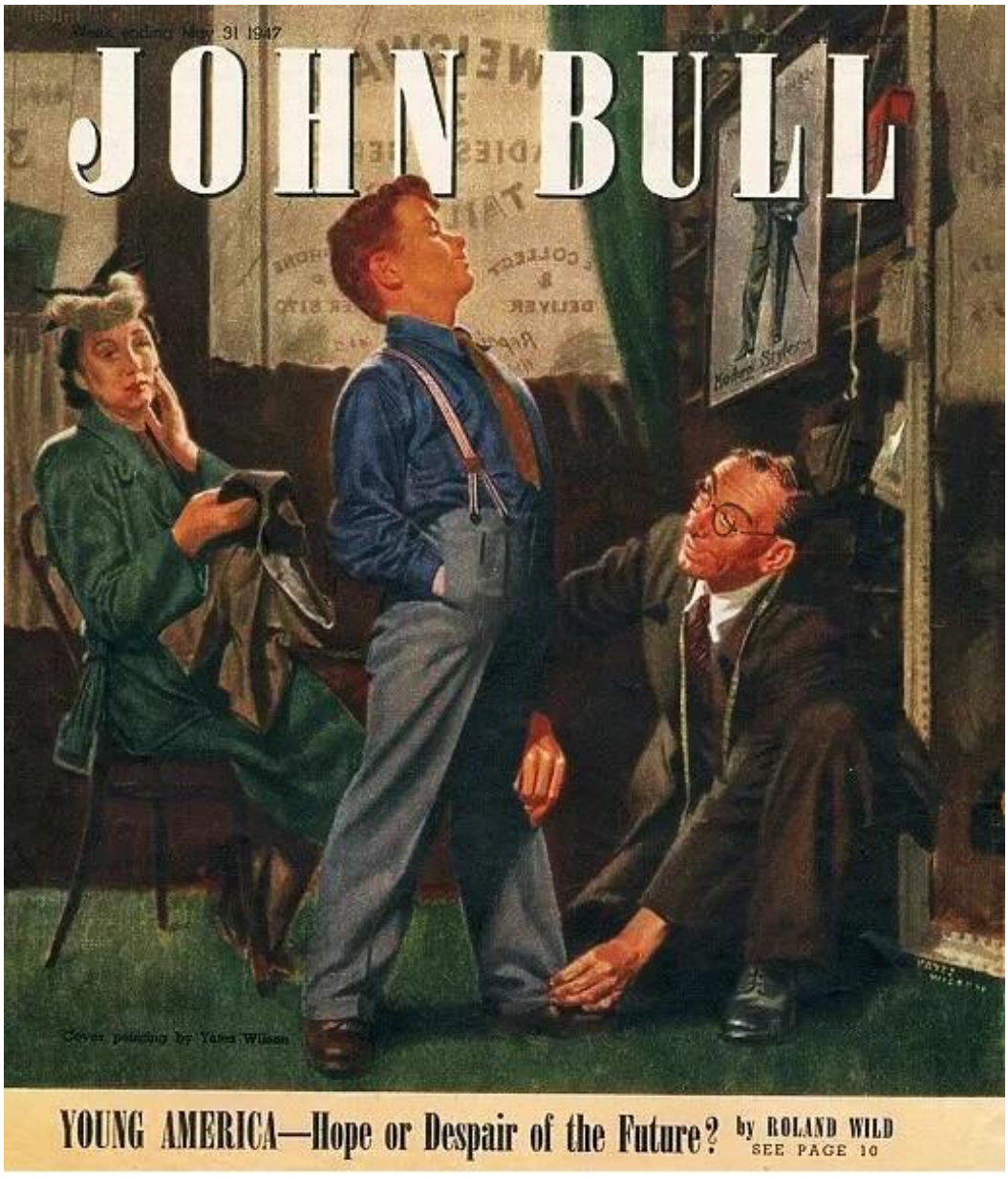
(1) WG in *John Bull* magazine

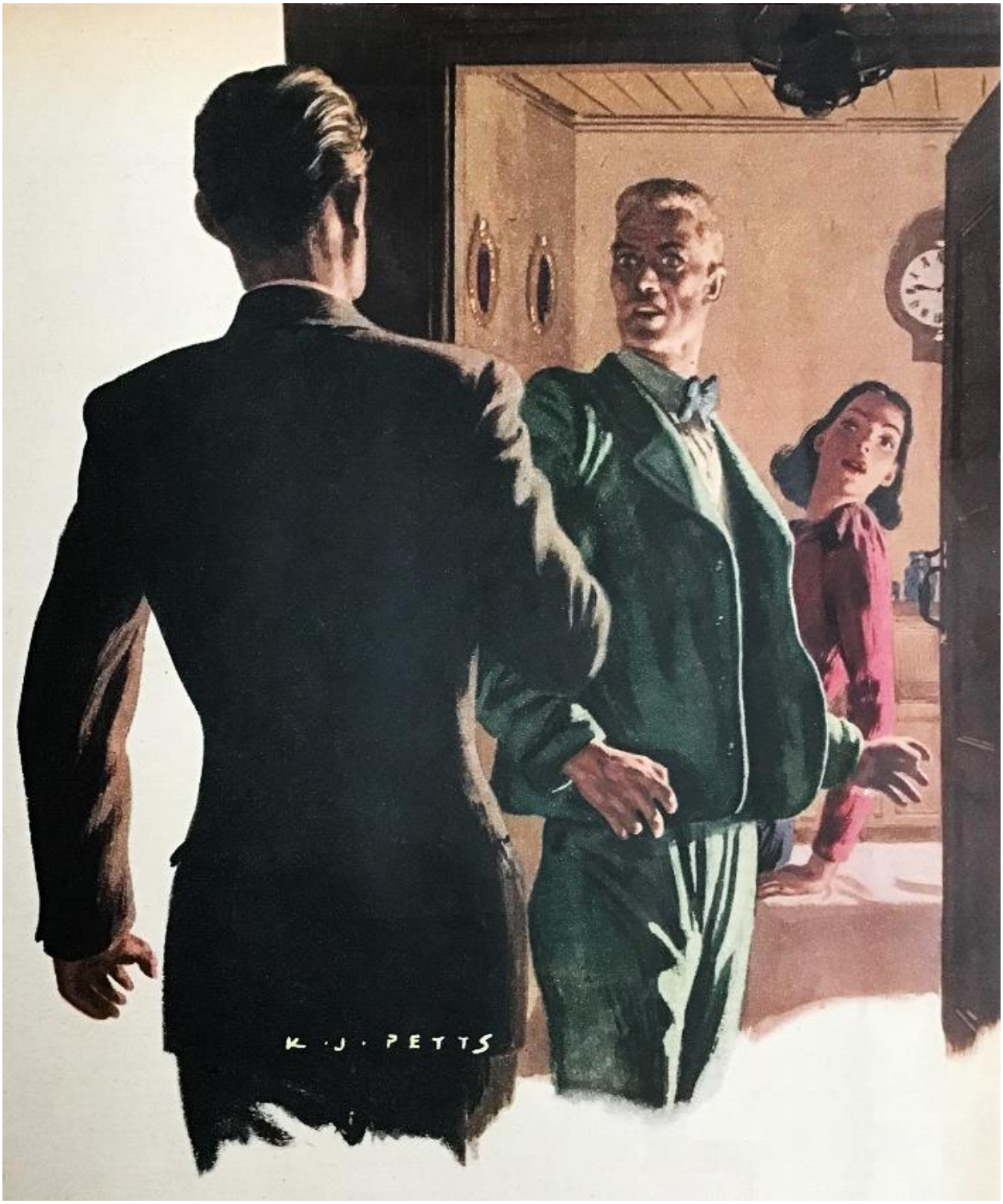
Between the end of World War II and its closure in 1964, *John Bull* carried three short stories and five condensed novels penned by WG, as follows:

(a) Short stories

(i) The issue of 31 May 1947 (front cover below) includes the short story **AT THE CHALET LARTREC**.

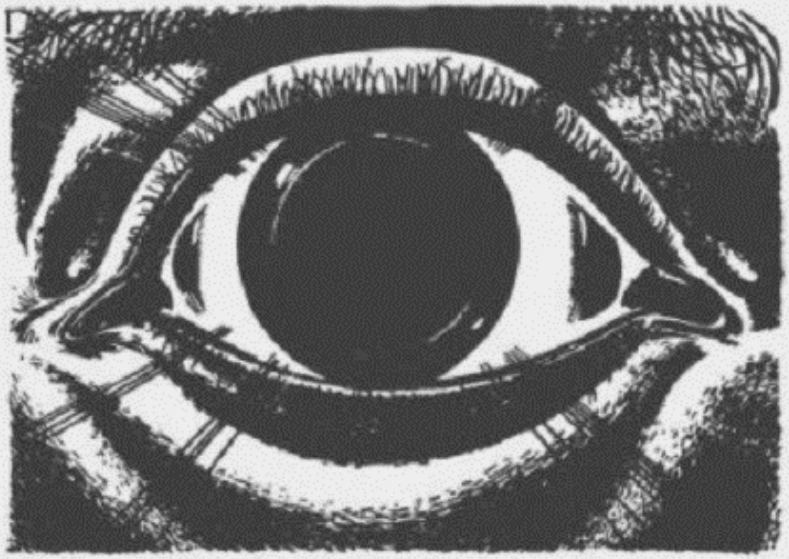


Although the story was subsequently re-published in *The Japanese Girl and other stories* (Collins, 1971), the two versions differ substantially.



The door was suddenly flung open and Lartrec stared at me ...[1]

WHAT WAS THE FANTASTIC MYSTERY OF THE CYCLOPS EYE?



The sensational Buck Ruxton murder trial—in which the mysterious Cyclops eye was a puzzling feature—brought Sir Hartley Shawcross one of his early legal triumphs. JOHN BULL, out tomorrow, gives a full and fascinating account of this remarkable case.

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Daily Herald, 3 June 1958

(ii) The issue of 7 June 1958 (below) includes a story called **THE SUNCHURCH WONDER** which seems not to have been published anywhere else, either before or since.

Angela's wedding terms were crystal clear. "Score a century tomorrow —and I'll marry you," she said

WHEN Angela came downstairs on the day of the cricket match, she looked absent-minded and ate her breakfast without paying much attention to what her mother was saying. Once or twice she stared with lifted eyebrows at the sun flooding in through the french windows.

Mrs. Beresford said: "Is anything wrong?"

"Nothing. No. By the way, I've forgotten —did I tell you? Last night Donald Macdonald asked me to marry him."

"Did he?" said her mother, putting sugar in her coffee. "He's in rather a hurry, isn't he? You've only known each other a month. What did you say?"

"I said yes."

"What?" Mrs. Beresford paused with her cup half raised.

"I said yes—on two conditions."

"Oh." Her mother drank her coffee. "This is a new departure, isn't it? You didn't let Tom down as lightly last year. Tell me the worst."

Angela examined the nails of her left hand. "It all really began as a joke. We'd been playing tennis. I was partnering Teddie, and Donald was on the other side. He's not an awfully good player but he's got an odd sort of service that fizzes off the court like a firework.

"Afterwards I suppose I was feeling a bit—well, he'd served them every time. When the other two had gone off, I mentioned today's cricket match. He said he didn't see why Sunchurch always lost to Taybourne.

"I pointed out to him what must be obvious to anybody, namely that Taybourne is on the main

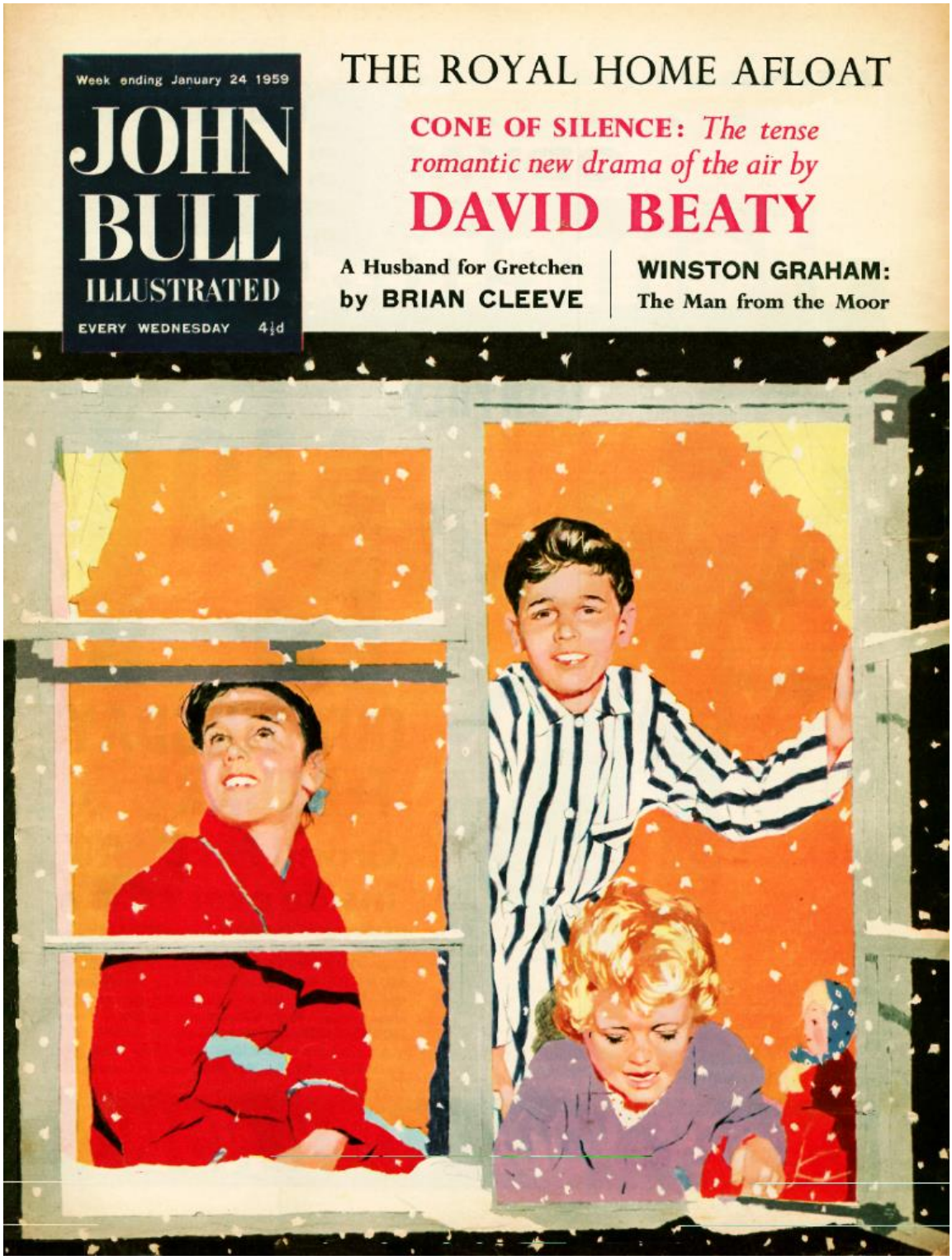
Donald flashed his dark eyes at her. "I'm going to play," he said. "After I left you last night I saw the Sunchurch skipper"

The Sunchurch Wonder

by WINSTON GRAHAM

ILLUSTRATED BY WYLES

(iii) The issue of 24 January 1959 (below) includes a story called **THE MAN FROM THE MOOR**. This story re-appeared in *The Japanese Girl*, also substantially revised, as GIBB.



He was on the run . . . desperate. But he'd win through

THE MAN FROM THE MOOR

by WINSTON GRAHAM

ILLUSTRATED BY BATCHELOR

GIBB had been lucky from the start, you had to admit that. He'd just slipped away from the working party in full daylight and made for the trees on the other side of the valley. Then there'd been the lucky bicycle; he'd gone down that rough track like a lunatic, pedalling for dear life and hoping he wouldn't strike a stone. Before the warders had known he was out on the main road and cycling briskly, and you might have thought he was a curate out sick-visiting, if it hadn't been for the little question of clothes.

Two motorists stared at him coming the other way, and he jumped off the bicycle at the foot of the long hill and ran beside the river until he came to the house. He went up to a side window and broke it and climbed in. In the third bedroom he found a suit and a cap. He grabbed them and was out again before anyone saw him. He spent the rest of the daylight in the wood on the slope of the other hill.

When darkness came, he set off south-east by the stars. He struck the hilly and deserted road through Holne Chase and walked for a while with the River Dart bubbling alongside. He slid through Ashburton at first dawn, and by now hunger was gripping like the beginning of cramp. But he would make no move to steal food. If he stole food, he would be drawing an arrow on a map.

Dawn saw him through Bicklington. There was sure to be a road check, and he kept a look out at each village. He wished his suit fitted better: he was broad enough to take most of the length, but the trousers were strung uncomfortably tight.

There was the sound of a motor behind him and he raised his hand hopefully as he turned. It was a private car and to his surprise it stopped. Driver and car were antiques; the man sixty-five or more, in a bowler hat and a blue suit, with a collar too big.

"Want a lift for a few miles? I'm going as far as Sidmouth."

"Thanks. Thanks very much."

Gibb ran round the car and got in. They jerked ir to motion.

"Lovely morning, isn't it! Lovely morning," said the old man. "Makes you feel good to be alive."

"It certainly does," said Gibb, relaxing on the lumpy seat with relief. Off his feet at last!

"Going far?"

"Well, yes. . . . London, I hope."

"Well, well, very enterprising to be off so early. I like to be up early, y'know. Always have, ever since I was a lad."

"Yes," Gibb agreed. "I like to get up early too."

The old man crashed the gears at the foot of a hill, and they ground slowly up it at a fast walking pace. The engine roared and quivered madly as if it was going to take off and leave them behind.

"I'm going to see my sister at Sidmouth," shouted the old man. "Always go every week. You a Londoner?"

"Yes." They got to the top of the hill, and rattled down the other side.

"Been working down here?" the old man said.

An inquisitive type. "Yes," Gibb said swiftly, sidelong. "Been on a dock job at Plymouth, see, but I heard my little girl had been knocked down. Car came on the pavement behind her. Just coming home from school, she was, poor kid. Pushed her into a lamp-post. Broke two ribs, they say. Terrible, isn't it?"

"Terrible," said the old man. "I'm very sorry for you. Very sorry indeed. Have you heard how she is?"

"Not since. I set off this morning, soon as it was light."

They hummed recklessly through another village. Two policemen were talking to a motorist. Gibb braced himself, but they got past.

"Wouldn't it have been better," said the old man, "to have gone by train? It's little more than four hours by rail."

Gibb licked his lips. There was a lovely spanner in the cubby hole of the car. "Well, y'see, I was laid off three weeks ago. I've stayed on expecting another job, see, but you know how money goes, especially sending it home as well. I just hadn't got the cash."

The old man tutted sympathetically and to Gibb's relief began to talk of his own life. He was a retired schoolmaster —"just a village school, you understand." Gibb heard all about school meals—which made his stomach turn with hunger—and the Education Act and the effect of inflation on pensions.

Presently, they began to get near Exeter. "Tell me where you would like to be put down," said the old man.

"Well, sir, if you don't mind, I think I'll come part way to Sidmouth."

"That'll take you well out of your way."

"I think maybe I'll stand a better chance of picking up a lift on one of the side roads."

"As you please." For the first time the old man's faded blue eyes rested on his companion with a hint of doubt.

BEYOND the River Exe they branched off. The countryside was in full bloom; apples and cherries waved their blossoms in the breeze. Past a road junction, in a quiet part of the road, Gibb said: "This'll do."

"My dear young man, you're right off your proper direction here. However, if that is what you want, so be it." He brought the car to a grunting stop.

"Now I'll trouble you to get out."

The old man looked startled. "What d'you mean?"

Gibb picked up the heavy spanner. "I mean I'm an escaped convict and I want your car. And no damned nonsense, see."

The old man licked his lips. A vein beat in his neck. "What are you going to do?"

"I'll not cosh you if you play the game, but one shout or move and I'll lay you out. Understand?"

They got out of the car. No one was about. Gibb opened a gate and led the way into an apple orchard. Every time they moved, a shower of scented petals floated over them.

"Against that tree. Sit down. Now I'll need your braces, to take the place

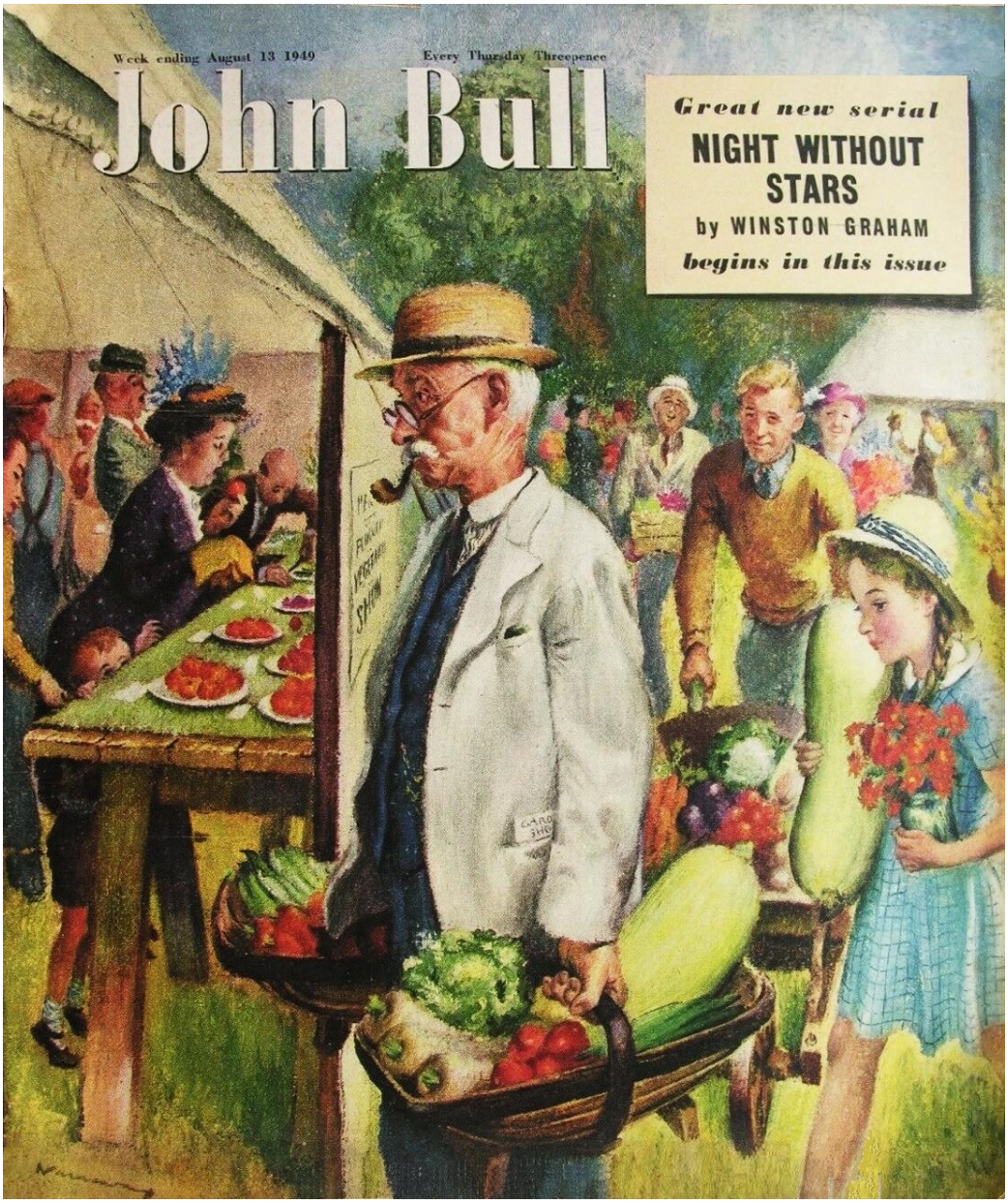
This page and next: **"Yes," she said, "I live alone." But he could see immediately that she regretted ...**

… having admitted it

(b) Condensed novels

Five WG novels published by Hodder and Stoughton in the period 1950 to 1957 were serialised in condensed form in *John Bull*, as follows:

