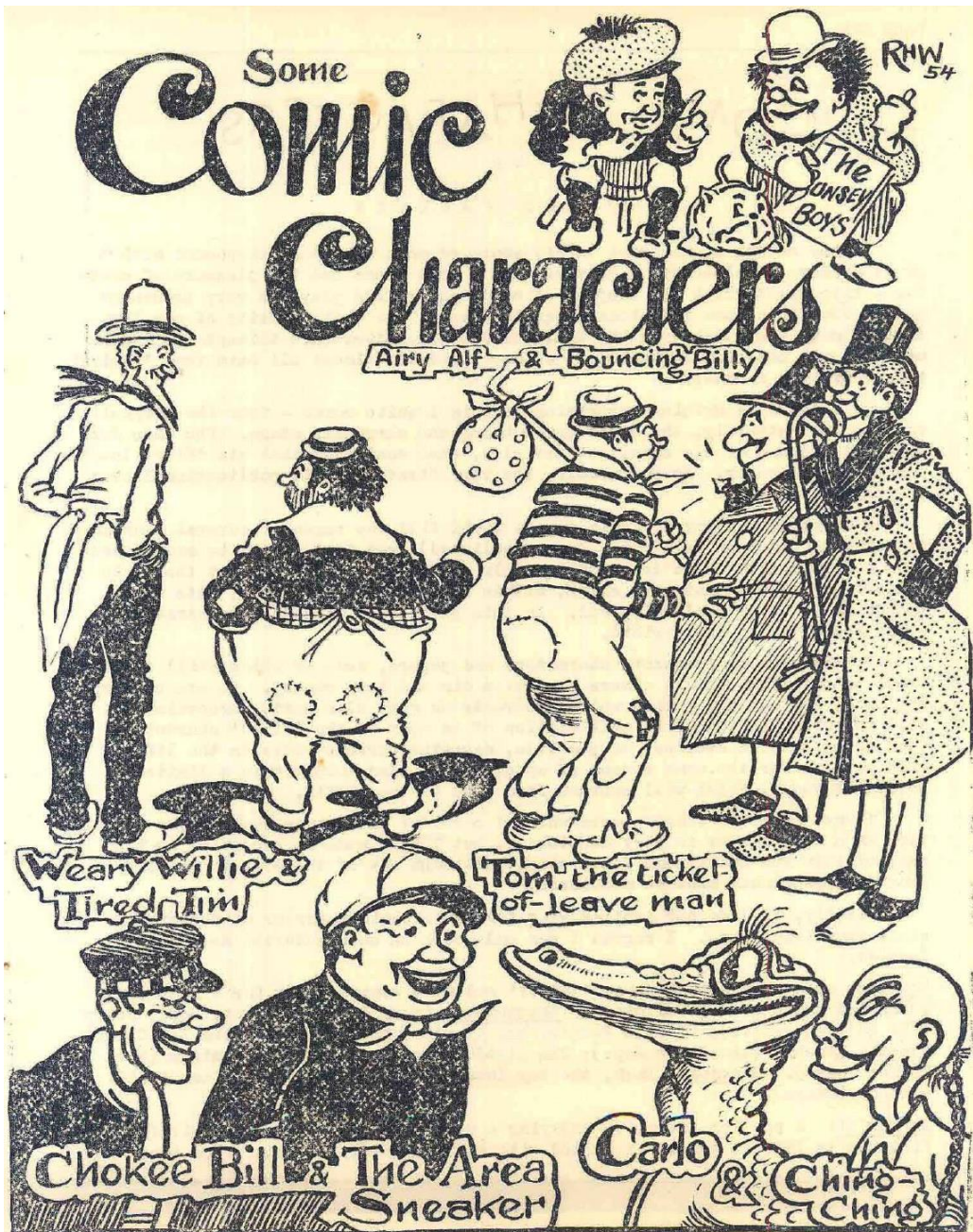
# *The* COLLECTORS' Digest

OCTOBER 1954, vol. 8. no 94.  
Price 1s. 6d.

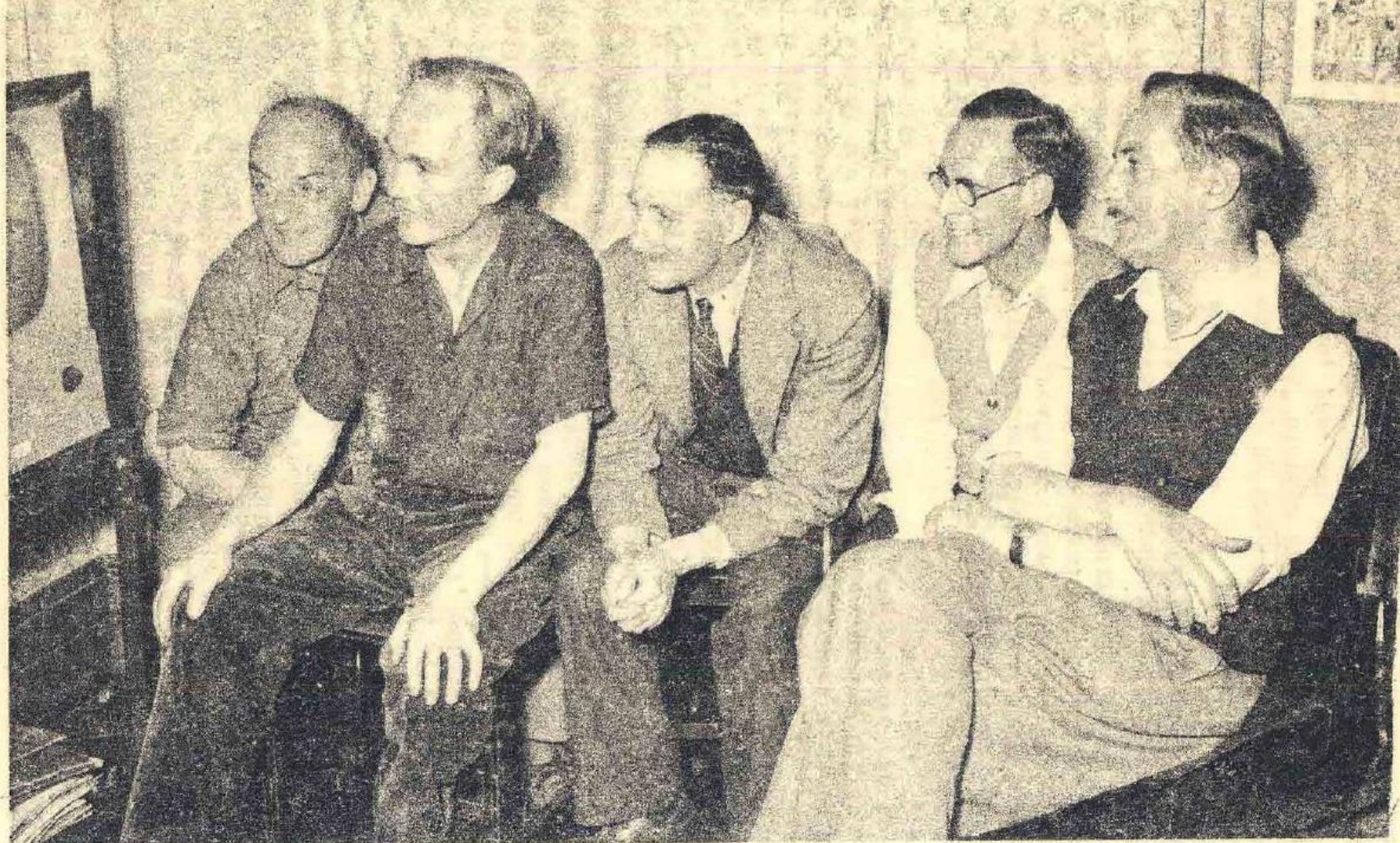




# Collectors' Digest 1954 Xmas Annual no. 8







## Also from Collectors' Digest 1954 Xmas Annual no. 8

FIVE STALWARTS OF THE LONDON O.B.B.C. WATCHING BILLY BUNTER ON TELEVISION

From left to right: BEN WHITER, BOB WHITER, LEN PACKMAN, CHARLIE WRIGHT  
and BOB BLYTHE



CD March 1955  
No: 99

# *The Collectors' Digest*

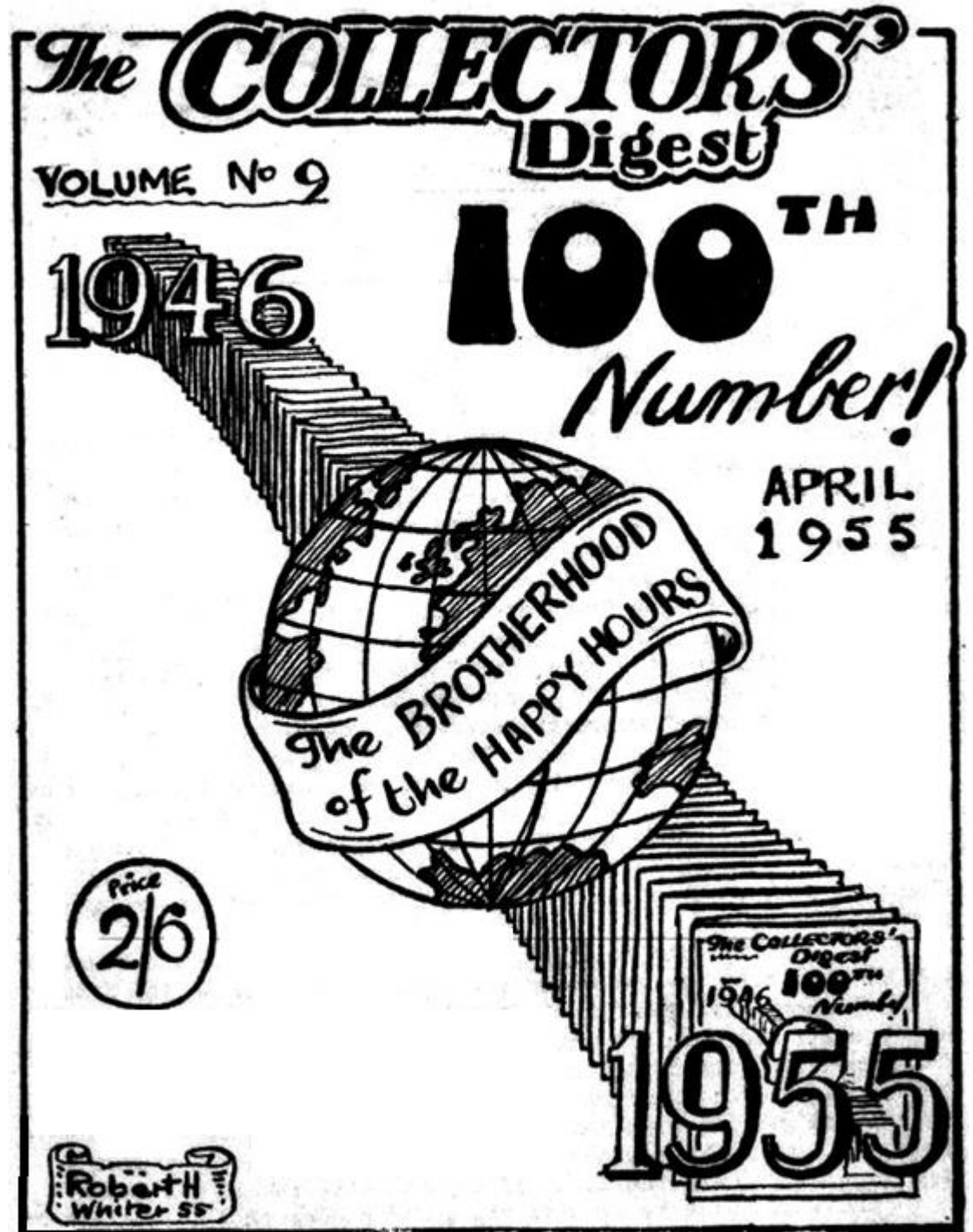
MARCH, 1956  
Vol. 9. No 99.

Price 1s. 6d.



**I'm  
Running to Make Sure  
of My Copy of the 100<sup>TH</sup> C.D**

CD April 1955  
No: 100



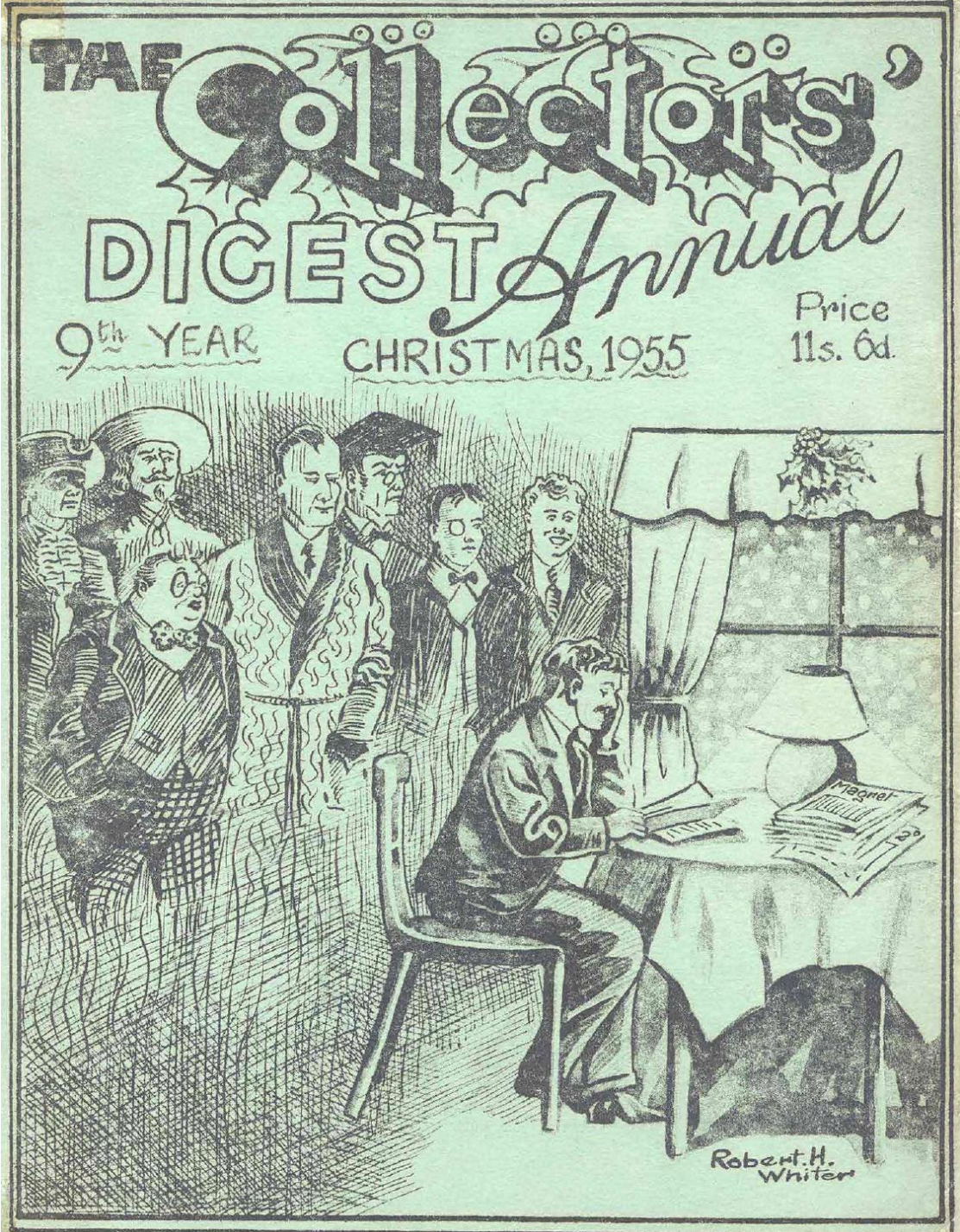


CD July 1955  
No: 103





**Collectors' Digest**  
**1955 Xmas Annual**  
**No. 9**





CD September 1956  
No: 117

# *The* COLLECTOR'S DIGEST

Vol. 11, No 117.  
Price 1s. 6d.

September, 1956.

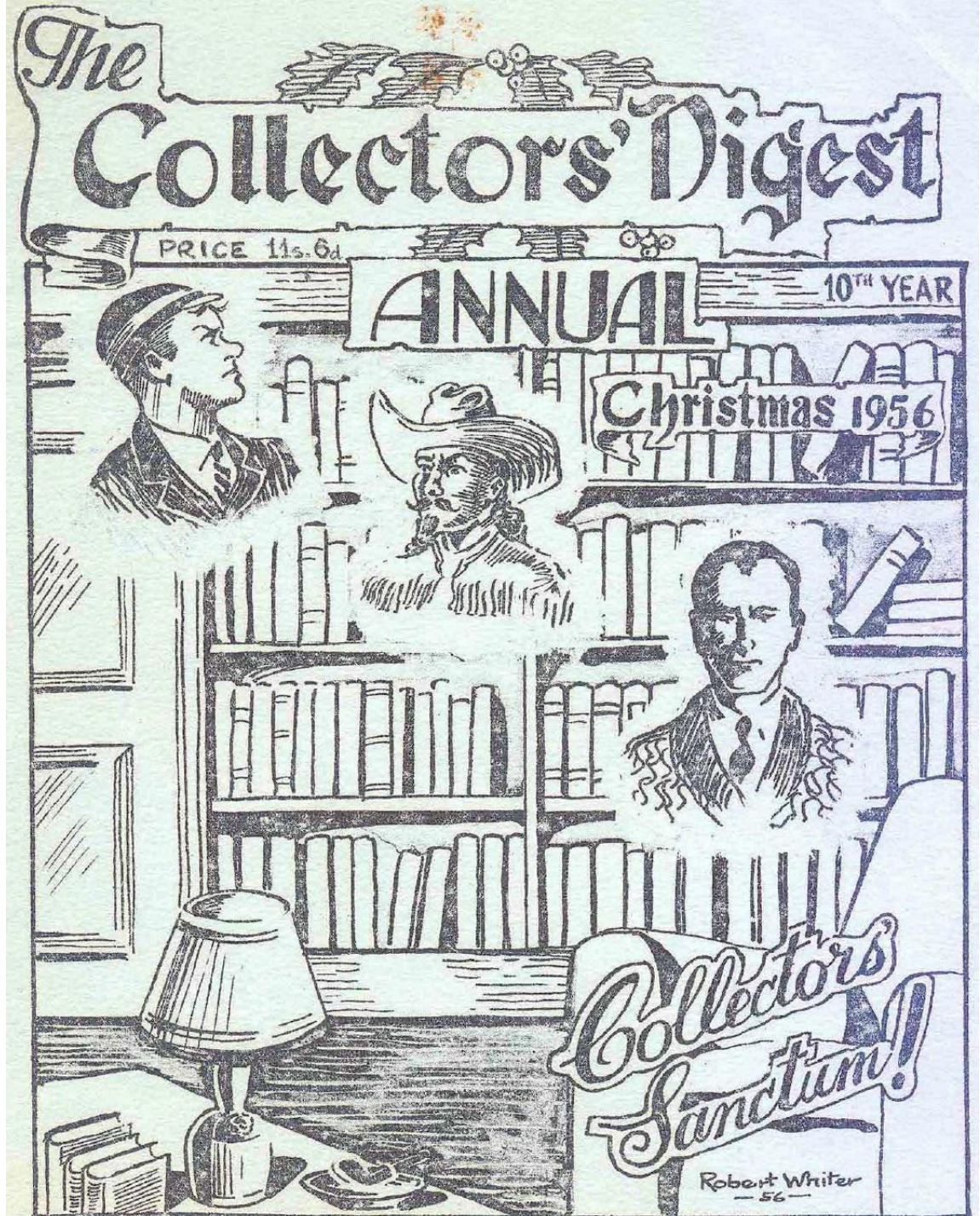


Robert Whiter

*Pedro*

AN OLD FAVOURITE - IS HE COMING BACK?

**Collectors' Digest**  
**1956 Xmas Annual**  
**No. 10**





CD May 1957  
No: 125

# *The Collectors'* 1'6 DIGEST PRICE





CD September 1957  
No: 129





CD October 1957  
No: 130

# *The Collectors* Vol. 11 No 130 *Digest*

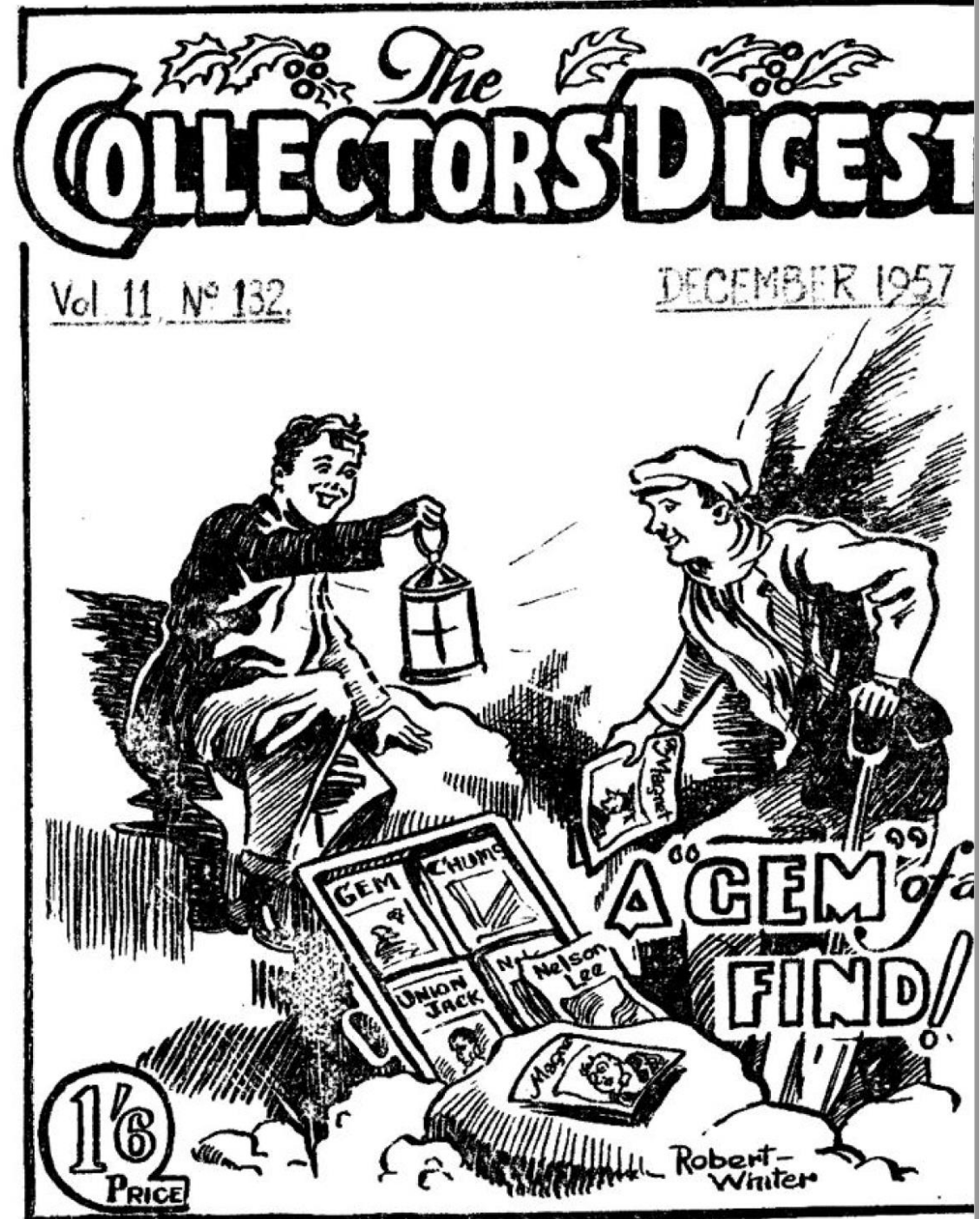


OCTOBER  
1957

Price 1s. 6d.



