



"Billy Bunter is working industriously on 'Billy Bunter's Weekly.'"

THE GREYFRIARS GHOST!

*A Play in Verse for Amateur
Actors*

(NOTE.—This play may be performed by readers of THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL, without fee or licence, on condition that the words, "By permission of the Editor of THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL," appear on each programme.)

Characters :

HARRY WHARTON	} The Famous Five of the Greyfriars Remove.
BOB CHERRY ..	
FRANK NUGENT	
JOHNNY BULL ..	
HURREE SINGH ..	
BILLY BUNTER ..	The fat boy of the Remove.
PETER TODD ..	Leader of No. 7 Study.
ALONZO TODD ..	The Duffer of the Remove.
TOM DUTTON ..	A deaf junior.
THE GHOST ..	Impersonated by Harold Skinner.

ACT I.

SCENE.—No. 7 Study in the Remove Passage.

(PETER TODD, ALONZO TODD, and TOM DUTTON are doing their "prep," and BILLY BUNTER is working industriously on his amateur magazine—"Billy Bunter's Weekly.")

BUNTER :

Say, Toddy, how do you spell "cricket?"
It starts with "c"?

PETER TODD :

Right on the wicket!

BUNTER :

And is there, please, an "a" in "leather?"

PETER TODD :

You are a nuisance, altogether!

BUNTER :

Oh, really! Can't I ask quite meekly
If you will help me with my "Weekly"?

PETER TODD :

I've got no patience with you, Billy
You're absolutely soft and silly.
How can I do my prep. in peace?
Let all these futile questions cease!

BUNTER :

Dutton, is there an "a" in "leather"?

DUTTON :

Eh? What was that about the weather?

BUNTER :

I didn't ask about the weather.
I said, "Is there an 'a' in 'leather'?"

DUTTON :

Speak up, speak up, my little man!
Speak up as loudly as you can.
Although not deaf (Todd, stop your
sneering)

I'm just a trifle hard of hearing!

BUNTER :

Is there an "a" in "leather," chump?

DUTTON :

Oh, no, I haven't got the hump!

BUNTER :

I didn't ask you if you had!

DUTTON :

What's that? Do you suggest I'm mad?

BUNTER (*aside*) :

The fellow's deafness makes me groan!
My kingdom for a megaphone!

ALONZO TODD :

Dear Bunter, let me help you, pray.
In the word "leather" there's an "t".

BUNTER :

I'm much obliged to you for that.
How many "t's" are there in "bat"?

ALONZO TODD :

Why, there is only one, dear Bunter—

BUNTER :

And how do you spell "leather-hunter"?

PETER TODD :

Here, porpoise! let your questions wait.
How can a fellow concentrate?
And, look! you've splashed a pint of
ink

Over my Latin verbs, I think!

BUNTER :

I'm really very sorry, Toddy—

PETER TODD (*aside*) :

Enough to ruffle anybody!

BUNTER :

I want a study of my own.

PETER TODD :

You'd have one, too, if I had known
You meant to run your "Weekly" here,
And make a mess, which I've to clear!

BUNTER :

Why not clear out, my scraggy friend?

PETER TODD (*jumping to his feet*) :

Such insults, Owl, must swiftly end!

BUNTER :

Why not move into Number One?
With Wharton you would have great fun!

PETER TODD :

You think I'm going to shift for you?
A thing I should be mad to do!

ALONZO TODD :

Hush, hush, my comrades, do not quarrel!
I know a story with a moral.
Two naughty schoolboys fought one day;
One smote the other, sad to say,
And dealt him such a stunning blow
That he was maimed for life, you know!
My Uncle Benjamin impressed—

PETER TODD :

Oh, please give Uncle Ben a rest!

ALONZO TODD :

My Uncle Ben impressed on me
The dire results of enmity.
He says that we should love each other,
You must treat Bunter as a brother.
Now, kiss him nicely. If you can't—

PETER TODD :

I'd rather kiss my aged aunt!

