



the imperial
adventure

new century
antiquarian books

catalogue eighty-one

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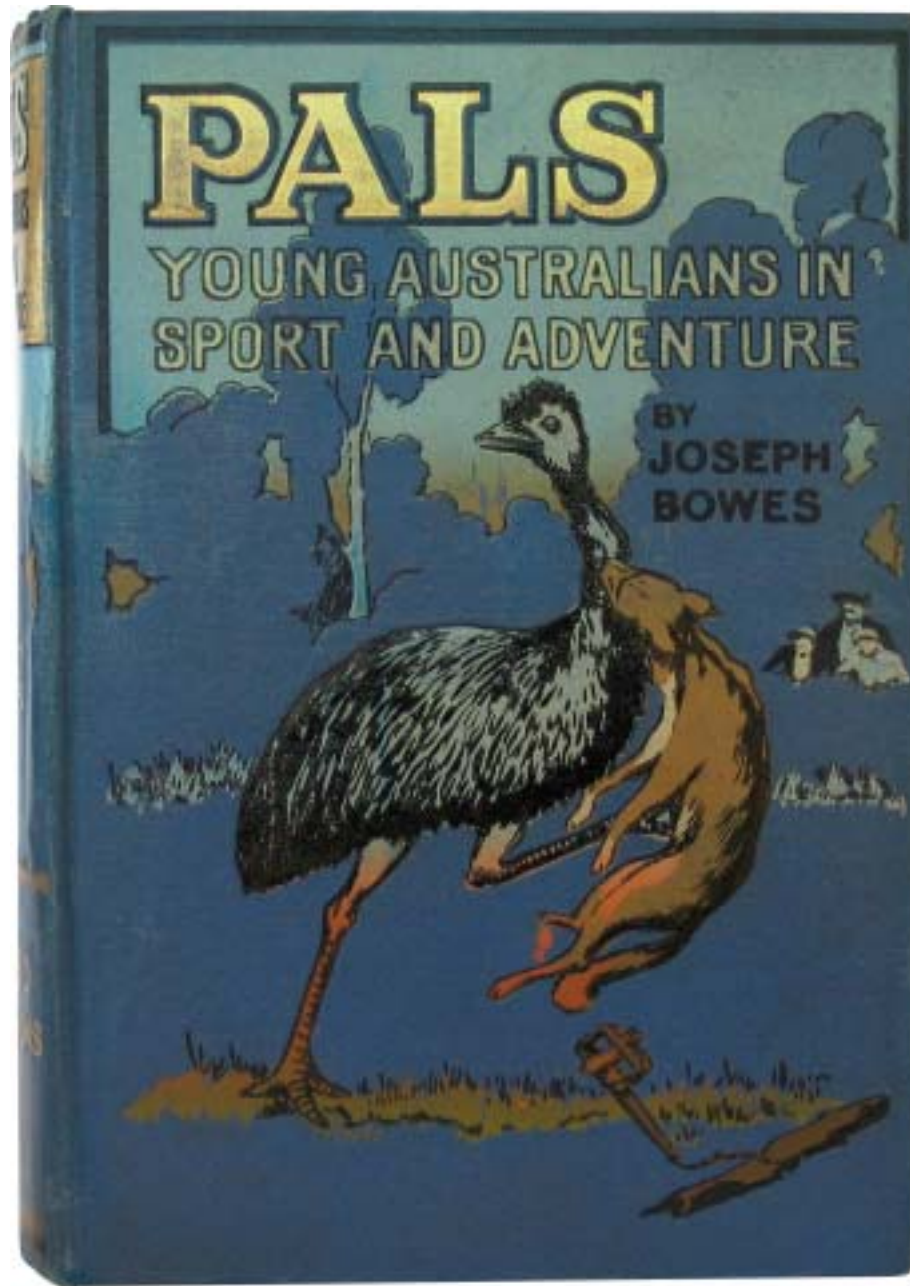
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The Imperial Adventure: the Australian Frontier 1900 – 1939

“That book is good in vain,” wrote Dr. Johnson, “which the reader throws away”, an observation especially true of books for children. From the 1830s, tales of colonial adventure that engaged the reader were written predominantly to encourage those who found the quality of their life at ‘home’ deteriorating to emigrate to the colonies. This propagandist representation of the colonist as adventurer persisted, broadly speaking, through the next half-century. In the 1880s there was a subtle but real shift in the nature of such writing. Adjusting to the now predominant imperialist view in Britain, the books of this second half-century promoted engagement with the colonies as a field for British national and imperial advancement. The books of this ‘Golden Age’ of the adventure story represent the colonies as little more than an exotic setting for imperial endeavour. That the adventure tale should become a vehicle for imperial propaganda is a testament to the flexibility of the genre. Of its nature, such popular writing was always didactic and propagandist, directing the young and unsophisticated reader towards the ‘correct’ moral, religious, social, or political paths of the day. But the confident imperialism of the 1880s and early 1890s shifts subtly in the decade or so before the Great War. With the rise of German military and naval power in Europe and of Japan in the East, the certainty of British hegemony was diminished and many of the adventure writings of the period stress the ‘evil’ presence of the ‘Other’. By and large, the books published after the Great War do not articulate the same interest in political imperatives that are so evident in the corpus of writing that preceded them but they have their own interest and importance in demonstrating the perception and self-perception of an Australian society that was struggling to shake off the colonial-imperial frame of mind that the Great War had so effectively re-imposed after the dynamic and uncompromising nationalist sentiments of the 1890s and 1900s.



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[1] **BECKE, Louis.**

The Settlers of Karossa Creek and other stories of Australian Bush Life. London, Religious Tract Society, [1906]. Octavo, pp. 240, 16 (advertisements) + frontispiece and conjugate title-page, and two other plates; very good in the original colour pictorial blue cloth, top edge gilt. **\$125**

First edition.

