

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

The Newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London
Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

opinions expressed are the editor's unless noted otherwise

no. 164 5th October 1996

To renew your subscription, send 12 stamped, self-addressed envelopes or (overseas) send 12 International Reply Coupons or £5.50 or US\$11.00 for 12 issues. Dollar checks should be payable to Jean Upton. Please note that dollar prices quoted without qualification refer to US dollars.

Our Society has published *Studies in Sherlock Holmes* by Dorothy L. Sayers: her four contributions to the higher criticism, brought together for the first time in a single volume, with a foreword by Richard Lancelyn Green. Only 100 copies of this luxury edition are for sale. Cost post-paid is: UK £21.00; Europe £22.00; USA \$45.00; elsewhere £23.00 or equivalent. Orders to Mrs E.M. Godden, Apple Tree Cottage, Smarden, Ashford, Kent TN27 8QE. Cheques payable to The Sherlock Holmes Society of London.

It's a pleasure to welcome Kelvin I. Jones back to the Holmesian scene. Besides his booklet *Sherlock Holmes in Cornwall* (reviewed in DM 163), he has reprinted his 1981 brochure *Thank You, Watson — The Matches*, a study of Holmes and tobacco (£3.00 + £1.00 postage), and this month publishes *The Mythic Hound* (£3.50 + 50p postage), a sequel to *The Mythology of The Hound* (reprinted at £2.50 + £1.00). These works can be ordered from Oakmagic Publications, 2 South Place Folly, Penzance, Cornwall TR18 4JB. (*It's worth seeking out a little book called *Mr Holmes in Cornwall: A Critical Explanation of the Late Dr Watson's Narrative Entitled "The Devil's Foot"* by Percy Trevelyan, still available, according to Whitaker's, at 70p plus postage from the Institute of Cornish Studies, Trevithick Centre, Trevenson Road, Pool, Redruth, Cornwall TR15 3PL. *)

David Stuart Davies has two books due on 1st November. *The Annals of Skelington Bones no. 3: The Ghoulie from the Globe* (£4.00 or \$8.00, payable to D.S. Davies) sees Bones in "his most chilling, his most blood-curdling and his most ridiculous adventure yet". If you enjoyed the first two cases, you'll love this one. (Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER). More substantial is *Bending the Willow: Jeremy Brett as Sherlock Holmes* (Calabash Press, Ashcroft, 2 Abbottsford Drive, Penyffordd, Chester CH4 0JG). This major work will be launched on 23rd October at Crime in Store. It can be ordered from the publishers at £19.99 (US\$29.99, Canada \$39.99) plus postage.

Hugh Scullion of Cadds Printing Ltd (59 Lancaster Avenue, West Norwood, London SE27 9EL) has issued a pleasant 1997 *Sherlock Holmes Desk Diary*, spiral-bound at £8.50 or \$14.00, or filofax at £8.00 or \$13.00. A5 format (8.25" x 5.875"). Significant dates are picked out, each week has a Canonical quotation, and there are 27 illustrations. Cheques payable to Cadds; dollar checks payable to H. Scullion.

Michael Connolly (Tigarve, Allistragh, Armagh, Northern Ireland BT61 8EZ) has a few items unsold from his last list: *The Strange Case of the End of Civilization as We Know It* by John Cleese, Jack Hobbs & Joe McGrath (fine at £4.00;

VG/fine at £3.00); *The Musgrave Papers 6 & 7* (£2.50 each); *The Ritual 11-15* (£1.50 each). Don't send money with your order as cash is on receipt of item/s, with postage at cost.

The Pleasant Places of Florida have published their 13th round-robin pastiche, *The Bourbon Bullion Bafflement*, at \$6.00 post-paid (within USA — I don't know what overseas rates would be). Orders to Dr Benton Wood, PO Box 740, Ellenton, FL 34222, USA — checks payable to Benton Wood.

