



The Greyfriars Gazette

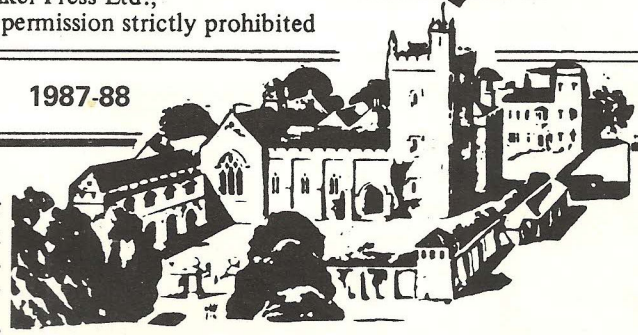
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NEWSLETTER No. 47 1987-88



Our apologies for yet another delay in sending you your latest Greyfriars Book Club volumes. As has so often been the case in the past, the blame lies with the slip-case (box) manufacturers. So often, the books are ready but the slip-cases which enfold them are not. Result, frustrating times for us and alarm and despondency for you, our readers.

Accordingly, we have held a 'straw poll' among a representative sampling of CLUB FRIARS, and the overwhelming verdict is: Dispense with the slip-cases, and give us a faster service.

So be it.

In any case, the new strong and bright, crystal-clear plastic jackets which we now provide ensure that no further protection of your Club volumes should really be necessary. Allied to which, the latest in a long line of tardy slip-case manufacturers was giving us a product which we couldn't really be proud of - and at ever-increasing prices. Sooner or later, we should have had to increase our prices to you - just to pay for the cost of book boxes!

As it is, the bold decision to dispense with them means that no price increase whatsoever need be contemplated in the cost of the ongoing Club volumes for the foreseeable future. Surely a situation devoutly to be wished!

Please do appreciate that a month or two must elapse before all the benefits of this New Order manifest themselves to everyone. But be assured that within a short time "the improvefullness and speedupfullness of the esteemed production line will be terrific".

Less anxiety for us all in the future!
[q.v N.L 46a Oct. '87]

At this time of writing - a month before Christmas, traditional season of bonhomie and goodwill - another fast-growing and most unwelcome recent 'tradition' threatens to make itself felt. This is the by now well-established 'tradition' of spiteful disruption of holiday times and festive occasions by militant industrial action, lightning strikes and go-slows, aimed at seriously inconveniencing and spoiling the small pleasures of as many people as possible.

This time it is another postal strike which threatens us: one which can have a disastrous effect upon our own pre-Christmas mail-out, as well as halting the delivery of greetings, and parcels and presents nationwide.

We must hope that commonsense and moderation will prevail among the ranks of our normally friendly and helpful posties, and that they will resist the pressure of a militant minority more interested in chaos than in the spirit of Christmas.

STOP PRESS

And at this much later time of writing -- TWO weeks before Christmas -- we find the postal strike has been abandoned. But not before irredeemable damage has been caused to our programme. The result is that the print-setting for this edition of the GAZETTE has spent a week in a postal log-jam, bringing our production to a complete standstill. Result, the last volumes of the season could be held back no longer but has had to be mailed out without Gazette. So this edition [No47] has to be mailed out to you separately by letter-post, at this later date.

FROM



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REPORTS FROM THE CLUBS

THE MIDLAND OLD BOYS' BOOK CLUB '87

"The year has been a quiet one – quiet but far from dull, for our thirty-eight members. Small attendances bring their own benefits, of course. Meetings can be less formal and certainly ours are notably friendly, relaxed and jolly, with everyone able to have his or her say in a way that was not possible when we had double the attendance, ten years ago. And the 'tuck', provided by the lady members, is absolutely spiffing!

"Our chairman, Tom Porter, is very much missed. He has been in and out of hospital and quite unable to attend meetings for over a year now. Ivan Webster and I share the chairmanship in his absence; we do our best but we cannot match his compendious knowledge of the hobby.

"In compensation we have had two visits from Bill Lofts and a letter, usually lengthy, each month when he cannot appear in person. Bill's membership of our club has enriched our meetings beyond measure; his fund of history and anecdote seems inexhaustible, with something fresh every time. His visits are the highlights of our year.

"Correspondence from members unable to be present is a growing feature of the meetings. Without doubt the star contribution has been Ron Gardner's serialised synopsis of a 35-chapter shocker: "The Black Dwarf of Mongolia". Quizzes are also popular, as are readings and an occasional game. There is much quiet enjoyment to be found at Dr. Johnson House, Bull Street, Birmingham, at 7.00 p.m. on the last Tuesday in the month. All are welcome."