[2] **BOWES, Joseph.**

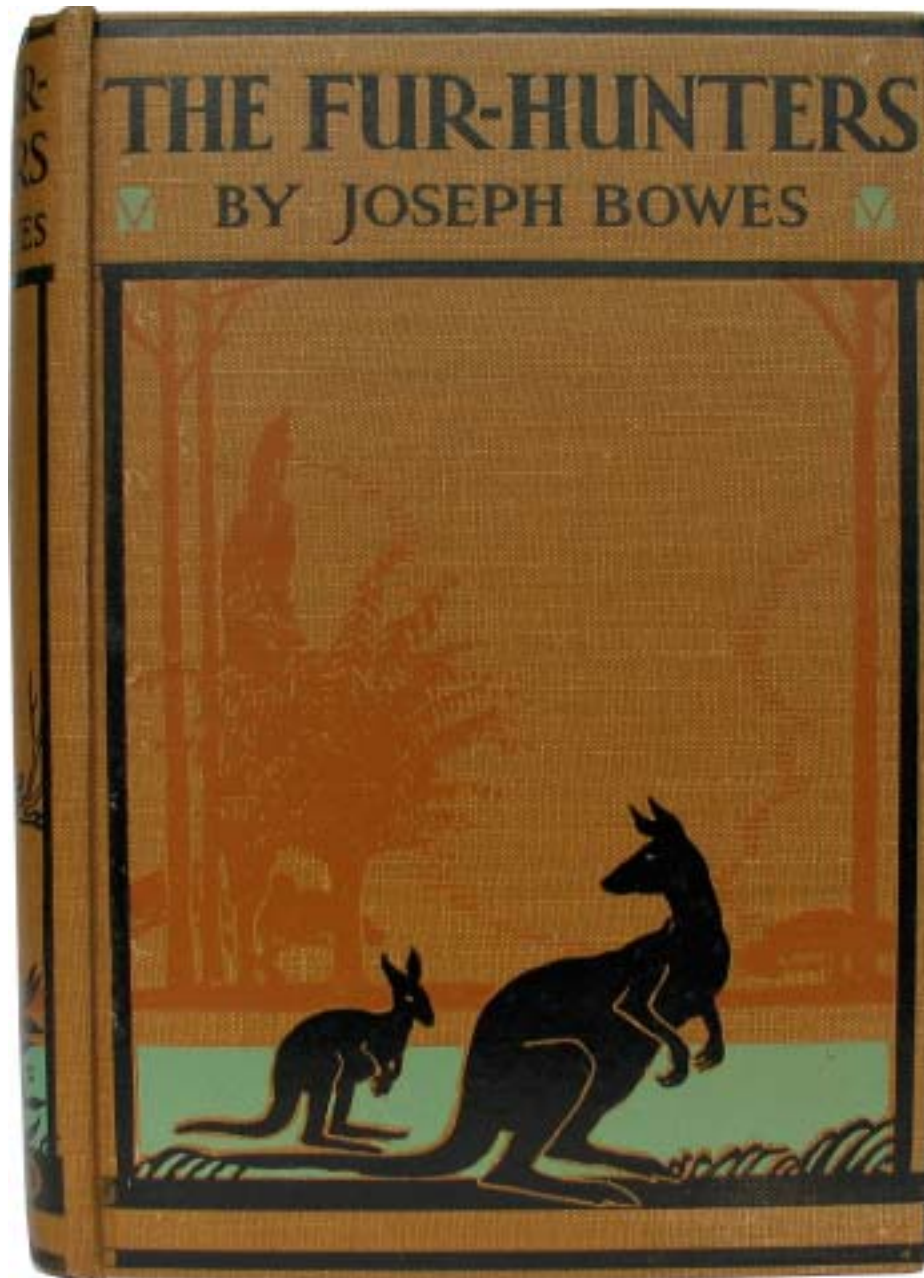
Pals: Young Australians in Sport and Adventure. London, James Glass, [1910]. Octavo, pp. viii, 312 (last advertisement for Ormiston & Glass) + eight colour plates; very good in original colour pictorial blue cloth. **\$145**

Bowes's very scarce first book.

Bowes was unable to find a publisher for this book but, as he later wrote in the Dedication to *New Chums*, "To my cousin James Glass whose sporting spirit gave the author his first chance". James Glass was a principal of Ormiston & Glass, established manufacturers of fancy leather goods, fountain pens and ball pointed pens. The firm was particularly noted for its fountain pens (now collectable) and the last page of the book is, indeed, an advertisement for their pens.

Not being himself a publisher in the normal course of business, Glass financed the publication of the small first edition, followed by this second impression. This is a copy of the equally scarce second impression of the first edition. Bowes had no trouble finding a publisher thereafter.

Unlike his equally popular contemporaries – Herbert Strang, Alexander Macdonald and Robert M. Macdonald – Bowes was Australian-born, spending his working life in Queensland. Apart from his Anzac series published during the Great War, Bowes's adventure tales for adults and young people were, like this one, set mainly in Queensland and northern Australia.



[3] **BOWES, Joseph.**

Comrades: A Story of the Australian Bush. London, Henry Frowde [and] Hodder and Stoughton, 1912. Octavo, pp. 288, 16 (advertisements) + six coloured plates; very good in the original colour pictorial pale blue cloth. **\$125**

First edition.

[4] **BOWES, Joseph.**

The New Chums: A Jungle Story. London, Henry Frowde [and] Hodder and Stoughton, 1915. Octavo, pp. 308, 16 (advertisements) + six coloured plates; the absorbent paper with a degree of diffuse foxing, otherwise very good in the original colour pictorial tan cloth, grey endpapers lined white. **\$145**

First edition, scarce: one of two variant binding styles (no priority); this issue not in Muir, who notes only the variant without advertisements (see Muir, 836).

Dedicated to "To my cousin James Glass whose sporting spirit gave the author his first chance": Glass published Bowes's first novel, *Pals*, in a comparatively small edition followed by a second impression (also evidently small).

[5] **BOWES, Joseph.**

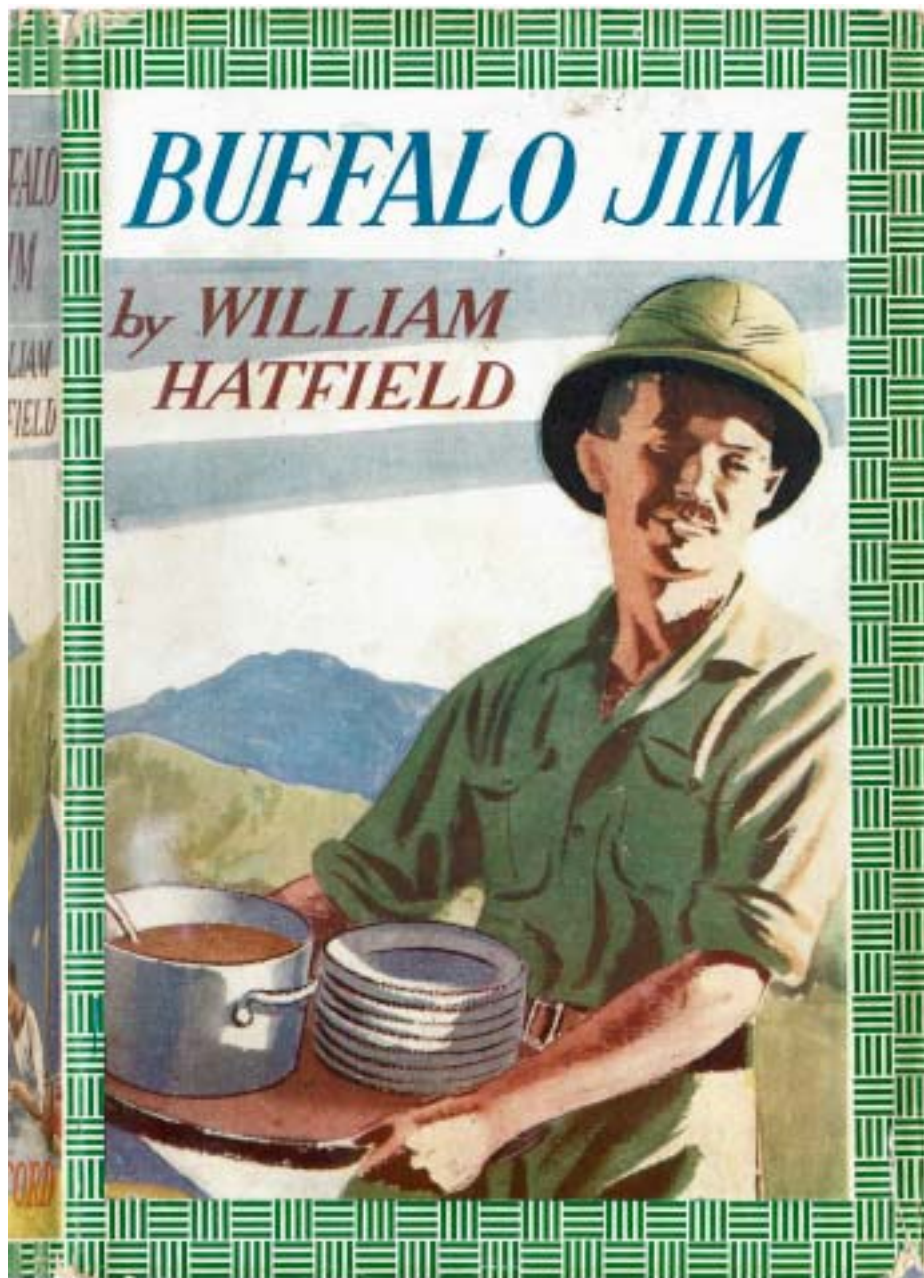
The Jackaroos: Life on a Cattle Run. London, etc., Humphrey Milford Oxford University Press, 1923. Octavo, pp. 288 (last colophon only) + four coloured plates; prize plate on the front endpaper, near fine in the original pictorial green cloth. **\$145**