CD December 1957  
No: 132





**Collectors' Digest**  
**1957 Xmas Annual**  
**No. 11**

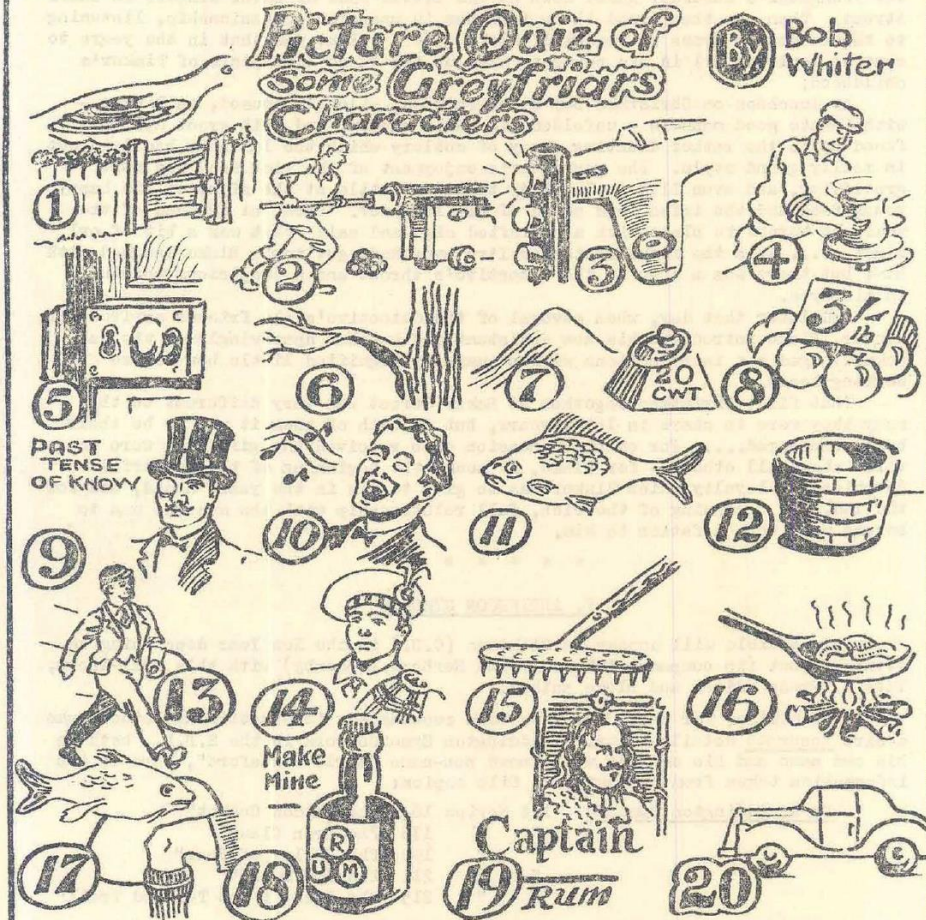
*The Collectors'*  
**DIGEST ANNUAL**

PRICE  
**126**

**Christmas 1957**

*Picture Quiz of  
 Some Greyfriars  
 Characters*

**By** Bob  
 Whiter



Answers on page 118





CD February 1958  
No: 134



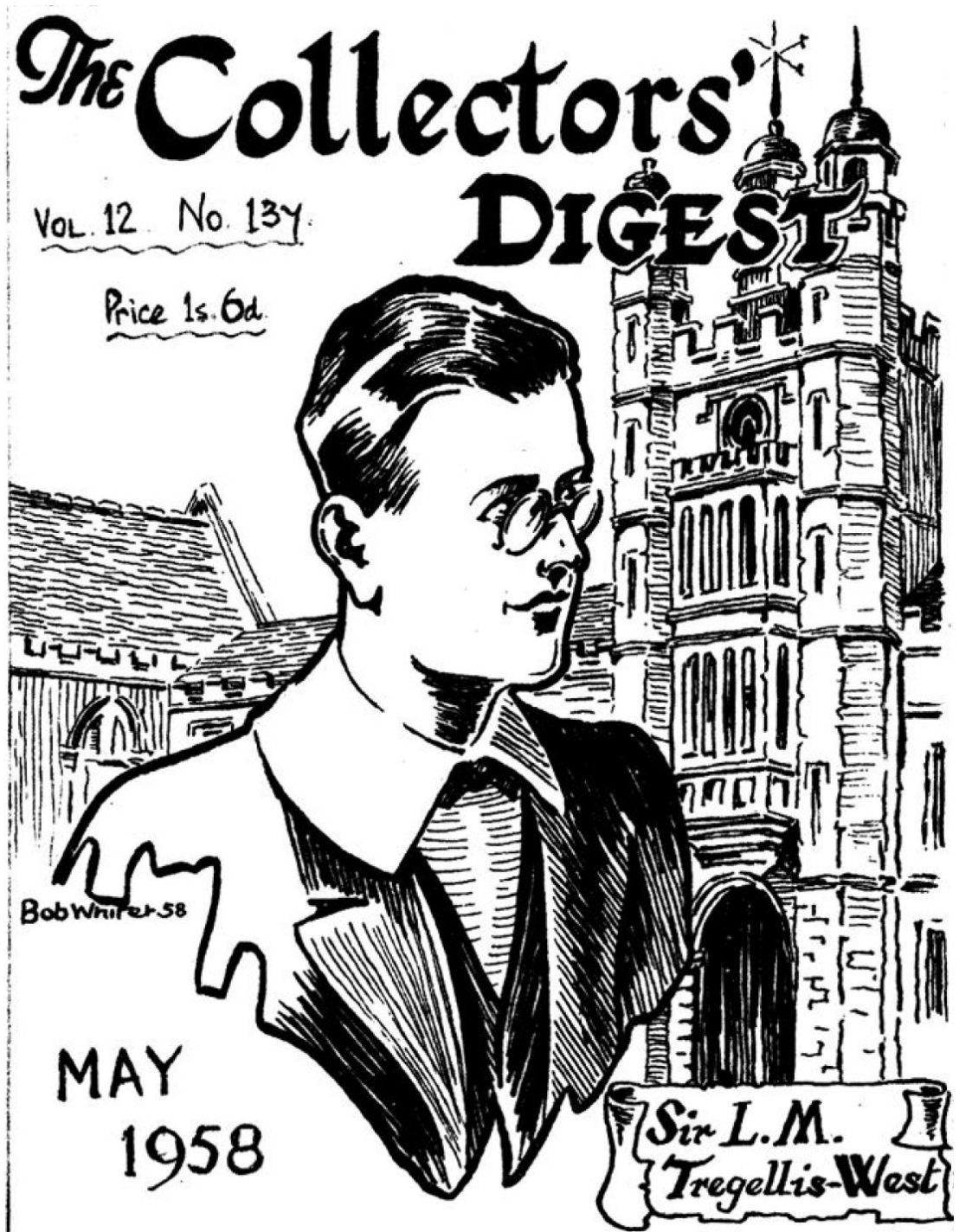


CD April 1958  
No: 136



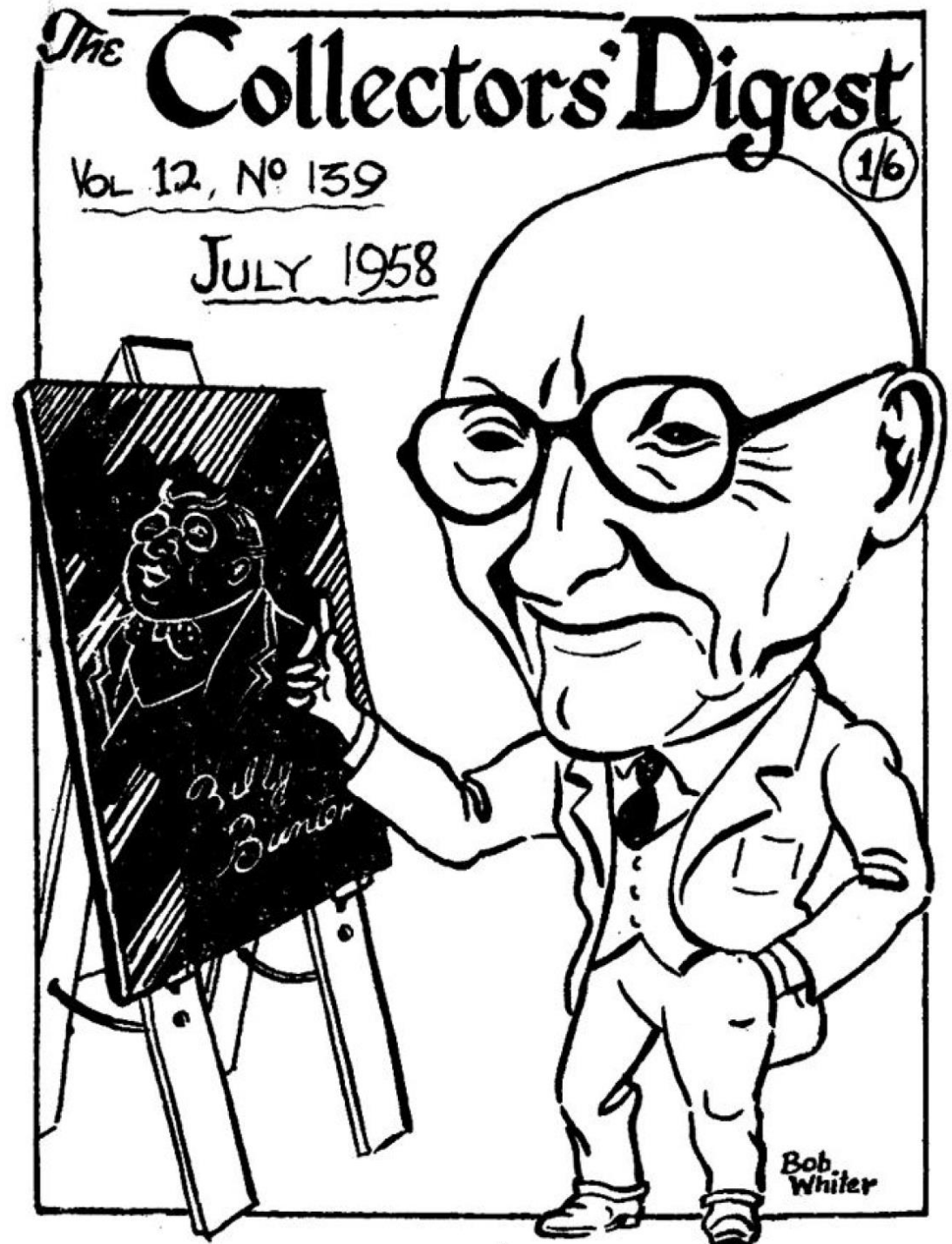


CD May 1958  
No: 137





CD July 1958  
No: 139





CD August 1958  
No: 140



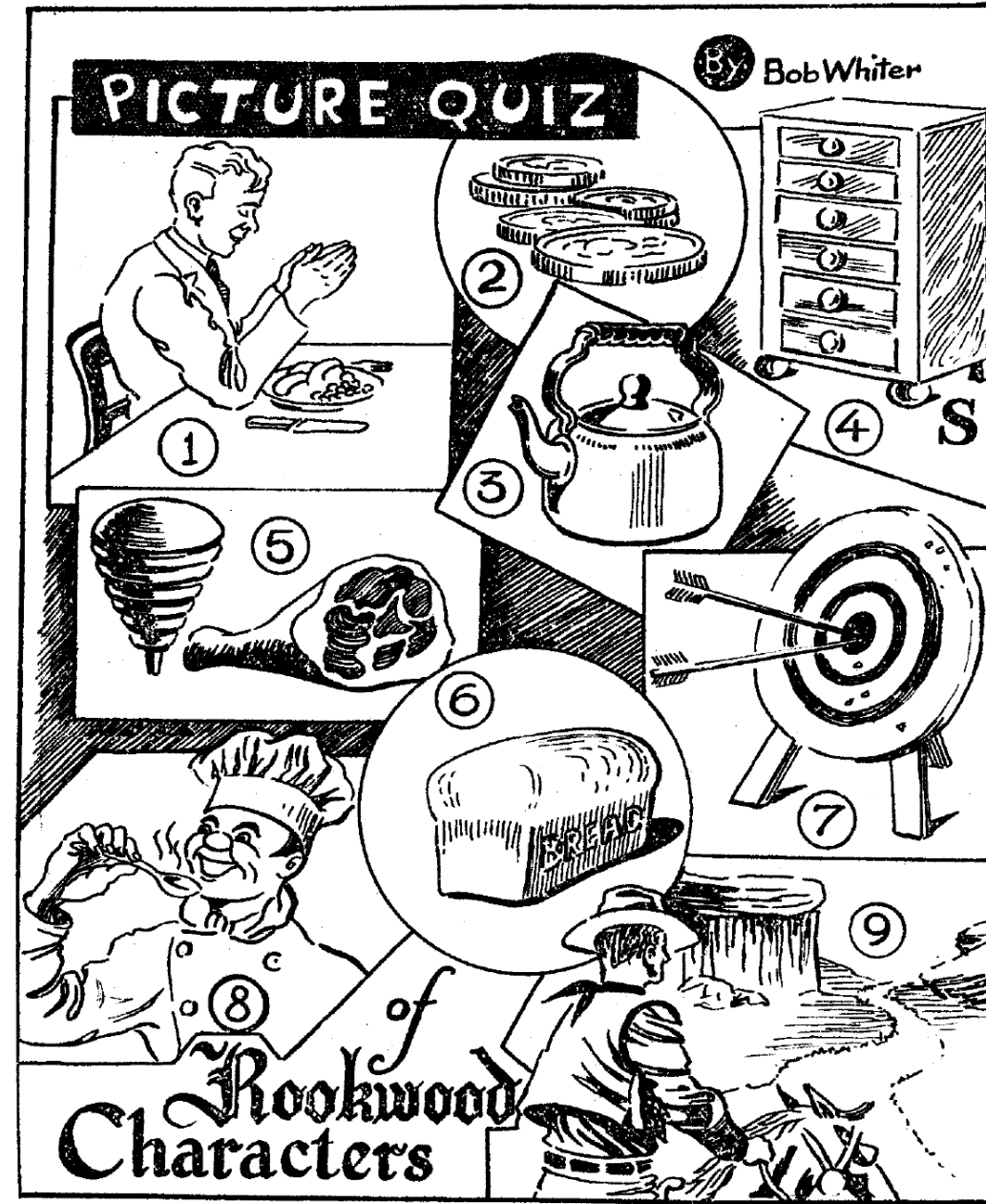


CD December 1958  
No: 144

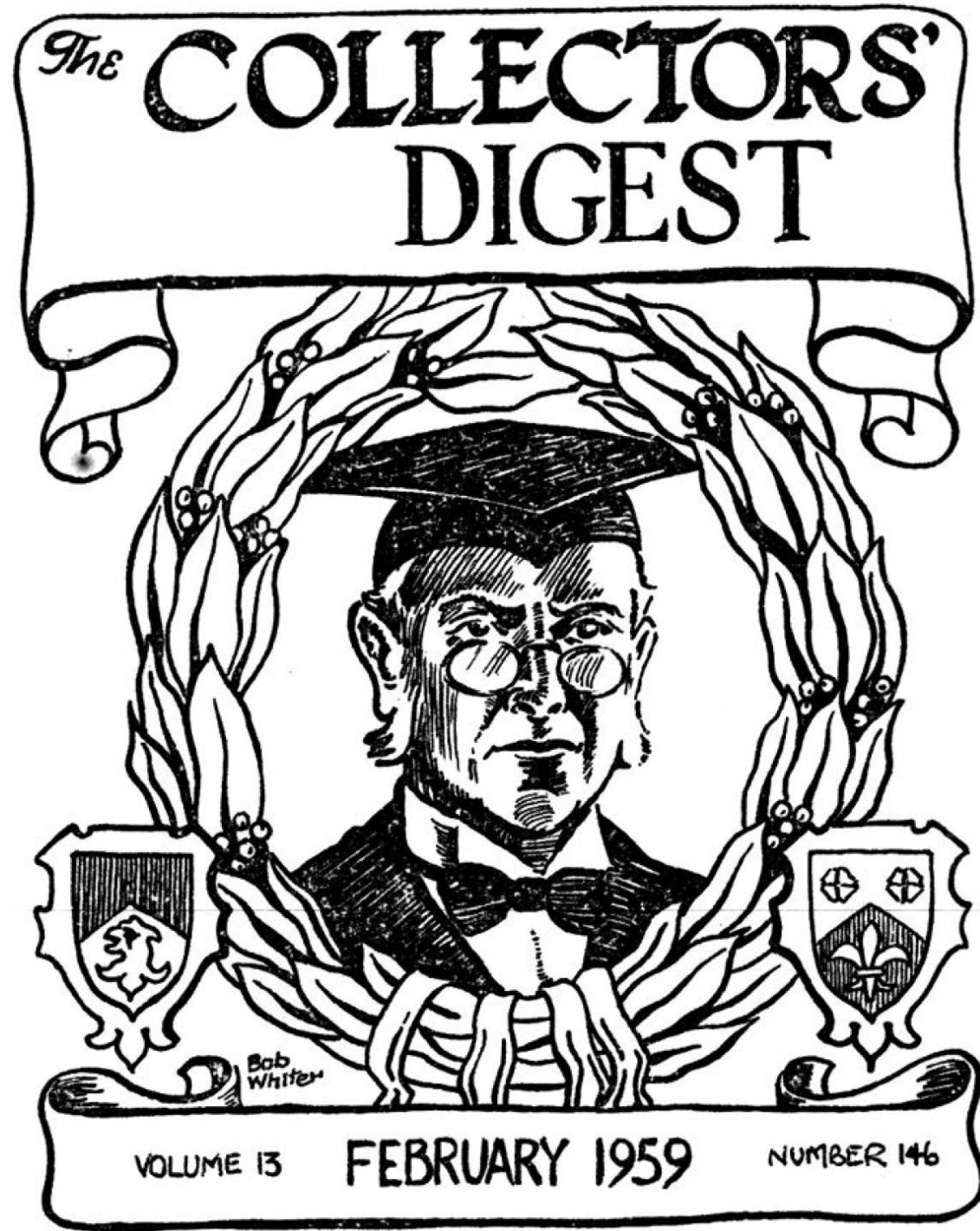




# Collectors' Digest 1958 Xmas Annual No. 12

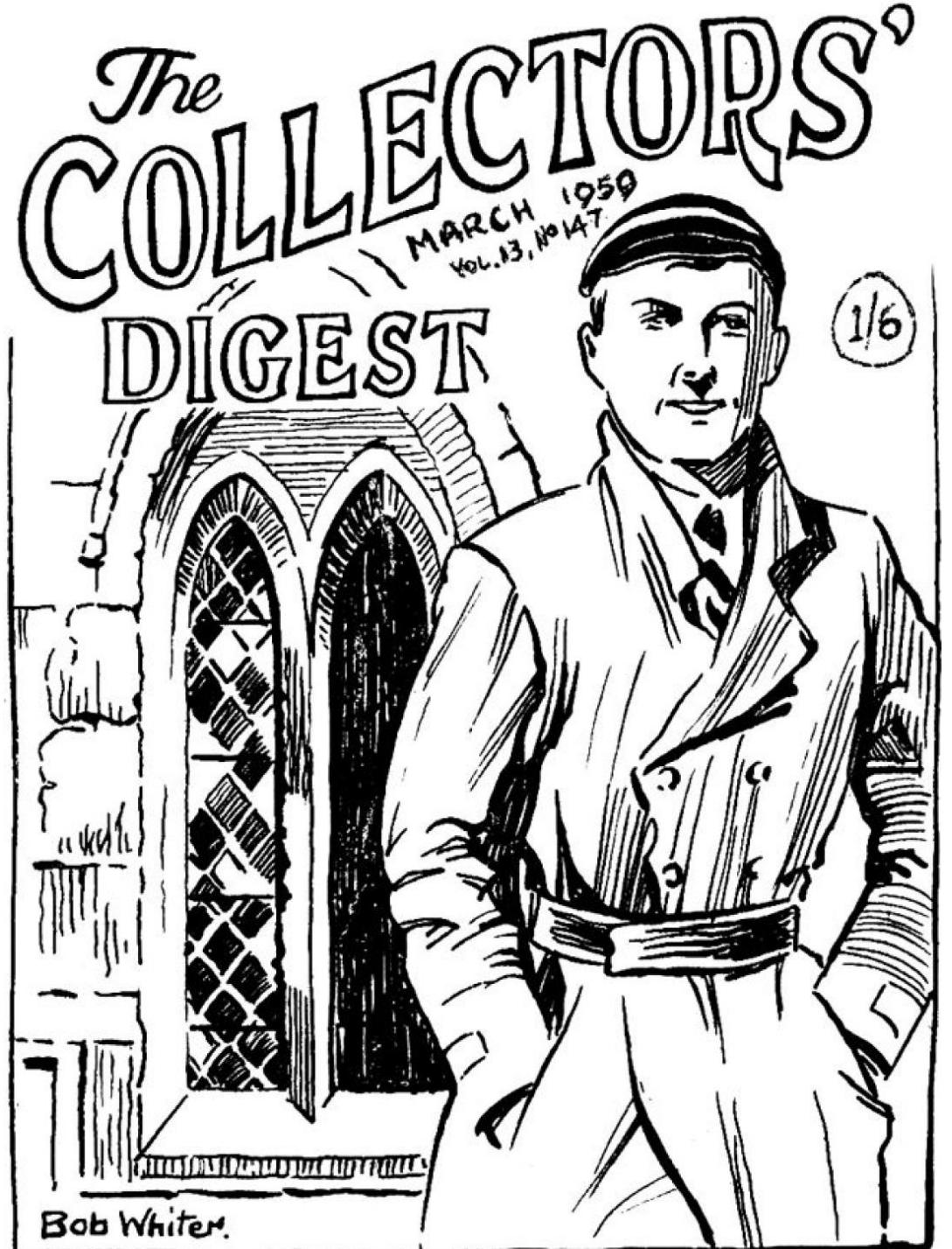


CD February 1959  
No: 146





CD March 1959  
No: 147



CD April 1959  
No: 148

# The Collectors' Digest

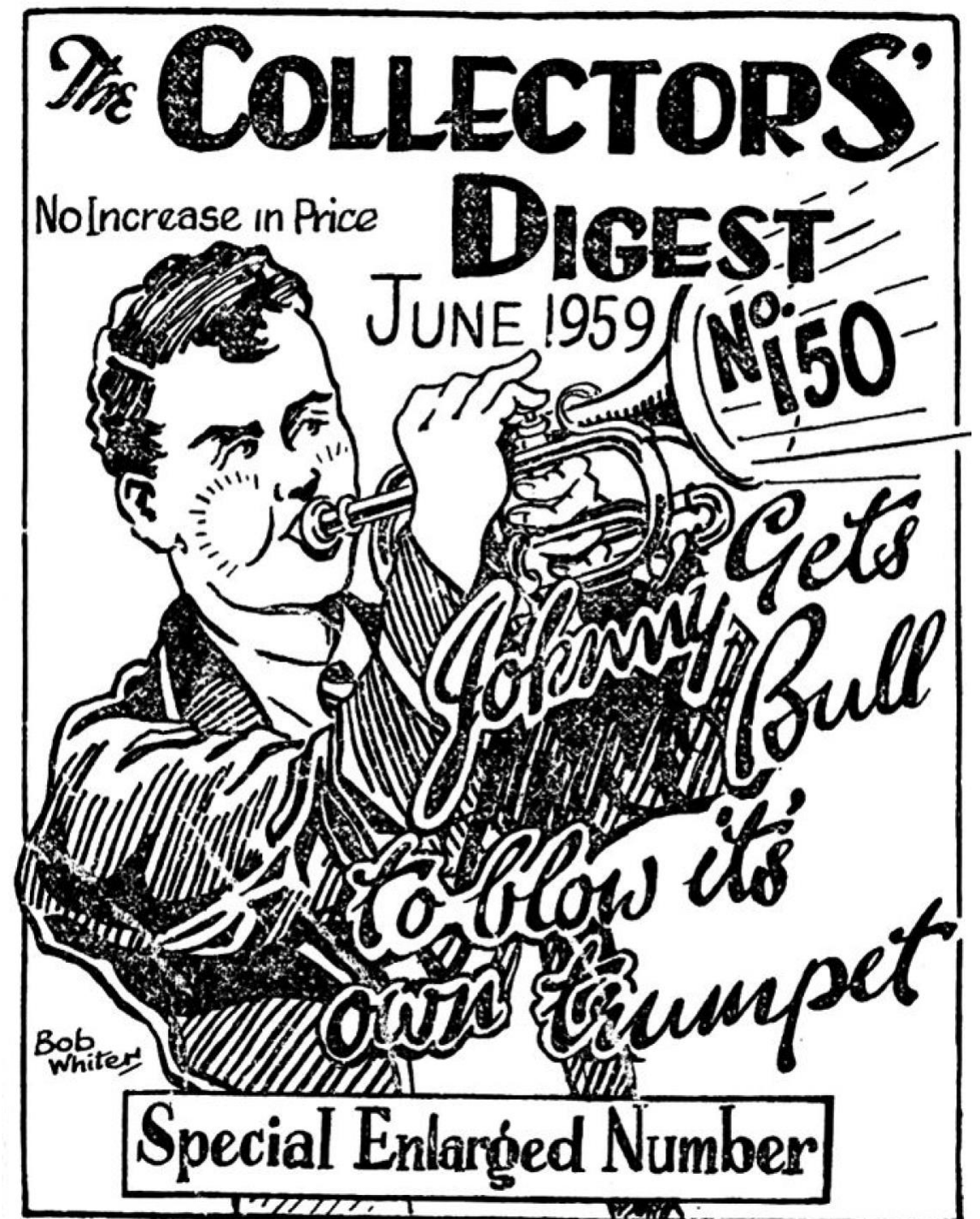
APRIL 1959 VOLUME 13  
NUMBER 148

1/6





CD June 1959  
No: 150



CD July 1959  
No: 151

# *The* COLLECTORS DIGEST

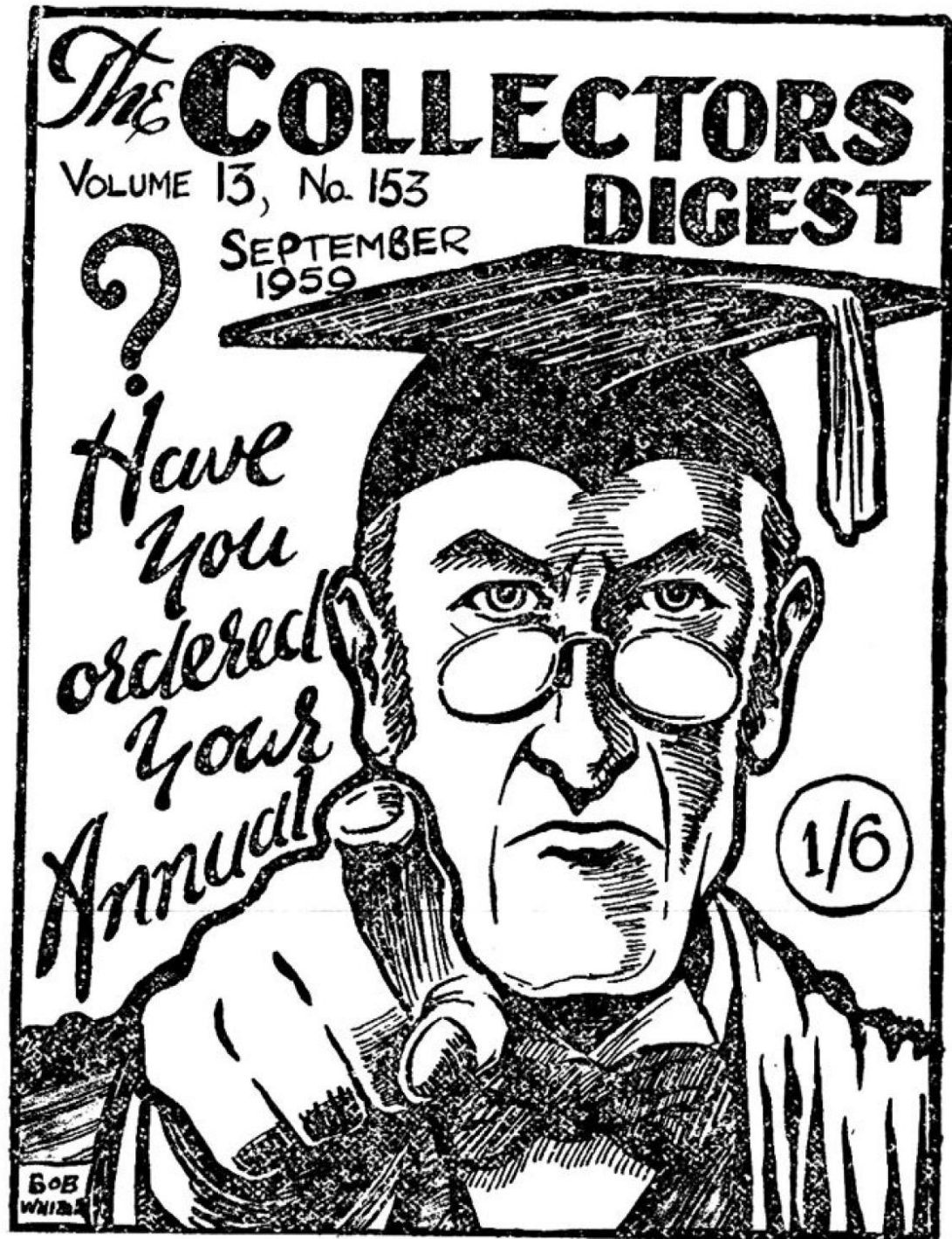
JULY 1959  
Vol. 13, No. 151

1/6<sup>d</sup>





CD September 1959  
No: 153



CD October 1959  
No: 154



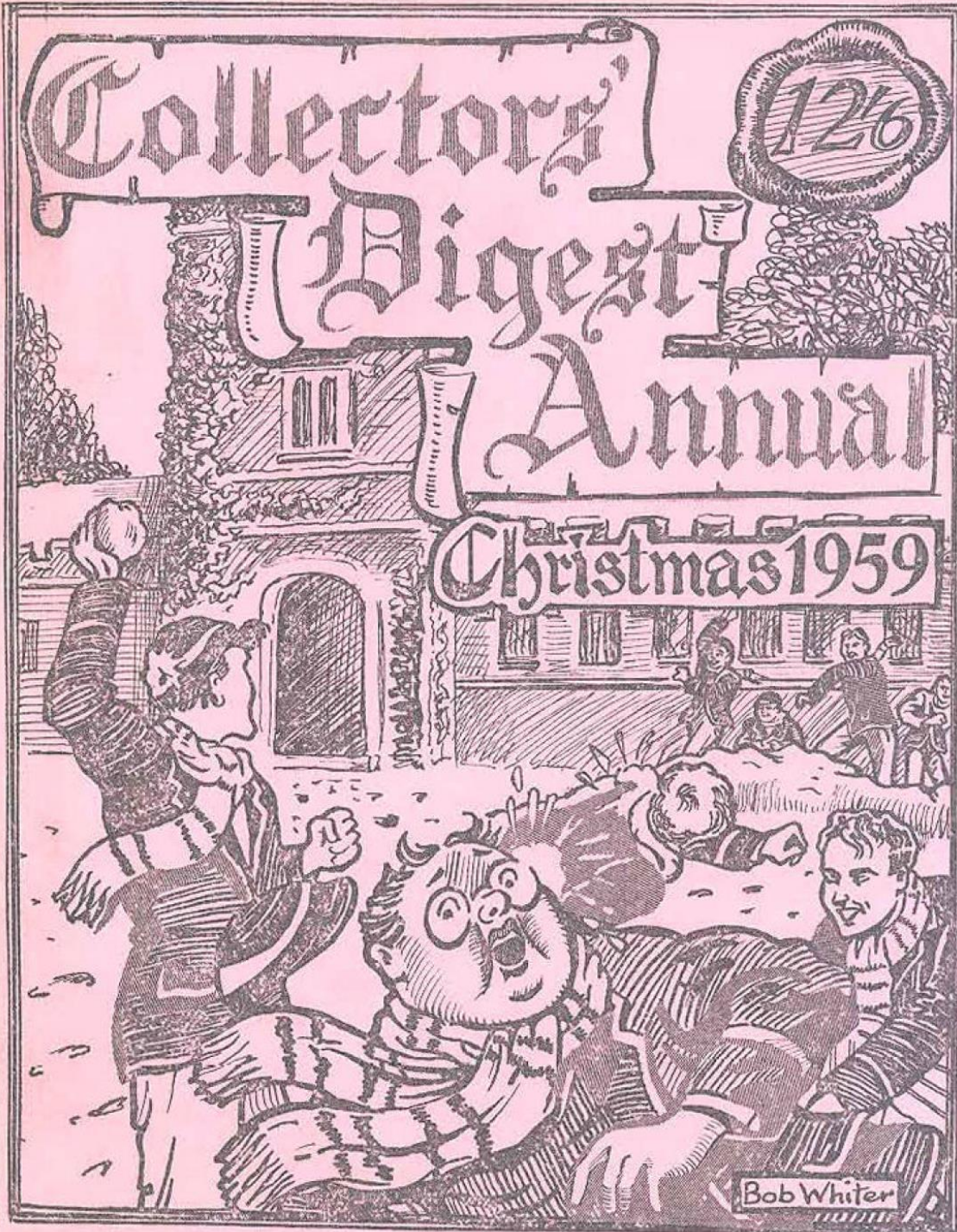


CD December 1959  
No: 156



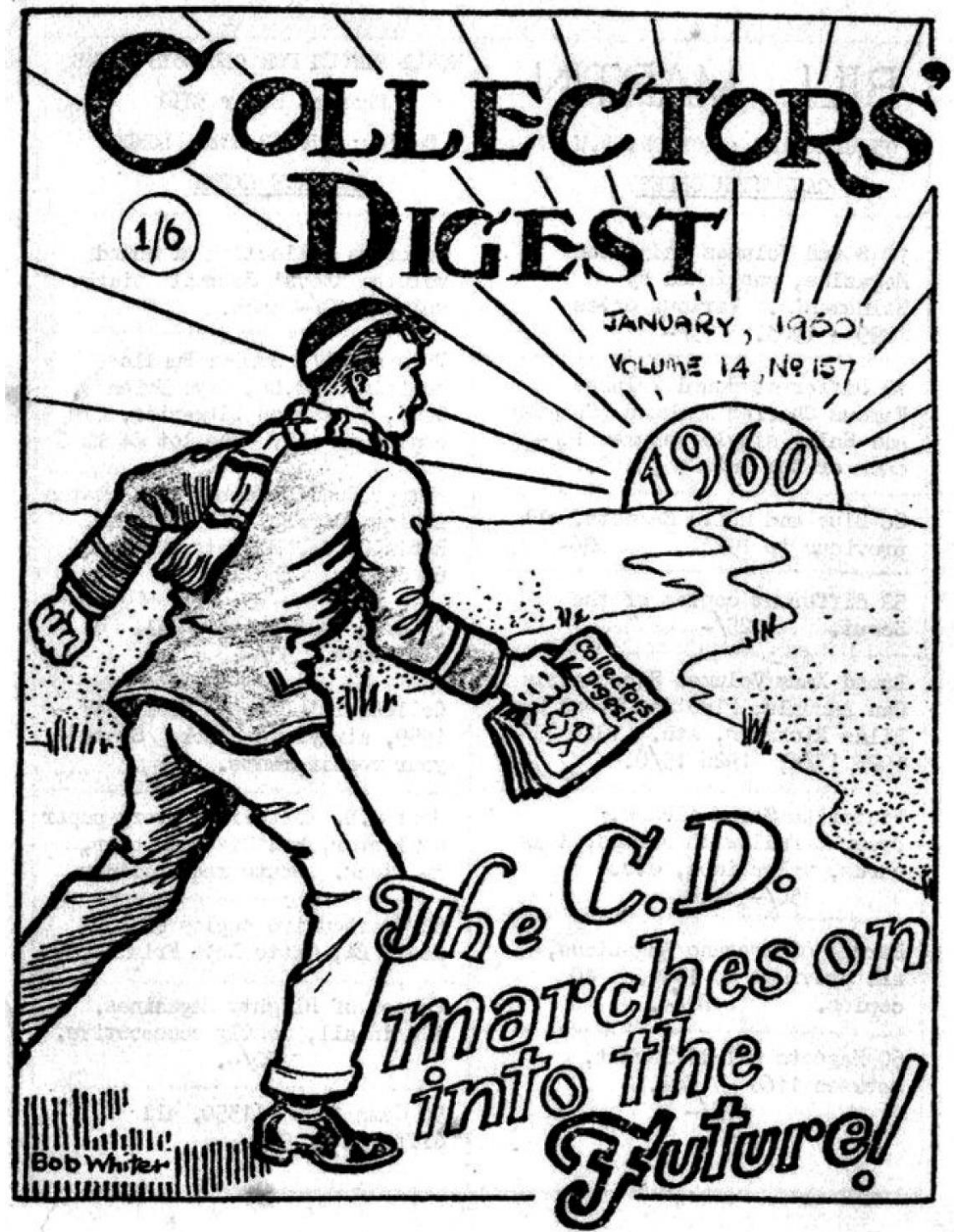


**Collectors' Digest  
1959 Xmas Annual  
No. 13**





CD January 1960  
No: 157

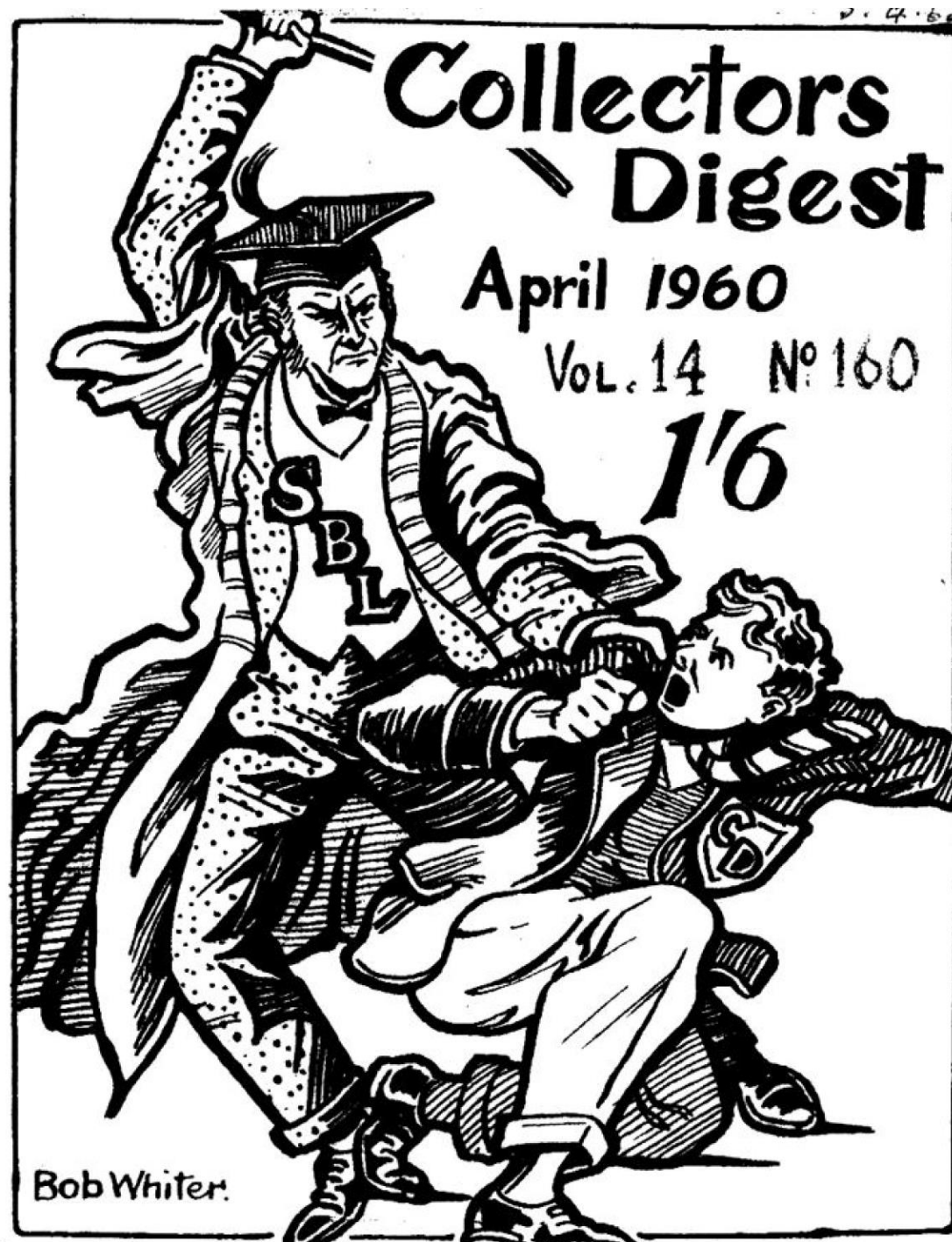


CD March 1960  
No: 159





CD April 1960  
No: 160



CD October 1960  
No: 166

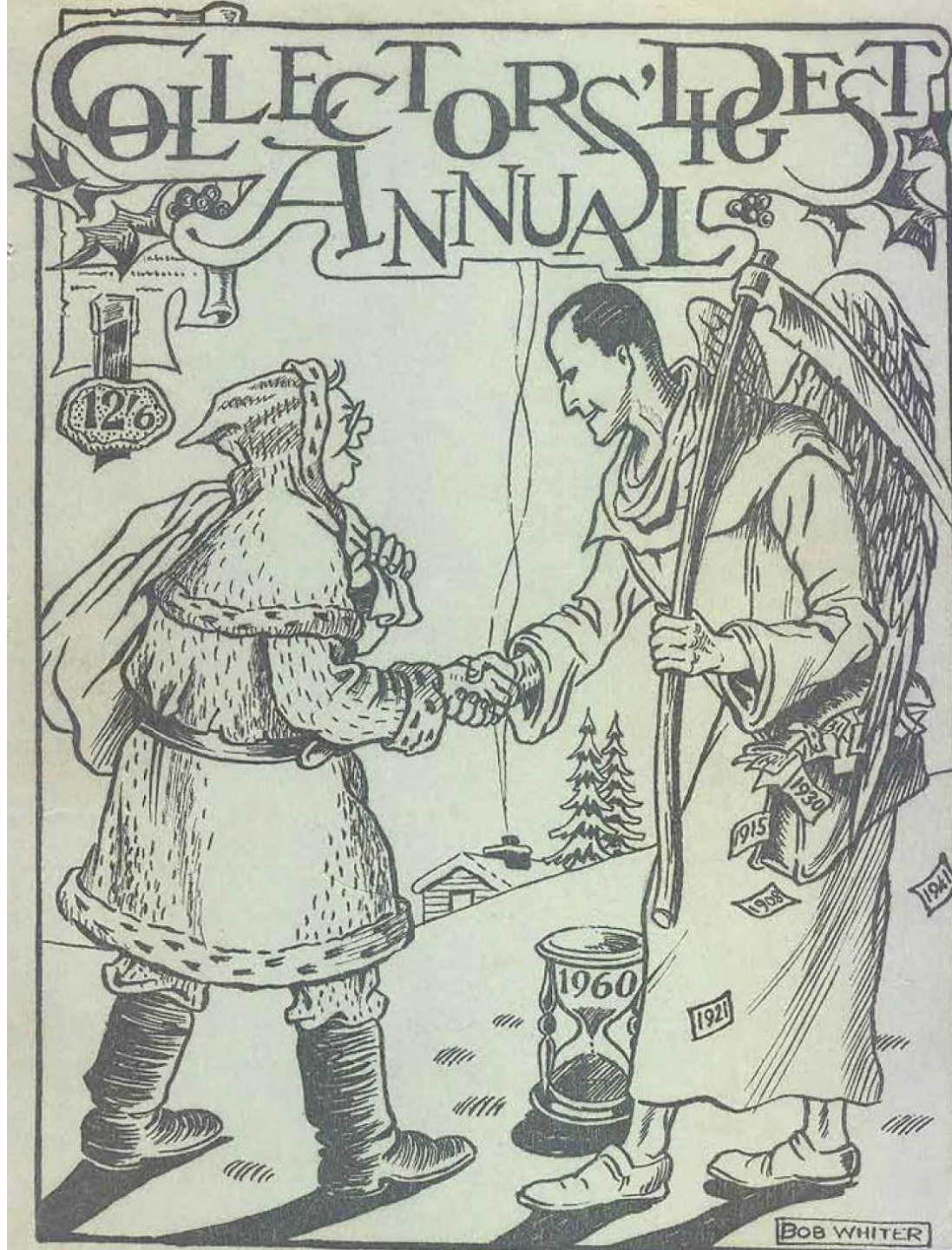
The **COLLECTORS'** 1/6  
VOL.14 No.166  
OCTOBER  
1960  
**DIGEST**



*"Mr. Collector—  
man of many  
Occupations!"*



**Collectors' Digest  
1960 Xmas Annual  
No. 14**



CD March 1961  
No: 171

# collectors digest

VOLUME 15, NUMBER 171

MARCH, 1961.