BUNTER (*pushing back his cuffs*) :

Look here, if Peter wants to fight,
I'll put him through the mill all right!
I'll give him a tremendous lamming!
Toddy, you needn't think I'm shamming!

PETER TODD :

You! Why, you couldn't hurt a fly!

BUNTER :

I'll hurt a Todd, though. Mind your eye!
(BILLY BUNTER *advances upon PETER TODD, then stops short suddenly, with a look of terror. GHOST appears in doorway. BUNTER is facing it. His companions have their backs to it.*)

PETER TODD :

Why, you are showing funk already!

BUNTER :

Oh, dear! I wish my nerves were steady.
I fear they must be in a poor way:
I see a phantom in the doorway!

(*All eyes are turned towards the door. Juniors start back in alarm. The GHOST, with a sheet tied round its head, and two slits so that it can see, stands motionless.*)

PETER TODD :

Great jumping crackers! Who—what is
it?

GHOST :

I come to pay my ghostly visit!

DUTTON :

Are you a thing of flesh and blood?

GHOST :

You don't suppose I'm made of mud?

BUNTER (*in terror*) :

Oh, help! I've got a sinking feeling!
Support me, Toddy, I am reeling!

ALONZO TODD :

Strange apparition, clad in white,
What is your mission here this night?

GHOST :

Of Greyfriars School I am the Ghost—

PETER TODD :

It's someone having us on toast!

GHOST :

Nay, talk not thus, my foolish friend.
From lofty clouds did I descend,
To view the scenes of early youth;
Long years have passed since then, in
truth.

And now I come to cast my spell
On those who in this study dwell.

BUNTER :

Toddy, the Thing will do us harm!
My knees are knocking with alarm.
I feel as if I'm going to swoon—

PETER TODD :

Brace yourself up, you silly coon!

GHOST :

I fain would speak
with Peter Todd,
Alonzo, too, whose
ways are odd.

I also would have
speech with Dut-
ton,

And Bunter, too—
the greedy glutton!

(GHOST advances a
short distance into
the room. BILLY
BUNTER backs away in
alarm.)

BUNTER :

Oh, Toddy! get a
cricket stump,

And give the beastly ghost a clump!

It's coming, see, in my direction!

PETER TODD (*grimly*):

I'll try and hasten its ejection.

(PETER picks up a cushion, and hurls it with
all his force at the GHOST. He misses; but the
GHOST swiftly glides away, and is lost to sight.)

DUTTON :

My nerves are thoroughly upset!

ALONZO TODD :

It was a sight I'll ne'er forget!

(BILLY BUNTER, uttering a feeble moan,
collapses on the floor, and lies motionless.)

PETER TODD :

Why, Bunter's fainted clean away!

ALONZO TODD :

With shock and terror, I should say!

PETER TODD :

I'll see if I can bring him to.

Lend me a pin, Alonzo, do!

ALONZO produces a pin from the lapel of his
coat and hands it to PETER, who sticks it into
BUNTER'S calf. A piercing yell echoes through
the study.)

PETER TODD :

I fancied that would do the trick!

BUNTER (*scrambling to his feet*):

You rotter! That's a bit too thick!

DUTTON :

That Ghost of Greyfriars puzzles me.

Who ever could the fellow be?

It couldn't be a genuine spook

Or it would not have slung its hook.

PETER TODD :

It was a jape on
some one's part,
But, Jove, it gave
me quite a start!

ALONZO TODD :

I hope it doesn't
come again.

Such sights as that
would turn my
brain!

BUNTER :

I think we'd better
lock the door,

And then it can't
come any more!

PETER TODD :

A ghost can get
through door or wall,

But that was not a ghost at all!

BUNTER :

It was! I'm jolly sure of it:

That's why I had a fainting fit!

PETER TODD :

You weak-kneed funk! You would
collapse

At nothing—wouldn't he, you chaps?

