

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

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no. 229 1 March 2003

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Apologies for the increase in the dollar rate, necessitated by US bank charges. You can receive the DM electronically free of charge, as a Word 97 attachment or as plain text. Please contact me by e-mail.

I omitted to mention the death late last year of **Zakaria Erzinçioğlu** ('Dr Zak'), Britain's leading forensic entomologist and author of *Maggots, Murder and Men* and *Every Contact Leaves a Trace*. He also tried his hand, very effectively, at fiction, with 'The Adventure of the Bulgarian Diplomat' in Mike Ashley's *The Mammoth Book of New Sherlock Holmes Adventures* (Robinson, 1997). His dream of establishing the Solon Institute, a permanent body for forensic science, has been taken on by his widow, Sharon, herself a medical researcher.

Leslie Fiedler died on 29 January. His Freudian psychosexual criticism of classic literature did not overlook Sherlock Holmes. His essay 'Art in the Blood' appeared as the introduction to the 1978 *Sherlock Holmes Illustrated Omnibus*.

Mary Ellis, who played Lady Florence in Granada's 1993 production *The Eligible Bachelor* (based very loosely on 'The Noble Bachelor') and Mrs Maberley in 1994's *The Three Gables*, died on 30 January at the remarkable age of 105. As a young girl she had known William Gillette, and was the last surviving singer to have created a rôle in a Puccini opera — Suor Genovieffa in *Suor Angelica* at the New York Met in 1918. She will be best remembered as Ivor Novello's leading lady.

George Welch, a long-time active member of our Society, has been in very poor health for about a year, and has been in and out of hospital several times. Friends might like to drop him a line or send a card, care of his brother, Mr A J Welch, 48 Vaughan Road, Manchester M21 0YL.

Our good friend **John Baesch** had a heart attack last month but is recovering well. We've just learned that John and **Evelyn Herzog** are now engaged to be married. Excellent news! I was going to suggest that John would welcome Get Well cards, but it looks as if congratulations are more to the point. Friends can contact him at 613 Cranbrook Road, Apt G, Cockeysville, MD 21030, USA; or Evelyn at 360 West 21st Street, #5A, New York, NY 10011, USA.

The third volume in the Baker Street Irregulars Manuscript Series is something rather different from the first two. The work reproduced is not by Arthur Conan Doyle but by another giant of the detective story. And it is illustration rather than text. In *G K Chesterton's Sherlock Holmes* Steven Doyle has published for the first time nineteen drawings, in Chesterton's distinctive, almost cartoonish style, using pencil and crayon. They were intended for a still unidentified edition of the Holmes Canon, probably in the early 1930s, but have for years lain almost unknown in the Lilly Library at Indiana University. The pictures add greatly to our understanding of Chesterton's admiration for the Holmes stories. To put them in context, the book includes four of his essays: 'Errors about Detective Stories', 'How to Write Detective Stories', 'A Defence of Detective Stories' and 'Sherlock the God'. There are also essays by Dale Ahlquist of the American Chesterton Society, Pasquale Accardo, and Scott Bond — all are enlightening, the last particularly so, as an illustrator's commentary on the drawings. A publisher himself, Steven Doyle has ensured that the reproduction is excellent. *G K Chesterton's Sherlock Holmes* is an unusual, important and

exceptionally interesting volume. The price is \$35.00 plus \$8.00 postage (\$9.50 outside the USA). Send orders to The Baker Street Irregulars, c/o Calabash Press, PO Box 1360 Ashcroft, BC, Canada V0K 1A0.

Jeremy Paul, whose script for Granada's 1986 *The Musgrave Ritual* won an Edgar award, has written *Sing Willow: The True Story of The Invalids CC, the Cricket Side Immortalised in A G Macdonell's England, their England* (The Book Guild Ltd, 25 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 2LU; £16.95). The Society's cricketers may like to know that the Invalids' first match was played, as the Old Age Pensioners, at West Wycombe. Ian M Leslie, whose letter to *The Times* in October 1951, signed 'John H Watson, MD' was vital in persuading Marylebone Borough Council to set up the Sherlock Holmes Exhibition, and who was a stalwart member of our Society, was an Invalid. So, of course, is Mr Paul. You can buy signed copies of *Sing Willow* directly from him, at 4 Seymer Place, Seymer Road, Swanage, Dorset BH19 2AJ.

Breese Books Ltd has moved to 10 Hanover Crescent, Brighton BN2 9SB (e-mail mbreese999@aol.com).

Catherine Cooke has a few books for sale on behalf of Anna Smyth: *The London of Sherlock Holmes* by Michael Harrison (£10.00), *Sherlock Holmes and Music* by Guy Warrack (Sherlock Holmes Society of London reprint, £5.00); *Sherlock Holmes Gazette* (issues 1-6, £3.00 each), *Sherlock Holmes Detective Magazine* (issue 28, £3.00), *The Strand Magazine* (vol. 4, July-Dec 1892, £8.00). Prices don't include postage. If you're interested, please contact Catherine at ccooke@westminster.gov.uk.