Price .. .. 2s. 0d.

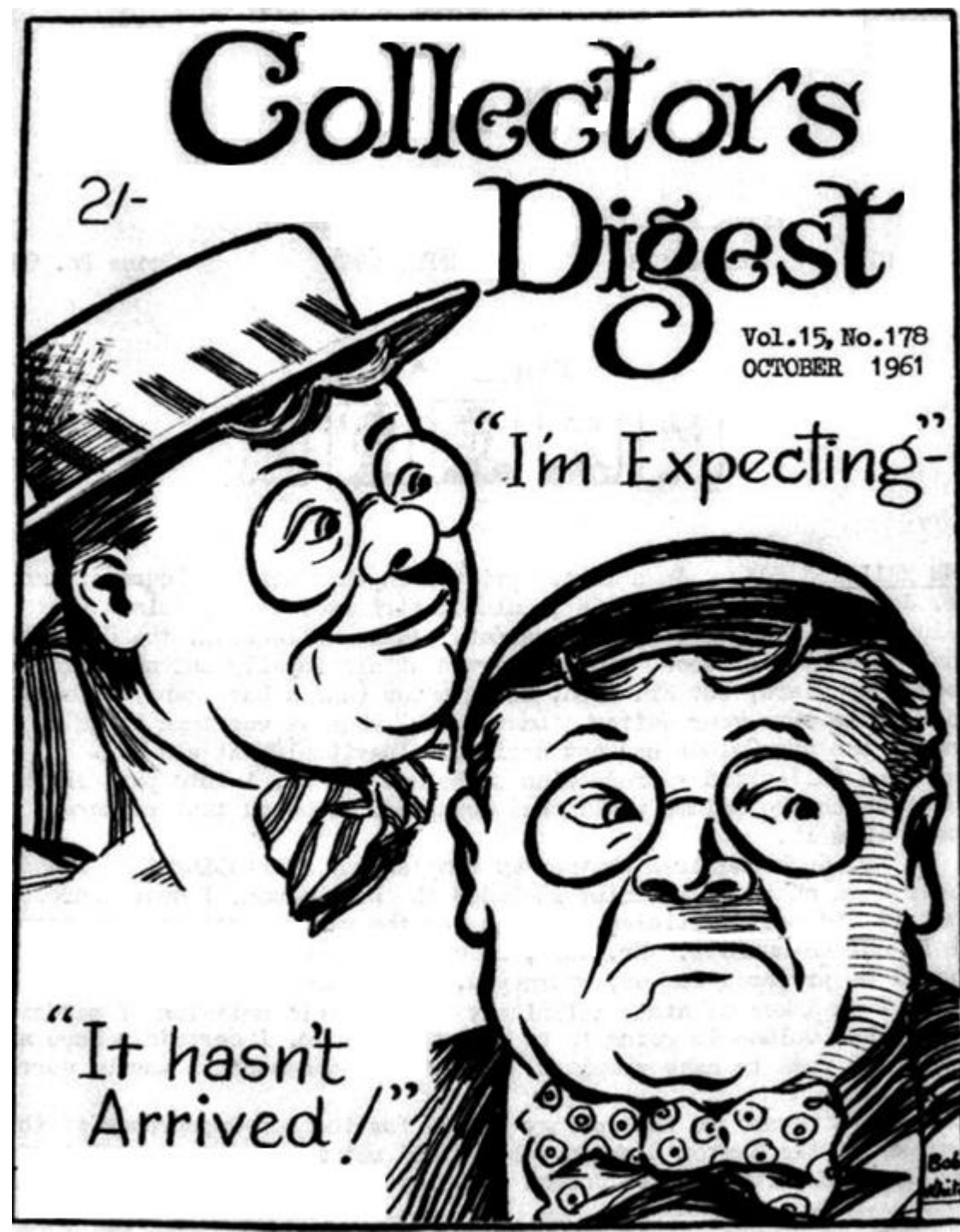


*The  
Rio Kid.*

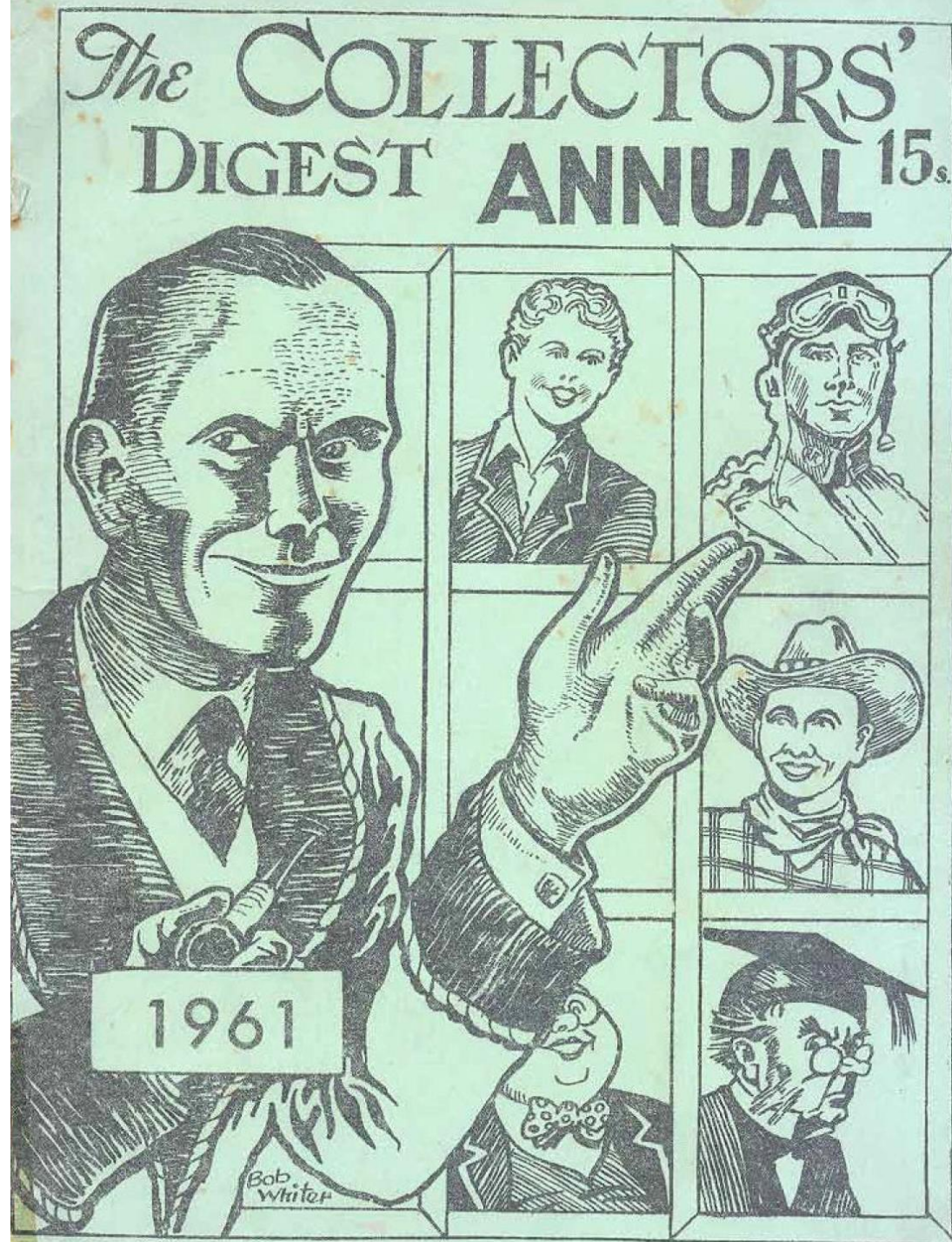
Bob Whiter



CD October 1961  
No: 178

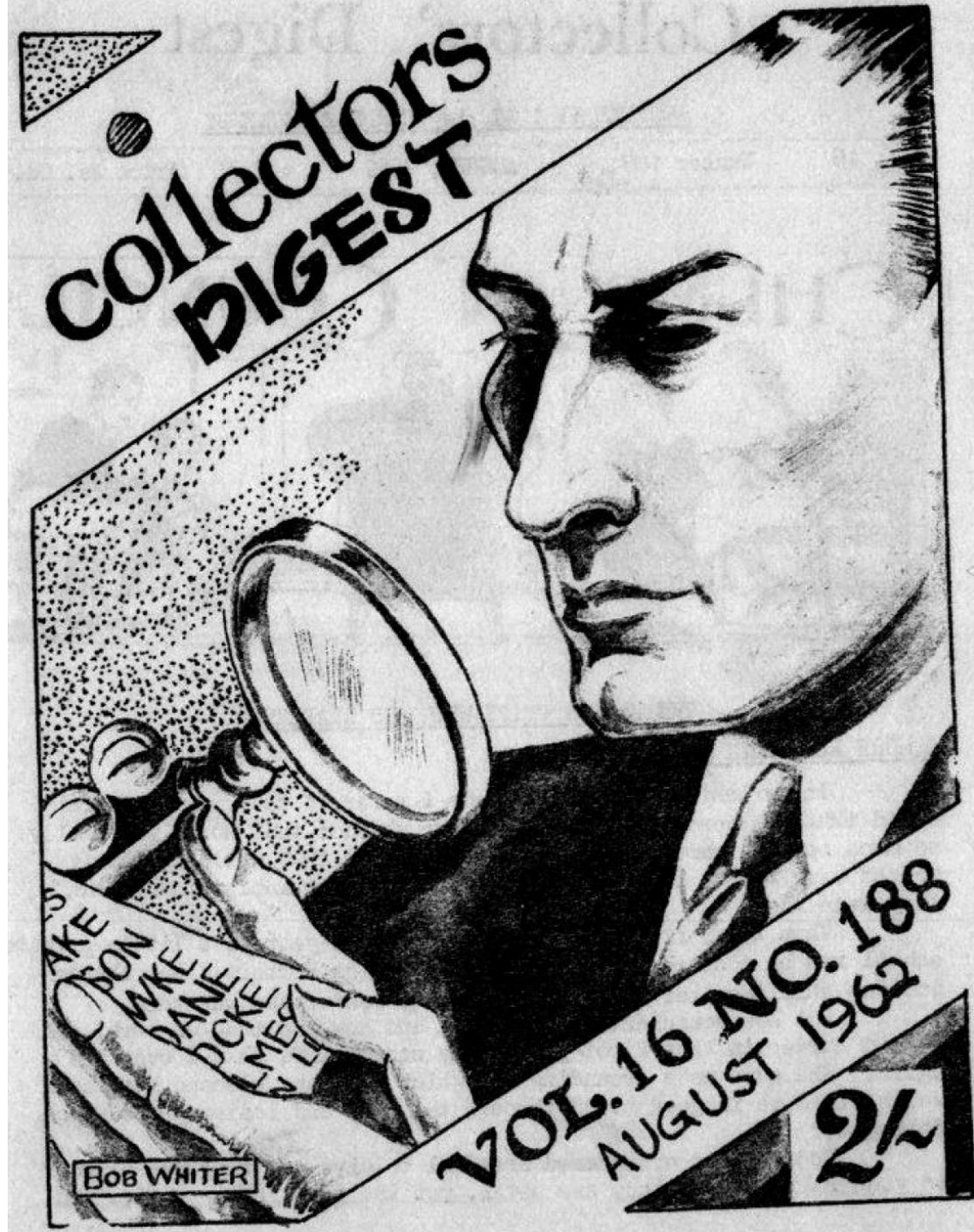


**Collectors' Digest  
1961 Xmas Annual  
No. 15**





CD August 1962  
No: 188



CD February 1963  
No: 194

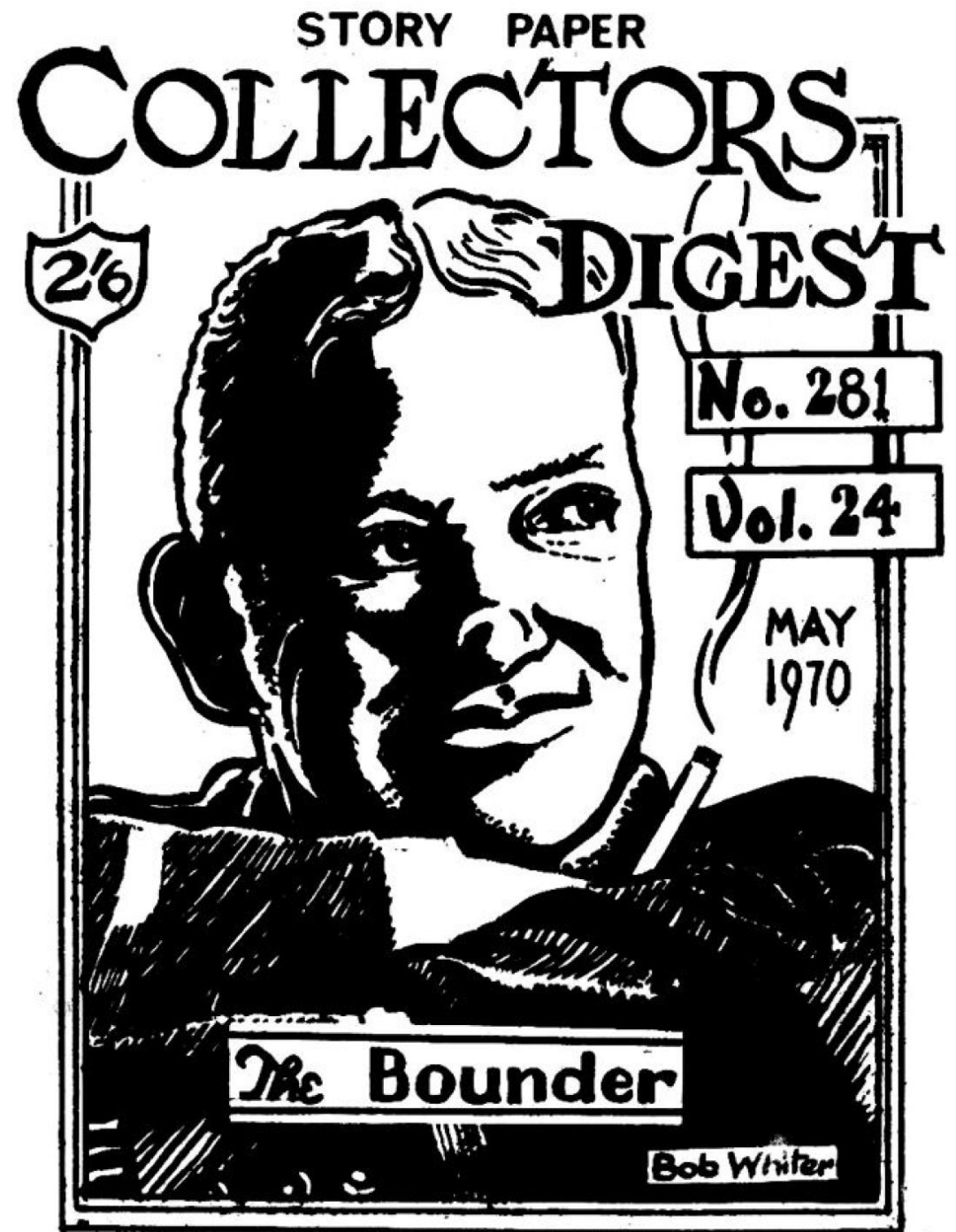




CD June 1966  
No: 234



SPCD May 1970  
No: 281





# SPCD July 1977

## No: 372

### CHAPPIE

by Robert Whiter

I wonder how many collectors and readers of Hamiltonia realise that the Greyfriars Holiday Annual for 1926 contains a self portrait (even if it is only a line drawing) of Mr. C. H. Chapman, the late celebrated Magnet artist. As many devotees will probably remember I was instrumental in bringing this grand old artist back into the fold at a time when most people were under the impression that he had passed on. They were therefore prepared to put up with R. Macdonald illustrating the Bunter Books, which at the time were just getting into their stride. Let me hasten to add - before some irate "Mac" fan throws a cricket ball at me - Macdonald was fine for St. Jim's, and with the

**No contributions in the following:**

**Collectors' Digest 1962 Xmas Annual, No. 16**

|  
|

**Collectors' Digest 1984 Xmas Annual, No. 38**



SPCD April 1985  
No: 460



SPCD May 1985  
No: 461



One from Roger!



# SPCD October 1985

## No: 466

### The Maynard's Greyfriars Trade Cards. BY BOB WHITER.

I was most interested in Paul Galvins' mention of the Maynards Ltd. trade cards featuring the Greyfriars characters. I am fortunate in possessing a complete set. The set consists of twelve cards, each the size of a normal cigarette card. Pictured by C.H. Chapman, they are drawn in black and white and tinted with pink and blue mechanical stipple.

Not numbered, the backs of the cards merely bear the title: Maynards Ltd., Chocolate Cigarettes and an accompanying brief storyette about the picture, each of which makes some excuse for the character in question to be either "Smoking" or in possession of a chocolate cigarette.





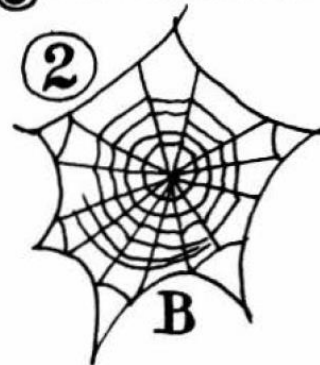
# Guess these St. Jim's Characters

by Bob Whiter



①

LE



②

B



③



④

E



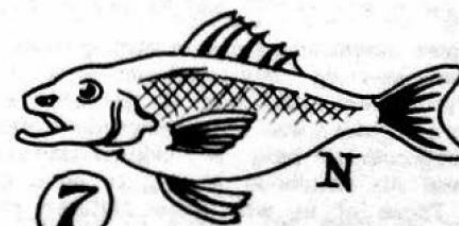
sc

⑤



B  
D

⑥



⑦

N



⑧



⑨



⑩

Collectors' Digest  
1985 Xmas Annual  
No. 39



# SPCD March 1986

## No: 471

### TEA IN THE STUDY

By Bob Whiter

The Famous Five came up the Remove staircase in a ruddy, cheery crowd. Tea in the study was the next item on the programme and all of them were ready for it - (Magnet 1,117, July 13th, 1929).

Some of the happiest moments of Schoolboy Hamiltonia must surely have taken place during: "tea in the study". When funds were low, of course, the chums of Greyfriars, St. Jim's and Rookwood, or for that matter any of our favourite author's Schools, had to put up with 'doorsteps and dishwater' in the Hall! But if Gussy had received a "fivah" from his "governah" or Wharton's uncle had sent him a remittance - tea in the study was the order of the day. The same thing would apply if one of the other members of the Famous Five had received money from home:

Cheery voices from Study No. 13 announced where the Famous Five were. The Co. were teeing in Bob Cherry's Study (Magnet 1441, Sept. 28th, 1935).





# SPCD July 1986

## No: 474

### Cuneo-by BobWhiter



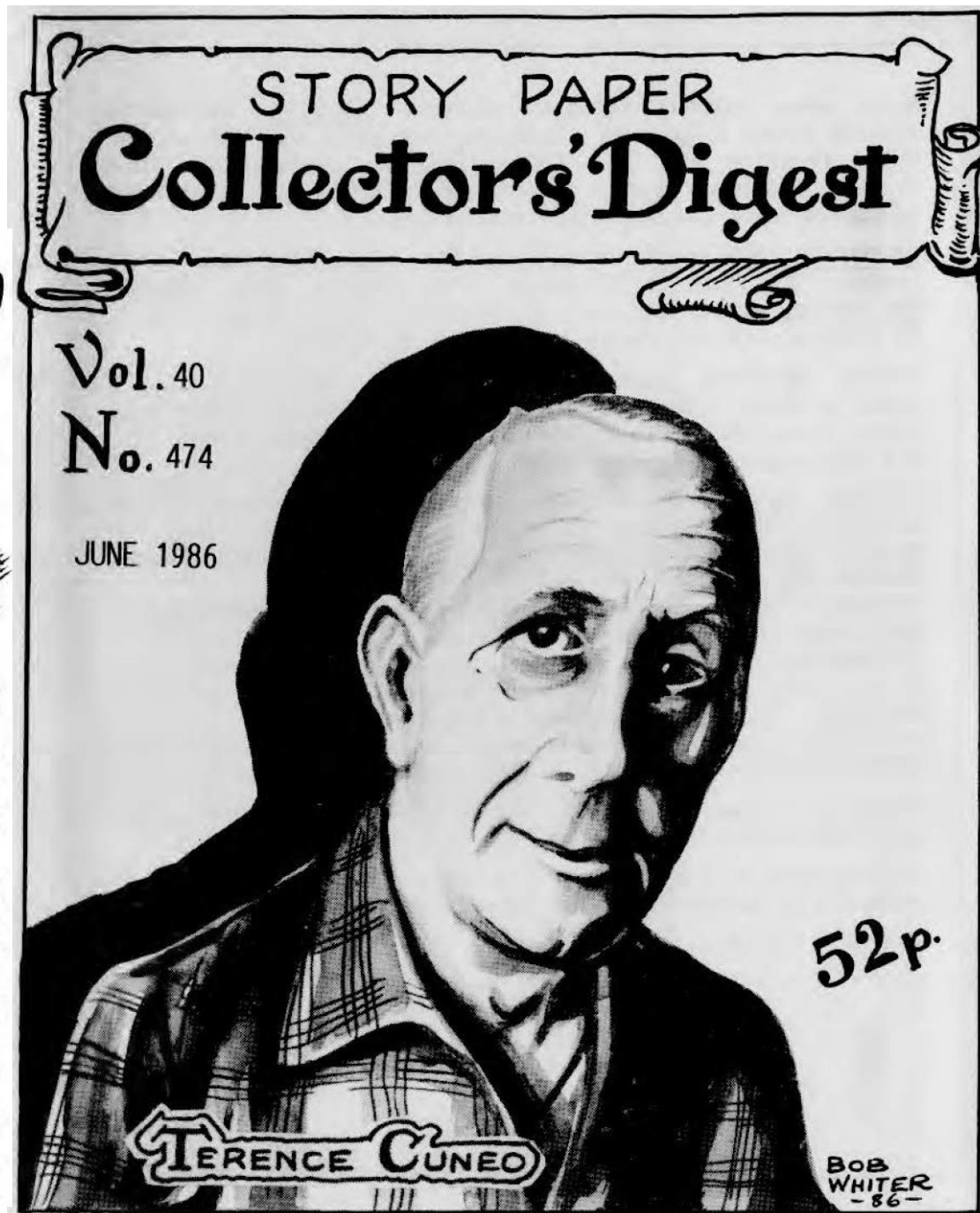
I wonder how many collectors realized that the recent fine set of postage stamps on railway trains, were the work of T. Cuneo? In case some of you are saying who on earth is Cuneo, let me help to refresh your memories.

Let us take for a start the 1931 Holiday Annual, with that fine story "An Englishman from France" by Philip Hardy. Our artist did the black and white illustrations, plus a superb colour plate: "Gentlemen - At your Service!". A story about Ferrers Locke in the following year's annual again had the pictures drawn in black and white by Cuneo. I don't have the intervening years handy, but I seem to remember a coloured plate "The Hero of Waterloo" which showed a young highlander carrying a wounded man to safety in one of them, could it be 1935?

"The Rio Kids' Ride, graced the 1937 H.A. and was further graced with Cuneo's art work, which consisted of several black and white pictures and a fine coloured plate showing Kid Carfax just beating a locomotive with the pursuing outlaws on the other side of the permanent way!

Cuneo also illustrated several of the Serials that appeared at the back of the Magnet. Among those, collectors will recall the following: "The Shadow of the Guillotine" by George E. Rochester which appeared in 1929; Cuneo also illustrated the serial in 1930, also incidentally by George E. Rochester named "The Flying Spy". Stanton Hope's "Island of Slaves" was next, circa 1931, then in 1932 we had "The Red Falcon" by Arthur Steffens.

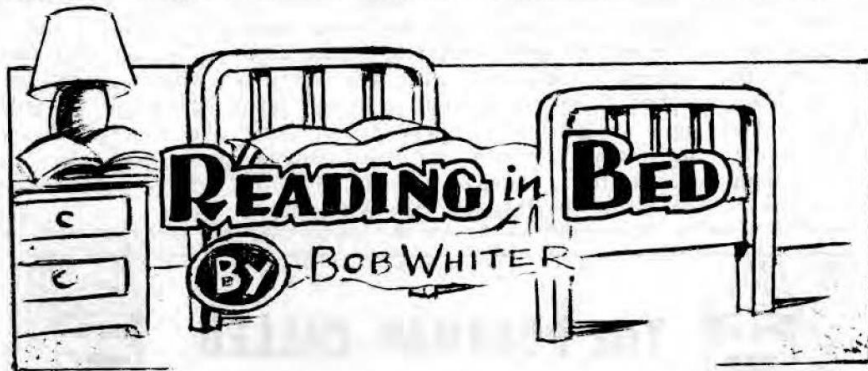
I don't possess all the Chums annuals, but in at least three you can find stories with the illustrations by him. In the 1930-1931



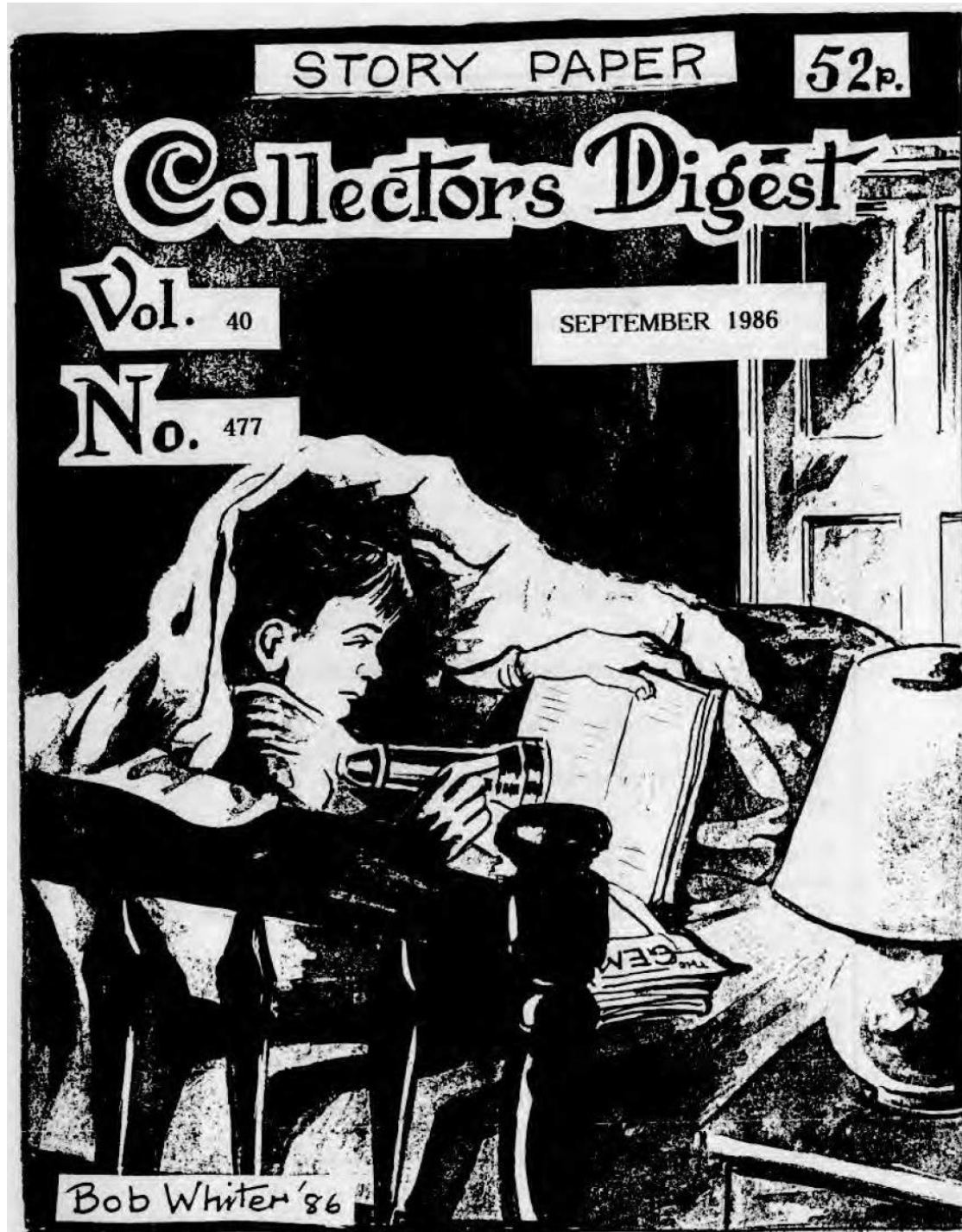


# SPCD September 1986

## No: 477

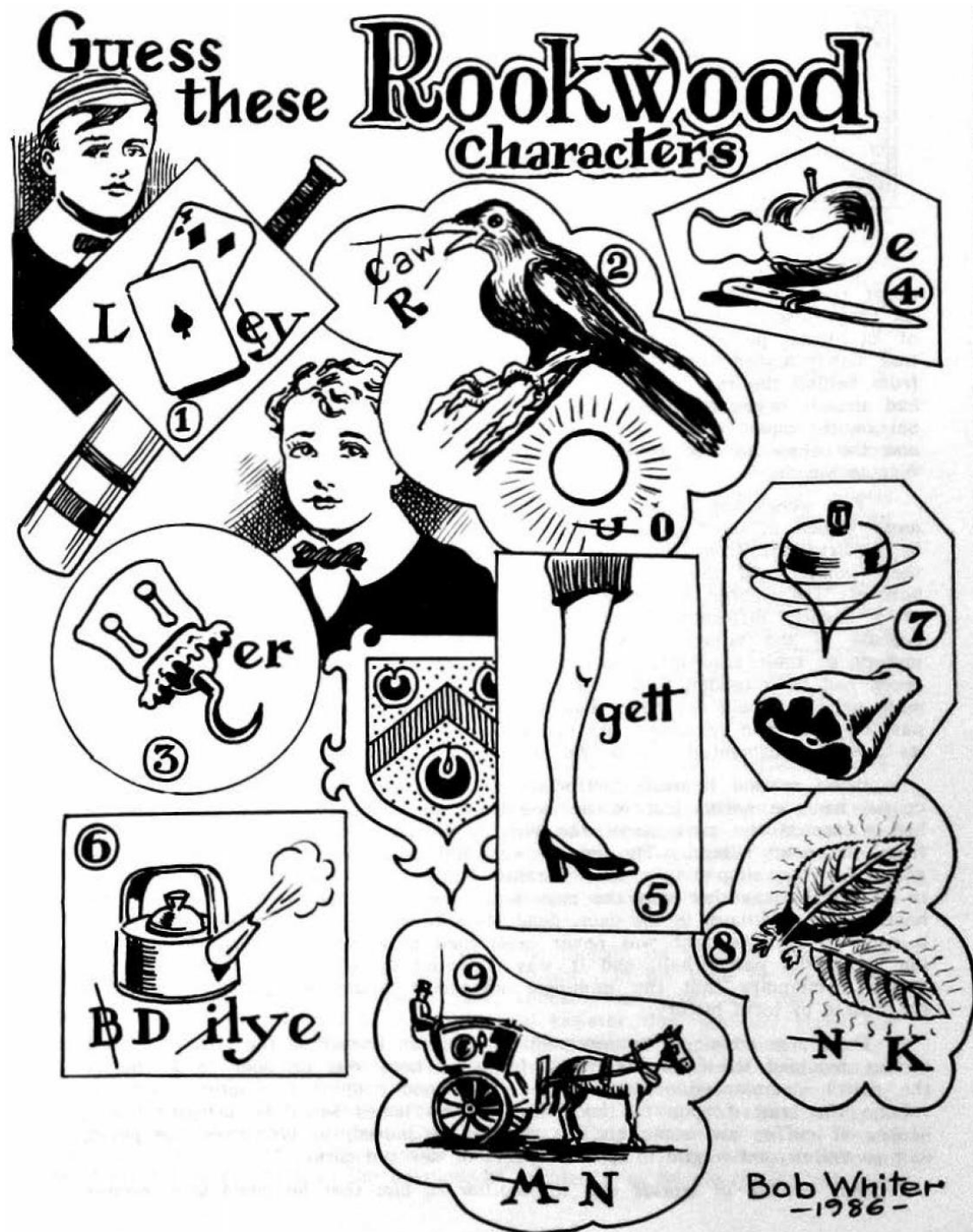


Most of us these days I suspect lead very busy lives, and do not always have as much time as we would like for reading. Speaking for myself; what with work, scouting and other numerous hobbies and interests, my chief reading time takes place in bed. I really look forward to that few minutes or so before slumber's chain binds me. The other night, as I was about to indulge in a cosy interlude with my favourite characters, my thoughts went back to the days of my youth - those days reading in bed was strickly taboo - even though my father was a great adherent. To use a word beloved of Frank Richards, as children, reading in bed was a surreptitious practice! You didn't dare to even turn on the bedside lamp for fear it might be seen, so the electric torch or flash light was pressed into service. With the bed clothes pulled up around your head, covering both yourself and the light (see our cover picture) you visited the land of enchantment until the arms of Morpheus claimed you; but ready at the slightest noise to extinguish the torch and assume a posture of being sound asleep should an enquiring parent put his or her head round the door. I was fortunate in one respect - my father ran a radio and bicycle shop, so it was comparatively easy to keep the flash light shining bright; i.e. fresh batteries and a bulb once every so often, although my father did on a couple of occasions query the "short life" of the batteries! After awhile I learned to





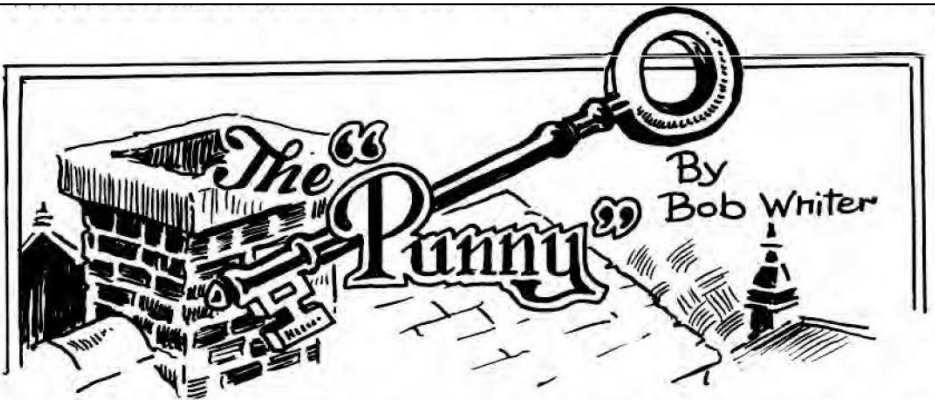
Collectors' Digest  
1986 Xmas Annual  
No. 40





# SPCD March 1987

## No: 483



Although certain aspects of the description tend to vary, i.e. whether the iron bars across the window were inside or outside the glass, the general location is pretty common in most of the stories. From Mr. Quelch's study:- "Mr. Quelch led him up the stairs and turned into a long passage that Pop had never traversed before. But he was aware that it led to the punishment room" (Magnet 1168 July 5th 1930). On, "Harry Wharton followed the Remove master from the study. They passed down the broad corridor through a gazing crowd - But at the foot of the staircase..." (Magnet 888 February, 14th 1925).