(i) **NIGHT WITHOUT STARS**

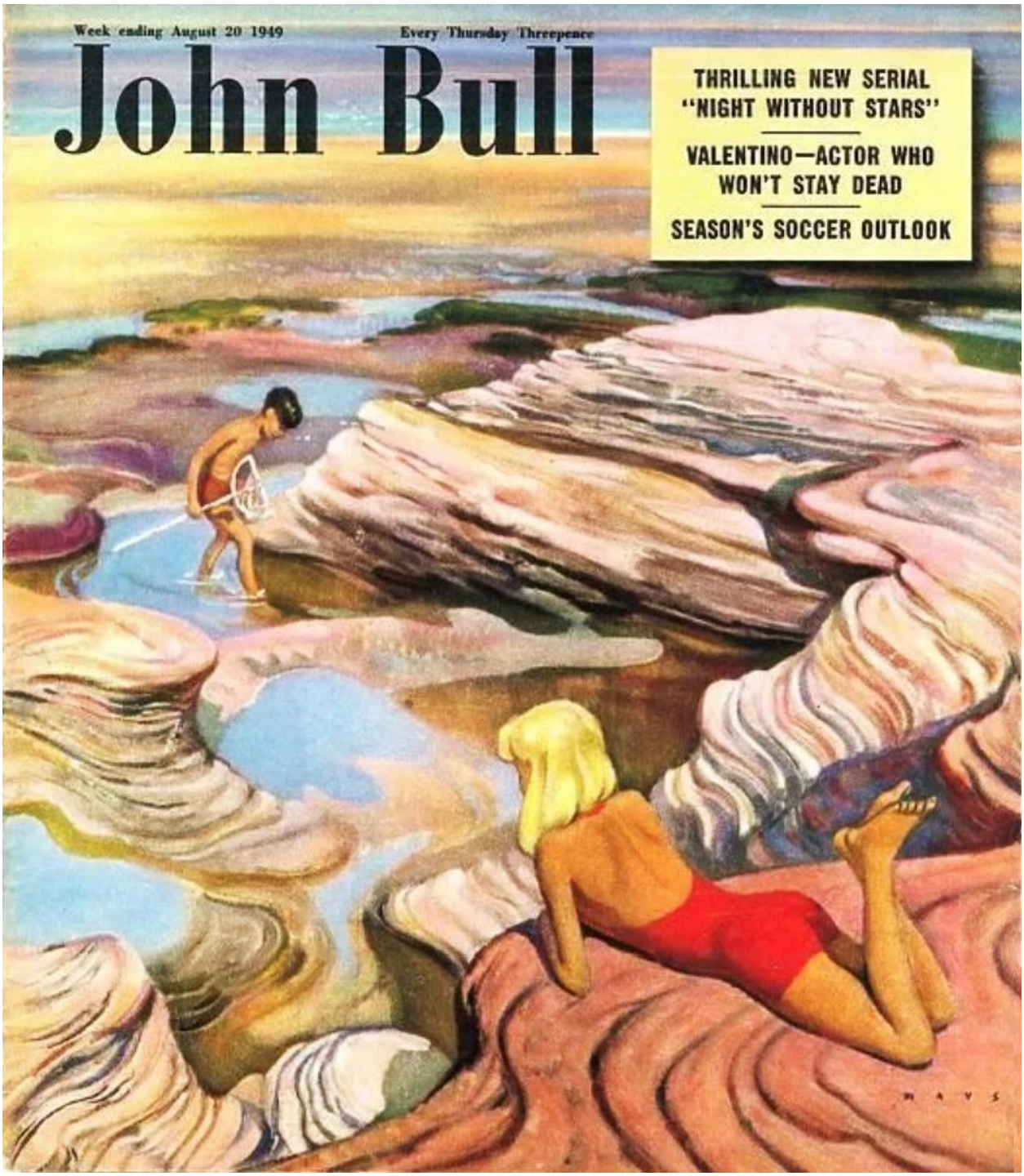


Although the novel was not published until January 1950, *John Bull* ran a ten-part serialisation from 13 August (above) to 15 October 1949.

NIGHT WITHOUT STARS, part one (comprising chapters one to three). With the exception of the opening sentence, which has been tweaked in typical WG fashion, the visible text is identical to that of the novel.

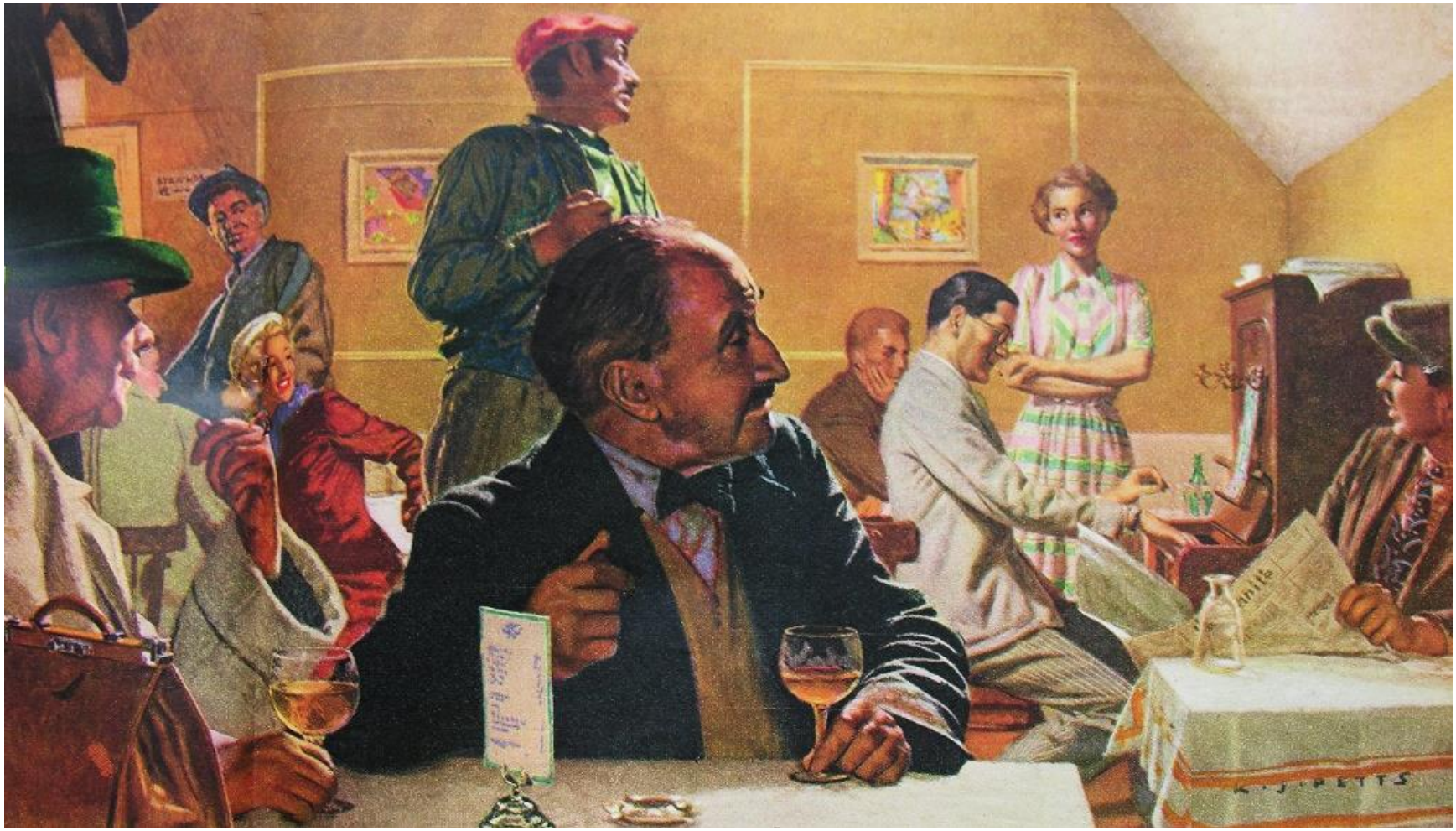
Part one, second illustration (cropped): **"Why meet troubles before they come?" he said carefully.**

(The early parts of each story typically have two illustrations and the later parts one)



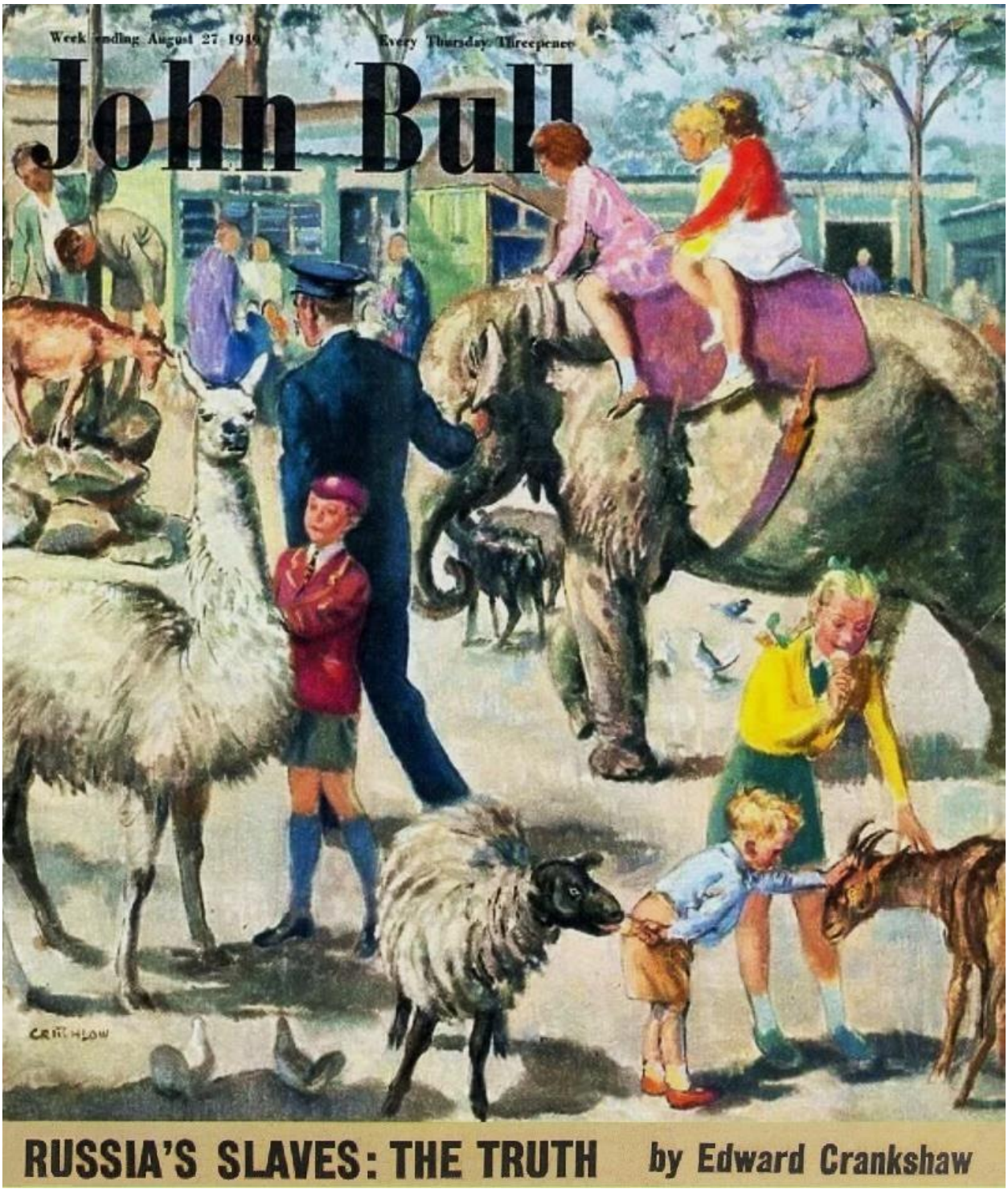
20 August 1949 (NWS, 2 of 10)

Illustrations below



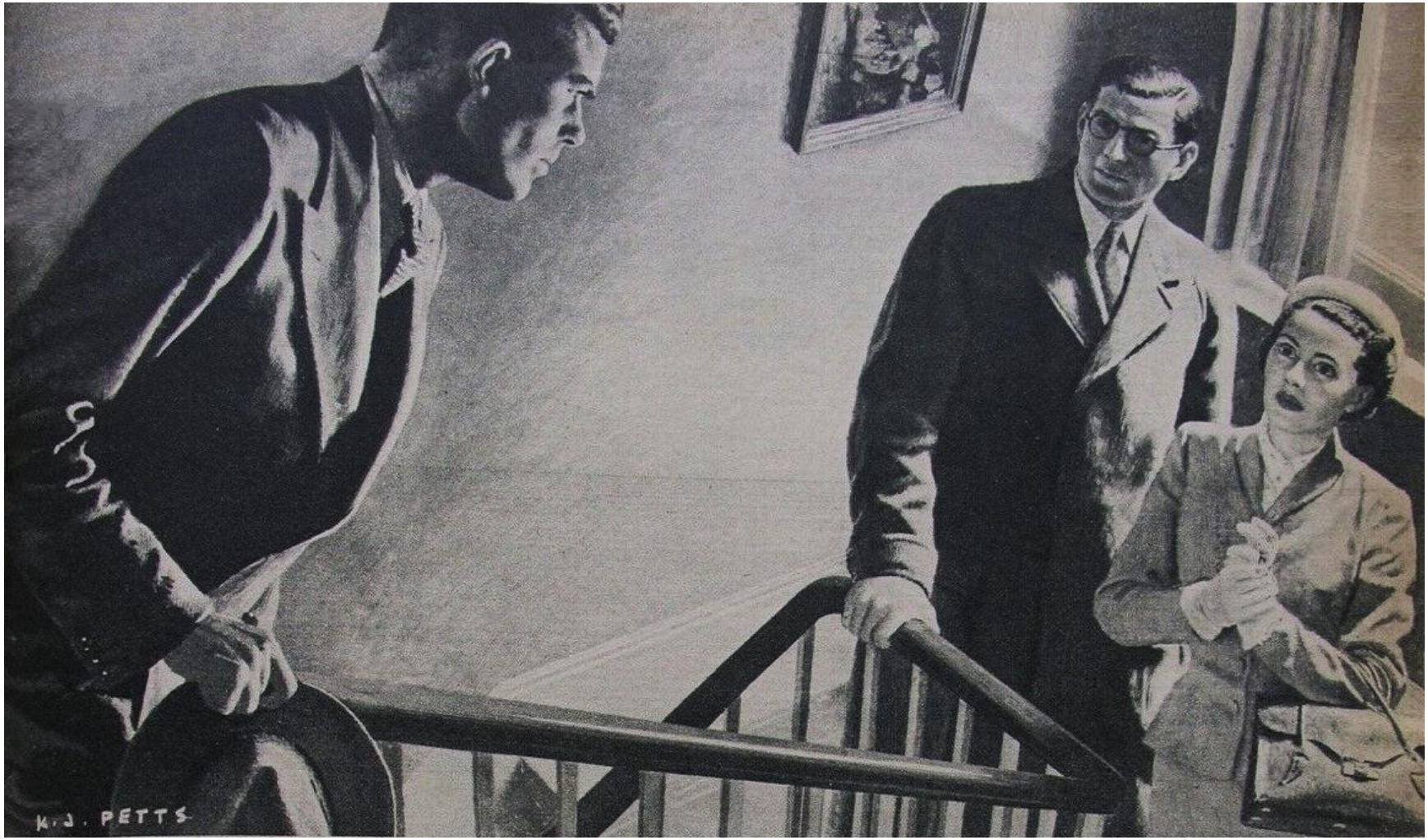
I sat down at the piano in a mild rage and couldn't think what to play. After a while I remembered some Provençal songs and felt better about it all ...

"Keep your hands off my property, monsieur. Alix belongs to me."



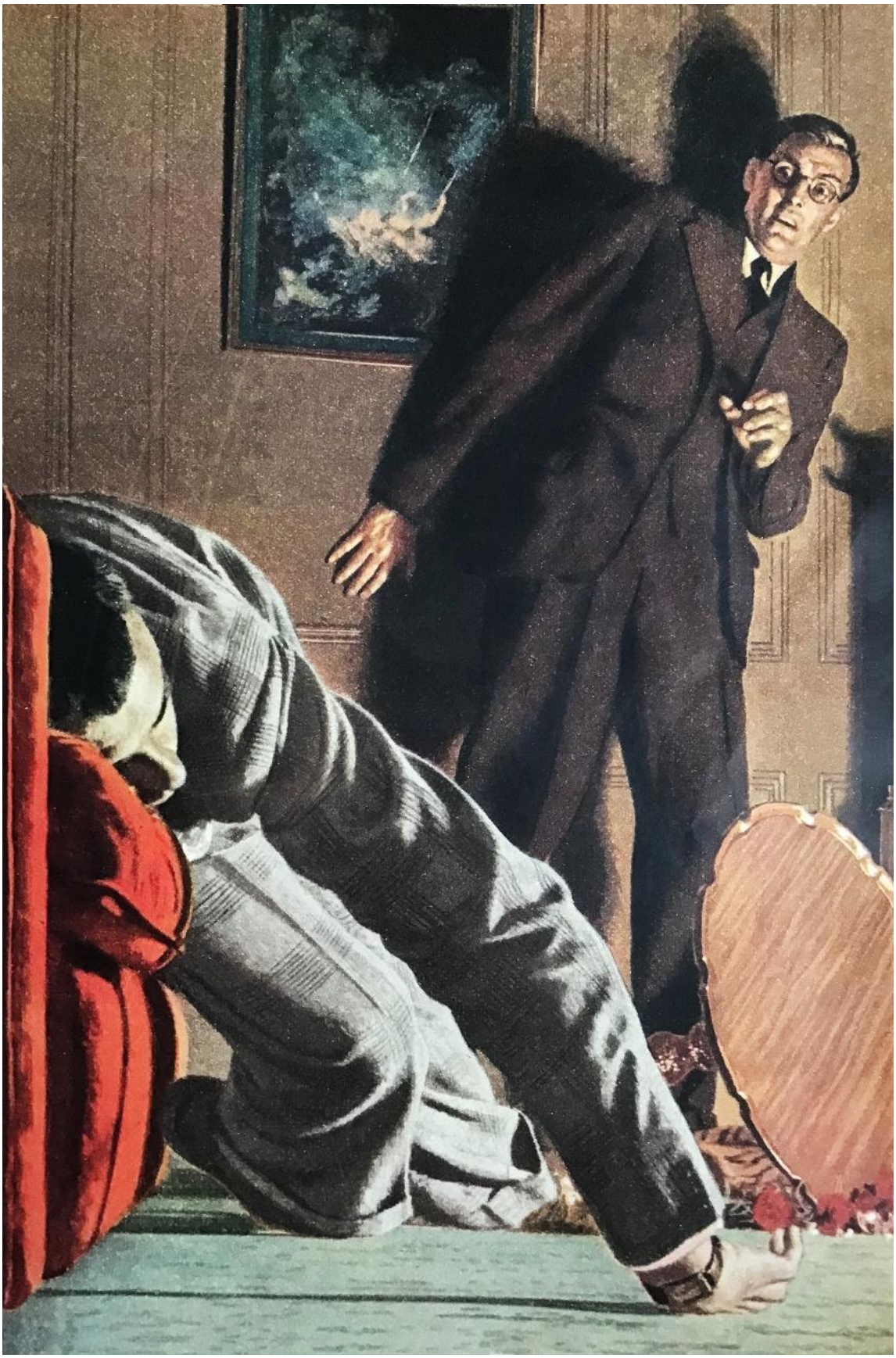
27 August 1949 (NWS, 3 of 10)

Illustrations below



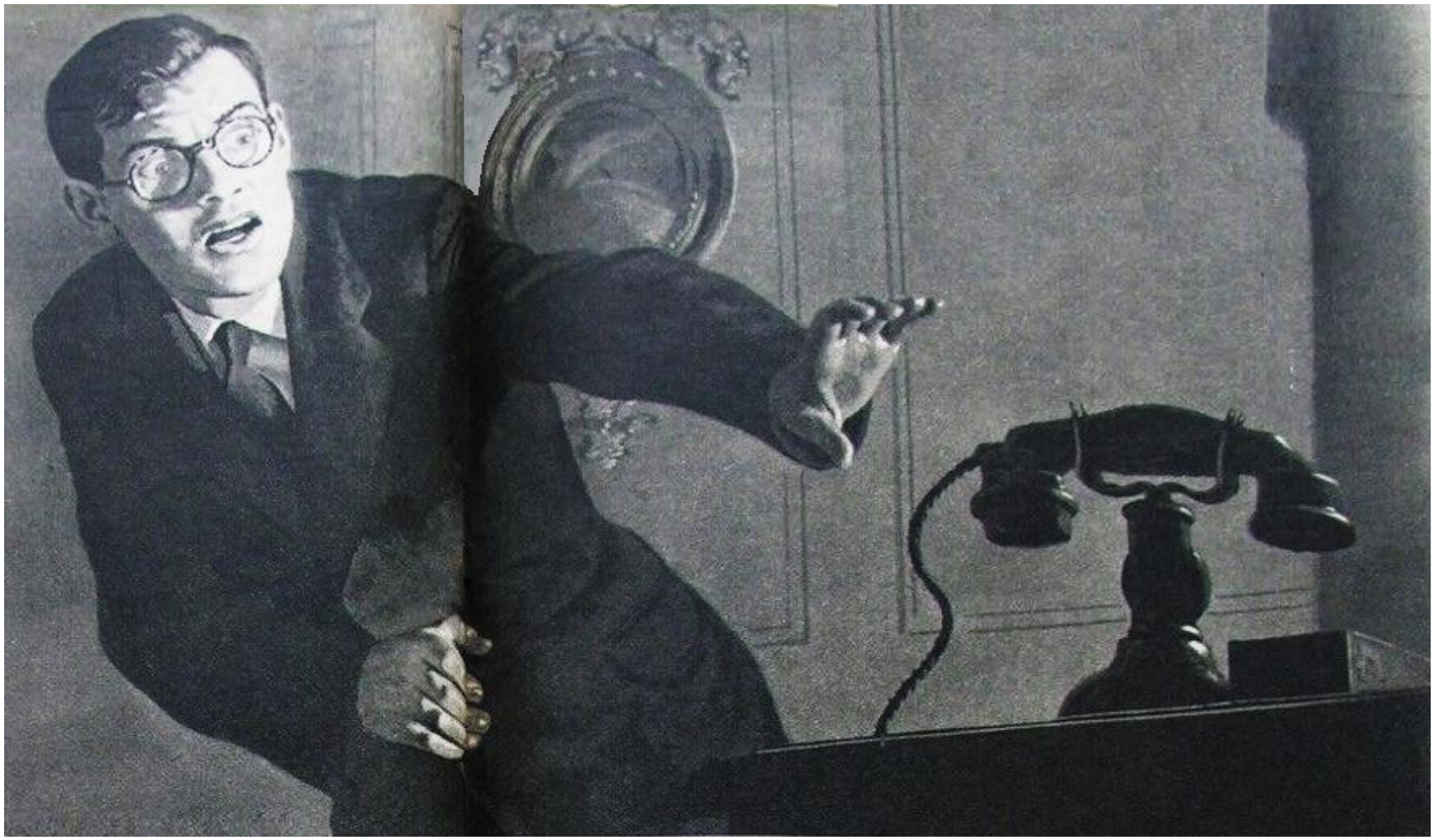
Grognard came down. I could have murdered him ...

