

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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Earlier this month, this newsletter and I lost a very good friend with the death of David Kirby, Both as the proprietor of Rupert Books, the foremost Doyle/Holmes dealer this side of the Atlantic, and as a friend, I valued him for his knowledge, his wisdom, his honesty and his generosity. He was a gentleman and he'll be greatly missed.

Thanks to Markus Geisser, Peter Horrocks, Philip Porter, Barbara Alder, Philip Barron, BJ Rahn, Jean Upton, Elaine Hamill and Shirley Purves, I can now offer copies of the following reports on the Great Swiss Pilgrimage of 1991:-

29 April: Luzerner Neuste Nachrichten, Luzerner Tagblatt; May: Swissair Magazine; 1 May: Der Bund, Berner Zeitung; 3 May: Berner Oberlander, Oberlandisches Volksblatt, Thuner Tagblatt, The European; 4 May: Financial Times; 5 May: New York Times, Swiss News, Sunday Express; 6 May: Der Bund, Oberlandisches Volksblatt, Berner Oberlander, Vancouver Sun, Stars & Stripes, Daily Telegraph, Today; 7 May: Der Oberhasler; 10 May: Feldkircher Anzeiger; 11 May: Le Monde, The Economist; 12 May: Sunday Telegraph; 18 May: Birmingham Evening Mail; 21 May: The Lady; 16 June: The Universe.

David Stuart Davies# charming "dramatic presentation" FIXED POINT: THE LIFE & DEATH OF SHERLOCK HOLMES has just appeared in a 2nd, slightly revised edition. Text and introduction are extended, there's a new foreword by Jeremy Brett, a reprint of Edward Hardwicke's brief essay from the "Dr Watson" issue of THE MUSGRAVE PAPERS, a frontispiece by Catherine Bates and 5 stills from the Granada TV series. The whole has been newly typeset. It's a must at £4.50 including postage from David (Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER).

From the Northern Musgraves to the Franco-Midland Hardware Company. The FMHC's Share Issue no. 3 is THE DARTMOOR OF "THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES" by Philip Weller. This is an invaluable practical guide to the various candidates for the locations named or described in the novel, together with other relevant places such as the Cabell sepulchre. Practical is the word: full directions are given for reaching or viewing each site. This is Holmesian scholarship of a very high order, firmly based on personal research. I hope that future editions will include a bibliography of the investigations by earlier writers which are referred to only obliquely in the text. The price for this handsomely produced booklet is a reasonable £4.50 (UK), £5 or \$10 (Europe), £5.50 or \$11 (rest of world); all prices include postage (sterling cheques & Eurocheques, with card number on rear, payable to The Franco-Midland Hardware Company; dollar payments in US dollar bills, please). The Company's address is: 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 3RU.

More books: this month Ian Henry has issued two more of Jeremy Paul's scripts from the Granada TV series, THE SPECKLED BAND and THE NAVAL TREATY, in the same handsome format as THE PROBLEM OF THOR BRIDGE. Each includes an informative introduction by Mr Paul and four nicely reproduced production stills. The price for each is £5.45 (+ 38p postage if ordering direct from the publisher: Ian Henry Publications Ltd, 20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH).

Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) has produced 3 more of his attractive and amusing coloured postcard caricatures: Sherlock Holmes & Mrs Hudson, Sherlock Holmes & Prof. Moriarty at the Reichenbach Falls (both in bathing-costumes and carrying life-belts), and Sherlock Holmes & Solar Pons. No price given, but for information please send a stamped & self-addressed envelope (UK) or 2 International Reply Coupons.

Philip Barron & Shirley Purves pass on information that later in the year WOMAN'S HOUR (BBC Radio 4) will feature a "brilliantly funny" short story, "The Case of the Missing Unmentionables" "by Joan Condon, featuring Mrs Hudson as the detective. Grant Eustace

tells me that the Talking Tape; Company cassettes of his canonical adaptations (featuring Roy Marsden & John Moffatt) are available in North America from BFS Ltd, 350 Newkirk Road N., Richmond Hill, Ontario L4C 3Q7, Canada. They won't be in the shops yet but may be available direct from BFS.

