THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

the newsletter of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London

☞ Roger Johnson, 210 Rainsford Road, Chelmsford CM1 2PD.

no. 94 16th January 1990

Welcome to the Naughty Nineties!

If you haven't yet bought the magnificent Studio Galleries limited edition decorative plate PORTRAYALS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, please note that the special-offer price will not be valid after the 31st January. After then there will be a special price for Sherlock Holmes societies, but it won't be as favourable to your pocket. The plate shows, in sepia, a collage of 19 stage & screen Holmeses plus 1 Watson; it's in bone china with gold rim. The special price is £18.95 (10") or £14.95 (8") from Studio Gallery Decorative Editions, 50 Caledonian Road, Kings Cross, London N1 9DP. Details of the new prices will be given as soon as they reach me.

Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8) is interested in theatre programmes and handbills from Sherlock Holmes plays. If you can help, please contact him direct. Carol Whitlam put me on to the fact that there are now six cassettes available from Simon & Schuster of THE NEW ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES with Rathbone & Bruce, from the 1940s radio series. Murder One stocks them at £7.95 each. In order: "The Unfortunate Tobacconist"/"The Paradol Chamber", "The Viennese Strangler"/"The Notorious Canary Trainer", "The April Fools' Day Adventure"/"The Uneasy Easy Chair", "The Headless Monk" /"The Demon Barber", "The Amateur Mendicant Society"/"The Vanishing White Elephant" and "The Limping Ghost"/"The Girl With the Gazelle".

"221B" no. 2 is now available from Ann O'Neill, SRN (38 Stephens Firs, Mortimer, Reading RG7 3UY) at £3 including postage. If you're writing to Ann (or anyone else) for information on a publication or what-have-you, please remember to enclose a stamped & addressed envelope for the reply. Michael J. Connolly (Tirgarve, Allistragh, Co. Armagh, Northern Ireland BT61 8EZ) has a new list of Sherlockiana for sale; a few unusual items, and all the prices seem reasonable. Don't forget the stamped & addressed envelope. Roger Matthews notes that the current series of Kinder Egg confectionery features plastic model Pink Panthers as the hidden gift, 12 in all, one of them dressed as Sherlock Holmes. Another fascinating booklist is available from Val Andrews (Flat 1, George Court, 57 Willoughby Lane, London N17 0QZ). All his own writings, mostly in the field of conjuring but including a couple of Holmesian items. Mr Andrews' SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE EMINENT THESPIAN is now out in German from Knaur under the title SHERLOCK HOLMES UND DIE KRONJUWELEN.

You'll be aware that the 2nd series of repeats of Granada's ADVENTURES is now being shown on ITV on Wednesday evenings - but "The Crooked Man" seems to have slipped through the net... This series will be COPP, GREE, NORW, RESI, REDH and FINA. (Thanks to Michael Cox.) Douglas & Ivy Warren tell of a Bristol University day course in The Science Of Crime Detection on Saturday 10th March at the College of St Paul & St Mary, Shaftesbury Hall, St George's Place, Cheltenham. Fee £16.00. Enrolment by post from Department of Continuing Education, University of Bristol, Wills Memorial Building, Queens Road, Bristol BS8 1HR; or by phone on Bristol 303629. Make cheques out to University of Bristol, or pay by Visa or Access.

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no. 95 14th February 1990

New books. Directors of the Franco-Midiand Hardware Company will already be aware of Paul Lester's SHERLOCK HOLMES IN BIRMINGHAM (Protean Publications, Flat 4, 34 Summerfield Crescent, Edgbaston, Birmingham B16 0ER). For £1.50 + 20p postage you get a 20 page booklet whose text goes into interesting detail about Conan Doyle's experiences in Birmingham and its suburbs, relating these to the brief venture that Holmes made to England's second city in "The Stockbroker's Clerk", together with John Garrideb's wild-goose chase to Aston and the brief mention of Birmingham in "The Gloria Scott". Dr Lester's foray into Holmesiana deserves our support. Something completely different comes from Hawk Books Ltd (Suite 309, Canalot Studios, 222 Kensal Road, London W10 5BN). This is THE COMPLETE CASEBOOK OF HERLOCK SHOLMES by Charles Hamilton, and at £9.95 for nearly 300 pages, fully illustrated - including 16 coloured plates - with 95 short parodies and an interesting introduction, the whole thing solidly bound in hard covers… well, it's got to be the bargain of the year. Charles Hamilton wrote under many pseudonyms, by far the best known being Frank Richards; as Richards he created Greyfriars School, Harry Wharton, Henry Samuel Quelch, Billy Bunter - and The Greyfriars Herald. It was in the Herald, back in 1915, that Herlock Sholmes first appeared. His adventures are, for the most part, broad and funny parodies of the canonical originals; they are also subtle beneath the farcical humour and sometimes bitterly satirical. As Norman Wright says in his introduction, "The humour in the stories was often barbed, and much of it must have gone over the heads of the twelve to fifteen year olds who bought the weekly Greyfriars Herald." It's certain that Hamilton didn't write all 95 of the Sholmes stories; a few are clearly by lesser hands, but there's more than enough gold in this vein to justify this long-overdue collection. The stories are the work of a parodist who knew and loved the originals. Try this, and see if it doesn't make you want to read more: "Herlock Sholmes took the cask from the corner, and the hypodermic syringe from the coal-box. With his long white fingers he adjusted the needle, and turned back his trouser-leg. For some little time his eyes rested dreamily upon the pink sock, all scored and spotted with innumerable darns…" Lovely stuff!

Things are definitely moving on the convention front this year. The 21st Bouchercon will be held for the first time outside the US, at King's College, London, from the 21st to the 23rd September. Full attending membership is £35, from Bouchercon XXI, 1 Penrose Avenue, Carpenders Park, Watford, Herts WD1 5EA. I don't know of any specific Holmesian content there, but the previous month will see a convention entirely devoted to Sherlock Holmes. THE 7% CONVENTION is a charity convention celebrating Sherlock Holmes, his era, and detection in general. This is a weekend event, with, guests, talks, visual events, full film & video programmes, dealers' rooms, auction & charity auction, workshops (literary & light-hearted), optional Victorian banquet, etc. Booked guests (professional engagements permitting) include Edward Hardwicke, Douglas Wilmer & Jeremy Paul. The dates of the Convention are the 25th-26th August 1990. The venue is the Shepperton Moat House Hotel, Shepperton, Middlesex - very handy for the M25 - offering excellent reduced-rate accommodation. Registration rates are £25 per person for the weekend (£13 for one day) until 1st July, thereafter £28 for the weekend (£15 for one day). Further details upon receipt of a stamped addressed envelope (or 2 International Reply Coupons outside the UK). Please write to THE 7% CONVENTION, c/o Jane Sayle, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants PO14 3RU.

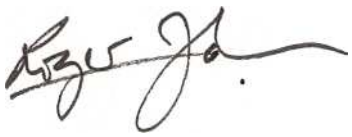
Another major item of news is that on Thursday 22nd March the Sherlock Holmes Museum in Baker Street will be officially opened by Lady Porter. The museum, sited a few doors north from Abbey House, in surprisingly well-preserved-premises complete with 17 steps to the first floor, is a commercial venture from a company called 221B Ltd. They seem to have gone into it all very thoroughly, and as far as I can see knowledge, scholarship and good taste

are the order of the day. Besides the museum itself, a shop and other adjuncts and activities are planned. Mr John Aidiniantz, the Secretary of the company, tells me that help is needed with the supply and display of exhibits, either items relating directly to the canon or more generally authentic Victorian objects. Since it is a commercial venture, the company is not looking for donations but for items to purchase. Mr Aidiniantz adds: "PS. I also need a housekeeper, two maids and a concierge." So if you're looking for a new job, and one directly connected with Sherlock Holmes, now's your chance. John Aidiniantz can be contacted at The Sherlock Holmes Museum, 221B Baker Street, London NW1 6XE. (Yes, the company claims that the museum will be sited in the actual, original 221B. I think I'll leave argument to the experts.)