First edition, scarce: loosely inserted is **the rare publisher's summary leaf** produced for books in the days before the dustwrapper blurb became commonplace.

[6] **BOWES, Joseph.**

The Fur Hunters in Australian Wilds. London, etc., Humphrey Milford Oxford University Press, [1925]. Octavo, pp. 280, 8 (advertisements) + coloured frontispiece and four other plates; an excellent copy in the original colour pictorial light brown cloth. **\$125**

First edition: scarce.



[7] **BOWES, Joseph.**

The Young Settler: The Story of a New-Chum in Queensland. London, *The Epworth Press J. Alfred Sharp*, [1927]. Octavo, pp. 272 + four plates; general light use, 1927 presentation inscription on front endpaper, a very good copy in the original pictorial green cloth. **\$165**

First edition, first issue: very scarce. Muir notes – with only slight detail – that there were several different bindings of these sheets. Muir describes copies with three plates only, possibly in error but also possibly indicating that secondary issues were published with a combination of any three of the four plates in this first issue). See Muir, 853.

[8] **FERGUS, R.M.**

Little Australian Pioneers. London, *Hutchinson & Co.*, n.d. circa 1928. Octavo, pp. [iv], ix-xii, 13 – 256 (complete) + coloured frontispiece and five black & white plates; light foxing of the absorbent paper but a very good copy in original pictorial green cloth with little edge-worn but rare dustwrapper. **\$165**

First edition: copy of Louise Dyer (Neilson's patron and the founder of L'Oiseau Lyre in Paris) with ownership inscription on the free front endpaper. Rare with dustwrapper.

[9] **FINNEMORE, John.**

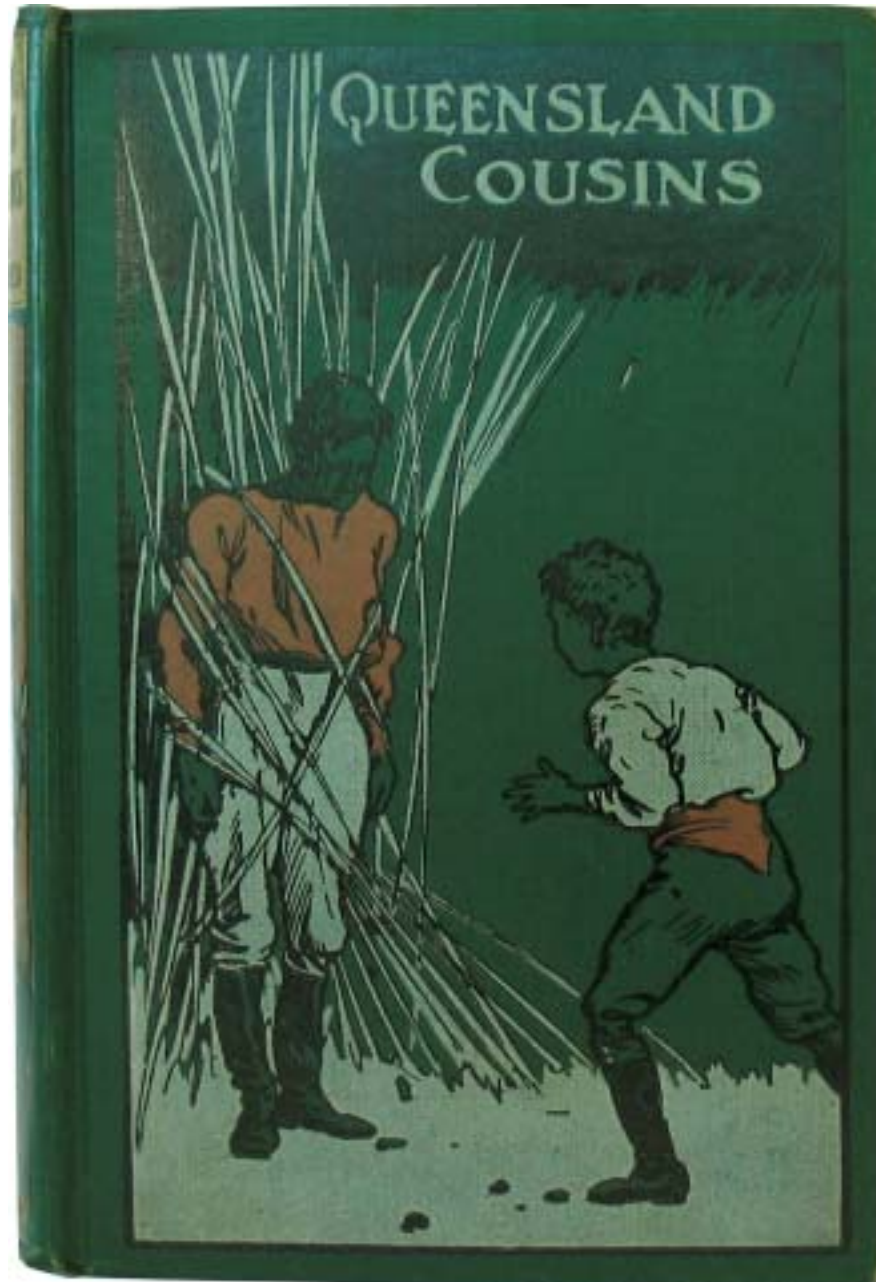
The Bushrangers of Black Gap. London, *A. & C. Black*, 1920. Octavo, pp. [viii], 280 + eight plates; original pictorial blue cloth. **\$110**

First edition: a collection of seven tales set in various exotic places. The first is set in Burragoona, somewhere in Australia, and involves the experiences of a young British bank teller captured by a bushranger and his escape.

