

# THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

## The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

*Roger Johnson, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE*

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Barbara Alder and Christopher Roden have merged their book collections and discovered a number of duplications in the fields of Sherlock Holmes, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and ghost stories. They're offering the extra copies for sale. If you're interested, please send a stamped & addressed envelope to: Ashcroft, 2 Abbottsford Drive, Penyffordd, Chester CH4 0JG. Lists will be sent out on the 20th September. Orders will be dealt with in the order received. Barbara and Chris are also keen to hear from anyone interested in joining an informal Sherlockian group, which will hold monthly meetings in the Chester area. The emphasis will be on Sherlockian studies rather than the social occasion.

Michael Connolly's booklist (his 9th) is out now. It's a shorter than usual catalogue of Holmesiana, but varied and reasonably priced. Send an SAE for a copy to: Tigarve, Allistragh, Armagh, Co. Armagh, Northern Ireland BT61 8EZ. A colleague of Catherine Cooke's has five volumes of **The Strand Magazine** for sale: volumes 1, 2, 4, 5 & 6. These are reading copies only - the bindings, which are original, are in a generally shaky state, but the pages are in fair condition. Margaret Girvan is offering them to the highest bidder (buyer pays postal costs). They may be inspected in, or collected from, central London. If you're interested, phone Margaret on 071-798 2038 (work) or 071-435 0429.

The new packaging for the LFP recordings of **The Hound of the Baskervilles**, **A Study in Scarlet**, **The Sign of Four** and **The Valley of Fear**, along with the Argo re-issue of **The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes**, is very attractive. Look out for special Sherlock Holmes "dump-bins" in the shops. These cassettes, new and re-issued, will be out on the 1st September. In November, HarperCollins Audiobooks will release an abridged reading of **The Hound of the Baskervilles** by Tony Britton at £6.99.

Yesterday (and I missed it) the Triangle Theatre Company presented at the Tamworth Arts Centre a play about Arthur Conan Doyle, called **Holmes, Watson and Me**. Does anyone know if the play is to be mounted elsewhere? News from the Northern Musgraves: in spring 1993 there'll be a national tour of a much revised version of Leslie Bricusse's **Sherlock Holmes: the Musical**, with Robert Powell and Roy Barraclough in the leading roles. (More from the Musgraves: **The Musgrave Papers** is, or are, at the printers now. This issue runs to 120 pages. My monograph **Ready When You Are, Mr Rathbone** may not be with you until the winter, but it will be a very handsome brochure, splendidly illustrated with rare stills from Tony Howlett's collection. The text is quite good too. Information about the Northern Musgraves can be had from David Stuart Davies at Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER; please enclose an SAE.)

Georgina Ledger (Rose Cottage, Coton, Milwich, Stafford ST18 0ET) reports immediate success from her plea in the last DM, which has

emboldened her to ask this time if anyone can help her with the following VHS videos: **The Seven-per-Cent Solution**, **Sherlock Holmes in New York** and Basil Rathbone's last, **Dressed to Kill** aka **Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Code**. She reminds me that in June, Hanbury Plays published **Holmes on the Range** by Craig Sodaro at £4.50.

Other books. Last month Dover put out **Six Great Sherlock Holmes Stories** by Arthur Conan Doyle at 95p. From Orion in October comes **Great Tales of Crime & Detection: the Television Detectives' Omnibus** edited by Peter Haining (£14.99, paperback £8.99), featuring everyone from Holmes to Morse and Wexford. In September, Robson will publish **Murder and Madness: the Secret Life of Jack the Ripper** by David Abrahamson, while in November there's a revised paperback edition of Melvyn Fairclough's **The Ripper and the Royals** (Duckworth, £6.99). Our member Allen Eyles, with David Meeker, has written **Missing, Believed Lost** (British Film Institute, 1st October, £14.95), an account of 100 British films - including the 1914 **A Study in Scarlet** - which may still, somewhere, be recoverable. (Thanks to Desmond Tyler for alerting me to this one. Desmond, as you may not know, is our Society's Archivist. If you have a query about the Society's history - for example - you might find out what you want by writing to him at 162 Leybridge Court, Eltham Road, London SE12 8TL.)

Recently received journals of interest are **The Devon County Chronicle** (Robert W. Hahn, BSI, 2707 South 7th Street, Sheboygan, Wisconsin 53081, USA), the first issue of **The Hound**, the journal of The Baskerville Hounds ("The Master of Hounds", 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 3RD), which contains a good collection of essays, including one by Bob Hahn, on the subject of you-know-what, and is produced to Sherlock Publications' usual high standard (**The Hound** is available only to members of the Baskerville Hounds or of the Franco-Midland Hardware Company; membership details can be had from "The Master of Hounds" by sending two 1st class stamps or one \$US bill), and **The School Report no. 9** (the Priory Scholars, Ken Savary, 12 Links Road, Kibworth, Leicestershire LE8 0LD) .

For those unaware, the next two films in the Granada Sherlock Holmes series will be **The Noble Bachelor** with Simon Williams as Lord Robert St Simon, and **The Last Vampyre** with Keith Barron as Bob Ferguson. The reason for the title-change is that Granada couldn't afford to go to Sussex, so have made the film in Gloucestershire, which looks rather different! Both will be two-hour films, the format to which our TV companies now seem to be committed, and which will prove even more of a headache than the once-ubiquitous half-hour length... Lucky people in the USA can now buy Disney's **The Great Mouse Detective** on video for as little as \$16; no sign of its being available over here.

From Peter Blau: the 17th cassette in the series **The New Adventures of Sherlock Holmes**, featuring Rathbone and Bruce, is now out; the episodes are "The Living Doll" and "The Disappearing Scientists". As far as I know, these Simon & Schuster cassettes are available in this country only through Murder One. Someone please tell me I'm wrong! Usually available from Murder One is the magazine **Scarlet Street**, which gives much coverage of Holmes on screen. David Stuart Davies contributes a regular column. **Scarlet Street** isn't easily come by here, but David has just 21 copies available of the current issue, no. 7, at £3.75 including postage (see Huddersfield address above). David makes no profit out of this venture. Altruistic innocent!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'R. J. J.', located at the bottom right of the page.