

“I AM AN OMNIVOROUS READER”

Book reviews by DAN ANDRIACCO, MARK MOWER, VALERIE SCHREINER, JOHN SHEPPARD, JEAN UPTON, NICHOLAS UTECHIN and ROGER JOHNSON

The Adventure of the Abbey Grange: A Facsimile of the Original Sherlock Holmes Manuscript with an introductory essay by Catherine Cooke and a preface by Vincent Delay. *The Sherlock Holmes Society of London and Fondation Martin Bodmer*. 2016. 92pp. £29.00 postpaid (hbk)

In 1992 the Society and Westminster Libraries published *The Lion's Mane* in manuscript facsimile, following Westminster's publication of *The Dying Detective*, jointly with the Arthur Conan Doyle Society. The Baker Street Irregulars have since reproduced nine more Canonical manuscripts, and the Bibliothèque cantonale et universitaire Lausanne has issued *The Adventure of Shoscombe Abbey*, but only that last comes close to replicating the original as accurately and attractively as the two Westminster volumes. The bar has now been raised by this sumptuous new book, another collaboration with a major library. The exactness of the reproduction is remarkable: we can see every pencilled note and adjustment that ACD made. The value of these facsimiles is that they enable us to examine the manuscripts for ourselves, at our convenience, and (guided here by Catherine Cooke's excellent introduction) follow the construction and development of the story. But thanks to Bob Ellis's outstanding work as production editor, *The Adventure of the Abbey Grange* is also a lovely object, a pleasure to handle and a joy to read. Highest recommendation!

RJ

The Adventures of Two British Gentlemen in Switzerland: In the Footsteps of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes edited by Nicole Glücklich. *Deutsche Sherlock-Holmes-Gesellschaft*. 2016. 516pp. €29.00 + €8.00 postage (hbk)

Pilgrims to Switzerland (and many other people) will relish this lovely book. Despite its 516 pages, at approximately 7"x 5" it's not much bigger than my 1881 *Baedeker's Switzerland*, and the paper is of much higher quality. By Victorian standards, it's a pocket book — or rather, two books in one. Open *Die Abenteuer zweier britischer Gentleman in der Schweiz* and you have 270 pages in German. Turn it over, and there are 248 pages of a good English translation by Silvia Meier and Michael Ross. Either way, it's very handsome: nicely laid out, with attractive fonts and beautifully reproduced illustrations, old and new, and a full-colour double-sided map.

Switzerland was and is very important in the story of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes. I'll be very surprised if there's ever a better guide to their Switzerland. (Who knew that Monsieur Moser was a real hotelier?)

The book can be ordered from: Deutsche

Sherlock-Holmes-Gesellschaft, c/o Olaf Maurer, Wanderstraße 31, D-67071 Ludwigshafen, Germany (e-mail dshc221b@yahoo.com). The price is the same for all countries. Within Europe they prefer payment via SEPA; PayPal will cost a total of €47.70, to cover PayPal's own fees.

RJ

From Abbey to Wiles — Sherlock Holmes: Classic British Cover Artists by Nicholas Utechin. *The Sherlock Holmes Society of London*. 2016. 28pp. £7.00 postpaid (pbk)

In my youth I was curious about the artists who designed the dust-jackets for John Murray's editions of the Canon, but I didn't know how to find out about them. Now Nick Utechin has done the research, and this witty, entertaining and beautifully illustrated monograph is the result. It's fascinating to compare the superficially similar Paget-inspired images by Frank Marston, Philip Simmonds, the two Abbey brothers, and the great Frank Wiles — and to see how different J Abbey's first attempt was. (I wonder why CP Shilton's picture for *The Hound* breaks with Murray's tradition — and so ineffectually! Val Biro's version is far better, but completely unlike the others.) This is a strictly limited edition, so buy now!

RJ

A Curious Collection of Dates: Through the Year with Sherlock Holmes by Leah Guinn and Jaime N Mahoney. *Gasogene Books*. 2016. vii + 344pp. \$34.95 (pbk)

A delightfully frustrating problem for a reviewer is to run out of superlatives. That's the obstacle facing me in trying to discuss this book. For every day of the year there is at least one entertaining, enlightening, and thoroughly enjoyable entry related in some way to Sherlock Holmes. Naturally, many are pinned to dates of events — events in the Canon, historical events referenced in the Canon, events in the life of Arthur Conan Doyle and people associated with him, and events in the history of the Baker Street Irregulars or Sherlockiana in general. Other entries are birthdays of historical figures; actors, writers, and illustrators; relatives, friends, and associates of Conan Doyle; and perhaps some others I have missed.

