

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

Roger Johnson, Mole End, 41 Sandford Road, Chelmsford CM2 6DE

e-mail: shjournal@btinternet.com

no. 336 30 September 2013

The subscription for postal subscribers who send money rather than stamped & self-addressed envelopes is (for 12 issues) £6.60 in the UK, and £11.00 or US\$18.00 overseas. Please make dollar checks payable to **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**. An e-mail subscription costs nothing and pretty much guarantees instantaneous delivery.

I can now access the electronic editions, both published on disc by The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box (www.batteredbox.com; gav@cablerocket.com; PO Box 50, RR #4, Eugenia, Ontario, Canada NOC 1E0) of *The Bibliography of A Conan Doyle* by **Richard Lancelyn Green & John Michael Gibson**, with updates by **Phillip George Bergem** (Cdn\$50.00); and *The e-Index to The Strand Magazine* by **Geraldine W Beare** (no price given, though *Index to The Strand Magazine* is listed as by **J F Whitt** at \$10.00, which may be an error). The *Bibliography* is, of course, excellent, and I'm particularly pleased to have Geraldine Beare's *Strand* index, which has been far too long out of print. Note, though, that this edition isn't fully searchable.

Each chapter of *Conan Doyle: Writing, Profession and Practice* by **Douglas Kerr** (Oxford University Press; www.oup.com; £30.00) looks at the various aspects of Conan Doyle's unusually varied life, and considers the influence and the impact that each had on his writing. Born in Scotland of an Irish mother and a second-generation English father, he was schooled in England, studied medicine in Scotland, and for the rest of his life was based in England. All three cultures are evident in his writing, and Professor Kerr may be right in calling him Britain's last national writer. His initial career in medicine, in which he twice acted as ship's surgeon and briefly as ophthalmologist, as well as general practitioner, influenced his creation of Sherlock Holmes as the world's first consulting detective. Even if you didn't know, you could probably deduce from his fiction that he was also a scientist, sportsman, historian, liberal imperialist and amateur criminologist, and of course his spiritualist mission occupied much of the latter part of his life. Douglas Kerr's essays are particularly valuable in placing each topic within its historical and social context. His prose is as intelligent and lucid as his approach to his subject. This is an admirable book.

Since John Camp's splendid little volume *Discovering London Railway Stations* was published in 1969, much has changed. Broad Street Station is no more. Liverpool Street and King's Cross have been successfully redeveloped. The Eurostar terminal at Waterloo has come and gone. St Pancras has become a magnificent international station. The grand hotels have been restored and reopened... *Discovering London Railway Stations* by **Oliver Green**, new from the same publishers, Shire Publications (www.shirebooks.co.uk; £6.99) is necessarily a completely new book, twice as long at 104 pages, and illustrated in colour. Broad Street, Willesden Junction and, rather sadly, Baker Street, are no longer included, but Blackfriars, currently being redeveloped, has been added, and each of the thirteen stations is covered in greater depth.

Shire has also published *Victorian and Edwardian Railway Travel* by **David Turner** (56 pages; £6.99) and *The Victorians and Edwardians on the Move* by **John Hannavy** (128 pages; £9.99). Unlike the 'Discovering' series, at 7" x 4½", these 'Shire Library' volumes are 8¼" x 6" and lavishly illustrated. Together with Oliver Green's book, they provide pretty much all you need to know about how Holmes, Watson and their circle got around. [*Shire and its sister company Old House Books publish a wonderful range of material relating to our period, including facsimiles of the two Bradshaw guides that inspired Michael Portillo's *Great Railway Journeys*. Check the website.*]

In DM 325 I welcomed *The Autobiography of Sherlock Holmes* by **Don Libey**, with slight reservations on account of the sometimes radical departures from the facts revealed in the Holmes canon, but I did note that there is serious thought behind the revisionism, adding, 'It's well written and it's not just whimsy.' This morning I received *The Biography and Autobiography of Sherlock Holmes: Being a Single Volume, Two-Book*

Compilation of: *My Brother, Sherlock* by Mycroft Holmes and *The Autobiography of Sherlock Holmes* by Sherlock Holmes (Campbell & Lewis; \$17.00 – available on Amazon.co.uk at £10.70). I'm looking forward to learning more surprising and intelligently imagined new information about the great detective.