The Fall Price List of the Battered Silicon Dispatch Box has a lot of good things: "*Dr Watson, Mr Sherlock Holmes*"; *The Adventures of Young Stamford & Other Sherlockiana* by Richard M. Caplan; *The Parlour Games of Sherlock Holmes* and *Five Sherlockian Walks in London*, by William S. Dorn; *An Annotated Collector's Guide: The 100 Most Important Critical Studies and Association Items to the Sherlock Holmes Canon* by Carl William Thiel; *The Sherlockian Star Chamber* by Steven Clarkson; *The Chronicles of Addington Peace*, the elusive detective stories by Bertram Fletcher Robinson, and much more. Contact George A. Vanderburgh, PO Box 204, 420 Owen Sound Street, Shelburne, Ontario L0N 1S0, Canada (fax 519 925-3482; e-mail gav@gbd.com).

"*Some Knowledge of Baritsu*" by Hirayama Yuichi & John Hall is Musgrave Monograph no. 7, due on 1st December. Orders are being taken now at pre-publication prices, post-paid: UK £5.00; USA \$10.00 airmail; Canada \$11.00 airmail; elsewhere \$12.00. Cheques should be payable to The Northern Musgraves, and orders sent to John Addy, 23 East Street, Lightcliffe, Halifax HX3 8TU.

Leopard Books (Random House UK Ltd, 20 Vauxhall Bridge Road, London SW1V 2SA) have released yet another edition of Christopher Lee's splendid abridged reading of *The Valley of Fear*. The price on the liner card is £9.99, but Leopard's catalogue says: "*published price £8.99 inc. VAT, bargain price £4.99 inc. VAT*". Presumably the latter is what you can expect to pay in a shop. Be careful, though — exactly the same excellent recording is still available at £5.99 as a Random House Audiobook! (*Reviewed in DM 163.*).

Leopard have also issued what appears from their catalogue to be a very nice hardback edition of the Canon at the remarkably low price of £2.99 each for *A Study in Scarlet*, *The Sign of Four* and *The Valley of Fear* and £3.99 each for the other six volumes. These are reprints of the 1974 John Murray/Jonathan Cape editions. Bracken Books (also a division of Random House UK) have published *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* as a £5.99 paperback

Other new and forthcoming titles. Last month Altamont Publishing, Italy (c/o Amalgamated Book Services Ltd, Suite 1, Royal Star Arcade, High Street, Maidstone, Kent ME14 1JL) issued *Sherlock Holmes Draco Draconis* by Brett Spencer & Dorian David, at £14.99. *A Study in Scarlet* is due

as a Penguin Popular Classic in December; *The Hound of the Baskervilles* follows in January (Penguin Books Ltd, 27 Wrights Lane, London W8 5TZ; £1.00 each). Michael Coren's *The Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle* will be published in paperback next month by Bloomsbury Publishing PLC (2 Soho Square, London W1V 6HB; £6.99).

One I missed at the time: *Lestrade and the Devil's Own* by M.J. Trow was published in June at £15.99 (Constable & Co. Ltd, 3 The Lanchesters, 162 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 9ER) (*I'm astonished that the witty and ingenious Lestrade novels haven't appeared in paperback.*)

Richard Dalby has alerted me to the fact that EU copyright in the works of Arthur Conan Doyle is in the hands of Lady Duncan and her daughter Andrea Reynolds. Aitken & Stone are agents for the revived copyright. (*This is not to be confused with the rights of Dame Jean Conan Doyle in her father's creations.*)

The latest production by Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) is a set of five pewter miniatures, each about an inch high. One is a bust, in deerstalker and cape, one is a character jug, and one, I think, is a thimble; one is a teapot, with the nose as the spout, and the last is a pipe. All are delightfully idiosyncratic and superbly made, and a bargain at £9.50 the set, including postage. (*Mark Hunter-Purvis reminds me that Charles Hall's book *Sherlock Holmes and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in Edinburgh* is still available at £4.50 post-paid. It's full of fascinating information and splendid illustrations.*)

The play *Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure at Sir Arthur Sullivan's* makes for a grand evening's entertainment. Miles Richardson is an admirable Holmes, well supported by the rest of the cast and by Tim Heath's clever script. The national tour continues. The play will be at the Warehouse Theatre in Croydon for 3 weeks, from 30th October to 17th November (box office 0181 680 4060). For details of other venues, contact Desmond Maurer, Stage One Theatre Company, 34 Jasmine Grove, London SE20 8JW (0181 778 5213).