Mrs Lynne Hills is looking for a travelling-companion home from meetings. If anyone travels home on the Brighton line (no, the line is not immaterial) from Victoria, by way of Haywards Heath, please get in touch with Lynne at 1 Beaconsfield Villas, Whitemans Green, Cuckfield, West Sussex RH17 5DA (phone Haywards Heath 452886). Paula Brown (40787 Canyon Heights Drive, Fremont, CA 94539, USA) has a rather different set of requests: can anyone help her obtain the following items, please? A copy of Peter Haining's THE TELEVISION SHERLOCK HOLMES, a copy of Jessica McMahon's interview with Brett & Hardwicke from the SHJ for summer 1986, and copies of any photographs taken at the final performance of THE SECRET OF SHERLOCK HOLMES at Wyndham's Theatre (it seems that, contrary to usual rules, there were rather a lot of cameras in use that evening).

David Stuart Davies reminds me that subscriptions for 1990 to the northern Musgraves are due by the end of this month. The annual sub is £6; it should be made out to the Northern Musgraves and sent to the Membership Secretary, John Addy (23 East Street, Lightcliffe, Halifax HX3 8TU). Meanwhile, another of these very welcome regional societies has been established: after the Northern Musgraves and the Franco-Midland Hardware Company comes the Sherlock Holmes Society of Leicester, otherwise the Priory Scholars. The inaugural meeting on the 3rd February attracted 13 prospective members, and the first meeting proper will be at 2.30 pm on Saturday the 24th March at the Old Tudor Rectory Hotel, Main Street, Glenfield, Leicester, when the speaker will be the pleasantly ubiquitous Carol Whitlam. Information about the Priory Scholars can be had from the Convenor, Sheila B. Redfearn (12 Groby Road, Glenfield, Leicester LE3 8GJ). (In a different part of the world entirely, any members of our Society planning to visit the San Francisco Bay area are urged to write or call Ted and Mary Schulz at 17 Mount Lassen Drive, San Rafael, California 94903, USA. Grand Sherlockians and delightful people.)

Seen recently in my local Debenham's: a video of a children's film called THE CLUE ACCORDING TO SHERLOCK HOLMES (Start Video, £7.99), based on a novel by John Bellairs, THE TREASURE OF ALPHEUS WINTERBORN. (Thanks to John E. Stephenson for information here, and congratulations on 50 issues of John's CALL OF THE HUNT.) Derek Hinrich tells of a book by Brian Robson called THE ROAD TO KABUL: THE 2nd AFGHAN WAR 1878-81 (Arms & Armour Press, £19.95, though I think it may now be remaindered). The author was inspired to write the book after reading A STUDY IN SCARLET. D.F. Grieve Models (St Andrews, Westwood Road, Betsham, Gravesend, Kent DA13 9LZ) sell a kit with full instructions & historical notes for a model of a Sergeant of the Berkshire Regiment at Maiwand; cost is £15.20 (+ 30% overseas). Robert C. Hess recommends a pewter statuette of Holmes with 4 Baker Street Irregulars, about 5½" tall, mounted on a wooden base, the work of John Pryce, cost $265 or £175 from Robert (559 Potter Boulevard, Brightwaters, NY 11718, USA). The photo he sent me is very impressive. He also recommends the 19" long model of the Aurora, about £70 from Laboromnia (15 Wallingford Avenue, London W10 6QA) or $116 from Robert (US only). Stanley MacKenzie says that Artone (Ellgreave Street, Burslem, Stoke-on-Trent) offer a boxed set of 1½" high china heads of Holmes, Watson, Moriarty & Lestrade for £13.75 + postage.



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no, 96 18th March 1990

Sad news to begin with: Dr Julian Wolff died recently. Dr Wolff was the Grand Old Man of American Sherlockiana, and he was known and loved throughout the civilised world. For over 25 years he headed the Baker Street Irregulars; in his 17 years as editor he made the BAKER STREET JOURNAL the internationally esteemed organ that it is today. I never me or corresponded with him, but I shall miss him. Better news is that another great American Sherlockian, John Bennett Shaw, continues to improve in health after his recent stroke. He still welcomes correspondence (at 1917 Fort Union Drive, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501, USA) - but don't expect an immediate reply.

A reminder of the 7% CONVENTION, to be held at the Shepperton Moat House Hotel on the 25th-26th August. There'll be films, talks, competitions, workshops... Booked guests (professional engagements permitting) include Douglas Wilmer, Edward Hardwicke & Jeremy Paul. All profits will go to that very worthwhile charity the Samaritans. Details from Jane Sayle at 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants PO14 3RU (phone 0329 667325). I should mention that the Convention has no official connection with our Society; this applies to many (or most) activities in the Sherlockian world, including the new Sherlock Holmes Museum at 239 Baker Street.

Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8) has produced 3 most attractive white metal miniature busts of Holmes, the faces being similar to those on his recent caricature figurines, each with a different expression. The price, including postage inland, is £2.50 each or all 3 for £6.50: a real bargain. Jon L. Lellenberg, who knows much more about these things than most of us, has gently pointed out that THE COMPLETE CASEBOOK OF HERLOCK SHOLMES (Hawk Books, £9-95) is not actually complete, as it contains only 95 of the 100 parodies written for THE GREYFRIARS HERALD and others by Charles Hamilton. Nevertheless it's the nearest we're likely to get to completeness, and it's a considerable bargain. James Cuthbertson and Desmond Tyler have drawn my attention to the recent amusing & interesting exchange of correspondence in the Daily Telegraph initiated by James and prompted by the news that Lloyd's Bank is reviving Cox & Co. as a separate banking establishment for Army Officers. Perhaps Watson's tin dispatch box will come to light after all.

Geoffrey Stavert has sent a letter from Georgina Gold, Feature Writer for LIVING magazine (King's Reach Tower, Stamford Street, London SE1 9LS), who is looking for fanatics to interview. If you feel you fall into this category, why not contact Ms Gold? Alison McClean (39 Connsbrook Drive, Belfast BT4 1LU) wants two SECRET OF SHERLOCK HOLMES programmes: from October 1989 at the Yvonne Arnaud Theatre, Guildford, and from September 1988 at the Richmond Theatre; she is also looking for pen-friends. Avril Ashton (2 Brookhouse Close, Hoghton, Preston PR5 0FH) has a spare VHS recording of THIS IS YOUR LIFE featuring Peter Cushing; if you want it, please send her a new 3 hour VHS tape, and she'll send this 3 hour tape with the recording by return. Bert Coules (Fairway, Sandling Road, Saltwood, Hythe, Kent CT21 4QJ) offers a VHS recording of 2 episodes from the 1950s Ronald Howard TV series ("The Red-Headed League" & "The Vanished Detective") for £10. Quality is not first-rate, but these are almost impossible to get on this side of the Atlantic. Still on the subject of videos, Daniela Karger (Schumannstrasse 63, 5300 Bonn, West Germany) is looking for someone to swap Holmes videos with her. She also wants to sell her collection of the BAKER STREET JOURNAL from 1975 to 1986 - note that not all volumes are complete. She asks a reasonable £2 for each issue. If you're interested, send a self-addressed envelope & a 20p stamp to Daniela.

Michael Cox sends information of a sudden burgeoning of Sherlockian drama on TV. The US producer/distributor Harmony Gold has announced a series called THE GOLDEN YEARS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES with Christopher Lee & Patrick Macnee as Holmes & Watson. There will be 2 four-hour films and 22 1-hour. Meantime, Yorkshire TV, in association with Green Pond Productions for CBS, have begun filming THE HANDS OF THE MURDERER, a 2-hour TV film with Edward Woodward & John Hillerman as Holmes & Watson. There's an option for 5 more films after this one.

