

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

ROGER JOHNSON, 210 RAINSFORD ROAD, CHELMSFORD CM1 2PD

no. 101 6th September 1990



IT WAS THEN THAT FARQUARSON REALISED HIS UNDER-ARM DEODORANT WAS NO LONGER WORKING. "

Thanks to all who entered our little Centenary Competitions - and thanks especially to those who so generously donated prizes.

Miles Tubb provided what I consider to be the best caption (see left). To him goes the bumper "Dr Watson Special" issue of THE MUSGRAVE PAPERS, courtesy of the Northern Musgraves. This copy is signed by Jeremy Paul, Bert Coules & as many other contributors as I could get hold of. Peter J. Crupe came close with

"I CAN TELL YOU DIDN'T USE YOUR DEODORANT AGAIN THIS MORNING!"

- but Miles got there first.

Other captions that made me smile were:

"ARE YOU SURE THIS IS A CURE FOR TENNIS ELBOW?"

"A STILL CONVALESCENT DR WATSON FINDS THE STRENGTH TO REMONSTRATE WITH HIS NEW FLATMATE SHERLOCK HOLMES UPON LEARNING THE TRUE FATE OF HIS BULL PUP."

"THIS IS HOW I FINALLY DEFEATED MORIARTY, WATSON: WITH ONE OF MRS HUDSON'S ROCK CAKES!"

"YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO HIT ME ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE HEAD, YOU FOOL!"

"DO THREE MORE ELBOW RAISES, AND I'LL SWAP OVER AND LET YOU USE THE WEIGHT."

"DO YOU MEAN TO SAY BY LIFTING THIS TEN TIMES A DAY I'LL BE ABLE TO BEND A POKER, MR ATLAS?"

"ARE YOU SURE THIS IS HOW TO DANCE THE LAMBADA?' 'YES, CLOSE YOUR EYES FOR THE BIG FINISH!'"

and not least:

"PLEASE DON'T, ROGER! I SWEAR I DIDN'T KNOW THAT THE POSTAL RATES WERE GOING UP THE WEEK AFTER I SENT YOU ALL THOSE D. M. ENVELOPES!"

Most of you recognised that the characters depicted are John Turner & his victim Charles McCarthy, from "The Boscombe Valley Mystery". The 1st correct answer drawn from the bowler hat (more convenient than a deerstalker!) was Pam Bruxner's. Pam wins a copy of the *Magico* reprint of the 1901 pictorial souvenir programme from Gillette's New York production of SHERLOCK HOLMES. A lovely item, most kindly provided by Rupert Books.

Now on to the news. If you missed the 7% Convention, then you missed a treat. It's too early for a final figure, but money raised for the Samaritans will be about £1000. A lot of hard work has gone into raising this amount while at the same time providing a memorable weekend for convention-goers. Well done, the organisers and their helpers! You still have the chance to help the Samaritans,



though. Jane Sayle (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU) has a number of the Rupert-Bear-dressed-as-Sherlock-Holmes lapel pins for sale at £2 each, including postage; proceeds go jointly to the Samaritans and to police charities.

"John North" offers another jolly read with SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE ARABIAN PRINCESS (Ian Henry, £9.95); unlike THE GERMAN NANNY, this one is definitely a comedy, cleverly hovering just this side of farce. Princess Fatima disappears from the stage of the Hyperion Music Hall, and the chief suspect is Sherlock Holmes himself (don't worry, though: it's all a plot devised by Colonel James Moriarty, to avenge his late brother, the Professor...) If this theme seems familiar, it's because the book is based on that clever musical comedy THE DEERSTALKER. Meanwhile Jon Lellenberg has come up with something rather more important in NOVA 57 MINOR (Gaslight Publications - available, as are many other good things, from Rupert Books of 59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE). Here we have the full, tortuous and fascinating story of "The Man Who Was Wanted", the only non-Doyle Holmes tale to have been - for a while - considered an authentic part of the Canon. Beautifully produced, as always with Gaslight.