Several people have sent more information about the tour, ending at Burton upon Trent on 13th December, of the Lip Service production *Move Over Moriarty*. This "hilarious genre spoof achieves epic results with two performers and a set. A classic music hall murder mystery with women playing men playing women, and a series of impossible scene changes..." It sounds like great fun. To find out when it will be in your area, call Nick Sweeting on 0171 978 4200.

Geoffrey Stavert sends word that BBC Radio 2's *Friday Night Is Music Night* is scheduled to come from Portsmouth later this month. The interval talk by Miles Kington is expected to cover Conan Doyle's connection with the city. Check your *Radio Times*.

The *Sherlock Holmes* public house and restaurant at 10-11 Northumberland Street, London WC2 5DA, has a new manager, Michael Phillips. He and his staff are keen to maintain the pub's high reputation as a shrine for Holmesians world-wide. Needless to say, it remains a great place to eat and drink. Just nearby, in the Arches under Charing Cross Station, is the **Players' Theatre**, which celebrates its Diamond Jubilee this year. Dinner at the *Sherlock Holmes* followed by Victorian Music Hall at the Players' makes for a memorable night out (box office 0171

839 1134). This year's pantomime is *Robin Hood, or The Foresters' Fête* by F.C. Burnand, first performed in 1862.

Good Food and Cakes (21A Market Street, Wellingborough, Northants. — phone 01933 227100) offer a Sherlock Holmes Celebration Cake: "a luxury 2lb Victorian fruit cake with brandy, marzipan and icing, featuring a Sherlock Holmes silhouette plaque". Cost is £19.50, and it can be delivered anywhere in the country. Philip Attwell says the cakes are delicious — his wife Sue and her partner Enid make them!

Wonderful Victorian (and other) Christmas presents can be had from **Past Times**, who have 60 shops and a mail order service. Call 01993 770440 for a catalogue. **Hawkin & Co.** (St Margaret, Harleston, Norfolk IP20 0PJ; phone 01986 782536) stock all sorts of toys and things you didn't know were still made. The 1996-1997 catalogue is out now.

Our Society's next meeting is the Annual Film Evening on 23rd October, when David Stuart Davies presents a varied programme at the Museum of London. **The Baskerville Hounds' Annual Pack Meet** on Dartmoor is on 11th-13th ("The Kennel Maid", 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). On 26th October **Baker Street Branch Lines** will visit Swindon ("Bradshaw", 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). **The Northern Musgraves** will be in Manchester on 26th & 27th for their "Write On Sherlock" weekend (David Stuart Davies, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER). **The Irregular Special Railway Company** has a "Holmes in Retirement & Bluebell Weekend" in Sussex over 2nd & 3rd November (Antony Richards, 163 Marine Parade, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 2RB). **The Franco-Midland Hardware Company** and **The Glades of the New Forest** have their Dr Watson Day on 10th November ("The Stock-broker's Clerk", 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU). **The Poor Folk Upon The Moors** hold their AGM & Christmas Lunch at the Grand Hotel in Torquay on 7th December (Eric Monahan, Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW).

Periodicals received. *Irregular Special Railway Company Newsletter* no. 18 (163 Marine Parade, Leigh-on-Sea, Essex SS9 2RB). *The Musgrave Papers* no. 9 (**The Northern Musgraves**, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER). *The Torr* no. 9 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Eric Monahan, Highcliff, 14 Silver Bridge Close, Broadsands Park, Paignton, Devon TQ4 7NW). *The School Report* no. 26 (**The Priory Scholars of Leicester**, Horace Coates, 21 Butcombe Road, Leicester LE4 0FY). *The Cormorant's Ring* Sept. 1996 (**The Trained Cormorants of Long Beach**, Jim Coffin, 6570 E. Paseo Alcazaa, Anaheim Hills, CA 92807, USA). *The Pleasant Places of Florida Communication* nos. 166 & 167 (Dr Benton Wood BSI, Box 740, Ellenton, FL 34222, USA). *The Parallelogram* Sept. 1996 (**The Parallel Case of St Louis**, Joseph J. Eckrich BSI, 914 Oakmoor, Fenton, MO 63126, USA). And finally: *Scuttlebutt from the Spermacti Press* August & September 1996 (Peter E. Blau BSI, 3900 Tunlaw Road NW #119, Washington, DC 20007-4830, USA).

Roger Johnson