[10] **HATFIELD, William.**

Buffalo Jim. London, *Oxford University Press*, [1938]. Octavo, pp. 288, colour frontispiece and line illustrations by Norman Hepple; neat inscription on free front endpaper, some spotting to edges but very good in the original decorated blue cloth, top edge stained blue, with like dustwrapper. **\$165**

First edition: the dustwrapper is most uncommon.



[11] **HAVERFIELD, E.L.**

Queensland Cousins. *London, Edinburgh, Dublin, and New York, Thomas Nelson and Sons, n.d. [1908].* Octavo, pp. 238, [2] (blank), [16] (advertisements, last blank) + two coloured plates; an excellent copy in the lightly used coloured pictorial dark green cloth. **\$125**

First edition: adventures of a settler's family among the Aborigines of North Queensland.

[12] **MACDONALD, Alexander.**

The Lost Explorers: A Story of the Trackless Desert. *London, Glasgow, Dublin, Bombay, Blackie and Son, 1907.* Octavo, pp. [6] + [2] (tipped-in leaf of preface) + 7–380, [2] (blank), 16 (advertisements) + eight plates; some diffuse foxing, mainly early and late, otherwise an excellent copy in the bright original coloured pictorial blue cloth, olivine edges, grey endpapers lined white. **\$365**

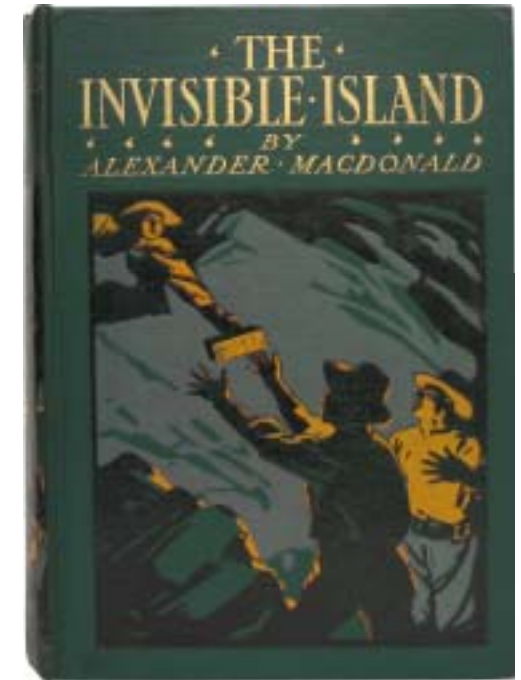
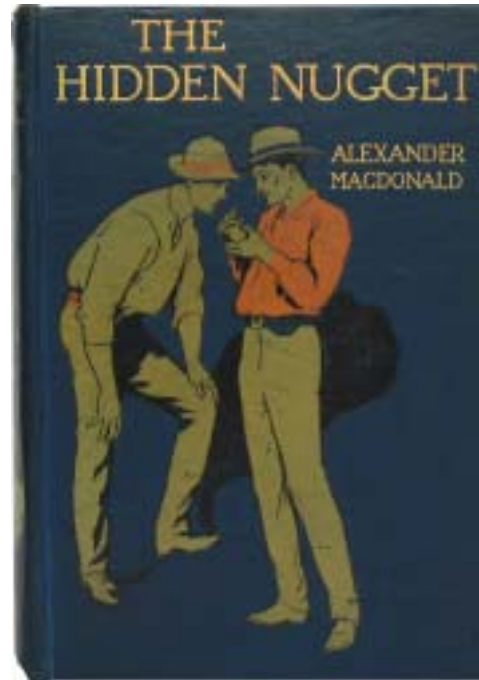
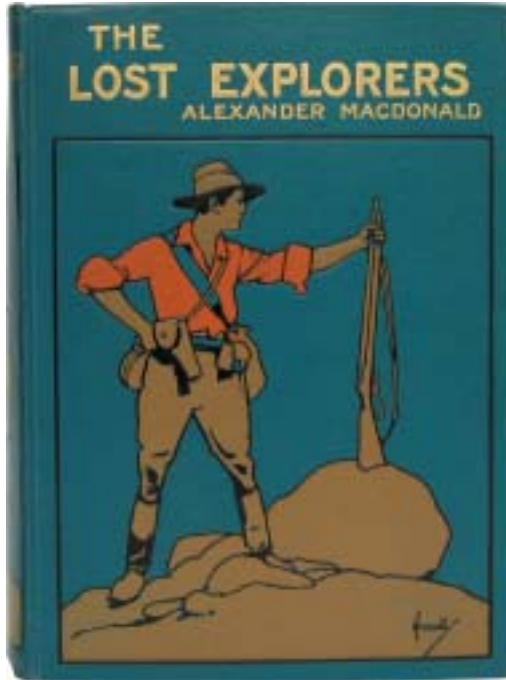
First UK edition. Two young explorers accompany an explorer into the interior of Central Australia in search of a lost exploring party and discover a mystic mountain that is the entrance to a lost world and a superior lost race of Aborigines.

Loosely inserted is the **rare publisher's summary leaf** produced for books in the days before the dustwrapper blurb became commonplace.

[13] **MACDONALD, Alexander.**

The Quest of the Black Opals: A Tale of Adventure. *London, Glasgow, Dublin, Bombay, Blackie and Son, 1908.* Octavo, pp. 352, 16 (advertisements) + six plates, and a map; last leaf of advertisements a little spotted, neat gift inscription on half-title, an excellent, near fine copy in the original colour pictorial dark green cloth, olivine edges, grey endpapers lined white. **\$330**

First edition: opals hunting at White Cliffs and on the Queensland opal fields.



[14] **MACDONALD, Alexander.**

The Island Traders: A Tale of the South Seas. *London, Glasgow, Dublin, and Bombay, Blackie and Son, 1909.* Octavo, pp. 292, 16 (advertisements) + six plates; some spotting, very good in little spine-faded original coloured pictorial red cloth, olivine edges. **\$330**

First edition: Sydney University graduate (degree in the Mota language of New Guinea) is recruited to spy on German New Guinea and thwart their intentions to take over the New Hebrides.