Then, when the Head's study was temporarily occupied by Mr. Prout:- "And in that iron grip the Bounder of Greyfriars was marched up a back staircase and along the passage leading to the isolated punishment - room" (Magnet 1397 November, 24th, 1934). Also: "Where he was taking him Gilbert could not guess - at first But when they turned into a long corridor at the top of a back staircase he guessed He had never seen the punishment-room at Greyfriars, but he had heard it spoken of, and he knew that it lay at the end of that corridor" (Magnet 1601, October, 22nd, 1958). And finally: "Smithy was locked in the punishment-room, high up in a remote corner of the ancient pile of Greyfriars" (Magnet 161, February 4th, 1939).

# Story Paper

# Collectors

# Digest

VOL. 41 No. 483  
MARCH 1987



The  
"Punny"

52p

Bob Whiter '87



# SPCD September 1987

## No: 489



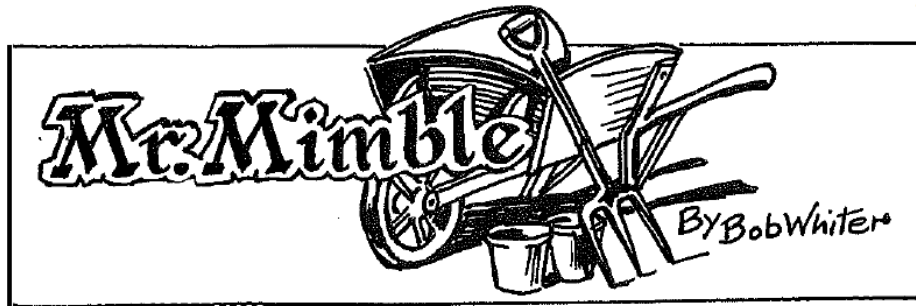
Re-reading for the umpteenth time my collection of C.D.s the other night (what endless joy they give), I came across Brian Doyle's delightful article on 'Pip, Squeak and Wilfred'. Towards the end of the article, Brian mentions the two annuals that were published, containing these favourite characters, i.e. 'Pip and Squeak Annual', and 'Wilfred's Annual'. Does anyone remember the 'Pip and Squeak Competition Annual'? The copy I had, would, I think, have been published either in the late 20s or early 30s. The picture on the cover showed an immense christmas tree, loaded with goodies, and I think had our three friends gazing at it. This was one of the puzzles; I seem to recall you had to count the presents. Most of the competitions consisted of picture puzzles, some of them after the style of yours truly's humble efforts in the last two C.D. Annuals. Others were full page - find the missing boy or how many cats can you count, type of puzzle. The picture puzzles were on various subjects - one had several small pictures with hidden clues suggesting dogs; another, musical instruments, while in others you had to guess girls' names, countries and occupations. I can well recall one Sunday, sitting with some of my sisters trying to solve them. The annual also contained several short stories, two of which I seem to remember were illustrated by Saville Lumley. One was of a boy and





# Bob's first 'article' in a CD ANNUAL!

## Collectors' Digest 1987 Xmas Annual No. 41



Among the numerous adult characters created by Charles Hamilton, there are those who can actually further the plot of the stories; on the other hand there are some who, in the main, merely help to create the right atmosphere. Mr. Mimble, I think, comes into the second category. Although in early "Who's Whos" his Christian name is given as Joseph, in the latter part of the Greyfriar saga he generally answers to Alfred. He is the husband of Jessie Mimble who runs the school tuckshop. They have one young son Henry Herbert George Mimble who is however most often referred to as "the small boy Mimble".

Alfred Mimble is the school gardener, with the main emphasis placed on his caring for the Head's garden.

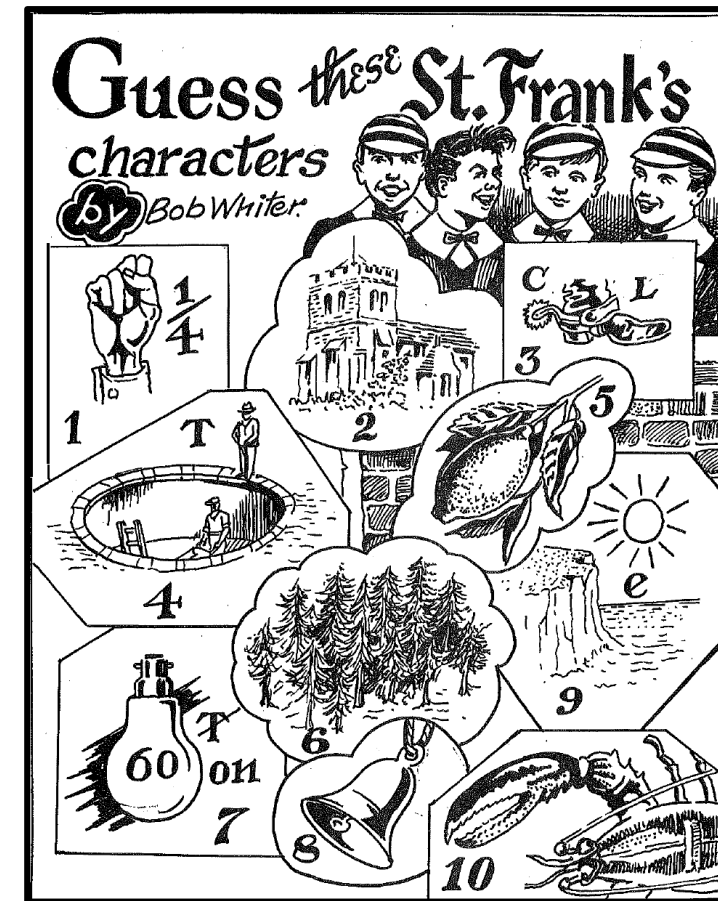
In the Brander Headmaster series (1930) he gets several mentions. When Dr. Locke gets struck down, we read the following:

"What's happened to the Head?"

"Is he hurt?"

Wingate nodded.

"Mimble the gardener found him lying in his garden," he said. (no. 1170)



# SPCD March 1988

## No: 495



I well remember buying the first Hotspur. It was in September, 1933, and I was already a voracious reader of several of the boys' papers. When I saw No. 1 lying on the counter of the newsagent, I just had to have it! There it was, with the huge eagle swooping down on the airman, colourfully depicted in red, white and blue on the cover. Not only did it appear to contain some jolly good yarns, but the publishers, D.C. Thomson, were giving away with No. 1, a black mask. We had a lady, a Mrs. Escount, staying with us at the time when her small son saw me wearing the domino; of course he had to have one! My mother, bless her, gave me the necessary two-pence and sent me to purchase another Hotspur and mask for master Escount.

Let me see if I can remember some of the features that that first edition had to offer. In writing this from memory, so please bear with me. In common with the other four Dundee papers, the "Hotspur" had a comic strip entitled "Silas Snatcher the truant catcher". This strip incidentally was in accord with the stoups, they were all school orientated.





# SPCD July 1988

## No: 499



The "Victorian Britain" Stamps

It is interesting to realize, in our age the Sherlock Holmes "canon" does this form of Even in *His Last Bow*, when we are told that Vot pays Holmes 500 for the supposed secret "Naval a cheque. All this was purported to have taken most terrible August in the history of the world".

On 8th September, 1987, the United Kingdom issued a set of stamps entitled "Victorian Britain". They were designed by Mike Dempsey, PCSD, of Carroll, Dempsey & Thirkell, Ltd. These stamps are of great interest to all those fascinated by the Victorian Age, and especially to the devotees of Sherlock Holmes. My set is comprised of four denominations.

Starting at 18p, the first stamp shows a youthful Victorian against a background of the Crystal Palace with the addition of Landseer's "Monarch of the





SPCD October 1988

No: 502



To say that Dicky Nugent created and wrote the stories of St. Sam's, and its infamous headmaster Dr. Birchmall, is almost like saying that Dr. Watson wrote the Sherlock Holmes canon. (In some Sherlock Holmes societies they get over this by referring to Conan Doyle as the literary agent!)

But to return to St. Sam's, just how popular were these tales? I always used to read them for a good laugh; nowadays I mostly pick out certain incidents and enjoy a good chuckle. A typical example might be: "Dr. Birchmall galloped down the passage followed by Mr. I. Jolliwell Lickham at a brisk canter, with Mr. Chastiser bringing up the rear with a mere foxtrot!"

Of course the atrocious spelling added to the fun and was enough to make a cat laugh.





# Collectors' Digest

## 1988 Xmas Annual

### No. 42



Those wonderful Christmas numbers! What excitement, what magic they did and still evoke! From the colourful covers with titles dripping with snow, to the sprigs of holly that adorned the inside pictures, they just made our Christmases.

Let us take a typical "Magnet Christmas Number" and peruse its contents. Somewhere within its pages would be yuletide wishes generally in the form of jingles, purported to be from the boys themselves. Yet another favourite feature was a pantomime or some other form of Xmas show, with the parts being played by the Removites. Of course we mustn't forget the Editor's chat in which he, and sometimes Frank Richards would wish their readers the 'Compliments of the season'. These greetings would be in 'old English' writing, whilst sprigs of holly and old-fashioned lanterns would often embellish this "Come into the Office Boys" (in later years the appellation "Girls" would be added) feature.



# SPCD January 1989

## No: 505



I wonder how many collectors, or I probably should say, Greyfriars enthusiasts, have noticed two illustrations in two different series of the MAGNET which have a certain similarity.

I refer to MAGNET 1273, dated June 18th, 1932, story entitled 'Coker's Camera Clicks'. On page 5 there is a picture by Leonard Shields depicting Fisher T. Fish counting his money, with George Wingate talking to him from the study door.

Now check MAGNET 1655 dated November 4th, 1939; this story is called 'The Tuck Hamper'. On page 7 we have Fish again counting his money, this time with five juniors talking to him from the study door. The picture this time is by C.H. Chapman. But note the similarities: - the picture of George Washington flanked by American flags; the clock and small picture on the mantelpiece; the fireplace; the cupboard, surmounted by books in the corner. Even the door has a certain sameness, the panels, knob and finger shields. Fishy's posture is almost the same, although in the later illustration he has a pen in his hand.





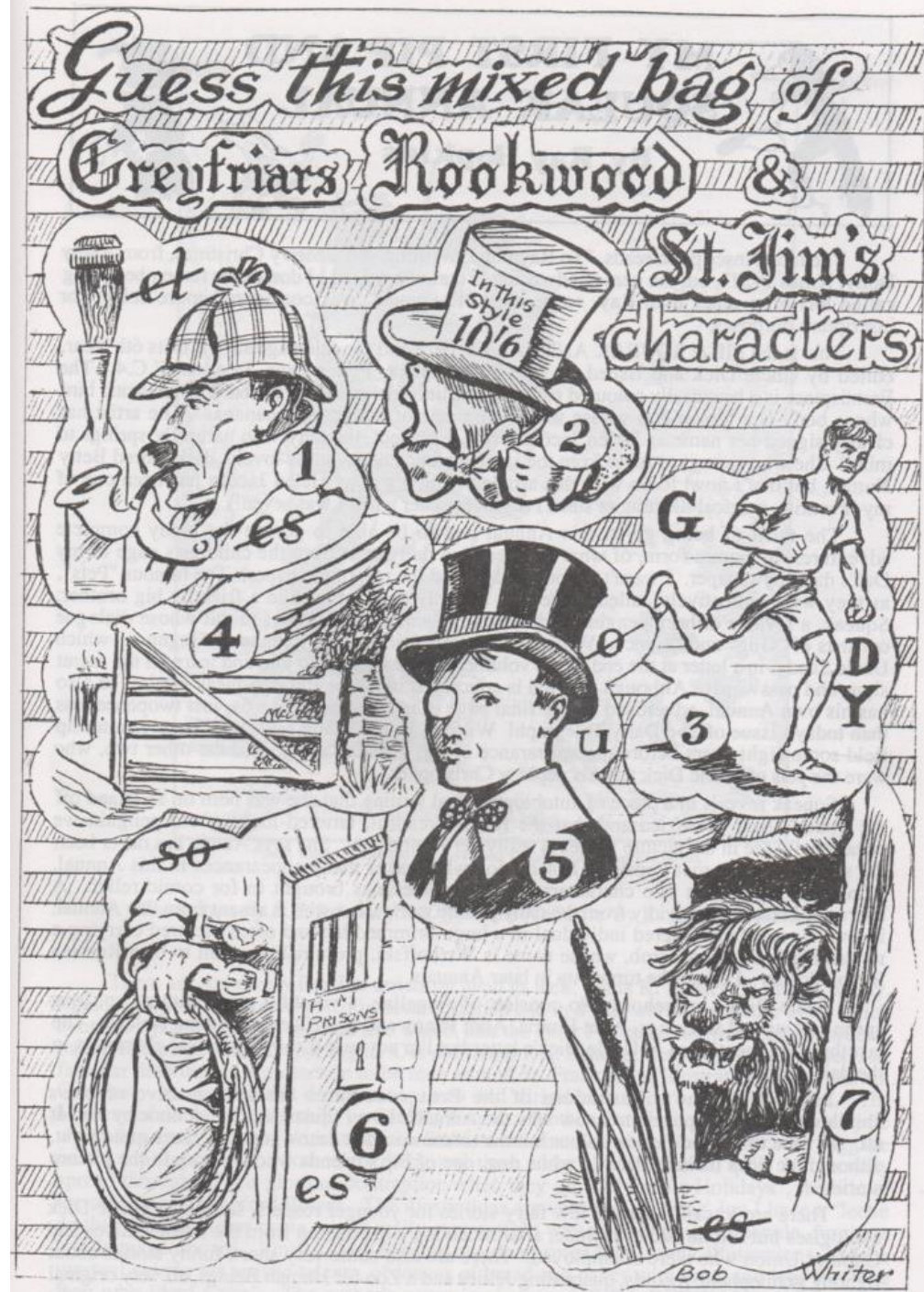
# Collectors' Digest

## 1989 Xmas Annual No. 43

### George & Cousin Ethel

By Bob Whiter.

Re-reading the numerous Christmas stories (something I always do at this particular time of the year), I suddenly realised that the Gem's *Lord Eastwood's Christmas Party* contained not one word about snow! This is surely unusual, almost unique; a Christmas tale by our old friend without snow. Well, there you are! But that is not what prompted this article. The story gives an insight into the relationship between Cousin Ethel and George Figgins. In the sixth chapter we have Arthur Augustus disturbed:





# SPCD July 1990

## No: 523



He's lazy, unreliable and crusty, but can you imagine Greyfriars without him? I'm speaking of course of William George Gosling gatekeeper and porter of the school.

When reading the Greyfriars saga, one gets the impression that Gosling is not only the oldest inhabitant, but also the oldest residing staff member at the college.

He can remember when the remove didn't have Mr. Quelch as form master, but a Mr. John Thorpe in charge (see the second Levison Return series 1927). He remembers when several old boys were in attendance - unfortunately the three that come readily to mind must be termed infamous rather than famous! Such people as Bartholomew Widders who returned with the intention of thrashing Mr. Prout (Magnet 1237, 1931). Franz Kranz who kidnapped Bob Cherry, together with the Bounder and Tom Redwing, to learn the secret of the gadget Major Cherry had invented (Magnets 1354-1358, 1934) "Kidnapped from the Air", Randolph Crocker Series (Magnets 1615-1625). And we mustn't forget Randolph Crocker alias





# Collectors' Digest

## 1990 Xmas Annual No. 44



It is not easy to pinpoint exactly when the partnership of Hilton and Price came into being. The last segment of the Pentelow Greyfriar's Gallery lumped several of the lesser lights into the one article; Hilton and Price were among those mentioned, although even then separated and not associated. In the 1981 Holiday Annual occupying the year's "A Who", included describe But he success.

21 Holiday is listed as the following iars Who's en-pictures They are n one yarn. chances of






# SPCD March 1991

## No: 531

### Valerie Drew Revisited

by Bob Whiter



From 1928 until 1960, I lived with my parents and family at 706 Lordship Lane, Wood Green, a suburb of London. Many of the older members of the Old Boys Book Club will remember meetings there, hosted by my brother Ben and myself. During our tenure, we had many neighbours, some stayed longer than others, we were glad when some departed whilst we were really sorry to see others leave.

Among the latter was a family comprising a grandfather, father and two daughters. The girls, Gwenn the youngest and Molly a couple of years older than myself, turned out to be very nice and friendly, and soon we were swapping our weekly story papers, I giving them the "Magnet" and "Gem" and they giving me the "Schoolgirls' Weekly".

# STORY PAPER

## Collectors' Digest

VOLUME 45  
NUMBER 531

MARCH 1991



86p

Valerie Drew  
Revisited




# SPCD November 1991

## No: 537

### In Defence of Poor Thomas

By BOB WHITER.



No, that doesn't refer to Doubting Thomas, Thomas Mann or even Thomas Merry; but to Mrs. Kebble's cat - her favourite feline Thomas. Whenever food is missing, the boys almost invariably accuse Bunter. Bunter in turn along with various denials and protestations of innocence, often blames poor Thomas.

The following passages will illustrate the point.

"Have you been grub-raiding in Vernon-smith's study, Bunter?"

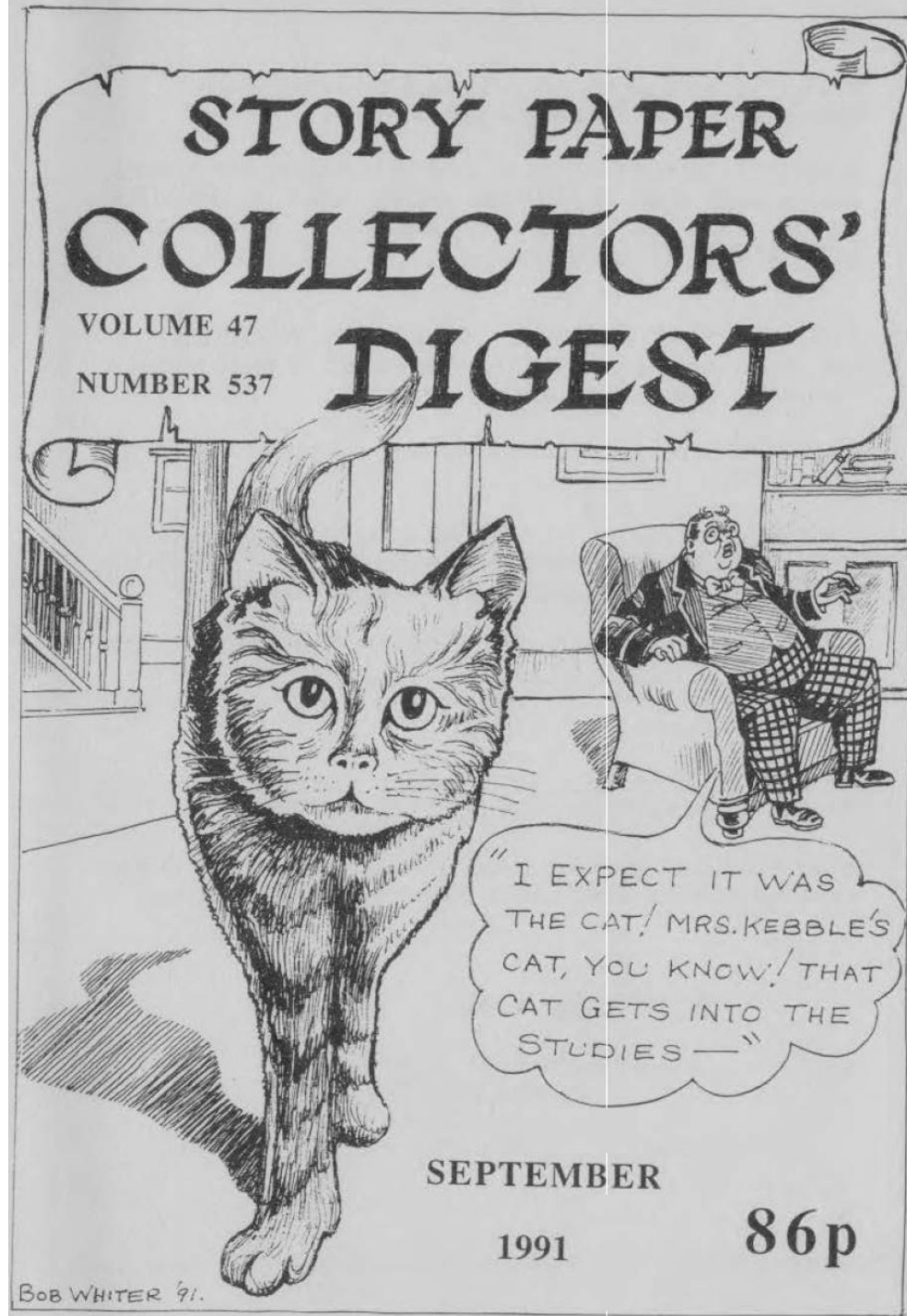
"Oh! No!" gasped Bunter, "I only went there to borrow Smithy's algebra, Loder. I've got some to do, and I lost my book. If Smithy's cake's gone, I expect it was the cat! Mrs. Kebble's cat, you know! That cat gets into the studies --" (Magnet No. 1496 October 17th, 1936. *The Shadow of the Sack!*)

The Famous Five gazed at him. The other fellows roared.

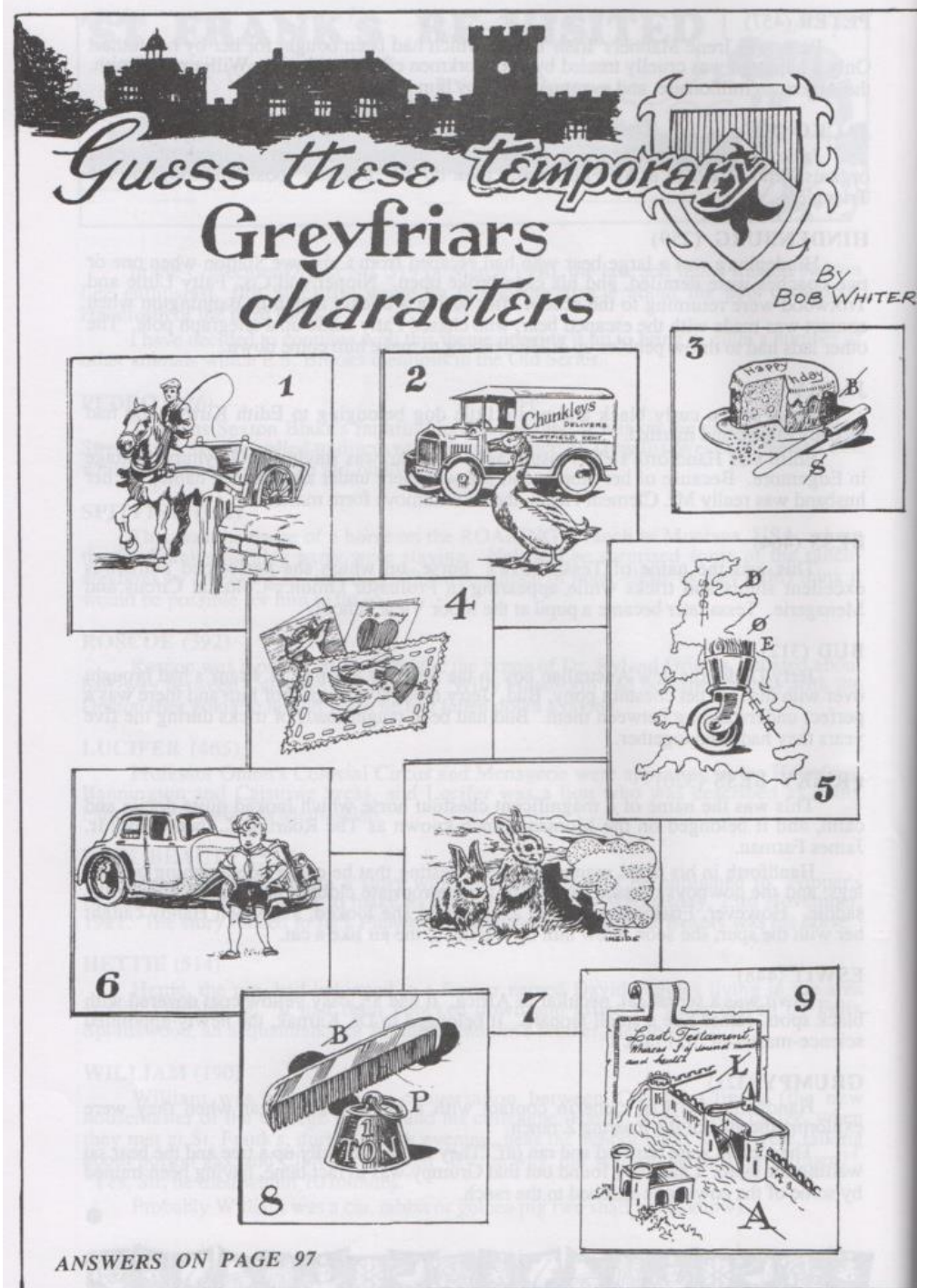
"If your cake's gone, Wharton, I'm sorry. But I know nothing about it." said Bunter. "It may have been the cat! Mrs. Kebble's cat is always getting into the studies. I believe cakes like cats - I mean, cats like cake-" (Magnet No. 1499 November 7th, 1936. *The Secret of the Smuggler's Cave.*)

Poor Thomas has even been blamed for noise in the night, witness the following excerpt.

Prout, clearly, had heard some sound, for his study door was heard to open. They caught a glimmer of the light from the doorway, and the sound of a grunt in the dead silence of the night.



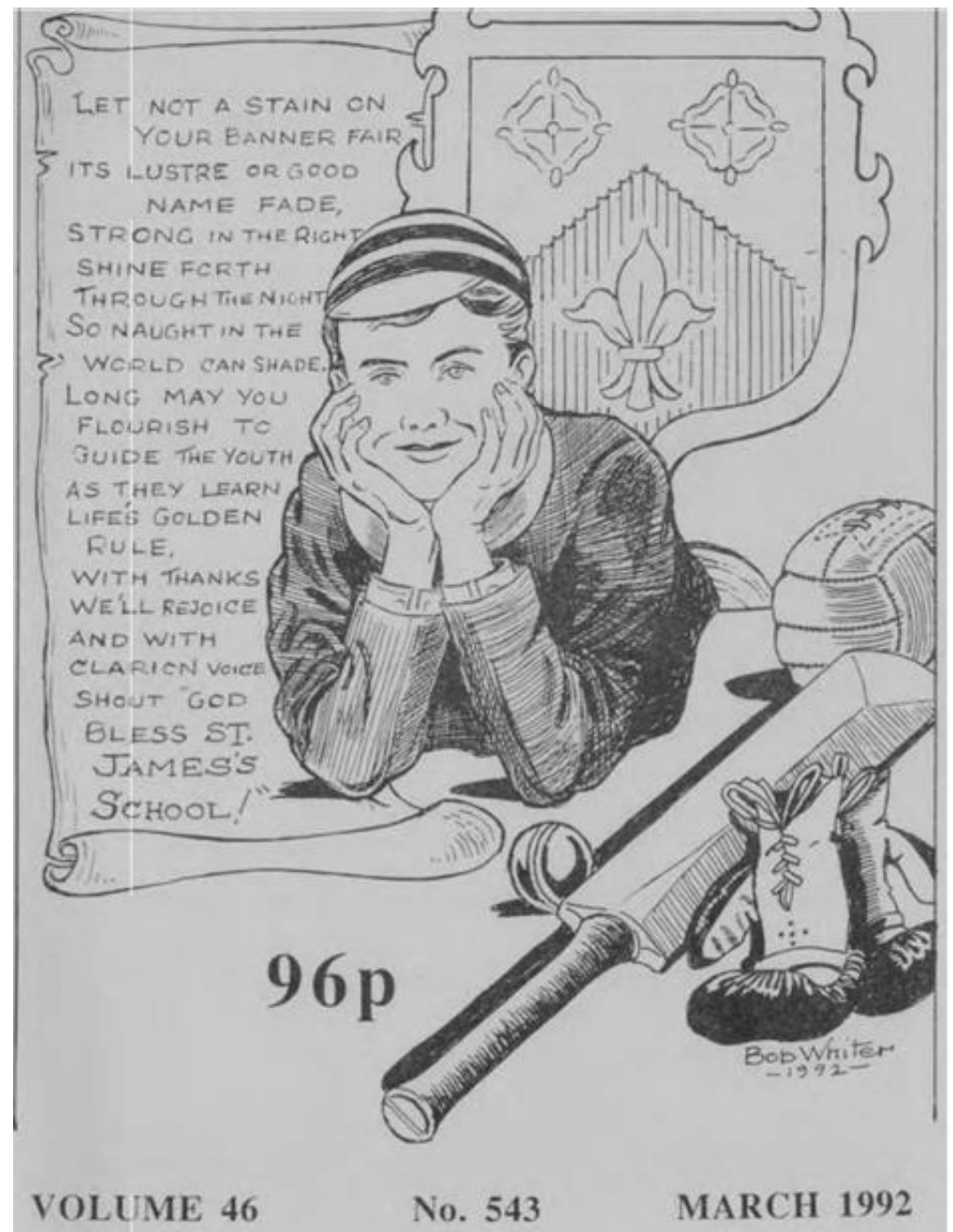
**Collectors' Digest  
1991 Xmas Annual  
No. 45**



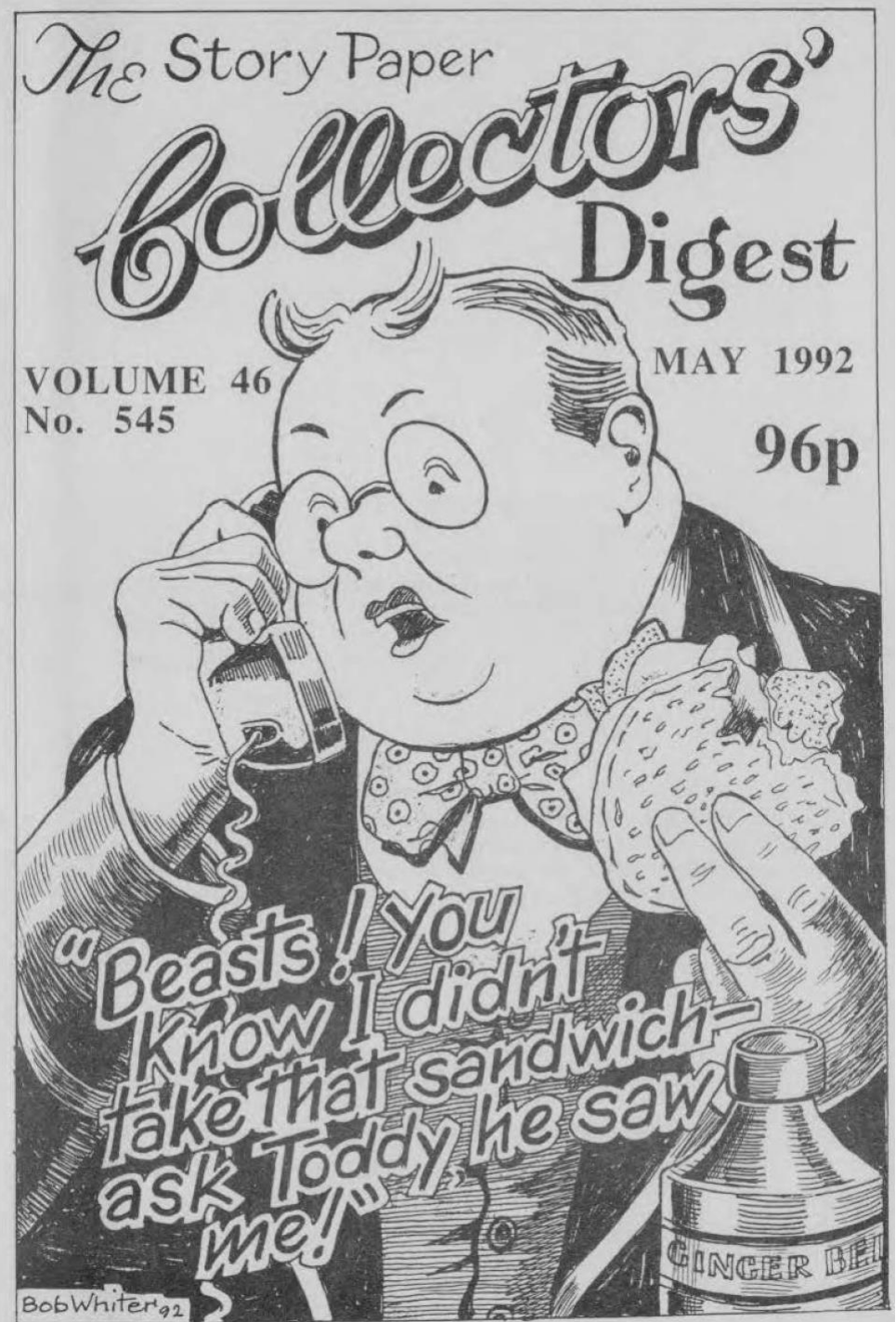


# SPCD March 1992

## No: 543



SPCD May 1992  
No: 545





# SPCD October 1992

## No: 550



BLAKIANA BRIC-A-BRAC

by BOB WHITER

As Bill Lofts mentions in his and the late Derek Adley's book, 'The Men Behind Boys' Fiction - "with fresh data coming in all the time", it is not always easy to present correct facts and dates.

