

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

no. 131 18th May 1993

Beware! We've recently seen the Wordsworth Classics edition of **The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes** on sale at £4.99. The publisher's price is £1.00. Anyone charging more is ripping you off. Similarly, the two Orbit video-tapes, **Terror By Night** and **The Woman In Green** should cost no more than £5.99 each - and by shopping around, you may find them priced as low as £3.99 each.

The promised Arthur Conan Doyle medal is now available from Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW), and very handsome it is. On the one side is a bas-relief bust of Sir Arthur, based on the famous portrait by Henry L. Gates, in the National Portrait Gallery; on the other is a full-length likeness of the Sherlock Holmes statue in Picardy Place. Designed by Charles, the medal is made by Alex Kirkwood & Son of Edinburgh to their usual impeccable standard; it's in bronze, measures about 2 inches across, and resembles the commemorative medals issued for Queen Victoria's jubilees. It comes in an elegant box. The price as originally announced was £12.50 (see DM128), and I don't think it's changed; you'll curse later if you miss out!

The two latest titles in the series **Match Wits With Sherlock Holmes** are now out. For \$4.95 (paperback) or \$14.95 (hardback) each, Murray Shaw re-tells **The Adventure of the Dancing Men/The Three Garridebs and The Hound of the Baskervilles** for younger readers in a way that the American Library Association summed up neatly: "With the humor and settings intact, young mystery lovers have access to re-creations of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's famous Sherlock Holmes and his Victorian England... Clues conclude each story, so that the reader can follow Holmes' logic..." There are beautiful illustrations by George Overlie, including a map of England with London inset. The publisher is Carolrhoda Books Inc. of 241 First Avenue North, Minneapolis, MN 55401, USA; the books are available in this country from Murder One.

Tom Stix wants some elusive video material, specifically: a) German TV coverage of John Bennett Shaw's Sherlockian workshop in Hoboken in the early 1980s, and b) out-takes relating to John Bennett Shaw from the BBC TV **40 Minutes** coverage of the Holmes phenomenon, fronted by Tim Pigott-Smith and broadcast in 1987. He can use American or European format VHS. Please let him know if you can help. (Thomas L. Stix Jr, BSI, 34 Pierson Avenue, Norwood, NJ 07648, USA.)

Because of a cancellation, the Northern Musgraves have two vacancies for their York weekend on the 11th - 13th June, at £186 each, all in. If you're interested, contact David Stuart Davies (Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER; phone 0484 426957). The previous Saturday, the 5th June, the Poor Folk Upon the Moors will be hosting a day on Dartmoor; in accordance with custom, this will be an informal day, with various options available. For details, contact Clare Taylor (Flat 4, Gonvena House, Gonvena Hill, Wadebridge, Cornwall PL27 6DN).

We recently spotted in a newsagent's a colourful and attractive 60-piece

jigsaw puzzle, showing a deerstalker-and-ulster-clad Mickey Mouse failing to notice the paw-prints leading from his half-eaten cake to a clumsily disguised Pluto. It cost £2.99, and will make a nice present. Amazingly, it was made in Greece!

The May issue of **Book and Magazine Collector** features an article on ACD's uncle, the great illustrator Richard Doyle, as well as an ad for Black Hill Books (The Wain House, Black Hill, Clunton, Craven Arms, Shropshire SY7 OJD), who deal in Holmesiana. Meanwhile, Neal Smith's Black Orchid Books has a new catalogue out for May (Unit 8, Castle Court, Castle Street, Shrewsbury SY1 2BG; phone 0743 362653) - an interesting list, and reasonably priced. (Don't forget to enclose postage when you send off for a dealer's catalogue and do, please, mention **The District Messenger** when you follow up any product or service mentioned here.) The new catalogue **Sherlock In L.A.** no. 9 will set you back \$2.50, but you get a printed 80-page booklet, including a couple of unfamiliar anecdotes about Conan Doyle, an essay by Jim Coffin, and copious illustrations. (Sherlock In L.A., Flavia & Vincent Brosnan, 1741 Via Allena, Oceanside, CA 92056, USA.) Books Nippon in Paternoster Row, by St Paul's Cathedral, has a surprising range of Holmesiana in Japanese.

Baker Street Associates (P.O. Box 351453, Los Angeles, CA 90035-998, USA), who are responsible for producing the excellent cassettes of **The New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes** from the classic Rathbone and Bruce radio series, have negotiated a new contract with their distributors, Simon & Schuster. I hope this will result in the full series of 26 cassettes being properly distributed in this country! Ken Greenwald of Baker Street Associates plans to produce other Holmesian material. Watch this space. Meanwhile, BSA have issued their first newsletter, **The Dispatch Box**, vol. 1 no. 1; Ken welcomes correspondence at the above address.

