

Ripping Reads

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The Darnley Mills Schoolboy Adventure Series Philip Turner by Pat Knowles



A series of books which I regularly re-read are those following the adventures of David, a carpenter's son; Peter, from the Rectory; and Arthur, "heir to the most remote farm on the moor". The books chart the activities of the three boys growing up in the small northern town of Darnley Mills. At junior school in the first book, *Colonel Sheperton's Clock*, Arthur has gone off to agricultural college towards the end of the series (where "as regards sheep, he had forgotten more by the time he was six years old than the instructors appeared to him to know").

Their adventures range from solving a First World War mystery; tracing a long-lost statue that once stood in a niche in the church where they are all choir boys; converting an old punt into a paddle driven houseboat (finding a missing Roman signal tower whilst exploring in it); and taking part in a war in support of Christian Aid!

Along the way they make friends with a friar, an admiral and his servant, an ex-gunner's mate, two titled ladies (one aged seven), and a host of others. Arthur captains the school cricket team as they win the county cricket cup using "the Ramsgill-Frankenstein Secret Weapon with the Chinese Leggett Sproghole Attachment". Peter produces an endless array of ingenious inventions, which David usually makes whilst trying