May 22 has the expected entry for ACD, and one for Richard Wagner, also born on that date. Holmes, you'll recall, was eager to attend a Wagner night at Covent Garden in "The Red Circle." The admirable entry on Dr Watson, appropriately noting that he is "more than Holmes's loyal Boswell," begins on page 221. (There are *no* coincidences.) Speaking of coincidences, biographies of two great American

mystery writers and Sherlockians, John Dickson Carr and Rex Stout, appear on facing pages under their respective birthdates of November 30 and December 1. Stout also gets attention on March 1, the date of his infamous “Watson Was a Woman” speech at the 1941 BSI dinner.

As a member of the Vatican Cameos, a society for Catholic Sherlockians, I was gratified by the March 2 entry on Pope Leo XIII, the only person other than the official police known to have been a client of Sherlock Holmes more than once.

Usually I say that an invaluable reference book belongs on your shelves. This one belongs on your nightstand so that you can begin or end your day with the appropriate entry or entries.

DA

Mentored by a Madman: The William Burroughs Experiment by AJ Lees. *Notting Hill Editions*. 2016. 214pp. £14.99 (hbk)

The author is one of the world’s leading neurologists. Influenced by WS Burroughs’ attempts to escape from his legendary drug addiction, and inspired by Sherlock Holmes’ methods of deduction, he discovered a ground-breaking treatment for Parkinson’s Disease. Written in a non-clinical, autobiographical style, this is as much a page-turner as the best whodunit. The book is not overly abundant in Sherlockian content, but is a real eye-opener in regard to the world of medical research. It would be of immense interest to anyone who is curious about the daunting labyrinth that is pharmaceutical research, or has in any way been affected by Parkinson’s Disease.

JU

Sherlock Holmes: Behind the Canonical Screen edited by Lyndsay Faye and Ashley D Polasek. *The Baker Street Irregulars*. 2015. xiv + 257pp. \$29.95 plus postage (pbk)

These papers were delivered at a BSI conference in 2012, predating the momentous discovery of William Gillette’s film *Sherlock Holmes*. No matter! Here are eighteen essays, talks and interviews by Sherlockians, academics, film historians and workers in the industry — several, of course, not defined by a single category. Jeffery Hart surveys the changing perception of Holmes on screen and the tardy acceptance of Watson as essential; Russell Merritt writes about the silent Holmes; Jennie C Paton looks at cartoons, and John Farrell watches musicals; Kristopher Mecholsky shows that deviation from the Canon isn’t necessarily a bad thing. Rathbone, Brett and the Japanese “Sherlock Hound” get a chapter each, but *Murder Rooms*, the Guy Ritchie films, and *Sherlock* are considered together. The editors review the portrayal of women in Sherlockian film and TV productions. There are particularly interesting papers on more unusual topics: restoration of old films, and the vexed question of intellectual property. Finally, Nicholas Meyer speaks about adapting Holmes for the screen; two Disney animators explain how *Basil of Baker Street* became *The Great Mouse Detective*;

and Leslie Klinger interviews Rob Doherty, the man behind *Elementary*.

I’d love to have been at the conference, but this splendid book is the next best thing.

RJ

About Sixty: Why Every Sherlock Holmes Story Is the Best edited by Christopher Redmond. *Wildside Press*. 2016. 249pp. \$14.99 (pbk)

Christopher Redmond assembled a team of sixty Sherlockians — veterans and newcomers — to make the case that a certain Holmes story is the best. Although I’ve been reading the Canon for more than fifty years, this book gave me new insights and new appreciation for many of the stories.

