



The Greyfriars Gazette

NEWSLETTER No 35

SUMMER 1981



Issued to all full Subscribers to the Greyfriars Press programme

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Greetings all Friars,

Well, the worst hasn't happened after all! Despite our gloomy prognostication in the Easter Gazette about a price rise to £8.95 in the Summer, we have managed to peg the price at £7.95 instead. Small sighs of relief all round, no doubt — though muted by the loud tsks-tsks of disapproval by our accountants!

So, at £7.95, our Greyfriars Press volumes are well below the average cost for books of such large dimension — and small circulation.

BOOK CLUB NEWS

Our FOURTH Book Club Catalogue is now in active preparation. We are adopting a new publishing policy for this next Catalogue. And it is a policy which should delight all keen Collectors. Instead of moving to and fro in efforts to encompass a Series in each volume, we are going to begin at Magnet No. 11 (1908) and move forward from there in numerical and date order.

Thus Magnet Nos. 11 to 20, then Nos. 21 to 30, followed by Nos. 31 to 40 — and so on.

This is a system which most Collectors would probably have favoured from the outset, but for various practical reasons was not feasible in the past. Copies of this new exciting club list will be mailed out to all customers in their pre-Xmas parcels.

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

- August : THE SCHOOLBOY SPECULATOR (No. 39) — £16
- October : THE PRINCE OF GREYFRIARS (No. 40) — £16
- December : THE FIRST BOYS PAPER OMNIBUS (No. 41) — £16

Out-of-print Club books now include the following: Nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 9. (Soon to go out-of-print books include Nos. 8, 10, 11.)

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 edition

TO 'LATE-COMING' COLLECTORS

The following titles are now O/P (Out of Print) and are no longer available by order through the Trade. Nor are they listed in our new Catalogue.

However, we still hold a few copies of these at our offices, which are available to late-coming Collectors, BY MAIL ORDER ONLY, while stocks last.

Magnet Vol		
No. 2	The Rebellion of Harry Wharton	— £12.00
No. 30	Burglar of Greyfriars	— £7.95
No. 33	Sleuth of Greyfriars	— £7.95
No. 36	Bob Cherry's Big Bargain	— £7.95
Nelson Lee Vol. 2	: The Haunted School	— £7.95
Greyfriars Holiday Annual	1975	— £7.95

(Postage at usual rates : £1.30 per parcel)

Cheques, money orders and postal orders should be made payable to HOWARD BAKER PRESS LIMITED, and crossed.

NOTE: The charge of £1.30 will cover up to 4 books sent as one parcel, i.e. books chosen from existing stock and currently available. We regret that this 'bulk order' offer cannot include overseas (non-UK) customers, for whom a standard rate of 95p per volume will apply.



ALTERNATIVE CHOICES

It is a true maxim that many a Catalogue is out of date the day after it is printed. Such is sometimes the case with our own Greyfriars Press seasonal list.

Our books have a distressing habit of going O/P before our Warehouse in Tonbridge has given us due warning.

One by one, over the months and years, title after title disappears from our List. Therefore, when ordering back titles from our Stock List please provide alternative choices *whenever possible*.

Thus both supplier and customer avoid hold-ups, delays and unnecessary correspondence.

On such occasions, our 'impeccable service' can become distinctly peccable — through no fault of ours.

STOP PRESS

A further three titles — though listed in our Autumn Catalogue — have just gone O/P.

Vol. 31	Billy Bunter's Hat Trick	— £7.95
Vol. 9	Schemer of the Remove	— £7.95
	The World of Frank Richards : Lofts/Adley	— £6.00

A few copies of each are still available by MAIL ORDER from Wimbledon.

Dear Sir...



Friar John A. C. Bridgewater of Tels and Radar Branch REME, Leigh Sinton Road, Malvern, Worc. WR14 1LL, writes on the subject of our price increase: "In spite of the shock price increase it still gives me considerable pleasure to write your cheque. I think it a wise policy to reduce the number of volumes produced in the 6 months period to balance the price increase and retain the 6 months 'sub' at the approximate £30 mark. Price increases are inevitable and I think you have done wonderfully well to have managed to hold off for so long."