On a similar subject, Derek Hinrich has drawn my attention to a recent Law Report in the Times, covering Tyburn Productions vs Conan Doyle. If you've been wondering about the long-announced follow-up to THE MASKS OF DEATH, here is a little news. What it comes down to is that Tyburn was obliged to pay a sizeable sum to Dame Jean for the use of the characters & names of Holmes & Watson before THE MASKS OF DEATH could be distributed in America. This case was brought in an attempt to get a ruling that Dame Jean has no legal copyright in the names and characters, so that no such payment need be made in order to distribute THE ABBOT'S CRY. The ruling of the court (inevitably) was that a British court of law has no jurisdiction in a matter of another country's copyright laws. There the matter seems to rest for the moment, and I've been unable to get any further information from Tyburn Productions.

Tekna Productions, who did the design & printing for Westminster Libraries' splendid series of coloured prints from the Paget illustrations, as well as producing an admirable set of their own from some of the early short stories, have now issued "8 superb colour prints" from Sidney Paget's illustrations for THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES. Each is approximately 7"x 4½" on A4 card. The coloured advertisement shows them to be well up to Tekna's very high standards. The set is a reasonable £13.50, from Tekna Productions, 2 & 3 Moores Place, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 4AG (phone 0277 224466). Payment in sterling is preferred, but any major currency is acceptable. Prices include postage world wide.

Two new catalogues of great interest. SH 21 from Sylvian Hamilton covers all aspects of Holmesiana: books, posters, games... including many rarities. Sylvian has moved again and is now at Hermitage, Mt Pleasant, Duns, Berwickshire TD11 3HU (phone 0361 82922). Post Mortem Books covers crime fiction generally, with a good amount of American material difficult to get over here - the 36th catalogue can be had from 58 Stanford Avenue, Hassocks, Sussex BN6 8JH (phone 07918 3066) . The 13th issue of Geoff Bradley's fine magazine CADS (Crime And Detective Stories) is now out: 80 A4 pages for £3.50 from Geoff at 9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex SS7 1PA - and well worth it.

John E. Stephenson notes that enquirers can obtain information about the continuing Sherlock Holmes TV series and a tour brochure from Debra Hall, Granada Television International Limited, Manchester M60 9EA. John also got a couple of stills of Jeremy Brett as Holmes. (I'd suggest that you also ask about the interesting range of merchandise connected with the series.) The Gasogene Press (Box 1041 Dubuque, IA 52001-1041, USA) has recently published MS. HOLMES OF BAKER STREET by C. Alan Bradley & William A.S. Sarjeant; John says it's a "must buy". Something that I'm after (will we see it over here?) is THE LOST ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES by Ken Greenwald, based on the radio plays by Denis Green & Anthony Boucher (Simon & Schuster, $9.98). A most important book, coming shortly, is Donald Redmond's SHERLOCK HOLMES AMONG THE PIRATES: COPYRIGHT & CONAN DOYLE IN AMERICA, 1890-1930, due from Greenwood Press in March 1990.

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Published on the 24th April is a new pastiche: SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE GERMAN NANNY by John North (Ian Henry Publications, £ 9.95), a jolly tale which takes Holmes & Watson from the whimsical little problem of an abandoned baby and plunges them into a Ruritanian adventure. To be accurate, the little Duchy concerned is actually Strackenz, which will be familiar to readers of ROYAL FLASH. I thought I'd caught the author out in an error when he had Holmes make use of "the excellent library in the Marylebone Road", since the public library wasn't opened till 1924, but I'm assured that there was a good private library there at the turn of the century. It's a well-written and knowledgeable story; recommended.

Also on the 24th, at 6.30 p.m. at Victoria Library, 160 Buckingham Palace Road SW1, I'll be giving an updated version of my illustrated talk on Sherlock Holmes On The Screen under the title of SHOOTING SHERLOCK. There'll be refreshments served from 6 p.m.; admission is free. Maybe I'll see some of you there.

Debra Long (30 York Road, Cheam, Surrey SM2 6HH) is looking out for: a copy of THE ARM-CHAIR DETECTIVE vol. 18 no. 4, a copy of THE SHERLOCK HOLMES JOURNAL vol. 17 no. 4, and copies of any photos taken at the last night of THE SECRET OF SHERLOCK HOLMES at Wyndham's Theatre. Geoffrey Stavert tells that a new member from Spain, Ms Cristina Maria Orio (C/Bajada de la Plana 8, Atico 1, 08032 Barcelona, Spain) would like to correspond with any member willing to answer elementary questions about the Society's doings and Sherlockian matters in general. Ms Orio writes excellent English.

Also from Geoffrey, the news that the Federation of Master Builders (Scottish Region) has commissioned a statue of Sherlock Holmes which is expected to be unveiled in Picardy Place, Edinburgh (Sir Arthur's birthplace) in 1991. The Federation is asking for practical ideas for a publicity campaign and colour brochure to mark the event. Suggestions, please, to 30 Richmond Terrace, Haymarket, Edinburgh EH1 1BY. On a different tack, the Great Alkali Plainsmen, a distinguished scion of the Baker Street Irregulars, plans a big Sherlockian gathering in Kansas City over the weekend 1 to 3 September. For details, write to Geoffrey Stavert at 3 Outram Road, Southsea, Hants. PO5 1QP.

Desmond Tyler (162 Leybridge Court, Eltham Road, London SE12 8TL) missed part 3 of THE ADVENTURES OF THE RODENT SHERLOCK HOLMES, starring Roland Rat. Can anyone provide him with a recording, please? Roger Matthews recommends the April issue of YESTERDAY IN HAMPSHIRE, SUSSEX & ISLE OF WIGHT (£ 1.20), which contains an article on collecting for Holmes enthusiasts. Michael J. Connolly (Tirgarve, Allistragh, Co. Armagh. BT61 8EZ, Northern Ireland) has a brief, interesting list of Holmesian books for sale; several rarities here at reasonable prices. Which reminds me that THE NEW ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, edited by Greenberg & Waugh, is now out in paperback (Arlington, £ 7.95), while just published by Hale at £ 11.95 is THE CASE OF THE COTTINGLEY FAIRIES by Joe Cooper.

Sheila Redfern tells me that the first meeting of The Priory Scholars was a great

success. The next meeting will be on Saturday the 19 May at the Old Tudor Rectory, Main Street, Glenfield, Leicester, when John Burrows will talk about Victorian Leicester. Membership of this East Midlands Holmes Society is £ 8 p.a. (a bit steep compared to other Holmesian groups, but one has to be realistic) from the Hon. Secretary, Sheila E. Redfern (12 Groby Road, Glenfield, Leicester LE3 8GJ).

Issue no. 3 of "the magazine "221B" should be ready about now. There'll be 56 pages this time, and the contents have diversified to include a pastiche, a brief history of Holmes on stage & screen, and an investigation of Holmes' engagement to Agatha. The magazine costs £ 3.30, post-paid, from Ann O'Neill (38, Stephens Firs, Mortimer, Reading RG7 3UY). Make cheques & postal orders payable to Miss Ann O'Neill.

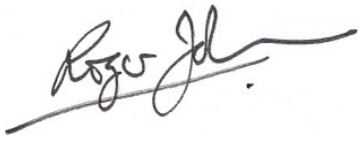
Outside the Society's own events, the most exciting happening this year will be the 7% CONVENTION on the 25 to 27 August at the Shepperton Moat House Hotel. Films, videos, talks, competitions, workshops, a dealers' room - and some very special guests. After expenses, all proceeds will go to that very worthwhile charity the Samaritans. Details from Jane Sayle at 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU. If you miss my talk at Victoria Library next week, you can hear it at the Convention. Then again, maybe that isn't a very good reason for going...

Holger Schott asks me to pass on his apologies for the delayed appearance of his anthology of seminal Holmesian essays. The situation is now in hand, and the book will be published shortly.

I recently received a postcard signed "Marian" advising me to buy a new novel called THE PUNJAT'S RUBY by one Marian J.A. Jackson (Pinnacle Books, $3.50) "wherein Miss Abigail Patience Danforth makes her debut as the world's first female consulting detective". Not yet having seen a copy, I can't comment further. In May there'll be a third collection of classic Sherlock Holmes radio plays issued on cassette by the BBC Radio Collection. Also in May, on Thursday the 24th, at Marylebone Library, Stanley MacKenzie will introduce a showing of the Rathbone/Bruce film of THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES. Admission will be free. This is a part of the Library's Golden Jubilee celebrations, since the present building was erected in 1940.