ALONZO TODD :

Our portly friend could not be made

A dashing hero, I'm afraid.

BUNTER :

How dare you speak of me like that,

You weak, anæmic, skinny rat?

I've got more pluck than all the Todds.

I'd fight against no end of odds!



Billy Bunter advances upon Peter Todd, then
stops short suddenly, with a look of terror.
A Ghost appears in the doorway.

PETER TODD :

Yet when the Ghost of Greyfriars comes
You holler "Rescue!" to your chums!

BUNTER :

Well, anyway, the ghost has gone,
And so I think I'll carry on!

(BUNTER sits down at the table, and busies himself with his "Weekly." The other occupants of the study resume their prep. For a moment there is silence. Then—enter GHOST.)

GHOST :

The Ghost of Greyfriars reappears
To haunt the scenes of early years!

PETER TODD :

Now, Bunter, here's your chance to show
How full of pluck you are, you know!
This puts your courage to the test:

Eject the ghost—
we'll give you
best!

(GHOST advances upon BUNTER. The fat junior, seized with panic, rushes from the room, knocking furniture over, and causing a general commotion.)

BUNTER (in flight) :

This is no place for
me, you chaps.
I'll see you later on
—perhaps!

(Exit BUNTER, with
GHOST in hot pursuit after him.)

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE.—No. 1 Study in the Remove Passage.

(THE FAMOUS FIVE are seated round the table. HARRY WHARTON is engaged in compiling the team for the next Form match.)

WHARTON :

Bulstrode, in goal, I think will suit—

CHERRY :

I fancy Hazeldene, old fruit!

WHARTON :

Well, what about Tom Brown at back,
And Nugent leading the attack?

NUGENT :

That is a very wise suggestion! (Laughter.)

BULL :

Where's Wharton playing? That's the
question!

WHARTON :

I'll operate upon the wing
In partnership with Hurree Singh.
It's not my usual place, I know,
But still, we'll just see how we go.
It ought to prove a great success—

HURREE SINGH :

Yes, we shall bag the goalfulness!

WHARTON :

Now, who shall play at centre-half?

CHERRY :

Bunter, I think—

NUGENT :

Don't make us laugh!

WHARTON :

The mere suggestion
makes one sob.

You shall be centre
half-back, Bob!

(Enter BUNTER, looking very much scared and startled.)

CHERRY :

Hallo, hallo, hallo!
Here's Billy!

What do you mop
your face for, silly?

BUNTER :

I've just had an ex-
citing fight

With a fierce ghost, at dead of night!

WHARTON :

Now, Bunter, don't be asinine:
The clock has only just struck nine!
How can it be the dead of night,
When all our lamps are burning
bright?

BUNTER :

Well, anyway, I met a ghost,
It would have scared and startled
most;
But, being a courageous chap,
And ever ready for a scrap,
I dealt the ghost an awful blow,
And knocked it off its legs, you know!

CHERRY :

You sent it sprawling? I should smile!
A ghost would make you run a mile!



Bunter enters No. 1 Study, scared and startled

BUNTER :
I hit it with a fearful thud :
I really think that I drew blood !

BULL :
You can't draw blood from any ghost.
It seems you're having us on toast !

BUNTER :
I know you fellows think it odd,
But Peter and Alonzo Todd,
The moment that the spook appeared
Took to their heels, and disappeared !
They left the ghost for me to fight !
I put it on his back all right.

HURREE SINGH :
The worthy Bunter's telling lies——

WHARTON :
A fact we fully realise !

BUNTER :
In all my life, I've
never lied——

NUGENT :
You couldn't, Bunty,
if you tried !

BUNTER :
The Ghost of Greyfriars stalked
about,
With one fierce blow
I knocked it out.
I smote with vigour
and with vim,
Just as I box when
in the gym !

The phantom gave one piercing wail——

CHERRY :
Tell us another fairy tale !

BUNTER :
I tell you, I attacked it, Cherry——

BULL :
A nice, romantic fable——very !