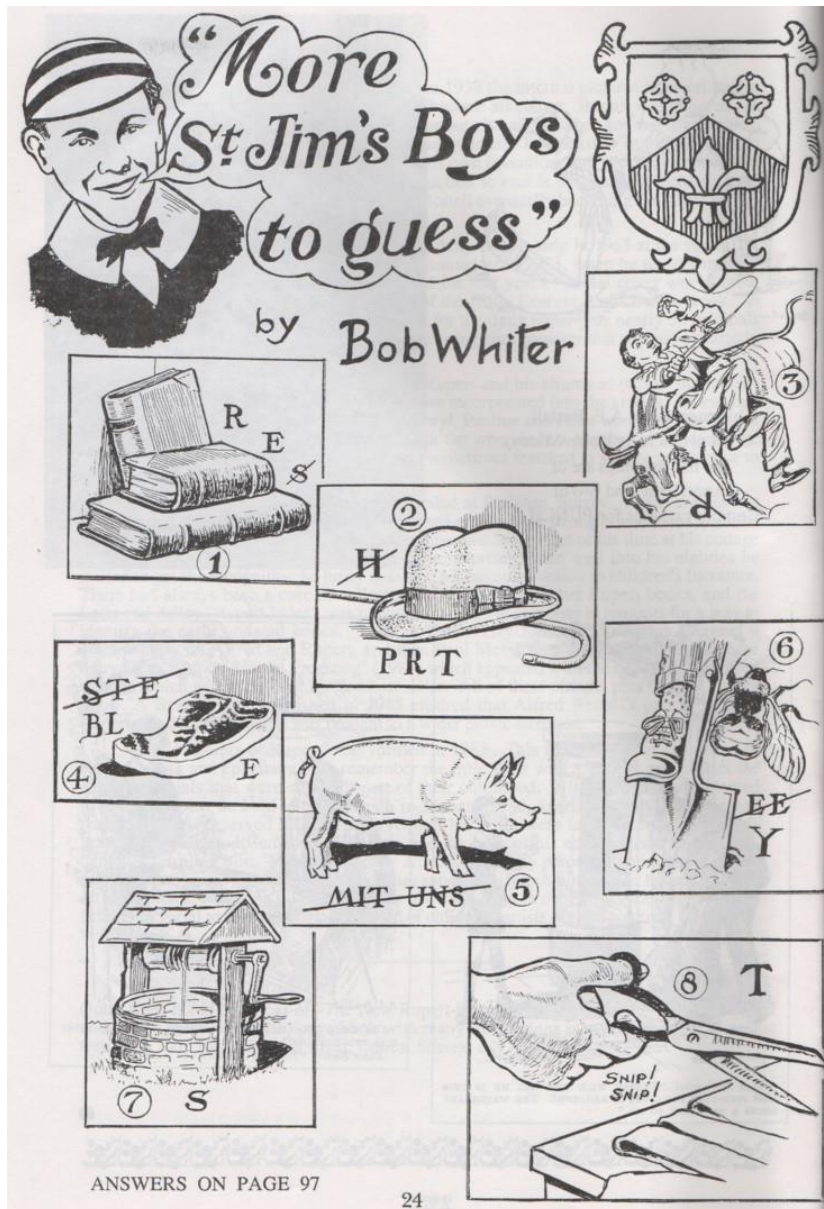
This is particularly the case with the so called first portrait and story of Sexton Blake. According to the Sexton Blake Annual of 1941 and also The Valiant Book of TV's Sexton Blake, Fleetway Publications Ltd. 1968, both of which reprinted both picture and story, the original date was 4th May, 1894 and the publication "Union Jack".





# Collectors' Digest

## 1992 Xmas Annual No. 46



### IN MEMORY OF "FRANK RICHARDS"

by Bob Whiter

Founder of Greyfriars, who told her story so well  
And in that service, eloquent but apart  
Achieved a name that never lost its spell  
Over your country's young at heart.  
Who saw your work accomplished, ere at length.  
Shadows of evening fell, and withered time  
Had warped your stature or resolved the strength  
That kept its manhood's prime.  
Great were your stories till you broke the earthly bond  
And not so far from the Greyfriars portal  
Your spirit passed into the great beyond  
And you became immortal!



# The Origin of 'Biggles'? by Bob Whiter



## THE ORIGIN OF "BIGGLES"?

by Bob Whiter

Sir Peter Masfield, in a statement made recently, confirms an opinion that I have held for a long time - that Squadron Leader Arthur Wellesley Bigsworth was the man on whom W.E. Johns based his famous character 'Biggles'.

Just who was Bigsworth? He was a pilot in the Royal Naval Air Service during World War I. Over the years he served with quite a few famous men, as the following brief notes will show.

In October 1914, Christopher Draper, later known as "The Mad Major," was sent to Fort Grange, an aerodrome near Gosport. Here he found a Naval wing being formed by Lieutenant Commander Arthur Longmore (later Air Chief Marshall Arthur Longmore, C.B.E., D.S.O.). Draper earned the Distinguished Service Cross in March 1918 and was surely the inspiration for Kenneth J. Alford's stirring march "The Mad Major" (1921). He was to gain further fame in 1931, and then again, in 1953, at the age of 61, by flying under the bridges that span the river Thames. Among the pilots, including the C.O. and Draper, was *Flight Commander A.W. Bigsworth* who acted as second in command.

# THE STORY PAPER Collectors' Digest

VOL. 47

No. 558

£1

JUNE  
1993



Bob  
Whiter  
93-

# SPCD July 1993

## No: 559

### Monty Lowther

By Bob Whiter



Do you like Monty Lowther? As with all characters, some readers did and others didn't. Some of course didn't care either way! His nearest equivalent at Greyfriars was probably Bob Cherry, whilst at Rookwood I would plump for 'Putty' Grace. Speaking of Bob Cherry, I don't think Monty ever approached Bob's popularity. This was strange in a way as Lowther had many more facets to his character than had Bob.

Bob was a happy-go-lucky junior, full of fun and the joys of life, loyal, brave and true, the type of person that most people would like to have as a friend - in fact it was often stated that even the "rotters" found it hard not to like him.

Monty, on the other hand, was also loyal, brave and true, full of fun---- although the latter might be taken a step further. Perhaps a little too much fun? He was a never-ending purveyor of puns and jokes. How often has one of the juniors asked the question, "Is that one of your rotten jokes" to which almost invariably Monty would reply, "No, it's one of my good ones!"

# The Story Paper Collectors' Digest



VOL. 47

No. 558

JULY  
1993

£1

# Monty Lowther

Bob Whiter '93



# Collectors' Digest

## 1993 Xmas Annual No. 47



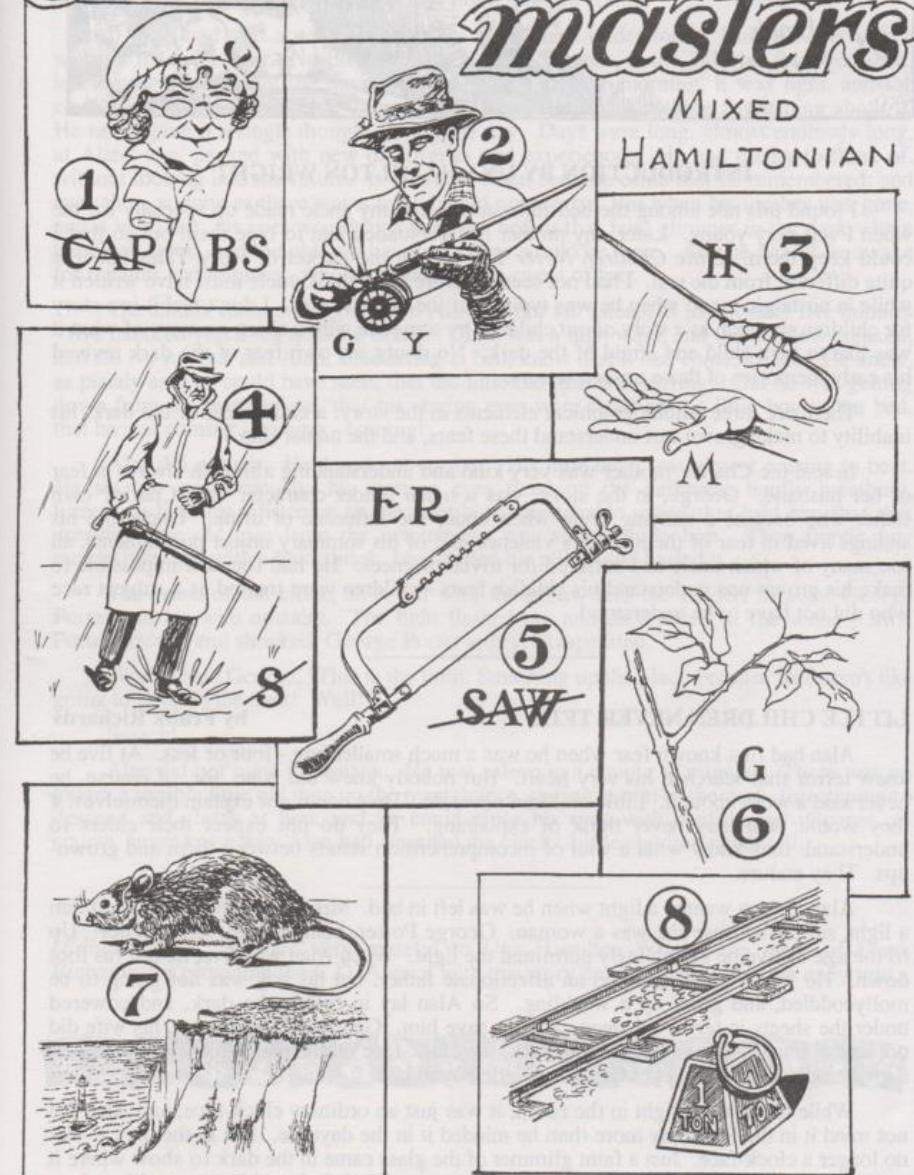
With all the propaganda given both sides during the Great War, it is amazing how the troops could, at least feel some of the human kindness toward each other. On several occasions after armistice with no quarter given and none a victor would be seen offering a light for a cigarette or even a drink to the vanquished.



Editor's Note: This article by Bob was originally published in the American magazine OVER THERE! (Fall/Winter 1992 number). It is reproduced here with permission.

A Vicefeldwebel belonging to the grenadier battalion of the 109th Reserve Inf. Regt. giving a light to a captured Tommy in the spirit of Christmas. Artist: Bob Whiter.

# Guess these masters

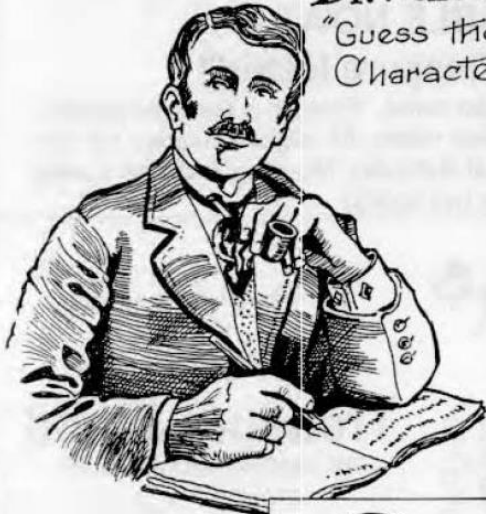


BOB WHITER '93

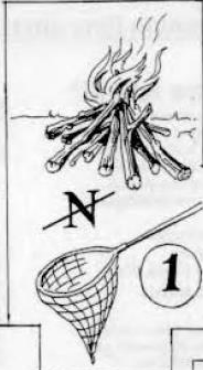
# SPCD January 1994

## No: 565

**Dr. Watson Says**  
"Guess these Characters."




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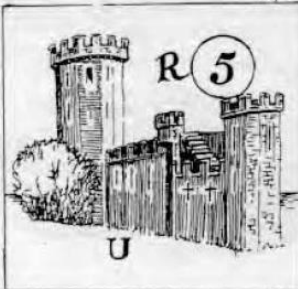


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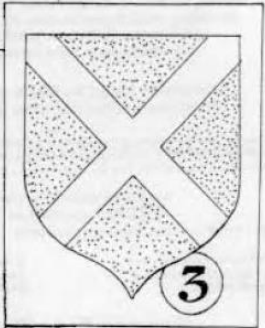
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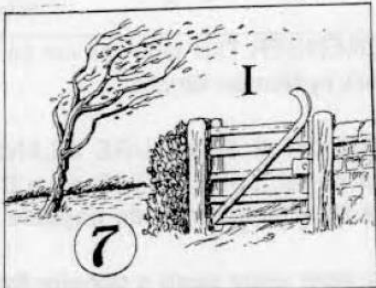


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Answers next month

- BOB WHITER 1993 -



# SPCD March 1994

## No: 567

### THE SCHEMERS OF STUDY NO. 7

by Bob Whiter

Every so often in the Greyfriars' saga, consisting mainly of series, there would come along a single story. What I liked about some of these was that they featured characters from other forms, not always mentioned in the normal run.

In the cover drawing, I have tried to give my interpretation of the three occupants of Remove Study No. 7, who feature in the single story Magnet, 1492, Vol. L, September 19, 1936. This was entitled "Schemers of Study No. 7". Originally, as most Magnet buffs know, Study No. 7 boasted four occupants: William George Bunter, Thomas Dutton, Peter Todd and Alonzo, Peter's cousin, making up the fourth member. If my memory serves me correctly, the last time we heard of Alonzo was in the Portercliffe series; we assume he left Greyfriars on account of poor health.



# SPCD July 1994

## No: 571

### George Alfred Grundy

By Bob Whiter



#### GEORGE ALFRED GRUNDY

by Bob Whiter

Grundy was a tremendously big fellow with a four-point-seven punch and in a "scrap" he was admittedly first class. But the things that he couldn't do were innumerable. He couldn't play cricket, though he firmly believed that he could. He couldn't see that he was an ass, a fact which was perfectly obvious to everybody else in the two Houses at St. Jim's. He was a new fellow in the school, and he had, like Caesar, hoped to come, to see, and to conquer. That idea, however, had been somewhat knocked out of him in the Shell at St. Jim's. Grundy's idea was that he ought to have a hand in everything that was going on, and an authoritative hand, too. He found few fellows to agree with him on that point. Wilkins and Gunn, in his own study, agreed with him - perhaps for the sake of a quiet life. Outside his own study it surprised and exasperated Grundy to find that he was generally sat upon.

This was the description of the great George Alfred Grundy, as it appeared in *The Gem*, number 390, vol. 9, dated 31st July 1915. (Change the names, the form and the school, and you have an almost exact description of the latter day Horace Coker and his two study mates Potter and Green of the Fifth of Greyfriars.)

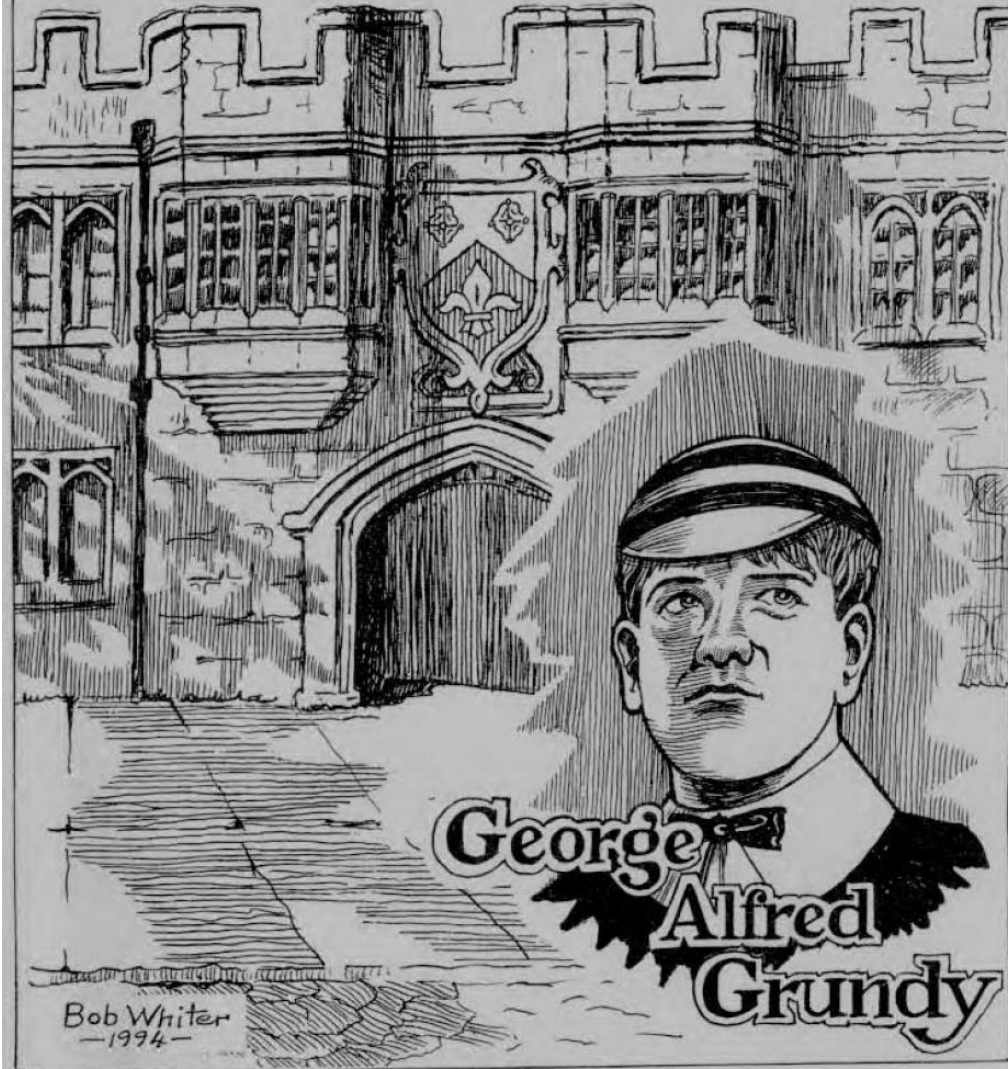
VOL. 48  
No. 571

Story Paper

JULY  
1994

## Collector's Digest

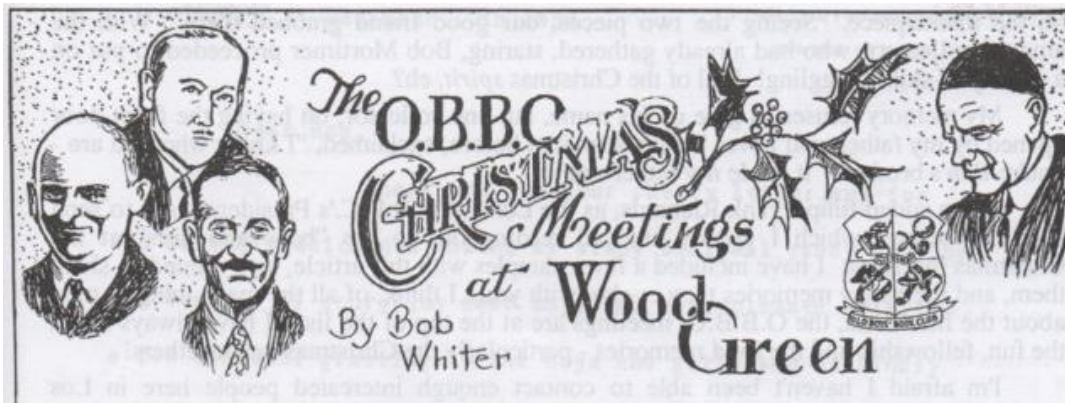
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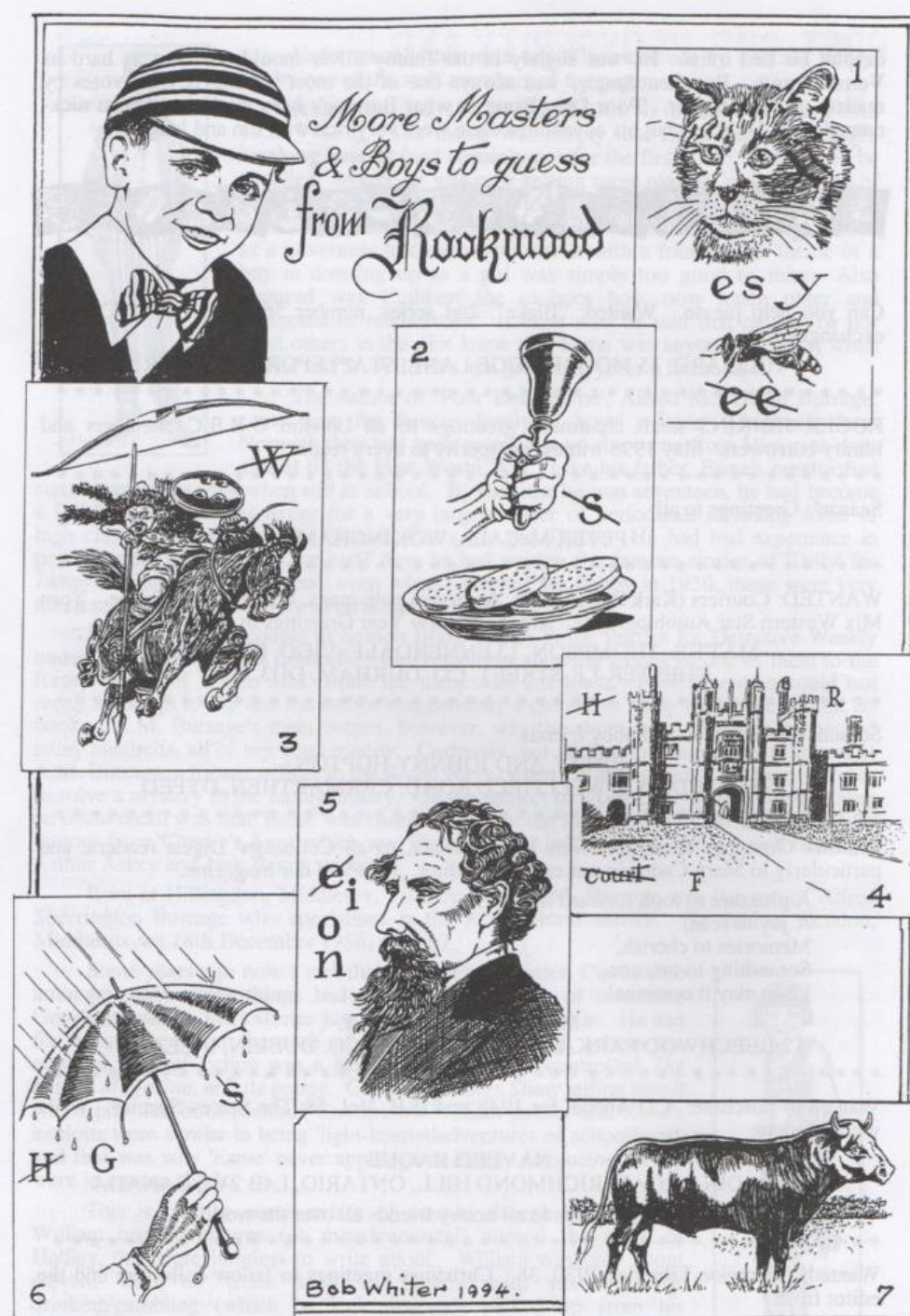


# Collectors' Digest

## 1994 Xmas Annual No. 48



Some of my happiest memories are of the Christmas meetings that my brother Ben and I used to host at our home in Wood Green, London. I don't think I am exaggerating when I say it became almost a ritual for the London Old Boys Book Club to have Wood Green as its permanent Yuletide venue. It was here that we introduced the ghostly candlelight reading, the first performance being the sighting of the "spectre of Polpelly" (Magnet 1,453, December 21, 1935, Chapter 4, "The Phantom of Polpelly") by John Redwing, whilst he was awaiting the arrival of his son Tom Redwing, Vernon Smith, the Famous Five, and, of course, Bunter. With the lights out and just the candle flickering, giving the right atmosphere, it went down very well. I can remember dear old Len Packman making sure I had enough light by which to read the passage!





## Collectors' Digest 1994 Xmas Annual No. 48 (Continued)

December 10th, 1958

ROSE LAWN,  
KINGSGATE-ON-SEA,  
BROADSTAIRS,  
KENT.

Dear Bob,

Thank you for your cheery letter, and for the Celender, which now adorns my study wall all ready for the New Year. Of course, my dear boy, I am very pleased to write a few lines of greeting to the boys and girls who so kindly remember me. May their Christmas be the happiest ever, and their New Year the brightest that ever was; with lots and lots of happy Christmases and bright new Years to come!

At this time of year my thoughts always run back to the Xmas numbers which you tell me you are going to re-read. I think I missed them more than anything else when the old papers conked out. And recently I just couldn't resist getting back to the subject, with the result that "Bunter Comes for Christmas" next year, in one of the Cassell books.

I was much interested to see in the Daily Telegraph on Saturday that they are giving tickets for the Hunter play at the Palace prizes in a competition. I hope that the lucky winners will have a good time with Billy. Who could have guessed that he would last so long, when he rolled off the typewriter in 1908?

Best of wishes,laddie,for your Christmas gathering,  
and as Tiny Tim used to say,God bless us all,every one!

With kindest regards,

Always yours sincerely,

Frank Richards

~~Chet des Cousins~~

Rose Lawn ~~Wimereux sur Mer.~~  
Kingsgate  
Kent.

December 13th. 1956

Dear Bob,

Christmas is always a cheery time: and one of its cheeriest aspects, to my mind, is the tremendous influx of letters from old friends: every one of them happily welcome, though when I look at the Everest on my desk I wonder a little how and when they will be answered! But I just must send a line in reply to yours, even with Billy Bunter waiting for the typewriter: a brief message to you and your friends at your meeting on Sunday. May you all have the happiest of Christmases a prosperous New Year, and many more to follow till you have accumulated as many as I have: and continue to be my "constant readers" all the time! And, as Tiny Tim used to say, God bless us all, every one!

Always yours sincerely,

Frank Richards

~~Chalet des Courlis~~  
Rose Lawn  
Kingsgate  
Broadstairs,  
Kent.

Dec. 15th. 1955

Dear Bob Cherry,

Thank you for a very delightful card.  
In answer to your question, "Ravenapur" was  
a little too much like the last act in Hamlet,  
to please me very much. But I am glad you  
liked it: and really of its kind it was not  
bad.

Best of wishes for your meeting on Sunday. Here are the few lines you have asked me for, laddie.

"Greetings to all friends, best  
wishes for Christmas and the New Year:  
and may you all live as long and happily

as Frank Richards, and thank God as humbly  
and gratefully as he does for His many  
blessings."

With kindest regards,

*Frank*



We the collectors & readers of  
the C.D. monthly & Annual  
Wish you Mary, our Editor -  
"The Compliments of the  
Season,"  
and our undying thanks!





SPCD March 1995  
No: 579



# SPCD May 1995

## No: 581

### WORDS AND TERMS USED IN THE RIO KID STORIES

#### Part 1.

by Bob Whiter

In his very fine article on the Rio Kid which appeared twice in the C.D. Annual (1952 and 1987) my old friend Eric Fayne justly praises those truly wonderful stories about the boy outlaw. Eric wonders how Charles Hamilton (Ralph Redway) ever found the time to soak himself in Western Lore and atmosphere. I fully agree and can only add that our dear author certainly did his homework well!

My grandfather owned a corn exchange and obtained the contract to feed all the livestock in the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show when it toured the U.K. My father as a boy was taken to meet the great showman and the accompanying Indians, including Red Shirt the Sioux chieftain. From an early age I was told all about the Deadwood stage being chased by Indians, my father no mean artist, illustrating his remarks with thrilling pictures. This started a love for the old West that has persisted until this day. In those days I never dreamed I would actually visit some of the places mentioned in the stories. In this article I have tried to show the origins of the terms, places, etc. which are found in the Rio Kid sagas. Oh I know you will find omissions -- due to the problem of space I have tried to keep the list down, using only those I have considered to be the most important. I only hope you will enjoy browsing through them as much as I have in presenting them. One thing I would like to say about any of the stories (not only those featuring the Rio Kid) that featured Americans. Just because our transatlantic cousins don't use a certain phrase, saying or word now, doesn't mean they never did!



Part 2

**Pecan** - An olive-shaped edible nut with a smooth, thin shell that grows on a kind of hickory tree of the walnut family, common in the southern and central U.S. The tree on which it grows Algonkian (compare Cree Indians pakan, hard-shelled nut).

**Pesky** - U.S. informal, troublesome; annoying; alteration of pesty pest.

**Placer** - Mining, the washing of loose sand or gravel for gold or other minerals, Spanish placer variant of placel.

**Plaza** - A public square in a city, town or place, Spanish plaza borrowed from Latin platea courtyard, broad street. Doublet of piazza place.

**Posse** - A group of men summoned by a Sheriff to help him. Medieval Latin Posse body of men, power (Latin posse to be able).

**Possum** - U.S. an *opossum*. A small mammal that carries its young in a pouch or on its back. The opossum feeds at night and when caught, pretends to be dead. Alkonkian (Powhatan) apasum, "Playing possum."







## Laughter & the Love of Friends

By  
Leslie Rowley

and illustrated by  
BOB WHITER

'From quiet homes and first beginnings.  
Out of the undiscovered ends.  
There's nothing worth the wear of winning -  
Than laughter and the love of friends.'

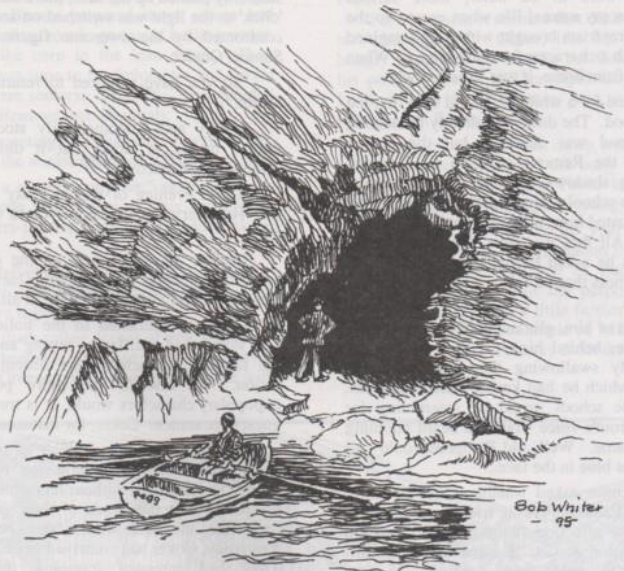
(Hilaire Belloc)

I had graduated from 'CHICK'S OWN' to the more advanced 'RAINBOW', supplemented by the daily exploits of 'PIP, SQUEAK, AND WILFRED' when my grandmother, in her wisdom, introduced me to 'THE MAGNET LIBRARY'. I was somewhere in my ninth year at the time, and I'm still a devotee of Greyfriars

MAGNET' was close at hand. The craft and skill of the creator of Greyfriars had already invented a very plausible setting for the school and the characters.