Stanley in turn tells me that the Brambletye Hotel in Forest Row, which has long featured a Black Peter's Bar, has extended the Holmesian theme by adding reproduction posters and canonical illustrations. Stanley speaks highly of the comfort & quality of this family-run hotel and restaurant. A brochure can be had from the Brambletye Hotel, The Square, Forest Row, East Sussex RH18 5EZ (phone 0342 824144). Speaking of such things, Bob Peckitt tells me that there's a Sherlock Holmes pub in Eastbourne; can anyone provide further details?

John E. Stephenson reminds me that this year's BOUCHERCON (the annual convention for mystery readers & writers) will take place at King's College in The Strand, London WC2. The Guest of Honour is P.D. James, and there'll be an astonishing array of well-known crime-writers present over the weekend of the 21 to 23 September. According to advance publicity, "members of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London are arranging various functions during the convention. Sherlock Holmes societies throughout the world have been invited to attend. We understand that Mr Holmes's secretary will be speaking at one of the sessions (thanks to Abbey National pic)". Further details of Bouchercon XXI can be had from 1 Penrose Avenue, Carpenders Park, Watford WD1 5AE (phone 01-428 5034 or 01-903 0110).



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no. 98 14th May 1990

A.G. Andrews wrote recently to Gillette Castle (67 River Road, East Haddam, GT 06423, USA), the last home of William Gillette, requesting information. He received by return, free of charge, a book entitled SHERLOCK HOLMES AND MUCH MORE by Doris Cook. A reminder that it can be worth contacting the less obvious sources of Sherlockiana. He's also provided information about the SHERLOCK HOLMES pub in Eastbourne, as has R.J. Ellis. The address is 155 Terminus Road, Eastbourne BN20 ITU - about 250 yards from the seafront. It's a Charringtons theme pub, fairly recently opened, with a certain amount of Holmesiana on display - but not a lot of atmosphere. A final note from A.G.: THE PIPE SMOKERS' EPHEMERIS (Tom Dunn, 20-37 120th Street, College Point, NY 11356, USA) often contains items of Holmesian interest.

Bill Blake notes that Lovejoys (corner of Charing Cross Road & Old Compton Street) has the Doubleday COMPLETE SHERLOCK HOLMES at £9, as well as other fascinating crime & mystery books at bargain prices. E.C. Jones asks whether more of Basil Copper's additions to the Solar Pons canon are forthcoming. Does anyone know? Kyle Richeson - are you out there? Stephen Farrell has two spare back issues of THE SHERLOCK HOLMES JOURNAL. Summer 1988 & Winter 1988 (vol. 18 no. 4 & vol. 19 no. 1) can be had from Stephen for £3 the pair, including postage (19 McLeod Road, Abbey Wood, London SE2 0BP); please make cheques payable to The Donkey Sanctuary.

Philip Weller tells me that the British distributor of that excellent game CONSULTING DETECTIVE is now Mr Brent Hardstone (Magic Draw Ltd, Holmes Building, 46 Wood Street, Liverpool L1 4AQ), who offers a £2 discount for all members of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London. The price consequently is £17.95 + £2 postage (postage is free on orders over £50). GAMES magazine calls CONSULTING DETECTIVE "the most ingenious and realistic detective game ever devised". Ask Mr Hardstone about the supplements to the game and about the companion game GUMSHOE.

The new issue of "ACD", the journal of the Arthur Conan Doyle Society, is just out and full of fascinating material on all aspects of Sir Arthur's life & work. Non-members may have copies at £5 each including postage from Christopher Roden, Grasmere, 35 Penfold Way, Dodleston, Chester CH4 9ML. Christopher also has some copies of the first issue of "ACD" available at the same price. (A reminder to members of the ACDS: subscriptions for 1990-91 are due now!) Also just published is the 1990 ANNUAL REPORT of the Franco-Midland Hardware Company, containing a set of first-rate essays on "The Priory School". Information about the Company can be had from Philip Weller, Grimpen Mire, 4 Tickhill Square, Denaby Main, Doncaster DN12 4AN.

Don't forget the two outstanding conventions. THE 7% CONVENTION runs over the weekend of the 25-27 August at the Shepperton Moat House Hotel. All profits will go to the Samaritans. Details from Jane Sayle, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU. BOUCHERCON XXI takes place at King's College, London just 4 weeks later: 21-23 September. Details from 1 Penrose Avenue, Carpenders Park, Watford WD1 5AE.

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☞ Roger Johnson, 210 Rainsford Road, Chelmsford CM1 2PD.

no. 99 13th June 1990

Here's something of genuine importance for your bookshelves: the first fruit of the BSI History Project is a volume called "DEAR STARRETT -/"DEAR BR1GGS -", being the letters of Vincent Starrett & Gray Chandler Briggs from 1930 to 1934. In this correspondence between two great-hearted Sherlockians we see the gestation & birth of Starrett's Magnum Opus THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, still a cornerstone of any worthwhile Holmesian library. Briggs, as should be better-known, was the first person to make a firm identification of the site of 221B Baker Street. The letters give a vivid impression of Holmesian scholarship in those far-off days before the Baker Street Irregulars and the Sherlock Holmes Society of London; they were compiled and edited, as his last great contribution to the scholarship of Holmes, by the late John Nieminski, while the notes and introduction are the work of Jon L. Lellenberg. These are almost as fascinating as the letters themselves, and as tantalising: I'd love to know what became of the artist Manley and his posters for Starrett's book and for Bell's SHERLOCK HOLMES & DR WATSON. "DEAR STARRETT - "/"DEAR BRIGGS - " is published in an edition of 500 by Fordham University Press (Bronx, NY 10458, USA for the Baker Street Irregulars, at $18.95. Expensive for a paperback of 128 pages, but not when you bear in mind that it was already a collector's item before publication! Here's to the next volume in the Project!

Published last year (and somehow missed by most of us, but not by Derek Hinrich, was A LA RECHERCHE DU CRICKET PERDU by Simon Barnes (Macmillan, £7.95 , a series of very clever literary parodies including "The Case of the Masked Captain" ("by Arthur Conan Doyle" - all have a cricket theme, of course. Michael Cox tells me of THE INTERNATIONAL ILLUSTRATED SHERLOCK HOLMES edited by Tsukasa Kobayashi, Akane Higashiyama & John Bennett Shaw, "a handsome paperback, arranged story by story, collecting illustrations from all over the world. The main text is in Japanese but the captions are in English and there's a colour section on the Granada films". Can anyone provide publication details (or a copy for review ? Yvonne Parkin's interviews with various people connected with the Granada film series & THE SECRET OF SH will be published this year in transcript separately from the rest of her interviews. More when it reaches me. (Yvonne's.address is 44 Wilmslow Close, Redesdale Park, Wallsend, Tyne & Wear NE28 8TB. Our own Jean Upton is Art Editor of a very worthwhile quarterly called PRESCOTT'S PRESS, covering all sorts of aspects of Holmesiana with humour & scholarship (details from the Editor, Warren Randall, at PO Box 610, Levittown, NY 11756, USA .

Clive Brooks, whose enjoyable pastiches began publication in AD LIB magazine, has two books newly out: THE MEMOIRS OF PROFESSOR MORIARTY vol. 1, and SHERLOCK HOLMES REVISITED - THE HITHERTO UNCHRONICLED ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES vol. 1. The first is a limited edition of 300, hardbound and containing 30 contemporary illustrations; it's available only from Rupert Books (59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE . The second may be had, signed & dedicated, for £11.99 from SpyGlass Books, Special Order Department, 23 Sylvan Avenue, Bitterne, Southampton SO2 5JW. Cheques payable to Brooks Books (overseas customers please add £4 postage

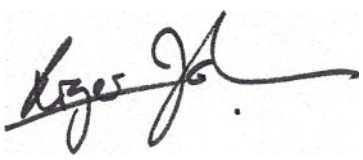
per book; please pay in Sterling or International Money Order . SHERLOCK HOLMES RE-VISITED is also a profusely illustrated hardback. More information about these books (and much more, including Clive Brooks' new series of audio cassettes can be had from Rupert Books, whose new newsletter (RUPERT BOOKS NEWS no. 2 is a mine of information. Finally on this subject, Donald Redmond's monumental SHERLOCK HOLMES AMONG THE PIRATES was published last month by the Greenwood Press at £34.95.