Knife Edge, the sixth of the rattling good *Young Sherlock Holmes* novels by **Andrew Lane**, brings Sherlock back from his perilous adventures in Shanghai. He disembarks from the *Gloria Scott* (no, a different *Gloria Scott*) at Galway and to his astonishment is met by his brother Mycroft. It is, of course, work that brings Mycroft Holmes so far from his protective routine. Sir Shadrach Quintillan is holding an auction at his castle, at which the world's great powers will bid for the services of a clairvoyant who claims to communicate with the dead and to see into the future. Mycroft's first task, aided by Sherlock, is to discover how genuine are Ambrose Albano's powers, and then there's the diplomatic battle of wits with the other prospective bidders. As if things weren't complicated enough, the legendary Dark Beast makes its presence known in a peculiarly violent way. (Macmillan Children's Books; www.panmacmillan.com; £12.99.)

In 1999 the brilliant real-life Edinburgh detective James McLevy first appeared on Radio 4, played by Brian Cox and transformed by the writer **David Ashton** from an Irishman into a native Scot and placed four or five decades later in the city's history. Since then there have been thirty-seven more plays, and four novels, the latest being *Nor Will He Sleep* (Polygon Books; www.birlinn.co.uk; 13 October; £7.99). Young Arthur Conan Doyle featured in the last one, *A Trick of the Light*. Now, in 1887, Robert Louis Stevenson returns for his father's funeral to a city that's close to chaos. An old woman was beaten to death by Leith Docks. Two rival gangs of students have been running riot, but it seems that the killer is someone more sinister. Could Stevenson's creation Mr Hyde have come to life? In the year of the first McLevy play David Ashton also wrote *The Other Side*, a play for BBC2, in which Frank Finlay played the elderly Conan Doyle and Richard E Grant a young man who claimed to be Sherlock Holmes.

Sherlock Holmes is at last available in Welsh, thanks to Roy Upton-Holder and the Deerstalkers of Welshpool. *Y Cylch Brith*, a nice paperback published in just 100 copies, is 'The Speckled Band' translated by **Eurwyn Pierce Jones** (Deerstalker Publications, Baskerville, 146 Little Henfaes Drive, Welshpool SY21 7BA; £6.00 plus postage; e-mail ruptonholder@onetel.com). The Deerstalkers' website is at www.sherlockholmeswelshpool.com.

The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes, Volume 1: The Adventures and The Memoirs edited by **Leslie S Klinger** is now available in Kindle format from Amazon.co.uk and Amazon.com at £15.26 or \$24.63. The other volumes will follow.

Pilgrims to Switzerland in 2012 will remember **Helmi Sigg**, author of a stylish novella called *Sherlock Holmes and the Giessbach Falls*. Albert Kunz reports that the English text is available as an e-book at www.amazon.com/s/ref=nb_sb_noss_1?url=search-alias%3Daps&field-keywords=helmi+sigg or www.amazon.co.uk/Sherlock-Holmes-Giessbach-Fall-ebook/dp/B00EF42FVO/ref=sr_1_1?ie=UTF8&qid=1377262105&sr=8-1&keywords=helmi+sigg.

Back in April Endeavour Press published *The Best of The Strand Magazine* in Kindle format. They've now added *The Best of The Strand Magazine, Volume II*, introduced by **Andrew Roberts**, available from Amazon.co.uk for just 99p.

Brian Pugh is preparing a further revised edition of his invaluable *Chronology of the Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*, for publication early next year in both paperback and electronic formats by MX (www.mxpublishing.co.uk). Also forthcoming are *The Mammoth Book of*

the Lost Chronicles of Sherlock Holmes by **Denis O. Smith** (Paperback: 512 pages, Publisher: Running Press Book Publishers, 1 April 2014); *Sherlock Holmes FAQ: All That's Left to Know about the World's Greatest Private Detective* by **Dave Thompson** (Applause Theatre Book Publishers; 30 Mar 2014); and *Further Encounters of Sherlock Holmes* edited by **George Mann** (Titan Books, 28 Feb 2014).

The winning bid in **Anthony Horowitz's** auction was £3,700, which goes to the anti-bullying charity Kidscape. A character with the winner's name will meet Sherlock Holmes in the follow-up to *The House of Silk*.

