

The DISTRICT MESSENGER



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON
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The latest publication from Cadds Printing Ltd (59 Lancaster Avenue, West Norwood, London SE27 9EL) contains two new stories. The longer and more complex is Hugh S. Scullion's 'A Fatal Mistake', an adventure of Wiggins, formerly leader of Holmes's Baker Street irregulars and now a professional investigator himself. The setting is mostly Dulwich, Norwood and Sydenham - parts of south London that Mr Scullion knows well, as did Arthur Conan Doyle. The style is earthy and often humorous, though the punctuation is highly erratic, and the story is well illustrated with photographs of the area. So too is the second, slighter, story, 'The Rising Ransom' by the late Douglas Moreton. This is the last of his Sherlock Holmes stories, and not a bad one to end on, being a clever (and cleverly titled) tale set in the author's native Lancashire, well-butressed by historical research. *A Fatal Mistake & The Rising Ransom* is available from specialist dealers or direct from the publisher, at £12.00 or \$20.00.

There's a nice new paperback edition of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* published by Wordsworth Classics (Wordsworth Editions Ltd, Cumberland House, Crib Street, Ware, Herts. SG12 9ET). David Stuart Davies has contributed an enthusiastic introduction for the general reader, and the book costs just £1.00!

Our member John Radford's book *the Intelligence of Sherlock Holmes and Other Three-Pipe Problems: Psychological Studies of the Great Detective and His Companion Dr John H. Watson* is now available from Sigma Forlag International (22 Jellicoe House, 4 Osnaburgh Street, London NW1 3AY; £9.95). A review will appear in the next issue of the DM.

New from Rupert Books (58/59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE) is Rupert Books Monograph 13, *An Appreciation of Sir John French* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, a facsimile of a scarce 1916 propaganda booklet, with an afterword by Squadron Leader Philip Weller. It's priced at £10.00. Due in March next year from Rupert is *The Man Who Hunted Jack the Ripper* by Nicholas Connell & Stewart P. Evans, containing much previously uncollected material from the papers of DI Edmund Reid, who succeeded Fred Abberline in Whitechapel in 1888. (*Reid believed that there were nine Ripper murders, rather than the usually accepted five or six.*) The price is likely to be £18.00.

The standout for me, though, will be *A Study in Celluloid: A Producer's Account of Jeremy Brett as Sherlock Holmes* by Michael Cox, to be published by Rupert Books on 1st December at about £18.00. Michael's series in *Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine* has produced many fascinating insights, both technical and personal, into the making of Granada's *Sherlock Holmes* series, but his book promises to be definitive.

Bill Barnes sends word of *Footsteps in the Fog, and Other Stories*, a volume of three long Sherlock Holmes stories by the

Australian author Kel Richards. Mystery at the testing of the Bruce-Partington submarine in Loch Ness ... a werewolf stalks Dartmoor ... murder follows the escape of Col. Moran from prison, and Holmes joins forces with Professor Challenger ... This 304-page, perfect-bound book can be had from Bill Barnes, 19 Malvern Avenue, Manly, NSW 2095, Australia, for £15.00, US\$24.00 or Can.£32.00 (airmail); £13.00, US\$21.00 or Can.\$29.00 (surface mail).

Recommendations from **Classic Specialties** (P.O. Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA) include: *Sherlock Holmes Visits a Cemetery* by Don Izban (a tour of Graceland Cemetery, Chicago, resting place of, among others, Allan Pinkerton and Vincent Starrett; \$8.00); *366 Excuses for a Sherlockian Party* by Joel & Carolyn Senter with Rick Freeman (\$14.95); *Ready When You Are, Mr Rathbone: A Review of the Universal Holmes Films* by Roger Johnson (they call it 'this marvelous little book', and who am I to disagree?; £12.95); *The Sherlock Holmes Cook Book* and *The Sherlock Holmes Book of Wine and Spirits*, both by Charles A. Mills (\$6.00 each); *Deeper Shades: The Dressing-Gowns of Sherlock Holmes and the Psychology of Color* by Bill Mason (\$8.00); *Five Sherlockian Walks in London* by William S. Dorn (\$8.00); *The Floor Plans of Baker Street* by Edward S. Smith, Jr (\$7.50). There's lots more. Look up **Classic Specialties'** website at <http://www.sherlock-holmes.com>.

The Black Cat Bookshop (36-39 Silver Arcade, Leicester LE1 5FB) has a new catalogue out, full of Holmesiana and Doyleana.