My subject (interest declared!) is “The Adventure of the Missing Three-Quarter.” Arguing that it’s the best was beyond my creative imagination, so I focused on its wonderful gallery of minor characters. Many of the other essayists do argue that their subject is the best story, and their reasons are impressive for their variety. Susan Smith-Josephy calls *A Study in Scarlet* the “absolute epitome of a Holmes-Watson tale”. Sonia Fetherston shows how “A Case of Identity” predicts what would follow in the Canon. Jaime N Mahoney lauds “The Veiled Lodger” as “a study in understanding”, with Holmes compassionate and humane in a story in which he has nothing else to do. Also impressive are the insights that will colour my future readings of the stories, such as Al Shaw’s speculation that “The Red-Headed League” was the first use of “the long con” in a detective story.

It’s a great book to read straight through, and to keep handy for perusing again whenever you re-read one of the Sixty. All royalties go to the not-for-profit Beacon Society, dedicated to introducing young people to Sherlock Holmes through schools and libraries.

DA

Cracking the Code of the Canon: How Sherlock Holmes Made His Decisions by Diane Gilbert Madsen. *MX Publishing*. 2016. xvi + 371pp. £12.99 (pbk)

Ms Madsen re-read the Holmes stories while planning her novel *The Conan Doyle Notes*. This book is based on her copious research notes — not about Holmes’s methods of detection but about his sense of justice and his attitude to the law. Why did he decide to turn a criminal over to the police, to let an offender go free, or to dispense punishment himself? How careful was his judgement? Crimes, criminals and victims are analysed and categorised; changing social and legal attitudes are compared. Ms Madsen has obtained expert advice on English and Scottish law. There are tiny flaws (Mary Holder becomes Mary Sullivan and the kingdom of Scandinavia is renamed Sardinia) but everything that matters is scrupulously accurate. It’s an original approach, and it gives one furiously to think.

RJ

On How to Investigate Mysteries: Secrets for Sam by Alan Macfarlane. *Cambridge Rivers Press*. 2016. 80pp. £4.31 (pbk)

One of “a series of short letters written to young friends” by Professor Macfarlane, this nice little book shows how the ratiocination of Holmes and Dupin can help us understand the great mysteries of anthropology and social history. This reasoning backwards is, says Macfarlane, an equivalent in the arts and social sciences to the methodology of forward reasoning propounded by René Descartes. *On How to Investigate Mysteries* should encourage enquiring youngsters (and adults) to learn and to think about what they learn.

RJ

Welcome to Undershaw: A Brief History of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, The Man Who Created Sherlock Holmes by Luke Benjamin Kuhns. *MX Publishing*. 2016. vii + 108pp. £18.99/€24.99/\$28.95 (hbk)

Author and publisher are active supporters of the campaign to restore Undershaw, and they’re to be applauded for producing this rather handsome book in time for the opening of the Stepping Stones School. (Royalties go to help the restoration of the building.) The story of the man and his house is pleasantly told, there are lots of interesting illustrations, Brian Belanger’s cover design is enticing, and the passion that impelled David Forbes-Nixon to buy Undershaw for Stepping Stones is almost palpable in his introduction.

RJ

Legendary Dartmoor Pubs & Inns: Explore in the Footsteps of Sherlock Holmes & the Hound of the Baskervilles by Simon Butler. *Halsgrove*. 2016. 128pp. £9.99 (hbk)

In 2001 Halsgrove published Philip Weller’s *The Hound of the Baskervilles: Hunting the Dartmoor Legend*; this very attractive new book, a collaboration with the Dartmoor Trust Archive, maintains the same high standard. It’s lavishly illustrated with historic and modern photographs. The text is informative, entertaining and remarkably comprehensive: it covers much more than Holmes or Conan Doyle, but anyone following the trail of the Hound or Silver Blaze will want to have a copy to hand. The familiar places are here (including Tavistock, which isn’t actually on the moor), and there are *so* many other alluring settlements and hostels...

RJ

The MX Book of New Sherlock Holmes Stories, Part V: Christmas Adventures edited by David Marcum. *MX Publishing*. 2016. xviii + 540pp. £37.99 (hbk), £19.99 (pbk)

As with its predecessors, all royalties from the latest volume in this admirable series will go to help the restoration of Undershaw. Familiar names among the thirty authors include Hugh Ashton, Molly Carr, Matthew J Elliott, Wendy C Fries, Paul D Gilbert,

John Hall, James Lovegrove, Mark Mower, Denis O Smith, Amy Thomas and Nicholas Utechin. Exciting bonuses for me are Bert Coules’ radio dramatisation of the essential Christmas story, “The Blue Carbuncle”, and a seasonal radio play by Jim French. Excellent!

