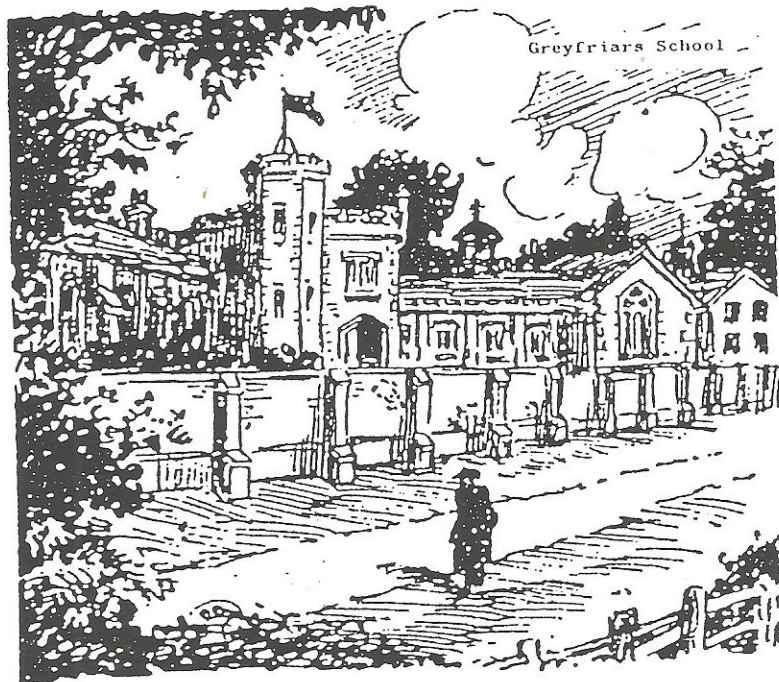


*POEMS OF GREYFRIARS*

*VOLUME 4*

*KEITH ATKINSON*



Dedicated to the successive editors of  
Collectors' Digest.



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*Keith Atkinson*

June 1996

TALKING SENSE.

Harry Wharton's temper had the Famous Five estranged,  
And in stubbornness of mind he would not go out as arranged.  
"Leave me alone!" he grunted when his friends proposed a game,  
A puntabout at football, on the off-chance that the same  
Would liven up his surly mood and lift the sullen frown,  
But Wharton remained adamant, and would not follow down.  
"My absurd Wharton," Inky purred in conciliatory tone,  
"Let the milk of human kindness percieve the dogful bone.  
Let not the sun go downfully upon your direful wrath,  
Too many cookful gentlemen debase the soupful broth.

"Oh! Let him stew in his own juice," growled Bull with  
savage face.

"If he's going to be stubborn, let him mooch about the place!"  
"My esteemed Johnny," Inky crooned, "this wisefulness I tell,  
The stitchfulness in timefulness goes longest to the well.  
A halfful loaf is better than a bushful bird in hand,  
And the bestful plans of mice and men are built on  
shiftful sand."

Bob Cherry could not long remain in unforgiving mood.  
He said "Oh, come on Wharton, there's no reason to be rude."  
"My esteemed Cherry," Inky smiled, "I've said talkfully  
enough

To pour oilfulness on water which is troublefully rough.  
The speechfulness is silvern, the forgivefulness divine.  
The lastful straw will sinkfully upset the Plimsoll line."

Then Wharton grinned at last and said "Your proverbs  
are such that

They'd raise a smile upon the face of the proverbial cat."  
The Nabob's calm had won the day with soothing words pacific,  
As Inky said "The smilefulness is joyfully terrific."





TIPPING COKER.

"I'm warning you for your own good.  
I'll keep an eye on you."  
Said Coker to the Famous Five,  
"And just remember too  
Fourth Form cheek or impudence  
I'll put down with firm hand.  
Just take that as a tip from me  
And do as I command."

"Gentlemen, chaps and fellows,  
You hear what Coker says."  
Said Bob, "He's a short way with fags,  
But we have shorter ways.  
And sauce that suits the gander  
Should suit the goose as well.  
Let's give a tip to Coker  
To take him down a spell."

What happened next was sudden,  
Took Coker by surprise.  
Five pairs of hands upturned him,  
His feet waved to the skies.  
They held his legs and kept him  
Inverted on his head  
'Midst many yells of laughter.  
"Ooogh! You young sweeps!" he said.

"We're warning you for your own good,"  
Said Cherry with a grin.  
That Fifth Form cheek and impudence  
We look on as a sin."  
" 'Ware prefects!" yelled out Smithy  
As Wingate hove in sight,  
"You young sweeps, what's this game?" he asked  
As Coker was held tight.