Other new books. Allen Sharp has four more apocryphal adventures out from Cambridge University Press at £2.25 each: THE CASE OF THE HOWLING DOG, TCOT SILENT CANARY, TCOT MAN WHO FOLLOWED HIMSELF and TCOT BUCHANAN CURSE. Already published is M. J. Trow's LESTRADE & THE GUARDIAN ANGEL (Macmillan, £11.95), while due this month is LESTRADE & THE DEADLY GAME (Constable, £11.95). This month also Bantam Press will publish Glen Petrie's second Mycroft Holmes adventure, MONSTROUS REGIMENT (£12.95). Published in May by Ravette Books (3 Glenside Estate, Star Road, Partridge Green, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 8RA), a firm new to me, was UNTOLD CASES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES no. 1: THE CASE OF THE FOTHERINGHAM DIAMOND by Tom Bullimore & Ian Anderson (£3.95, paperback); the authors' names are new to me too. In June Penguin Books published GREAT ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES by Arthur Conan Doyle in their Puffin Classics series (£2.99). Bill Blake reminds me that another new Gaslight publication is SCHLOCK HOMES: THE COMPLETE BAGEL STREET SAGA by the late Robert L. Fish; this is probably the most outrageously clever and funny collection ever of Holmes parodies (and it can be had from Rupert Books).

Following the success of THE QUALLSFORD INHERITANCE, Lloyd Biggle Jr has written THE GLENDOWER CONSPIRACY ("a memoir of Sherlock Holmes from the papers of Edward Porter Jones, his late assistant"). KIRKUS REVIEWS, PUBLISHERS WEEKLY and other American journals have given the new book enthusiastic reviews (Council Oak Books, 1423 S. St. Louis, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74120, USA; \$14.95). In December Vintage will publish a paperback edition of Anthony Burgess's collection THE DEVIL'S MODE, containing his sole venture into Holmesian pastiche. In October comes THE SECRET FILES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (Constable, £11.95) by June Thomson & Aubrey B. Watson. June Thomson is the very well-respected author of the Inspector Finch novels; somehow I doubt the existence of Aubrey B. Watson. (Some of this information comes from Post Mortem Books' latest catalogue, available from 58 Stanford Avenue, Hassocks, Sussex BN6 8JH.) Robert Richardson's elegant THE BOOK OF THE DEAD (Augustus Maltravers & the case of the Sherlockian manuscript) is now out in paperback (Gollancz, £3.50).

Just arrived this morning is SH22, Sylvian Hamilton's new catalogue: books, comics, posters, games, Persian slippers - it's all here (Hermitage, Mount Pleasant, Duns, Berwickshire TD11 3HU, Scotland; do remember to send a stamped & addressed envelope or a couple of IRCs when writing away for catalogues). The Northern Musgraves have published their first Musgrave Monograph, PACING THE MUSGRAVE RITUAL by Carol Whitlam (£1.50 from Kathryn White, 149 Myrtle Terrace, Cross Roads, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD22 9AJ); there are only 50 copies, so don't blame me if you're unlucky! Finally on this subject, STAGE STRUCK no. 1: PARTNERS IN CRIME is now out: this is Yvonne Parkin & Pam Clarke's transcript of their fascinating interviews with Jeremy Brett & Edward Hardwicke (£2.50 + 40p postage UK, or 70p Europe, or £1.80 outside Europe; cheques payable to P. M. Clarke, but send orders to Ms Y. Parkin, 44 Wimslow Close, Redesdale Park, Wallsend, Tyne & Wear NE28 8TB). Proceeds will go to the British Diabetic Association.

Now, news on the audio front. In October the Talking Tape Company (Unit 11, Shaftesbury Industrial Centre, The Runnings, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL51 9NH) will release 6 double-cassette packs, each containing 4 of Grant Eustace's adaptations from the Canon (24 plays altogether). These were originally "broadcast" as in-flight entertainment by British Airways, and were very well received. All feature Roy Marsden & John Moffatt as Holmes & Watson. Cost will be about £6.99 per set; they'll be available from W. H. Smith and the usual outlets.

Meanwhile the BBC's plans for dramatising the entire Canon continue to flourish. "A Scandal In Bohemia" will be broadcast at 3 pm on Wednesday 7th November on Radio 4, and the rest of THE ADVENTURES will follow weekly with a 2-week gap at Christmas; the final 6 start on Wednesday 2nd January with "The Blue Carbuncle". All the plays feature Clive Merrison & Michael Williams as Holmes & Watson; the writers are Bert Coules, Peter Mackie & Vincent McInerney. This first series will be released on cassette (3 volumes of 4 stories each) by the BBC Radio Collection, probably in February.