Carol Whitlam tells me that the 3rd collection of Michael Hardwick's radio adaptations featuring Carleton Hobbs & Norman Shelley is now available on cassette in the BBC Radio Collection; the stories are MUSG, BLAC, BRUC & DANC. Bill Black notes that vols 7 & 8 of THE NEW ADVENTURES OF SH (from the classic 1940s American radio series with Rathbone & Bruce are now available at Murder One (and, I think, from Rupert Books at £7.95; no. 7 features "The Out of Date Murder" & "The Waltz of Death", while no. 8 has "Colonel Warburton's Madness" & "The Iron Box". Due in the autumn are the first three double cassettes of Grant Eustace's canonical adaptations, first heard as in-flight entertainment on British Airways. These will be (A) PRIO/CHAS/BOSC/SECO, (B) NAVA/SIXN/ABBE/ NORW, (C) BLUE/SOLI/SCAN/REDH; they'll be followed in the new year by (D) BLAC/TW1S/GOLD/SPEC, (E) COPP/ENGI/SUSS/SHOS, (F) BRUC/CARD/THOR/DEVI. Holmes & Watson are played by Roy Marsden & John Moffatt. If these 6 sets sell well, there's a possibility of (G)MUSG/SILV/FINA/EMPT and (H) HOUN. The cassettes will be issued at £6.99 each by The Talking Tape Company (Unit 11, Shaftesbury Industrial Centre, The Runnings, Cheltenham GL51 9NH).

From Bert Coules comes more exciting news: BBC Radio plans a series based on the short stories for Radio 4 on Wednesday afternoons in the new year, to be transmitted in the order of first appearance in THE STRAND. Each play will be 45 minutes, and Holmes & Watson will probably be played by Clive Merrison & Michael Williams. The writers will be Bert Coules, Peter Mackie & Vincent McInerney. John Tydeman, head of radio drama, has stated that this series will be a prelude to dramatisations of all the Sherlock Holmes stories. At the New End Theatre, Hampstead (27 New End, Hampstead, London NW3 1JD - phone 071-794 0022 from 24 July to 19 August, Ipcress Productions will present PARTNERS IN CRIME, a new Sherlock Holmes play by F.G. Callan, starring Brian Abbott as Holmes, Norman Mitchell as Conan Doyle, John Duval as A.J. Raffles, Derek Bell as E.W. Hornung, Glyn Grain as Watson & Michael Rhenish as Mycroft. The director is Michael Hunt. Performances are at 8 pm Tuesday to Sunday; tickets are £6 (£4 concessions, except Friday & Saturday when they're £0.50.

Late news from the 7% CONVENTION is that Douglas Wilmer will definitely attend, while Jeremy Paul, Edward Hardwicke & Richard Carpenter will be there if professional engagements permit. The list of activities planned for the Convention is far too long to detail here. Enough to say that it all looks GOOD - and if that isn't sufficient persuasion, remember that all proceeds after expenses will go to the Samaritans. If you're interested in the Convention but can't attend, you can become a Non-Attending Supporter for just £6 (£7 in Europe; $14US (surface mail, or $18US (air mail elsewhere ; for this you'll receive the Convention Book (foreword by Peter Cushing and support a very worthwhile charity. Send cheques (payable to The 7% Convention to Jane Sayle at 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head,
Fareham, Hampshire PO14 JRU.

No room for more. Look out for our Hundredth Issue!



THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

ROGER JOHNSON, 210 RAINSFORD ROAD, CHELMSFORD CM1 2PD

no. 100 23rd July 1990

Well, here it is - the 100th issue. Along with your copy, you'll find another scrap of paper. Don't throw it away, as it contains the details of our special Centenary Competition.

Paula Brown provides more information about THE INTERNATIONAL ILLUSTRATED SHERLOCK HOLMES, edited by John Bennett Shaw, Tsukasa Kobayashi & Akane Higashiyama. The publisher is Kodonsha (Kyoritsukaikon 4-6-19, Kohinata, Bunkyoku, Tokyo 112, Japan), and the price is 2000 yen. Thanks to Michael Cox, I can now give at least a brief review of the book. The 400 pages contain about 1000 illustrations, between 3 and 30 for each of the 60 adventures, representing 100 years of artistic impressions of Holmes, Watson & their world. It's fascinating to see how each generation has (perhaps unconsciously) interpreted the Victorian era in its own image, beginning, I suppose, with the original 1920s pictures for THE CASEBOOK. Some (Stefan Lemke & Marie-Luise Pricker in 1967, Adolf Born in 1987, Sergio Martines in 1988 - and others) convince by their vigour or sheer artistic inspiration. Others, such as the uncredited drawings from the 1950 British FIRST BOOK OF SHERLOCK HOLMES STORIES, are hilarious in their solemn ineptitude. Yet others (let's be honest) are just plain dull. It's a fascinating book. The only cavil I have is the smudgy reproduction of the superb Frederic Dorr Steele illustrations.

Published last year, but only just brought to my attention, is a very good pastiche, SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE MARK OF THE BEAST, by Ronald C. Weyman (Simon & Pierre, PO Box 280, Adelaide Postal Station, Toronto, Ontario M5C 2J4, Canada; $15.95). Here we have an alternative version of the events of the great hiatus, taking Holmes & Watson to Canada to combat a plot against the Prince & Princess of Wales. And while on the subject of books, Jon Lellenberg tells me that IRREGULAR MEMORIES OF THE 30s, the next volume in the BSI History Project, is due for publication in October; it will be followed in time by volumes on the 40s and 50s, and by an account of the making of the Limited Editions Club edition of the Canon, which was truly brought into being by the BSI, featuring the "purest version of Canonical text" and the very best illustrations. It's currently in print as the Easton Press Centenary Edition, leather-bound, beautifully produced, in 3 volumes at $36.50 (+ $2.95 postage) per volume (Easton Press, 47 Richards Avenue, Norwalk, Connecticut 06857, USA). Julian Symons' Holmesian detective novel THE KENTISH MANOR MURDERS (the 2nd adventure of Sheridan Haynes) is now out in paperback, in the handsome Penguin Classic Crime series at £3.99. (Thanks to David Stuart Davies.)

I do urge you to support SpyGlass Books, set up by Clive Brooks as Britain's first specialist Holmesian publishing company (23 Sylvan Avenue, Bitterne, Southampton SO2 5JW). The first books from SpyGlass are Brooks' own work: SHERLOCK HOLMES REVISITED vol. 1 (£11.99 from SpyGlass) and THE MEMOIRS OF PROFESSOR MORIARTY vol. 1 (£14.95 from Rupert Books, 59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE). SpyGlass has other manuscripts to hand but can't publish them unless the first two books are successful. It's a brave venture that deserves our backing. Michael J. Connolly (Tirgarve, Allistragh, Armargh, Co. Armagh BT61 8EZ, Northern Ireland) has a number of Holmesian books for sale; send a stamped & addressed envelope for a list.