Next page: **The smell of his clothes told me it was Grognard. He was dead …**

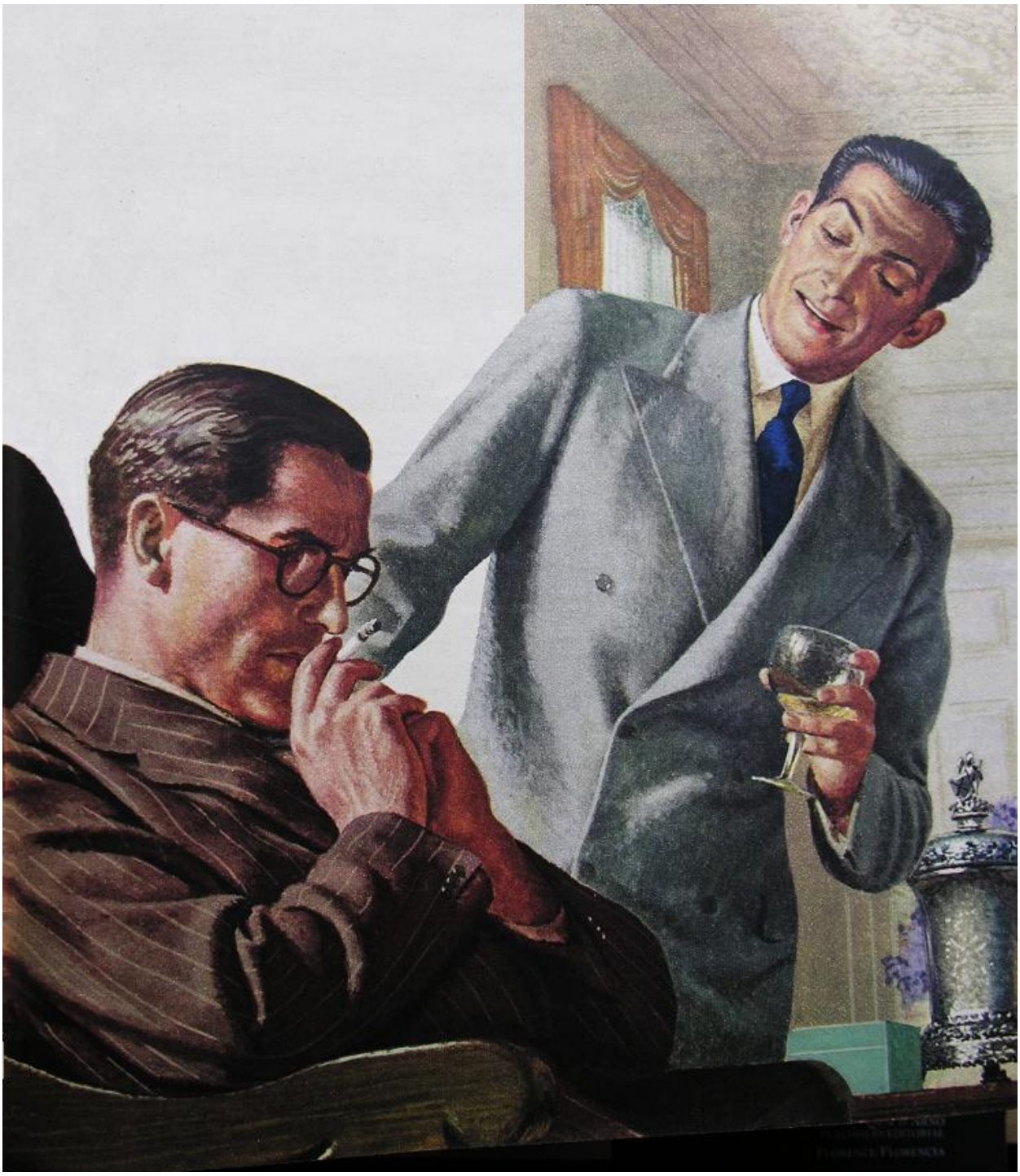


3 September 1949 (NWS, 4 of 10)

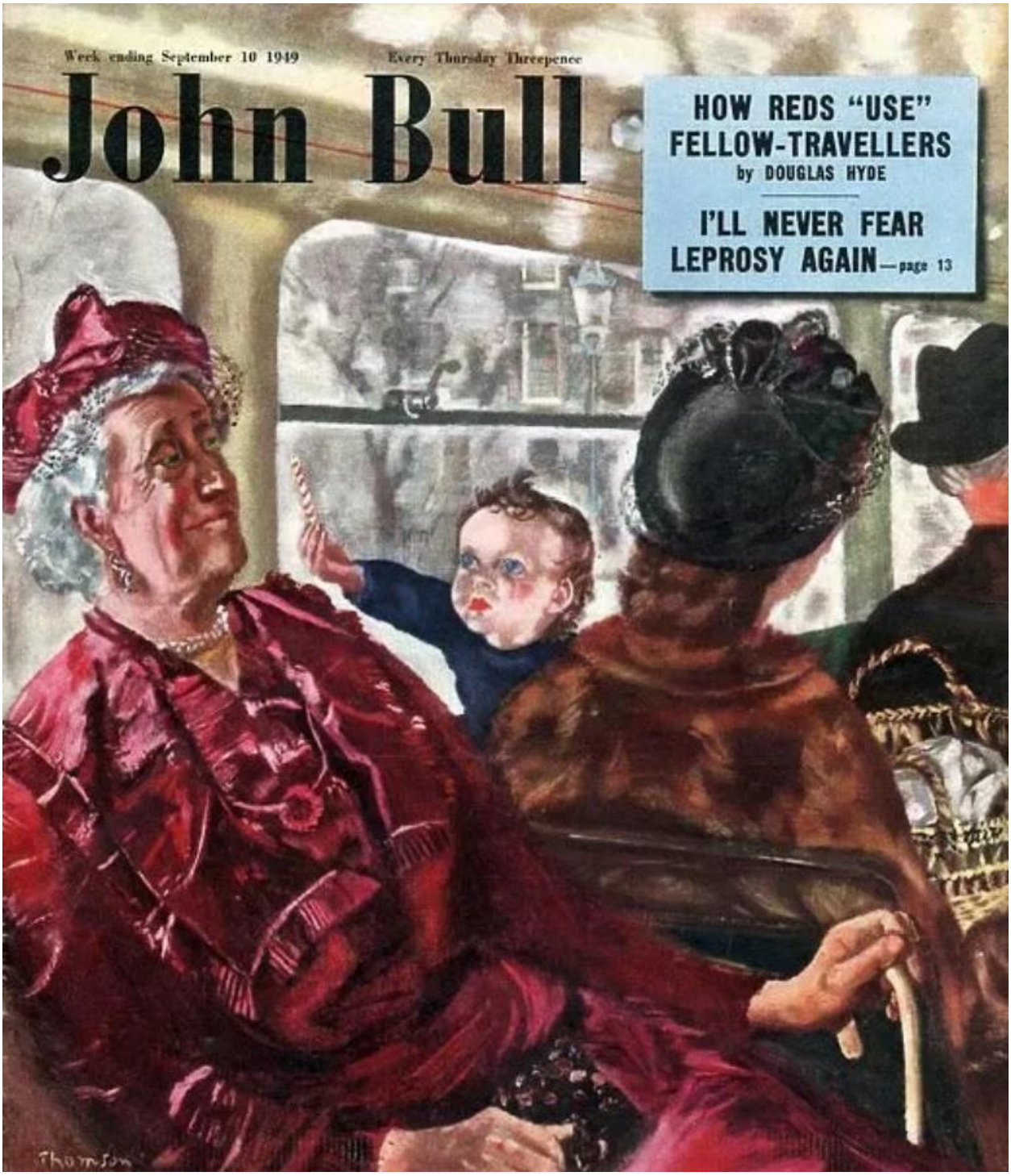
Illustrations below



Suddenly, the telephone rang …



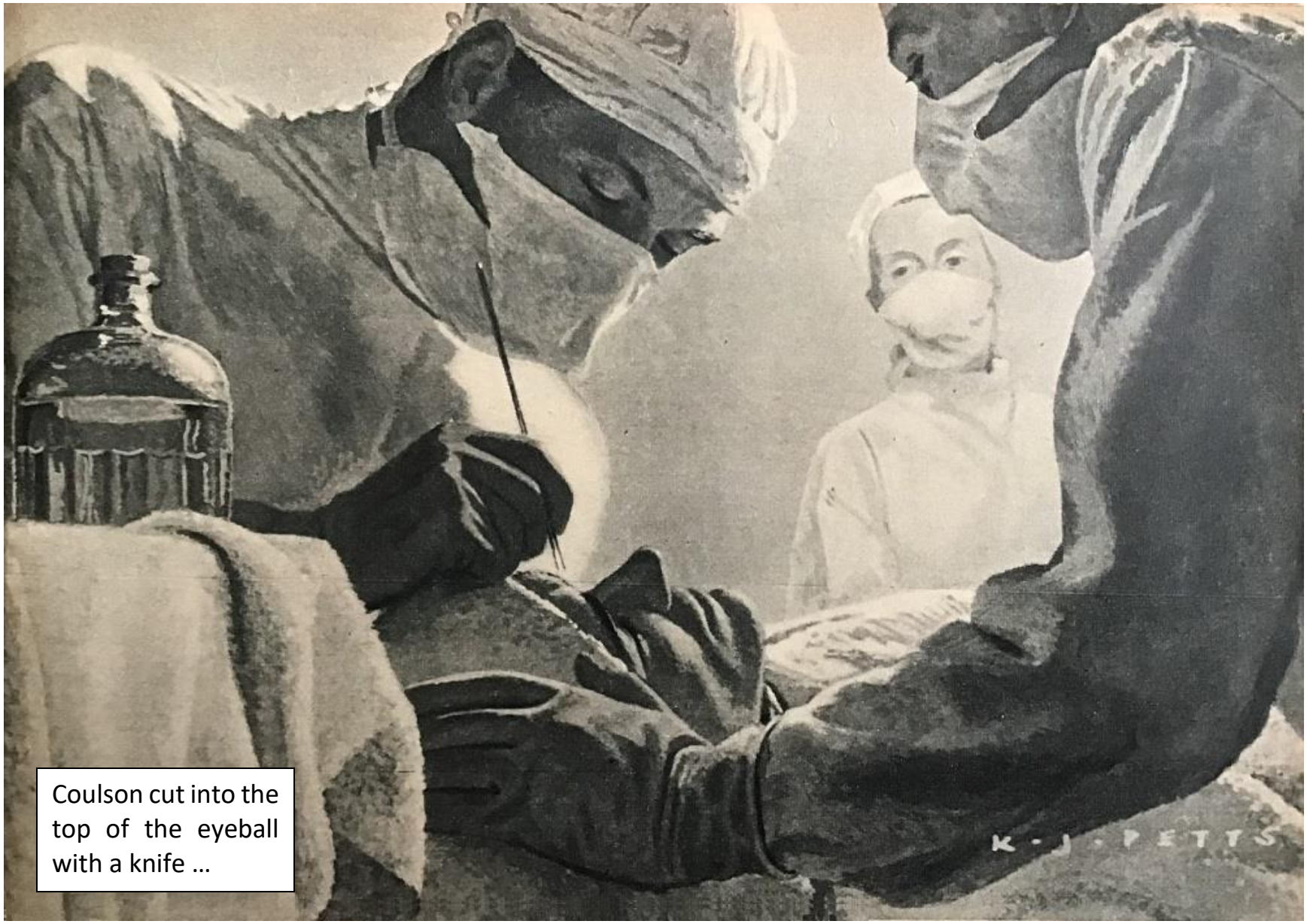
"Don't tell me you still have illusions, Mr. Gordon …"

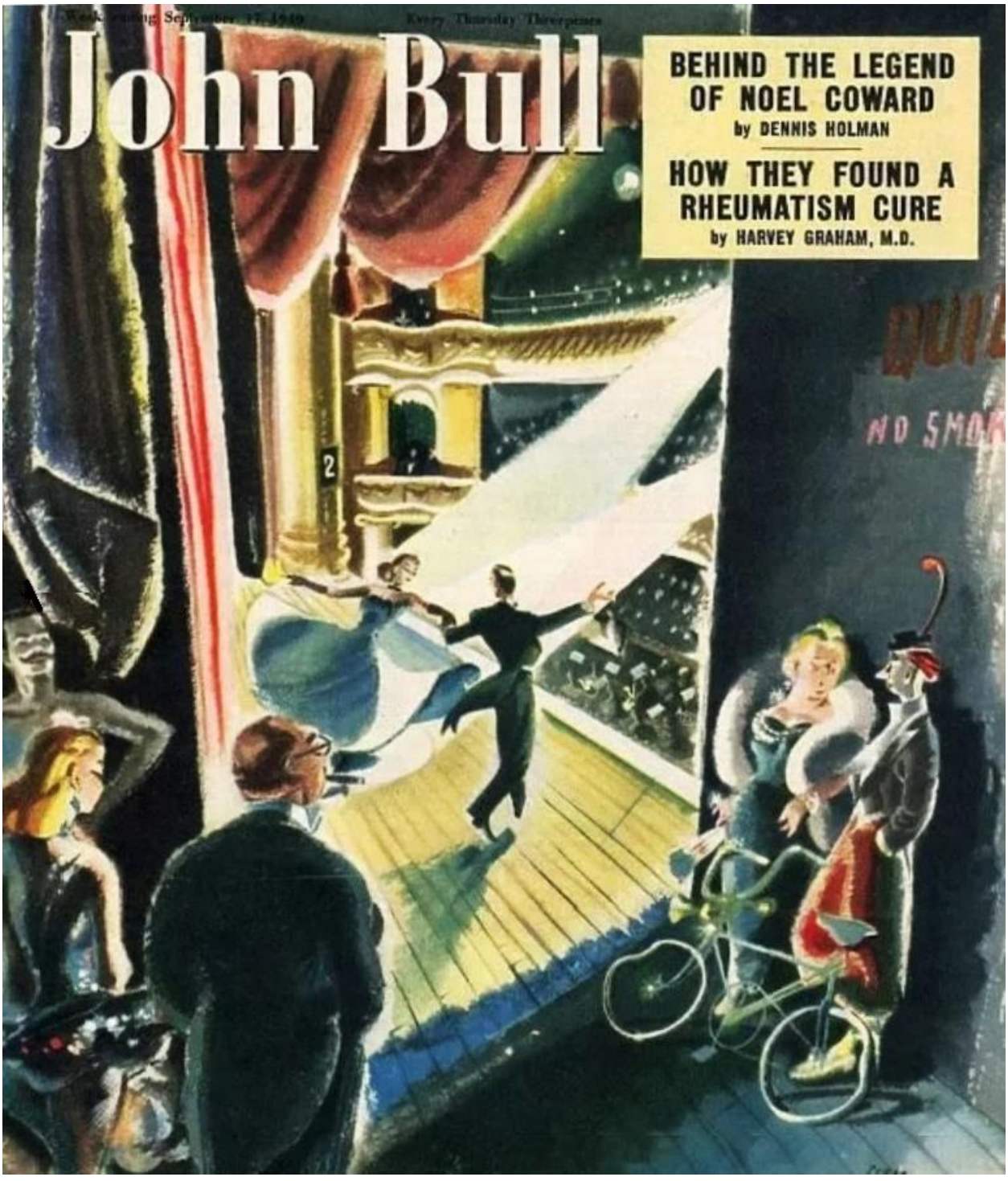


10 September 1949 (NWS, 5 of 10)

Illustrations below

RESTAURANT
BAR
"Does Mme Delaisse still live here?"

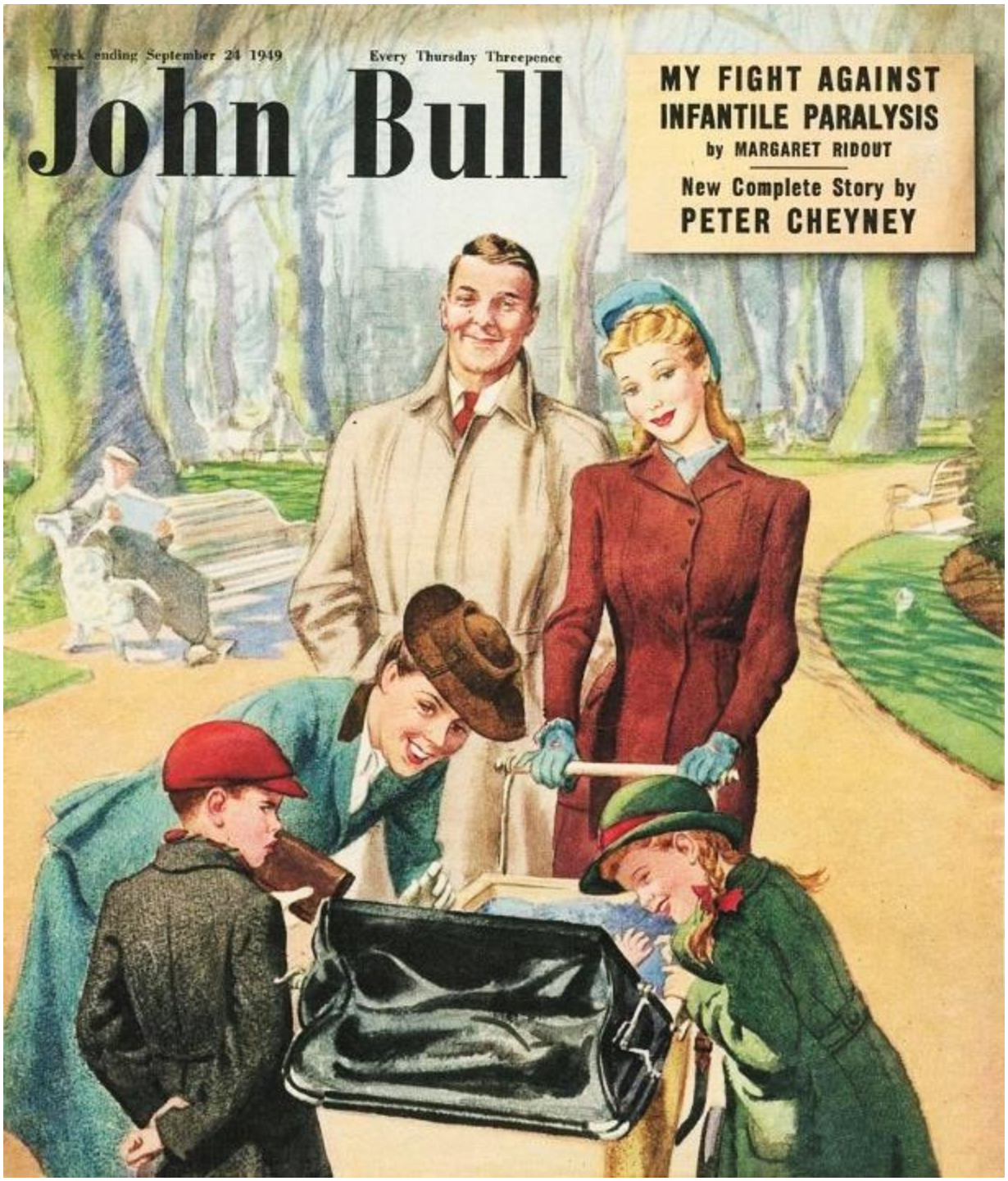

Coulson cut into the top of the eyeball with a knife …
K-J. PETTS



17 September 1949 (NWS, 6 of 10)

illustration below

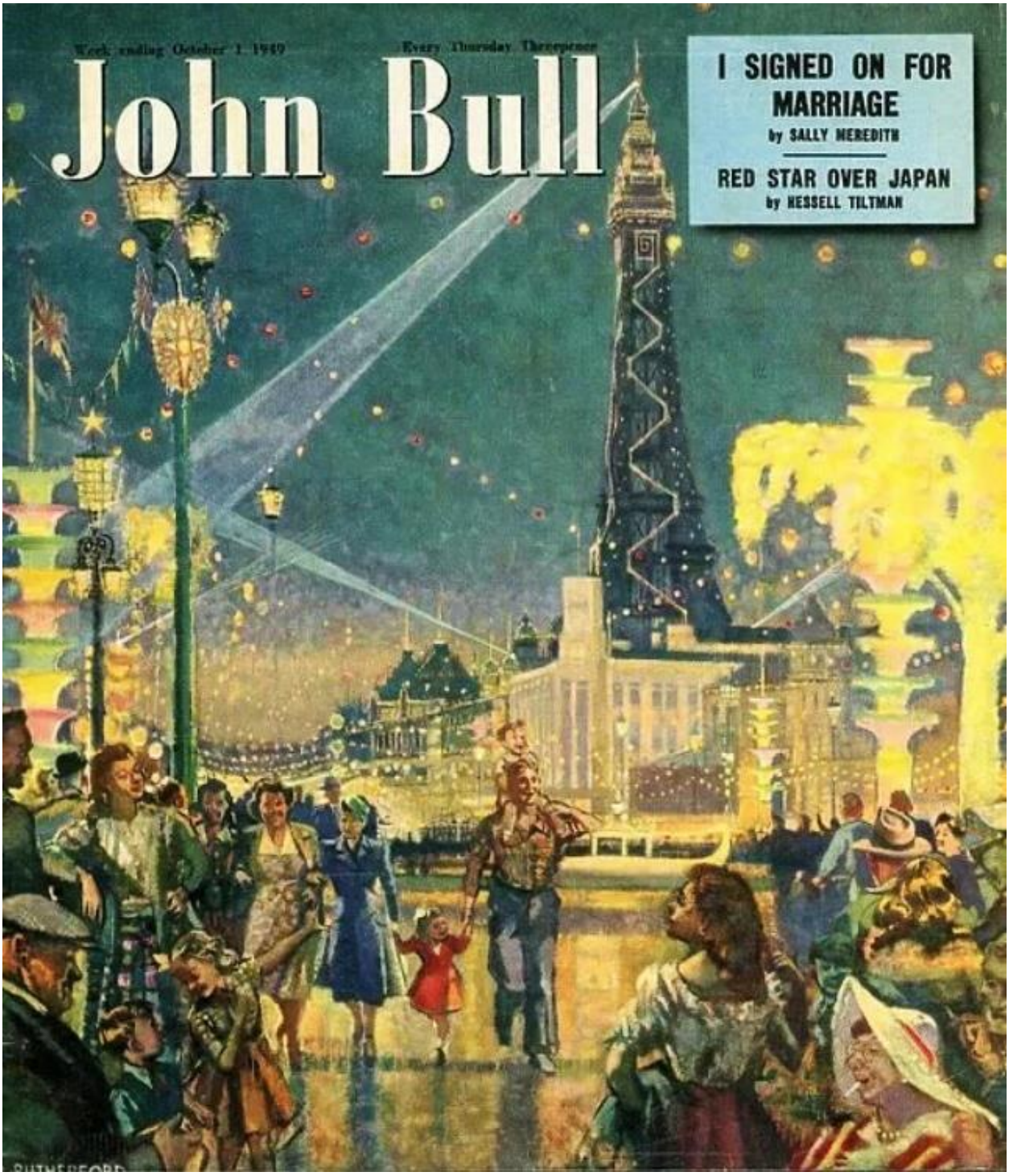
"We've had the stuff a week. Get rid of it, I say."



