



The Greyfriars Gazette



NEWSLETTER No 34

SPRING 1981

Issued to all full Subscribers to the Greyfriars Press programme

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Greetings all Friars,



AN IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Over the past one and a half years, faced with all the effects of savage inflation, there are very few companies indeed which have held their prices firm. Most have substantially increased them several times in the period. Postal charges have risen twice, some rail fares three times, and fuel, petrol, food, electricity and gas prices — as everyone knows — are going up all the time. Yet our books have not risen in price by one penny throughout this period.

Overall, the official Retail Price Index has registered an increase of almost forty per cent over the last eighteen months; a figure which is only exceeded by the average level of wage increases officially recorded in the same time. Wage rises, we are assured, continue to outstrip rising prices.

Whatever the truth of that — be it firm fact or political pipe dream — the consequences of the price explosion are that it now costs nearly six times as much for materials, services, printing and binding to produce a book as it did in 1970, and all other charges and overheads involved in publishing have risen commensurately. Yet our Greyfriars Press volumes priced at £2.10 then are just £5.95 now — the result of stringent economy and a financial balancing act of Homeric proportions.

Unfortunately, one can only continue such policies for so long. One cannot fly in the face of reality for ever. Then, unless the tide turns, one must give ground or be swept away. And we cannot continue to absorb ever increasing losses for more than another month or two at the most.

So it is with the greatest regret that we have to give notice that the price of most Greyfriars Press titles will have to be increased from July 1st — a full year and a half after our last small increase in price. But this time, because the increases have been less than realistic before and long delayed, the price rise must be a steep one.

Nevertheless, it isn't as swingeing as it might have been: a two pound book in 1970 is twelve pounds now! But for those book-buyers who have long been sheltered from the cold winds of reality by Greyfriars Press, it will undoubtedly come as a shock. As from July 1st, the price of most Greyfriars Press titles will have to be increased from £5.95 to £8.95.

FROM



HOWARD BAKER PRESS LIMITED

27a Arterberry Road, Wimbledon London, S.W.20

incorporating THE GREYFRIARS PRESS

General Fiction & Non-Fiction — Political Science — Poetry
Autobiography — Biography — Reference — Specialist facsimile editions

SPREADING THE LOAD

It will be appreciated that these increases have to be applied both to future titles and past publications, i.e. stock titles. The reasons for this are twofold:

- (1) To keep overall increases in cover price down to the absolute minimum by 'spreading the load' over as many books as possible,

and

- (2) So that we can continue to keep past titles available for new customers and collectors. Warehousing charges these days are punitive and maintaining availability of as many stock titles as possible costs us a great deal of money.

Thus we continue to do our utmost to give our customers a service without parallel.

And, of course, until July 1st everyone can still buy past titles at old prices. This is one year when it will pay to do your Christmas shopping early!

MULTIPLE BENEFITS

If these books were best-sellers, 25,000 to 100,000 copy runs, then prices could be less. But they are not mass best-sellers. They are produced in very small runs of sometimes little more than one thousand copies per title to meet the demand of a very small, select body of collectors and aficionados. Thus our unit cost is commensurately many times higher, and you — and we — have to pay the price for our 'minority' status.

Such arcane groups do suffer this disadvantage, but in the long term you can reap multiple benefits. While the run-of-the-mill 'best-seller' depreciates in intrinsic value as the years go by, your books *increase* in value — by many, many times the price you paid for them. So in the longer term . . . you win. Handsomely!

WORTHWHILE INVESTMENT

A brief scan of our advertisement columns in any issue of the Gazette will demonstrate the way every out-of-print book increases in value by three, four, even five hundred percent as the months go by. As a proof against inflation, such investment must be very worth while.