Friar Esmond Kadish caused us a few moments of deep disquiet when he wrote to us thus: "You do know, I suppose, that the Nelson Lee issue proposed for the Autumn Greyfriars Holiday Annual 1982 has already been published as a serial in HB GEM Volume No. Seven?"

We hastened to reassure Friar Kadish on this matter, and we repeat that reassurance here to allay any fears of any other readers who may have fallen into the same error. The answer is that the Handforth Tower issue in our GEM Vol. No. 7 was a *sequel* to the story we are printing in the GHA '82.

Therefore, Nelson Lee fans will now have both of the famous Handforth Tower Christmas duo.

Miss Jillian Sheppard, of 13 Bromley Drive, Ely, Cardiff, declares: "I, for one, don't find your books at all expensive, especially when one considers what well written, 'healthy' reading they are. No foul language, no suggestiveness. It is so nice to see life portrayed as *it should be*. As it might well have been years ago — not at all like today!"

Friar P. R. Morley, of 327 Tarring Road, West Worthing, West Sussex BN11 5JJ, also waxes nostalgic on the pre-war days. He writes of the Greyfriars scene: "Timeless characters in a wonderful world where nothing changes except the days of the week and the seasons of the year. Where no-one gets any older and Britain still has an Empire. Where if you had a fiver in your pocket you were a rich man; and where men and women had a code of chivalry and decency and even the crooks didn't all carry knives, or guns. It all seems too good to be true. But it was (well almost) like that and I only wish some of it were still around today! Greyfriars would definitely have slipped into oblivion but for you. And through these wonderful facsimiles you have ensured that old Greyfriars won't be forgotten for some considerable time yet. Carry on the good work!"

Friar Gordon Hudson, of 29 Carnoustie, Ouston, Near Chester-le-Street, Co. Durham, writes on the subject of Substitute Stories: "I have noticed the comments in the *Greyfriars Gazette* concerning the substitute stories. My own view is that so long as you are doing a Magnet programme these should be included. So in the circumstances I feel that you should continue the substitute stories. In any case, they do not amount to a great number.

"Having said this, as mentioned in my last letter, I would again request that you include the Greyfriars Sexton Blake story in your programme. I see from my *Magnet Companion* that this is a substitute story! However, I am sure this would please the Blake fans as well as the Greyfriars ones. The particular title is:

"Magnet No. 818 (1923): *Disgraced by His Father* by N. Wood-Smith."

Dear Sir . . .

Friar L. Herrod, of 664 Ominica Street West, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Canada S6H 1Y2 writes: "I cannot find adequate words to express my delight to read the Bendover College, Will Hay stories from the *Boy's Friend Library*. I did not have the pleasure of reading the original stories, but they are simply delightful. How about more Bendover Stories, or any *Boy's Friend Library* stories? *Sexton Blake*, or *Union Jack*?"

"Regarding annuals besides, of course, your *Holiday Annual* reprints: do you think you might in the future republish *Modern Boys Annual* and *Champion Annual*? Once again, sincere thanks for all your publications to date."

From Friar P. E. Rigby, of 131 Kensington Road, Southport, Lancs., PR9 0SD: "I note that the controversy over your printing Frank Richards 'substitute' stories is a continuing saga. Those in favour are so greatly in the majority that it is obvious that you as publisher must continue to issue such volumes. I do accept that the majority view must prevail.

"Nevertheless, my own view that the 'subs' do not achieve the genuine Hamilton presentation is unchanged. May I cite what Charles Hamilton himself said in reply to George Orwell's allegation that the *Magnet* style is easily imitated:

"On this point, I may say that I could hardly count the number of authors who have striven to imitate Frank Richards, not one of whom has been successful. The style, whatever its merits or demerits, is my own and — if I may say it with due modesty — inimitable. Nobody has ever written like it before, and nobody will ever write like it again. Many have tried but, as Dryden . . . has remarked:

"The builders were with want of genius curst
The second building was not like the first."

"Notwithstanding the above opinion, I accept the Rev. Robert Singleton's point that if it is your objective to reproduce every *Magnet* issue then it is reasonable to expect the 'subs' to be included.

"Finally, may I say how much I enjoy the early *Magnet* volumes which you generally confine to Club issues on the supposition that they would not be adequately attractive for general publication. These early stories have their own particular charm."