24 September 1949 (NWS, 7 of 10)

Illustration below

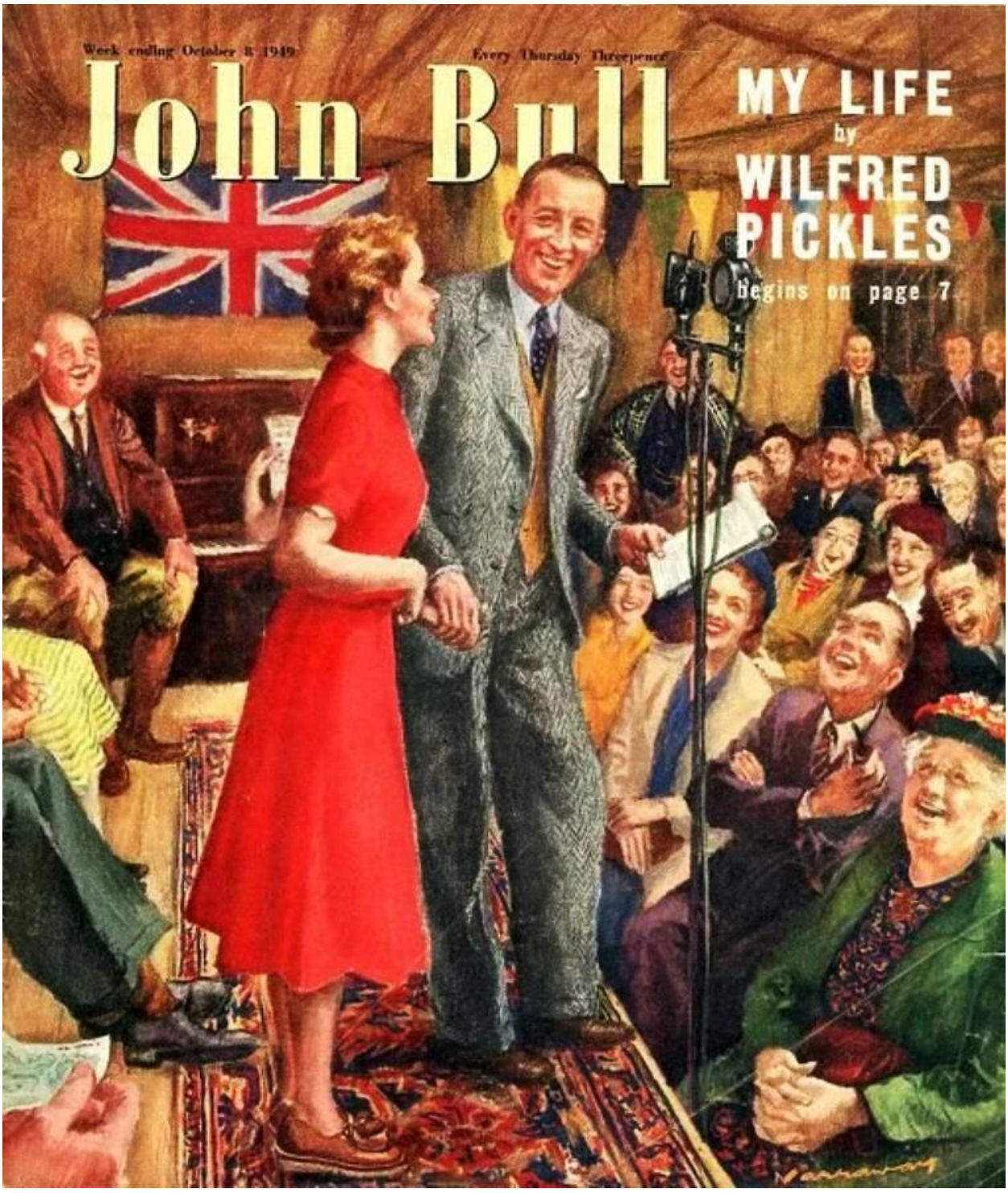
"That's what I killed him with …"



1 October 1949 (NWS, 8 of 10)

Illustration below

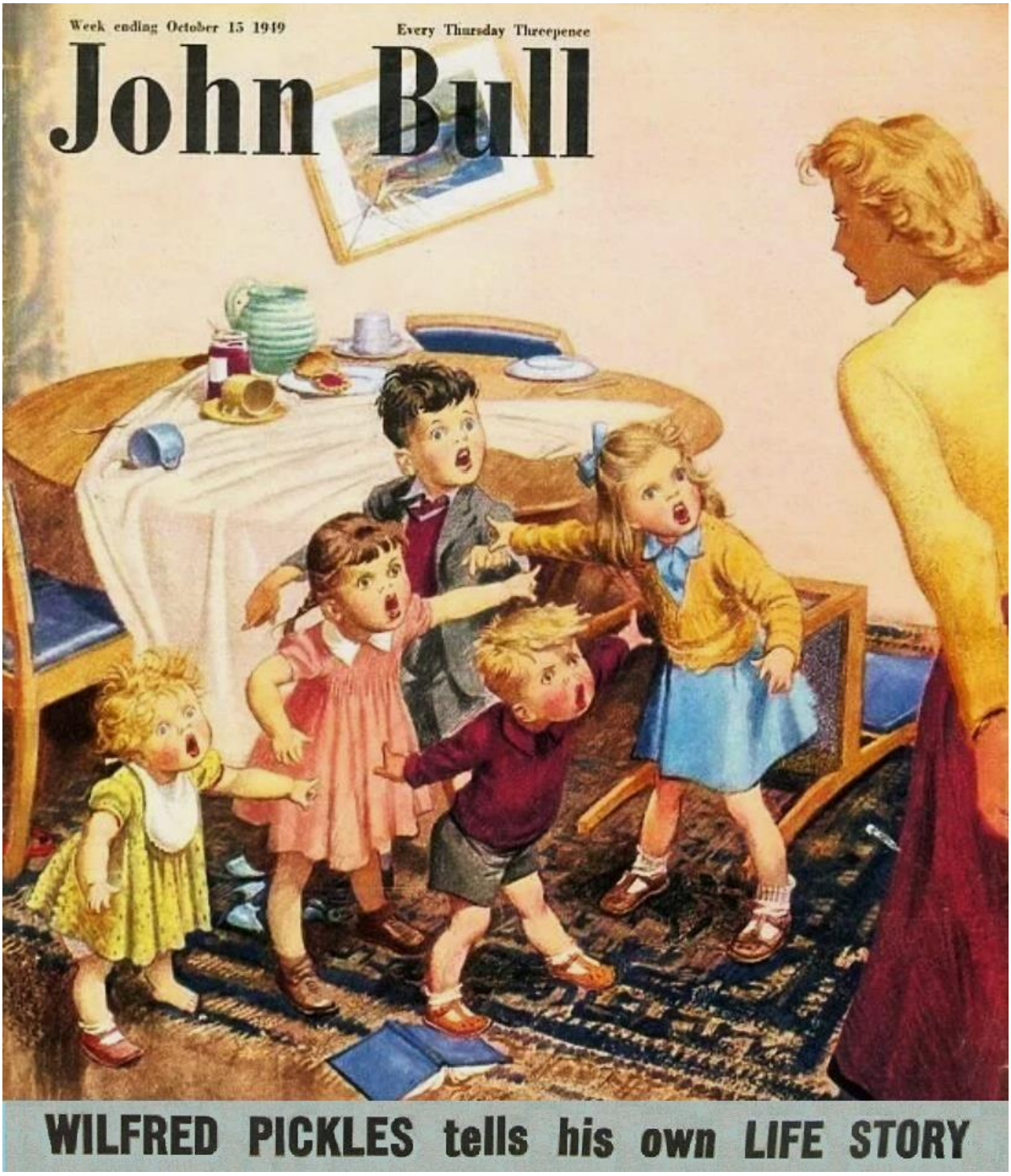
"Leave me alone," she spluttered …



8 October 1949 (NWS, 9 of 10)

Illustration below

Too late to clutch at the broken parapet of the road, I grabbed wildly at the grass …



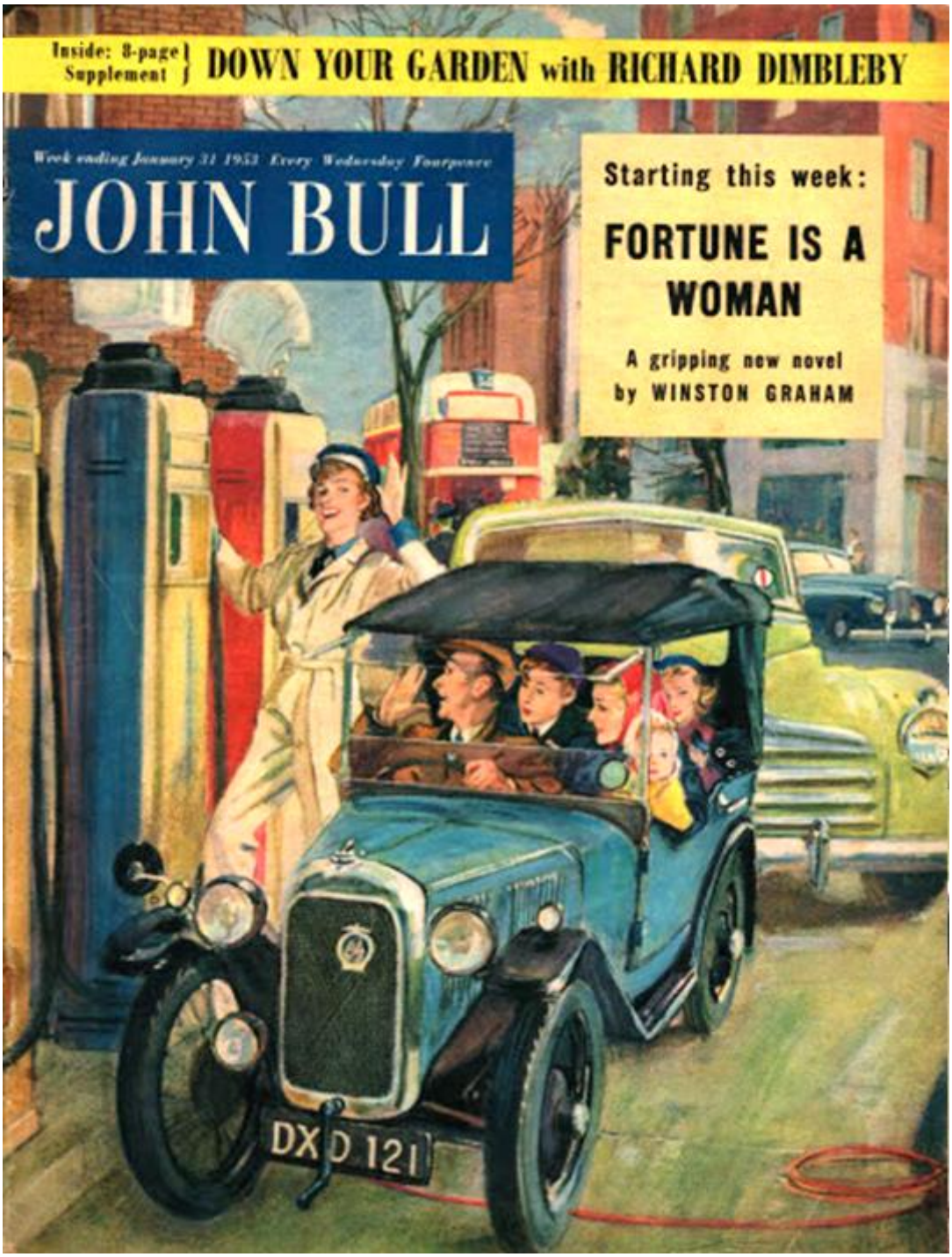
15 October 1949 (NWS, 10 of 10)

Illustration below

Deffand said: "Let me put a suggestion to you …"

* * * * *

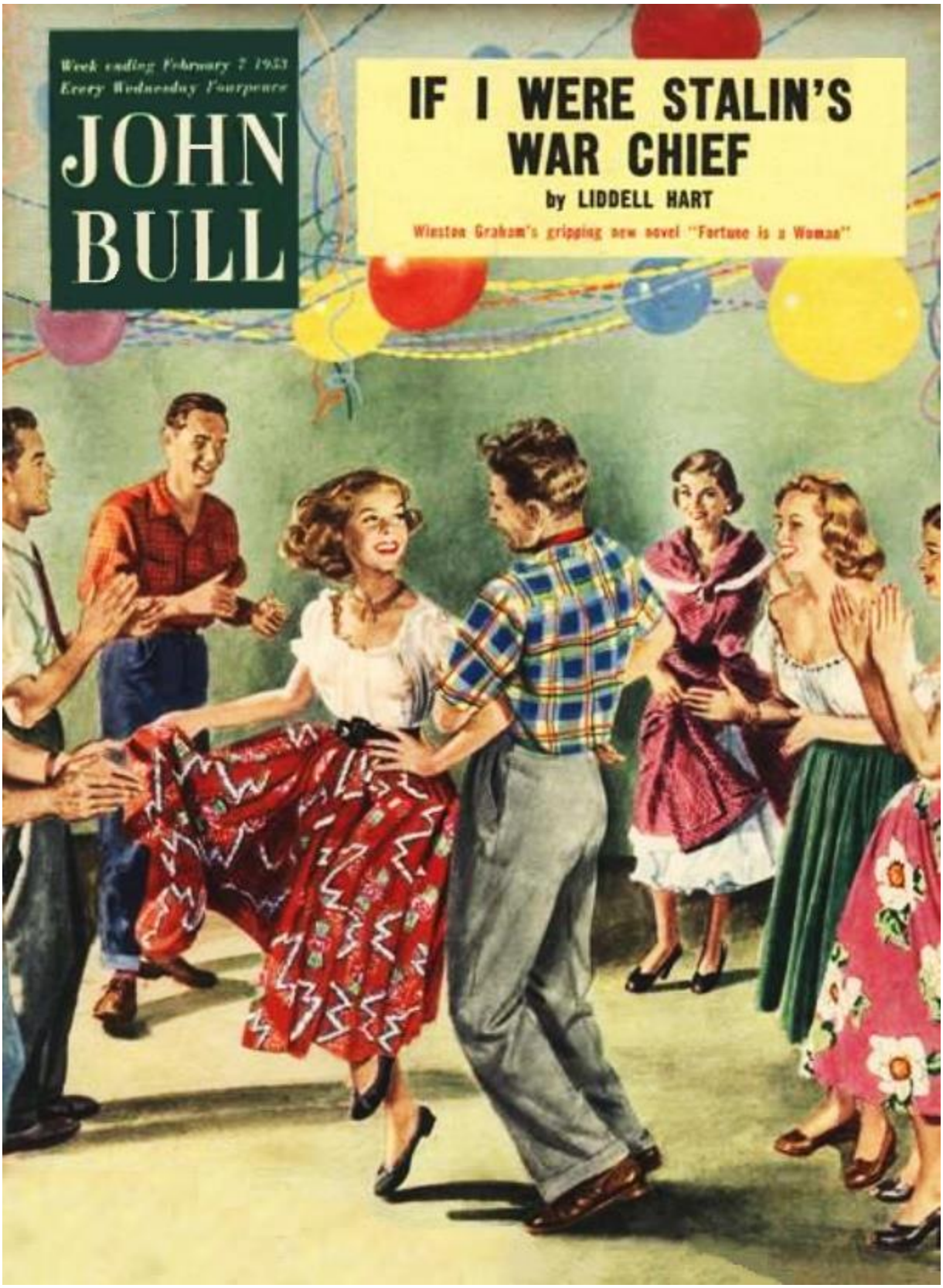
(ii) **FORTUNE IS A WOMAN**



After publication in novel form in December 1952, FORTUNE IS A WOMAN was serialised in *John Bull* in seven parts from 31 January (above) to 14 March 1953. Part one illustrations below:

On an impulse I said: "Are you happy, Sarah?" She looked away ...

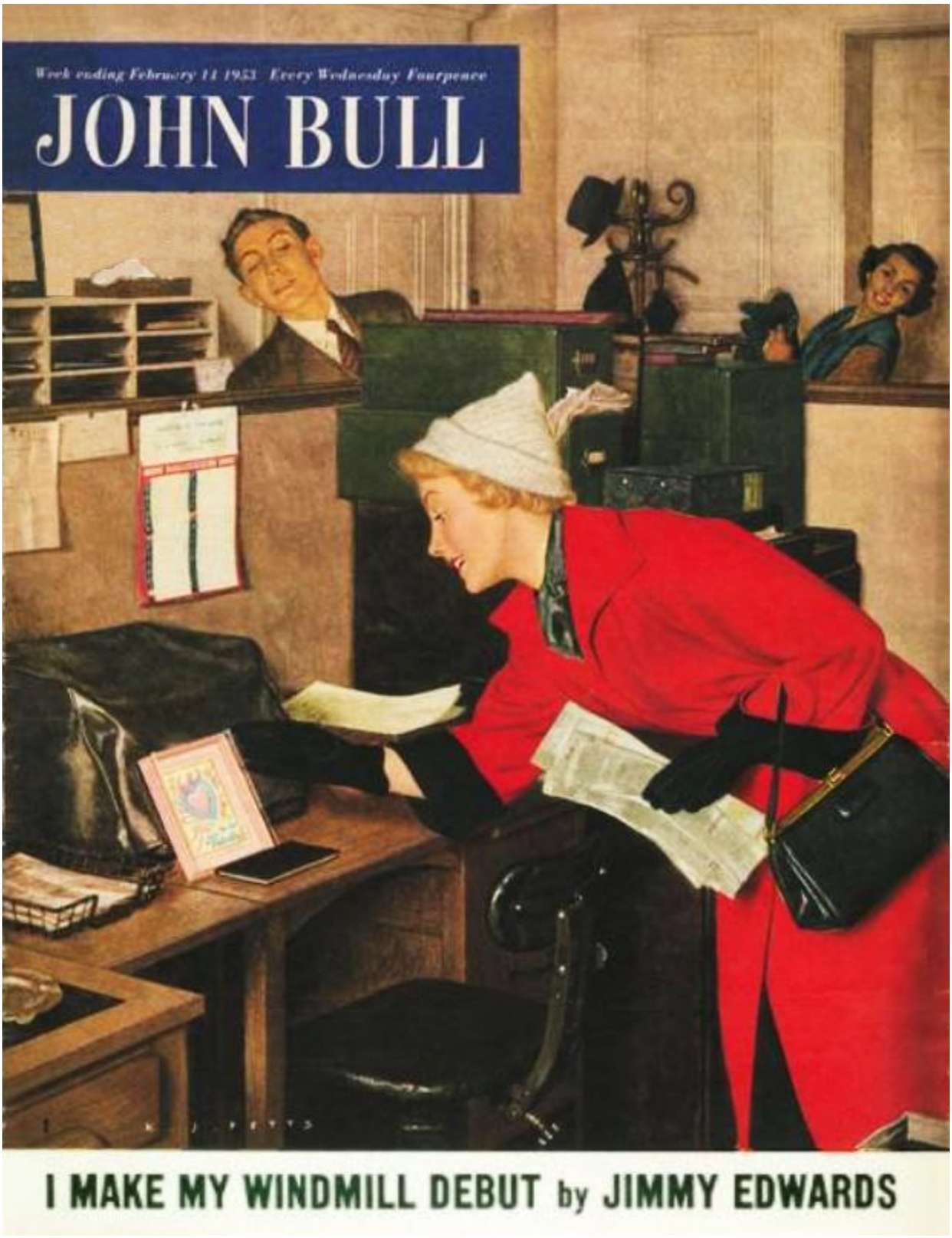
Tracey's voice came from the darkened doorway. "Bring Oliver in for a drink," he said. "I want to talk to him."



7 February 1953 (FORTUNE, 2 of 7); illustrations below

Previous page: The hair rose on the back of my neck. The thing I had stepped on was a man's hand ...

The man stared in at the car windows. "What's amiss up at the Manor?" he shouted.

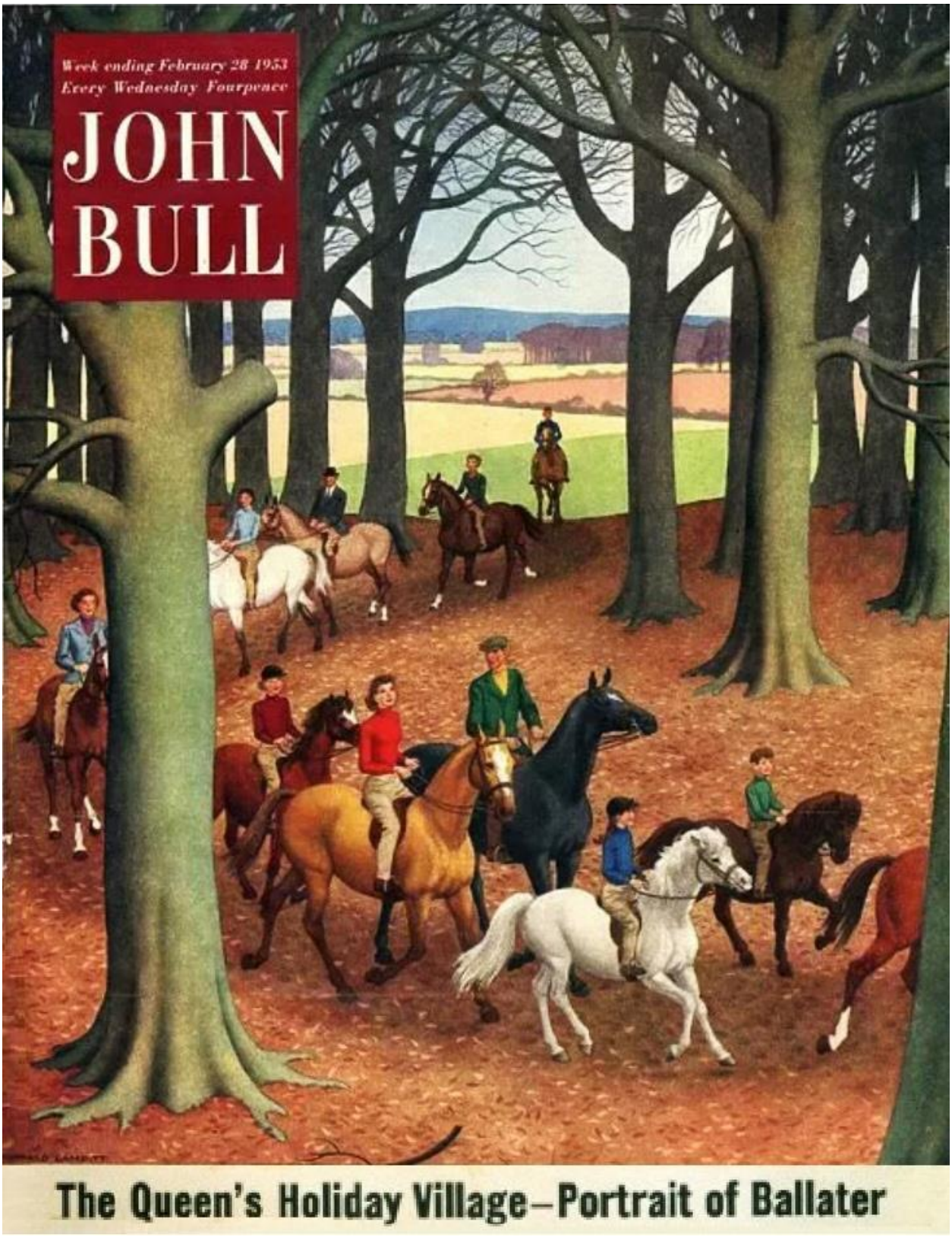


14 February 1953 (FORTUNE, 3 of 7); illustration below

Sarah answered in a low but perfectly clear voice. The coroner was sympa-thetic ...