BOOK CLUB NEWS

The concluding titles in the current programme (3rd Greyfriars Book Club Catalogue) are as follows:—

- August : THE SCHOOLBOY SPECULATOR (No. 39)
October : THE PRINCE OF GREYFRIARS (No. 40)
December : THE FIRST BOYS PAPER OMNIBUS (No. 41)

A new Book Club Catalogue (the 4th) is now in preparation, and will be issued in early Autumn.

Dear Sir...



From 29 Hampton Road, Merseyside, Rev. Robert Singleton writes: "I see from the Gazette that some controversy is arising re publication of more volumes of the 'sub' writers. My own opinion is that it is a good idea, certainly making it possible for those Friars who wish to collect every Magnet from No. 1 to the last with no 'breaks' to do this — assuming, of course, that every single Magnet can be eventually reproduced!"

"Though no-one could really rival Charles Hamilton, one or two of the 'Subs' came very close to 'The Master' in my view."

With which Friar J. H. Saunders, of 40 Perronet House, Princess Street, Elephant & Castle, London SE1, broadly agrees: "I am surprised that some readers are critical of the Sub. Vols. and I am sure that these are in a minority. I am certain that the silent majority are in favour of any complete reproductions of any Old Boys Mags, Magnet, Gem, Nelson Lee, U.J., etc., not just those containing stories by Chas. Hamilton."

Friar D. R. W. Clutterbuck hails us from 180 Old Lodge Lane, Purley, Surrey: "Your 1981 Holiday Annual is in front of me as I write. Whoever designs your jackets is the best in the business. This particular one has everything. But so had last year's, so what more can one say — except thanks a million. The contents are particularly fascinating to me. I had never seen one of the fabulous Double Numbers before."

"You have given thousands the wealth of Hamilton's writings, which ten years ago could be enjoyed only by a handful of lucky collectors. You have poured out this wealth unstintingly, where a less courageous publisher — even if he had conceived the idea — would have gone cautiously."

And Friar A. Dacre, of 7 Leopard Street, Walney Island, Barrow in Furness, writes in similar vein: "I would like to express my gratitude for such a wonderful and well organised achievement as your facsimile reprints have become. They must have given immense pleasure to thousands of 'old boy' readers. To myself it is like a dream come true."

For these expressions of appreciation, which mean a lot to us, very many thanks.

SORRY, BUT . . .

Whilst the *Greyfriars Gazette* will continue to be supplied free to all Bond Friars, we must now make a charge of 40 pence, inclusive of postage, for all other copies. Overseas subscribers: 25 pence airmail postage.

BACK TO THE FACTORY!

Cordially (despite disappointment) Friar E. Austyn-Prys of 21 Fields Road, Tredegar, Gwent, writes: "Although Magnet Vol. No. 76 ('Billy Bunter's Blunder') arrived some time ago, it was only last weekend that opportunity first came for me to settle down and enjoy it. And enjoy it I did, until I met with the abrupt hiatus in the 'Linley Expelled' trilogy. *Where is Magnet Issue No. 939 ('Back to the Factory Again')*? Why did you deny us the pleasure of learning how Mark Linley was satisfactorily restored to honour after his ignominious and unjust expulsion had aroused our sympathies?

"I could well have done without the comparatively poor Issue No. 844 in order to be able to read in full Stanley E. Austin's excellent triple-number tale (Nos. 938-940). Please give us this missing number when next you plan a volume of 'substitute stories'. I am sure that all who have read Vol. No. 76 would welcome it."

Sentiments echoed by Friar Charles H. Matthews of Station House, Market Harborough, Leicestershire, who wants to put on record: "How very much I enjoy the facsimile copies of *The Magnet*, *The Gem* and *The Nelson Lee*. No doubt, like many others, I could not possibly afford to buy the originals, and I have built up a large library of your Howard Baker books, enjoying not only the Frank Richards stories, but also the so-called 'substitute' tales. It is in connection with the latter that I now write.