Novice Maurice Frank (aged 12), of 64 Wenallt Road, Rhiwbina, Cardiff, South Glamorgan, Wales CF4 6SE, says: "Though this is the third time I have written, I still feel the need to express my utmost gratitude for the Greyfriars Press programme and my approval of all three aspects of it. If one of these — the single facsimiles — is not receiving the support which is its due, then I would regard that with amazement. Personally, I think that the singles are very convenient, and long may they flourish as the volumes are doing. By now we possess at least 63 volumes — with more on the way. All this though our first purchase was only made last summer."

"Your service is superb!" says Mr R. W. Robinson of 121 Landguard Road, Eastney, Southsea, Hants PO4 9DS and Novice Nandu Thalange, of 'Melba', 42 Regent Road, Bolton BL6 4DQ is equally congratulatory. "Having just read some six *Magnet* and *Gem* reproductions, may I congratulate you on publishing these gems (pun?) of humour. If not quite gems of English literature, to be classed with Shakespeare and Dickens, may I suggest that their effect and their memory had a significantly more profound effect on the youth of 1907-1940 than any modern periodicals will have on the youth of today. Long may your productions live! (As for the latest two Club volumes . . . superb!)"

Dear Sir

Friar Harold Truscott, of 16 Claremont Road, Deal, Kent CT14 9TX, addresses us in more belligerent mood: "It is unfortunate that whenever I write to you it is to complain. But you do some peculiar things, and sometimes they annoy me. I have resigned myself to having to put up with more and more sub. Magnet stories (since I wrote this the frequency of their appearance seems to have stepped up) but when it comes to having to pay twice for the same item, your peculiarity goes a little too far.

"Let me explain: a little while ago you issued *Collectors Pie of Magnet and Gem* which included Magnet No. 992: *The Footprint in the Sand*. Now we have GHA 1935 which includes precisely the same story. Surely some bad planning here.

"You must have known that you were going to issue the HA, so why did you include *that* story in the earlier volume?

"Another instance: Vol. 3 of the abortive Greyfriars Library Book Series is the story of Ragged Dick. Now we are promised the Ragged Dick series in *Forever Bunter* for August. You may say that readers want the Magnets, very well. In that case why put it (the SOL version, I think) into that Volume 3?

"As I said, it means that those who, like myself, support you all the way are being penalised by having to pay twice for the same item. Please do avoid this duplication in future."

The Editor replies: *We do not know why the obvious solution has not occurred to Friar Truscott. The answer is, of course, that our aim is to publish every Magnet in due course. Thus duplication is bound to occur when a Magnet story has been reproduced in one pre-war Holiday Annual or another. Would he have us not produce some Magnets at all because they also appear — perhaps in truncated form — in some GHA or elsewhere? We venture to think that Friar Truscott, our second sternest critic, will find himself in a miniscule minority on this issue.*

"Lastly," he concludes, "why drop from six volumes to four for the next six months?"

That, o angry one, is quite simply a matter of company policy, dictated by various editorial and economic factors beyond our control. One might have guessed that, too.

(Friar Truscott please note: The Gem 1922 Barring-Out Series — 9 issues — is scheduled for the new Book Club programme.)

"Most Respected Abbot," writes Friar P. J. Harris, of 5542 Decelles Avenue, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3T 1W5, "Greetings and my thanks for Gazette Newsletter No. 34. I always look forward to this interesting little publication. Referring to the notice on page 2 that we have just three volumes left on the current programme — two volumes of 1916 *Magnet* plus *First Boys Paper Omnibus*: congratulations on maintaining the high quality and interest of the offerings from 3rd GBC Catalogue to the very end. The collection of boys' magazines and papers — December selection — should make for another grand volume.

"Now we Friars really live in a state of anticipation — the arrival of the Autumn 1981 Catalogue and the new Book Club Catalogue, the 4th. I certainly do not envy you your task. Choosing all the various titles to make up TWO different catalogues must be mind bending for you — for US a nostalgic feast.

"As for the unavoidable increase in the cost of your volumes — this had to come. I am sure that all Friars were prepared for this. *Surprising that it has not come earlier.* For the delay, Sir, our thanks and appreciation for the respite. We rest secure in the knowledge that the high quality of the volumes will never sag.