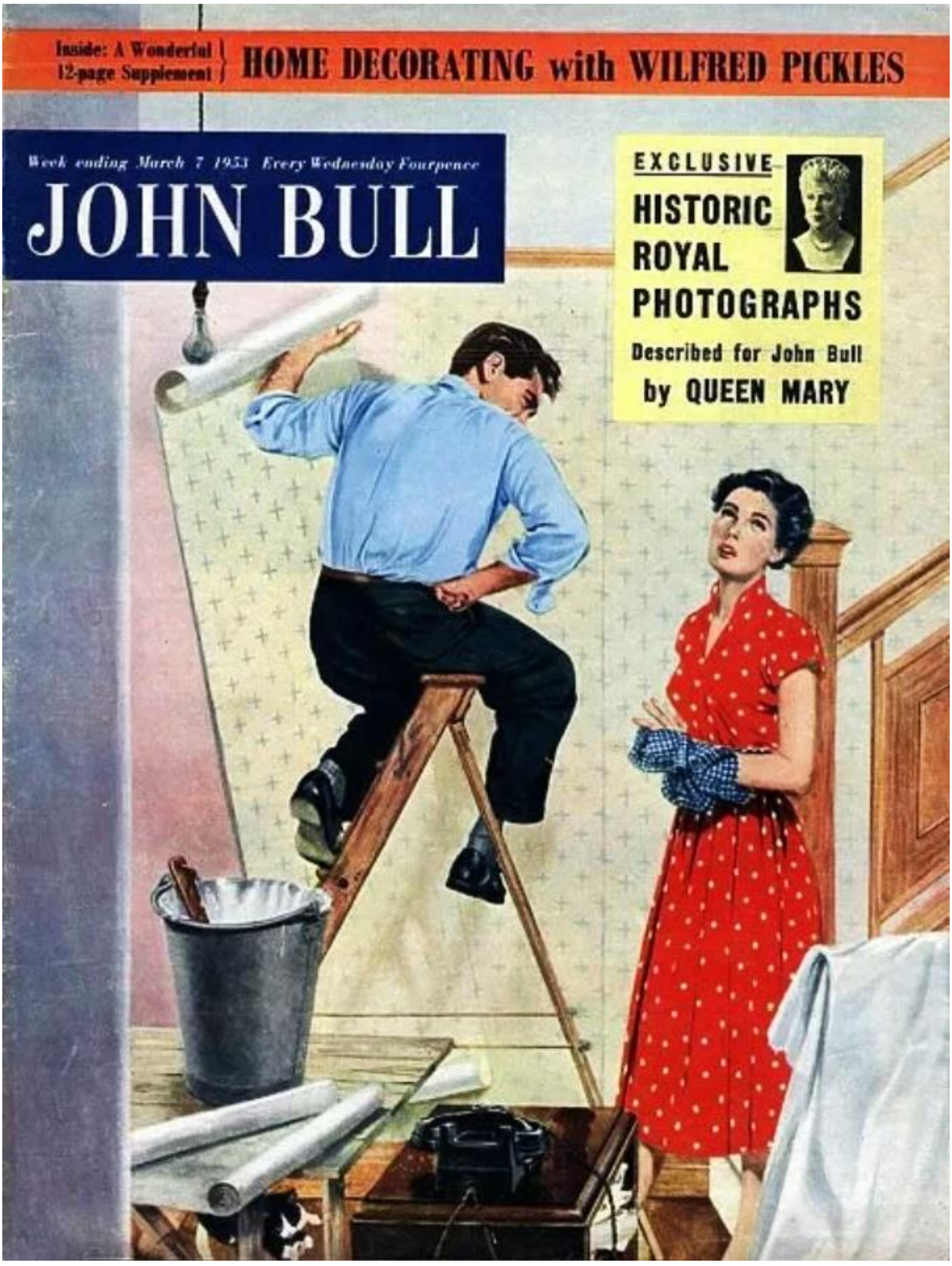
21 February 1953 (FORTUNE, 4 of 7); illustration below

I asked Michael why people were acting oddly towards me …



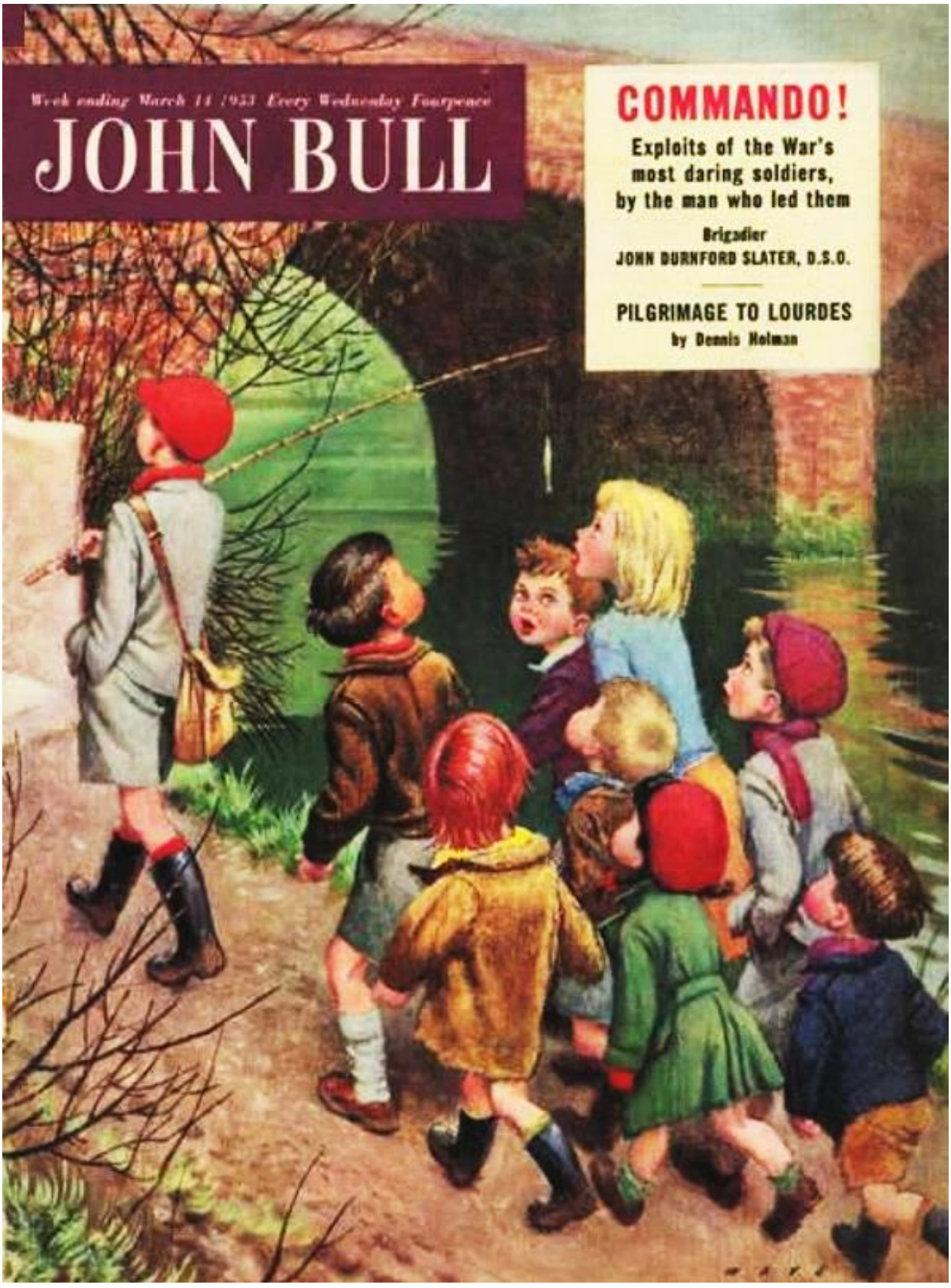
28 February 1953 (FORTUNE, 5 of 7); illustration below

I tried once again. "The name of the man," I said …



7 March 1953 (FORTUNE, 6 of 7); illustration below

I ripped out the phone wires and swung round at Vere …

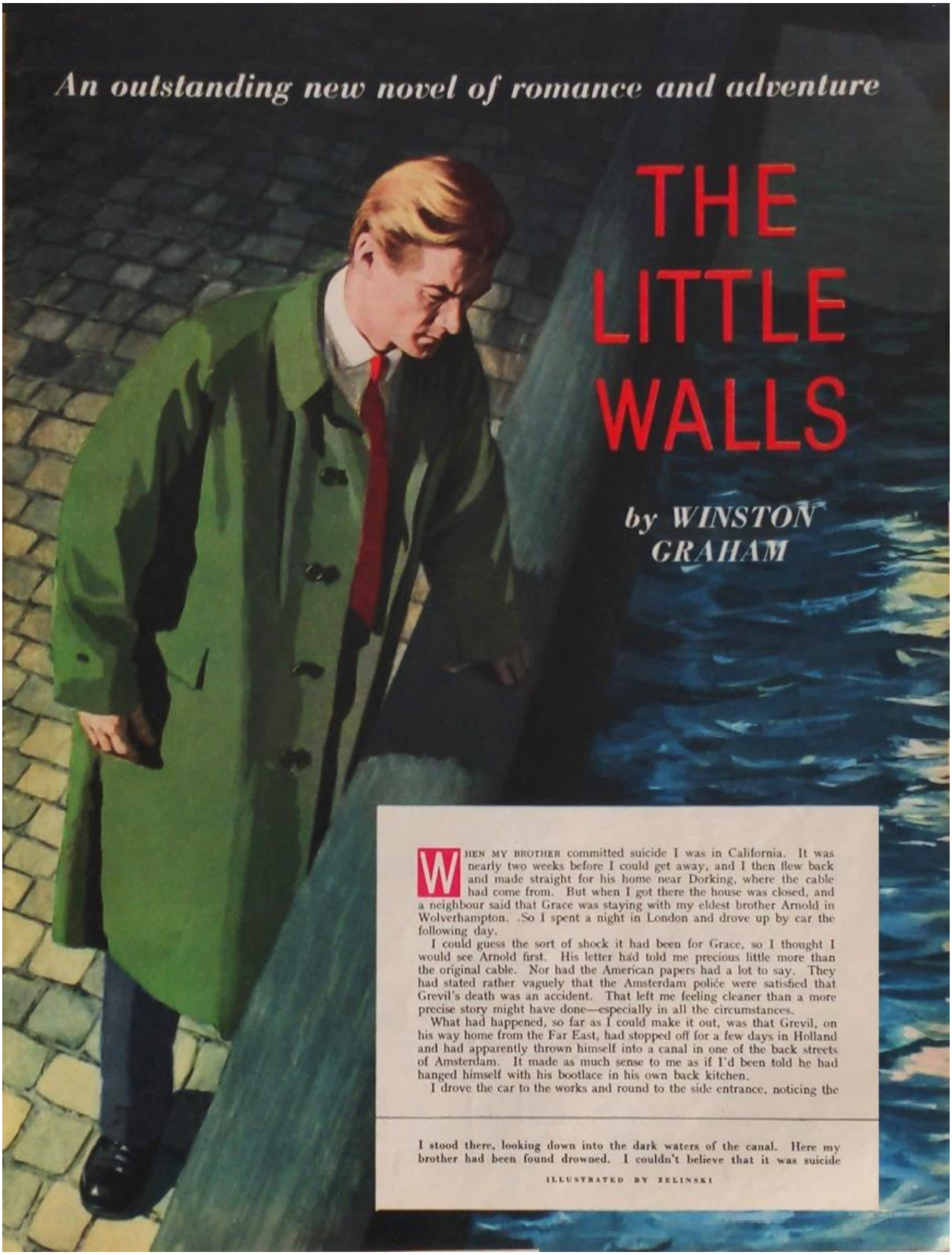


14 March 1953 (FORTUNE, 7 of 7); illustration below

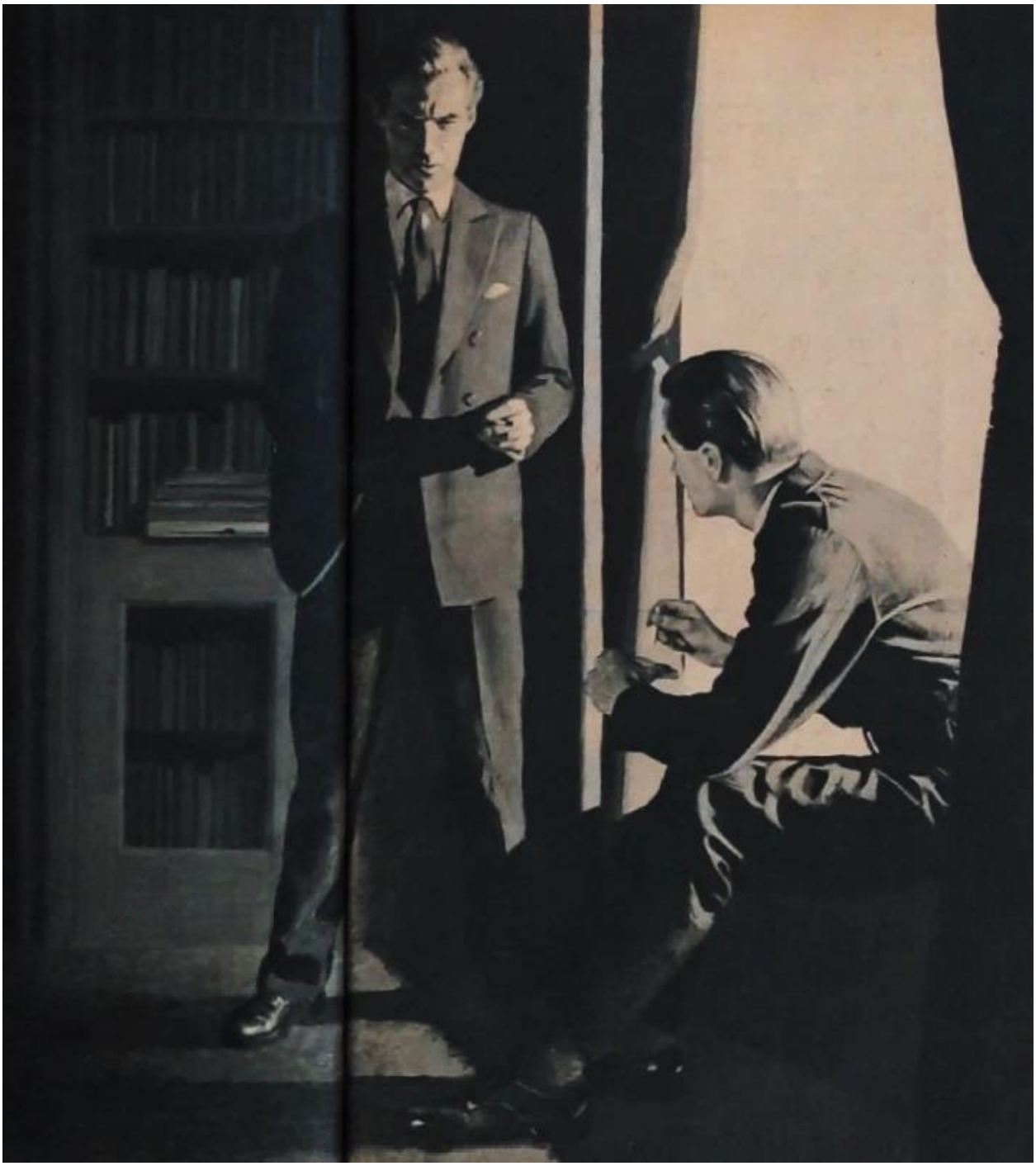
Sweating with fear, I gripped the stick and went in …

(iii) **THE LITTLE WALLS**

THE LITTLE WALLS appeared in *John Bull* in eight parts from 26 March (below) to 14 May 1955. The novel was published on 23 June.

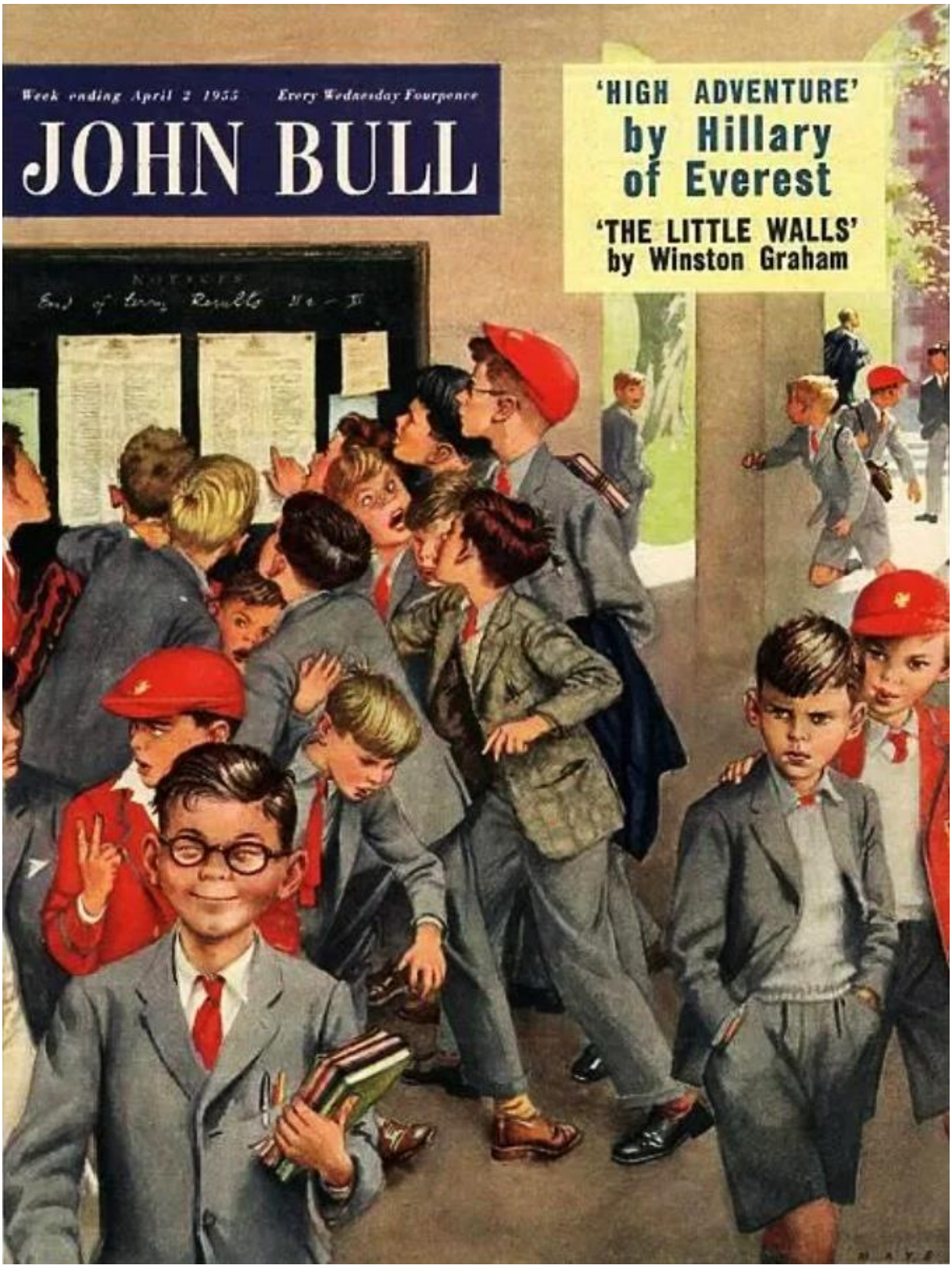


Part one, first page



"I've read about your brother's death. How can I help?"

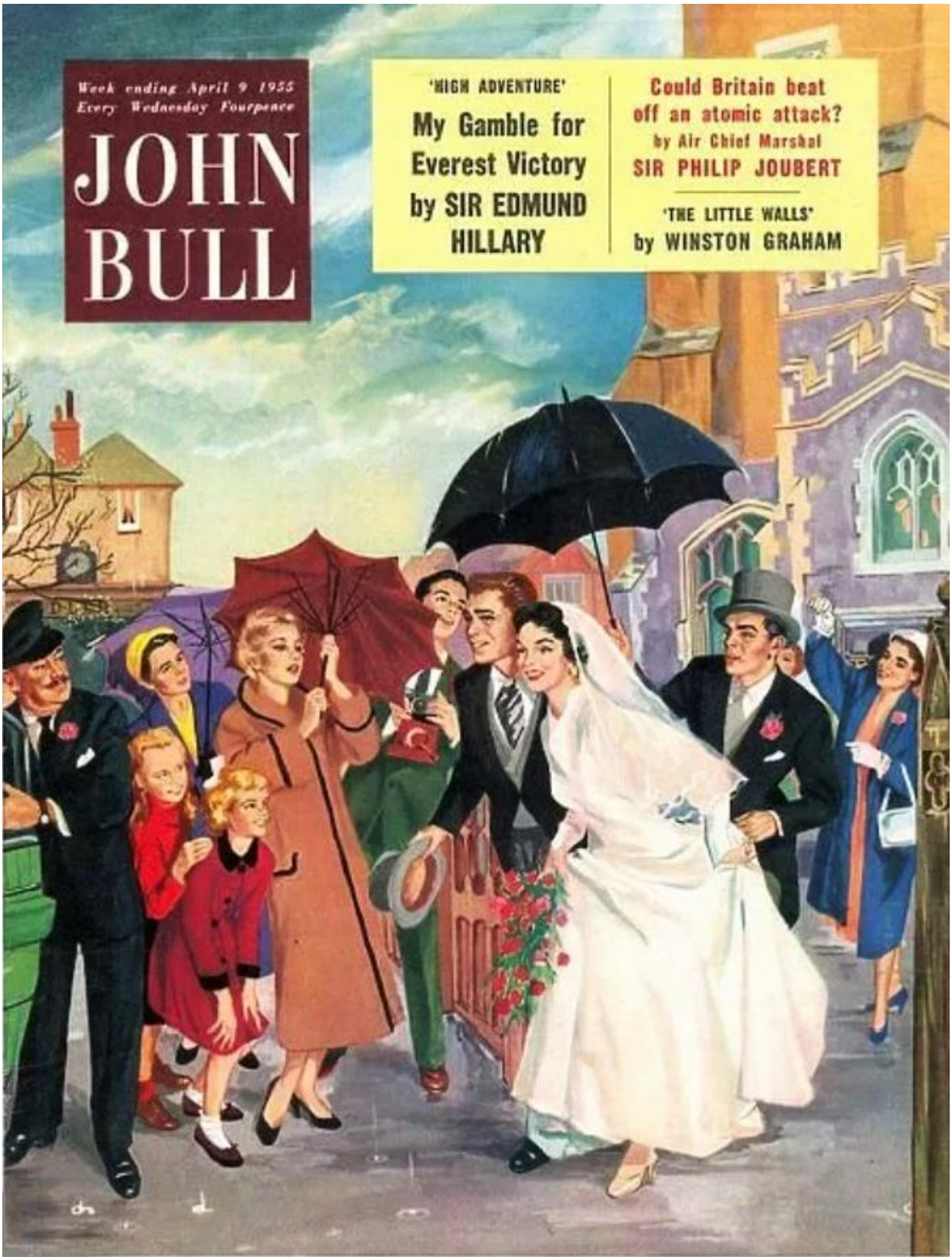
"Go to the police. Maybe they can tell you something. Not me."