Just out is THE BAKER STREET PILLAR BOX 3, the newsletter of the Franco-Midland Hardware Company, full of interest. For details of the FHMC, contact Philip Weller, 4 Tickhill Square, Denaby Main, Doncaster DN12 4AN. Even more recent is the 3rd issue of THE MUSGRAVE PAPERS, annual journal of the Northern Musgraves. This is a bumper 92-page special devoted to Dr Watson (contributors include Edward Hardwicke, Bert Coules & Jeremy Paul). Non-Musgraves can have copies at £5 each from David Stuart Davies (Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER). And while I remember, Peter Horrocks is compiling a booklet to accompany next year's SHSL trip to Winchester; if you'd like to contribute a short piece on any of the Hampshire cases, please get your MS to Peter before the end of November (22 Old Buildings, Lincoln's Inn, London W2A 3HJ). From Germany, another new journal is the 5th issue

of THE SOFT-NOSED BULLET-IN, from Von Herder Airguns Limited (Corinna Koch, Freiligrathstrasse 13, D-3000 Hannover 1, West Germany). This issue's all in German, but with a couple of the late Norman Schatell's lovely cartoons with English captions. On a sadder note, Kelvin Jones has resigned from editorship of THE SHERLOCKIAN; he will no longer publish, or distribute the magazine in Britain. All enquiries should be addressed to Magico Magazine, PO Box 156, New York, NY 10002, USA. Finally, in this line, CADS (Crime And Detective Stories, Geoff Bradley's admirable magazine) is now into its 14th very welcome issue (£3.25 from G.H. Bradley, 9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex SS7 1PA).

Ian Heritage tells of a shop called SOUVENIRS in Marylebone Road, selling Holmes mugs at £2.99 and Holmes T-shirts at £6.99. I recently saw in the duty-free shop of a P&O cross-Channel ferry a Sherlock Holmes clock, one of a series called Pub World Collection. The design (vivid & rather ugly) isn't based on any Sherlock Holmes pub sign I've ever seen. It's made by Brambles of England and priced at £13.50. Deirdre Keetley of Studio Gallery Decorative Editions (who made that lovely Portrayals of Sherlock Holmes plate) tells me that the company has produced a small range of bone china souvenirs for the Sherlock Holmes Hotel in Baker Street, including a plate, mugs, a bell & thimble. They look very nice in the photograph. For a list of all the hotel's souvenirs and an order form, write to Nickolas Mouzakitis, The Sherlock Holmes Hotel, Baker Street, London W1. Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8) has also produced a pair of Holmesian mugs, with amusing cartoon designs; £5 the two + 95p postage. Two other designs are due at the end of the year.

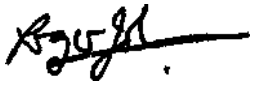
Dennis Collins kindly sent a copy of THE SCOTSMAN Weekend supplement for Saturday 7 July, the 60th anniversary of the death of Arthur Conan Doyle. The long leading article is a good-natured & respectful pastiche in which. Holmes & Watson discuss their creator.

Ian Gale brings the good news that the Rathbone/Bruce films are being reissued on video in the UK by Virgin Vintage Classics, starting with THE WOMAN IN GREEN for a reasonable £6.99 (strange choice, though: why not THE HOUND?). Allan Smith and Stanley MacKenzie have both had letters from Granada TV correcting information given in good faith in DM 96. For information about the Sherlock Holmes programmes, write to the Viewers Enquiries Department, Granada Television International Ltd, Manchester M60 9EA; please do <u>not</u> write to Debra Hall at Granada.

A.G. Andrews says that Sherlock's Restaurant (50/52 High Street, Aylesford, Kent ME20 TEA; phone 0622 710649) looks like a pleasant place to eat. Debra Long (30 York Road, Cheam, Surrey SM2 6HH) is after a couple of collectibles: she wants Basil Rathbone's signature and a programme, poster or handbill from the US production of THE CRUCIFER OF BLOOD with Charlton Heston & Jeremy Brett. (I'm after some videos myself. Can anyone please help with the following on VHS? THE BAKER STREET BOYS, Granada TVs YOUNG SHERLOCK, THE 7% SOLUTION, THE TRIUMPH OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, SHERLOCK HOLMES IN NEW YORK, THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS.) Edward J. Halloran of C.E. Brock Productions Inc. (6000 East Evans, Suite 1-240, Denver, Colorado 80222, USA) tells me of a proposed new radio (eventually TV) series called HOLMES & ASSOCIATES in which. Holmes & Watson head a modern American management "think tank", using Holmesian logic & state-of-the-art technology to solve management problems. Associated will be a range of wearables & collectibles aimed at Holmes fans everywhere.

THE 7% CONVENTION, Britain's first Sherlock Holmes convention, will be held at the Shepperton Moat House Hotel on the 25-26 August, featuring talks, seminars, videos, films, quizzes, an auction and what promises to be a quite amazing variety of dealers. Douglas Wilmer will be there; so if engagements allow will Edward Hardwicke, Jeremy Paul & Richard Carpenter. Peter Cushing wrote the forward to the Convention souvenir book. You can attend for the whole weekend or for just one day. All profits will go to the Samaritans. If you can't attend but would like to support this worthwhile venture, you can take out Non-Attending Registration (which will get you a copy of the book) for £6 (UK & EEC), £7 (rest of Europe), $18 (airmail; rest of world). Make cheques payable to The 7% Convention and send them (or your enquiries) to Jane Sayle, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 3RU.

A couple of new societies: The Fratton Lodgers (Mr Terry Weller, 25 York Place, Portsea, Portsmouth, Hampshire) and The Reichenbach Society (Mr Sim Lew-Gor, Stephenson Hall, Oakholme Road, Sheffield S10 3DF). Remember to enclose a large SSAE with your enquiry.



THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

ROGER JOHNSON, 210 RAINSFORD ROAD, CHELMSFORD CM1 2PD

no. 101 6th September 1990

IT WAS THEN THAT FARQUARSON REALISED HIS UNDER-ARM DEODORANT WAS NO LONGER WORKING."

Thanks to all who entered our little Centenary Competitions - and thanks especially to those who so generously donated prizes.

Miles Tubb provided what I consider to be the best caption (see left). To him goes the bumper "Dr Watson Special" issue of THE MUSGRAVE PAPERS, courtesy of the Northern Musgraves. This copy is signed by Jeremy Paul, Bert Coules & as many other contributors as I could get hold of. Peter J. Crupe came close with

"I CAN TELL YOU DIDN'T USE YOUR DEODORANT AGAIN THIS MORNING!"

- but Miles got there first.

Other captions that made me smile were:

"ARE YOU SURE THIS IS A CURE FOR TENNIS ELBOW?"

"A STILL CONVALESCENT DR WATSON FINDS THE STRENGTH TO REMONSTRATE WITH HIS NEW FLATMATE SHERLOCK HOLMES UPON LEARNING THE TRUE FATE OF HIS BULL PUP."

"THIS IS HOW I FINALLY DEFEATED MORIARTY, WATSON: WITH ONE OF MRS HUDSON'S ROCK CAKES!"

"YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO HIT ME ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE HEAD, YOU FOOL!"

"DO THREE MORE ELBOW RAISES, AND I'LL SWAP OVER AND LET YOU USE THE WEIGHT."

"DO YOU MEAN TO SAY BY LIFTING THIS TEN TIMES A DAY I'LL BE ABLE TO BEND A POKER, MR ATLAS?"

"'ARE YOU SURE THIS IS HOW TO DANCE THE LAMBADA?' 'YES, CLOSE YOUR EYES FOR THE BIG FINISH!'"

and not least:

"PLEASE DON'T, ROGER! I SWEAR I DIDN'T KNOW THAT THE POSTAL RATES WERE GOING UP THE WEEK AFTER I SENT YOU ALL THOSE D.M. ENVELOPES!"

Most of you recognised that the characters depicted are John Turner & his victim Charles McCarthy, from "The Boscombe Valley Mystery". The 1st correct answer drawn from the bowler hat (more convenient than a deerstalker!) was Pam Bruxner's. Pam wins a copy of the Magico reprint of the 1901 pictorial souvenir programme from Gillette's New York production of SHERLOCK HOLMES. A lovely item, most kindly provided by Rupert Books.

Now on to the news. If you missed the 7% Convention, then you missed a treat. It's too early for a final figure, but money raised for the Samaritans will be about £1000. A lot of hard work has gone into raising this amount while at the same time providing a memorable weekend for convention-goers. Well done, the organisers and their helpers! You still have the chance to help the Samaritans,

though. Jane Sayle (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU) has a number of the Rupert-Bear-dressed-as-Sherlock-Holmes lapel pins for sale at £2 each, including postage; proceeds go jointly to the Samaritans and to police charities.

