

Letter from America: The forgotten
William Le Queux



On hearing of the death of double agent Kim Philby (1912 -1988), Alistair Cooke reflects on the influence of forgotten Edwardian spy writer William Le Queux (1864-1927)

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Invasion Fiction, William Le Queux, and Fake News

What is invasion fiction?

Who was the mysterious William Le Queux?

Why did a group of famous British authors secretly meet at the outbreak of World War I?

And what did "fake news" look like a century ago?

These topics are discussed by Dr Conor Reid and Ailise Bulfin in a podcast available on the [Words To That Effect Website](#)



*Episode 1 of Words To That Effect explores the power of words and communication. William Le Queux, rarely read today, was in his time a hugely successful author of invasion fiction stories. Exploiting a public fascination and concern with Britain's preparedness for a military invasion, he created sensational best-selling tales such as *The Great War in England in 1897* and *The Invasion of 1910*. His work was part of a massively popular subgenre of literature known as invasion fiction. This subgenre, often also called future war fiction, began in the 1870s and proliferated right up until the First World War.*