[15] **MACDONALD, Alexander.**

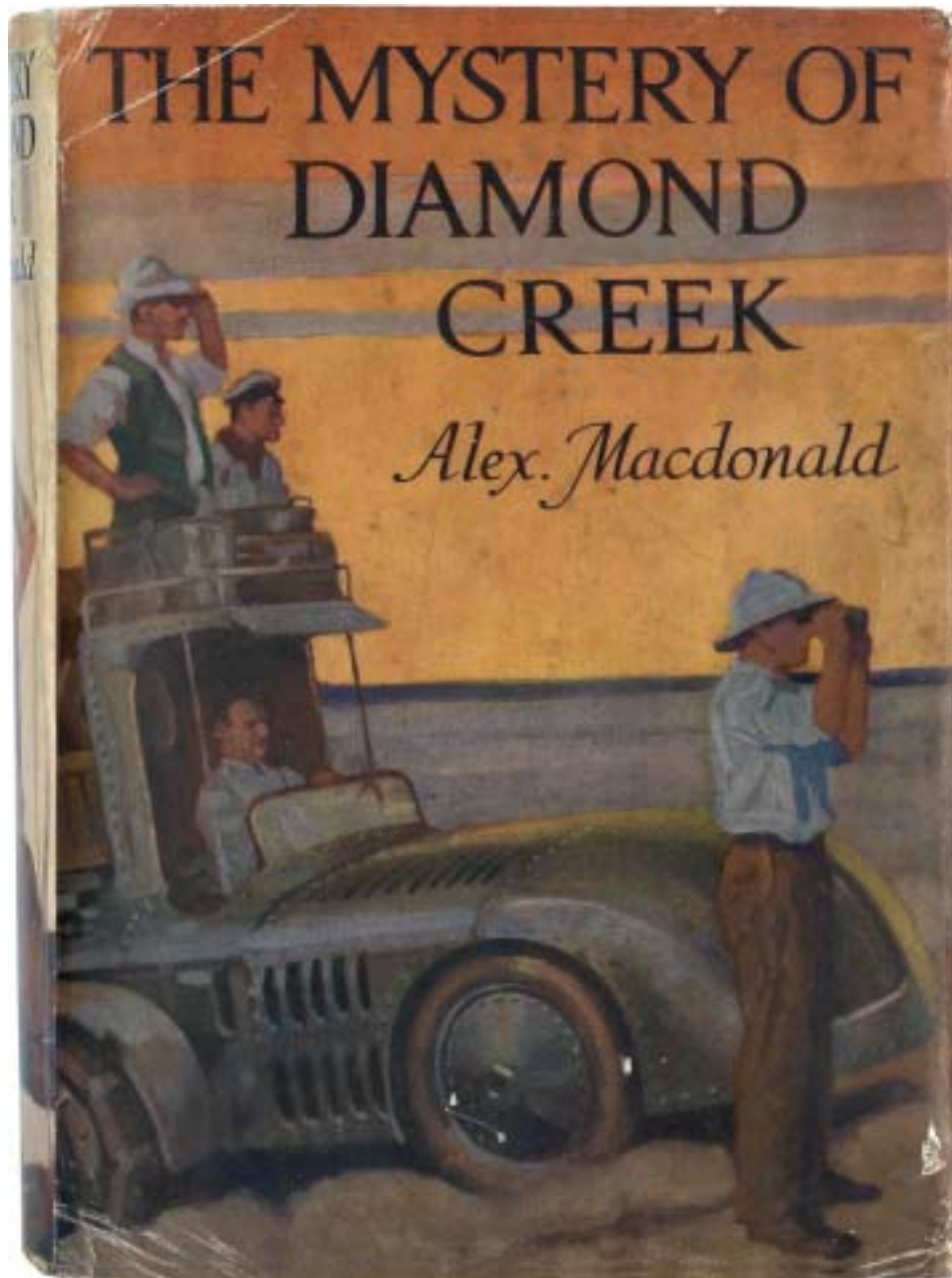
The Hidden Nugget: A Story of the Australian Goldfields. *London, Glasgow, Dublin, Bombay, Blackie and Son, 1910.* Octavo, pp. 284, 16 (advertisements) + seven plates; first leaf slightly tanned from the boards, advertisements lightly foxed, very good in the original colour pictorial dark blue cloth, olivine edges. **\$330**

First edition: a cryptogram leads to vast gold deposits a Bleak Hill, north of Geraldton, Western Australia.

[16] **MACDONALD, Alexander.**

The Invisible Island: A Story of the Far North of Queensland. *London, Glasgow, and Bombay, Blackie and Son, 1911.* Octavo, pp. 360 + six coloured plates; some spotting, very good in original colour pictorial dark green cloth, olivine edges. **\$330**

First edition: secret Chinese gold hoard on an island in the Gulf of Carpentaria.



[17] **MACDONALD, Alexander.**

The Mystery of Diamond Creek. *London and Glasgow, Blackie & Son Limited, n.d. but 1927.* Octavo, pp. 320 + six plates; original pictorial ochre cloth with rare dustwrapper. **\$365**

First edition: Macdonald's last boy's adventure story, set in Central and Northern Australia and narrating the adventures of Stuart Notley in search of diamonds.