RJ

The Missing Misadventures of Sherlock Holmes edited by Julie McKuras, Timothy Johnson, Ray Riethmeier & Phillip Bergem. *The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota*. 2016. x + 219pp. \$25.00 plus postage (pbk)

The Misadventures of Sherlock Holmes, edited by Ellery Queen, was published in 1944 and shortly afterwards withdrawn, thanks to the disapproval of the Conan Doyle. (Copies aren’t hard to find, but they are expensive. Or you can download a scan at archive.org/details/scriblio_test_044.) It contains thirty-three examples of “parody, travesty, burlesque and exact imitation”, with an introduction justifying the inclusion of each story... and “an explanation for certain omissions — ‘missing misadventures’.” This new volume, compiled and published for the 2016 conference at the University of Minnesota, effectively completes the Queen anthology. Here are those fourteen missing tales, long, short, and mostly humorous. The stand-out for me is the first English translation (from Dutch) of *De Allerlaatste Avonturen van Sir Sherlock Holmes*, but it’s all appealing, and attractively presented in similar style to the original *Misadventures*. (Airmail postage for non-US buyers costs \$22.50. Contact Phillip Bergem at pgbergem@gmail.com.)

RJ

The Sacrifice of Sherlock Holmes by Jonathan Barnes. *Big Finish*. 2016. 4 CDs. £30.00 or download \$25.00.

This set completes (possibly) the saga that began, chronologically, with episode 1 of *The Ordeals of Sherlock Holmes*, when the protagonists were young men. Nicholas Briggs and Richard Earl effortlessly convince, as Holmes and Watson age through *The Adventure of the Perfidious Mariner* and *The Judgement of Sherlock Holmes* to 1921, where we now find them. Mycroft Holmes is dead. The terrorist organisation called The Society is revived, under a madman known as Agamemnon (Alan Cox), who has a murderous hatred of London, the “New Troy”, and of Sherlock Holmes. The detective and the doctor are old and tired. Can they defeat the terror? Can they even survive it? It’s a fantastic and compelling tale.

RJ

Echoes of Sherlock Holmes: Stories Inspired by the Holmes Canon edited by Laurie R King and Leslie S Klinger. *Pegasus Crime*. 2016. 368pp. £14.99/\$24.95 (hbk)

This is King and Klinger’s third volume of stories that draw inspiration from the work of Conan Doyle. The authors were free to translate their affection for the Canon, without any presumption on style, format,

era or characterisation. In my view, this eclectic mix of seventeen tales from an excellent assembly of writers is the best to date.

Alongside some gentle pastiches and the reworking of familiar characters into modern settings and innovative scenarios, we find a cartoon strip in which Mrs Hudson plays detective, and cameo appearances by Conan Doyle and Auguste Dupin. Inevitably, some stories work better than others. My favourites were “The Adventure of the Dancing Women” by Hank Phillippi Ryan and “Holmes on the Range” by John Connolly. The latter has a wonderful plot in which the more traditional characters of Holmes and Watson appear in the Caxton Private Lending Library & Book Depository, an institution in which popular fictional characters are brought to life in the real world. Splendid stuff indeed.

MM

The Devil’s Daughters by Diana Bretherick. *Orion*. 2015. 470pp. £8.99 (pbk)

This is the second of the author’s “Lombroso” books. The setting is principally Turin in 1888, so it is well centred in the Victorian period we Holmesians love so much. Whilst the principal character, Murray the young Scottish doctor, is fictional, the novel is permeated by the presence of Cesare Lombroso, a real character (in every sense!) of his time. Lombroso is regarded as “the father of modern criminology”, although most of his actual thinking on the subject as referenced in the novel, will appear wildly eccentric to 21st century readers. Holmesian references can be found; particularly worthy of comment is the author’s inclusion, almost accurately, of what is probably our favourite phrase, “the game was afoot.” Murray’s training under Professor Bell of Edinburgh University, and Lombroso’s real-life obsession with spiritualism will also strike familiar chords with us. This heady brew of fact and fiction makes for a thoroughly good read.