"A special newsletter can be obtained from me. Write to: Geoff Lardner, Georgian House, Broad Street, Littledean, Gloucestershire. GL14 3NH."

Report from the COURTFIELD (FRIARS) CLUB

Bob Acraman writes:

"MEETING 24th January 1987 Once again a first class meeting at Courtfield following on quickly from our November meeting. Among the first to arrive was Doris Peckett closely followed by Sylvia and Josephine and Don Webster and others, the last to arrive being Leslie King, and all were greeted with a welcoming glass of Sherry, Chartreuse or soft drinks. On this lovely day the meeting began with a welcome by our Chairman, then a discussion on the reduced output of the repro's, then a further discussion on the early P.G. Wodehouse stories in the G.H.A. Don Webster's quiz was won by Margaret Bridges followed by a scrumptious tea prepared by your Courtfield Hostess. After tea a long discussion on the future of the repro's and a reading from readers letters. All too soon it was 9.30 p.m. and time to depart after

supper and a vote of thanks rendered by Leslie King."

"MEETING 3rd May 1987 Another first class meeting which opened by your Chairman calling for a minute of silence in respect and memory of the loss of member Eric Bristow who sadly passed away with cancer. Then followed a talk by your Chairman on the exhibition of Frank Richards work in the Ealing College organised by Stephen Goddard and Bill Bradford, your host being courteously shown round by the former and invited to tea with him in the college. After another superb "study tea" Friars asked to see the colour film of your host's tour this year from Los Angeles through to San Francisco, and Hollywood in the steps of Harry Wharton & Co in the book, then, supper, after a vote of thanks by Norman Kadish, the meeting closed at 9.00 p.m. Next two meetings 22nd Nov, and March 27th 1988 at Kingsgate Castle, Kent". For membership details, write to Bob Acraman, 49 Kingsend, Ruislip, Middx. (or phone 08956-30125)

LONDON FRIARS CLUB

Brian Simmonds writes:

Just to remind you all of "The Friars Club". We have been around for 10 years; we have 5 magazines a year; meet on a regular basis in each others homes. Sometimes there is an opportunity to buy some of our favourite Mags and at other times we have the odd outing. It is good to meet others and to discuss all our favourite characters – So calling all interested Friars: come and join with us – yearly subscription is £4.50p.

Please Write to Sec. of THE FRIARS CLUB - 4 Nutfield Road, London NW2 7EB.

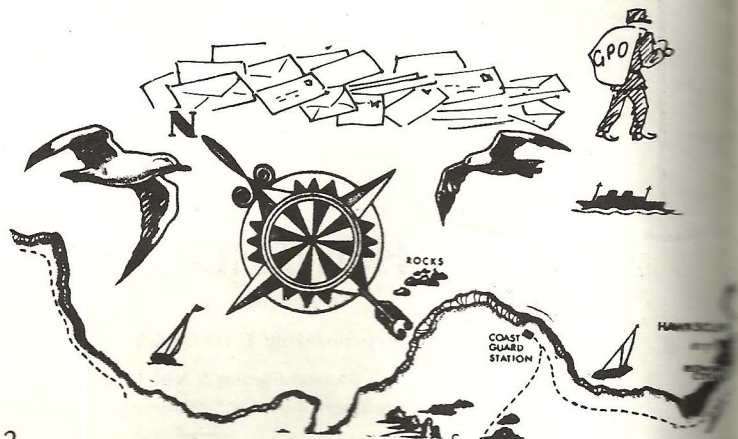
CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Sunday 20th December

By kind invitation of Greg and Jean Charters at
The Magpie and Stump
18 Old Bailey
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Cost will be approx. £13.00 per head, including drinks. Partners welcome. Payment in advance, please. Please ring Maurice Hall on 01-644 5914 for further information.

We regret that reports from the Northern Club – and others – not received at time of going to press.



THE BOY FRIEND LIBRARY CATALOGUE

At last after many years of research, this catalogue is a must for all collectors of this famous Library.