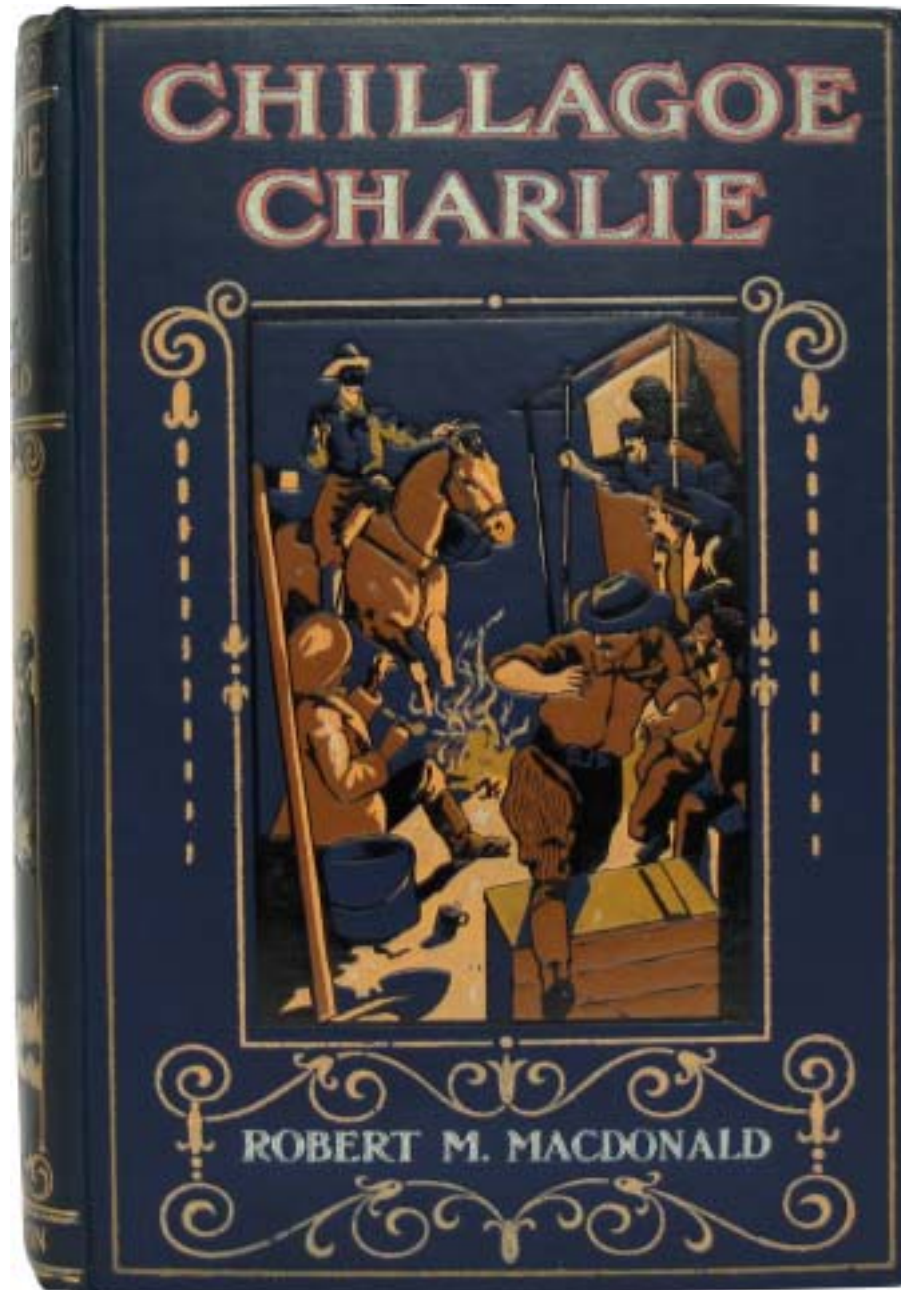
Macdonald wrote of this novel that "Stuart Notley is a 'real' character. He is now Sir Stuart Notley. The Bushman Tanami was one of my old associates and McCrimmon accompanied me on a New Guinea expedition" (presentation inscription, dated 1938, in copy catalogued by New Century Antiquarian Books, catalogue 15).

Loosely inserted is the **rare publisher's summary leaf** produced for books in the days before the dustwrapper blurb became commonplace.

[18] **MACDONALD, Donald and John F. EDGAR.**

The Warrigals' Well: A North Australian Story. *London, Ward, Lock, and Co., 1901.* Octavo, pp. iv (advertisement, with extensive reviews, for Macdonald's *How We Kept the Flag Flying*, printed in black and red), 308 (last colophon only), [8] (advertisements) + frontispiece and three plates; an excellent copy in the original pale blue pictorial cloth. **\$145**

First edition: an adventure story involving extensive conflict with Aborigines set in the Northern Territory and North Queensland.



[19] **MACDONALD, Robert M.**

The Great White Chief: A Story of Adventure in Unknown New Guinea. London, Blackie and Son, 1908 [but November – December, 1907]. Octavo, pp. xii, 368 (last blank), 16 (advertisements) + eight plates and a double-page map; an excellent copy in the original coloured pictorial blue cloth, olivine edges, grey endpapers lined white; neat gift inscription dated Christmas 1907 on endpaper. **\$385**

The first edition of the author's very scarce first adventure novel. Robert Macdonald, like his unrelated namesake, Alexander, spent many years prospecting and pearling in North Queensland, Western Australia, Central Australia, Papua New Guinea, and elsewhere. It was this experience that formed the basis of his popular series of tales of colonial adventure.

Loosely inserted is the **rare publisher's summary leaf** produced for books in the days before the dustwrapper blurb became commonplace.

[20] **MACDONALD, Robert M.**

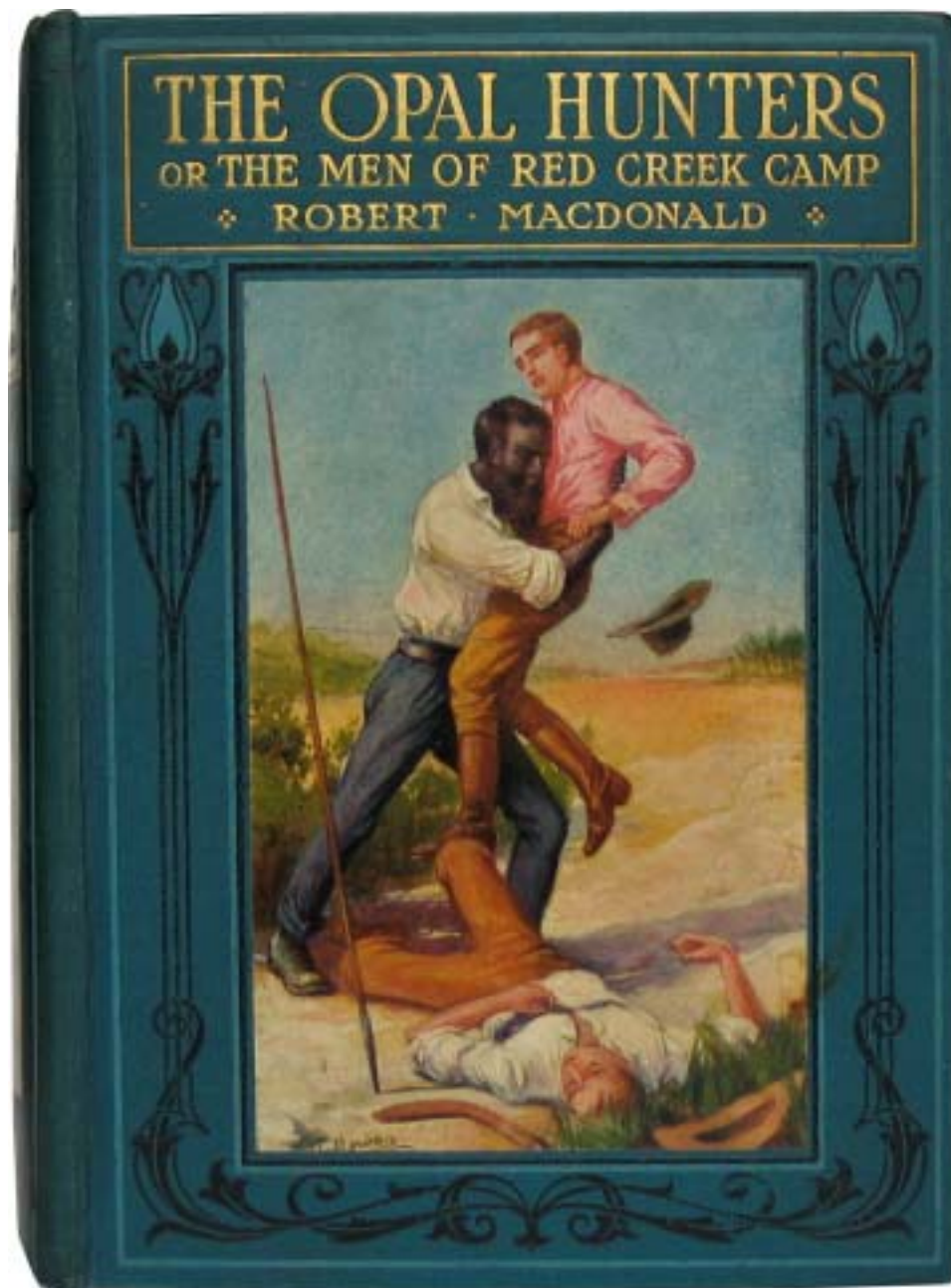
Chillagoe Charlie. London, T. Fisher Unwin, 1909. Octavo, pp. 346, [6] (advertisements) + coloured frontispiece and 16 other plates; original coloured pictorial dark blue cloth; a little worming, mainly in the margin, of the first six leaves, a very good copy withal. **\$330**