Dr Ben Wood (PO Box 740, Ellenton, Florida 34222, USA) is offering Holmesian stamps: San Marino (set of 5) \$3.50, Comoro Islands \$4, Turks & Caicos (4 stamps + souvenir sheet) \$8.50, Dominica (souvenir sheet) \$4, Redonda \$6 (outside US add \$2 postage).

Michael Cox has kindly sent me issue 2 of SCARLET STREET, a well illustrated magazine devoted to crime, detection & the gothic on the screen, with much emphasis on Holmes & Watson; published quarterly (annual subscription \$14, single issue \$3.95, from R.H. Enterprises, PO Box 604, Glen Rock, New Jersey 07452, USA). I may have mentioned before MS HOLMES OF BAKER STREET: THE TRUTH ABOUT SHERLOCK by Alan Bradley & William A.S. Sarjeant (Gasogene Press Ltd, Box 1041, Dubuque 52004-1041, USA; \$19.95), which is yet another attempt to prove that Holmes was a woman.

Recent and forthcoming books: about Jack the Ripper: Barbara Reader's JACK THE RIPPER PART II (Excalibur Press of London, £3.95; published last year), Paul Harrison's JACK THE RIPPER: THE MYSTERY SOLVED (Hale, £12.95; published last March); JACK THE RIPPER by M. Fairclough (Duckworth, £12.95; due 26 September) and THE JACK THE RIPPER A - Z by Paul Begg, Martin Fido & Keith Skinner (Headline, £16.95; no date given).

Overseas societies. Von Herder Airguns Ltd (Kathrin Jaeck, Berlinerstr. 6E, W-3005 Hemmingen, Germany) has issued the 7th SOFT-NOSED BULLET-IN and the 14th number of THE STRIKING (T)RIFLES. On the other side of the ocean, Capital Holmes of Ottawa (Sheila Vaudrey, c/o 2217 Iris Street, Ottawa K2C 1B7, Canada) plans a Victorian murder party - MURDER WITH MR SHERLOCK HOLMES, featuring Guest of Honour L.B. Greenwood (author of THE RALEIGH LEGACY and other fine apocryphal Holmesiana) and a mystery playlet. If you're free on Saturday 23 June, this should be a great way to spend the day.

Stephen Farrell offers a nice copy of THE MEMOIRS in the John Murray Uniform Edition with the attractive dust-wrapper as the prize in a little competition in aid of his favourite charity, the Donkey Sanctuary. Just answer the following questions: 1) In which story is Cardinal Tosca mentioned? 2) Why was Holmes wasting his time in trying to warm his hands by the gasogene? 3) What beside his stethoscope did Watson conceal in his top hat? (wild speculation is encouraged). Entry to the competition costs £1; please make cheques payable to The Donkey Sanctuary and send your entries to me. Thanks.

From Peter Blau: The TV film of THE CRUCIFER OF BLOOD, starring Charlton Heston & Richard Johnson, is due for transmission in the US in September. A conference honouring "Victorian PUNCH" and including a talk about ACD's uncle Richard Doyle, who designed the magazine's most famous cover, is scheduled for the 12th/13th July. Information from Michael Slater, Department of English, Birkbeck College, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HX. Michael Senuta has published SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT SHERLOCK HOLMES, a 30 page booklet containing two pastiches and an analysis of THE CASEBOOK (\$8 from the author, 881 Columbine Drive, Barberton, Ohio 44203, USA). There are still rumours that Billy Wilder intends to issue a restored and complete version of THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES - hard luck on us who bought the recently released video of the cut version. Anthony Hinds' playscript THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES, whose sole (amateur) production was reviewed enthusiastically by Nick Utechin in 1982, has been published at £5.45 by the New Playwrights' Network (35 Sandingham Road, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK10 1QB); Hinds himself isn't exactly new, since he produced the 1959 Hammer HOUND and wrote the story for THE MASKS OF DEATH. SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE INCIDENT AT VICTORIA FALLS, the 2nd miniseries with Christopher Lee & Patrick Macnee, will be broadcast first in the US, over 4 weeks (17 February to 15 March 1992). Also featured are Jenny Seagrove as Lillie Langtry and Claude Akins as Teddy Roosevelt. The following month will see SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE LEADING LADY (20 April to 17 May), which features Morgan Fairchild as Irene Adler & Engelbert Humperdinck as Eberhardt Bohm.