2 April 1955 (LW, 2 of 8); illustrations below

I heard footsteps coming up the path …

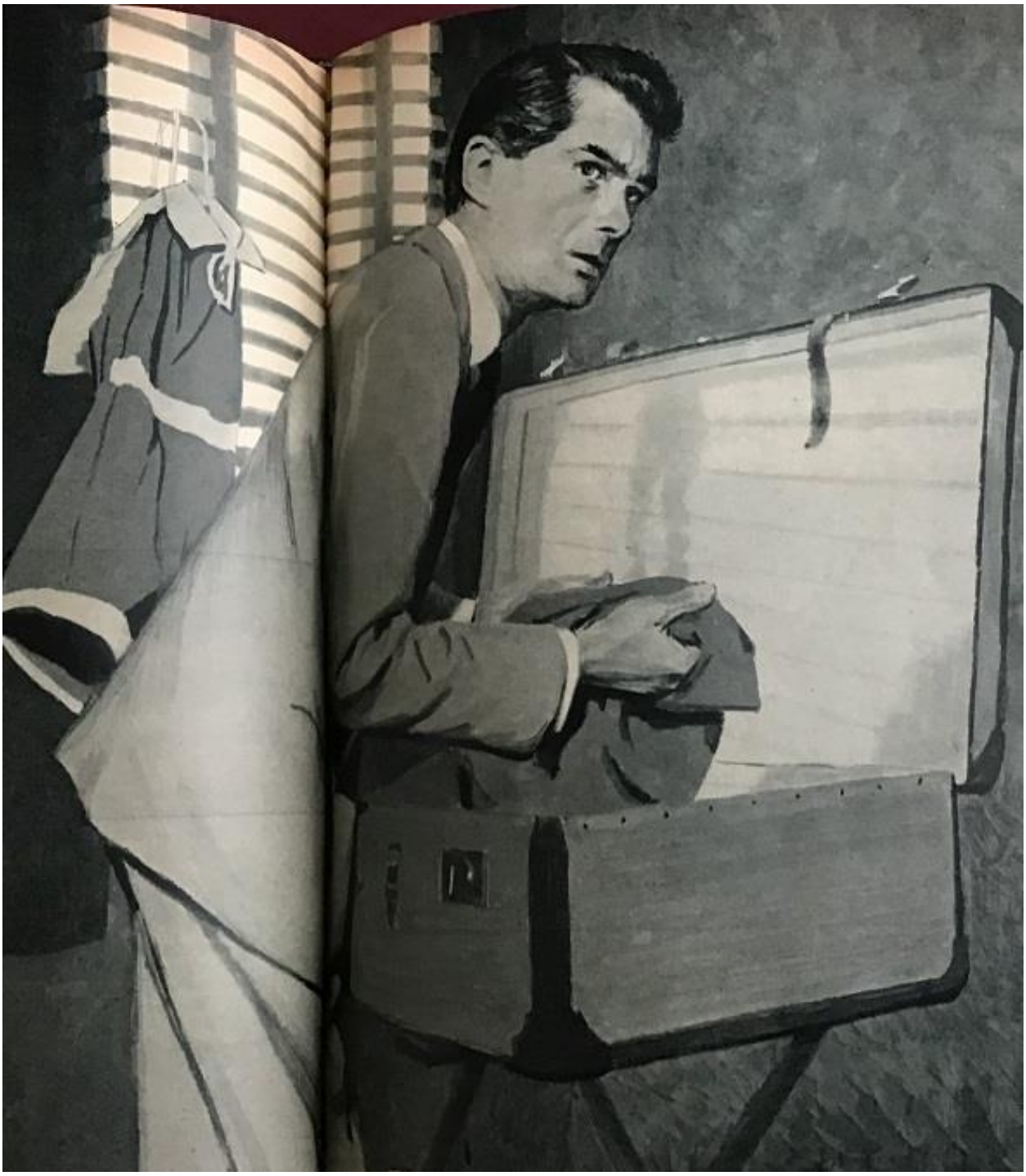
"Your wet shoes are dripping on my friend …"



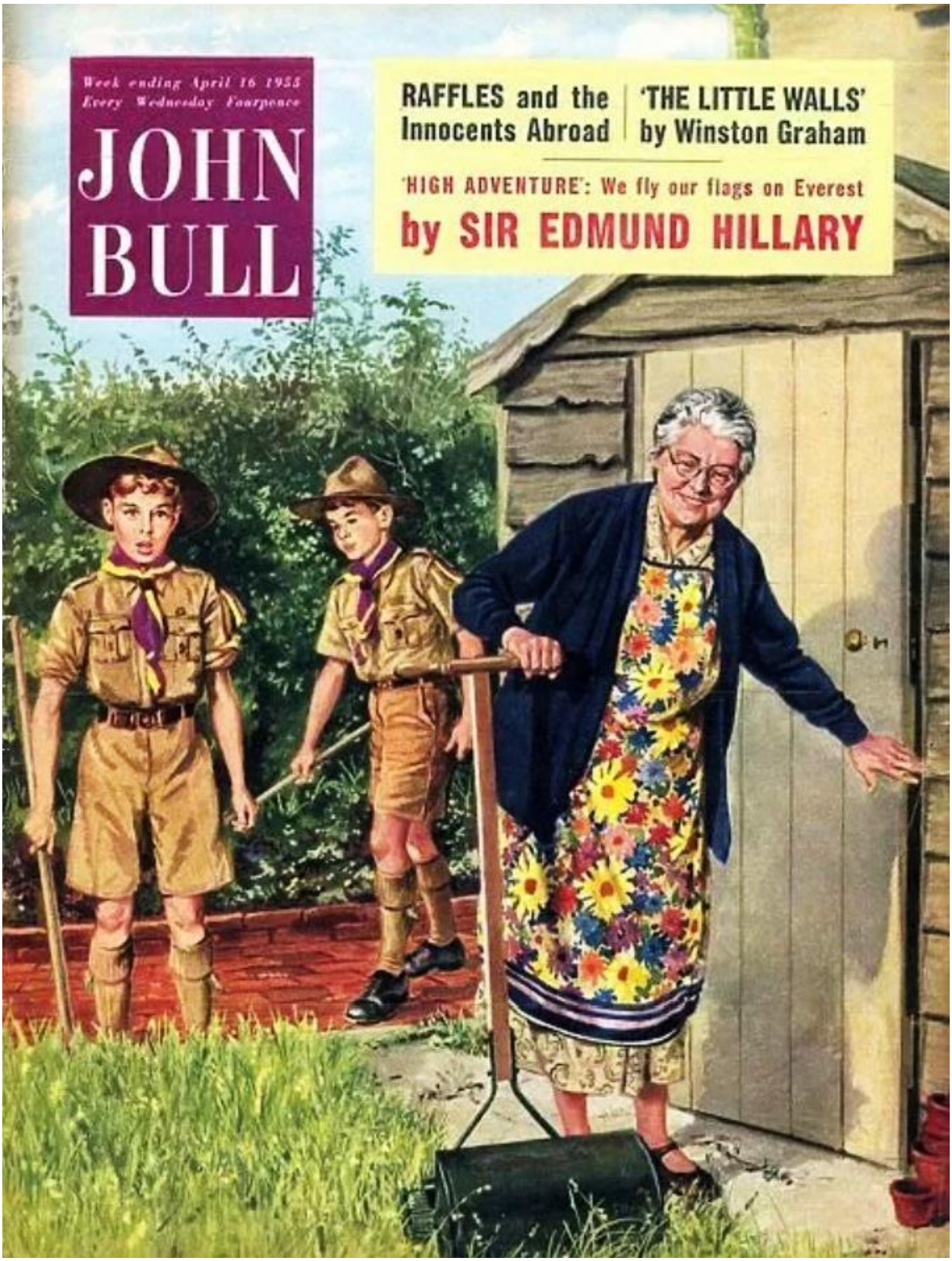
9 April 1955 (LW, 3 of 8); illustrations below

"May I offer you a word of advice? Don't stay too long."

I said: "Where is your husband now?"
She half turned to me: "Which one?"



I found her case and searched it quickly. I knew it was risky, but I had to force the pace …

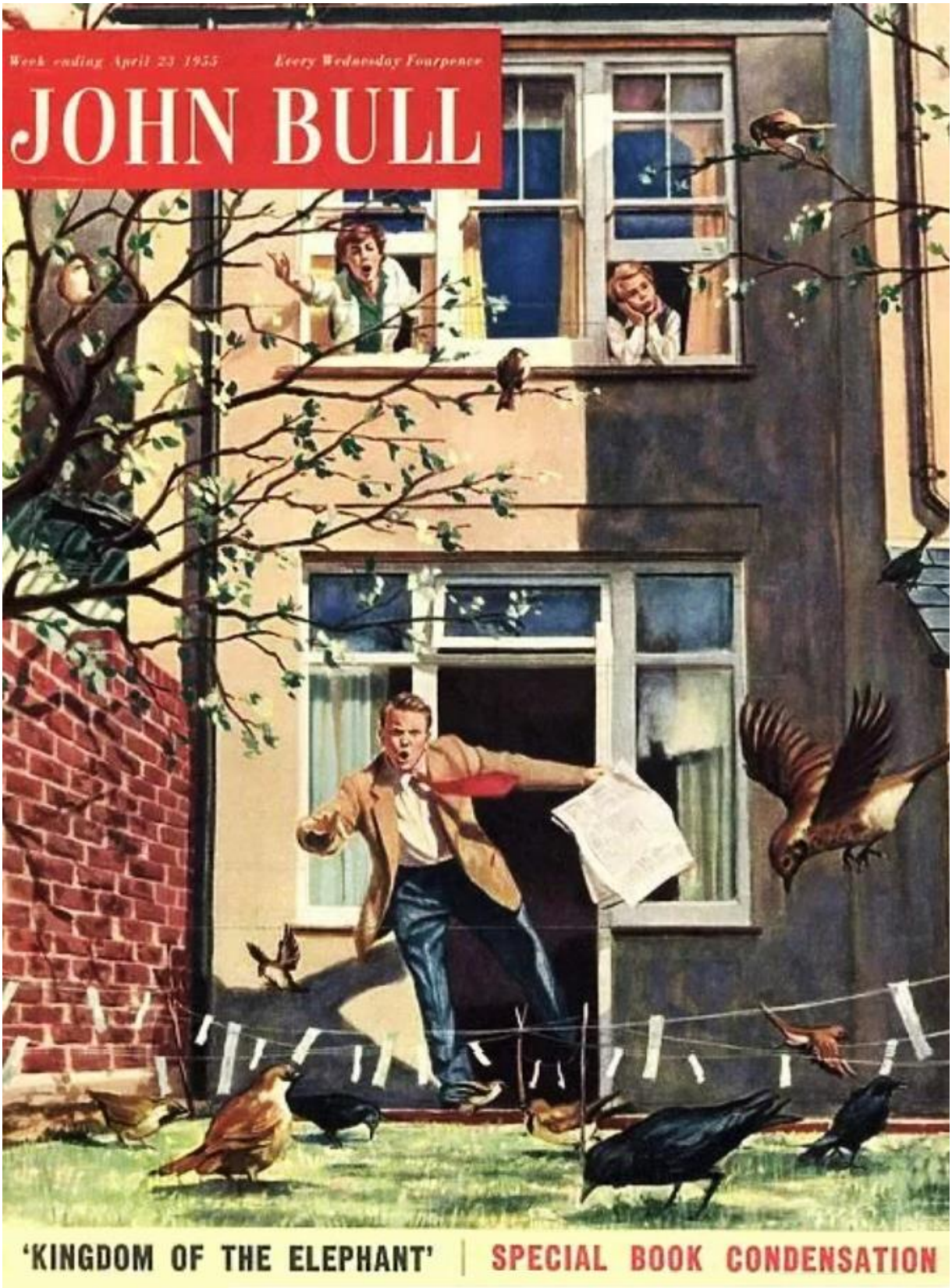


16 April 1955 (LW, 4 of 8); illustrations below

We settled ourselves on the springy turf, with the sea moving a thousand feet below us …

I turned to da Cossa. "That isn't your picture, is it?"

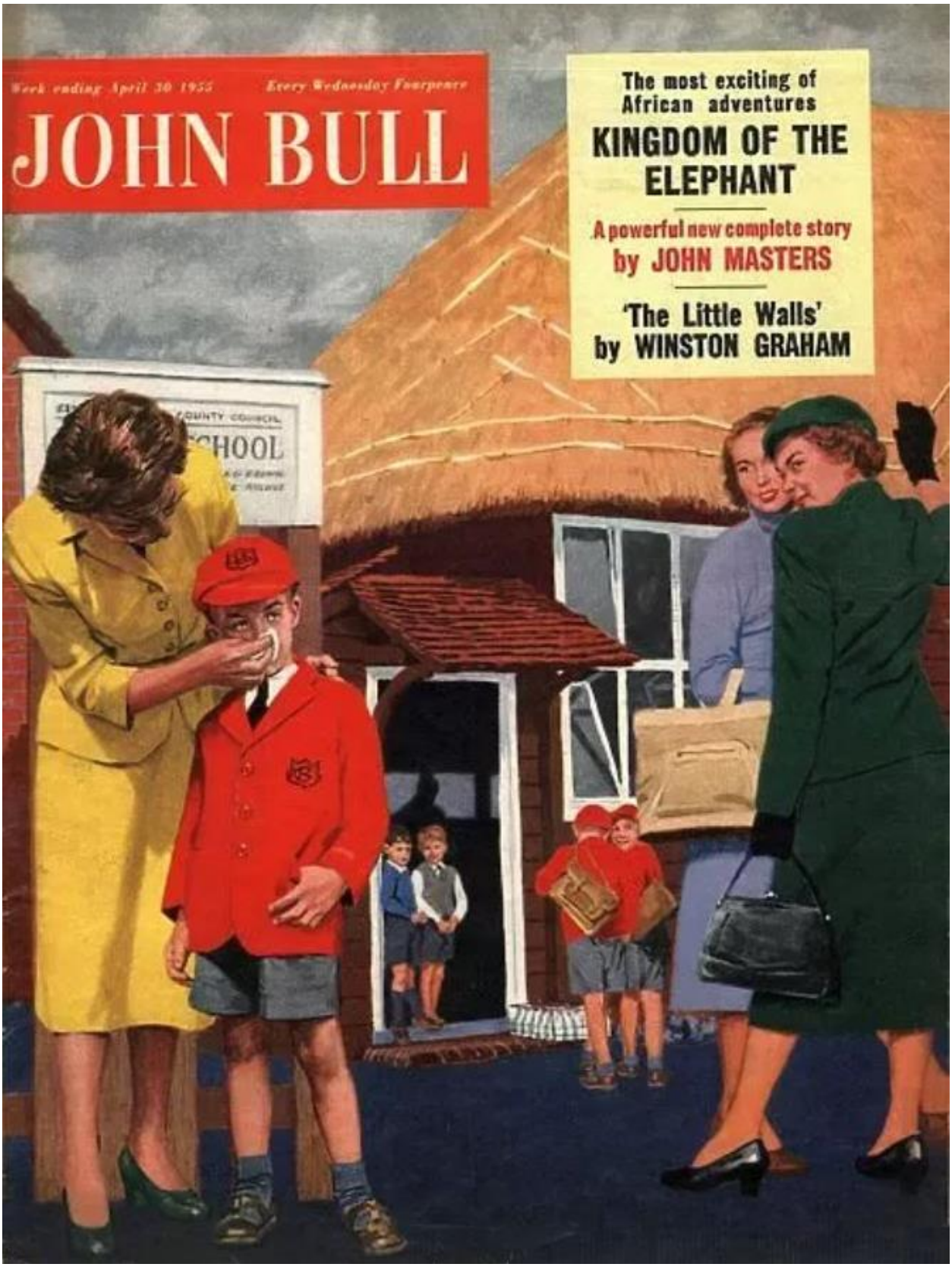
I introduced them. Leonie was quiet and cold.



23 April 1955 (5 of 8); illustrations below

She didn't make a fuss, but she didn't play back.

"What's the matter?" said Leonie. "You look pale."

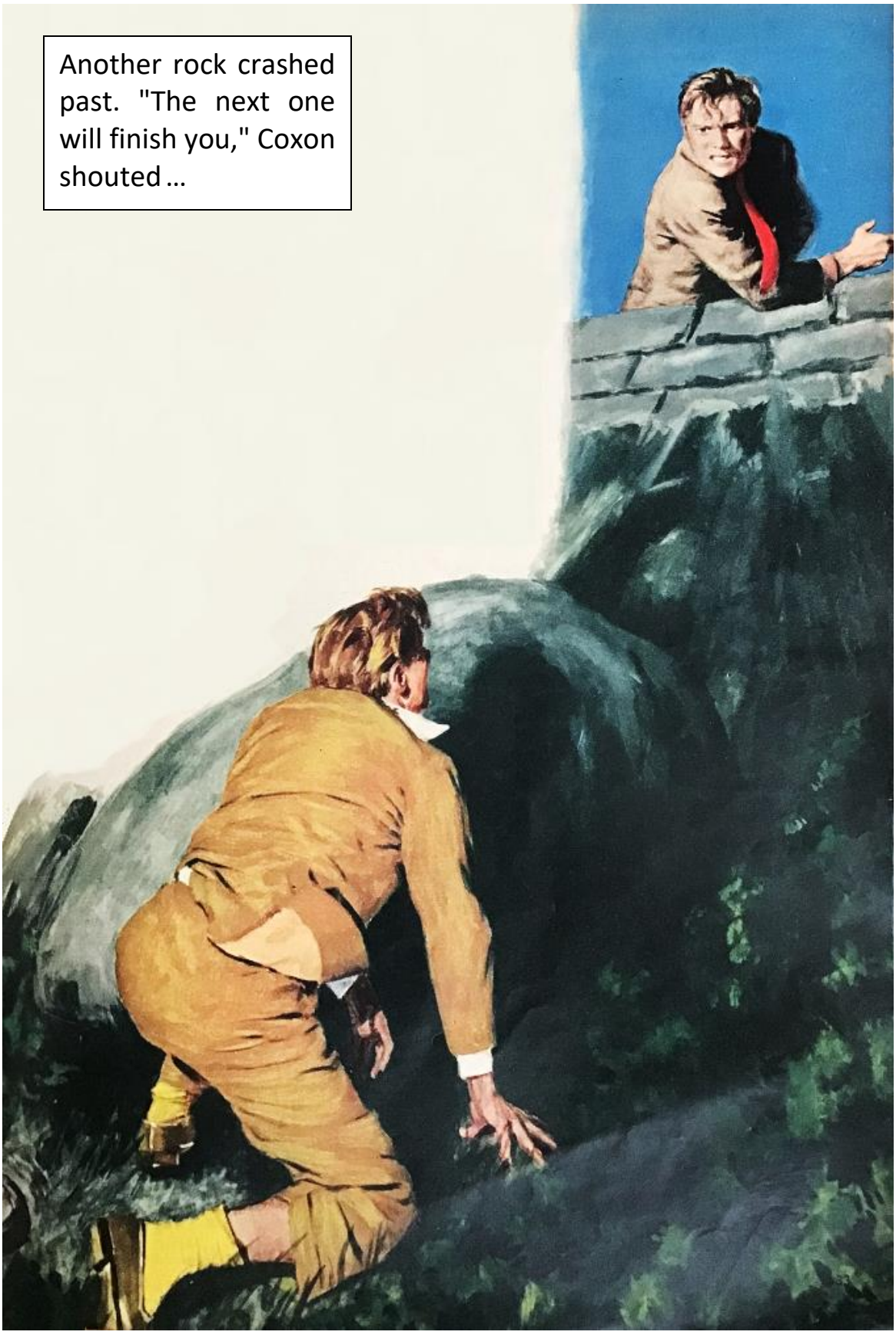


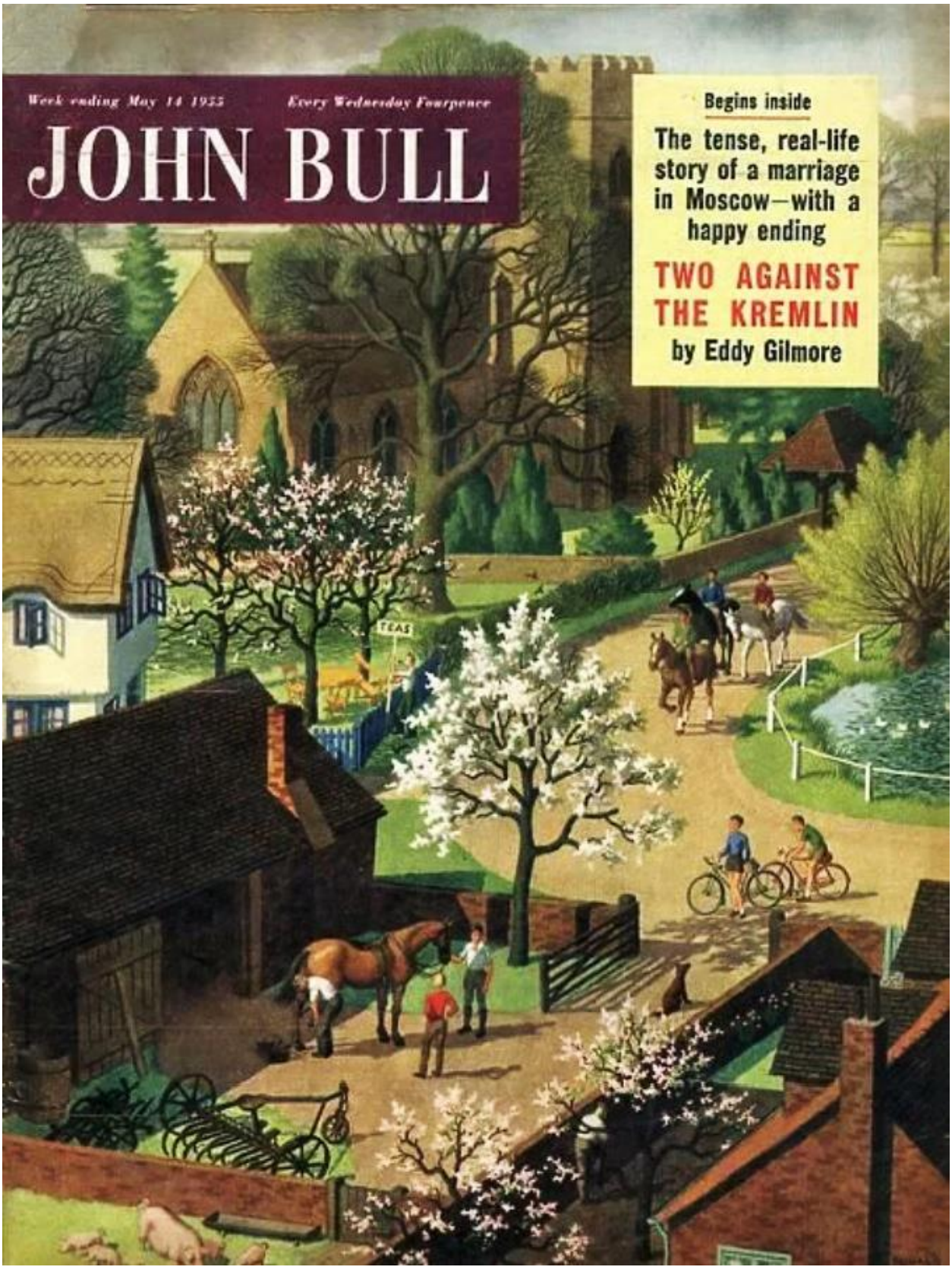
30 April 1955 (LW, 6 of 8); illustrations below

I looked up at her. "I'm going back to Holland. I'll leave Martin to look after you." Leonie paused, then said: "That'll be fun."