Coming in November from Constable is Barrie Roberts' latest novel *Sherlock Holmes and the Harvest of Death* (£16.99), and from Robinson the first British edition of *The New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* edited by Martin Greenberg & Carol-Lyn Rossel Waugh (£7.99). Out now from Players Press (distributed by Ian Henry Publications Ltd, 20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH) are two more plays by Stanley Reyburn: *Sherlock Holmes in The Voyage of Sven Sigerson* and *Sherlock Holmes in The Case of the Crafty Cracksman* (each £7.00).

Issue 32 of *Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine* is a 'Special Statue Issue' - not surprising, really. Two pages are given over to a foretaste of the **Return of Sherlock Holmes** festival, taking place in London 21st - 26th of this month. The central event, of course, will be the unveiling of the new statue of Sherlock Holmes outside Baker Street Station (by the Chairman of Abbey National, who contributed most of the funding for it), and there's an interview with the sculptor, John Doubleday. Michael Cox's magisterial account of the making of Granada TV's *Sherlock Holmes* series closes in a mood of mixed satisfaction, relief and frustration - so much achieved, and so much *almost* achieved. The series has been expanded into a book, to be published in December by Rupert Books (see above). There's part one of a new Holmes story by D.O. Smith. Martin Edwards looks at Anthony Berkeley's sleuth, Roger Sheringham. Paul Chapman considers crime as entertainment. Pat Ward reports from America. Jeffrey Richards continues his series on the radio detectives, and Chris Senior examines detectives on television. Antony Richards illuminates the Inspector Morse Society ... And there's more, of course! The

magazine is published six times a year, at £2.50 or \$5.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £18.00 (Europe £20.00, rest of world £25.00 or \$40.00) from the Admin. Dept, PO Box 100, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 8HD. The US representative is Classic Specialties (PO Box 19058, Cincinnati, OH 45219, USA; e-mail sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

Mamelok Press Ltd (P.O. Box 12, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP32 6NQ) make wonderful Victorian card masks, facsimiles of ones in Madame Tussaud's Collection and elsewhere. In similar style, Mamelok has issued a Millennium Collection of assorted masks including **Sherlock Holmes** (M.C.7). You may find them at carnival and novelty shops, or try Mamelok direct. They have a website at www.mamelok.co.uk.

The Friends of Dr Watson announce their second annual *Dr John H. Watson Prize Essay Competition*, open to members and non-members alike. Essays are invited of between 1,000 and 3,000 words on the subject of Dr Watson's medical abilities, knowledge and skills. The first prize consists of: a year's membership of The Friends of Dr Watson, the Dr John H. Watson Prize Essay Certificate, a signed copy of Leslie Klinger's latest volume in *The Sherlock Holmes Reference Library*, and *The Original Illustrated Strand Sherlock Holmes*. The second prize is a £20.00 Black Cat Bookshop gift voucher, and *The Original Illustrated Strand Sherlock Holmes*. The judges this year are David Stuart Davies, Leslie S. Klinger and Philip Weller - formidable Holmesians all. Get entry forms and rules from: Dr Watson's Dresser, 14 Western Close, Letchworth, Herts. SG6 4SZ. Please enclose a stamped & self-addressed envelope (in UK) or 2 International Reply Coupons.

Patrick Brown sends a message via e-mail: 'The Bird's Nest Theatre in Deptford, South London, is to present an evening called *In League with Sherlock Holmes*, consisting of two short plays, *Where's Frannie?* by David Collier, an adaptation of "The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax", and *The Copper Beeches* by Kevin Scouler, followed by an "irregular" adaptation of *The Red-Headed League* written by our Attached Writer Clive King. The show runs from September 8th - 25th, Wednesday to Saturday at 8.00 pm. Tickets are £7.50 (£5.00 concessions and £4.00 Equity members). The Bird's Nest Theatre is above the Bird's Nest pub at 32 Deptford Church Street, London SE8 4RZ. Our phone number is 0181 694 2255.' (*Looks good!*)

(*So does this ...*) Cambridge's two famous comedy and drama societies, the Footlights and the ADC, plan something special for Christmas. *Sherlock Holmes: The Pantomime* will run at the ADC Theatre from 23rd November to 4th December, at 8.00 pm. Tickets cost £3.00 - £7.00, but on the first night only all seats are £3.00. You can book now at the Cambridge Arts Theatre Box Office (6 St Edwards Passage, Cambridge; phone 01223 503333). A limited edition numbered *Sherlock Holmes: The Pantomime* programme will be available for £3.50 including postage from the producer, Gemma Rougier, at the ADC Theatre, Park Street, Cambridge CB5 8AS. Please make cheques payable to Gemma Rougier. The programmes will be despatched in December. If you need more details, either write to Gemma, or e-mail her on gcer2@cam.ac.uk.

