

*By Harry Wharton*

(The Famous Schoolboy who edits  
"The Greyfriars Herald")

I CAN safely say that there is not another fellow at Greyfriars who receives so many letters as I do.

Even Lord Mauleverer, who has sisters and cousins and aunts scattered all over the globe, and whose postbag is voluminous, receives only a tithe of what I receive in the way of correspondence.

If I were to tell you the number of letters I have had during the past year you would be fairly staggered. Some of you would think I was indulging in a flight of fancy, as Billy Bunter so often does. But the fact remains that my yearly influx of letters runs into many thousands. Nor is this altogether surprising. For there are readers of "The Greyfriars Herald" all over the world—some of them residing in the farthest outposts of the Empire—and when they are in doubt or difficulty, or have any criticism to make, they write to me as one friend to another. They know they will always get a hearing, even though I may be too busy to give them an immediate reply.

There are lots of grown-ups, I believe, who dislike getting letters. They are haunted by thoughts of Bills. But to the average schoolboy, the postman is not merely a man who carries a bag—a paid servant of the government. There is something wonderful and magical about him, and when we watch his approach from our study windows we are on tip-toe with expectancy.

Having been swamped with correspondence ever since I started to edit "The Greyfriars Herald," I suppose I ought, by this time, to

take letters as a matter of course and not get excited about them. And yet every morning I find myself looking forward as eagerly as ever to the arrival of the postman.

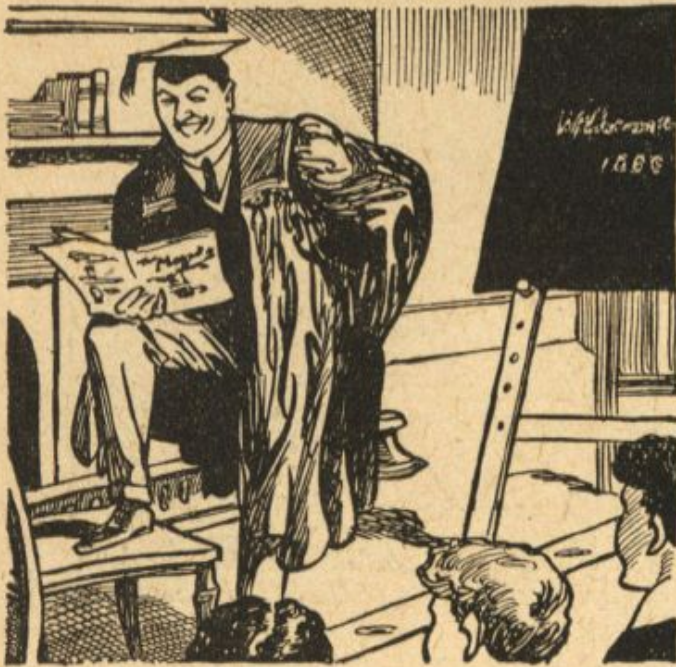
I will now ask my readers to take a peep over my shoulder while I go through my morning mail.

Eagerly I take up my paper-knife and slit open the envelope at the top of the pile. I take out the letter, and glance at it with a smile. It is from a reader signing himself "Sunny Jim," and his letter is typical of many hundreds that I receive.

"Dear Harry Wharton,—I have just finished reading this week's issue of 'The Greyfriars



I am always glad to meet the postman



A schoolmaster reads aloud to his class certain extracts.

Herald,' and I think it is simply ripping! Even the weird and wonderful article by Billy Bunter does not mar the number. It only makes it all the more amusing! Billy's article sent me into shrieks of laughter—I expect he intended it to be taken seriously.

"I hope you and the members of your staff will continue to turn out such splendid numbers. And may the 'Herald' and its cheery editor continue to flourish!"

This, as I have said, is a typical letter. The writer asks no questions and makes no criticisms. He simply lauds the "Herald" to the skies. When I have time, I will send "Sunny Jim" a few lines in acknowledgment of his kind tribute.

Now for the next letter. This is a horse of a different colour. Not all my correspondents are "Sunny Jims." Just listen to this:

"Dear Wharton,—The current issue of 'The Greyfriars Herald' is too tame for words. You want to buck your ideas up!

"We don't want any more tales of Greyfriars School. We are sick and tired of them! Why don't you give Buffalo Bill and Dick Turpin a look in? We want tales of thrilling adventure and hairbreadth escapes; and if you don't alter the style of your paper at once

I shall cease to be a reader. I've given you fair warning.—Yours, DISGUSTED."

"Disgusted" will have to remain disgusted; because I do not propose to make the sweeping alterations he suggests. "The Greyfriars Herald" deals almost exclusively with school life; else why call it "The Greyfriars Herald"? We might as well call it "The Wild West Weekly," and have done with it.