At <http://lookingglasslantern.co.uk/> is the website of **Looking-Glass Lantern**, a project conceived by Graham Dunnington and fusing 1970s-influenced progressive rock with the atmosphere of Victorian England. The debut album, *A Tapestry of Tales*, features six tracks: 'The Blue Carbuncle' (a 12-minute progressive rock adaptation of the story); 'Six Pearls to Mary' (the Watsons' marriage, and Mary's untimely death); 'Two Solitary Men' (an instrumental depicting Holmes and Moriarty); 'A Scandal in Bohemia' (a 13-minute adaptation); 'Wisteria Lodge' (a short piece for classical guitar); 'A Tapestry of Tales' (a musical tribute to the world of Holmes). The second album, due in 2014, is an hour-long, progressive rock adaptation of a famous Holmes adventure.

Hirayama Yuichi reports that a DVD of the 1914 film *Der Hund von Baskerville*, starring Alwin Neuss, is in preparation. See www.edition-filmuseum.com/product_info.php/info/p34_Forthcoming-releases.html.

Frannie Davis, an after-school tutor in Seattle, refers us to an article about Holmes discovered by one of her pupils. It was written by Mike Haldas, co-founder of CCTV Camera Pros, and it's on the company's website at www.cctvcamerapros.com/Sherlock-Holmes-s/645.htm.

Jonathan Hopson reminds me of the **Peter Cushing evening** at Theatr Clwyd, Mold on 29 October. It will include a showing of the *Hammer Hound of the Baskervilles* and a talk by Tony Earnshaw. www.clwyd-theatr-cymru.co.uk/en/whats_on/event/17705.

Peter Blau notes that *Elementary* season 1 has been released in America as a six-DVD set available at Amazon and elsewhere, and a set available only at Target stores with bonus features on a seventh disc. The (presumably standard) set is due in the UK on 23 December.

News from John Addy: Nick Rennison (author of *Sherlock Holmes - The Unauthorised Biography*, 2005) and Robert Ryan (*Dead Man's Land*, 2013) will contribute to 'Before Sherlock - the Novel Art of Detection' on 27 October at The Old Swan Hotel, Harrogate, as part of the Harrogate History Festival: <http://harrogateinternationalfestivals.com/2013-history-festival/detection-a-novel-art/>.

Conan Doyle's former house in South Norwood is still, I think, up for sale. Jason E Cooper & Ian Bone of the **South Norwood Tourist Board** (www.southnorwoodtouristboard.com) write: 'As the powers that be don't appear to hold 12 Tennis Road in the same esteem that we all do, we have decided to honour the area's most famous author by naming the lake in South Norwood's Country Park *Lake Conan*. Whilst it is not the same as having access to the house where the death of Sherlock Holmes was penned, it will at least keep the name of the author prominent within the area. We are hoping that all Sherlock Holmes enthusiasts around the world will back our aim to not only name the lake (which currently has no name) but also have an official unveiling with a plaque/sign marking its name. I hope you will all lend support to pressure those in the decision making that this is the right thing to do.'

At www.mapbox.com/tutorial-sherlock/ is what Andrew Koop rightly calls an 'awesome Sherlock map by **Young Hahn**'. Scroll down and it takes you to the locations of 'The Bruce-Partington Plans' in sequence.

At <http://vimeo.com/47743812> is the trailer for a film based on **Stephen King's** story 'The Doctor's Case' (yes, *that* Stephen King). It doesn't look as if the film has got much further since this was posted a year ago.

Tom Ue, joint organiser of the stimulating *Sherlock Holmes Past and Present* conference at the University of London, has arranged a one-day symposium for 9 December in the Haldane Room at University College London. *Challenger Unbound* celebrates Conan Doyle's second most famous protagonist. Details are at <http://events.ucl.ac.uk/event/event-vq-hj6dhvnb-vzfwfzw/challenger-unbound> or contact Tom at +44 (0)78 4942 8351; e-mail wai.ue.10@ucl.ac.uk.

The International Exhibition of Sherlock Holmes opens on 10 October at the Oregon Museum of Science & Industry in Portland. In February it moves to the Center of Science & Industry, Columbus, Ohio. The website's at www.sherlockholmesexhibition.com. Photos are at www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.452351758136422.99355.451969811507950&type=1.

Dates and days this year are exactly the same as in 1895. When that situation arose in 1963, Bernard Davies designed a nice calendar which the Society published. I'm afraid we've missed the boat this time.