"I very much enjoy your selection of substitute stories as I have never read them before — not to my knowledge, anyway. At the moment I am reading with much pleasure the 'Billy Bunter's Blunder' volume, and have just read the second tale therein — 'The Hand of the Enemy' — and turned quite naturally to the next story, expecting to read its sequel 'Back to the Factory Again'. To my utter disappointment and puzzlement, all I see is 'The Hidden Foe'. For some reason or other you have not included the sequel, and the story is only half a story now, with no ending.

"I hope that it is your intention to include the missing tale in another, and not too distant, volume of *The Magnet*."

Friar Matthews, Friar E. Austyn-Prys (and many others no doubt) will be pleased and relieved to hear that the missing Mark Linley sequel, No. 939, will be published in our Autumn programme.

ANOTHER SUBSTITUTE DISCOVERED?

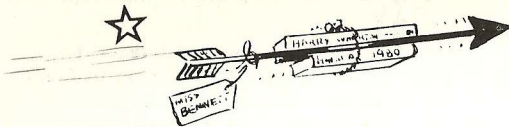
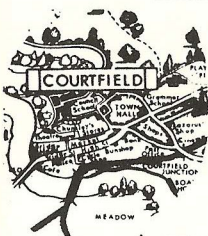
Mr. Cyril Parratt of 46 Stalin Road, Colchester, reports that he has detected another substitute story: "Bunter the Bad Lad, SOL No. 237, 'described as being by Frank Richards.'

"As the possessor of at least thirty of your facsimile Magnet reproductions, the marked difference in style is as clear to me as it must be to all connoisseurs of this period."

You are wrong, Mr. Parratt! All records show this story to be genuine "Hamilton". — Ed

And still on the subject of substitute stories, Friar Cyril Rollins, of 16 Cotysmore Road, Sutton Coldfield, writes: "On reading in G. G. Newsletter No. 33 of the reluctance of a few members to accept stories by the substitute authors, I was led to wonder whether they could possibly have differentiated between the Hamilton stories and the others if they had not been told. Certainly it never occurred to me during the period of the early and middle '20s, when I was first 'hooked' on the Greyfriars stories that there might be more than one Frank Richards. Furthermore, had it not been for the substitute writers, the output between 1919 and 1926 in the Magnet would have looked pretty sick (had Charles Hamilton been depended upon for a story each week)."

Friar P. R. Morley, of 327 Tarring Road, Worthing, sums up: "You can take it for granted that I, and others like me, still think of your service as the best I have known amongst the mail orders. Stupendous, monumental, and highly efficiently-simplified."



NEWS FROM 'COURTFIELD'

A report from the London chapter of the Friars Club tells of a splendid Christmas meeting and party at the hospitable home of Mr. Norman Berg, on December 7th.

No details of further meetings have been reported at time of going to press, but no doubt 'Courtfield' activities continue unabated.

NEW CLUB FOR NORTHERN FRIARS ?

Friar Darrell Swift of 22 Woodnook Close, Leeds LS16 6PQ, is considering holding a meeting in the north of England (probably in Leeds) for all fans of the Howard Baker Press productions. This will be a chance for discussion and exchange of views to take place. If you are interested, please contact Friar Swift at the above address so that a gathering may possibly be arranged in the near future. It is felt that the formation of a Northern Chapter of the Friars Club is long overdue.



"I think it's some form of foreign exchange, Sir!"

OVERSEAS PAYMENTS

All of our book prices are calculated at the lowest possible level — in U.K. currency. And all of our catalogue prices are quoted, and customers invoiced, in pounds sterling.

It follows that it is in pounds sterling that we prefer to be paid.

For overseas customers this usually presents no difficulty. Most International Banks have London offices on which sterling cheques can be drawn, and many of our far-flung Friars pay us this way. Others pay by International Money Order (obtainable through local post offices) *expressed in sterling*. So, if you can, please pay us in the currency — sterling — in which our books are listed on invoices or in our catalogue.