"So, with warmest wishes for an enjoyable Summer to all at 27a and God's blessings on you all."

Dear Sir

From Hastings, New Zealand, Friar J. R. Murtagh, of 509 Windsor Avenue, writes: "I found your newsletter No 34 most interesting. The increase in price of Greyfriars Press books was to be expected and even at £7.95 they are, I feel, cheaper than your 1970 volumes were at £2.10 when compared with wages then and now."

Friar Barry Tebb of Flat D, 127B Brudenell Road, Leeds 6, has a timely request: "Having read virtually all the *Magnet* volumes in print, I have recently started on the limited Book Club editions. The first ten *Magnets* seem among Richards' very best — obviously there was a freshness in his early work he found it difficult to maintain. Checking your lists, I note immense gaps in the sequence Nos 1 - 300 of the *Magnet* and I am sure many other readers would — like me — like to read chronologically through from No. 1 to 1680, and this is only possible if the early volumes are available. Also the development of the characters is a fascinating study which can only be followed by reading in this way. I hope you will find these comments useful."

The Editor replies: *Friar Tebb's prayer is answered! In the forthcoming Book Club collection we propose to do just that: publish the Magnet issues in strictly chronological order.*

Nos. 1 to 10 have already been issued. Now we continue with Nos. 11 to 20, 21 to 30, and so on until we meet in head-on collision with the general Greyfriars Press Books approaching from the opposite direction.

Friar V. Merrills, of P.O. Box 151, Exshaw, Alberta, Canada T0L 2C0 writes: "I read in the last Gazette of the coming price increases in your Autumn (Fall) Gazette. This, of course, is only to be expected. A great deal of credit is due to you for having kept the prices as low as possible for so long — while all around us other things have been rising so much more quickly. Well done!"



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



ANOTHER GEM ARTIST?

Recently, while he was preparing a collection of *Gems* for the new Autumn programme, our editor drew attention to the cover of issue No. 1338 dated September 23rd 1934. He was of the firm opinion that part of the front cover was drawn by the late Eric Parker, the famous Sexton Blake artist. I must agree with him entirely — as the style is typical of the Parker flair for atmosphere. The story in question is called 'The House of Dread' a reprint of an earlier green *Gem* yarn. Here 'Martin Clifford' had clearly based his theme on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's famous Sherlock Holmes story, 'The Speckled Band'. Regular artist was R. J. MacDonald, so one can only assume that perhaps Parker was brought in to get exactly the right atmosphere for such a dramatic scene. Both artists have long passed on, so have the editors concerned. Readers who do not normally buy the *Gem* reprints could not do better than purchase this volume. In my recent overseas survey, one reader confessed that this very story thrilled her more than that of the great Sir Arthur Conan Doyle!

W. O. G. Lofts

CLASSIFIED ADVT'S



SALES AND WANTS

It has become necessary to levy a small charge for insertion of advertisements in our Classified Advertisement/Sales and Wants Section. Please rehit 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: Original copies of the early *Magnet*, *William* books by Richmal Crompton and *Jane* books by Evadne Price. **FOR SALE:** Surplus copies of the above books, plus various Hamiltonia including some out-of-print Howard Baker Magnet volumes. List from: Mr. D. Swift, 22 Woodnock Close, Leeds, LS16 6PQ.

FOR SALE: Rare out of print volumes — all in mint condition: Club No 2 — Loder for Captain — £30; Club No 4 — Harry Wharton and Co in India — £30; Club No 5 — Tom Merry's Schooldays — £25; Club No 6 — Paul Dallas at Greyfriars — £30; Club No 7 — Greyfriars Crusaders — £25; Club No 9 — Boy From the Underworld (Dick the Penman) — £30. **ALSO,** Greyfriars Press Volumes — No 21 Tyrant of Greyfriars, £25; No 25 Billy Bunter's Christmas, £25; No 26 A Bargain for Bunter, £20; No 29 Mystery of the Moat House, £25; No 30 Burglar of Greyfriars, £25; No 19 The Greyfriars Hikers, £30; No 8 Mystery of Wharton Lodge, £30. **REMITTANCE WITH ORDER TO Ms Cox, 188 Tonbridge Road, Maidstone, Kent. (Letters only. No callers.)**