JS

Holmes and Hudson by Austin Mitchelson, and Warwick Eede. *Editions Graphiques*. 2016. £18.99 via Amazon (pbk)

Holmes and Hudson is one of the more bizarre products of the present free-for-all world that surrounds everything Sherlockian. The fact that this graphic novel carries a “Parental Advisory: Explicit Note” on the cover implies a frisson for the potential purchaser — one that is unwarranted, since what is presented is of habitual graphic novel content with an entirely unnecessary spicing of f-words.

Mitchelson co-wrote two Holmesian pastiches in 1976 (with me: interest declared) and then tested the water — mightily swirled here — with his alternative biography, *The Baker Street Irregular* (1994), which postulated a thoroughly unpleasant occupant of 221B. Here, Holmes is mad, drug-crazed, murderous and a thoroughly bad egg. There are some clever allusions along the way, but we are basically facing another Ripper take, with sideways jabs (literally in some

cases) at Canonical favourites. There is too much plot, and thus some twists become annoying (I had to re-read to work out exactly who this rancid Holmes faced at the Falls!) And yet: it is a passingly clever take, and the artwork, by Warwick Eede, is vitally absolutely in tune with what is called for by this sort of publication.

NU

Sherlock Holmes and a Scandal in Batavia by Jeremy Kingston. *Robert Hale*. 2016. 222pp. £12.99 (pbk)

From the start, this is a gripping and colourful tale which never ceases to entertain. “Batavia” is the old Roman name for the Netherlands, and the plot is centred on Prince Alexander, son of the King of the Netherlands, who fears that his life and ascension to the throne may be in jeopardy. So begins a case which takes us on a whirlwind tour of Europe. Two features set this pastiche apart. First, Kingston’s extensive knowledge of history, which is drawn upon at every turn creating a backdrop rich in period detail. And second, his clear regard for the Canon, demonstrated in the many neat references and affectionate nods to the characters, stories and intrigues of the original texts — we even learn why there has always been some confusion over the location of Watson’s Jezail bullet wound! The relationship between Holmes and Watson is particularly well-drawn. At one point Watson suffers a nervous fit. Holmes says: “*You look ready to drop. Here is a cab. No, say nothing more of dukes, or Dutchmen, or dynamite. The subjects are closed until after you have breakfasted tomorrow. I cannot afford to have my aide and confidant laid low.*” It’s a touching portrayal, maintained consistently. I believe this to be the author’s first Holmes pastiche. I’d encourage him to write lots more.

MM

Associates of Sherlock Holmes edited by George Mann. *Titan Books*. 2016. 380pp. £7.99 (pbk)

Thirteen short stories by thirteen authors, each centred on a personality from the Canon, and in each case an inventive and entertaining narrative is woven around them, with a suitable degree of Canonical grounding. I particularly enjoyed the tales written around Clarence Barker, the rival detective, and Irene Adler, who needs no introduction. Another one worthy of note is the rather mystical tale narrated by Helen Stoner, with its links to Tibet, leading Holmes to express his wish to go there one day! Other readers will find their own favourites, of course. While one or two are a little too gruesome, taken as a whole this is an excellent and well-written collection which should appeal to all Holmesians.

JS

The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes: The Ripper Legacy by David Stuart Davies. *Titan Books*. 2016. 235pp. £7.99 (pbk)

This novel is one of David Stuart Davies’s best, intriguing and engaging from start to finish. I was a

little afraid at first that this might be another Jack the Ripper meets Sherlock Holmes tale, but it's actually something very different.

The plot revolves around the kidnapping of an eight-year-old boy, whose family engage the Great Detective to investigate. Holmes and Watson are drawn into a shadowy world of secrets and conspiracies and face a race against time to unravel the overlapping strands of the case. Davies's writing is first rate and the structure of the book works well — short, punchy chapters, easily devoured, leading you to want to read more... and more. At times, it was almost cinematic in feel and would work well as a television or film adaptation. Including bits of narrative from the perspective of different characters, alongside Dr Watson, added a fresh dimension. In short, a good story told with great skill and affection.

MM

The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes: The Counterfeit Detective by Stuart Douglas. Titan Books. 2016. 272pp. £7.99 (pbk)

The Great Detective receives an anonymous letter suggesting that an imposter is at work in the New York, solving cases and achieving some notoriety. His name? Sherlock Holmes, of course! Our intrepid duo set off across the Atlantic to confront the counterfeit detective. So begins an elaborate adventure which takes us on a whirlwind tour of the Big Apple in the late summer of 1899.