Videos. The Virgin reissue of THE WOMAN IN GREEN is apparently a one-off. The rest of the Rathbone/Bruce series is being released by CBS/Fox in their All Time Greats series. Out now are SHERLOCK HOLMES IN WASHINGTON, SHERLOCK HOLMES FACES DEATH and THE SPIDER WOMAN; due in November are THE HOUND, THE ADVENTURES, SH & THE SECRET WEAPON, SH & THE VOICE OF TERROR and THE SCARLET CLAW. Enquiries can be dealt with by phoning 081-575 8616. (Many thanks to Wai-Ming Chan & David Stuart Davies for this information.) WITHOUT A CLUE is now available at £14.99, and Ian Gale tells me that THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES is due in the shops about now; we're waiting to find out whether any of the missing bits have been restored. As a service to fellow-collectors, Bert Coules (Fairway, Sandling Road, Saltwood, Hythe, Kent CT21 4QJ) can offer THE ROYAL MURDER and THE RELUCTANT CARPENTER (from the Ronald Howard TV series) on a single VHS cassette for £10 inclusive. Technical quality is "not too bad, considering the age and source of the material". He also has the 1931 Raymond Massey film of THE SPECKLED BAND; quality "is not as good as I would have liked (and there are occasional moments where repaired damage on the original print gives rise to minor jump-cuts) but as you know it is an extremely rare item. Tape copies have to be individually supervised, so I have to ask £15 for this one."

Carol Whitlam reports that the range of material available at the Granada Studio Tours souvenir shop (the one devoted entirely to Holmesian stuff) is expanding. For details, contact the Merchandise Manager, Granada Studio Tours Ltd, Manchester M60 9EA. Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8) has produced two attractive mugs, one with a portrait of Sir Arthur flanked by caricatures of Holmes & Watson (on reverse: Holmes & Watson exulting over the proposed Edinburgh statue), the other reproducing the cover of Charles' nice book THE SHERLOCK HOLMES COLLECTION (reverse has a cartoon, captioned: "Even if Moriarty is behind the Poll Tax, Holmes, you still have to pay.") £5 for the two mugs, plus 95p postage. The Northern Musgraves offer attractive book-plates at £2 for 20 to non-Musgraves; the NM Christmas card is also now available, featuring Holmes, Watson and a Moriartiesque snowman, at £3.50 the pack (overseas £6.50 or \$14 US). Send orders to David Stuart Davies, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER.

Mark Chadderton tells of a recent ad for "Little Sherlock", a baby-faced doll, issued in a limited edition by Ashton-Drake Galleries Ltd, Freepost, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 2ER. Price is £69.95; dolls are limited to one per customer. Mark asks if anyone can help him with videos of the 1960s BBC Holmes series or the Wontner or Norwood films (he is in luck, since Channel 4 is currently broadcasting the Wontner SIGN and SILVER BLAZE) - if you can help, contact Mark at 30 King Edward Road, Rugby, Warwickshire CV21 2TA. Tim Salisbury (20 Uphill Road South, Uphill, Weston-super-Mare BS23 4SG) is also after videos, specifically THE TRIUMPH OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, the Clive Brook SHERLOCK HOLMES and any Rathbones except SH & THE SECRET CODE. Mark Hunter Purvis (6 Deer Park Way, Axwell Park, Blaydon, Tyne & Wear NE21 5PD) wants details of anybody who makes or sells busts or statuettes of Holmes or Conan Doyle (try Charles Hall for one, I suggest).

Ann O'Neill (38 Stephens Firs, Mortimer, Reading RG7 3UY) offers a limited edition black & white postcard with silver foil block, showing Brett & Hardwicke as Holmes & Watson (50p each "large sturdy SSAFE per order"; cheques payable to Miss Ann O'Neill). Ann tells me that John Aidiniantz (of the Sherlock Holmes Museum) intends to produce a magazine on behalf of the Museum; his chosen title is "221B" - rather silly, as there's already a magazine of that name, but there's no copyright in titles (trademarks are a different matter, though...). Ivy & Douglas Warren send information about Bristol University Continuing Education Courses: on Saturday 18th May at Bristol A. Spicer will give a dayschool on SHERLOCK HOLMES & DETECTIVE FICTION, while on Saturday 17th November at Bristol 5 lecturers will present THE SCIENCE OF CRIME DETECTION (this course will be repeated at Cirencester on Saturday 23rd March); for details contact the Department For Continuing Education, Wills Memorial Building, Queen's Road, Bristol BS8 1HR (phone 0272 303629). Birmingham University School of Continuing Studies offers a weekend residential course on PREHISTORIC DARTMOOR, based at Ashburton (26th-28th

April); details from Mrs J. M. Burl, School of Continuing Studies, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT.