Here's something for the really dedicated (and, er, comfortably off) collectors. Richard Lancelyn Green was a frequent customer at **David Drummond's Pleasures of Past Times**, London's leading emporium of books, playbills and by-gones of the performing arts (11 Cecil Court, Charing Cross Road, London WC2N 4EZ; phone 020 7836 1142; e-mail popdrummond@gmail.com). Newly available is an original *Sherlock Holmes* programme and synopsis from William Gillette's brief run at the Duke of York's in 1905. Billy was played by Charlie Chaplin, so this item is doubly desirable. It's also very rare, which is why you'd be lucky to get it for £400.00.

Sherlock Holmes has already featured in **Lucy Worsley's** fine series on BBC4, *A Very British Murder*, and of course also features in her book of the same name (BBC Books; £20.00). Unfortunately the programmes are broadcast at the same time, Mondays at 9.00pm, as the *Specsavers Crime Thriller Club* on ITV3, leading up to the Crime Thriller Awards. I'm told that Sherlock Holmes will feature on 21 October. Look out for at least one familiar face from our Society.

The report of the Annual Meet of the **Sherlock Holmes Society of India** is on the website at www.sherlockholmesociety.in/, along with a test to assess your Holmes Mania Quotient. (Thanks to Jay Ganguly.)

Ken Ross, a true benefactor of the race, has posted on YouTube his remaining video recordings of the Society's weekend trips: Norwich 2000, Dartmoor 2002, and Sussex 2004. Go to www.youtube.com and type **ken ross sherlock holmes** in the search bar.

The dramatist **Snoo Wilson** died on 3 July. His output included two plays about Conan Doyle: *In Defence of Fairies* with Simon Callow (1997), and *Moonshine* with Robin Soans (1999). Peter Blau says Wilson is reported to have worked on a script for the Royal Shakespeare Company's 1974 revival of Gillette's *Sherlock Holmes*.

The Egyptologist **Barbara Mertz**, who died on 8 August, is better known as a crime writer under the names of Elizabeth Peters and Barbara Michaels. PB notes that in *Other Worlds*, as by Michaels, Houdini, Conan Doyle and others suggest (and briefly debate) possible solutions to two unsolved ghostly 19th-century mysteries.

Periodicals received. *The Baker Street Journal*, Autumn 2013 (Steven Rothman, www.bakerstreetjournal.com; subscriptions, PO Box 583, Zionsville, IN 46077, USA). *The Bilge Pump*, September 2013 (**The Crew of the Barque Lone Star**, Steve Mason, <http://barquelonestar.com>). *The Camden House Journal*, July 2013, and August 2013 (**The Occupants of the Empty House**, Debbie Tinsley, PO Box 21, Zeigler, IL 62999, USA). *Gaslight Gazette*, September 2013 (**The Survivors of the Gloria Scott**, David J Milner, 6 Crowndale Drive, Taylors, South Carolina 29687, USA). *Ineffable Twaddle*, September 2013 (**The Sound of the Baskervilles**, Terri Haugen, www.soundofthebaskervilles.com). *Ironmongers Daily News*, 17 September 1913 [*sic*] (**La Société Sherlock Holmes de France**, Thierry Saint-Joanis, www.sshf.com/inscription-sshf.php). *The Magic Door*, Summer 2013 (**The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection**, Doug Wrigglesworth, 16 Sunset Street, Holland Landing, Ontario, Canada L9N 1H4). *Mayday Mayday*, September 2013 (**The Crew of the SS May Day**, Oscar Ross, 19 Ardarn Way, Belfast BT5 7RP). *The Passengers' Log*, Autumn & Winter 2013 (**The Sydney Passengers**, Erin O'Neill, 24 Karuah Street, Strathfield, NSW 2135, Australia). *The Petrel Flyer*, Fall 2013 (**The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia**, Len Haffenden, 1026 West Keith Road, North Vancouver, B.C., Canada V7P 3C6). *Report from the Unscrupulous Rascals*, August 2013 (**The Sherlock Holmes Society of South Australia**, Mark Chellev, 50 Richmond Ave, Colonel Light Gardens, SA 5041, Australia). *The Serpentine Muse*, Fall 2013 (**The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes**, Evelyn Herzog, 301 Warren Ave, #203, Baltimore, MD 21203, USA). *The Torr*, Autumn 2013 (**The Poor Folk Upon The Moors**, Stephan Arthur, Camelot, Hombergstrasse 9, CH-4433 Ramllinsburg, Switzerland).

And *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, August 2013 and September 2013 (Peter E Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD 20817-4401, USA; blau7103@comcast.net).

Roger Johnson