The tale has good pace and great characterisation. There are lots of nods to the original Canon and the narrative captures the voice and spirit of Dr Watson. Equally compelling is the portrayal of New York at the turn of the century; urbane and sophisticated in the brownstones of its more affluent neighbourhoods, with an underbelly of lawlessness and deprivation in the stale beer haunts of the Five Points — a city in which Holmes and Watson appear to be perfectly comfortable. Fans of the gentle, affectionate, pastiche will really enjoy this.

MM

The Redacted Sherlock Holmes, Volume III by Orlando Pearson. MX Publishing. 2016. 236pp. £8.99 (pbk)

Six more cases that Dr Watson considered too sensitive to be released at the time. The style is Victorian, but these stories tackle issues and puzzles of the 21st century. "Seasonal Tale", for instance, tells how Holmes was forced over a century ago to prove the reality of climate change. Effective use is made of Holmes's limited knowledge in such areas as team sports and ladies' fashion, which is where Watson comes into his own. Readers who liked the earlier volumes will undoubtedly enjoy this one.

VS

In brief

It's a delight to welcome Jeff Cody and Sebastian McCabe in their sixth novel-length mystery, *Erin Go Bloody* by Dan Andriacco (MX; £9.99). The

tranquillity of Erin, Ohio is rocked when the black sheep of the Ellicott family returns. Now a best-selling author, he's determined to march in the St Patrick's Day Parade, in protest against the technology that made his family rich and powerful. Murder follows, and Professor McCabe must play detective again. If not for the alarming mortality statistics, I'd love to visit Erin!

In 1903 Jack London, author of *White Fang*, wrote *The People of the Abyss*, a first-hand account of life among the poor in East London. In 1910 he began a novel called *The Assassination Bureau, Ltd*, but he never finished it. That fact is the inspiration for *The Outrage at the Diogenes Club* (MX; £7.99), fourth in Daniel D Victor's series "Sherlock Holmes and the American Literati". The real Assassination Bureau is as dark and dangerous an organisation as Holmes has ever faced. With the threat of war looming, what chance does he have of defeating the murderous cabal?

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes Re-Imagined: The Complete Collection (MX; £29.99) is attractive, slightly mad, and rather charming. Conan Doyle's text is intact. The re-imagining is expressed in the full-colour illustrations by P James Macaluso Jr, which re-create the scenes in Sidney Paget's original pictures using only Lego figures and bricks.

Similarly entertaining and attractive is *Barry Baskerville's Blue Bicycle* by Richard L Kellogg, illustrated by Gary Kato (Airship 27, £7.68) in which the boy sleuth of Watsonville helps his neighbours, annoys his teacher and solves a crime. Ideal for young readers.

Anyone seriously interested in Conan Doyle's life and career should have a copy of *A Chronology of the Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, May 22nd 1859 to July 7th 1930: 2014 Revised and Expanded Edition* by Brian W Pugh (MX; £14.99). And you'll want *A Chronology of the Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle: Addenda & Corrigenda 2016* (MX; £8.99) as well!

The subtitle of *Some of My Favourite Sherlockian Things* by EA (Bud) Livingston (MX; £8.99) is *A Compendium of Pawky and Outré Monographs, Toasts and Whatnots*, which tells you all you really need to know. These 70-odd pieces, originally delivered at Sherlockian meetings in New Jersey or New York, are droll and occasionally eye-opening.

Michael W McClure, BSI is a funeral director, with a passion for puns. Long ago he planned a book of joky epitaphs for various Canonical characters, and fellow-punster John Bennett Shaw wrote a foreword. The book has finally appeared, as *Sherlock Holmes and the Cryptic Clues: A Grave Undertaking* (Baskerville Productions, www.baskervilleproductions.com/books; \$21.95 pbk, \$32.95 hbk). Each epitaph appears on a drawing of a gravestone, and "notable Sherlockians are honored as their likenesses adorn the monuments as effigies" — including David Stuart Davies, Brian Pugh, Shirley Purves and a few other Britons. It's deucedly odd, but undeniably amusing.

RJ