HURREE SINGH :
Our portly friend deserves a bumping,
A licking, and a thorough thumping !

WHARTON (*rising*) :
Let's give it to him, here and now !

BUNTER :
Stand back, you beast ! Don't touch me——
Ow !

CHERRY (*gripping BUNTER by the collar*) :
Now tell us, on your solemn word,
Was it a ghost you saw and heard ?

BUNTER :
I tell you, Cherry, honour bright,
A ghost I saw this very night !
Its head was covered in a sheet
And what it said I can't repeat.
But it was certainly a ghost——

NUGENT :
Or some one having you on toast !

CHERRY (*releasing BUNTER*) :
I don't think it's a fairy tale
Because the porpoise looks so pale !

BUNTER :
Do you suggest that I'm afraid ?
If so, a sad mistake you've made !
I know each one of you's a funk,
At spectres you would swiftly bunk !
Your lips would part in gaping terror,

You'd have the wind
up, and no error !
But as for Bunter,
W.G.

A fearless, gallant
youth is he.

No ghost can ever
frighten *him*
Nor make him shake
in every limb.

Wharton, if you had
seen that sight
You would have fled
into the night !

Cherry, if you had
seen it, too,

I doubt if you'd know what to do !
Nugent, if you had seen this ghost
You'd rush in terror to the coast !
Bull, if it came before you now,
You'd yell to me for help, I vow !
Inky, you'd find it most uncanny,
And growl at it in Hindustani !
But I—the bravest of the brave,
Would like a hero bold behave !
I'd pulverise the Thing, you know,
And dash it to destruction——*Oh !*

(BUNTER *breaks off with an exclamation of
terror. Enter GHOST.*)

GHOST :
Pray cease your puny prattling, silly
fool !
I am the Ghost of Greyfriars School !



The Famous Five arm themselves with cricket
stumps, and advance upon the Ghost.

(ALL jump up to their feet. THE FAMOUS FIVE glare defiantly at the GHOST, but BUNTER takes refuge behind JOHNNY BULL.)

WHARTON :

Now, Bunter, come and prove your pluck!

Attack the Ghost—we wish you luck!

BUNTER :

Ahem! I don't think I will try.

I've got a heart attack, that's why!

CHERRY :

You said you'd dash it to destruction!

BUNTER :

That was a somewhat false deduction.

(Laughter.)

BULL :

You'd pulverise the Thing, you said.

BUNTER :

Yes—but I think I've lost my head!

NUGENT :

Why, don't you fight it, here and now?

BUNTER :

Oh, really, I—I don't know how!

GHOST :

I come to cast my deadly spell
On those who in this study dwell!

I come, in robes of solemn white,
To fill their hearts with fear and fright.

CHERRY :

I don't believe you *are* a ghost!

WHARTON :

He seems more human, Bob, than most!

GHOST :

I am the Ghost of Greyfriars School!

BULL :

I guess your nerve is pretty cool!

BUNTER :

Drive it away, you fellows—quick!

I don't believe this is a trick.

It is a spectre, sure enough;

Give it a kick, and then a cuff!

GHOST :

Whoever lays his hand on me—

WHARTON :

We're game to try it, as you'll see!

NUGENT :

Let's pick up cricket stumps, you fellows.

Hit it, and then see if it bellows!

(THE FAMOUS FIVE arm themselves with cricket stumps, and advance upon the GHOST. The latter tries to flee, but JOHNNY BULL puts

his back to the door and prevents its exit. The cricket stumps descend upon the GHOST.)

GHOST :

Yow-ow! You'll smother me with bruises!

WHARTON :

Let him clear, kids, if he chooses!

(The GHOST breaks away. CHERRY goes forward and tears away the sheet, and Skinner of the Remove stands revealed.)

NUGENT :

It's Skinner, having us on toast!

BUNTER (becoming suddenly brave) :

I knew it couldn't be a ghost!