First edition: extremely scarce. The most interesting of Macdonald's adventure books according to Morris Miller, *Chillagoe Charlie* is set at the time of the Mitchell River gold rush in North Queensland and concerns the doings of a bush parson who masquerades as a Chinese(!) bushranger in his pursuit of lost gold.

[21] **MACDONALD, Robert M.**

The Pearl Lagoons; or, The Lost Chief. London, S.W. Partridge & Co., [1911]. Octavo, pp. 320, 32 (advertisements) + coloured frontispiece, illustrated title, and five other plates; some spotting, lacks free front endpaper, very good in the bright original gilt and decorated green cloth with colour pictorial onlays on the spine and front board, olivine edges. **\$220**

First edition: pearling in the Solomon Islands, amid complications with the German Navy.



[22] **MACDONALD, Robert M.**

The Opal Hunters; or, the Men of Red Creek Camp. *London, S.W. Partridge & Co., [1912].* Octavo, pp. 320 (first leaf blank), 32 (advertisements) + coloured frontispiece, illustrated title, and four other plates; some spotting, very good in the bright original gilt and decorated green cloth with colour pictorial onlays on the spine and front board, olivine edges. **\$300**

First edition: opal hunting at Lightning Ridge.

[23] **MACKIE, John.**

A Bush Mystery: or The Lost Explorer. *London, James Nisbet & Co., 1912.* Octavo, pp. [ii], v-viii (complete), 320, 8 (advertisements) + coloured frontispiece and four other plates; near fine in the original colour and gilt pictorial cloth, top edge gilt, green marbled endpapers lined white. **\$245**

First edition: loosely inserted is the **rare publisher's summary leaf** produced for books in the days before the dustwrapper blurb became commonplace.

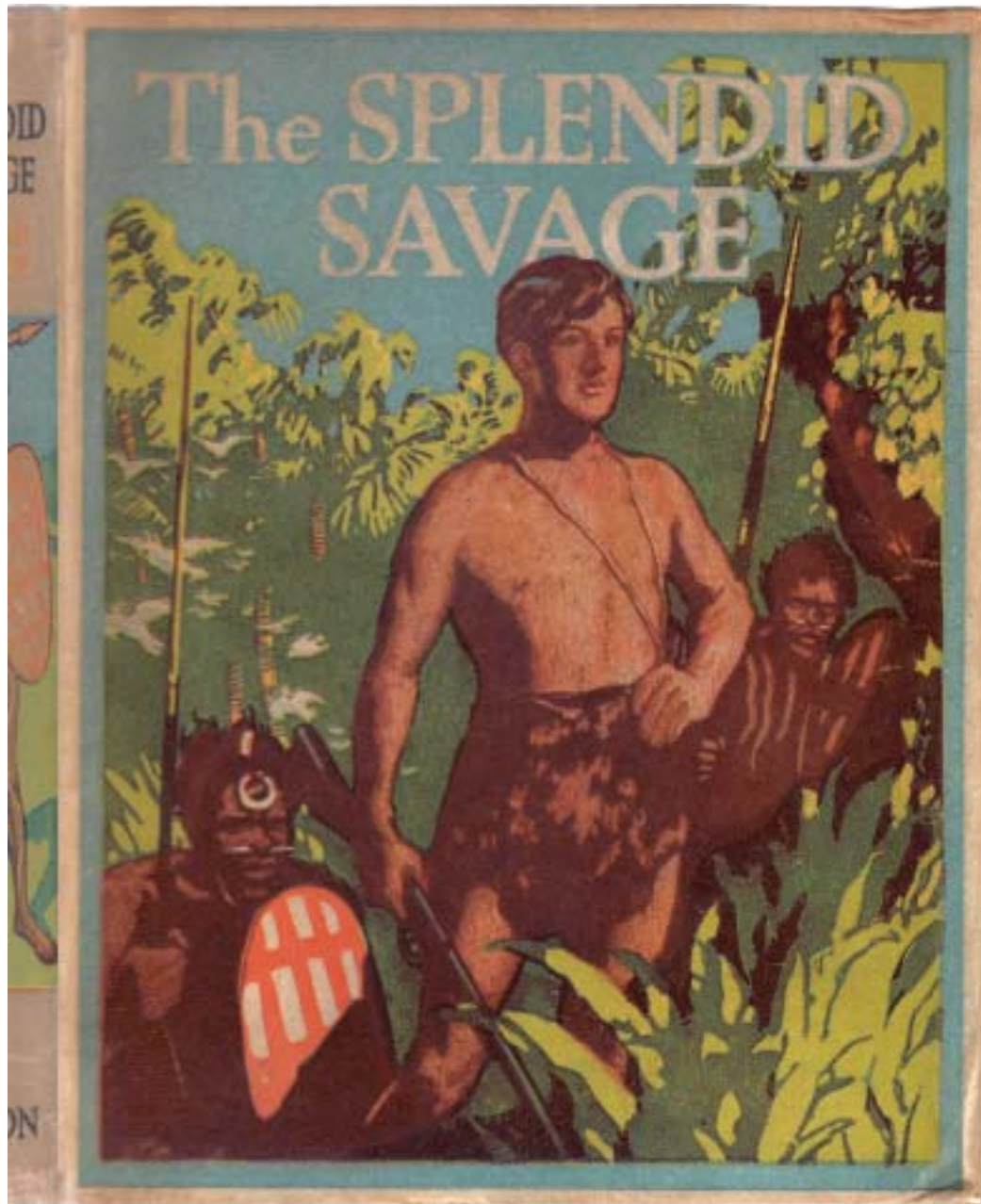
Set in North Queensland and based around the disappearance of the explorer Ludwig Leichhardt.