A new catalogue is available from **Canford Book Corral** (Drawer 216, Freeville, NY 13068, USA — not much Holmes, but lots of vintage American crime fiction.

At a quick look through the latest catalogue from **The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box** (PO Box 204, Shelburne, Ontario, Canada L0N 1S0) I'm attracted by a lot of the titles, especially the reprints of *The Martyrdom of Man* by Winwood Reade and two of Clark Russell's fine sea stories, *The Frozen Pirate* and *The Death Ship* (each at \$36.00). Also at \$36.00 is *Practical Handbook of Bee Culture*, attributed to Sherlock Holmes. Then there's Tupper Bigelow's *Irregular Anglo-American Glossary* (\$24.00), *A Sheaf of Sherlock* by Michael Harrison (\$42.00), *Dissecta Membra* by Eric Monahan (\$34.00), *Sherlock Holmes in the West Country* by Patrick Campbell (\$15.00), *The Original Text Solar Pons Omnibus* by August Derleth (\$130.00) and a great deal more.

Just out from The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box, and available only to members of **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**, is *The e-Sherlock Holmes Journal*, a complete archive on CD-ROM, searchable and printable, of the SHJ from 1952 to 2002. The discs also contain Geraldine Beare's comprehensive three-part index — Author & Title, Media News & Reviews, and Subject — and all the Society's membership lists, annual dinner menus, and Christmas cards, as well as the necessary Adobe Acrobat Reader. It is essentially a reference tool, and I already find it invaluable as such, but I should mention that the first eight issues of the Journal are included twice, the second time in perfect facsimile. The cost of *The e-Sherlock Holmes Journal*, including postage, is £65.00 or \$100.00. All paid orders received before the end of March will get an extra CD-ROM containing *The Complete Sherlock Holmes Stories*, *The Martyrdom of Man* and *Practical Handbook of Bee Culture*. If you're not already a member of the Society, you must place your order through a member. Or contact Bob Ellis and ask about joining (13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU).

This is a rich month for audio-books. In *The Darlington Substitution Scandal* David Stuart Davies fleshes out a brief remark made by Sherlock Holmes in 'A Scandal in Bohemia'. The story is read, or rather acted, with remarkable virtuosity and panache by the author's near-namesake, David Ian Davies. With credible characters, an ingenious plot and an atmosphere of excitement, we are plunged once again into that romantic chamber of the heart, that nostalgic country of the mind, where it is always 1895. What more could we wish for? The CD also includes DSD's story 'The Reichenbach Secret,' a credible reinterpretation of 'The Final Problem'. (One Voice Recordings, 16835 Halper Street, Encino, CA 91436, USA; e-mail ddavies858@aol.com.)

Getting back to the true Canon, two superb readers have recordings newly out. *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes episode 6* comprises 'The Priory School', 'The Red-Headed League' and 'The Blue Carbuncle', told by Edward Hardwicke. You really do get the feeling that if Watson did recount his experiences to a privileged group of friends over whisky and cigars, this is what it was like. Mr Hardwicke conveys every quirk of character, every nuance of atmosphere, and it's a pleasure to listen to that mellow but authoritative voice. This two-cassette pack was first released in Canada by Tangled Web as *Tales of Avarice*. CSA Telltapes (6A Archway Mews, London SW15 2PE) have done us a favour by issuing it over here.

David Timson is not nearly as well known, but he is one of the best readers around, and I'm delighted to welcome his latest recording, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes VI*. As Watson he is perhaps less relaxed than Edward Hardwicke is, but he is just as much in command. As Holmes he has the edgy nervous energy that comes across so tellingly in Conan Doyle's prose. He has plenty of opportunity to demonstrate his striking range of voices and accents in the four stories in this latest collection: 'The Gloria Scott', 'The Resident Patient', 'The Noble Bachelor' and 'The Final Problem'. His Moriarty, in particular, is masterly. The reading is complemented by atmospheric music from the Naxos catalogue, this time by Dvorak, Paganini and Mendelssohn (one piece, I'm not sure which, is used as the theme for Radio 4's Sherlock Holmes series), and David Timson contributes perceptive and informative notes on the stories. *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes VI* is available from Naxos AudioBooks (18 High Street, Welwyn, Herts. AL6 9EQ) on three CDs or three cassettes.

The cover of *Sherlock* issue no. 53 features a provocative still of Mme Valladon (Geneviève Page) kissing Mr Holmes (Robert Stephens) in Billy Wilder's *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*, covered in Gavin Collinson's article about the film. Also in this issue — MJ Elliott looks at the later series of *Columbo*; Robert Sanderson investigates Dirk Gently; Calum McLeod considers the novels of Martina Cole; Bert Coules reviews the BBC TV *Hound of the Baskervilles*; Mike Ripley asks whether an author really should write about what he knows; Richard Valley considers cross-dressing in the Sherlock Holmes stories; There's a preview of the 2003 Sherlock Awards; Ron Ellis contributes a new Johnny Ace story; Chuck Kovacik illuminates **The Baker Street Builders** ... and more! The magazine is published six times a year, at £3.95 or \$6.50 the issue. A six-issue subscription is £23.70 (rest of world £26.00 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; sherlock@sherlock-holmes.com).