WHARTON :

Skinner! I do not like such jokes!

SKINNER :

I only did it for a hoax!

CHERRY :

You did your best to scare us silly.

SKINNER :

The only chap I scared was Billy!

BUNTER :

Why, I'm a lion-hearted chap,

That's ever eager for a scrap.

And, if these fellows hadn't rushed you,
I should have battered you and crushed
you!

BULL (advancing upon BUNTER) :

You awful fibber! Out you go!

BUNTER :

I say, hold on! I mean—leggo!

CHERRY :

Let's roll the silly porpoise out!

HURREE SINGH :

He merits it, without a doubt!

(BILLY BUNTER is rolled over and over towards the door, and five boots speed his departure.)

BUNTER (from without) :

You've punctured all my ribs, you fellows!

I'm gasping like a pair of bellows!

I'm really very badly hurt,

And now I'm rolling in the dirt!

NUGENT :

Roll on, thou podgy porpoise roll!

CHERRY :

I kicked him twice, and scored a goal!

(Laughter)

WHARTON :

And now, let's deal with Master Skinner
He'll find he hasn't backed a winner!

SKINNER :
Don't be too hard on me, you chaps!
You'll let me off this time, perhaps?

BULL :
Over the table with him, Harry!
Give him six strokes, and do not tarry!

SKINNER :
Against such treatment I appeal!

WHARTON :
My cricket stump you'll shortly feel!
(SKINNER, loudly protesting, is placed in a
convenient position across the table, and
WHARTON administers six strokes with the
cricket stump.)

WHARTON :
Whack! That is wallop numero one!

CHERRY :
Skinner no longer thinks it fun!

WHARTON :
Whack! I've delivered number two!

SKINNER :
You rotters! Let me go! Yaroooo!

WHARTON :
Whack! How is that for number three?

NUGENT :
Skinner enjoys it, I can see!

WHARTON :
Whack! There we go with number four!

BULL :
Unlike young Twist, he'll want no more!

WHARTON :
Whack! Number five has now descended!

CHERRY :
And Skinner wishes it was ended!

WHARTON :
Whack! That completes the dose, I
think!

NUGENT :
Now, shall we smear his face with ink?

WHARTON :
No, no; I think he's had enough.
A further dose would be too rough.
Now, Master Ghost, you can depart,
And take these words of mine to heart:
If you should play this prank again
Your punishment will give you pain
Compared with which, your present
troubles
Will be as light and airy bubbles!
You understand me, do you not?
For future japes you'll catch it hot!

SKINNER !
I'll never do it any more.
Oh, crumbs, I'm feeling jolly sore!
So-long, you chaps; I'm going now—
(Moves towards the exit.)

CHERRY :
The Ghost of Greyfriars makes his bow!

CURTAIN.

SPECIAL NOTE TO ALL "HOLIDAY ANNUAL" READERS

For the benefit of new readers of the HOLIDAY ANNUAL, who have met our famous schoolboy heroes for the first time in the preceding pages, it should be mentioned that the adventures of these ever-popular characters are followed week by week by hundreds of thousands of my reader-chums in the pages of the companion papers. Harry Wharton, and all the jolly crowd of Greyfriars boys, appears in every issue of the "Magnet"; Tom Merry and his chums of St. Jim's in the "Gem"; and Jimmy Silver and his merry men of Rookwood in the "Boys' Friend"; while the "Popular" is unique in that it contains every week complete stories of all three of the world-famous schools, with the added attraction of "Billy Bunter's Weekly"—the funniest schoolboy journal in the world—inset as a four-page supplement.

I never heard yet of the boy or girl who did not, after reading for the first time a story of one of the famous schools, demand more! It was to meet this universal demand for "more" that the series of school-story papers enumerated above was built up. The companion papers, therefore, provide a ready means whereby HOLIDAY ANNUAL readers may keep in touch with their favourite characters, pending the issue of next year's ANNUAL!

THE EDITOR.

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