"John North" offers another jolly read with SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE ARABIAN PRINCESS (Ian Henry, £9.95); unlike THE GERMAN NANNY, this one is definitely a comedy, cleverly hovering just this side of farce. Princess Fatima disappears from the stage of the Hyperion Music Hall, and the chief suspect is Sherlock Holmes himself (don't worry, though: it's all a plot devised by Colonel James Moriarty, to avenge his late brother, the Professor...) If this theme seems familiar, it's because the book is based on that clever musical comedy THE DEERSTALKER. Meanwhile Jon Lellenberg has come up with something rather more important in NOVA 57 MINOR (Gaslight Publications - available, as are many other good things, from Rupert Books of 59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE). Here we have the full, tortuous and fascinating story of "The Man Who Was Wanted", the only non-Doyle Holmes tale to have been - for a while - considered an authentic part of the Canon. Beautifully produced, as always with Gaslight.

Other new books. Allen Sharp has four more apocryphal adventures out from Cambridge University Press at £2.25 each: THE CASE OF THE HOWLING DOG, TCOT SILENT CANARY, TCOT MAN WHO FOLLOWED HIMSELF and TCOT BUCHANAN CURSE. Already published is M. J. Trow's LESTRADE & THE GUARDIAN ANGEL (Macmillan, £11.95), while due this month is LESTRADE & THE DEADLY GAME (Constable, £11.95). This month also Bantam Press will publish Glen Petrie's second Mycroft Holmes adventure, MONSTROUS REGIMENT (£12.95). Published in May by Ravette Books (3 Glenside Estate, Star Road, Partridge Green, Horsham, West Sussex RH13 8RA), a firm new to me, was UNTOLD CASES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES no. 1: THE CASE OF THE FOTHERINGHAM DIAMOND by Tom Bullimore & Ian Anderson (£3.95, paperback); the authors' names are new to me too. In June Penguin Books published GREAT ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES by Arthur Conan Doyle in their Puffin Classics series (£2.99). Bill Blake reminds me that another new Gaslight publication is SCHLOCK HOMES: THE COMPLETE BAGEL STREET SAGA by the late Robert L. Fish; this is probably the most outrageously clever and funny collection ever of Holmes parodies (and it can be had from Rupert Books).

Following the success of THE QUALLSFORD INHERITANCE, Lloyd Biggle Jr has written THE GLENDOWER CONSPIRACY ("a memoir of Sherlock Holmes from the papers of Edward Porter Jones, his late assistant"). KIRKUS REVIEWS, PUBLISHERS WEEKLY and other American journals have given the new book enthusiastic reviews (Council Oak Books, 1423 S. St. Louis, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74120, USA; $14.95). In December Vintage will publish a paperback edition of Anthony Burgess's collection THE DEVIL'S MODE, containing his sole venture into Holmesian pastiche. In October comes THE SECRET FILES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (Constable, £11.95) by June Thomson & Aubrey B. Watson. June Thomson is the very well-respected author of the Inspector Finch novels; somehow I doubt the existence of Aubrey B. Watson. (Some of this information comes from Post Mortem Books' latest catalogue, available from 58 Stanford Avenue, Hassocks, Sussex BN6 8JH.) Robert Richardson's elegant THE BOOK OF THE DEAD (Augustus Maltravers & the case of the Sherlockian manuscript) is now out in paperback (Gollancz, £3.50).

Just arrived this morning is SH22, Sylvian Hamilton's new catalogue: books, comics, posters, games, Persian slippers - it's all here (Hermitage, Mount Pleasant, Duns, Berwickshire TD11 3HU, Scotland; do remember to send a stamped & addressed envelope or a couple of IRCs when writing away for catalogues). The Northern Musgraves have published their first Musgrave Monograph, PACING THE MUSGRAVE RITUAL by Carol Whitlam (£1.50 from Kathryn White, 149 Myrtle Terrace, Cross Roads, Keighley, West Yorkshire BD22 9AJ); there are only 50 copies, so don't blame me if you're unlucky! Finally on this subject, STAGE STRUCK no. 1: PARTNERS IN CRIME is now out: this is Yvonne Parkin & Pam Clarke's transcript of their fascinating interviews with Jeremy Brett & Edward Hardwicke (£2.50 + 40p postage UK, or 70p Europe, or £1.80 outside Europe; cheques payable to P. M. Clarke, but send orders to Ms Y. Parkin, 44 Wimslow Close, Redesdale Park, Wallsend, Tyne & Wear NE28 8TB). Proceeds will go to the British Diabetic Association.

Now, news on the audio front. In October the Talking Tape Company (Unit 11, Shaftesbury Industrial Centre, The Runnings, Cheltenham, Gloucestershire GL51 9NH) will release 6 double-cassette packs, each containing 4 of Grant Eustace's adaptations from the Canon (24 plays altogether). These were originally "broadcast" as in-flight entertainment by British Airways, and were very well received. All feature Roy Marsden & John Moffatt as Holmes & Watson. Cost will be about £6.99 per set; they'll be available from W. H. Smith and the usual outlets.

Meanwhile the BBC's plans for dramatising the entire Canon continue to flourish. "A Scandal In Bohemia" will be broadcast at 3 pm on Wednesday 7th November on Radio 4, and the rest of THE ADVENTURES will follow weekly with a 2-week gap at Christmas; the final 6 start on Wednesday 2nd January with "The Blue Carbuncle". All the plays feature Clive Merrison & Michael Williams as Holmes & Watson; the writers are Bert Coules, Peter Mackie & Vincent Mclnerney. This first series will be released on cassette (3 volumes of 4 stories each) by the BBC Radio Collection, probably in February.

Videos. The Virgin reissue of THE WOMAN IN GREEN is apparently a one-off. The rest of the Rathbone/Bruce series is being released by CBS/Fox in their All Time Greats series. Out now are SHERLOCK HOLMES IN WASHINGTON, SHERLOCK HOLMES FACES DEATH and THE SPIDER WOMAN; due in November are THE HOUND, THE ADVENTURES, SH & THE SECRET WEAPON, SH & THE VOICE OF TERROR and THE SCARLET CLAW. Enquiries can be dealt with by phoning 081-575 8616. (Many thanks to Wai-Ming Chan & David Stuart Davies for this information.) WITHOUT A CLUE is now available at £14.99, and Ian Gale tells me that THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES is due in the shops about now; we're waiting to find out whether any of the missing bits have been restored. As a service to fellow-collectors, Bert Coules (Fairway, Sandling Road, Saltwood, Hythe, Kent CT21 4QJ) can offer THE ROYAL MURDER and THE RELUCTANT CARPENTER (from the Ronald Howard TV series) on a single VHS cassette for £10 inclusive. Technical quality is "not too bad, considering the age and source of the material". He also has the 1931 Raymond Massey film of THE SPECKLED BAND; quality "is not as good as I would have liked (and there are occasional moments where repaired damage on the original print gives rise to minor jump-cuts) but as you know it is an extremely rare item. Tape copies have to be individually supervised, so I have to ask £15 for this one."

Carol Whitlam reports that the range of material available at the Granada Studio Tours souvenir shop (the one devoted entirely to Holmesian stuff) is expanding. For details, contact the Merchandise Manager, Granada Studio Tours Ltd, Manchester M60 9EA. Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8) has produced two attractive mugs, one with a portrait of Sir Arthur flanked by caricatures of Holmes & Watson (on reverse: Holmes & Watson exulting over the proposed Edinburgh statue), the other reproducing the cover of Charles' nice book THE SHERLOCK HOLMES COLLECTION (reverse has a cartoon, captioned: "Even if Moriarty is behind the Poll Tax, Holmes, you still have to pay.") £5 for the two mugs, plus 95p postage. The Northern Musgraves offer attractive book-plates at £2 for 20 to non-Musgraves; the NM Christmas card is also now available, featuring Holmes, Watson and a Moriartiesque snowman, at £3.50 the pack (overseas £6.50 or $14 US). Send orders to David Stuart Davies, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER.