Those who treasure the performances of Carleton Hobbs & Norman Shelley, Basil Rathbone & Nigel Bruce, Barry Foster & David Buck, and the other great Holmes and Watsons of radio should consider joining **The Old-Time Radio-Show Collectors' Association**, which has a vast library of recordings from both sides of the Atlantic, many of them available for loan. Get details from the membership secretary, John Wolstenholme, at 56 Melbourne Avenue, Dronfield Woodhouse, Sheffield S18 8YW.

I've had a message from Jim Ferreira of **The Scowrers & Molly Maguires of San Francisco**, the oldest BSI scion society

west of the Mississippi, and the first anywhere to admit women on equal terms with men. Annual subscriptions to the Scowrers' thrice-yearly journal, *The Vermissia Herald*, are available to non-members at \$10.00. Send checks, payable to The Scowrers, to Jim Ferreira at 753 Oriole Avenue, Livermore, CA 94550-2684, USA. Jim also has Scowrers & Molly Maguires lapel pins, based on the brand mark described in *The Valley of Fear*, at \$15.00. The price includes postage. You can get more details from Jim at BakerSt@home.com, or look at the website: <http://www.fortunecity.com/victorian/canterbury/222/sherlock.htm> - that the site for the San Francisco Bay Area Sherlockian Societies

The Parallel Case of St Louis has published an anniversary booklet, called *The Parallel Cases of St Louis*. Copies can be had for \$8.00 plus postage from Joe Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor Drive, Fenton, MO 63026-7008, USA. Make checks payable to Joseph J. Eckrich. **Holmes Under the Arch**, an 'irregular union of societies in Missouri and Illinois' will present a 'Weekend at Baskerville Hall' in St Louis on 10 & 11 September. Contact *Holmes Under the Arch*, 7101 Mardel Avenue, St Louis, MO 63109, USA. The Parallel Case of St Louis' next regular meeting will be on 20th September (details from Joe Eckrich: Jekrich@aol.com).

The Franco-Midland Hardware Company will be in Birmingham on 18 & 19 September, and will attend the unveiling of the statue outside Baker Street Station on 23 September, going on to visit various London statues with Sherlockian associations, before retiring to the Sherlock Holmes pub for refreshments. (Get details from 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU.) On 25 September, **The Northern Musgraves** will hold a reception at the Cockpit Theatre in Gateforth Street, five minutes' walk from Baker Street Station. (Terry & Barbara Harding, Riverbank, 2 Bohemia Cottages, Stalybridge, Cheshire SK15 1JY; phone 0161 303 0011). David Stuart Davies's play *Sherlock Holmes: The Last Act* will be on at the theatre in the evening.

The Priory Scholars' Video Day will be at the Guild Hall, Leicester, on 26 September (Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). **The Occupants of the Empty House** will meet in Du Quoin, Illinois, on 1st October (P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). The Pack Meet of **The Baskerville Hounds** will be based at the Prince of Wales inn at Princetown, Dartmoor, 15 - 17 October (The Kennel Maid, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU).

La Société Sherlock Holmes de France, La Société d'Études Holmesiennes de la Suisse Romande and The Reichenbach Irregulars are organising the *Millennium Congress of Holmesian Societies*, to be based in Lausanne, 4 to 7 May 2000. Participants will visit the Conan Doyle Foundation at the *Bibliothèque Cantonale et Universitaire de Lausanne-Dorigny* (where the 'Arthur Conan Doyle Iconography' CD-ROM archive will be launched), the Château de Lucens (Adrian Conan Doyle's erstwhile home), Meiringen, with its superb Sherlock Holmes Museum, and the Falls of Reichenbach. To be put on the mailing-list, contact Michael A. Meer, President of The Reichenbach Irregulars, Morgenstrasse 70, CH-3018 Bern, Switzerland (e-mail sherlock.holmes@gmx.net).

Periodicals received. *The Camden House Journal*, August 1999 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, P.O. Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). *The Parallelogram*, August 1999 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA). *Sherlockian Snippets*, August 1999 (Tabitha Smith, SaralockH@aol.com) (*a lively newsletter available only by e-mail*).

Roger Johnson