On Tuesday 18th September at Marylebone Library, Marylebone Road, London NW1, John Hawkesworth will be interviewed, with specific reference to his work on the Granada TV SHERLOCK HOLMES SERIES; questions from the floor will be encouraged! Mr Hawkesworth not only "developed" the series for television but wrote some of the best scripts, including the classic adaptation of THE SIGN OF FOUR. On the following Tuesday, the 25th, I shall be at Marylebone, giving a talk about Sherlock Holmes on British Radio (this talk was devised for the Bimetallic Colloquium in Montreal, back in June, where it was well received). Both events start at 6.30 pm, and admission is free. I hope to see you there.

That grand cartoonist Jeff Decker has produced a delightful pack of Holmesian playing-cards. All four aces feature different portraits of Holmes; the Kings are Moriarty, Lestrade, Watson & Mycroft; Queens are Mary Morstan, Mrs Hudson, Hattie Doran & Irene Adler; Jacks are Colonel Moran, Jack Stapleton, Dr Roylott & Lysander Stark; Jokers are Tonga & Jabez Wilson. The reverse features Holmes & Moriarty. A single deck costs \$7.50, a double is \$14 (+ \$1.50 postage inland). One pack has red backs, the other blue. Contact Singular Cards, PO Box 1364, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania 18703, USA (for overseas postage, please ask). Thanks to Wayne & Francine Swift for this information.

From John E Stephenson. Carol Rhoda Books Inc. of Minneapolis have published 4 books in a children's series by Murray Shaw, illustrated by George Overlie, called MATCH WITS WITH SHERLOCK HOLMES, containing Canonical adventures reworked for youngsters. SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE MYSTERIOUS FRIEND OF OSCAR WILDE by Russell A. Brown is now out in paperback from St Martin's Press. A worthwhile source of information on at least one aspect of Sir Arthur's life is The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment, 4 Wealden Close, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 2ST; address communications to the Curator, Malcolm Payne. A new BSI scion is the Sherlock Holmes Society of Decatur, Illinois (contact Troy Taylor at The Old Book Barn, or phone 217 875-0222). More on the Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment: a fund has been raised to erect a permanent memorial to Sir Arthur in Crowborough, in the form of a monolith of local sandstone with a brass plate carrying details of Sir Arthur's life and achievements. Donations should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, The Arthur Conan Doyle Memorial Fund, The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment, The Cross Hotel, Crowborough, East Sussex; cheques should be payable to A.C.D. Memorial Fund. Further details can be had from Malcolm Payne.

Belatedly, a report from Jon Lellenberg on the auction in New York on June 15th of two particular items from the late Eliss Austin's collection. (The belatedness is on my part, not on Jon's.) "His copy of BEETON'S, which had been Vincent Starrett's first copy, and then belonged to Frederic Dannay (Ellery Queen), went for \$52,000. the MS of THE VALLEY OF FEAR, complete except for the missing epilogue, went for \$260,000. The prices don't include Sotheby Parke Bernet's 10% commission or 8 % New York State sales tax. When they were listed in the Scribner's Rare Books Catalogue of Starrett's collection in 1943, compiled by David Randall, they were listed at \$175 and \$1,100 respectively." Think about it, if you can bear to.

From Peter E Blau. Warner Books have published DUCK EDWING'S MADVENTURES OF ALMOST SUPERHEROES (\$3.95), including "The Adventures of Headlock Holmes" as told by Dr Watsnew. Pocket Books/Minstrel are gradually reissuing all five of Eve Titus's lovely "Basil of Baker Street" books; latest is BASIL IN THE WILD WEST, "bringing Basil to Moriarty, New Mexico, home of mouse sheriff Bennett Shaw" (\$2.75). I wish some British publisher would pick up this charming series. There's yet another SHERLOCK HOLMES COOKBOOK, this one by Charles A. Mills (Apple Cheeks Press, \$3.50), offering a brief culinary tour of the Canon, with discussion of food, drink & clubs as well as recipes. The publisher's address is 2617 Stirrup Lane, Alexandria, VA 22308, USA. The 1991 Calendar of 221B Baker Street, with photos of the sitting-room at S. Holmes Esq. in San Francisco, is available at \$12 from Brian & Charlotte Erickson, 1920 March Way, Mountain View, CA 94040, USA (add \$5 postage US or \$7.50 foreign orders). The 9th NEW ADVENTURES OF SH cassette, with Rathbone & Bruce in A SCANDAL IN BOHEMIA and THE CASE OF THE SECOND GENERATION, is now out from Simon & Schuster.