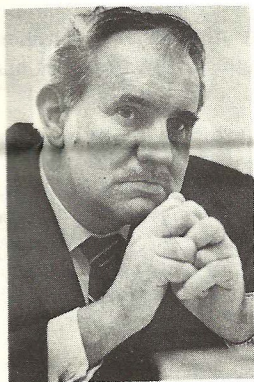
Lists not only both series of titles, dates, and authors, but states whether tales were original or reprinted. Giving also the source with numbers of original boys paper.

It also indicates famous characters and schools including original book length tales by Frank Richards/Martin Clifford not reprinted elsewhere. Sexton Blake, Nelson Lee, Ferrers Locke, Ken King, Biggles and so many other stories indicated whatever ones interest.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

On the subject of box slip-cases, Friar Jeremy Ward, M.A., of Rossall Junior School, Fleetwood, Lancashire, writes: 'Thank you for GBC Vol. 76, safely arrived as usual. I note your difficulties with box slip-cases and approve your decision to scrap them, interesting and impressive though they were, in the interests of speed of supply. Enclosed please find my order for GBC Vol. 77. How exciting it is to move into yet another year - 1915!'

And another well-satisfied regular reader is Friar L.W. Garner, of 39 Fairway, Kingsley, Northampton, who says 'Thanks for sending the Greyfriars Gazette No. 46 recently. I now enclose a cheque for £1 for the next issue, whenever it is forthcoming. Please put the small balance to your 'fighting fund' to help with things generally. Again, many thanks for making these wonderful Magnet volumes available. The magic never dies, and what better antidote can there be to times of stress and strain than a visit to Greyfriars? It never fails!'

ANOTHER OUT-OF-PRINT (O/P) TITLE

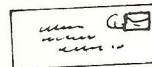
At the very moment of going to press we are informed by our warehouse of another o/p title.

It is Magnet Vol. No. 14 MY LORD BUNTER.

And - STOP PRESS - Book Club Vol. No. 8 THE SHEIK OF GREYFRIARS has just been reported o/p.

[A word to the wise. We predict that soon to go o/p will be POPPER ISLAND REBELS and BUNTER THE HYNOTIST!]

Whilst Friar G.T. Spong of 22 Downs Way, Sellenge, Kent, has this to say: 'I was very sorry to see the last of the Greyfriars Press Magnet series, but delighted that Magnet volumes continue to be available in the Book Club. My good wishes for every success in the future. As a reader of Charles Hamilton for over thirty years, many thanks for making these wonderful yarns available.'

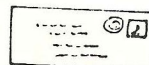


'And I would like to add my own vote of thanks,' says Friar K. Pauley, of 18 Beech Avenue, Lane End, High Wycombe, Bucks HP14 3EQ, 'for all the marvellous books you've published over the years. They have given me endless hours of pleasure, and no matter how life grinds me down I find a few hours with Bunter always picks me up. My favourite Magnet period is the thirties, and though I am now reading some of your 30s volumes for the fourth time I still find them just as refreshing as first time round.

'I suppose I am a relatively young Friar, at thirty years of age. I started reading the Cassell editions when I was eight, and graduated onto your own books when I heard about them through a school library. Through the Gazette and dealer network, I have managed to collect all your books except for Volume 18, and I hope beyond hope that you continue to reprint the Magnet series until it is completed from end to end.'



Someone else looking for Volume 18 is Miss Val Ansford, of 15a Duncan Street, Christchurch 8, New Zealand, who writes: 'I should have the complete Magnet series Volumes 1 to 100, but since I moved (July 1986) I have been unable to find Number 18, 'The Greyfriars Double'. Can any Friar help, please? And at what price?'

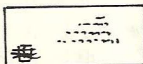


'I was delighted to find the Greyfriars Gazette in the latest parcel,' says Mrs Betty Hopton, of 'Karunda', 79 Scalpcliffe Road, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire DE15 9AB. 'In my opinion, the Gazette is very much a part of the Greyfriars saga, and much enjoyed. I am

so pleased that you are keeping on with the Book Club volumes, and hope that you will be able to obtain the missing magnet originals you need. Thank you so much for all the pleasure you have given everyone. I wish I had heard of the Magnet years ago. The day I obtained my first Howard Baker Magnet facsimile volume was a Red Letter Day in my life, and a day I will remember always.'