"Just giving a tip to Coker!  
He gave us one you see."  
Laughed Wingate "Let him go at once."  
The Five set Coker free.  
For a fraction of a second  
Horace stood there on his head,  
Then crashed to earth, "Ooogh, ow!" he gasped.  
"I'll smash 'em!" Coker said.

"Come off, you men." Bob chuckled,  
"I think something's made him cross.  
If you want another tip Coker,  
Just come to us, old hoss."  
The Famous Five, still chuckling,  
Departed at a trot.  
Whilst Coker gasped and spluttered.  
He'd asked for all he'd got.



WAVED OFF.

"Fancy a donkey ride?" Bunter enquired,  
"I'll show you chaps how it's done."  
The Famous Five grinned at the prospective sight  
As they strolled in the hot Margate sun.

"Donkey, sir?" asked a man with a red, cheerful face  
As the Famous Five gathered around.  
"Right - ho!" replied Bunter. "Just watch me, you men!  
And you'll see me cover the ground."

"Oh, my eye!" gasped the red-faced man, slightly dismayed,  
As he eyed Bunter's corpulent weight.  
"You'll be a bit 'eavy, but I'll take a chance.  
Now Neddy, just stand still and wait."

Twice, Thrice, Bunter heaved to get onto it's back,  
But each time slithered back to the sand.  
Neddy stood like a rock. "Bunk me up!" Bunter snapped  
And Inky and Bob gave a hand.

They grasped Bunter and heaved, and up Bunter went,  
But to his annoyance and pain  
He went over the top and came down with a bump,  
And Bob grinned "Oh, do that again!"

But the chums combined efforts succeeded at last  
And Bunter bestraddled the moke.  
Then Neddy threw up his back heels in the air  
And into a gallop he broke.

Bunter flopped on it's neck as his steed gathered pace  
And the public were shouting for more.  
"Ride him, cowboy!" yelled Bob. "Attaboy! Stick to him!"  
As the donkey raced down the seashore.



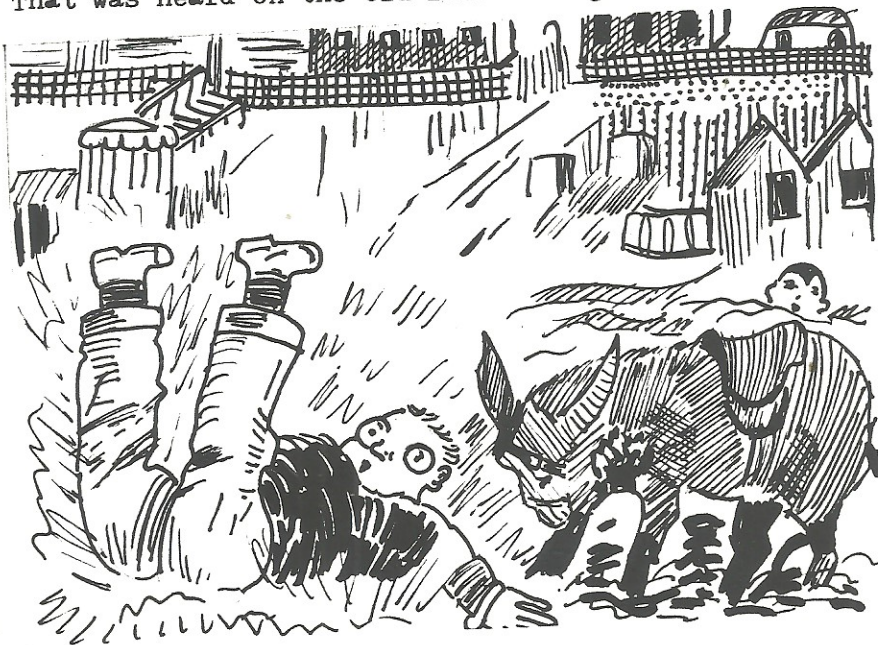
"Whoop! Fire! Murder! Help! yelled out Bunter, "I say,  
Oh, stoppim! Oh, crikey! Oh, lor!"  
Neddy fled down the sands and the mob yelled behind  
As the moke gathered pace more and more.

Wild yells greeted the rider as he raced along.  
People dodged from the fat Owl's wild ride  
With howls of protest, mixed with cheers as he went  
Smashing castles of sand in his stride.