The majority of my readers prefer that our stories and articles should deal with Greyfriars, and it is the majority I have to study. "Disgusted" threatens to give up buying the paper, but that threat will occasion me no sleepless nights. I would not have any fellow read "The Greyfriars Herald" unless he genuinely liked it.

We now come to the third letter of the pile. This, also, proves to be a letter of criticism, but it is fair and just criticism, and that is what I like.

"My Dear Wharton,—I enjoy your little paper immensely; but it is not perfect, and I venture to suggest certain improvements.

"Your best humorous writer is Tom Brown; yet nothing has appeared from his pen for five long weeks. There are hundreds of your readers who hunger and thirst for Tom



"Billy Bunter's article sent us into shrieks of laughter."

Brown's laughable articles, and they are very disappointed to think that you have dropped him in favour of other contributors. Would you be good enough to bring him into the limelight again?

"The poems by Dick Penfold are excellent; but I do not see why Penfold should monopolise your poetry column. He is not the only fellow in the Greyfriars Remove who can write verse. It would be only fair to give some of the others a look in. Will you do this?"

"One other point. Although the 'Herald' is mainly a humorous paper, I think an occasional story written in a more serious vein would not come amiss. Mark Linley can write this type of story; and I suggest that you give him a chance to exercise his talents.

"Wishing you and your paper every success,

"Yours sincerely,

"A CANDID FRIEND."

Now, there is nothing to cavil at in that letter. The criticisms of the writer are helpful, not destructive; and he may be sure of gaining our editorial ear.

But we must hurry along with our correspondence, or we shall never be done.

Here, by way of variety, is a letter from a schoolmaster. I can picture some of you raising your eyebrows, and exclaiming: "Fancy a schoolmaster reading 'The Greyfriars Herald'!" Well, schoolmasters *do* read our little paper, as a diversion from their more serious studies. And I could name a doctor and a barrister who read the "Herald," too.

My schoolmaster friend writes to say that on certain days, when his pupils have been specially good, he reads aloud to his class certain extracts from "The Greyfriars Herald." I guess there are a good many boys who would like to belong to that class!

And so we go on through the colossal pile of correspondence. There are letters of every sort, "from grave to gay, from lively to severe," as the poet has it.

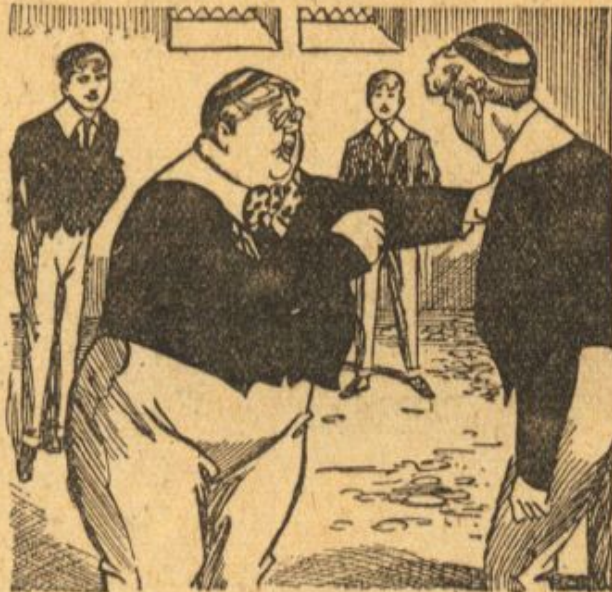
I keenly appreciate the hearty support and good wishes of all my chums, and they may rely upon me to keep the flag of "The Greyfriars Herald" flying as proudly as ever.

THE END.

## Great Days at Greyfriars

### First Day of Term

By Dick Penfold



The holidays have run their course,  
We're back to school's monotony;  
And now must turn our minds, perforce,  
To Latin, Greek, and Botany.  
Farewell to the vacation's joys,  
The sweet, delightful summer-time;  
New term commences; Greyfriars boys  
Will have a somewhat glummer time!

Bob Cherry's back; he sheds a tear,  
And Smithy's sad and sorrowing;  
While Billy Bunter's also here,  
Back to his deeds of borrowing.  
"Will some kind fellow," he inquires,  
"Lend me a bob right speedily?"  
Then to the tuckshop he retires,  
Devouring doughnuts greedily!

Hallo! There's Fisher Tarleton Fish.  
He shakes my hand most clammily;  
There's Skinner, too; and I could wish  
He'd stayed home with his family.  
There's Squiff and Brown, a merry pair,  
Both full of gay absurdities;  
Who is that giant over there?  
Why, Coker, on my word it is!

Welcome to all the Greyfriars throng!  
A noisy, vast community;  
Let's hope that we may get along  
In friendliness and unity.  
May all the days of this new term,  
Be happy days and jolly days;  
We'll play our parts with courage firm,  
Refreshed by recent holidays!