The river Sark flowed under the old stone bridge at Courtfield, passing either side of Popper's island, skirting the mortgaged acres of

empt  
pped  
efore



SEAGULL'S CAVE.



THE CROSS KEYS  
WILL BE FOUND AT THE  
FAR END OF THE VILLAGE



# MEMORIES...

## AND THE MAGIC OF THE SEASON

BY ROBERT WHITER

(Editor's Note: This article first appeared in an issue of the American magazine, *British Heritage*)

I suppose most people look back on their youth through rose-coloured glasses. I'm certainly no exception, particularly when recalling past Christmases in England. Ah, but the thrill, the excitement that still comes over me as my mind travels back through the misty corridors of time.

For us children, the sight of shops and department stores dressing their windows provided the first signs of the coming festivities. Twinkling-coloured lights inside the windows, reflecting on the imitation snow and holly hung and festooned in gay profusion, made the toy and novelty stores even more attractive than usual. Not to be outdone, the butchers and poultry shops displayed their prime cuts, turkeys and geese, decorated appropriately. The birds, decked out in white paper hats and cuffs, hung in lines clearly marked in graduated prices.

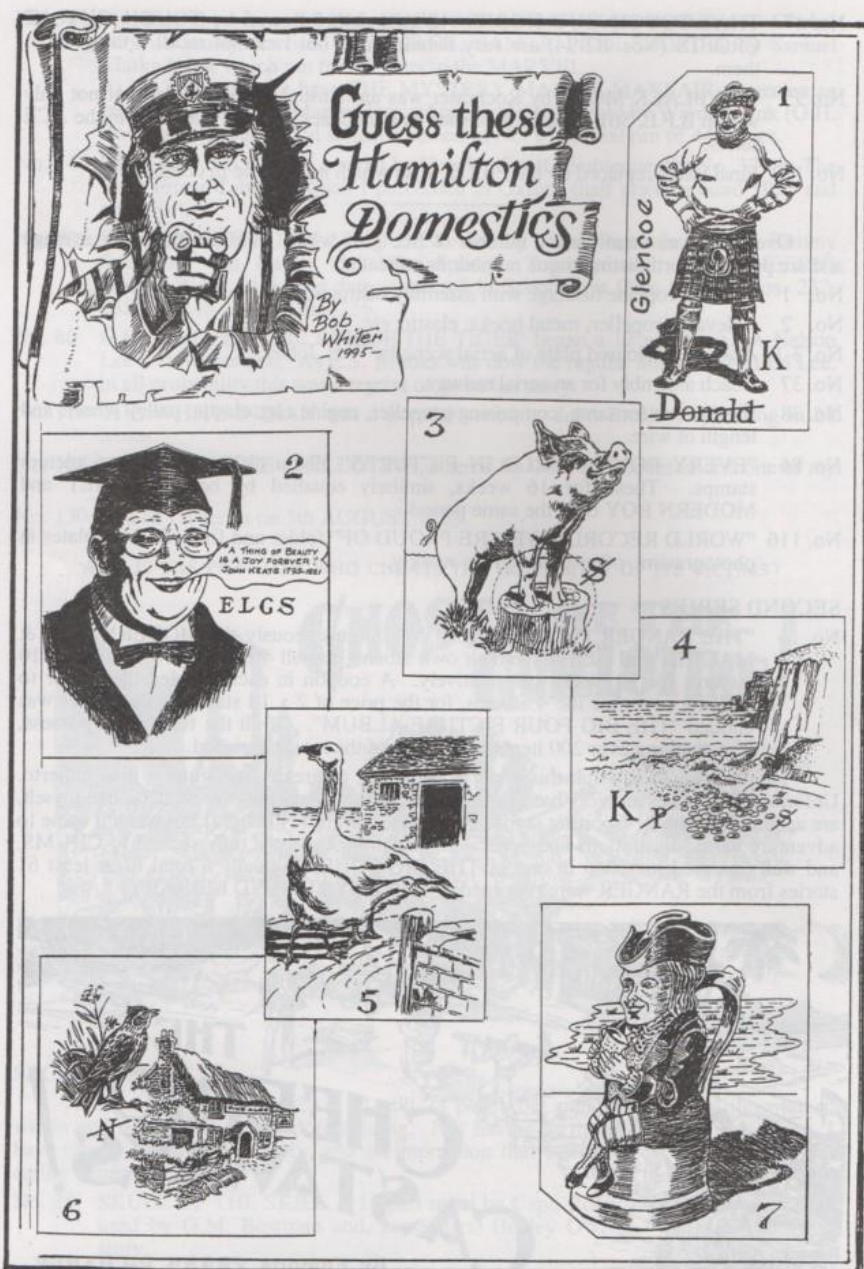
Costermongers packed every side road, pushing barrows piled high with large assortments of fruits, nuts, figs and dates. Overhead, holly and mistletoe hung draped over awnings. At night-time, the cries of the costers mingled with the hissing of the Naphtha lamps, which provided the only illumination apart from an occasional street lamp. People stag-

Edmonds Brothers, one of the two major department stores in Wood Green (a borough of North London in which I spent my boyhood) was a veritable Mecca for children, especially at Christmas.

select known telling year E if the enter sailor our ey so), we just se compe crayon severa prize. well re from a



FRANK RICHARDS WITH SOME YOUNG FRIENDS



GUESS THESE HAMILTON DOMESTICS

### THE O.B.B.C. BADGE

Recently several new subscribers have asked me who designed the OBBC badge, and also what its Latin inscription means. The badge was designed in the Club's very early days by Bob Whiter, who remains a member of the London Club and, of course, a regular contributor to the C.D.

I reproduce the badge-design here. "Puer Manebit", as I understand it, means "Boyhood Remains" ('Boyhood Survives' might be a better translation, perhaps).

Bob Whiter has for many years lived in Los Angeles with his wife, Marie, and the Whiters' ever welcoming hospitality to hobby friends is legendary. Bob's brother, Ben, was Secretary of the London Club for decades, and since his passing has been much missed.

Below is a reproduction of the most recent of Bob Whiter's hobby drawings. (M.C.)



Bob Whiter 1995.





## PART I

Arguably the most prolific of all the many artists and illustrators of the papers of our youth, Savile Lumley, remains virtually an enigma - even that Sherlock Holmes of our book collecting fraternity, the indefatigable Bill Lofts, hasn't had much luck in locating any facts about this elusive pen, pencil and brush wielder. If my memory serves me correctly, I seem to remember Bill suggesting to me that it was probably a made-up name, taken from two surnames.

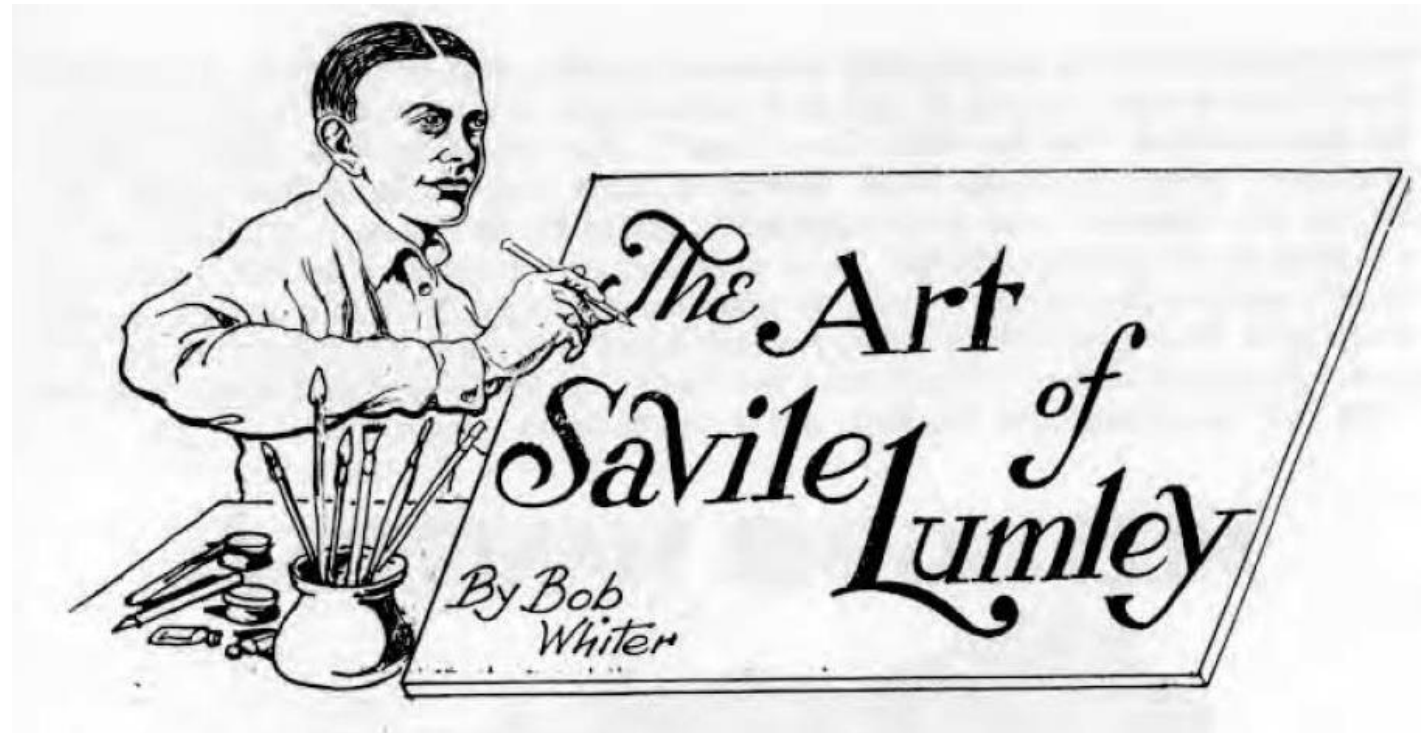
Be that as it may, I made the cover drawing from a rather fuzzy photograph in the *Boys Own Annual* of 1917-18. Among the many publishers for whom he drew, his work may be found in some of Herbert Strang's annuals - a name we know was certainly made up from two sources (see Brian Doyle's excellent *Who's Who of Boys' Writers and Illustrators*, 1964).

## FORUM

**From BOB WHITER, California, USA:** When designing the O.B.B.C. badge I wanted the motto to be 'Boyhood is Everlasting'. My old teacher, a Mr. George Callister, took me along to see Mr. Eustace of Trinity Grammar School. He was a Latin scholar and said 'Puer Manebit' was the nearest that he could come up with.

# Collectors' Digest





## PART 2: Conclusion

A very funny picture entitled "How's That?", depicting a bowler breaking the batsman's bat with a fast ball, was Lumley's frontispiece to the Annual of 1932. "Rookwood's Reckless Rascal!" was a sepia plate showing George Alfred Gower, who, in 1790, tied a birch to the flagstaff at the top of the school's tower. This was just one of the many occasions when the Holiday Annual gave little glimpses of the purported histories of the schools - a feature that Roger Jenkins has pointed out was missing from most of the postwar attempts to copy the famous annual. These two plates were rounded off with another coloured painting, "The Demon of the Lake!" This shows a dinosaur emerging from the water which, together with Lumley's line drawings, illustrates Cecil Fanshaw's story of the same name, *The Demon of the Lake*.



# SPCD July 1996

## No: 595

### BOB WHITER WRITES:

I was very interested in Desmond O'Leary's article (May C.D.) on the passing of Terence Cuneo. You may remember in C.D. 474 of June 1986 I had written a short piece on him, having been a life-long admirer of his work. I also drew his likeness for the front cover. Soon afterwards Roger, my son, started attending the Saturday classes that Cuneo used to teach. Roger took along the C.D. and also some Magnets that contained Cuneo's illustrations to George E. Rochester's story "The Shadow of the Guillotine".

CONTINUATION OF OUR SUPERB FRENCH REVOLUTION SERIAL!



By  
GEO. E. ROCHESTER.  
(Introduction on  
next page.)

# STORY PAPER COLLECTORS' DIGEST

VOL. 49

No. 595

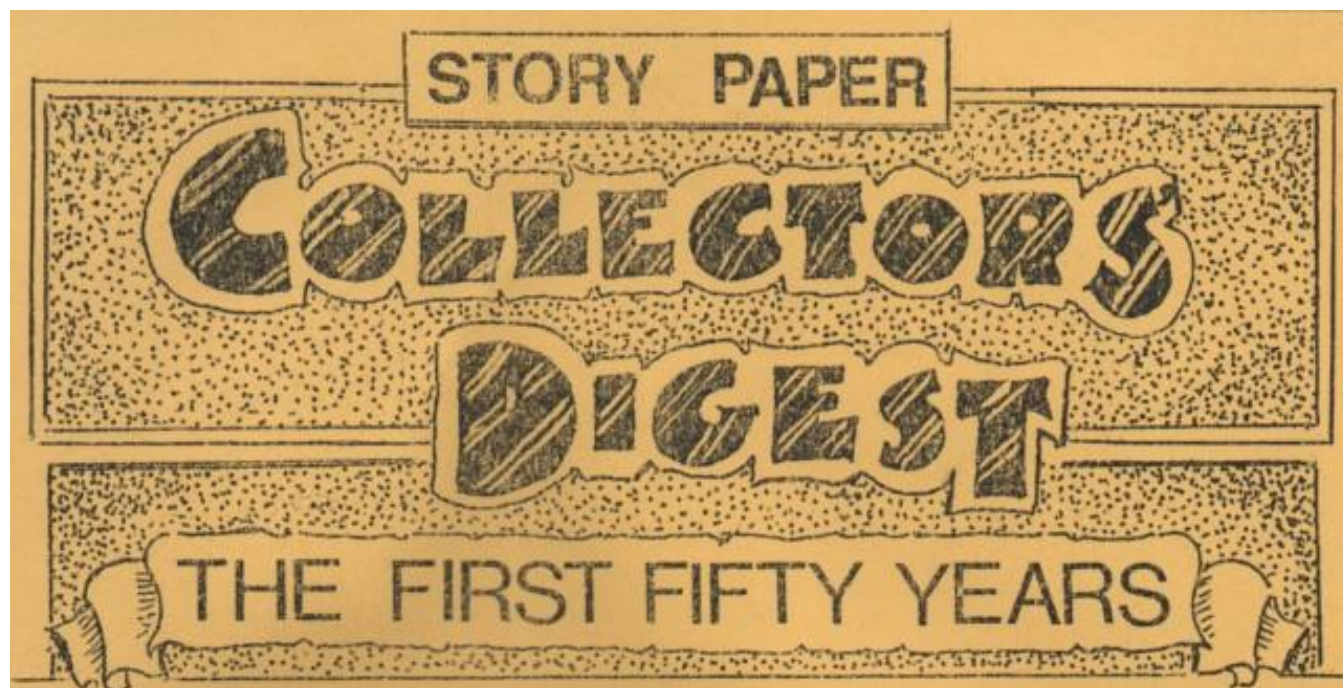
JULY 1996

## *The Story Paper* **Collectors' Digest**





1996?  
Fifty years  
of the CD...



BEGINNINGS OF THE C.D. AND THE O.B.B.C.

By BOB WHITER

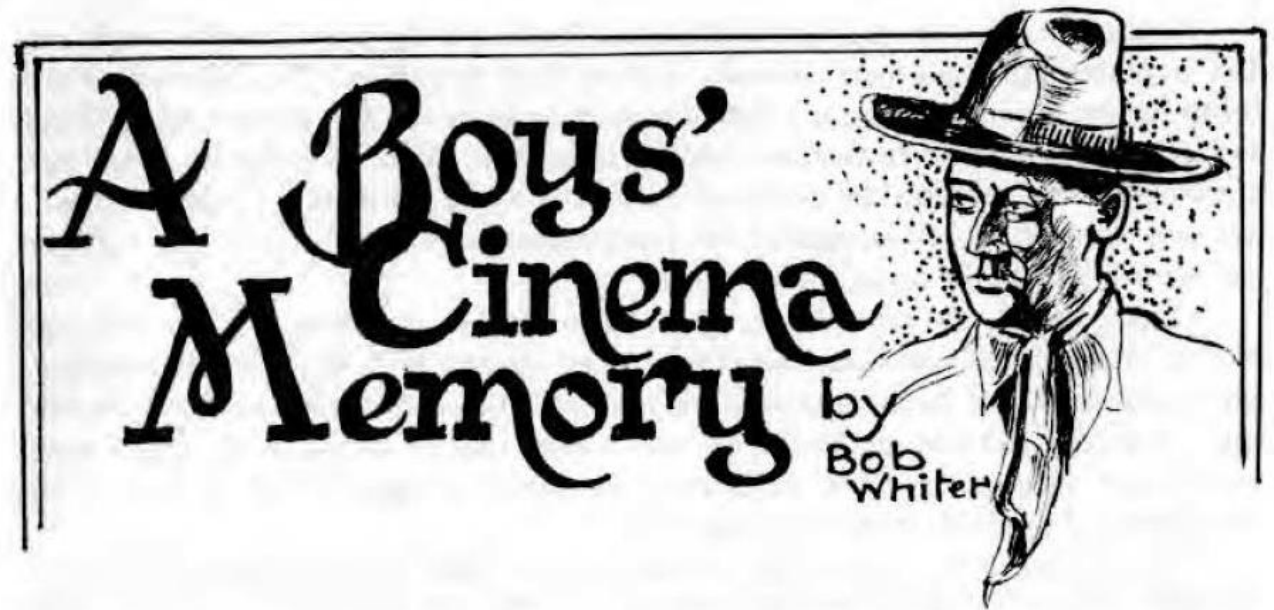
Little did I realize the effect the following incident was to have on my story-paper collecting career. At the age of thirteen, a boy from another form at school asked if I'd be interested in some old Marvels. Apparently, when the boy's grandfather had died, they found among his effects a case of old boys story-papers. Now I had been an avid reader of the Magnet and Gem (I had even had my photograph printed in the latter, Gem 1619, February 25th 1939, 'Jack Blake Answers Back'): I also read the Bullseye, Film Fun and the Thomson papers, but the Marvel was obviously before my time. I had heard of it vaguely, its main attraction had presumably been stories about the trio. Jack, Sam and Pete.



**Collectors' Digest**  
**1996 Xmas Annual No. 50**







Barbara, one of our twin daughters, had asked us (Marie and myself) to pick up a certain video; her working hours preventing her from so doing. Whilst Marie searched for the required movie I wandered over to the Western section. Looking through their large and varied selection, my eyes suddenly alighted on a couple of titles! "The Man from Monterey" and "Somewhere in Sonora". There they were, resplendent in their colourful jackets, showing pictures of John Wayne the featured star.

By way of interest, on "The Man from Monterey" label, Wayne's rival Francis Ford is shown menacing him with what looks like a Colt cap & ball pistol, either an 1849 Pocket Dagoon or an 1851 Navy. As the story is set circa 1850s this would be correct. So many times a Western movie starts off with a subtitle:- Wyoming or some other state, "1860" and the actors are armed with 1873 Frontier model Colts (sometimes you'll see a few comparable model Remingtons). In other words some form of cartridge loading pistol is featured before Smith & Wesson purchased the Rolin White patent in 1856 - Colt was not able to use this loading method for quite some time; the earliest being the converted 1860 Army.



# 1997

## Eric Fayne tribute...

### REMEMBERING ERIC FAYNE

We are sorry that space does not permit the publication here of the many tributes which we have received for Eric Fayne. However, we are including two of special interest: the first is from Una Hamilton Wright (Charles Hamilton's niece), while the second was written by Bob Whiter, who is a founder-member of the Old Boys Book Club and a regular contributor to the Collectors' Digest.

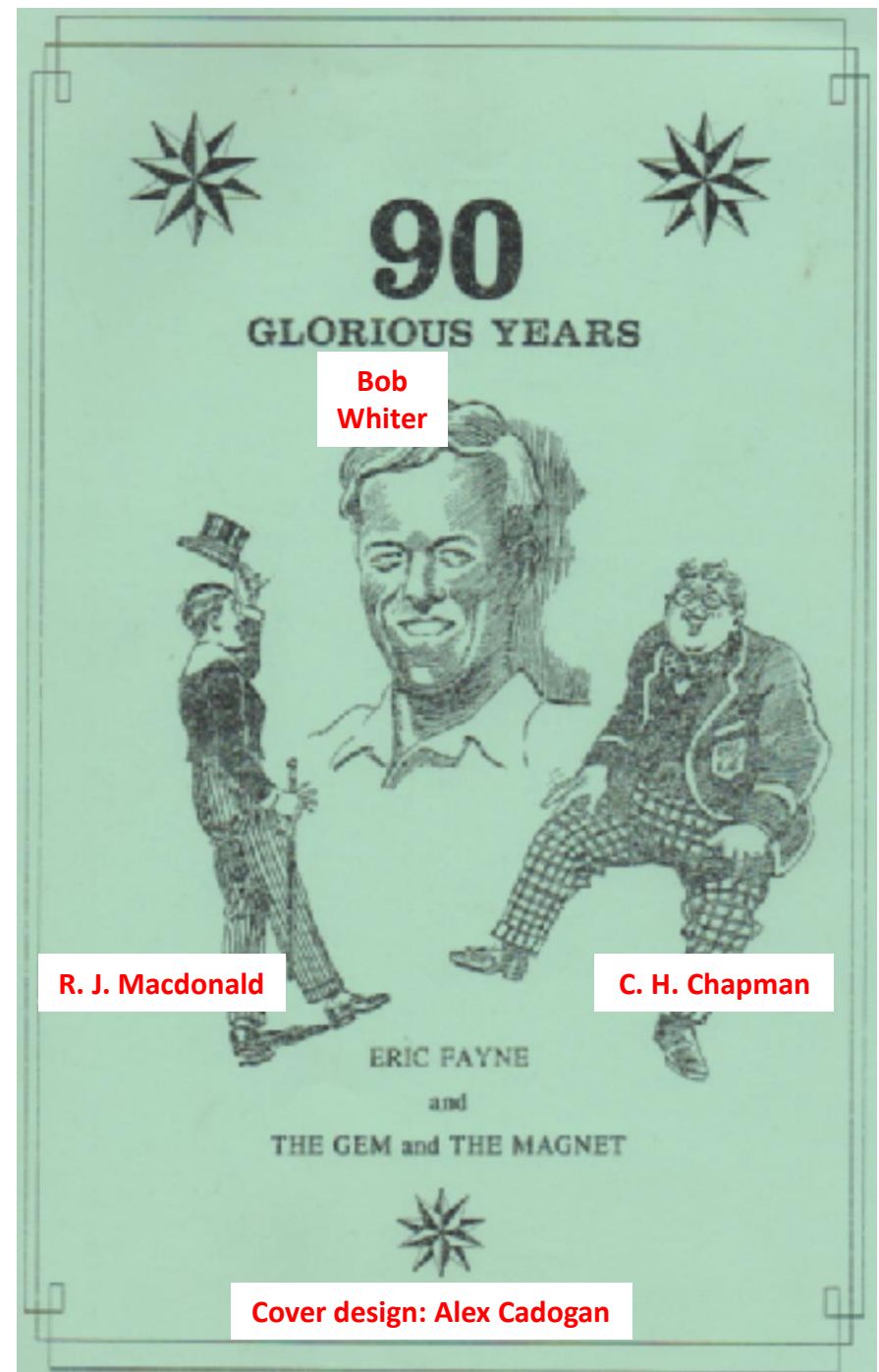
#### From UNA HAMILTON WRIGHT:

I was most upset to hear of the death of Eric Fayne . . . . and I should be so glad if you could publish a message from me mentioning my very warm memories of him. I didn't meet him until after Uncle Charley died - it was at Uncle's funeral in fact. It was so gallant of Eric to make that ghastly, snowy journey across Kent by public transport and taxis on January 1st 1962 to help comfort mother and me. We felt so alone. Since then he has always been so friendly and approachable, as though he were trying to live out the Greyfriars ethic in his own life.

#### From BOB WHITER:

It was a lovely day here in California until my good friend Naveed Haque 'phoned me from Canada and informed me of the passing of Eric Fayne. Whilst I was talking to him, the mail arrived and a letter from another good friend, Darrell Swift, confirmed the very sad news.

The sky suddenly seemed to grow much darker: a light had gone out! My mind travelled back over the years, fifty to be exact, to my first correspondence with Eric, and then to March 1949, when he attended the second meeting of the Old Boys Book Club at my home in Wood Green. And, to use his own words, 'we've been friends ever since!' The third meeting was held at Eric's home and school in Surbiton. Together with another dear friend, John Robyns (Robby), I was invited to lunch before the meeting. What a wonderful occasion. We spent the entire lunch-time discussing Charles Hamilton and his works.







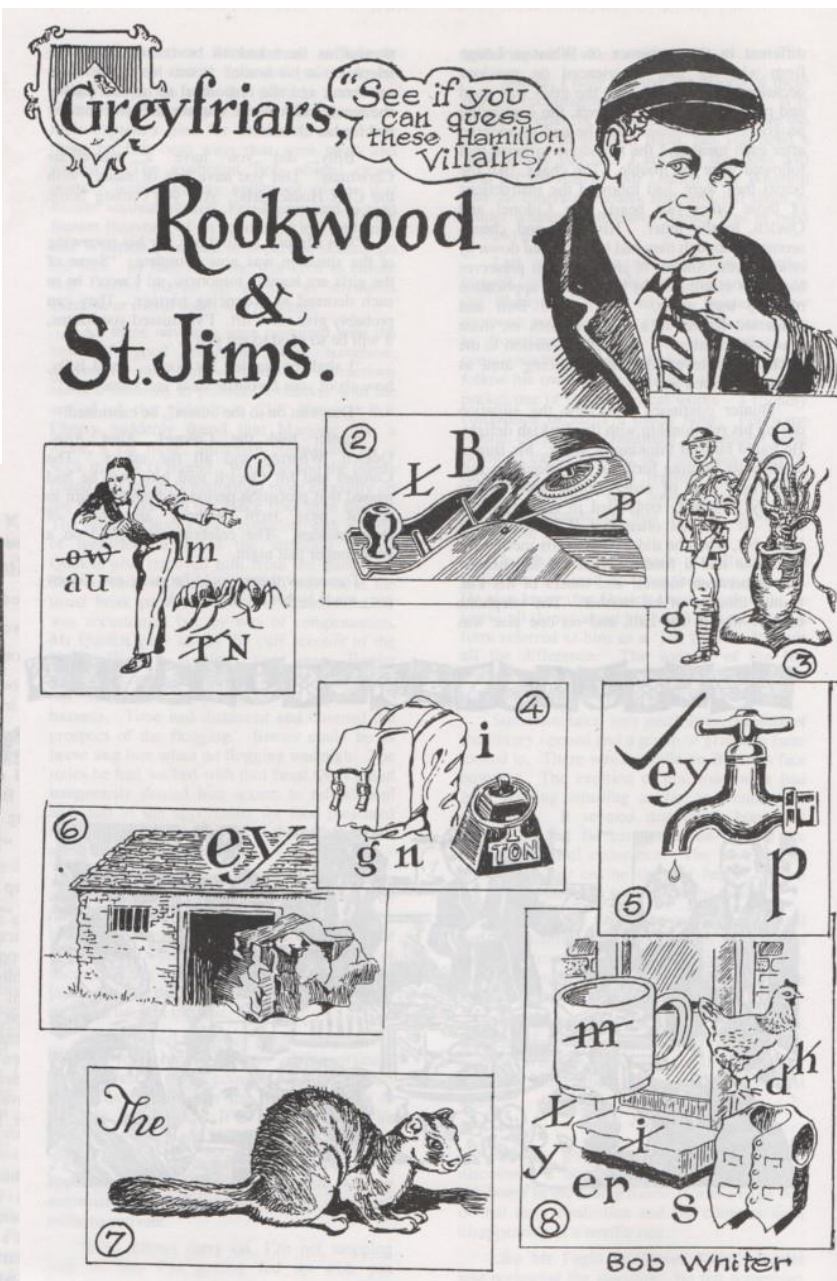
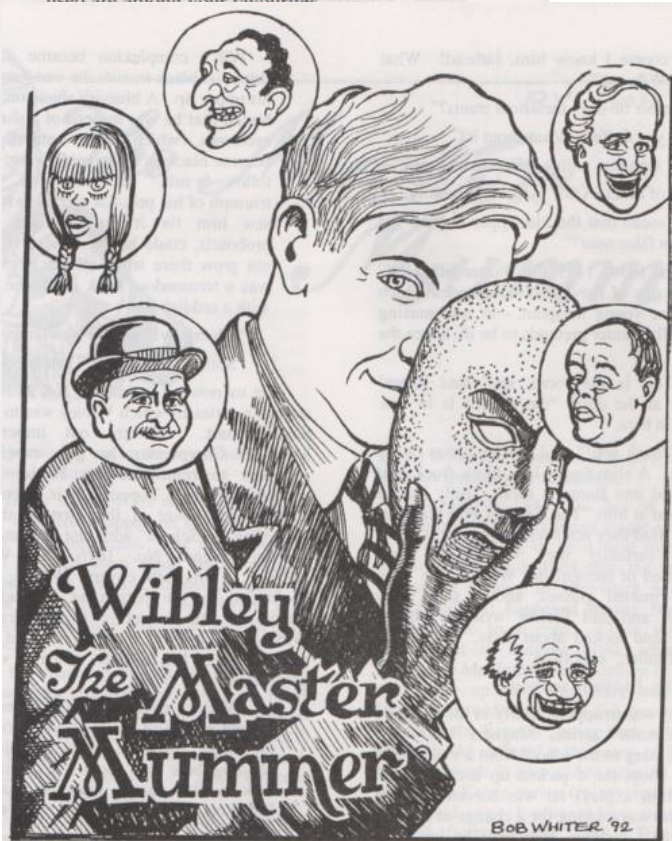
The young boy sat in the bay window of the front room, looking out into the street.

His father stood by his side, hidden by the curtain. The parent rapped on the window as a passer-by came into sight. The man lifted his eyes and dropped them again before doing a double-take. To see a Chinaman, replete in mandarin cap and robe, in the window of a suburban London house, must have created quite a surprise.

The boy made up to look like an Oriental was "yours truly" indulging in one of his many hobbies. Later on as a member of various dramatic and operatic societies, he was still carrying on his love for making up, acting and, of course, music. Even later on still, he would take part as an extra in movies.

This must be one of the reasons why I have always enjoyed the stories that featured Monty Lowther and George Francis Kerr of St. Jim's, "Putty" Grace of Rookwood and of course the master mummer of Grevfriars. William Wibley

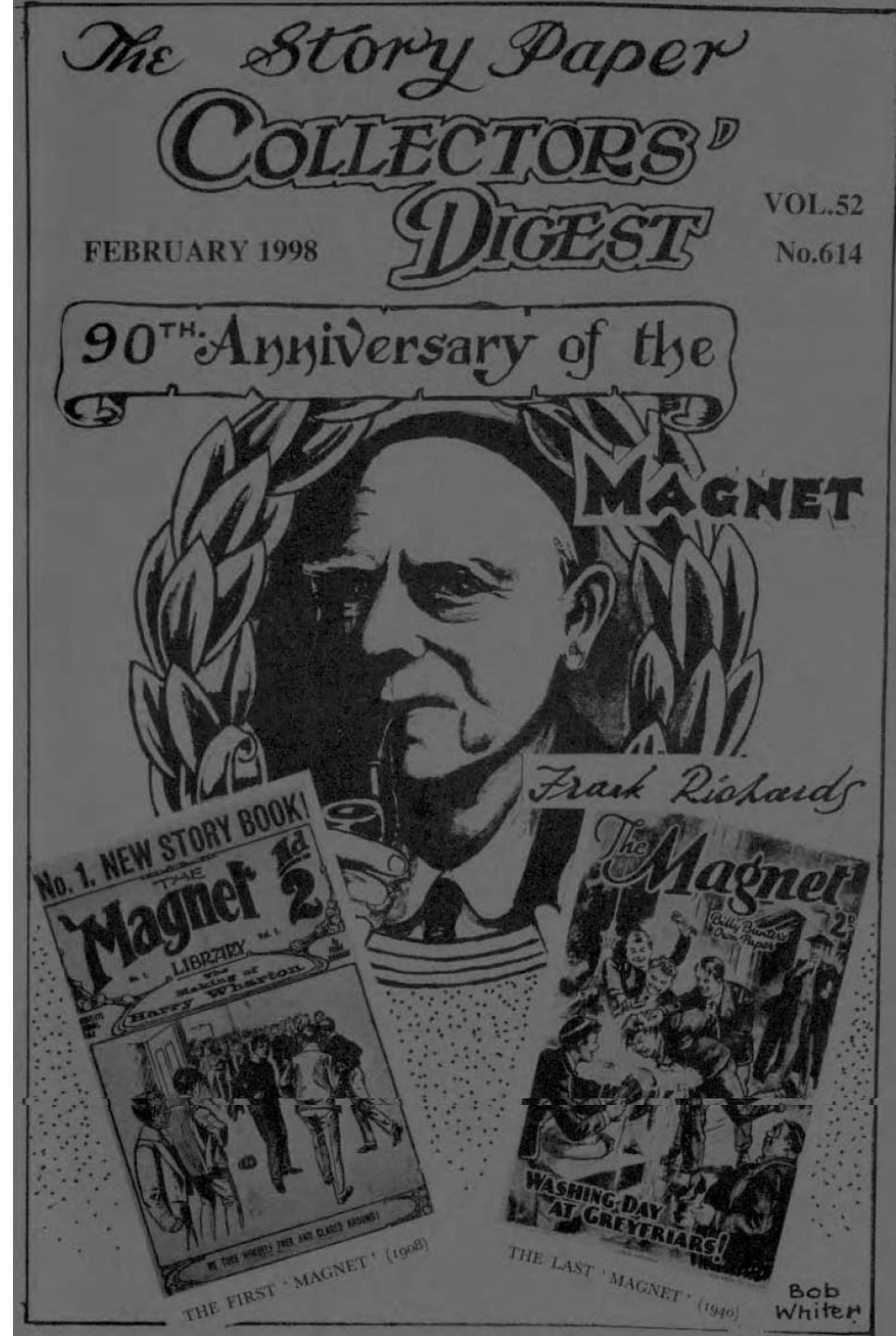
give a brief representation. I hope the examples  
read are among your favourites.