Down the shelving and glistening sands Neddy rushed.  
Then he suddenly came to a stop  
At the edge of the sea where the waves splashed ashore,  
And Bunter sailed over the top.

"Yaroo! Whoop! Oh, help!" Bunter yelled as he soared,  
And he splashed in the waves with a roar.  
Then some good-natured seabathers grasped the fat Owl  
And dragged him up dripping on shore.

He was led, drenched and gurgling, back to his friends  
Who were gurgling too with delight,  
And from bathers and trippers alike came a yell  
That was heard on the old Isle of Wight.





SUPPER AT STEAK.

"Come down to supper, Todd, old chap,"  
Said Bunter pleasantly.  
"I shouldn't care to go and eat  
Without your company."  
Teddy stared in puzzlement  
At Bunter's strange request  
As Bunter eyed a parcel large,  
With which he seemed impressed.  
And Toddy, following his glance,  
Soon knew the reason why,  
For wrapped up in that parcel  
Was a steak and kidney pie.  
"Well, shall I carry this for you?"  
He reached out a fat paw.  
A prompt rap from a ruler raised  
A loud and fearful roar.  
Bunter rolled out supperwards,  
Soon Peter followed suit  
As Bunter's plan to gain the pie  
Had so far not borne fruit.  
At supper table Bunter was  
Attacking bread and cheese,  
But felt that steak and kidney pie  
Was better far than these.  
Though, doubtless, Todd would let him have  
A portion of that pie,  
The whole delicious dish of it  
Would hardly satisfy.  
"I say, old chap," the Owl exclaimed,  
"Quelch wants to see you now.  
He called to me as I came down,  
I hope it's not a row."  
"Oh, blow!" Todd grunted, standing up,  
But as he turned to leave  
A sharp voice rapped out "Bunter! Boy!  
Do my own ears decieve?"

8

Why did you just now make to Todd  
A quite untrue remark?"  
"I didn't, sir!" gasped Bunter. "What?"  
"I mean I meant it for a lark.  
I wasn't going to touch that pie  
The moment he was gone."  
"That pie!" ejaculated Quelch  
In penetrating tone.  
"You utterley untruthful boy!"  
Quelch thundered with a boom,  
"You would appropriate Todd's pie  
When he had left the room?  
Take fifty lines and leave the Hall  
At once, now, do you hear!"  
"I haven't had my supper, sir!"  
Gasped Bunter, quaking fear.  
"I have no doubt you've had enough,  
But if not you will miss  
Your supper as a punishment  
For telling lies like this."  
Bunter rolled dismally from Hall,  
Not only pieless now,  
But even bread and cheese and cake  
Were thus denied him. "Ow!"  
Grinning glances followed him,  
But Bunter did not grin,  
He could have taken lines or whops -  
A missed meal was a sin.  
But, no help for it, Bunter left,  
Groaned loudly as he went.  
Like Cain of old he could not bear  
A greater punishment.



9

BOOTIFUL FOOD.

The door of Study No. 1 was standing half-ajar  
As Bunter listened in the passageway.  
His fat ears heard quite plainly all the Famous Five's  
remarks  
For they did not lower their tones in any way.

On the table Cherry dumped a parcel tied with many knots,  
And Bunter guessed untold what it contained.  
He knew a picnic had been planned on the island in the Sark,  
And that girls from Cliff House School be entertained.

"This parcel will be safe enough while we see about the boat."  
Said Bob. "But what if Bunter sees it here?"  
Asked Nugent. "Well, and if he does, he won't know  
what's inside."  
And as they emerged the fat Owl bounded clear.

"I say, you fellows!" Bunter squeaked. "Can't stop!"  
Cherry replied,  
"Not even for the pleasure of your voice."  
"Well, if you'd like my company -." "Big 'if'!" said  
Johnny Bull,  
"And the girls would object strongly to our choice."

"Oh, all right!" said Bunter scornfully, "You're jealous  
of my looks,  
And afraid I'll cut you out with both the girls."  
"Oh, my hat!" "Ha, ha." The Famous Five were struck by  
that remark  
And considered it as one of Bunter's pearls.

They chortled as they went downstairs and Bunter watched  
them go,  
And from landing window watched them out of gates.  
The coast was clear now, back he rolled to Study No. 1  
With his thoughts upon the feast that now awaits.

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Bunter lifted up the parcel and then staggered with  
the weight.

He never knew that foodstuffs weighed so much.  
He puffed and panted up the stairs and closed the  
box-room door  
And released that heavy parcel from his clutch.