This is not to say that we will not accept payment in other currencies, but clearances and conversions take time, could delay delivery of your order, and certainly cost money. *If you are paying us in any currency other than sterling, please add £2.00 to the sterling total cost before conversion.* This averagely is what it costs here to convert and collect remittances in overseas currencies.

Our best recommendation is : remit in sterling to save time, trouble and money. Sterling advice!



Readers/Friars in the Irish Republic, please NOTE:

EIRE is now included in the
4-books-per-parcel postal Contract system.

Therefore, when you order per our Order Form,
include yourselves in the U.K. only concession

S T O P P R E S S

**STOP
PRESS
NEWS**

Our Post Office contracts official has visited us today and informed us that, as from now, the postal book parcel price is £1 . 30p instead of the former £1. 10p

FRIARS — please make the necessary adjustment on all future orders by post .

CLASSIFIED ADVT'S



SALES AND WANTS

It is necessary that in future we levy a small charge for insertion of advertisements in our Classified Advertisement/Sales & Wants section. Please remit at the rate of 5 pence per word.

WANTED: Keen Magnetite prepared to pay £2 (plus return postage) for one month's loan of Greyfriars Book Club limited editions. Immense care taken of books. References if required. Send list of available titles for loan to Mr. A. B. Tebb, Flat D, 127B Brudenell Road, Leeds 6.

WANTED: Club Vol. 3 - The Making of Harry Wharton - £27 offered. Write: Mr. I. M. Johnson, 25 Hatcliffe Close, Blackheath, London SE3.

WANTED: GHA 1974 and Magnet Vols - Bunter Tells the Truth and The Ghost of Polpelly. Good prices paid. Write: Mr. James Lee, 28 Bristol Road, Hollington, St. Leonards-on-Sea, Sussex.

FOR SALE: From the estate of the late Friar Richard Dalby. Offered at sensible prices for quick sale. All orders, with remittance, to Mrs. Edna Dalby, 6 Spanish Place, London W1.

Out of Print Volumes: Club Vol. 1 - Worst Boy at Greyfriars - £30; Club Vol. 2 - Loder for Captain - £30; Club Vol. 3 - The Making of Harry Wharton - £60; Club Vol. 4 - Harry Wharton & Co in India - £30; Club Vol. 7 - Greyfriars Crusaders - £30; Magnet Vol. 2 - Rebellion of Harry Wharton - £20; Magnet Vol. 8 - Mystery of Wharton Lodge - £20; Magnet Vol. 17 - The Black Sheep of Greyfriars - £25; Magnet Vol. 19 - The Greyfriars Hikers - £25; Magnet Vol. 26 - A Bargain for Bunter - £20; Magnet Vol. 27 - Shadow over Harry Wharton - £20; Magnet Vol. 29 - The Mystery of Moat House - £25; Magnet Vol. 30 - Burglar of Greyfriars - £20; Magnet Vol. 36 - Bob Cherry's Big Bargain - £15; Magnet Vol. 37 - Billy Bunter's Lucky Day - £20; Magnet Vol. 38 - Bunter Tells the Truth - £20; Magnet Vol. 39 - The Ghost of Polpelly - £20; Magnet Special 24A - The Mysterious Mr Krantz - £15; Magnet Special 25A - Greyfriars Chums in China - £25; GHA 1975 - £15; GHA 1976 - £15.

Other Volumes: The following Club titles are offered at £10 each: The Sheikh of Greyfriars; The Greyfriars Film Stars; Cock of the Walk; The Boxer of Greyfriars; Harry Wharton in Africa; The Boy from the Underworld; Action at Greyfriars; The Flogging Judge Jeffreys; Bob Cherry Swot; Levison's Return; New Boys at Greyfriars; Tatters of the Remove; Harry Wharton & Co in Hollywood; The Bounder of Greyfriars; Paul Dallas of Greyfriars; The Schoolboy Caravanners; The Treasurer Hunters; The Fall of the Bounder; Tom Redwing's Triumph; The Toad of the Remove; The Removal of Harry Coker.