# SPCD February 1998

## No: 614



SPCD April 1998  
No: 616



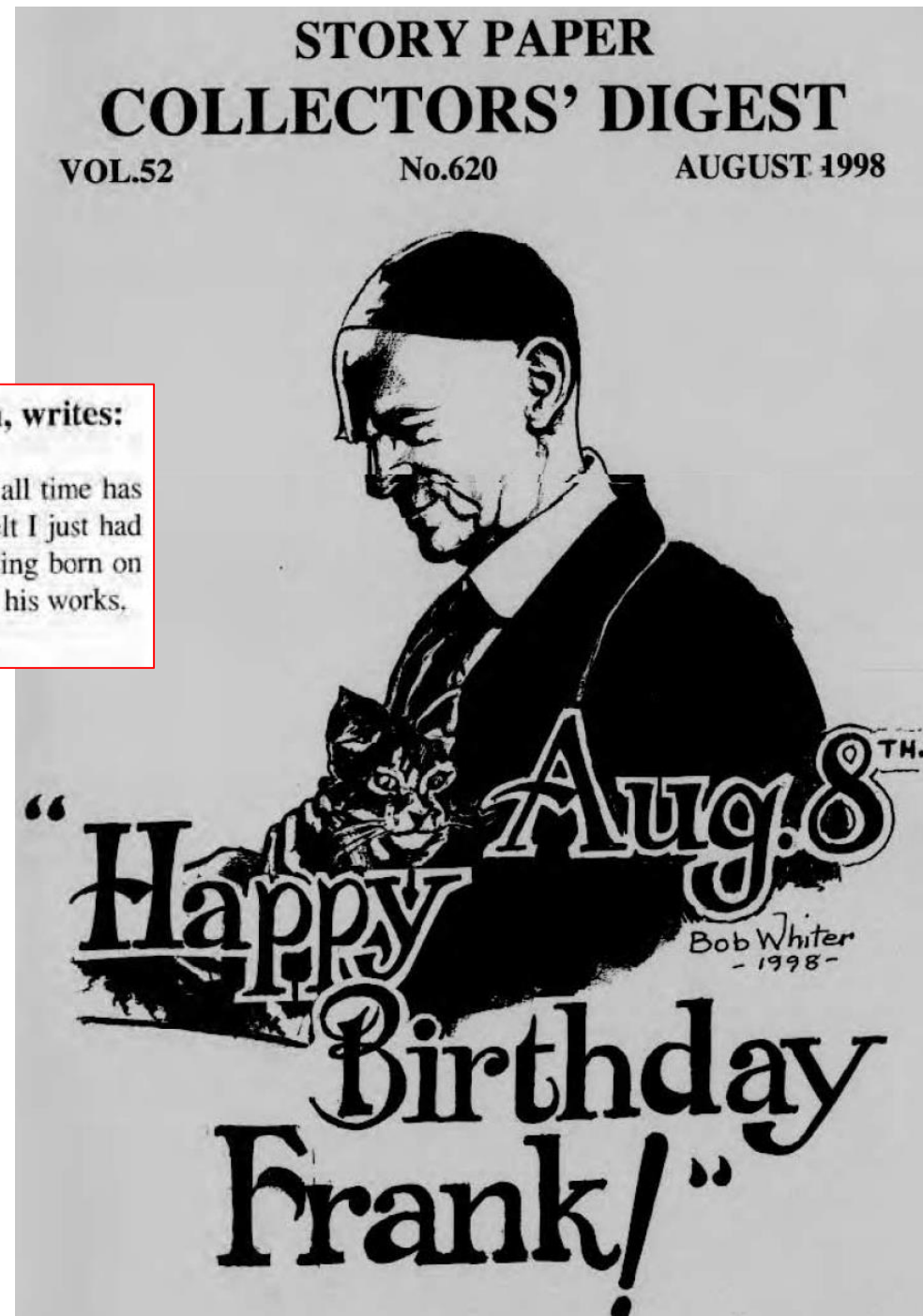


# SPCD 1998

## No: 620

**BOB WHITER, the illustrator of our attractive cover this month, writes:**

Although our favourite, and may I say the greatest, school story writer of all time has left us in the flesh, his wonderful spirit and genius will never be forgotten. I felt I just had to make this birthday tribute to his memory. The fact that I am also a Leo, being born on the 9th of August, may have something to do with a life-long love-affair with all his works. I crave your indulgence.



### AUTUMN MEMORIES

by Bob Whiter

As November approaches, my thoughts almost invariably turn to Guy Fawkes days in Britain. November 5th, of course, is not celebrated over here. July 4th, Independence Day, is the day when Americans traditionally let off their fireworks (or as they would term it "shoot off their fireworks or firecrackers"). One year I bought some fireworks, and saved them for November 5th, then let them off in the evening! All the neighbours came out and stared in amazement - "What was that mad Britisher doing this time?" These days I sort out all the *Magnet* series dealing with the "Glorious Fifth" and imagine I'm back in the U.K. in the good old days!

Each month over here in the Scouting Calendar, a meeting at the Scout H.Q. is held. It is called the "Round Table". Leaders of packs and troops are invited to come and be shown various ideas to help them run their own units more effectively. The scouter who normally runs these meetings phoned me from Chicago - he wouldn't be back in time - would I organise and run the meeting? Hastily I summoned the Round Table staff and planned a meeting. I had no trouble with the Boy Scout section, Richard Narumi, just back from the Jamboree in Japan, was full of ideas. So I resolved to take care of the Cub Scout section myself (with the help of one of the ladies).

The theme of the month is always taught a month in advance, thus giving the leaders time to arrange their own packs' programmes. Because August had been "dark" - in other words, no Round Table meeting - we had two themes:- "Be a Detective" and "Hallowe'en". I put on my thinking cap and thought about detectives. First of all I made a plaster cast of a footprint in a box filled with soft earth. Made up cards with Police and other important phone numbers to be either stuck on the bottom of the telephone or pinned up near it. I then made arrangements for packs to visit police stations or have a detective visit the various packs and talk to the boys. But I wanted something else, something the adult leaders could make and take back with them from the Round Table. Suddenly I thought of the wonderful Secret Seven series in the dear old *Magnet*!

Getting out my volume for the year of 1934 I went through the issues of the Secret Seven. My eyes followed the pictures advertising the free gifts. In other words "The Sheriff's Outfit". Two of the gifts shown interested me in particular:- The Code and Cypher Key and the "Thumb Print Recorder". By studying the several pictures of the latter, and with the aid of ruler, set-square, compass and ruling pen, I was able to make the separate drawings. These I had duplicated on stiff card. I changed the inscription in the middle of the inner circle and made it the Cub Scout Code and Cypher Key. I also made up a finger printing card.



# Collectors' Digest

## 1998 Xmas Annual No. 52



BY BOB WHITER

See if you can guess (or remember) from which Xmas series the following extracts have been taken. Seven are from Greyfriars series, one from St. Jim's and one from Rookwood. Each one can be linked with the puzzles on the page "Guess these places where the boys have spent Christmas".

No. 1

Harry Wharton held up a lamp, and the light glimmered on walls of panelled oak black with age.

----- was an ancient building, some parts of it dating back to Saxon times, some to early Norman. But the residential part had been modernised, and the ghost of the Red Earl - had that phantom really walked at Christmastide - would no doubt have been surprised and disconcerted at finding itself among electric lights, bathrooms, garages, wireless installations, and other things that certainly would have made any returning spirit from Tudor times sit up and take notice. But the----- had not been changed - there was no electric light there, and all was dark and shadowy when the chums of ----- visited it.

No. 2

After that he left his room and proceeded to----- . Undoubtedly it was just as well that ----- was out.

Turning on the light in ----- room, Billy Bunter proceeded to look for what he wanted. -----, fortunately, was well provided with clothes. It was unfortunate that he did not possess Bunter's handsome, well-developed frame; all his things were much too limited in circumference for Bunter. But that, after all, was a difficulty that could be overcome. Where there was a will, there was a way. A waistcoat, for instance, could be slit up the back with a penknife. This procedure did not improve the waistcoat considered as a garment. But it made it meet round Bunter, which was the chief thing.





# SPCD March/April 1999

## No: 627/628 (Double Number)

### **PREP. FINISHED, NO COKER AND TWO MUGS OF COCOA**

**by Bob Whiter**

Horace Coker of the Fifth Form hurled open the door of his study, and strode triumphantly into the room. There was a smile of great satisfaction on his rugged face. His study-mates Potter and Greene were busy sorting out their books, getting ready for the evening's preparation.

"Have I ever told you two that I have a short way with fags?" he grinned.

Potter looked at Greene. "Well, er, yes, a few times", he murmured, venturing a wink at his friend. Unfortunately the beefy senior caught Potter's wink. He frowned darkly. "If you two fatheads don't think I can control cheeky fags . . ." he started to say. Greene hastily interjected. "I'm sure Potter didn't mean anything of the sort, we know how good you are at it". Which, considering how Coker's encounters with the juniors usually ended, was straining the bounds of veracity more than a little.

Fortunately, it was always easy to pull the great Horace's leg and his face regained its previous happy expression. "I've just knocked Skinner and Snoop's heads together", he announced with great relish. "Those two cheeky fags had strung a cord between the two elms near the tuck shop, and I came a purler!" Coker paused to rub his rather prominent nose, which, now that Potter and Greene took a second look, resembled Marion's, which in Shakespeare's poem was stated to be 'red and raw'. "I say old chap, hadn't you better bathe it?" ventured Greene. "I would if I were you" added his study-mate. Both seniors were anxious to get started on their preparation. Greene had just received some special cocoa from home. They both intended to sample some, after they had finished preparing the passage they probably would be called on to construe the next day. That this would be hardly practical if the third occupant of the study started one of his jawbone solos, they knew from past experience.



# Collectors' Digest 1999 Xmas Annual No. 53



AN ICY wind from the north-east had swept in the snow from the sea and the grey of the early afternoon was heavy with its wintry burden of feathery flakes that would be added to the country lanes, fields and meadows of Kent. Rime from the early morning frost still remained, etching its delicate pattern on the glass of the study window from which the aquiline features of Henry Samuel Quelch looked out upon a frozen quad.

suspected of attending the Wapshot races, had been discovered smoking on several occasions.



As he reached the porch and extended a podgy fist towards the bell pull Bunter hoped with all his heart that it would prove a very merry Christmas after all!



WELLS...  
TILTED HIS GLASS,  
HOPING AS HE DID  
SO THAT THOSE DOUBTS  
WOULD PROVE  
GROUNDLESS....

Bob's illustrations





# Collectors' Digest 1999

## Xmas Annual No. 53

### (Continued)



1. \_\_\_\_\_ stood in the darkness in the haunted room, his very flesh creeping.

What had caused that sudden extinguishing of the light? He had not touched it; no human hand had touched it. He put out his hands instinctively in the darkness, as if to ward off something - he did not know what.

What was that sound?

A rustling sound, as of a robe - an old monk's robe - sweeping on the stone floor, brushing against the stone walls!

The blood rushed to \_\_\_\_\_'s heart.

What was it?

From the silence came that deep and terrible groan. It rang in \_\_\_\_\_'s ears; it seemed to fill the haunted room with strange and eerie noises.

Groan!

\_\_\_\_\_ dashed in the direction of the sound. He stumbled against the table, and gave a sharp cry. There was a movement; something was in the room - he was no longer alone!

\*\*\*\*\*

2.

**Pen Names:** Jeffrey Gaunt, Frank Chatham, Barton Furze, John Beresford, Eric Roche, Hamilton Smith.

\_\_\_\_\_, of the Lower Fourth, was having tea with his pal, \_\_\_\_\_, in their study when the door was thrown open and \_\_\_\_\_ strode into the room, followed by \_\_\_\_\_.

"Hallo, kids!" greeted \_\_\_\_\_. "I understand that you brought a horse's skin back with you after last hols - some theatrical rubbish. I want to borrow it!"

That was like \_\_\_\_\_. He never beat about the bush, particularly when dealing with kids.

"You're not going to get it, \_\_\_\_\_, so shove off!" replied \_\_\_\_\_. "And if you must bring

\_\_\_\_\_ into other men's studies, you might ask him to wash his neck and change his collar!"

"You cheeky young rotter!" yelled \_\_\_\_\_, and made a rush for the table.

\_\_\_\_\_ grabbed him by the arm.

"We don't want any impertinence, young \_\_\_\_\_!" he said loftily. "Are you going to hand over that skin?"

"No!" retorted \_\_\_\_\_, "so buzz off! We don't want to have to fumigate the study!"

\*\*\*\*\*

3.

There was going to be a dance, in fancy costume, on New Year's Day. The five juniors had unpacked a large box, newly arrived, with all sorts of costumes and disguises in it. Now they were trying them on, and making their selections for the great occasion. \_\_\_\_\_'s taste ran to something rather striking. \_\_\_\_\_ was going to make up as the Bearded Bandit.

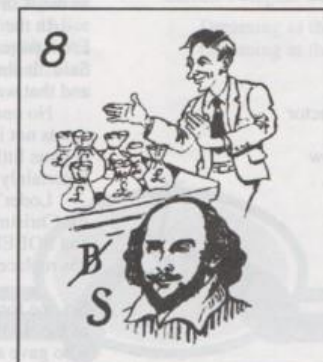
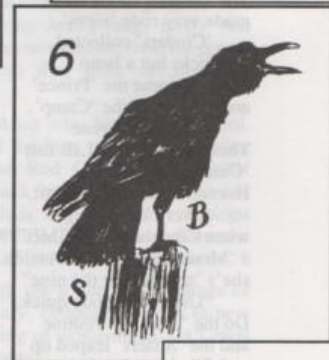
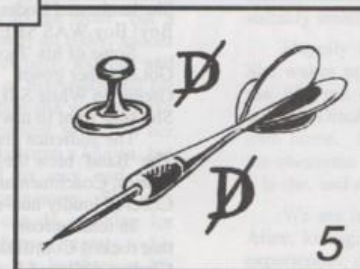
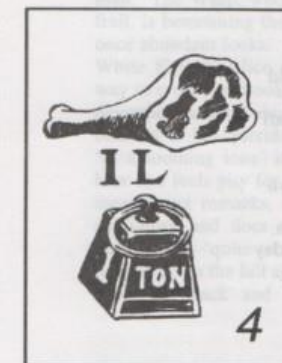
\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ were busy with their own occupations, but \_\_\_\_\_ kindly lent his assistance to \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_, the new fellow in the \_\_\_\_\_, was an obliging fellow! He dabbed fixing gum on a huge moustache and fixed it to \_\_\_\_\_'s upper lip; he gummed a big black beard, and fastened it to \_\_\_\_\_'s chin; he gummed gigantic eyebrows over \_\_\_\_\_'s own. Now he was busy with a big black wig, which he was affixing over \_\_\_\_\_'s hair.

\*\*\*\*\*

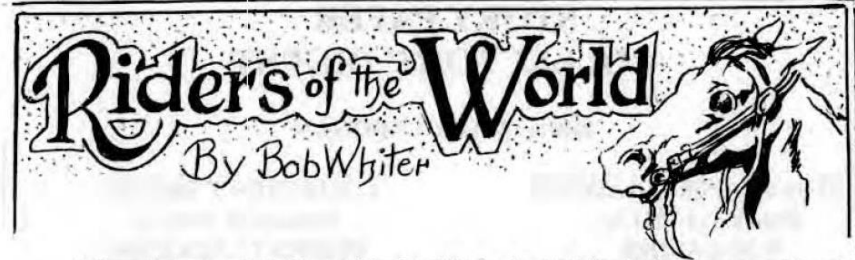
4.

It was dim and dusky in the study. The December darkness had fallen on the school. The winter wind, whistling from the downs, pattered snowflakes on the window-panes. The study fire burned with a ruddy glow, gleaming on the faces of the three fellows sitting round the fire, casting strange lights and shadows.

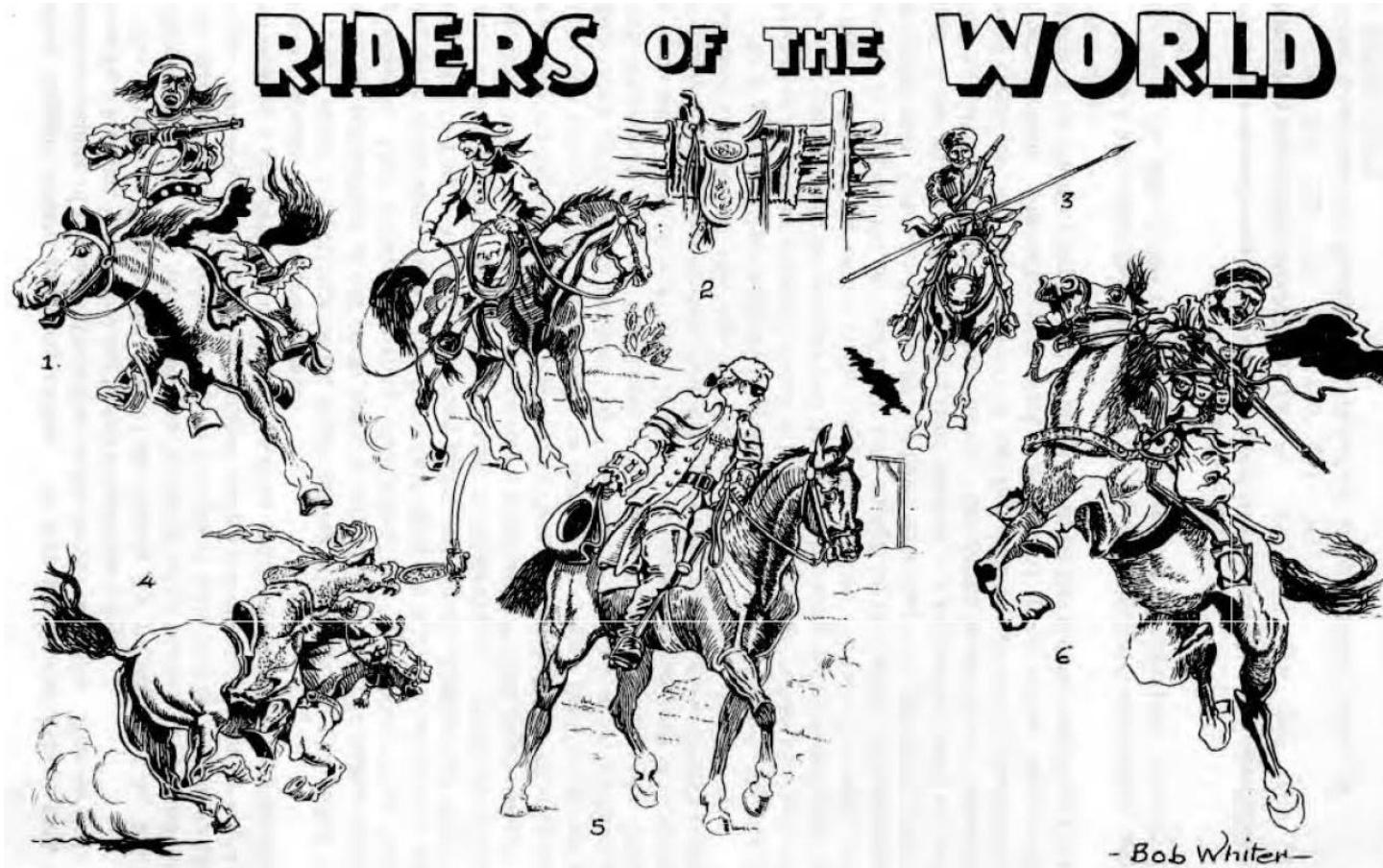
\_\_\_\_\_ School was breaking up for Christmas the next day. After tea in Study No. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ had gone down to look for letters and \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_, and







I drew the page of "Riders of the World", hoping to bring back some memories of 'derring-do', which most of us I am sure found, in the pages of our favourite story papers, *The Boys' Own Paper*, *Chums*, *The Captain* possibly being the chief providers, but we mustn't forget D.C. Thomson and their Big Five, namely:- *Adventure*, *Rover*, *Wizard*, *Skipper* and *Hotspur*. *The Magnet* and *The Gem*, together with *The Nelson Lee*, although containing mainly school stories, did on occasion have the boys travel to adventurous lands; whilst the secondary story often dealt with highwaymen or tales of the Foreign Legion.





A youthful Bob Whiter – looking very much like Bob Cherry!



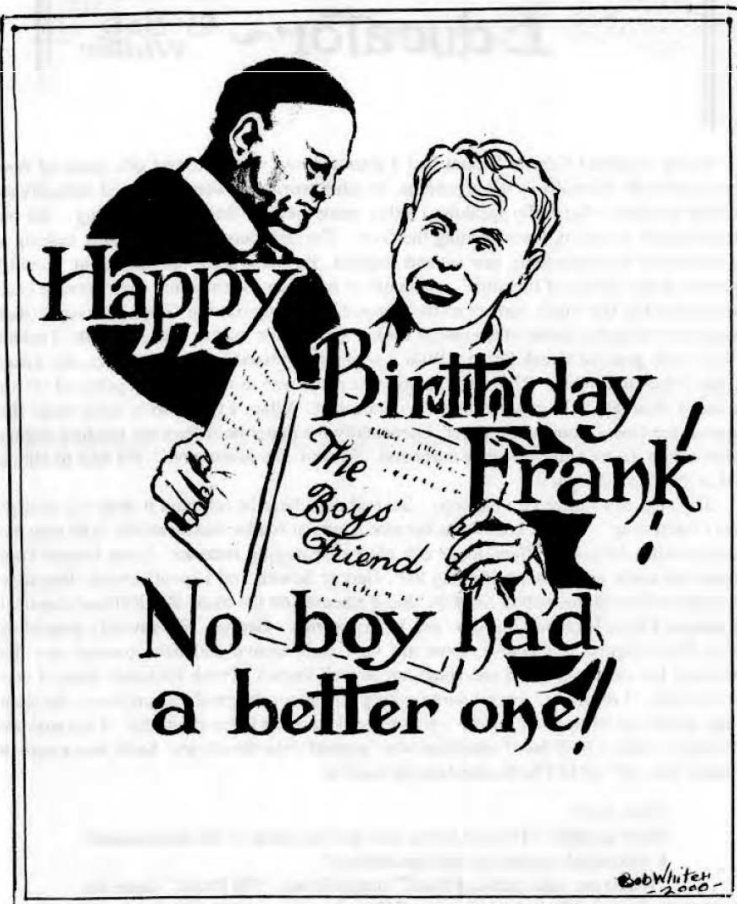
How dedicated a Hamiltonian were you? Did you just read the stories, enjoy them and then – that was that? Or did you, like myself, compile scrapbooks, filling them with, i.e. lists of the studies and their occupants, draw maps of the different schools and their environs; placing the various villages, towns, inns and other establishments – where you thought they should be situated? Regarding the scrapbooks, I'm afraid I ruined many a *Magnet* and *Gem* in those far-off days – not realizing at the time that I wouldn't be able to re-read the stories at a later date. Features such as "Greyfriars Interviews" and the various portraits of the character series were cut out, necessitating the replacement of these now useless for reading copies. Well we all do silly things – "Nemo mortalium omnibus horis sapit". Especially when young! To quote an ancient cliché – it seemed a good idea at the time! Speaking of such things, of course there were many instances of the papers themselves advocating, you might say, mutilation. I refer to the competitions and offers that the Amalgamated Press held from time to time. To enter, the reader had to cut out the application slip or coupon. If the entering token was small, not too much harm was done, but to quote one example – cutting out the stamps for the Armaments Race completely in most cases ruined the paper for any re-reading.





"Smithy had brought out an old football to punt about in the quad during break"... How many times has an old 'footer' featured in the Greyfriars saga? And how many times was there a handy puddle left behind by the recent rain? The latter served not only to make the football muddy, but also for some unfortunate person to be 'sat' in! Sometimes the rotters and sometimes the good fellows, were the recipients of the muddy ball, and generally their faces were the target; as Frank Richards loved to say - "every bullet has its billet!" If Smithy or one of the members of the several football elevens, kicked the ball there would be a good chance - almost a certainty - that it would hit the right person - but if Bunter or Coker or even Alonzo Todd (whilst he was still at the school) tried, it would be a stone ginger that the wrong person would get the benefit of the misguided kick!





# The **MAGNET** as an Educator~ by Bob Whiter

At the so-called Central School that I attended, we were allowed one hour of free time each week; normally in the afternoon. In other words we were permitted virtually to do what we liked. Generally speaking I either spent the time drawing or writing – but on this particular occasion, I was reading the *Gem*. The headmaster, Mr. Booker, making a casual tour of the classrooms, saw me and stopped. He made some remark about “I could do better in my choice of literature”. A month or two later, Soames and the cigarette case series started in the Xmas number of the *Magnet*. Copying out the Greek message, (that was scratched on the inside of the case) I took it to the same master, during break. I asked if they were genuine Greek letters. With a slightly surprised look on his face, he wrote out the letters in English. The only alteration he made was to write ‘ph’ in place of ‘f’ for the word Friardale. He asked where I’d obtained it. When I told him it came from the *Magnet*, the *Gems*’ companion-paper, incidentally the paper he’d seen me reading during the free time, he looked even more surprised. “Hrmm”, he murmured. “I’d like to take a look at your, er – *Magnet*”?



# SPCD October 2000

## No: 646

COLIN MORGAN

by Bob Whiter

Our mutual friend Eric Fayne (of happy memory) once wrote – “The nicest people in the world read the *Collectors' Digest*.” Dear Eric, you never spoke a truer word! Some months ago readers of our magazine may remember an article and illustration of mine entitled *Riders of the World*. Each horseman I recalled reminded me of different series in the Thomson Big Five story papers:- these included – Solo Soloman, Abdul the Cruel, Frigg M'Fee and several others. These were all recalled from memory and I hadn't read about them in years. Imagine my great joy and gratitude, when from out of the blue (actually in the post) came a generous bundle of reproductions of the characters I'd named, together with a repro of the first set of illustrations by me which were accepted by and published in the *Hotspur*. These were entitled *All about the Cowboy's Kit* and appeared in 1959. In moving to the U.S.A. soon afterwards, I'd lost my copy, so was very glad to have another eventually. I naturally wrote and thanked my generous donor, who, although unknown to me at the time, soon through the all too few letters was looked upon by me as a good friend. Always cheerful, he never mentioned that he was suffering from a terminal illness – now I hear the very sad news that he has been taken from us.

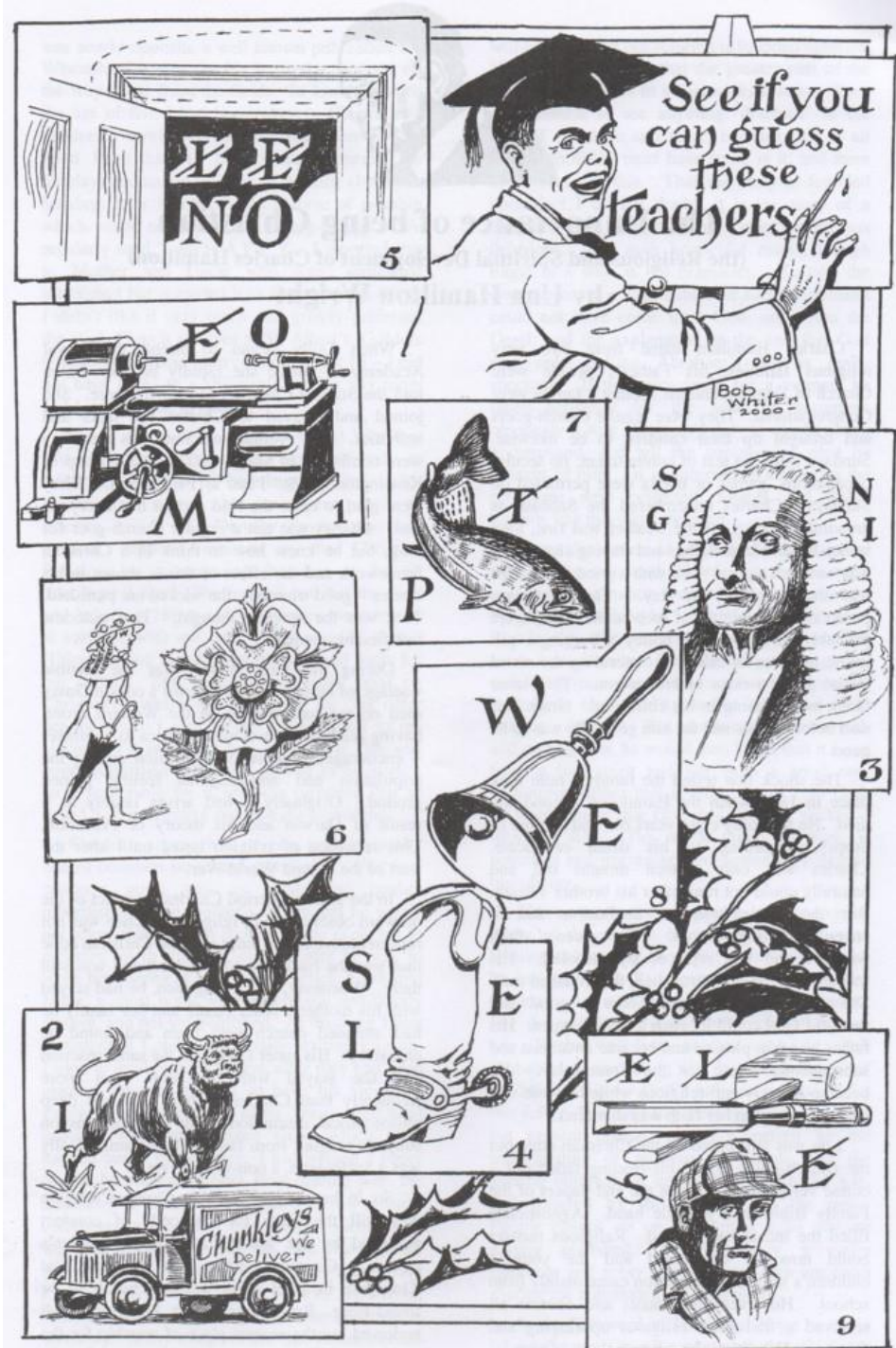
I can only bid a fond farewell to a very kind friend and fellow collector. Goodbye Colin old chap, my only regret is that I never had the pleasure of meeting you in person.

(Editor's note: The pictures mentioned by Bob are published on the inside front cover of the CD this month. They appeared originally in *Hotspur* 1187, 8<sup>th</sup> August 1959).





**Collectors' Digest**  
**2000 Xmas Annual**  
**No. 54**





### A LA BONNE HEURE!

by Bob Whiter

Although I generally kept a volume of Magnets in my kit bag during my army service, obviously, by the time leave came round, I needed to "recharge the batteries", as it were. Therefore, one of my first undertakings on arriving home was to change volumes and select another one to read whilst on leave.

After Hitler's hordes had overrun the continent, Britain received a fair amount of refugees. My family became quite friendly with an elderly French lady and her daughter, and they quite frequently would be found at the old homestead. Actually, they were quite a help to my mother. With most of the family either in the forces or on war work, it was quite a large house for my mother to maintain. My father, although a good man in lots of ways, had been brought up in the strict Victorian tradition. Ergo, apart from gardening, he did very little about the house.

So when I found time, I'd spend a quiet hour in an armchair enjoying a volume of *Magnets* or *Gems*, or sometimes even the *Holiday Annual*. A sudden chuckle would burst forth from yours truly on reading a humorous incident, whereupon the old French lady would clap her hands and exclaim, "A la bonne heure!"

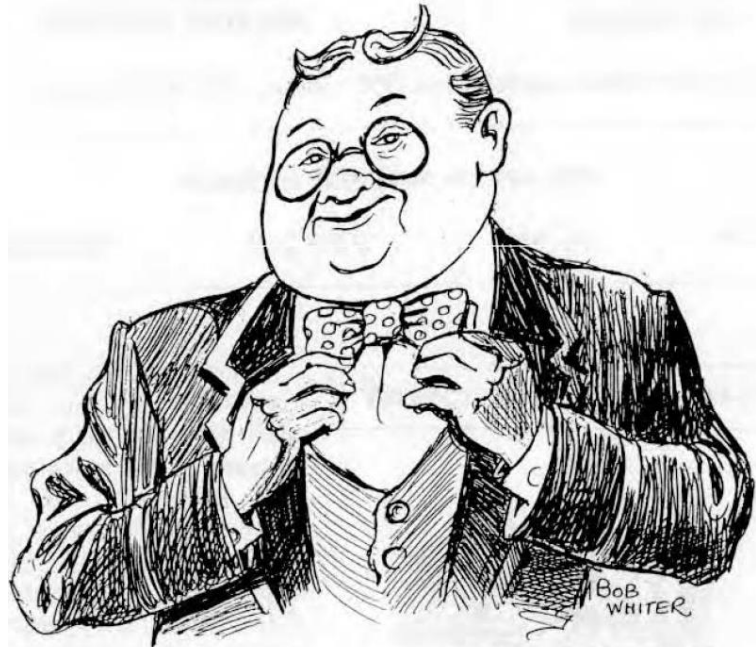
Recently, while eagerly thinking about the arrival of the *Collector's Digest Annual*, I got to thinking that soon there would be plenty of people sitting back in their armchairs reading their copies while emitting soft chuckles of enjoyment. But I doubt if there will be any elderly French ladies, either real or phantom, at their elbows wating to clap their hands and exclaim, "A la bonne heure!"