Having dumped the parcel on the lid of Mauly's trunk  
He fumbled for his knife and cut the strings,  
Anticipating stacks of cakes, jam tarts and ginger beer,  
And all sorts and conditions of good things.

It was a glorious vision, only seen in his mind's eye.  
It was not, alas, to be in actual fact.  
A cardboard box was opened and as Bunter peered inside  
He wondered why things were in newsprint packed.

Unrolling one the fat Owl gaped to find that it contained  
Nothing more exciting than a brick.  
Why Bob had packed a brick with tuck was more than he  
could guess,  
And he began to think it was a trick.

He grabbed another bundle and another brick disclosed.  
A further one contained an ancient boot.  
A mouldy old potato and some empty sardine tins  
Were discovered, and the fat Owl gave a hoot.

"Beasts!" hissed Bunter, glaring at that precious load  
of junk.  
The dreadful truth dawned on his puzzled mind.  
Those beasts had known he'd listened in at Study No. 1  
And had fixed up this dud parcel as a blind.

No wonder they had chortled as they hurried down the stairs.  
They were heading for the island in the Sark.  
This was just the sort of thing those beasts considered  
as a joke,  
But the Owl did not regard it as a lark.



Leaving strings and wrappings and the contents  
strewn around

He hurried for the boathouse at top rate.

He scuttled down the passage, fairly bolted from  
the House,

But Bunter found he'd got there much too late.



PASSING IT ON.

When Bunter's ventriloquial tricks  
Resulted with him in a fix  
And threat of castigation,  
The thought of flogging from the Head  
Filled Bunter with a fearful dread,  
And his imagination  
Caused him to vanish from the scene.  
Where, no-one knew, he was not seen  
To grace the railway station.

His father, ringing on the phone,  
Informed the Head that he alone  
Should take responsibility.  
And forthwith did berate the Head  
Until his face became quite red,  
And filled him with hostility.  
The Head could find but one resource,  
He rang for Trotter with more force  
Than became his venerability.

Requesting Mr Quelch to come,  
And thereupon he spoke with some  
Acerbic iteration,  
Informing Quelch he took the view  
He should endeavour to undo  
This absurd situation.  
That Bunter must be found at once,  
To take all steps to find the dunce,  
And end the aggravation.

Quelch left the study with set brow,  
His temper was tartaric now.  
His face wore grim expression.  
When Coker dawned upon the place  
And grinned at Quelch's thunderous face,  
Observing scant repression.  
"A Fifth Form boy," snapped Quelch in rage,  
"Should act with dignity, not engage  
In juvenile indiscretion.



"I should report to Mr. Prout  
Your acting like a stupid lout  
But for your crass obtuseness."  
And Quelch swept on, and Coker glared.  
His dignity was now impaired,  
Gone was his cool aloofness,  
As Temple of the Fourth came past  
And chuckled at his overcast  
Expression and his puceness.

"Funny, what?" and Coker smote.  
"Oh, gad!" was Temple's yelling quote  
As burning ear throbbled wildly.  
He fled and vanished down the stair,  
Reprisals were unthought of there,  
Unsafe to put it mildly.  
But Sammy Bunter rolled along  
Intime to ease his feelings strong,  
And instantly reviled be.

"You fat worm, what's your little game?"  
"Nothing!" back the answer came.  
"Then beat it, or I'll lick you!"  
Suiting the action to the word,  
And Sammy's voice was loudly heard.  
He disappeared quite quick too.  
As Temple dribbled him once more,  
More comforted than heretofore,  
And gave his ear a flick too.

Sammy scudded on his way  
And in the lower passageway  
Met Trotter looking pensive.  
"Mind where you're going to, you lout!"  
"Yes, Master Bunter, I'll watch out."  
Said Trotter, apprehensive.  
The shadow of the sack did loom  
If ever Trotter should presume  
To kick Bunter's rear, extensive.



"If jobs was not so 'ard to find - "  
Moaned Trotter in his inner mind,  
"I'd boot that fat cove flat."  
With Bunter he could not use force,  
But even Trotter had resource,  
A last resource at that.  
A loud and strident caterwaul  
Re-echoed round the servant's hall  
As Trotter kicked the cat.



ROWING WITH COKER.

Coker was busy at launching a boat  
With Potter and Greene for the day,  
Or, to put it exactly, was barging about  
In his usual bull-headed way.

"For goodness sake shove the thing over, you men,  
I could handle it myself with ease!"  
The boat slipped in the water and sent up a wave  
Which soaked Coker right up to his knees.