FOR SALE : Entire set of Greyfriars Press Magnet volumes Nos. 1 to 79 inclusive (This includes, of course, all the rare out-of-print volumes) Also, the full set of Gem vols and the entire run of H.B Holiday Annuals. Also for sale : every Greyfriars Book Club volume from No. 4 to 37 inclusive at £10 each. Altogether, a total of 146 volumes to be disposed of. Will sell as a complete set to any interested Collector, or separately. Offers invited in writing to : Paul Heywood, 101 Foden Road, Great Barr, Birmingham B42 2EL or Telephone 021-357-4683, after 6pm.

FOR SALE: The Black Sheep of Greyfriars, £25; The Greyfriars Crusaders (Club No 7), £25; Rebellion of Harry Wharton, £15; Mystery of Wharton Lodge, £20; Billy Bunter in China, £20; Calling Mr Quelch, £20; The Tyrant of Greyfriars, £25. Greyfriars Holiday Annual 1973 — £4; 1974 — £20; Howard Baker Holiday Annual 1974 (Omnibus 28), £3. Also Wall Map of Greyfriars School — £1. Apply to: Mrs Edna Dalby, 6 Spanish Place, London W.1. (Letters only. No callers.)

FOR SALE: Vol. 3, Bunter Court Series; Vol. 52, Bunter the Hypnotist; Vol. 1, Barring Out at St. Franks (Nelson Lee); Vol. 2 (Gem) Cardew of St Jim's; Vol. 1, D'Arcy the Runaway. Various Howard Baker Magnet volumes all mint. Please write to: Mr K. Whitaker, 69 Fairfield Road, Tadcaster, North Yorks.

MAGNET VOLUMES FOR EXCHANGE. Send for details, titles, numbers to: W. Taylor, 1 Basset Close, Frimley, Camberley, Surrey, CAMB 28795.

STOP
PRESS



The Greyfriars Gazette



NEWS FROM 'COURTFIELD'

On July 26, Bob Acraman was host at the Friars Summer meeting at 'Courtfield', 29 Kingsend, Ruislip, Middx. At time of going to Press we have no report from Host Bob Acraman of those in attendance, but no doubt it was one of the usual big turn-outs that mark such extra-special occasions.

STOP PRESS: List of some of the guests at 'Courtfield' just received

John Kirkham, Audrey Kirkham, Tom Porter, Vincent Loveday, Joan Loveday, Bill Lofts, Len Wormull, Keith Atkinson, Joan Golen, Laurie Sutton, Ming Kwai Sutton, Len Berg, Maurice Hall, Tommy Keen, Dr. Peter McCall, Maurice King, Leslie King, Sarah Batchelor, Amanda Hawkins, Alan Stingemore, Edward Coomber, Darrell Swift, Terry Jones, Anthony Whittle, Doris Peckett, Ann Clarke, Nandu Thalange, Sylvia Haynes, Peter Masters.

SINGLES

There has been no new Magnet Singles List issued since No. 2 Revised. So singles buyers who keep writing in for the *latest* List have to be sent the List they have already got! Rather a waste of time and postage for both parties.

When/if a new (3rd) Singles Catalogue is eventually published you will be duly informed through the columns of the Gazette. Meantime, No. 2 remains the current issue.

It is remotely possible, however, that we may decide to discontinue the 'singles' service altogether. Keeping such space-consuming stocks available puts a severe strain upon our limited storage facilities, and it may be decided, after investigation, that the 'singles' service is not commercially viable.

Most of you, quite understandably, much prefer the bound collections. Thus for us to occupy large areas of valuable storage space simply to satisfy a very small demand is hardly cost-effective.

We regret that shortage of space prohibits any further advertisements in this summer issue.

The next edition of the GREYFRIARS GAZETTE will be the special Christmas number (Newsletter No. 36).

Note to non-Bond readers: when ordering the Gazette by post please specify which issue you require.

Meantime, we wish many hours of happy reading to all Friars, and look forward to addressing you again, with news and views, in late November.



Sincerely,
Your Publisher



HOWARD BAKER PRESS LIMITED

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