It is interesting to note that although Charles Hamilton placed boys with somewhat similar characteristics at the different schools, they weren't carbon copies of each other; this specifically applies to his three main schools – Greyfriars, St. Jim's and Rookwood. We might take as an example, Vernon Smith, Cardew and Mornington. Then of course we have:- Alonzo Todd of Greyfriars, Clarence Cuffy at Rookwood and the subject of this article Herbert Skimpole at St. Jim's. As most Dickensians know, *Harold* Skimpole is a character in 'Bleak House'. Variouslly described as:- A Sentimentalist, brilliant, vivacious and engaging, but thoroughly selfish and unprincipled; a genial caricature – so far as mere external peculiarities and mannerisms are concerned – of Leigh Hunt. The St. Jim's Skimpole has none of these specialities.







BILLY BUNTER BLINKED AT HIS REFLECTION IN A TALL PIER-GLASS AND SMILED COMPLACENTLY, WHAT HE SAW WAS A HANDSOME, WELL-SET-UP FELLOW - WHOSE SPECTACLES RATHER ADDED TO HIS DISTINGUISHED APPEARANCE. JAMES, IN FACT, SAW A FAT, SELF-SATISFIED FELLOW, WITH A CONCEITED SMIRK ON HIS PODGY FACE.



I wonder how many of our fraternity, even think of how much we have been influenced in the descriptions of our favourite characters, by the artist? A case in point, of course, was Sherlock Holmes. Nowhere in the canon does Conan Doyle mention a deerstalker hat by name. Possibly the nearest will be found in 'Silver Blaze' "... Sherlock Holmes, with his sharp, eager face framed in his ear-flapped travelling-cap...". Likewise Sherlock's pipes – you can search as long as you like for either Calabash or meerschaum in the stories, but will only find clay, briar or cherry wood mentioned.

Winifred Paget, daughter of Sidney Paget, the artist who made Holmes such a familiar figure, tells how when her father was living in the country, he wore a deerstalker. He found it so comfortable that it inspired him to depict the famous sleuth wearing one – so much so, that now most people when thinking of Holmes, in their minds' eye, see a man in a deerstalker and smoking a large bowled curved pipe.

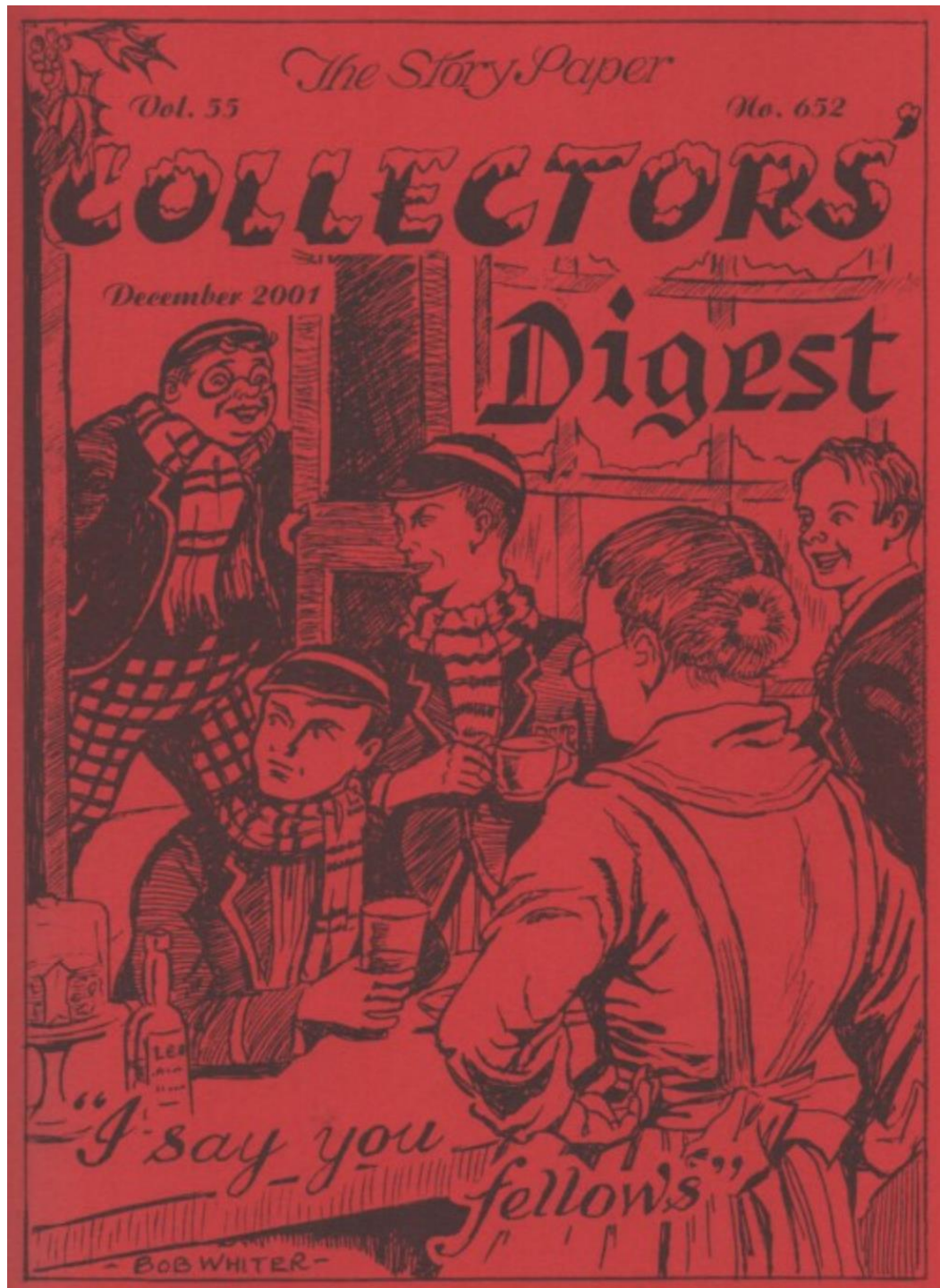
SAY, BO, EVER MET  
FISHER T. FISH? NO? THEN . . .

. . . MEET THIS REAL LIVE  
GUY FROM "NOO YARK" BELOW

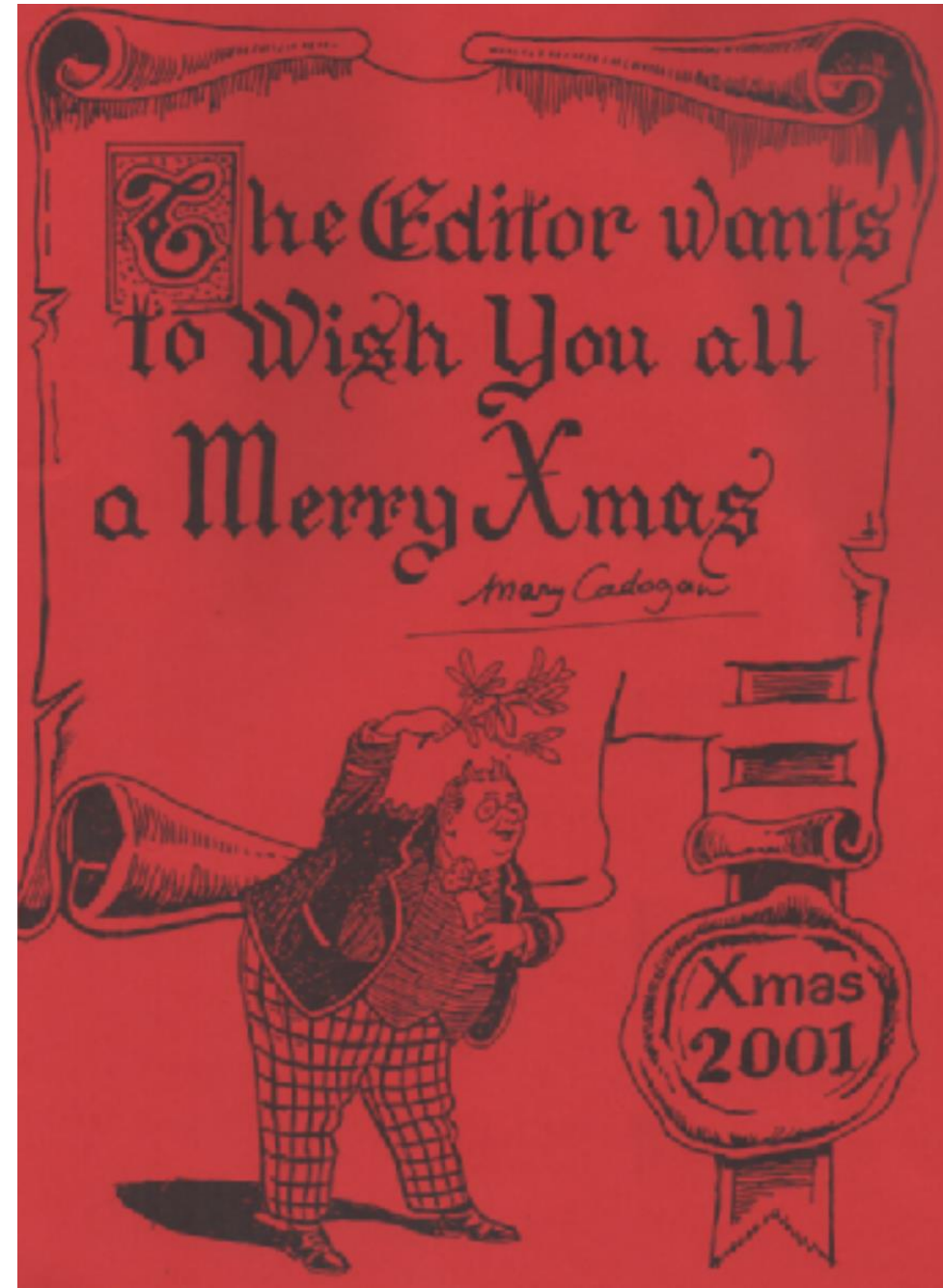




**SPCD December 2001**  
**No: 652**

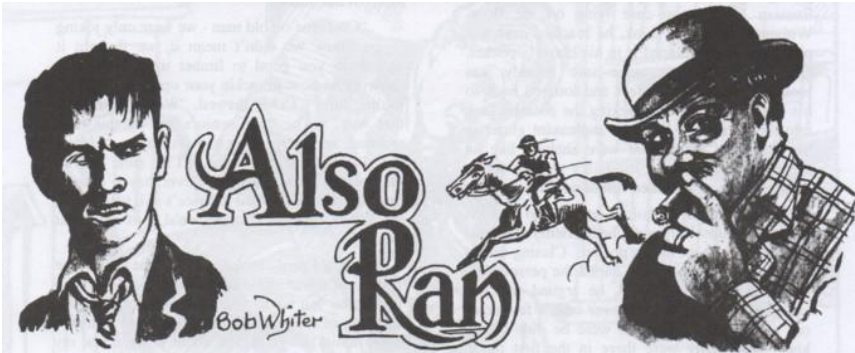


# The FINAL Collectors' Digest 2001 Xmas Annual No. 55 !!!



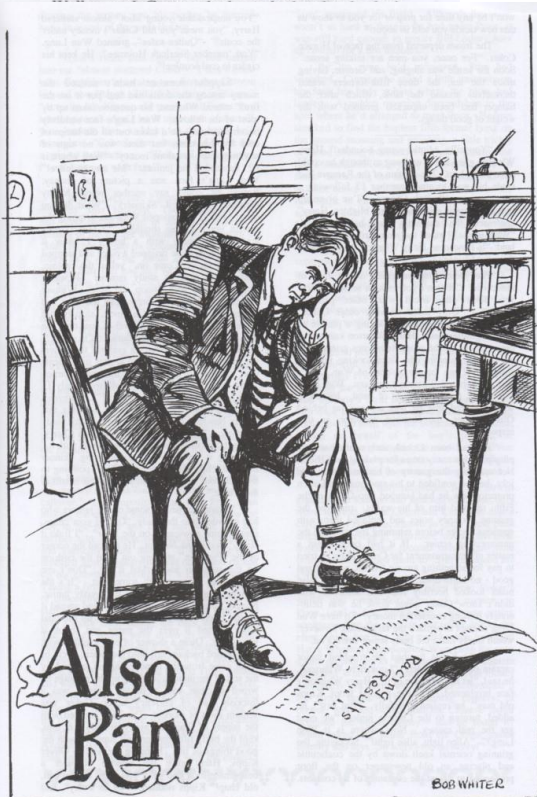


# The FINAL Collectors' Digest 2001 Xmas Annual No. 55 !!!



Also ran: Blue Peter, Sweet Music, Gadfly 2 and Pork Pie. The words danced before his eyes - the newspaper, opened to the racing results page, dropped from his trembling hands. The hapless sportsman groaned and slumped forward in his chair, his left hand supporting his head. That idiot Loder saying he'd had it straight from the horse's mouth! Pork Pie was a sure thing for the Welshham stakes and would romp home first in the three o'clock race at Wapshot! He already owed Bill Lodgey a large amount of money, and Bill had been very unpleasant about taking a further bet on tick! Only by lying that a favourite aunt was sending him a decent remittance, did Stephen Price finally convince the bookie that he would be in funds the next day. Now - what was he going to do? He had planned that this big win would not only get himself out of the hole, but his friend Cedric Hilton as well. Both seniors had had an unusual run of bad luck for the last few weeks. All the usual 'supply depots' had run dry - even Walsingham, Hilton's father's butler at Hilton Hall, who in the past had dipped into his savings to help out the senior, had sadly but firmly declined to help.

Bill Lodgey coming to the school and denouncing them swam before his eyes - he could almost see the stern visage of the headmaster, Dr. Locke, and hear his stern accents expelling them both, in front of the assembled hall. A sudden thought of perhaps 'touching' Loder or one of his two cronies, was dismissed almost immediately - it was from Loder he had received the so called 'cert'. The bully of the sixth, together with





# SPCD June 2002

## No: 654

### A FAVOURITE CHARACTER

by Bob Whiter

#### Part One

The edition of the companion papers from time to time in his chats, would publish lists which, according to his readers' letters, showed the most popular characters appearing in the stories.

In the case of the *Magnet*, I seem to remember that Vernon Smith and Bob Cherry generally vied for the readers' approbation.

I suppose because of his sometimes rather hasty temper, Harry Wharton seldom seemed to head the list. This always seemed a pity to me – I invariably thought his numerous sterling qualities far outweighed any negative ones. I don't think there were many who would have made a better captain of the Remove. Switching for the moment to Saint James (St. Jim's) and Rookwood – schools I enjoyed these almost as much as Greyfriars. I think Harry was a far more believable character than Tom Merry or "Uncle James" (Jimmy Silver). But to return to Greyfriars, I would like to pen a few lines on a character I always really enjoyed reading about; not only in his generally supporting role, but in the few but very important occasions when he took the lead.

I am speaking of Herbert, Lord Mauleverer. When 'Mauly' first arrived (*Magnet* 184) "The Schoolboy Millionaire" – he calmly hired a coach and horses and, with several Removites picked up at Friardale station, drove at breakneck speed to the school, through the gates and into the quadrangle.

# STORY PAPER COLLECTORS' DIGEST

VOL. 56

No. 654

JUNE 2002

## *The Story Paper* **Collectors'** **Digest**



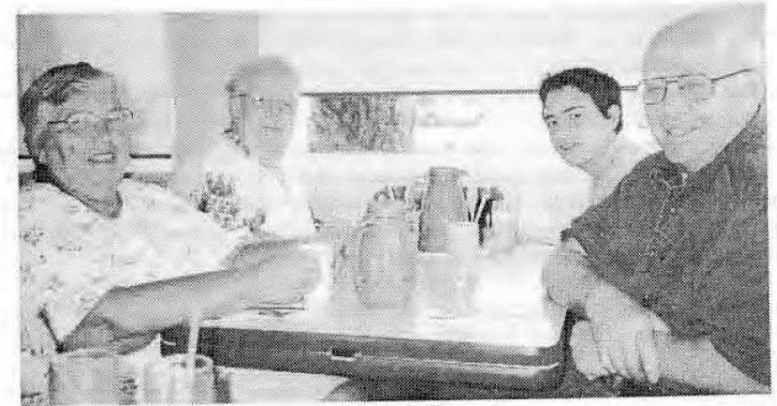
WITH HIS SHOULDERS SUPPORTED BY SOFT CUSHIONS  
WE FIND HIM REPOSING ON THE SOFA  
A LAZY, YAWNING SCHOOLBOY LORD  
WHO RICHLY DESERVES THE TITLE 'LOAFER'?  
APPEARANCES ARE SO OFTEN DECEPTIVE  
IS A MAXIM WE SHOULD ALL BEAR IN MIND  
NO KEENER BRAIN EXISTS AT GREYFRIARS  
NO SCHOLAR WAS EVER MORE KIND  
SO LET'S DRINK A TOAST TO JOLLY OLD MAULY  
MAY HIS SHADOW NEVER GROW LESS  
WITH HIS CHESTERFIELD MANNERS & BREEDING  
AND HIS IMMACULATE WAISTCOAT & DRESS!



# SPCD September 2002

## No: 655

### Tributes to DARRELL SWIFT



*The above photograph is one of the last ever taken of Darrell. He is second from the left, and others in the picture are Marie and Bob Whiter, with whom he had been staying in California until the day before he died, and Matthew Borrow. Matthew, from Potters Bar, is the son of Bob's nephew, Malcolm Borrow, who kindly supplied this photograph.*

### A FAVOURITE CHARACTER by Bob Whiter

#### Part Two

Mauly's truly noble nature is well displayed in the second Xmas adventure at Mauleverer Towers.

Bunter has bilked the taxi driver to the extent of getting him to drive the fat junior from Wharton Lodge to Mauly's home; stopping twice on route for snacks (which the driver had paid for). The poor man has searched high and low for his fat passenger; Bunter had jumped from the taxi whilst still on the driveway leading to the Towers and vanished. Finally in desperation the irate taxi-man seeks information from Mauly. When told that Mauly hasn't seen and doesn't want to see Bunter, the driver gets a little excited! (quote from story).

"I ain't losing twelve pounds!" said the taxi man, showing signs of excitement.

"Certainly not!" agreed Lord Mauleverer soothingly. "That would be rather hard cheese, by jove! But you're really not likely to get it out of Bunter, so perhaps you would not object to my paying it?"

#### From BOB WHITER (California):

He gave Marie and me a fond hug, thanked us most profusely for putting him up – and he was off – catching his plane from Los Angeles to fly on to New York and Allentown where he intended to spend a further week with friends, before returning to the U.K. and Leeds. It was not to be! It was with a most profound shock and combined disbelief and sadness that we heard the tragic news the following morning – that our very dear friend Darrell Swift didn't survive a massive coronary at Kennedy Air Port.

Darrell had broken his journey as he had done on several previous occasions to pass a few enjoyable days with us. In this instance his visit coincided with a sojourn of my nephew Malcolm, Valerie, his wife and Mathew their son. Everybody got along famously with each other.

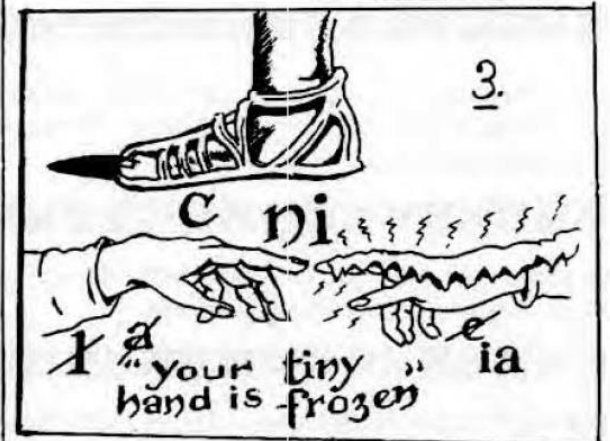
# SPCD Xmas Special 2002



## BOB WHITER'S BRAIN-TEAZER



*"Solve these  
cases & places  
from the  
Canon!"*





# SPCD June 2003

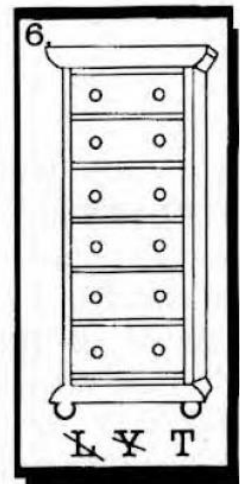
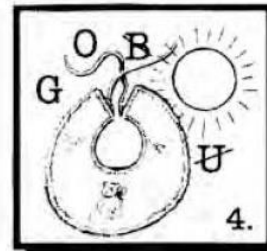
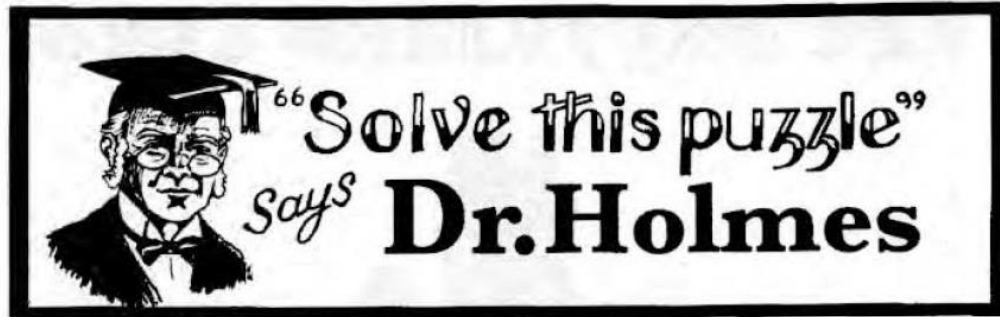
## No: 658

### **BOLSOVER'S BROTHER** (Magnet 1011, July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1927) by Bob Whiter

There seems to be a divided opinion among Hamiltonians on the subject of majors and minors. In some instances such as the 'Manners' of St. Jim's and the 'Nugents' of Greyfriars; perhaps we were given just a little too much of a good thing. I am referring to the friction that occurred between the older and younger siblings, the younger of the two generally a spoilt-darling at home. George Wingate, Captain of Greyfriars had a minor, Jack Wingate, who falls into the latter category – but he was also instrumental in providing the plots for some really first-rate stories. Not only in single or mini series, such as the Vernon Smith expelled two-part series (Nos. 1329 and 1330, The Bounder's Good Turn and The Millionaire Detective, August 5<sup>th</sup> and August 12<sup>th</sup> 1933) but also previously in the Loder-School Captain, a nine part series, which appeared in *Magnets* 923-931 during the later part of 1925.



# SPCD Xmas Special 2003



By: Robert Whiter  
-2003-



# SPCD September 2004

## No: 663

**Back  
cover**



Dickey Nugent thinking up a new Dr. Birchmall Adventure

## ERIC FAYNE by Bob Whiter

My memories of Eric go back a very long way. I had been in correspondence with him for some time (the 1932 Holiday Annual still in my collection came from him) so that when my brother Ben and I hosted the second meeting of the London Old Boys Book Club meeting at our house in Wood Green, I wrote and invited him to attend. I'll never forget opening the door – there he stood resplendent in his Modern School blazer with a cheery smile on his face. I had a mop of blond hair in those days, and he did me the honour of saying I reminded him of Bob Cherry, with a touch of Tom Merry thrown in for good measure! At the end of the meeting, which he had obviously enjoyed, he said he'd like to host the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting at his school in Surbiton. When I saw him to the door he asked if I could come early to lunch with him and another enthusiast from Brighton. What a lovely day that was – I soon realized I had made what proved to be two wonderful friendships. Eric himself and the gentleman from

**Accompanying  
a Ted Baldock  
article:**



Bunter, drawn by Bob Whiter

# SPCD Xmas Special 2004



## THE SAVING OF THE GRANGE

by Robert H. Whiter



Jack Anderson was busy wood-carving. His elder brother Ben was supervising. The project was an elaborate model bridge which was to embellish Jack's requirements for his Webelos craftsman's activity badge. The boys, both in scouting, were in their den; a room full of items which suggested a mutual love for scouting and the great outdoors.

Jack paused from his labours. He was a sturdy boy of ten, three years younger than Ben. The bridge was progressing quite well, and he cast a favourable look on his efforts.

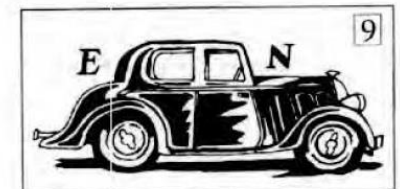
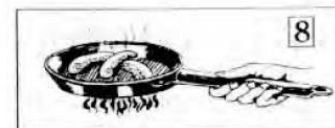
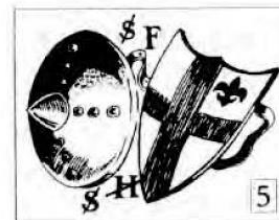
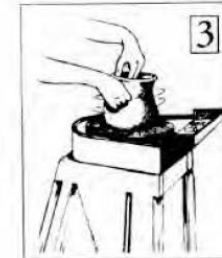
"I'll finish it tomorrow with luck, Ben," he said.

"I should think so," answered Ben, perhaps a little dubiously, "but I reckon you're done enough for today, Jack".

"Let's go out and play catch, I'm afraid we shan't have the garden much longer," He further suggested.

Jack sighed and turned away to the window, gazing out at the lovely grounds and garden. The Grange was indeed a beautiful old place, and the two boys were full of sorrow thinking that in a short time they would probably have to leave their fair domain.

by Bob Whiter





# SPCD Autumn/Winter Special 2005



# SPCD April 2005

## No: 665

The final 'regular' SPCD!



"WHEN I WAS GIVING HIM A TOUR  
OF THE SCHOOL" CONTINUED THE HEAD —



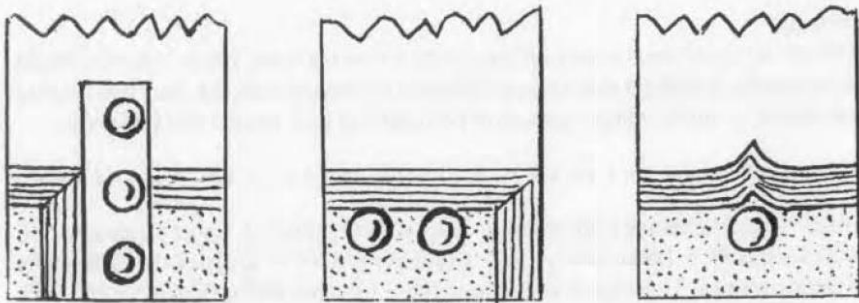
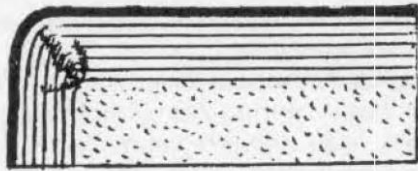
Dr. Locke carefully took out his watch, opened the chased cover and checked the time. Almost to the second the clock in the tower commenced to chime. The headmaster of Greyfriars School closed the watch and restored it to his waistcoat pocket.

He looked over the seated sixth formers, most of whom, without him speaking, had already closed their books and were putting them away in their desks. Dr. Locke had been expounding the beauties of Thucydides, but sad to relate, very few of the seniors would have expressed sorrow that the class had ended. It was Wednesday which meant a free afternoon and most of the class were already looking forward to either a session at the nets or a pull up the Sark; the river near the college. Break time had shown what a topping day it was; one to be spent out of doors.



# SPCD Spring Special 2006

CORPORALS' BRAID ON COLLAR



CORPORALS' BRAID ON CUFFS.



by Bob Whiter

I suppose most people who know me, know I'm very interested in things military, particularly those appertaining to the Two World Wars, especially World War I. I suppose that this is because I served in the second, and was able to observe the status quo as it were. Subsequently I'm afraid it tends to make one a little critical of books and documentaries on these two conflicts. One example – books and narrators will persist in referring to the German army of World War II as the 'Wehrmacht' which really means all of the German armed forces, i.e. Army, Navy and Air force. The German word for army is "heer," sometimes the French term "armee" was used. Another expression that irritates me is the way everyone refers to the German Field Marshal Rommel as the "Desert Fox". I had lots of friends in the 8<sup>th</sup> Army and I never heard them once refer to him as such; not that the British didn't give full credit to a clever enemy – they did, even using the term "doing a Rommel" when a successful stunt of any kind was pulled. Desmond Young in his excellent book on the German soldier never once refers to him using the description. The first time I heard the expression was in 1951 when Hollywood released the movie entitled "Desert Fox," whith James Mason playing the Field Marshal.



# SPCD Autumn/Winter Special 2006



## Eastwood House for Christmas by Robert Whiter



Over the years there have been numerous selections made by readers and collectors of what was either the best or the most popular Christmas series in the *Magnet*. Although it might be generally agreed that the percentage of the old devotees hold the *Magnet* closer to their hearts, there are still a goodly number of people, myself included, who also love the *Gem*. On this assumption I got to wondering - what was the premier Christmas series in the jolly old *Gem*?

I suppose the first "series" that comes to mind would be the Mystery of the Painted Room. If my memory serves me correctly, the Christmas or "Winter" number containing this celebrated story, was a double number! I well remember our old friend Eric Fayne saying how he implored the editor not to cut the story when it was reprinted - so two issues of the *Gem* were used, and no cutting! For obvious reasons two different titles were used. The first number then bore the legend, "The Mystery of Eastwood House", whilst the now second story became "The Hidden Hand". Going back to the first issue of this story, my fondest memory is of my very good friend Alfred Horsey. Some of you older collectors may remember his sparkling article in the "Story Paper Collector" put out by William Gander entitled "Footlights & Favourites". He had the original idea of forming the old boys book club. Alfred gave me a copy in excellent condition. I was about 13 at the time - he must have been around 35. It is a story that I've read and re-read many times.

Probably the next most popular Christmas story in the *Gem* was first published



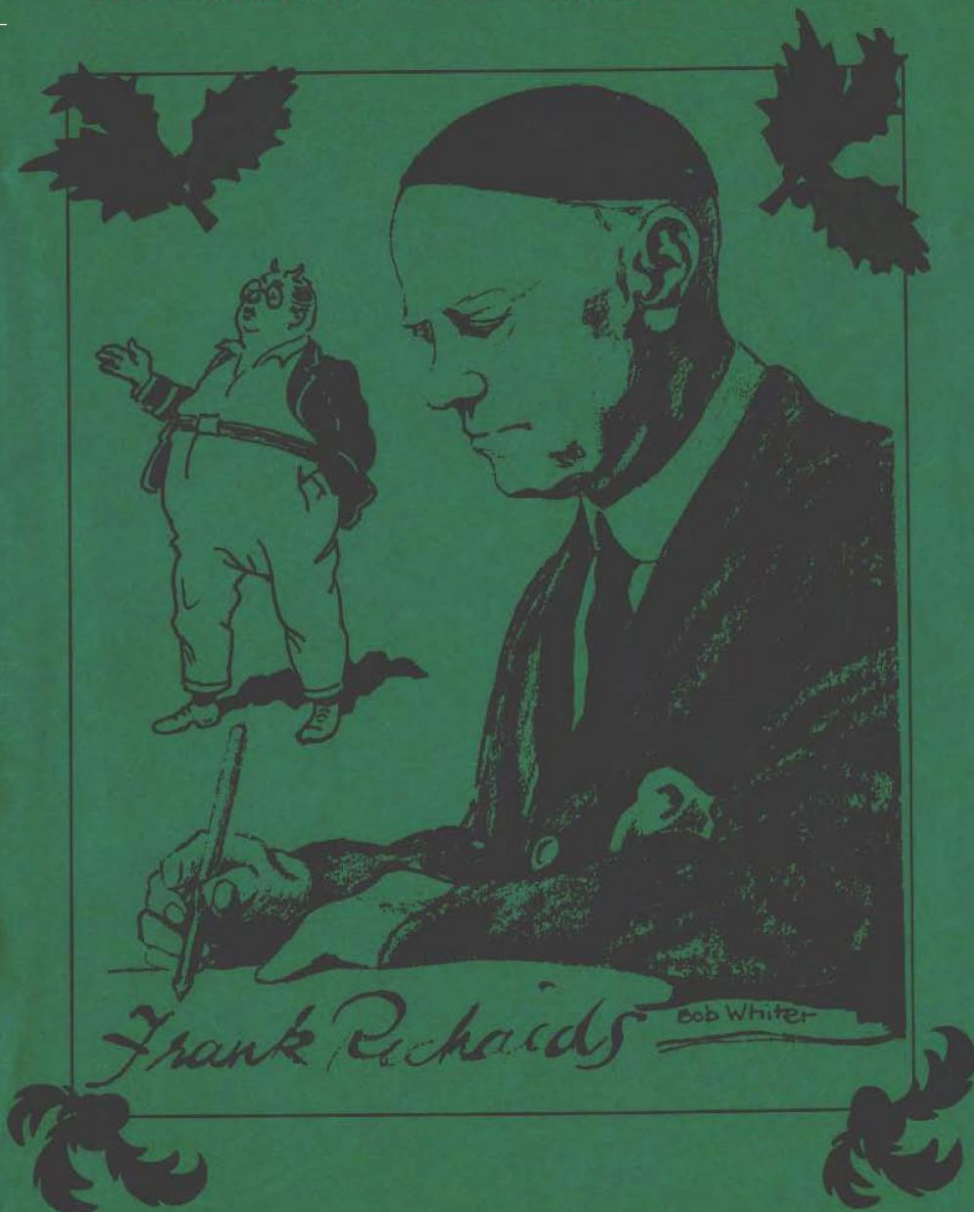
## LORD EASTWOOD'S

## CHRISTMAS PARTY

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

A Grand Long Christmas Story of Tom Merry & Co., and the Chums of St. Jim's.

## STORY PAPER COLLECTORS' DIGEST AUTUMN/WINTER SPECIAL 2006





**Maidstone  
2008**







**Here's to  
you, Bob!**

**Maidstone  
2008**