"You big clumsy asses!" He gasped with a howl  
As Potter winked slyly at Greene.  
They had let go the boat with a suddenness which  
Horace Coker had never foreseen.

"You great bawling dummies! Just look at my bags!"  
Snorted Coker in impotent rage.  
But at last he consented to get in the boat  
And pushed off from the school landing stage.

Coker was holding the lines while they pulled  
And giving some valuable tips  
On the subject of rowing, which goaded his friends  
Into feeling like getting to grips.

"Don't dig up the river now, Potter," he said,  
"And Greeney, that oar's not a flag.  
Don't wave it about like one, why can't you - urrrgh!  
Oh, you idiot, I'm soaked from that drag!"

Perhaps accidentally, Potter had raised  
An exceedingly large waterspout.  
"You clumsy ass, look at me!" "Did you get splashed?"  
Enquired Potter in innocent doubt.

"Look at me!" Coker howled, as he let go the lines  
And dabbed handkerchief to his wet face.  
"Look out!" exclaimed Greene, "There's a boat just behind  
And we're drifting all over the place!"

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From astern came the Bounder's skiff shooting along  
And the boats rocked in tune with the bump.  
"You clumsy young asses, why can't you steer clear?"  
Bellowed Coker, "Are you off your chump?"

"You great howling fathead!" the Bounder exclaimed.  
"Are you trying to sink us or what?  
If you had half the sense of a rabbit you'd know  
How to steer up the river, you clot!"

Coker leaped to his feet and a boathook he grabbed.  
What intention he had was not clear,  
But Smithy was not going to wait to find out,  
And his scull clumped on Coker's right ear.

Crash! "Ow!" Coker landed across the gunwhale.  
With his head dipping into the Sark.  
As the boats rocked apart he dropped into the flow  
Clutching onto the side of Smith's barque.

Potter and Greene rowed away from the skiff  
As Coker was not going to drown.  
A pull up the Sark in the sunshine of June  
Without Coker there acting the clown

Would make an enjoyable end to the jaunt,  
And Coker was left there afloat.  
He was trying to clamber right into the skiff,  
And almost capsizing the boat.

Smithy and Redwing pulled into the bank  
Dragging Coker behind as they rowed.  
"Now clear!" snapped the Bounder, but Coker climbed up  
Till a jab from a boathook bestowed

Extracted from Coker a loud fearful yell.  
He let go and he clawed up the bank.  
There he stood, drenched and dripping, and shaking his fist,  
Using language most lurid and frank.



THE PHANTOM FOOD FILCHER.

With dancing eyes and drooling lips fat Billy Bunter gazed  
On Coker's hamper, sent that day. The contents he appraised.  
Within the boxroom, out of sight, he started on a pie  
Of luscious chicken. Gravy dripped on chin and coat and tie.  
A dozen jam tarts followed and some chocolate eclairs,  
And apples, oranges and grapes succeeded nuts and pears.  
A box of chocolates disappeared like oysters down his throat,  
As Bunter battled manfully with tightening waistcoat.  
Three jars of jam went quickly down as sticky face grew red,  
And Bunter grunted, gasped and gulped, but on and on he fed.  
At long, long last he ceased to chomp and peered with glazing  
eye

At empty basket, then he moaned "I think I'm going to die!"  
And die he did, at last the Owl had overdone the grub.

He lay there, fat and sticky, like an overloaded tub.  
At service next day, Dr. Locke dwelt on the sin of greed  
And gluttony and selfishness, when others were in need.  
The boys of Greyfriars chastened were at Bunter's sad demise,  
But felt that now their grub was safe from Bunter's prying  
eyes.

Fat fingers nevermore would filch from study cupboard stock.  
How wrong they were! The Greyfriars' boys received a  
startling shock.

Next day each study cupboard shelf was quite bereft of cake,  
And day by day, and night by night, they made the same  
mistake.

The Famous Five kept watch one night, and at the midnight hour  
A fat and spectral figure came a-seeking to devour.

They gazed in wonder as the ghost did glide from door to door,  
And fat and ghostly jaws did chomp until there was no more.

With Bunter gone Removites thought their tuck would not be  
taken,

But now they found to their dismay, that they had been  
mistaken.

For things are even worse now, it's impossible to fill  
The ghastly, greedy, gormandising ghost of Bunter, Bill.

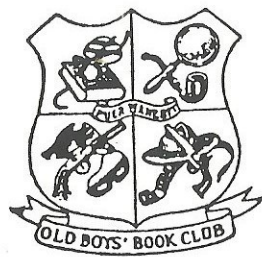


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