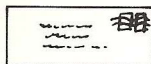


And Friar F.W. Field, of 30 Westfield Grove, High Barnes, Sunderland, Co. Durham SR4 8QZ echoes these sentiments, thus: 'To me the Magnet represents far more than a boys book that I used to enjoy. It represents a lost 'status Quo', which I shall never see again in my lifetime. Frank Richards' stories appealed to boys of all classes equally. As a lad from a working class family, I admired the 'decency' of Harry Wharton & Co and deplored the shady antics of Skinner and his cronies. In fact, I believe I owe the medically 'saving grace' that I don't smoke to my distaste for the underhand activities of certain groups in the Magnet.'



Friar Esmond Kadish, of 18 Grove Gardens, Hendon, London NW4 4SB, writes: 'I, too, am sad about the dropping of the Standard volume Greyfriars Press series. But no doubt this was inevitable under the circumstances. May I, however, ask you to consider the publication of a 'Special' - a Club edition of a Holiday Annual each Christmastime. I appreciate that the scheduled Book Club programme must have priority, and support this, but a Holiday Annual at Christmas now seems to be a tradition which, I feel, it would be a pity to lose.'

To which the Editor replies: 'Alas your appeal comes too late for implementation in the current '87 programme, but we will endeavour to encompass it in the next.'



From columnist Anthony Hern comes the following observation: 'It's a sort of tribute to the power of that dead language, Latin, when a teacher at a top London comprehensive school, Parliament Hill Girls' in Camden, should cause such a stir when she revealed that the funding for the study of Latin had been switched to the learning of Bengali.

'Yaroo! Bunterius exclamavit. As well he might. The Fat Owl of the Remove, along with Harry Wharton & Co, emerge from Greyfriars School speaking Latin because their creator, Frank Richards, thought it might be fun to translate one of his school stories into that dead tongue. Not just fun for him, though I'm sure it was; but fun, too, for schoolboys who might be in-

trigued to read of their heroes as part of a Latin lesson. The idea that Latin could be amusing is itself a challenge to those educationalists who are professionally anti-classics. For years they have posed the false antithesis that what is needed is not a dead language but something Living and Relevant (such as Social Studies). They are deliberately deaf to the argument that both, side by side, can be rewarding to girls and boys. Let me remind them of what the poet Horace wrote: Non omnis Moriar. For their benefit I shall translate: I shall not altogether die.'

(Originally appearing in the London Evening Standard, August 1987)



Friar Henry Gatiss, of 4 Pine Terrace, Catchgate, Stanley, Co. Durham DH9 8EJ, writes: 'Now 70 years young, and 42 years a coal-miner, I started to read The Magnet in 1929, and the very first copy I read in the blue and orange cover had an illustration of two schoolboys in Etons fighting against the famous old stile in Friardale Lane. The boys were Bob Cherry and Ponsonby. I wonder what series that Magnet was from. Can any Friar tell me? P.S. An impressive number of coal-miners and their sons read the old Magnet in the 'twenties and 'thirties. Even popular music was better then!'

As the postscript to the above letter shows once again, readers of The Magnet were drawn from all strata of society. It demonstrates that far from appealing to an elitist order, as some modist sociologists maintain, The Magnet had an overwhelming attraction for all social groups, and was read not only by secondary school, private school, boarding school, and grammar school pupils, but also by those attending elementary, state and charity schools.

The appeal of The Magnet transcended all barriers of class, religion and income group. To quote from The World of Frank Richards (Lofts/Adley, 1975) page 157: 'A poll conducted on the subject (of Magnet readers) showed that occupations include: doctors, chartered accountants, lawyers, airline pilots, industrial workers, postmen, miners, Members of Parliament, university professors, college lecturers, school masters and mistresses, army, navy and airforce officers and other ranks, artists priests and ministers of every denomination, civil servants, bank managers, police officers, engineers, housewives, interior decorators, photographers, company directors, authors, journalists, film actors, architects, TV personalities, librarians, publishers, stock brokers and magicians'.

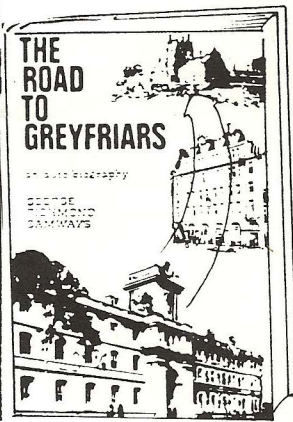
The foregoing surely indicates the scope of Greyfriars fan-dom. Clearly Magnet readers were drawn from all sections of society. There was nothing whatever elitist about The Magnet or its creator, nor about the many hundreds of thousands of readers all the world over who, down the years, have drawn an immeasurable amount of enjoyment out of its pages. - Ed.