In **The Billericay & Wickford Gazette** for the 29th April is a good piece by one John Saunders called "Pursued by the ghost dog of the marshes", that begins: "One day in 1901, holidaying in Norfolk, Conan Doyle was told the legend of the Black Dog of Dartmoor. A few weeks later **The Hound of the Baskervilles** was born..." I can offer photocopies. **The European** for the 18th March has an interesting but rather snide article by Stephanie Theobald about the new Société Sherlock Holmes de France, otherwise Les Quincailliers de la Franco-Midland. Thanks to Peter Horrocks, I've now seen a copy of the first issue of **Le Catalogue de la Franco-Midland**, full of interesting text (in French) enlivened by Jean-Pierre Cagnat's illustrations and caricatures. Information about the society can be had from Thierry Saint-Joanis, Grand dépôt de Paris, 47 rue de Montmorency, 75003 Paris, France.

Other recent periodicals of interest include: **The Ritual** no. 11 (The Northern Musgraves, David Stuart Davies, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER); **The Baker Street Journal** vol. 43 no. 1 (P.O. Box 465, Hanover, PA 17331, USA) (*note that correspondence for the Baker Street Irregulars should go to Thomas L. Stix, 34 Pierson Avenue, Norwood, NJ 07648, USA*); **The Petrel Flyer** vol. 5 no. 4 (The Stormy Petrels of B.C., 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6); **The Devon County Chronicle** vol. 29 no. 1 (Robert W. Hahn, 2707 S. 7th Street, Sheboygan, WI 53081, USA); **Scuttlebutt From the Spermaceti Press** April 1993 (Peter E. Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA).



STOP PRESS!

The Gainsborough Films version of **The Hound of the Baskervilles** (1932), scripted by Edgar Wallace, starring Robert Rendel & Frederick Lloyd, will be shown at the Museum of London (London Wall, London EC2Y 5HN) at 6.10 pm on Tuesday the 1st June. Tickets cost £2.50 (there's no prior booking). The film hasn't been seen for about 60 years. On Thursday the 3rd at the same time there'll be a showing of three silent shorts from the 1921 Stoll series with Eille Norwood and Hubert Willis: **The Devil's Foot, A Case of Identity, and The Man With the Twisted Lip**. Thanks to Tony Howlett for putting me on to this.

Next month the Folio Society will publish its 5-volume boxed set **Sherlock Holmes: The Complete Stories** (complete short stories, that is) by Arthur Conan Doyle, introduced by Peter Cushing and with splendid illustrations by Francis Mosley. Production is as excellent as we've come to expect. The price is £80 the set, but there's a special pre-publication price of £65 to Folio Society members and to **District Messenger** subscribers. Get your order in now to the Society at 202 Great Suffolk Street, London SE1 1PR. The other big publishing news is that Sherlock Publications (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 3RD) will be the European agents for Ronald Burt De Waal's **The Universal Sherlock Holmes**, his complete and definitive bibliography (see DM 129). For further details and an order form, send two 1st class stamps (UK) or one US dollar bill or two International Reply Coupons (rest of world). Michael Connolly (Tirgarve, Allistragh, Armagh, Co. Armagh, Northern Ireland BT61 8EZ) has a new Sherlock Holmes list available, short but interesting. A book I missed last year: published in November by St Martin's Press at \$17.95 was **The Seventh Bullet: A Holmes and Watson American Adventure** by Daniel D. Victor. John Taylor's **The Unopened Casebook of Sherlock Holmes** (BBC; £3.99) shows ingenious plotting, but the stories worked better on the radio.

The Sherlock Holmes postage stamps will now be issued on the 12th October this year. As Philip Weller points out, this will fittingly celebrate the publication 100 years ago of the last stories in **The Memoirs**, but the GPO's actual reason for bringing the issue forward is to fill a gap caused by the non-completion of the Channel Tunnel!

Mark Chadderton (Flat One, 78 Southcote Road, Boscombe, Bournemouth BH1 3SS) asks if anyone can provide him with a recording of **The Empty House** from the recent Radio 4 series with Clive Merrison & Michael Williams. He also passes on information (taken from Stephen Jones's **Illustrated Vampire Movie Guide**) that there exists a seemingly abysmal Venezuelan comedy loosely based on "The Sussex Vampire" and called **Sherlock Holmes In Caracas...**

Peter Horrocks (22 Old Buildings, Lincoln's Inn, London WC2A 3UJ) has more copies available of **Le Catalogue de la Franco-Midland**. If you'd like one, please send him a self-addressed envelope at least 10 inches by 12, plus a 36p stamp (UK) or reply coupons to the value of 85p (Europe) or £1.85 (USA). More interesting journals received: **The Serpentine Muse** vol. 11 no. 4 (Evelyn Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA); **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company Annual Report 1993: The Boscombe Valley Contract** and **The New Baker Street Pillar Box** no. 14 (The Stock-broker's Clerk, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 3RU); **The Soft-Nosed Bullet-In** no. 12 (Von Herder Airguns Ltd, Michael Ross, Bendheide 65, W-4152 Kempen 1, Germany).

That really is all for now.