



NEWSLETTER NO 8

Spring 1973

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Dear Readers and Fellow Friars,

Once again we have to express regrets for delay in sending you an edition, this time HARRY WHARTON'S ENEMY, enclosed herewith. Our Ulster printers, despite the most sanguine expectations, have failed to overcome their peculiar problems. Moreover, the schedule was further aggravated by an unkind spanner thrown into the works from an unexpected quarter.

We would like to thank all those readers who sent in their suggestions for our proposed expanded programme of pre-war papers. All your letters have been filed for future study.

Also, extra-warm (if belated) thanks to those kind Friars who sent us Greetings Cards, &c, at Christmas.

Among all the readers' letters received a number of salient points arise over and over again. This would seem to be a good opportunity to deal with them for the benefit of all regular readers (the 'silent majority') in one 'go', as it were. These subjects are: Varied qualities of paper used by Greyfriars Press, the division of extra-long series, and the inclusion of very early Magnets (1908-1920) in the programme

#### Paper Quality

We have received comment from a few readers about the varying types of paper used in our publications - e.g., THE GREYFRIARS HOLIDAY ANNUAL '73 and Gem No 4, TOM MERRY & THE NIGHT RAIDERS, to quote two examples. Because this paper doesn't have the glossy coated finish of most Greyfriars Press books it has been described as 'inferior' by some customers. In actual fact, the paper used in G.H.A '73 and T.M.N.R - an Esparto Book Wove - is a more expensive paper than the glossy Cartridge paper which we usually use. Surprising, but true.

#### Arrangement of Programme

A small minority of readers say they cannot always understand our arrangement of series - the Wilmot series, for instance. We would ask them to believe that there is always some sound editorial/production reason involved.

We do not 'split up' series or produce 'bits and pieces' out of sheer perversity; our prime objective is to ensure the continuance of the Greyfriars Press programme. To spell out the minutiae of production problems would be near impossible, and an intolerable burden upon our time. One hopes that Friars will accept the necessities and exigencies of the day-to-day logogriffs of publishing. To refer back to the Wilmot series as a typical example, however, we would explain that we are bound to produce a Christmas series in December, and these invariably run to four issues. So, in order to produce four more sections to make up an eight-section volume we had to find another four-section series. In the opinion of Frank Richards himself, and the Magnet editor of that day, Charles Down, the Wilmot series of four constituted a series in itself, because Frank Richards then proceeded to send the Greyfriars chums into the wilds of Brazil. Upon their return - nine issues later - he wrote what can only be properly considered a sequel to the Wilmot series (two sections).



Do you begin to see the logography? It becomes even more complicated as one goes on ...

### Splitting-up of Series

We do appreciate the disappointment of some Friars anent the splitting-up of the Stacey series into two parts, but the fact is we find it increasingly difficult, due to constantly rising costs, to produce more than 8 or 9 sections in each volume without increasing our price - a step we are most reluctant to take. One expedient, that of raising the cover-price for the occasional extra-long volume, has been suggested by a few readers, but we feel that the majority of our customers would jib at any price increase. The result would probably mean an overall loss of sales, and lost income, which could put our whole programme in jeopardy. Therefore, much as one would like to please the minority of dedicated collectors, hard economic factors must rule.

No doubt you are aware that costs of printing, paper, binding and other components of book production are escalating all the time, while we for our part feel it necessary to keep our prices stable. Market research indicates that our present prices are as high as most people are prepared to accept.

### Inclusion of Early Magnets

A number of readers have asked for the publication of early issues of the Magnet (1908-1920) but the problem here is that these early stories, although fascinating from a collector's point of view, are very dated in writing style and illustration, and might not find favour with the broad mass of readers. Whereas Magnets of the late 20's and through the 30's stand up well in comparison with modern writing.

As said, much as one wishes to please the Dedicated Collector, the Company cannot continue its programme without the support of a goodly number of casual buyers through the trade - bookshops country-wide.

### Special Edition

However, let not the Collector feel neglected. As an earnest, we are publishing a special edition of the entire Stacey series, in one volume, in early summer. This De Luxe edition, bound in leather-style casing, gold-embossed on front as well as spine, with headband, will make a most handsome addition to every collector's library.

Because of the small print run (we are only printing one hundred copies) this volume will sell at £4.75p (plus reduced postage/packing rate of 20p) and we hope that many Dedicated Collectors will support this venture. Let it be appreciated that this special edition is being produced solely as a service to our Readers and not with a profit motive in mind. If we cover our costs, we will be well content. We ask as many of you as possible to use the Order Form enclosed.

kindest regards to you all from

*The Publisher*

P O S T S C R I P T

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A submission from Reader Richard Lister, of 91 Latton Avenue, Mansfield, Notts. We hope to enshrine it in print in the Autumn GREYFRIARS HOLIDAY ANNUAL 1974. Herewith a preview:

MAGIC DAYS

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Magic days I still recall  
When Gem and Magnet did enthrall  
And manifold the weekly joys  
Derived from those immortal boys.

Harry Wharton, Bull and Cherry,  
Bagley Trimble, Blake and Merry,  
Doctor Locke, respected Beak,  
And Billy Bunter's famous squeak.

Portly Prout of paunch terrific,  
Lord Mauleverer, soporific,  
Harold Skinner, shrewd and sly,  
Dodging Quelch's gimlet eye.

Lancastrian Linley, quite a swot,  
Dubious Loder, Snoop and Stott,  
Grizzled Gosling, grim old stager,  
Hurree Singh, Bolsover Major.

Mercurial Bounder's moody whims,  
Arthur Augustus of St. Jim's,  
Boys of various size and ages  
Were brought to life on flimsy pages.

Now in hardback, quite de luxe,  
We find in HOWARD BAKER'S books  
So many of these stories dear,  
Rekindling joys of yesteryear.

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