Every reader of the Greyfriars and St. Jim's stories has always wanted to know what 'went on' in the editorial sanctum of the Magnet and Gem offices at Fleetway House.

For the first time the veil is lifted and the full story revealed. This definitive, fascinating account of life among the Magnet personalities is related by one who saw and experienced it all — and who is the sole survivor of that glorious golden age of boys' school fiction.

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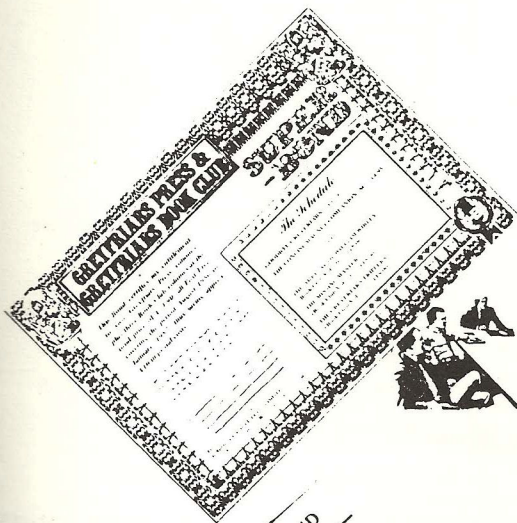


PRICES

Friars will be pleased to note that there is no price increase in any of our volumes, either current, future or stock titles. We plan to maintain this price stability well into 1988. And, hopefully, longer.

NEW CATALOGUE AND BOND

We are now circulating the new Catalogue and Bond for 1988. In it, six new volumes of the Greyfriars Book Club are announced — and we hope to increase on that number as soon as we have 'copy' for the missing periods i.e. Magnet Nos. 204 to 231 [of 1912] and Magnet Nos. 256 to 281 [of 1913]



THE NEW BOND



Howard Baker



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NEW BOOKS FOR 1988

Forthcoming GREYFRIARS BOOK CLUB volumes scheduled to be published in the current year: Available directly from the Publisher at £18 per volume

Publication Date
JULY 1988

BUNTER'S BANKNOTES
by Frank Richards (Club Vol. 78)
Magnet issues: No. 366, *Bunter the Blade*. No. 367, *The Last Plunge*. No. 368, *Captured at Last*. No. 369, *Tom Dutton's Triumph*. No. 370, *Through Fire and Flame*. No. 371, *Bunter's Bank Notes*

Publication Date
JANUARY 1988

A collection of single stories, plus a two-issue series recording Johnny Bull's dramatic departure for Australia

Publication Date
MARCH 1988

THE GATHERING OF THE SCHOOLS
by Frank Richards (Club Vol. 79)
Magnet issues: No. 372, *The Hun Hunters*. No. 373, *Carried Away*. No. 374, *The Fall of the Fifth (Double Number)*. No. 375, *Special Constable Coker*. No. 376, *When Johnny Comes Marching Home*

The double-sized, colour-covered Issue No. 374 features a large gathering of the schools at Eastwood House, including the stalwarts of Greyfriars, St. Jim's, Highcliffe and the girls of Cliff House.

Publication Date
MAY 1988

HURREE SINGH'S PERIL
by Frank Richards (Club Vol. 80)

Magnet Issues: No. 377, *The Mystic Circle*. No. 378, *The Schoolboy Acrobats*. No. 379, *Hurree Singh's Peril*. No. 380, *Heroes of Highcliffe*. No. 381, *The Punishment Policies*. No. 382, *The Slacker's Eleven*

Mystery, acrobatics, peril from the East, Fishy's latest scheme, cricket. Long, complete stories.

LORD MAULEVERER'S BEWITCHMENT
by Frank Richards (Club Vol. 81)
Magnet issues: No. 383, *Fifty Pounds Reward*. No. 384, *The Scout's Victory*. No. 385, *The Old Boy's Challenge*. No. 386, *Maul's Flirtation*. No. 387, *The Schoolboy Lawyer*. No. 388, *The Mystery of the Gables*

Publication Date
SEPTEMBER 1988

THE GREAT GREYFRIARS REBELLION
by Frank Richards (Club Vol. 82)

Magnet issues: No. 389, *The Mysterious Mr. Mobbs*. No. 390, *Sportsmen All*. No. 391, *The Master Who Stayed at Home*. No. 392, *Schoolboys Never Shall Be Slaves (Double Number)*. No. 393, *Ponsonby's Plot*