According to the preface he wrote to one of his early novels, Mackie was a Northern Territory pioneer – “the first white man to build a house and settle on the Van Alphen River in the far Northern Territory... before I became, among other things, a gold-digger in Queensland, and a Mounted Policeman on the frontier of North America...”. He went on to be a successful and, in his time, a well-reviewed writer. He wrote thirteen novels of adventure and romance set in the wilds of Australia, Canada, and the Antarctic.

[24] **MARCHANT, Bessie.**

The Black Cockatoo: A Story of Wesern Australia. *London, Religious Tract Society, n.d. but 1910.* Octavo, pp. 282, [6] (advertisements) + coloured frontispiece and one other coloured plates; original decorated cloth, colour pictorial onlay on the front board. **\$110**

First edition: adventure on a station outside Geraldton.



[25] **SAYCE, Conrad.**

In the Musgrave Ranges by **Jim Bushman.** *London, Glasgow, Bombay, Blackie and Son, n.d. [1922].* Octavo, pp. 284 + six plates; original pictorial tan cloth. **\$85**

First edition: adventures on a cattle station in the Northern Territory. The plates are by Fred Leist.

[26] **SAYCE, Conrad.**

The Golden Valley by **Jim Bushman.** *London, Blackie and Son, n.d. [1924].* Octavo, pp. 256 + six plates; slight occasional foxing, an excellent copy in the original pictorial cloth. **\$145**

First edition: search for a rogue and gold in Central Australia.

Loosely inserted is the **rare publisher's summary leaf** produced for books in the days before the dustwrapper blurb became commonplace.

[27] **SAYCE, Conrad.**

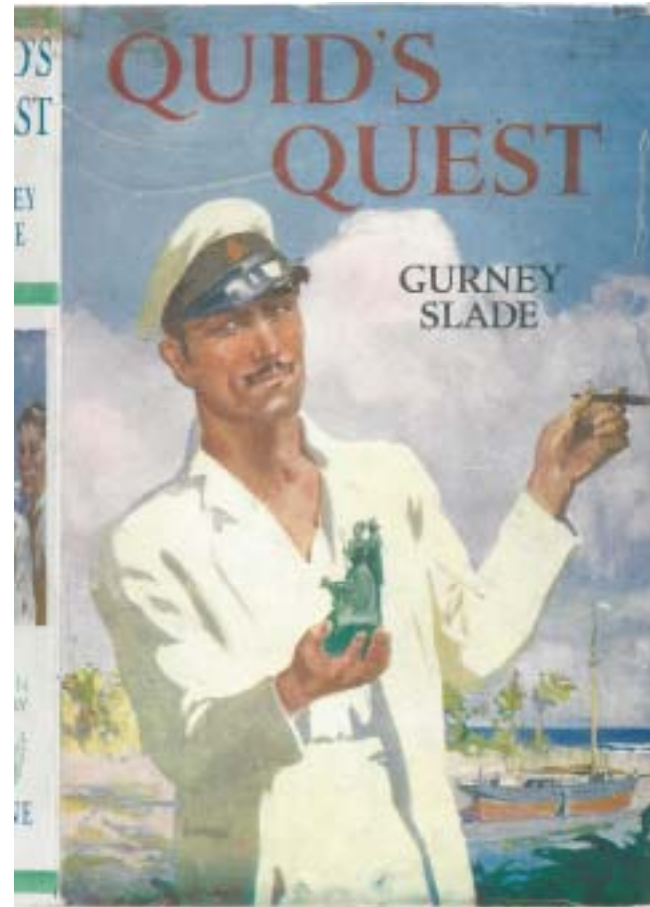
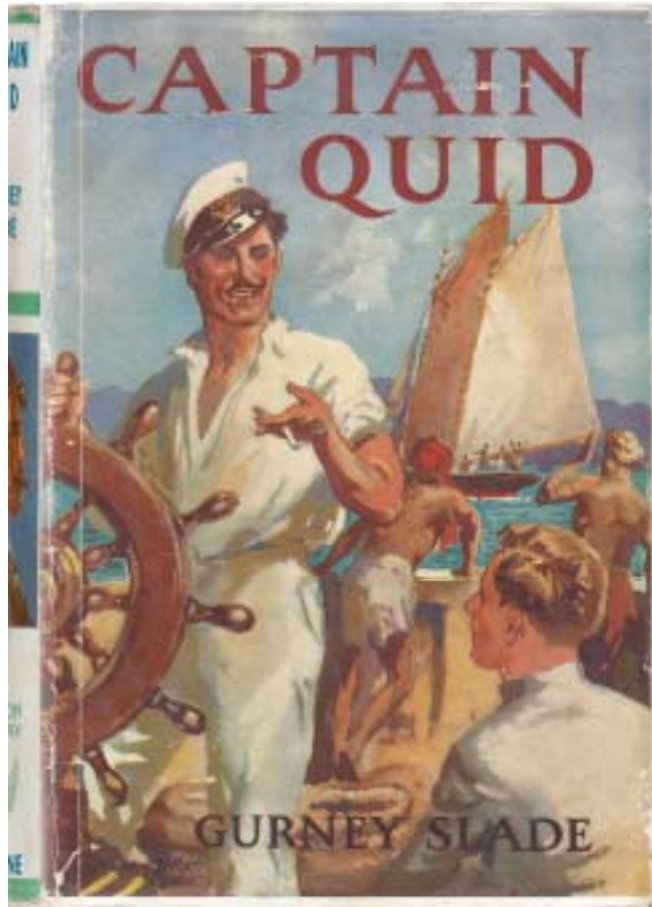
The Splendid Savage: A Tale of the North Coast of Australia. *London, Thomas Nelson and Sons, [1927].* Small quarto, pp. 192 + colour frontispiece, numerous illustrations in the text; some diffuse foxing, very good in the – little dusted – original colour pictorial boards. **\$125**

First edition: shipwreck in the Gulf of Carpentaria, rescue by Aborigines, and ensuing adventures.

[28] **SLADE, Gurney (Stephen BARTLETT).**

The Pearlery of Lorne. *London, etc., Thomas Nelson, n.d. circa 1929.* Octavo, pp. 250, [6] (advertisements)+ frontispiece; near fine in the original illustrated orange cloth, illustrated and lettered in black. **\$85**

New edition (prize plate dated 1929): set in north Western Australia.



[29] **SLADE, Gurney (Stephen BARTLETT).**

Captain Quid. London, Frederick Warne & Co., 1937. Octavo, pp. 256 + colour frontispiece; near fine in the original orange cloth, lettered and ruled in black with very scarce otherwise near fine – few small chips and minor internal tape repairs – dustwrapper. **\$110**

First edition: set in Broome and north Western Australia.

[30] **SLADE, Gurney (Stephen BARTLETT).**

Quid's Quest. London, Frederick Warne & Co., 1939. Octavo, pp. 252 + colour frontispiece, map illustration; some mild spotting, near fine in original tan cloth, lettered and ruled in black, some old tape stains to otherwise excellent dustwrapper. **\$110**

First edition: set in Broome and north Western Australia.