Philip Attwell notes that BBC 7 digital radio (check the website at www.bbc.co.uk/radio) is broadcasting the Radio 4 Sherlock Holmes plays with Clive Merrison & Michael Williams, while Oneworld (<http://oneworld.co.uk>) is transmitting vintage Holmes plays from American radio. Phil says a good source of information about forthcoming Sherlock Holmes material on British radio and television is www.mydigiguide.com.

Writers might find *Blood at the Source: Research Tips for Mystery Writers* (www.barbarafister.com/Bloodatthesource.html) useful.

Customs & Excise have dogs trained to detect the ink and dye on bank notes. Last month a sniffer dog named Sherlock tracked down £36,000 in a passenger's suitcase at Newcastle Airport.

At 8.00 pm on Friday 28 March, Roger Llewellyn will be at Falmouth Arts Centre, Cornwall with *Sherlock Holmes — the Last Act!* (a virtuoso performance of a stunning play, highly recommended). The box office number is 01326 212300, and tickets cost £7.00 (concessions £6.00).

You'll know by now that Britney Spears is set to star in a film called *221bCAUSE*, as an American assistant at a London travel agent located at 221B Baker Street. She notices that letters are arriving addressed to Sherlock Holmes, and when she starts answering them in his name she gets involved in a race to save the US President's kidnapped son. Who knows? It might be fun ...

Mia Stampe has set up a website for reviews (in English) of Sherlock Holmes books, films and so forth, drawing on the experience and opinions of Sherlockians world-wide. You'll find it at www.gfy.ku.dk/~ams/sh/books.html. It's worth a look. And Robert W Franson's review of *The Annotated Sherlock Holmes* is posted at www.Trynovant.com.

Terry Fountain tells me that the January issue of *ThrillerUK* features an article on the 'crimes' of Sherlock Holmes, who also appears on the cover. The magazine costs £3.95 plus 55p postage (£1.55 overseas) from T Fountain, *ThrillerUK*, 130 Sackville Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 7AA. There's a website at www.thrilleruk.fsnet.co.uk/latest.htm.

The March issue of *Collect it!* (Essential Publishing Ltd, The Tower, Phoenix Square, Colchester CO4 9PE) has a four-page article by Brian Jones on collecting Sherlockiana.

The Adventurers of Sherlock Holmes have their own website at www.ash-nyc.com.

Davice Sharp tells me that plans for *It's All GREE*, a weekend conference in April 2004, have reluctantly been cancelled.

The subject of our Society's meeting on 19 March at the National Liberal Club will be Holmes's relationship with Inspector Lestrade. The membership secretary is Bob Ellis, 13 Crofton Avenue, Orpington, Kent BR6 8DU.

On 7 March **The Occupants of the Empty House** meet in Du Quoin (Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA) **The Diogenes Club of the Monterey Peninsula** meet on 8 March (Michael H Kean, 2040 Sloat Road, Pebble Beach, CA 93953, USA). 10 March sees the book sale and regular monthly meeting of **The Sound of the Baskervilles** (David Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). **The Notorious Canary-Trainers** meet on 16 March to consider 'Thor Bridge' (Thom Baykoff, 222 Randolph Drive, #303, Madison, WI 53717, USA). **The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn** discuss 'The Naval Treaty' at their meeting on 28 March (Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA). Next day, **The Glades of the New Forest** visit the 'Five Orange Pips' locations in the Portsmouth area (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3 RU). **Caska Spolecnost Sherlocka Holmese** (the Czech Sherlock Holmes Society) plans a Sherlockian exhibition 'near Prague', to run from 1 April for about eight weeks (Ales Kolodrubec, Milesovska 1, 130 00 Praha 3, Czech Republic).

Periodicals received. *The Sherlock Holmes Journal*, Winter 2002 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**, Nicholas Utechin, Highfield Farm House, 23 Highfield Avenue, Headington, Oxford OX3 7LR). *The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment Interim Newsletter*, January 2003 (Brian Pugh, 20 Clare Road, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1PN). *The Camden House Journal*, February 2003 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). *Ineffable Twaddle*, February and March 2003 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, 3606 Harborcrest Court NW, Gig Harbor, WA 98332-8981, USA). *The Parallelogram*, January 2003 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J Eckrich, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63026, USA). *The Illustrious Clients News*, February 2003 (**The Illustrious Clients**, Steven T Doyle, 540 W Sycamore Street, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). *Communication*, January/February 2003 (**The Pleasant Places of Florida**, Jeff & Wanda Dow, 1737 Santa Anna Drive, Dunedin, FL 33544, USA). *Mayday Mayday*, February 2003 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardcarney Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). *The Whaling News*, January and February 2003 (**The Harpooners of the Sea Unicorn**, Michael E Bragg, PO Box 256, St Charles, MO 63302-0256, USA). And the great Sherlockian newsletter *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, January 2003 (Peter E Blau, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA; pblau@dgsys.com).

Roger Johnson