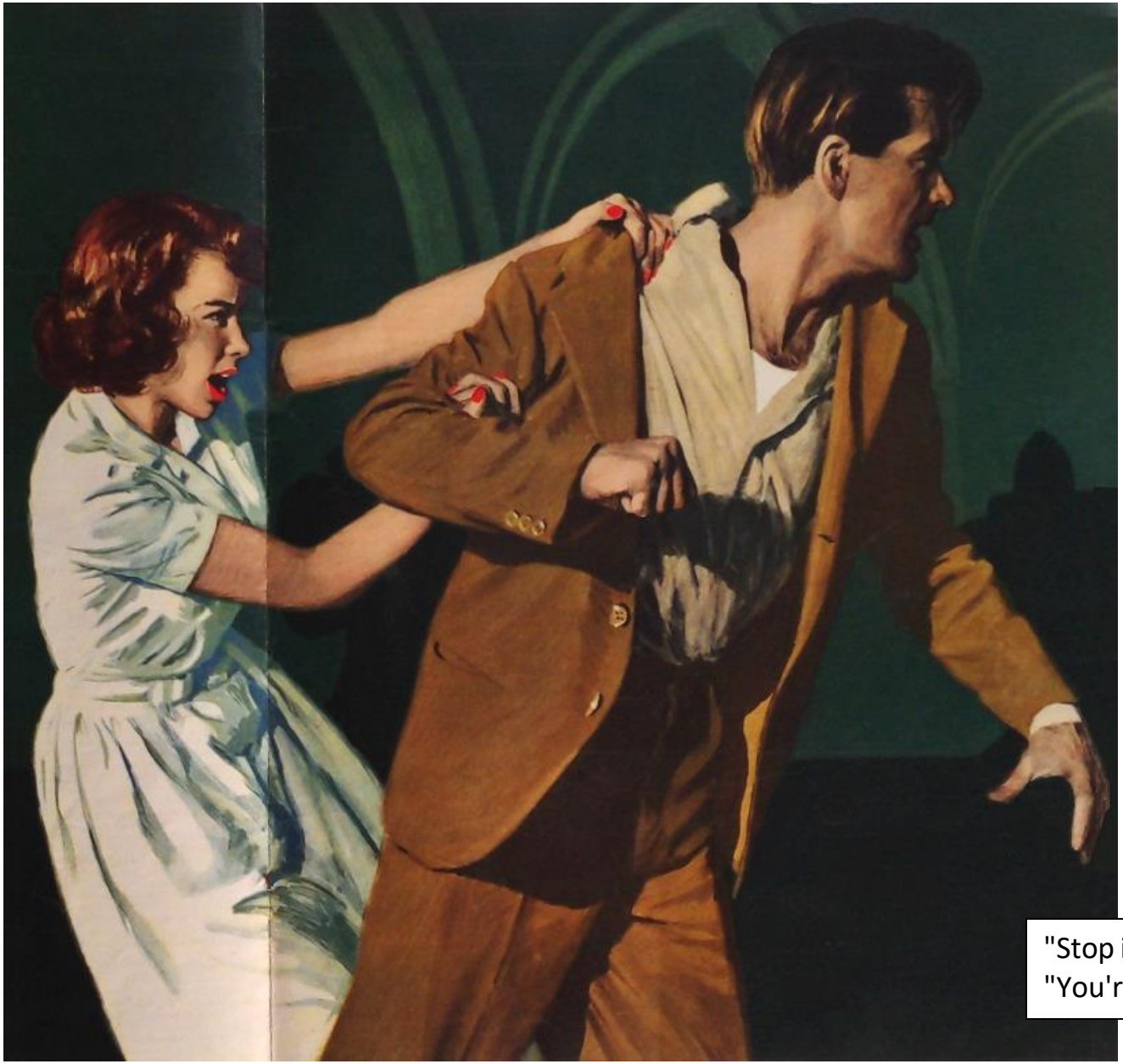
I lay there with my eyes closed, like a man asleep …

7 May 1955 (LW, 7 of 8); illustration below


Another rock crashed past. "The next one will finish you," Coxon shouted …

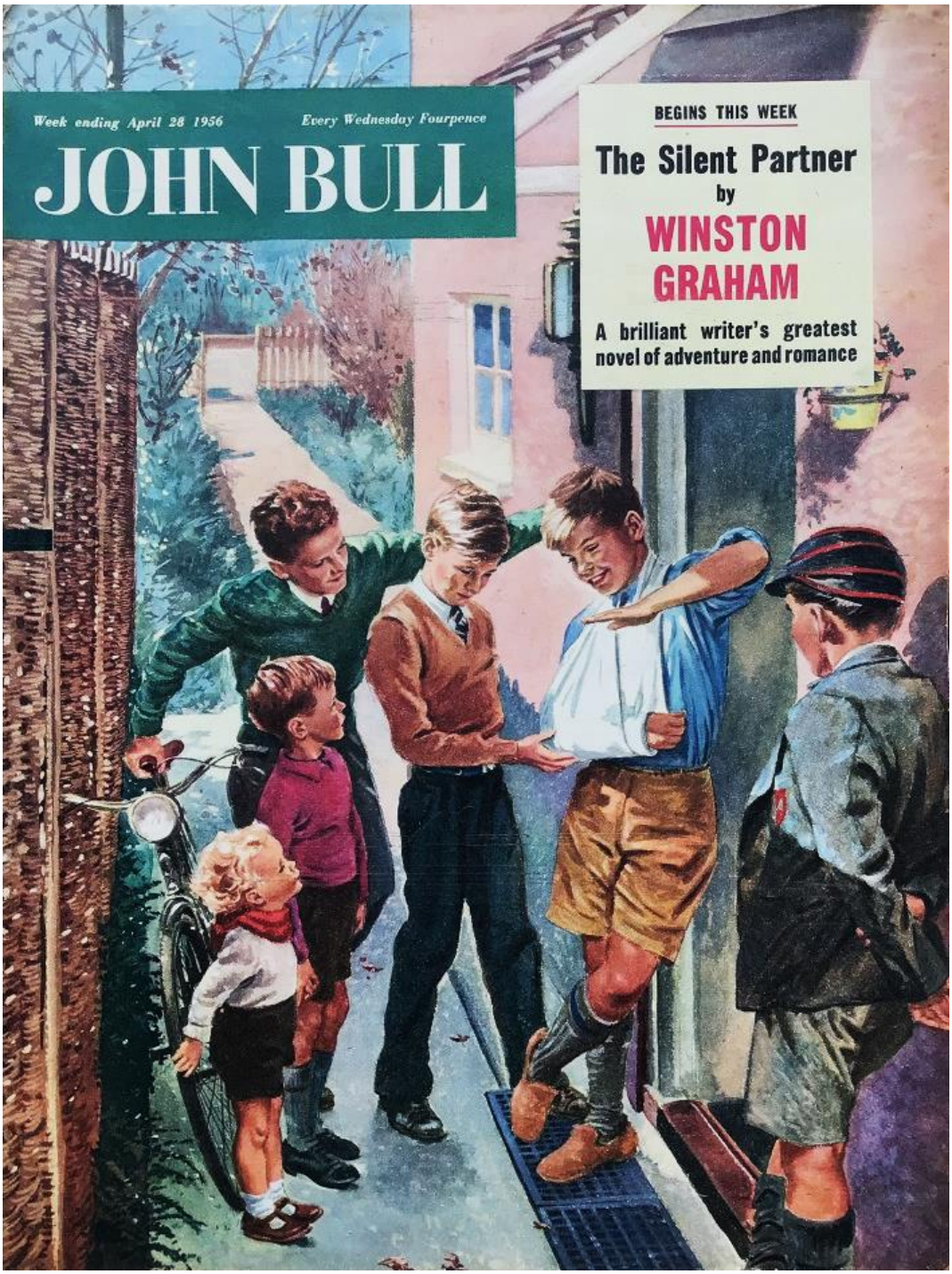


14 May 1955 (LW, 8 of 8); illustration below



"Stop it, Philip," she shouted.
"You're crazy."

(iv) **THE SLEEPING PARTNER**



THE SLEEPING PARTNER was serialised in *John Bull* as THE SILENT PARTNER in five parts from 28 April (above) to 26 May 1956. The novel was published on 28 June.

THE SILENT PARTNER

by **WINSTON GRAHAM**

ILLUSTRATED BY FANCETT

THE night Lynn left me I got home quite late but, it being July, there was still daylight left; the garage doors were open and I tapped my horn as I drove in. I knew I wouldn't be popular but I ran up the steps and pushed open the front door and walked in with my usual whistle. It was semi-dark in the house and no lights.

Lynn didn't answer and I thought she hadn't heard, so I whistled again and went into the drawing-room. There was no one there, but at the back now I could hear our bull terrier Kent barking a welcome.

I went through into the kitchen, switching on the lights, and found the electric oven cold and no evidence of dinner. The picture

And so I kissed her. . . . Perhaps I was a fool for feeling the way I did . . .

Pages 76 to 80: THE SILENT PARTNER, part one

Ray French had already seen us and he brought the girl over ...

"This is Mr. Granville. I asked him to come in for a moment or two."

5 May 1956 (SP, 2 of 5)

"I haven't seen much of Lynn for a long time," Hazel Boylon said. "She's had other fish to fry"

As she began to take out the paper, I turned to John. "I've got something to tell you that you won't very much like," I said.

Pages 80 to 83: THE SILENT PARTNER, part two

I went closer – and then started back with a gulp that choked me ...

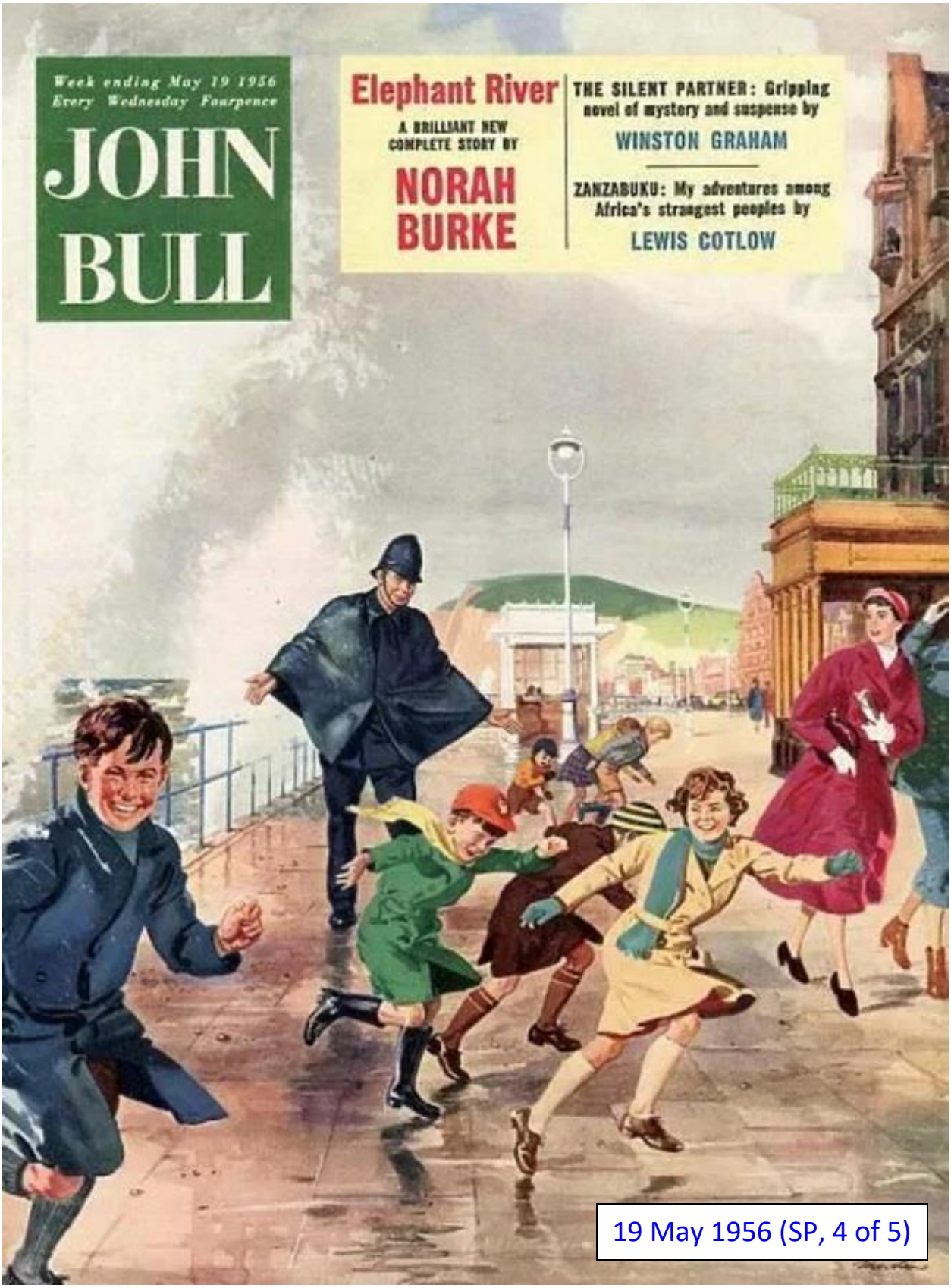
12 May 1956 (SP, 3 of 5)

Sergeant Booker wanter to see me alone. So Stella walked tactfully away …

Pages 84 to 87: THE SILENT PARTNER, part three

As the policeman climbed out of the window, I slithered across the roof – my one way of escape.

Ray came back with a card in his hand …

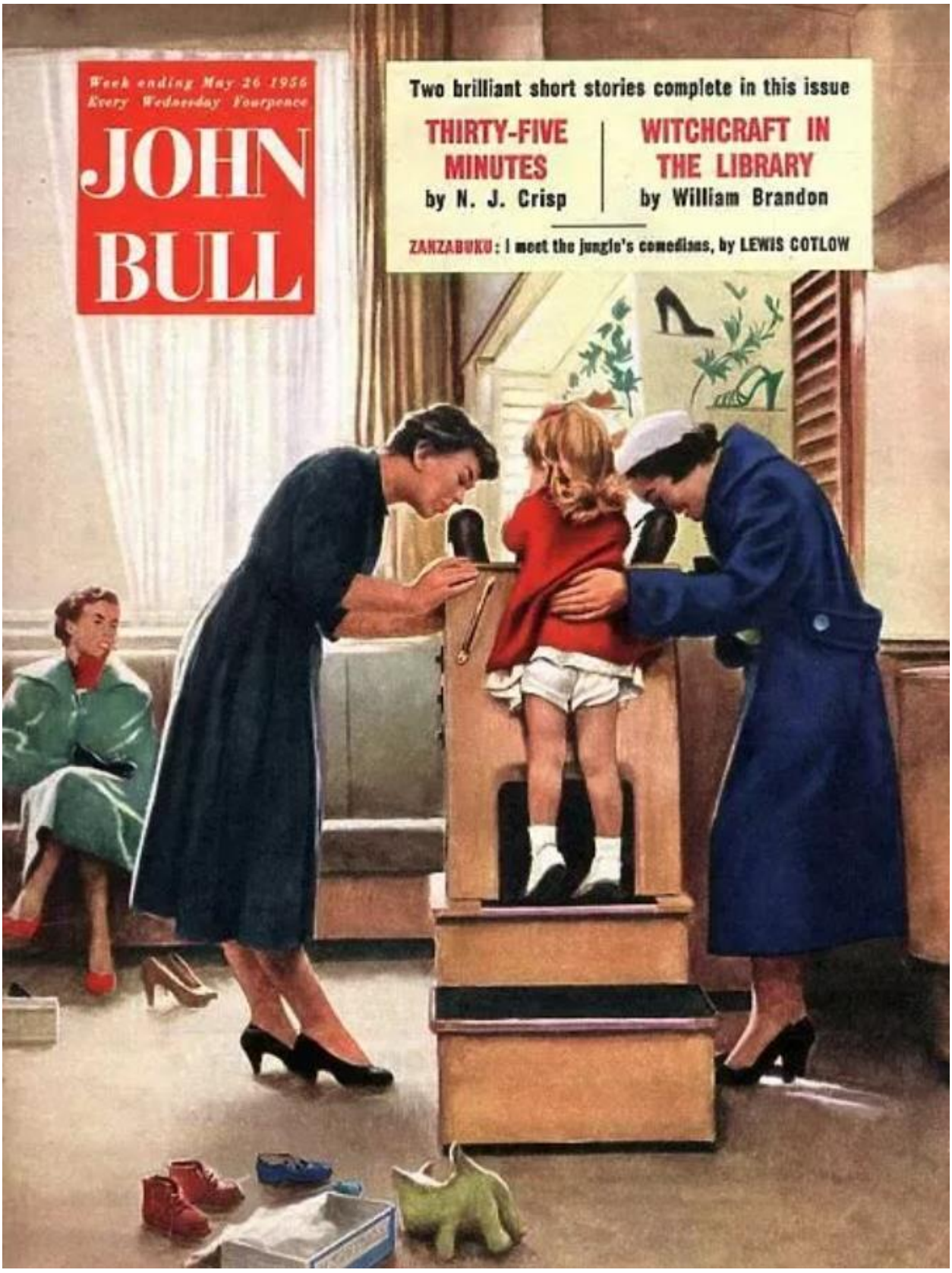


19 May 1956 (SP, 4 of 5)

"A lot may happen before we meet again," I said …

"Frank, when did you see Lynn last?" I asked. "I don't remember. Why?"

Pages 88 to 90: THE SILENT PARTNER, part four



26 May 1956 (SP, 5 of 5); illustrations below

Stella stood with trembling lips as I prepared to press the syringe home …

Something hit me hard across the eyes …

* * * * *

(v) **GREEK FIRE**

GREEK FIRE was serialised in *John Bull* in five parts from 2 November (above) to 30 November 1957. The novel was published in December.

This page and next: part one illustrations

"I suppose you have heard of my connection to George Lascou?"

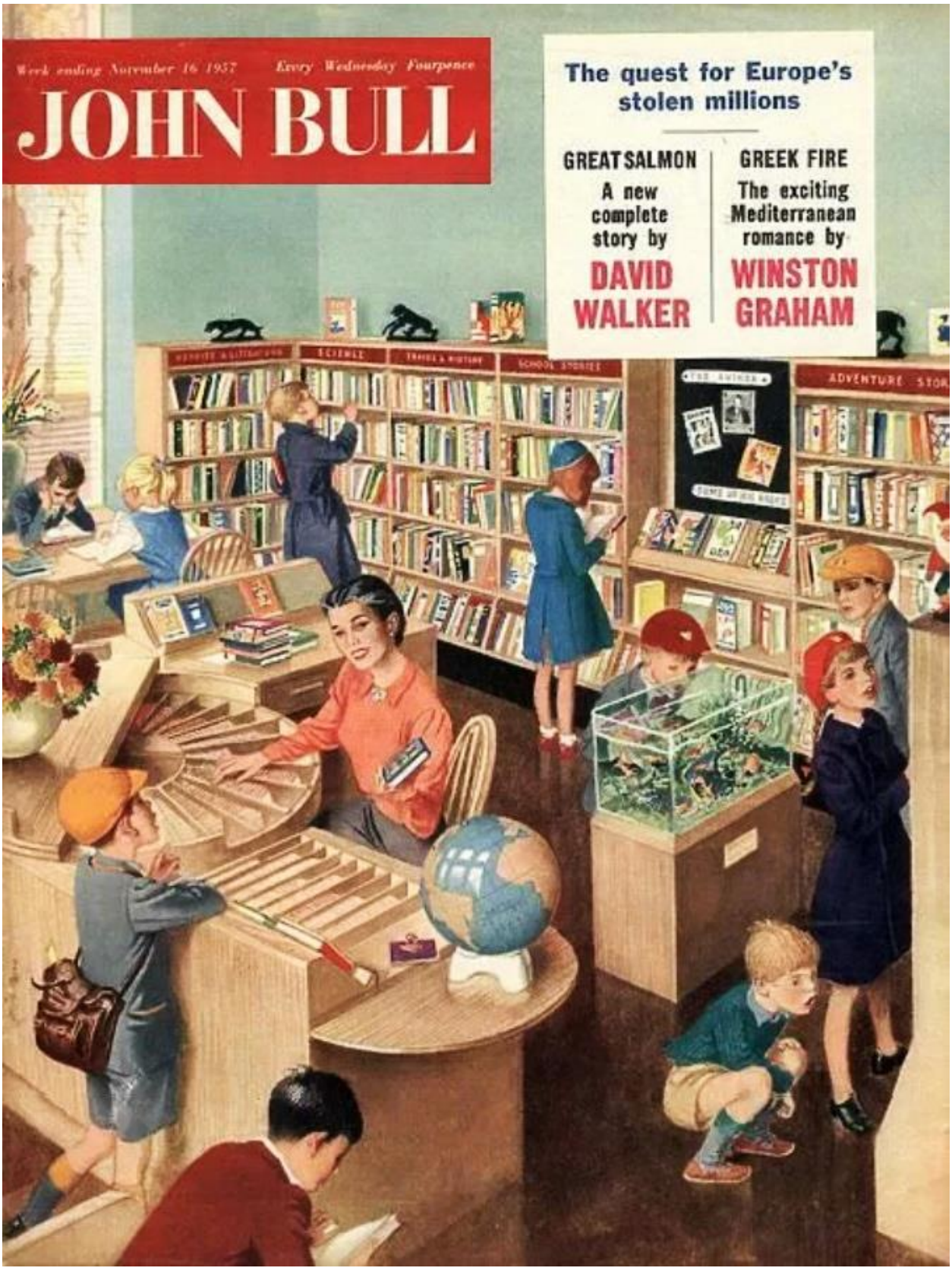
"The police have been trying to trace you. They want to ask you some questions."

This ad in the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 31 December 1957 shows *John Bull's* serialisation of GREEK FIRE running in Australia some two months behind the UK version

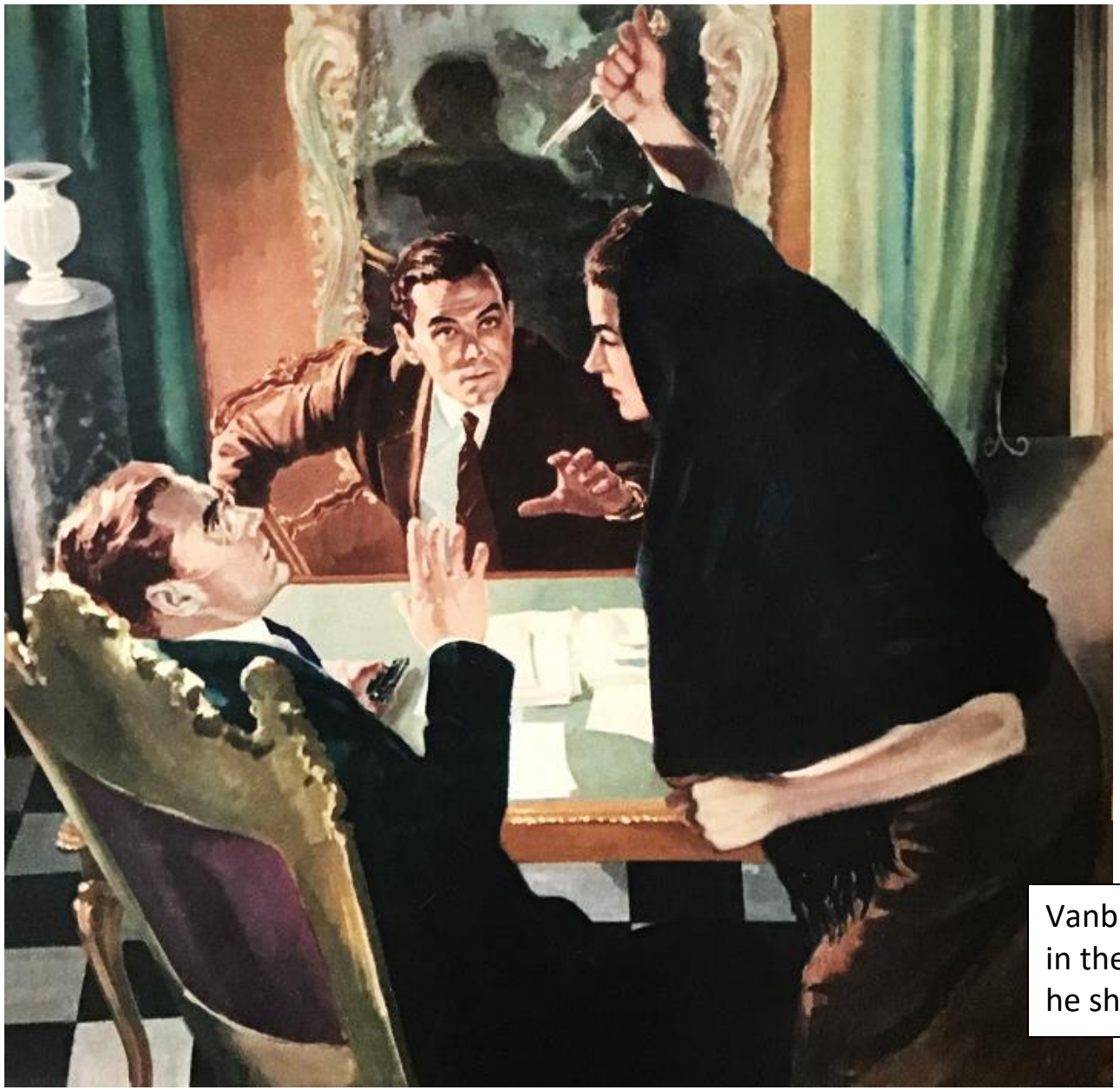
9 November 1957 (GF, 2 of 5); illustrations below

"Go, Peter. Leave Greece and never come back."

Philip jumped forward and clutched her arm, trying to snatch the envelope …



16 November 1957 (GF, 3 of 5); illustrations below



Vanbrugh saw a dagger glinting in the woman's hand. "Maria!" he shouted, starting up …

"Don't go in," the man said. "The police are there."

23 November 1957 (GF, 4 of 5); illustration below

In the wall was a panel about two feet square. Anya pressed a catch and the panel opened. "In!" she hissed.