A picnic party on Popper's Island for Harry Wharton and Co., plus a surreptitious smoking party on Courtfield Common for Harold Skinner and his cronies — both discovered by the irascible Sir Hilton Popper, new School Governor — lead to ructions at the school. This volume includes one double-sized, colour-covered issue (No. 392) together with a collection of single issues

Publication Date
NOV / DEC 1988

AT WAR WITH GREYFRIARS
by Frank Richards (Club Vol. 83)

Magnet issues: No. 394, *The Fellow Who Won*. No. 395, *At War with Greyfriars*. No. 396, *Backing Up Bunter*. No. 397, *Coker's Canadian Cousin*. No. 398, *A Lancashire Lad's Luck*. No. 399, *Champion of the Oppressed*

A new porter at Greyfriars. A surprising visitor for Coker. Competition frenzy in the Remove. Loder at his most 'loderish' — until the juniors find an unexpected Champion of the Oppressed in the unlikely shape of the duffer of the Fifth.

SIGNING OFF ...

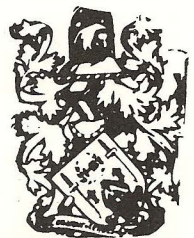
Many thanks to our readers for their Christmas and New Year greetings cards which are already arriving here in some profusion. Very much appreciated!

We heartily reciprocate your good wishes, and wish you very happy holiday reading in the weeks ahead. You have over two hundred volumes to choose from!

Looking forward to addressing you again, with more news and views later in 1988.

Sincerely,

Your Publisher





The Greyfriars Gazette



CLASSIFIED ADVTS

Charge for insertions in these columns: 5p per word.

Sales and Wants

WANTED TO PURCHASE: Cassell-Skilton Bunter hardbacks and Howard Baker Magnet volumes. Also some duplicates for Sale. Please state titles wanted. Contact: Colin Crewe, 12B Westwood Road, Canvey Island, Essex. Tel: 0268 693735.

FOR SALE - Greyfriars Press and Book Club volumes, both IN-PRINT and OUT-OF-PRINT. Enquiries to: J.T. Hayes, 29 Northway, Wallington, Surrey SM6 8DH.

FOR SALE

From the Estate of the late Friar Eric Bristow **HOWARD BAKER PUBLICATIONS**

Out-of-print Magnet volumes: £16 each.
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- 6 The Downfall of Harry Wharton
- 7 Billy Bunter and the Greyfriars Pretender
- 8 The Mystery of Wharton Lodge
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- 10 Billy Bunter and the Greyfriars Mutiny
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- 15 Calling Mr Quelch

- 16 Harry Wharton's Enemy
- 17 The Black Sheep of Greyfriars
- 19 The Greyfriars Hikers
- 20 Alonzo The Great
- 21 The Tyrant of Greyfriars
- 22 Billy Bunter's Christmas
- 23 The Joker of Greyfriars
- 24 The Kidnapped Schoolboys
- 25 Billy Bunter in China
- 26 A Bargain for Bunter
- 27 The Shadow over Harry Wharton
- 28 Billy Bunter's Circus

- 29 The Mystery of the Moat House
- 30 The Burglar of Greyfriars
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- 33 The Sleuth of Greyfriars
- 34 Bunter's Seaside Caper
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- 36 Bob Cherry's Big Bargain
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- 43 The Dictator of Greyfriars

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- 45 Gunmen at Greyfriars
- 46 The Popper Island Rebels
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- 49 The Mystery Man of Greyfriars
- 50 Billy Bunter's Easter Trip
- 51 The Bounder's Rebellion
- 52 Bunter The Hypnotist
- 53 Billy Bunter's Banknote
- 54 Vernon-Smith's Rival
- 55 Bunter The Lion-tamer
- 56 Bunter's Funny Turn
- 57 Expelled from Greyfriars
- 58 Bunter's Christmas Carol

- 59 Bunter's Rich Relation
- 60 The Greyfriars Impersonator
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- 62 The Big Bang at Greyfriars
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- 64 Billionairing with Bunter
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- 97 Bunter's Lawsuit
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HB Holiday Annual 1974

HB Summer Omnibus 1977
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Vol.

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- 2 Loder for Captain
- 3 The Making of Harry Wharton
- ⑤ Paul Dallas at Greyfriars
- 7 The Greyfriars Crusaders
- 8 The Sheik of Greyfriars
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