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DOES ANYONE KNOW?

Whilst perusing through a publication entitled "The Wonder Book of Comics" published by Odhams Press Ltd., I was astonished to find in its pages a story of Greyfriars featuring Bunter and Vernon-Smith called "Billy Bunter's Booby-Trap", written of course by Frank Richards. I have not heard of this story, or, any mention of it before in the C.D. Whether this story was a reprint of an earlier one published in one of the Holiday Annuals, I cannot say; the illustrations were very crude and by an artist called Norman Mansbridge. They were very similar to those drawn by Hutton Mitchell, one of the very first Magnet Artists.

It will be very interesting to see if some of the "experts" of Magnet lore can tell me whether this is an original story or not?

This book was published in the region of 1949 I believe.

W.O.G. LOFTS.

June 6th, 1955.

Dear Herbert Leckenby,

Many thanks for the C.D. I was a little afraid that the railway strike might keep it away: but luckily it is a bantamweight. The present limit of eight ounces is something like a jolt on the solar plexus to a purveyor of light literature --- light in perusal but not so light in typescript! However, we must all hope that the trouble will soon be over, and the wheels turning again.

I was very interested by the remarks from Friend Lofts on Page 179. The story he mentions was specially written by me for the "Wonder Book of Comics" about six years ago. So far as I remember, it is the only story I ever wrote for Odham's: though at one time I was within measurable distance of writing regularly for that firm. That was a long time ago: in the nineteen-twenties or early thirties: precise dates always escape me. The idea was a new periodical run on school stories by Frank Richards. Naturally I liked the idea very much: but I had to realise that it would be hardly fair to Gem and Magnet for their author to appear as a rival in the field. So very reluctantly I had to tell Hinton that it couldn't be done. I rather wished that I had decided otherwise, when the K.O. came along in 1940. But who can foresee the future! "Quid sit futuram cras fuge quaerere" isn't always a wise motto, though it comes from my beloved Horace.

I am told that the new series of Bunter plays on T.V. will begin on July 9th, and run fortnightly. Luckily I had completed and despatched them before the G.P.O. ceased to function. By the way, our plump friend will be seen in the BBC Annual later in the year.

I had a very welcome visitor the other day; no other than Arthur Gorfain of Sydney and the "Silver Jacket". You can guess that it was a pleasant occasion. Did I wish that I was a few

decades younger and could fly out to Sydney!

With kindest regards,

Very sincerely,

FRANK RICHARDS.