30 November 1957 (GF, 5 of 5)

Illustration below

Vanburgh turned to run into the sea …

(2) WG's *John Bull* illustrators

(i) K(enneth) **J**(ohn) **PETTS** (1907-1992; below). Born in Southgate, London, but lived from 1952 in Bedford. Served in the RAF; a keen cricketer. Worked in advertising but also undertook much magazine work. Contributed to *John Bull* from 1947 (when one of his first commissions was AT THE CHALET LARTREC – see page two) to 1960; also illustrated NIGHT WITHOUT STARS (pp. 9-33).[2]

(ii) Walter WYLES (1925-2017; below). Born in Canterbury, Kent to a British father and Spanish mother. Suffered from polio as a child, which left him with a pronounced limp. After the war, began freelancing fashion illustrations for various trade magazines, but his exceptional ability at drawing women quickly led to many commissions for book-cover and magazine art, and a successful career as a commercial artist. In 1964, he became the first British artist to be commissioned to provide romantic illustrations for an American magazine (*Redbook*). Contributed to *John Bull* from 1954 to 1961; illustrated THE SUN-CHURCH WONDER (pp. 4 and 5)[3]

(iii) A. E. BATCHELOR. Contributed to *John Bull* from 1953 to 1961; illustrated THE MAN FROM THE MOOR (pp. 6-8).[4]

(iv) (Leonard) GEORGE DITTON (1910-1995). A left-leaning Londoner who lived from 1946 in Playford, Suffolk. Contributed to *John Bull* from 1949 to 1960; illustrated FORTUNE IS A WOMAN (pp. 34-49).[5]

(v) Harry (Harris Solomon) ZELINSKI (below, left). Born in Rochford, Essex in 1922. Enlisted in the RAF as a teenager and served as a pilot during the war. After demob, studied commercial art at Southend School of Art, then joined Carlton Artists in London, but soon turned freelance. Later lived in Sussex, Oxfordshire, Dorset and Exeter, which is where, in 2010, he died. Contributed to *John Bull* from 1949 to 1961; illustrated THE LITTLE WALLS (pp. 50-74).[6]

(vi) Gerry (Gerald Charles) FANCETT (1922-2019). London-born; contributed to *John Bull* from 1952 to 1960. Fancett painted at least a dozen front covers for the magazine. Comments made about one of them suggest that the excerpt shown here (above, right) is a self-portrait. Illustrated THE SILENT PARTNER (pp. 75-92) and GREEK FIRE (pp. 93-106).[7]

* * * * *

(3) WG and Odhams Press

Active from 1920 to 1968, ODHAMS PRESS was a London-based publisher originally of magazines but latterly of newspapers, books and children's comics also.

In 1834, William Odhams (1814-1899) left his Sherborne, Dorset home for London, where he worked initially for *The Morning Post*. In 1847, he went into partnership with William Biggar in Beaufort Buildings, Savoy and in the 1870s launched the jobbing printer and newspaper publishing concern WILLIAM ODHAMS, which Odhams sold to his sons John and William in 1892. The business, then a small firm in Hart Street employing about twenty people, became known as ODHAMS BROS.

Julius Elias (Viscount Southwood; 1873-1946; image below), who left school at thirteen to start as an Odhams office boy, worked his way up to become managing director and eventually chairman of the firm, which had become ODHAMS LIMITED in 1898 then, following the acquisition of *John Bull* in 1920 took the name ODHAMS PRESS LTD. That same year, the company also launched *Ideal Home* and acquired equestrian magazine *Horse & Hound* – both titles extant to this day. In 1937 Odhams founded the UK's first colour weekly magazine, *Woman* (also still current), for which it set up and operated a dedicated high-speed print works.

In 1930 (by which point it was already publishing the *Sunday People*), Odhams acquired a 51% share in the *Daily Herald* (then the official organ of the Trades Union Congress) and within three years, thanks to vigorous promotion, had turned it into the world's best-selling daily, with certified net sales of two million. This accomplishment set off a circulation war with more conservative London papers such as the *Daily Express* which led eventually, in 1964, to the *Herald's* demise.

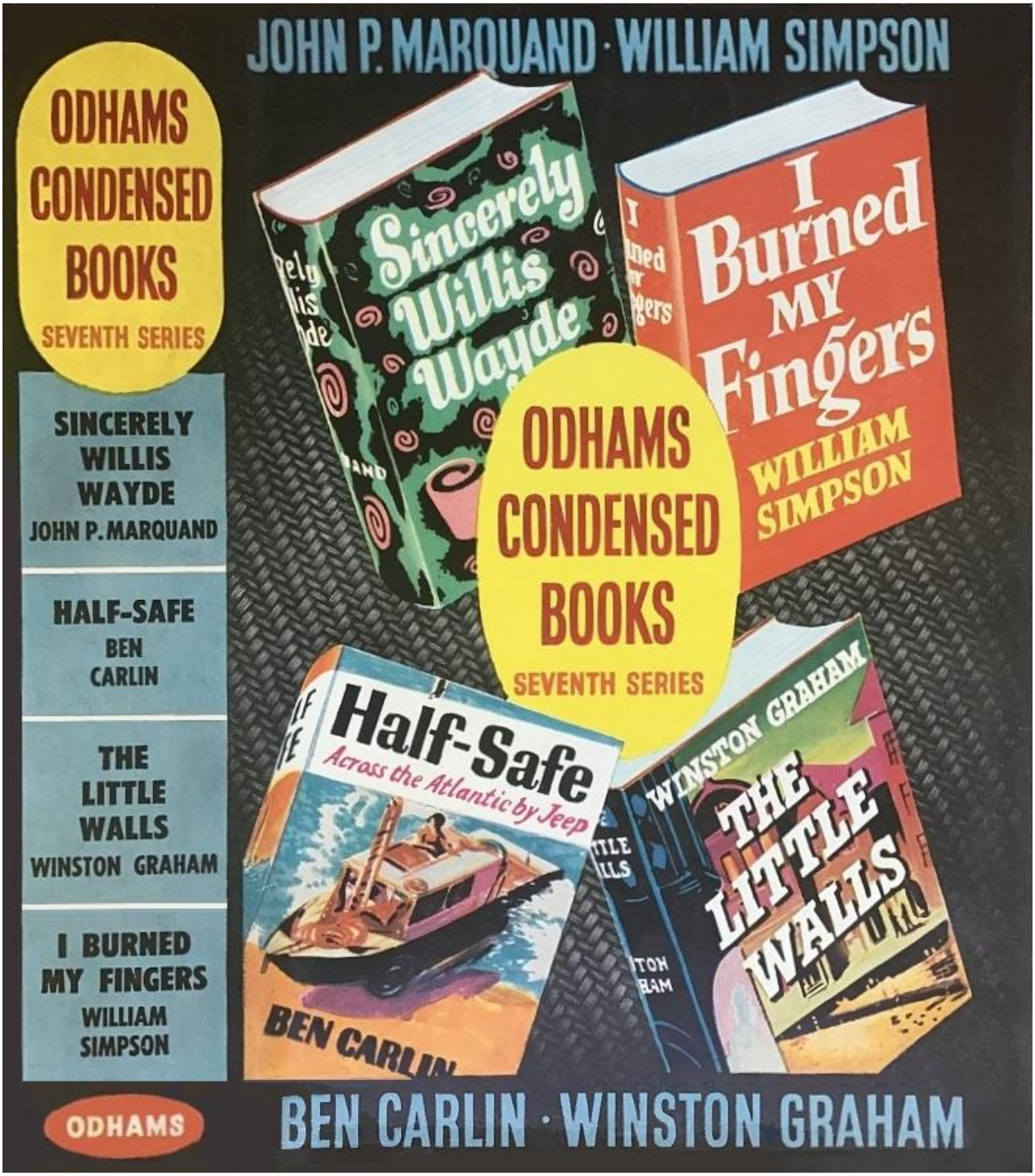
By the time it was acquired by Odhams in 1920, *John Bull* already had a chequered hundred-year publishing history behind it. In 1946 Odhams Press relaunched the jaded title in eye-catching covers drawn by some of Britain's

finest illustrators encapsulating the spirit of post-war Britain. During this period, the magazine featured stories by major British authors such as H. E. Bates, Nicholas Monsarrat, N. J. Crisp, J. B. Priestley, C. S. Forester, Agatha Christie and **Winston Graham** (see page one). Between 1949 and 1957 *John Bull* also **serialised five of WG's novels** (see pages nine to 106).

Julius Elias (Viscount Southwood) in 1934

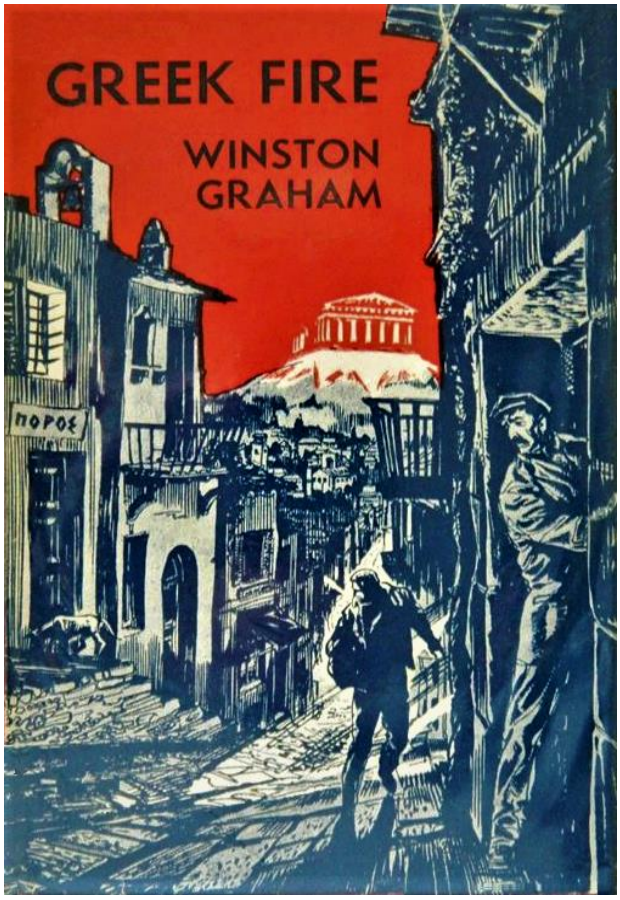
During its post-war iteration, *John Bull* incorporated other magazines such as *Illustrated* (1958) and *Passing Show* and *Everybody's Weekly* (1959). However,

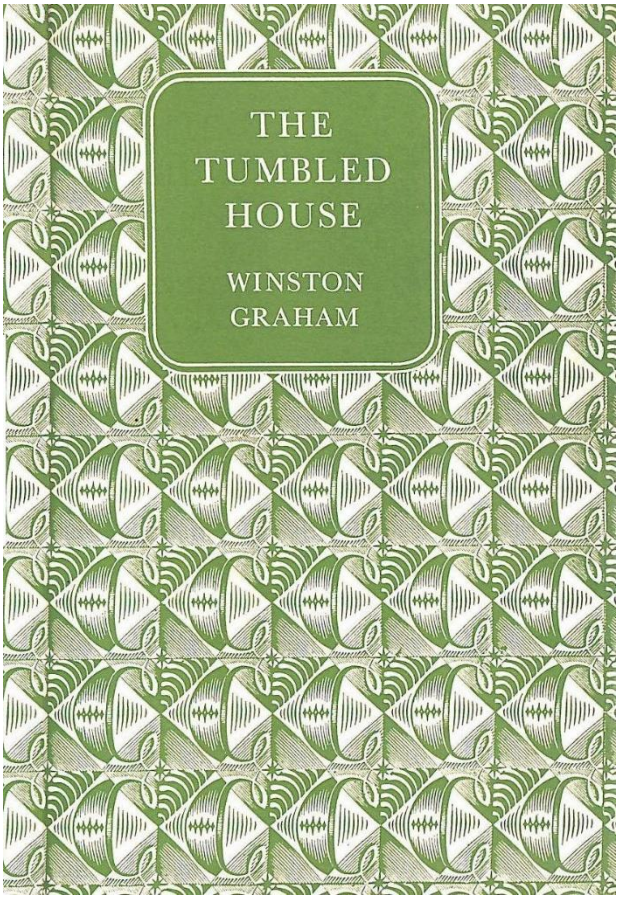
in 1960, following a sharp drop in circulation, the magazine was renamed *Today, the New John Bull* and attempted to appeal to a younger readership by carrying features on aspects of youth culture. Despite this, in 1964, with advertising revenue and a circulation of around 700,000 failing to meet costs, the title again ceased publication, this time for good.



Having previously focused on public domain fiction and general interest non-fiction texts, Odhams began in the late 1940s to broaden its book publishing range, producing such works as *My Early Life* plus three other titles by Winston Churchill in 1947, Rupert Gunnis's *Dictionary of British Sculptors 1660-1851* in 1953, *Into the Water Barrier* by Donald Campbell in 1955, Anthony Richardson's *No Place to Lay My Head* in 1957 and, between 1955 and 1958, seventeen volumes of *Odhams Condensed Books*, each featuring four abridged novels. The seventh (see above, circa 1956) included **WG's *The Little Walls***. Cut from 23 chapters down to eleven, it was the first of his novels to be so presented (with *The Sleeping Partner*, *Marnie*, *The Walking Stick* and *Stephanie* all subsequently condensed by Reader's Digest).[8]

Through the fifties and sixties, Odhams also ran the Popular and Companion Book Clubs. In 1959, the Popular published **the first UK book club edition of any WG novel** – *Greek Fire* – with its stable-mate producing the second – *The Tumbled House* – a years later. Here are both:





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Club Edition 4/3

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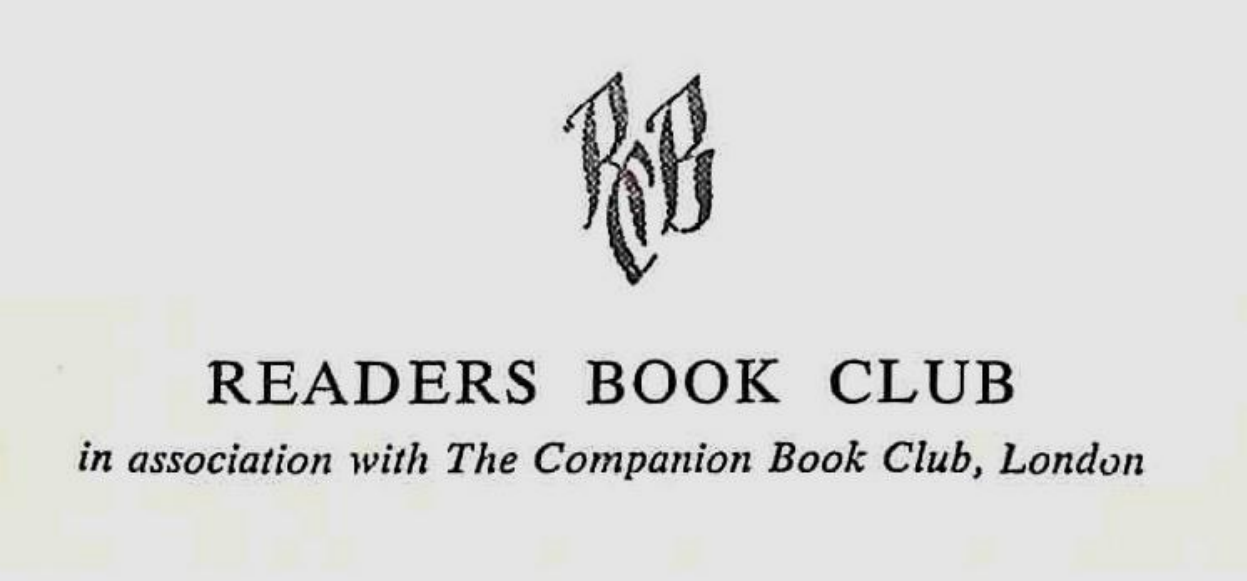
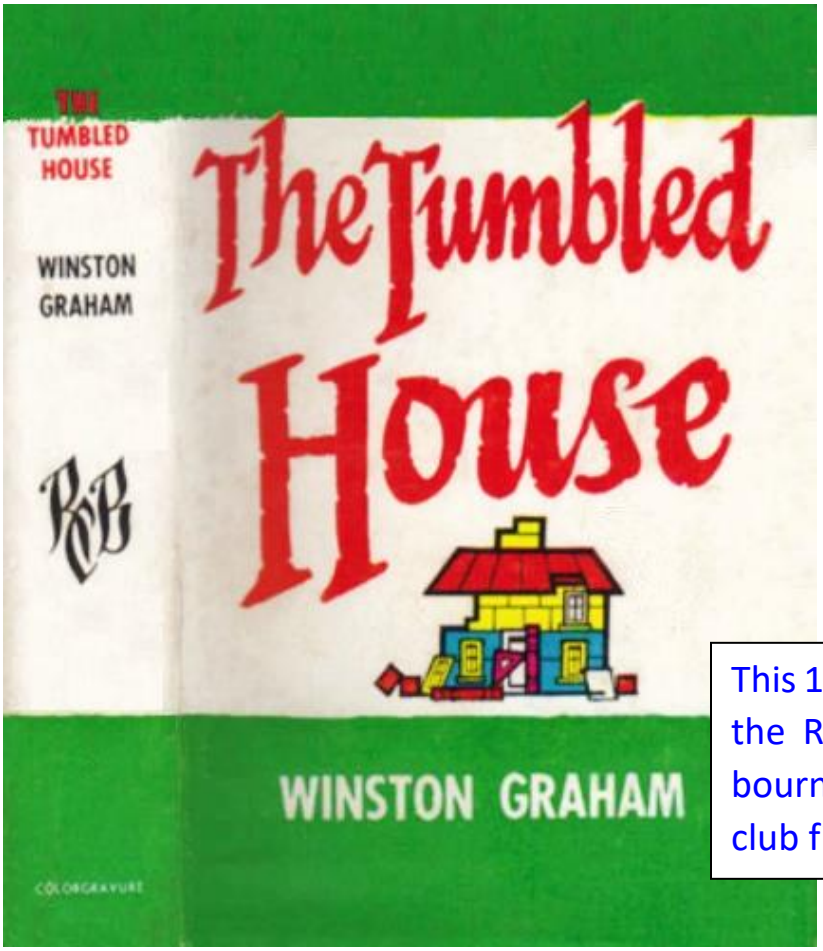
'PICTUREGOER' readers JOIN HERE! ... COUNTY P.A.P.8/25/10/58

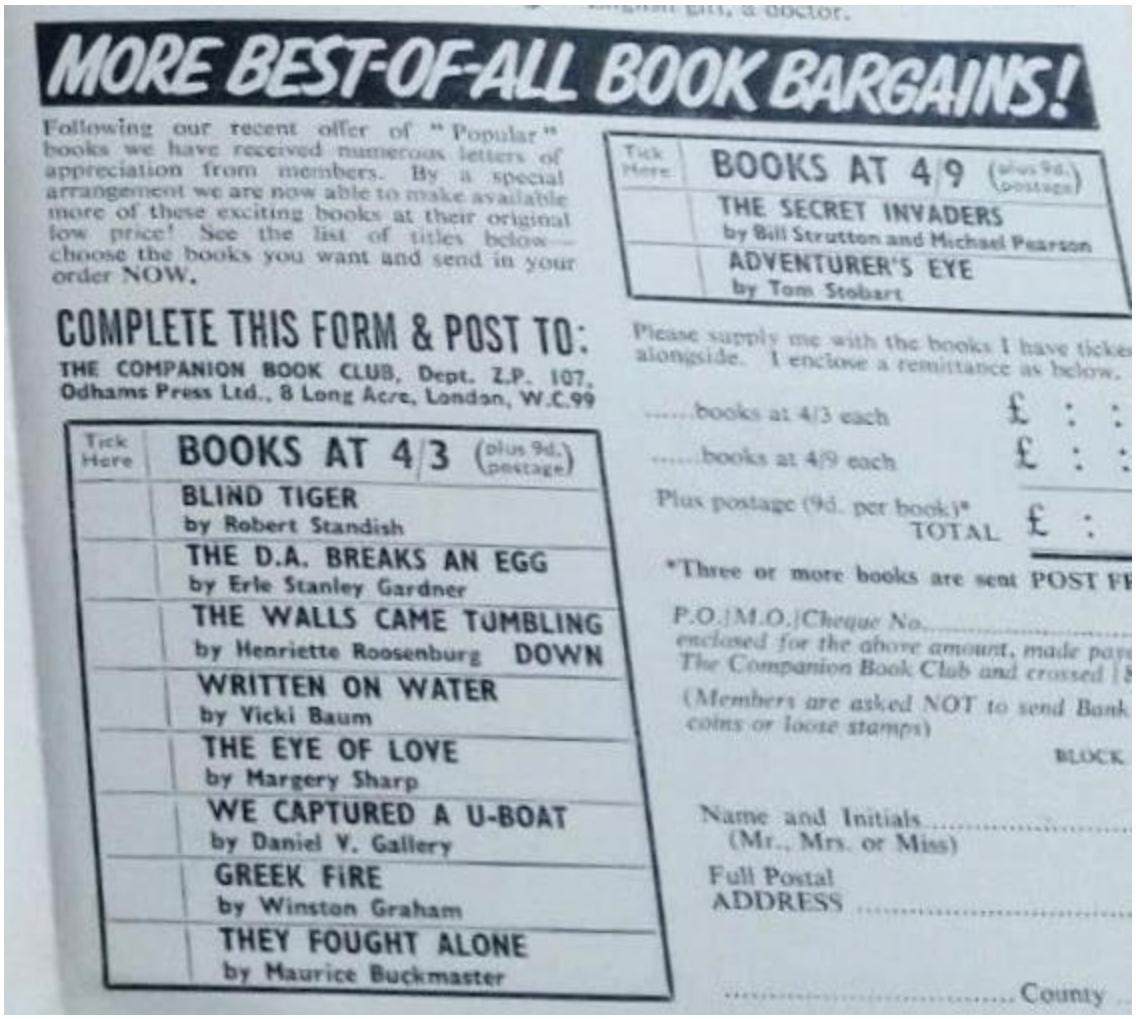
Ads like this one from *Picturegoer*, 23 October 1958 reveal that the Popular Book Club edition of *Greek Fire* was published in **February 1959**[9] and the Companion Club's *Tumbled House* in **December 1960**.

Odhams' UK Companion Book Club volumes were also sold in Australia via the *Herald-Sun* Readers Book Club:





This 1961 *Tumbled House* from the Readers Book Club, Melbourne marked another book club first for its author.



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	GREEK FIRE by Winston Graham
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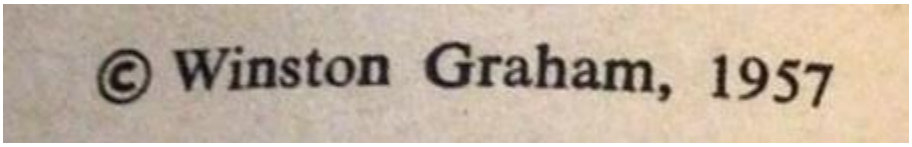
This excerpt from a Companion Book Club newsletter dated March 1961 reveals that Odhams sought to offload surplus Popular Book Club titles – including WG's *Greek Fire* – onto CBC members.

Through the 1950s, Odhams was one of London's three leading magazine publishers, with its two principal rivals, Newnes / Pearson and the Hulton Press, both acquired by Odhams in 1959-60. But in 1961 – dog eat dog – Odhams was itself taken over by the Mirror Group's Fleetway Publications (formerly the Amalgamated Press) and in 1963 that concern became part of an even bigger conglomerate, International Publishing Corporation or IPC. Between 1964 and 1968 Odhams Press operated as a subsidiary of IPC before being formally wound up on 31 December 1968.

* * * * *

NOTES AND SOURCES

[1] Some captions differ from those printed in *John Bull*.
[2] discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk
[3, 6] bearalley.blogspot.com / levergallery.com
[4, 7] philsp.com
[5] playford.org.uk / philsp.com / findmypast.co.uk
[8] Though *The Little Walls* (May 1955) was published by Hodder & Stoughton more than a year before *The Sleeping Partner* (June 1956), which book surfaced first in condensed form is difficult to say. *The Sleeping Partner* was one of five titles anthologised in *Reader's Digest Condensed Books Volume 27*, which appeared in the fourth quarter of 1956. Odhams began publishing their *Condensed Books* series in September 1955 with the intention (not realised) of producing a new volume every second month. The seventh (including *The Little Walls*) appears to have been published in either **December 1956** or **January 1957**.
[9] Copies of the Popular Book Club edition of *Greek Fire* are often sold as "published in 1957", which is not surprising, since the only date-reference within them cites that year:



But this reference is to *the date the original text was copy-righted*, prior to Hodder's first publication of the novel in 1957, and NOT the year of publication of the subsequent book club edition, which, as shown on page 114 above, was 1959.

The help of Serena Nurse, Nick Smith, Fr. Seamus Keenan and Joan Petts is appreciated.

* * * * *