The following Magnet volumes are offered at £3 each: Vol. 11; 13; 20; 24; 28; 31; 32; 33; 34; 35; 40; 41; 42; 43; 44; 45; 46; 47; 48; 49; 50; 51; 52; 53; 54; 55; 56; 57; 58; 59; 60; 61; 62; 63; 64; 65; 66; 67; 68; 69; 70; 71; 72; 74. Many other miscellaneous in-print titles available. Please send for list.

FOR SALE: All mint condition. Realistic offers invited for Magnet Vols. 22 and 23. Club Vols. 11, 13 and 14 - £12.50 each; Magnet Vol. 2 - £9.20; Magnet Vol. 4a - £10; GHA 1973 - £4.50; Billy Bunter's Own - £4.50; Magnet Vol. 33 - £8. Most other in-print Magnet vols available at below published prices, state wants: Mr. S. G. Smith, 170 Algernon Road, Lewisham, London SE13 7AW. No reply means item sold.

FOR SALE: Howard Baker GHA's 1920, 1925, 1927, 1941, 1973, 1975, 1976, 1978, 1979, 1980; Easter Omnibus 1978; Summer Omnibus 1977; Billy Bunter's Own 1979. Offers to: Mr. M. McLean, Grange Farm, Hollies Lane, Pattingham, Wolverhampton WV6 7HJ.

FOR SALE: Magnet Vols. 1 to 13; 16; 17; 26 to 28; 31 to 34; 36; 43; 46 to 48; 53; 58 to 60; 62; 67; 69 to 72. Offers to: Mr. A. E. Angus, 37 Gainsborough Road, Dronfield, Derbyshire S18 6QT (Tel. Dronfield 412996).



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SALES AND WANTS

Continued

FOR SALE: At £20 each plus post: Magnet Vols. 2; 19; 24; 25. At £15 each plus post: Magnet Vols. 7; 10; 15; 21; 29; 30; 36; 37; 38 and 39, also GHAs 1928, 1974, 1975, 1976 and Gem Vol. 6. At £40 each plus post: Club Vols. 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7. Write to: Mr. B. V. J. Deeks, Plas-yn-Ddol, Abbey Road, Llangollen, Clwyd, LL20 8SP.

FOR SALE: Offers invited for Club Vols. 2, 6, 7, 8 and 9; Magnet Vols. 17, 19, 22, 23, 24, 25, 24a and 25a, and GHA 1973 and 1974. **WANTED:** Book Club Vols. 1, 3 and 4; Magnet Vols. 18 and 29; Cassell publication — Billy Bunter and the Blue Mauritius. Write to: Ms Karen Reason, 21 Pennine Way, Mill Park, Liverpool L32 2BJ.

ORDERING FORWARD AND BACK



Apart from our Bond customers, who know exactly where they stand regarding delivery dates, there are those who order back stock titles for immediate delivery — but sometimes confound this simple operation by including a FORWARD title on their order list.

This means that, if they have only paid postage for one parcel of books, the *whole* of their order is held up until the FORWARD TITLE is available.

And some customers, uncomprehendingly, then write in to demand to know why their order has not been serviced by same-day return post, as is our normal custom with back-stock titles.

Hope all is now clearly understood.

Whilst on this subject, another point worth noting: the month of publication given in our seasonal catalogues usually means the *end* of the particular month in question rather than the beginning. Thus, a book announced for August publication — for example — is not likely to be available until the *end* of August: certainly not on August the First! Well worth remembering.

Wishing all Friars a very Happy Eastertide — and many enjoyable reading hours in the months to come,



Sincerely,
Your Publisher

Howard Baker



Хрусткое Вокпеце

HOWARD BAKER PRESS LIMITED
27a Arterberry Road, Wimbledon London, S.W.20