Mark Chadderton tells of a recent ad for "Little Sherlock", a baby-faced doll, issued in a limited edition by Ashton-Drake Galleries Ltd, Freepost, Stanmore, Middlesex HA7 2BR. Price is £69.95; dolls are limited to one per customer. Mark asks if anyone can help him with videos of the 1960s BBC Holmes series or the Wontner or Norwood films (he is in luck, since Channel 4 is currently broadcasting the Wontner SIGN and SILVER BLAZE) - if you can help, contact Mark at 30 King Edward Road, Rugby, Warwickshire CV21 2TA. Tim Salisbury (20 Uphill Road South, Uphill, Weston-super-Mare BS23 4SG) is also after videos, specifically THE TRIUMPH OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, the Clive Brook SHERLOCK HOLMES and any Rathbones except SH & THE SECRET CODE. Mark Hunter Purvis (6 Deer Park Way, Axwell Park, Blaydon, Tyne & Wear NE21 5PD) wants details of anybody who makes or sells busts or statuettes of Holmes or Conan Doyle (try Charles Hall for one, I suggest).

Ann O'Neill (38 Stephens Firs, Mortimer, Reading RG7 3UY) offers a limited edition black & white postcard with silver foil block, showing Brett & Hardwicke as Holmes & Watson (50p each "large sturdy SSAE per order"; cheques payable to Miss Ann O'Neill). Ann tells me that John Aidiniantz (of the Sherlock Holmes Museum) intends to produce a magazine on behalf of the Museum; his chosen title is "221B" - rather silly, as there's already a magazine of that name, but there's no copyright in titles (trademarks are a different matter, though...). Ivy & Douglas Warren send information about Bristol University Continuing Education Courses: on Saturday 18th May at Bristol A. Spicer will give a dayschool on SHERLOCK HOLMES & DETECTIVE FICTION, while on Saturday 17th November at Bristol 5 lecturers will present THE SCIENCE OF CRIME DETECTION (this course will be repeated at Cirencester on Saturday 23rd March); for details contact the Department For Continuing Education, Wills Memorial Building, Queen's Road, Bristol BS8 1HR (phone 0272 303629). Birmingham University School of Continuing Studies offers a weekend residential course on PREHISTORIC DARTMOOR, based at Ashburton (26th-28th

April); details from Mrs J.M. Burl, School of Continuing Studies, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, Birmingham B15 2TT.

On Tuesday 18th September at Marylebone Library, Marylebone Road, London NW1, John Hawkesworth will be interviewed, with specific reference to his work on the Granada TV SHERLOCK HOLMES SERIES; questions from the floor will be encouraged! Mr Hawkesworth not only "developed" the series for television but wrote some of the best scripts, including the classic adaptation of THE SIGN OF FOUR. On the following Tuesday, the 25th, I shall be at Marylebone, giving a talk about Sherlock Holmes on British Radio (this talk was devised for the Bimetallic Colloquium in Montreal, back in June, where it was well received). Both events start at 6.30 pm, and admission is free. I hope to see you there.

That grand cartoonist Jeff Decker has produced a delightful pack of Holmesian playing-cards. All four aces feature different portraits of Holmes; the Kings are Moriarty, Lestrade, Watson & Mycroft; Queens are Mary Morstan, Mrs Hudson, Hattie Doran & Irene Adler; Jacks are Colonel Moran, Jack Stapleton, Dr Roylott & Lysander Stark; Jokers are Tonga & Jabez Wilson. The reverse features Holmes & Moriarty. A single deck costs $7.50, a double is $14 (+ $1.50 postage inland). One pack has red backs, the other blue. Contact Singular Cards, PO Box 1364, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania 18703, USA (for overseas postage, please ask). Thanks to Wayne & Francine Swift for this information.

From John E. Stephenson. Carol Rhoda Books Inc. of Minneapolis have published 4 books in a children's series by Murray Shaw, illustrated by George Overlie, called MATCH WITS WITH SHERLOCK HOLMES, containing Canonical adventures reworked for youngsters. SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE MYSTERIOUS FRIEND OF OSCAR WILDE by Russell A. Brown is now out in paperback from St Martin's Press. A worthwhile source of information on at least one aspect of Sir Arthur's life is The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment, 4 Wealden Close, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 2ST; address communications to the Curator, Malcolm Payne. A new BSI scion is the Sherlock Holmes Society of Decatur, Illinois (contact Troy Taylor at The Old Book Barn, or phone 217 875-0222). More on the Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment: a fund has been raised to erect a permanent memorial to Sir Arthur in Crowborough, in the form of a monolith of local sandstone with a brass plate carrying details of Sir Arthur's life and achievements. Donations should be sent to the Hon. Treasurer, The Arthur Conan Doyle Memorial Fund, The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment, The Cross Hotel, Crowborough, East Sussex; cheques should be payable to A.C.D. Memorial Fund. Further details can be had from Malcolm Payne.

Belatedly, a report from Jon Lellenberg on the auction in New York on June 15th of two particular items from the late Bliss Austin's collection. (The belatedness is on my part, not on Jon's.) "His copy of BEETON'S, which had been Vincent Starrett's first copy, and then belonged to Frederic Dannay (Ellery Queen), went for $52,000. the MS of THE VALLEY OF FEAR, complete except for the missing epilogue, went for $260,000. The prices don't include Sotheby Parke Bernet's 10% commission or 8 % New York State sales tax. When they were listed in the Scribner's Rare Books Catalogue of Starrett's collection in 1943, compiled by David Randall, they were listed at $175 and $1,100 respectively." Think about it, if you can bear to.

From Peter E. Blau. Warner Books have published DUCK EDWING'S MADVENTURES OF ALMOST SUPERHEROES ($3.95), including "The Adventures of Headlock Holmes" as told by Dr Watsnew. Pocket Books/Minstrel are gradually reissuing all five of Eve Titus's lovely "Basil of Baker Street" books; latest is BASIL IN THE WILD WEST, "bringing Basil to Moriarty, New Mexico, home of mouse sheriff Bennett Shaw" ($2.75). I wish some British publisher would pick up this charming series. There's yet another SHERLOCK HOLMES COOKBOOK, this one by Charles A. Mills (Apple Cheeks Press, $3.50), offering a brief culinary tour of the Canon, with discussion of food, drink & clubs as well as recipes. The publisher's address is 2617 Stirrup Lane, Alexandria, VA 22308, USA. The 1991 Calendar of 221B Baker Street, with photos of the sitting-room at S. Holmes Esq. in San Francisco, is available at $12 from Brian & Charlotte Erickson, 1920 March Way, Mountain View, CA 94040, USA (add $5 postage US or $7.50 foreign orders). The 9th NEW ADVENTURES OF SH cassette, with Rathbone & Bruce in A SCANDAL IN BOHEMIA and THE CASE OF THE SECOND GENERATION, is now out from Simon & Schuster.

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

ROGER JOHNSON, 210 RAINSFORD ROAD, CHELMSFORD CM1 2PD

no. 102 12th October 1990

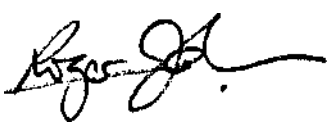
THE SECRET FILES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (Constable, £11.95) by June Thomson is splendid stuff. The idea isn't new; giving us in full some of those cases to which Watson merely refers in the canon was the basis for both THE EXPLOITS OF SHERLOCK HOMES and for SHERLOCK HOLMES REVISITED. Here we have seven of the untold tales. The first, "The Vanishing Head Waiter", is perhaps the least exciting, because this account of the disappearance of Mr James Phillimore bears a close and probably accidental resemblance to Conan Doyle & Carr's masterly treatment. Even here, though, we see Miss Thomson's strong points: elegant, convoluted plotting and apparently effortless pastiche of the Watsonian style. All the stories are good, but the last, "The Abandoned Lighthouse", tells the tale of the politician, the lighthouse keeper and the trained cormorant so completely satisfactorily that one wonders how anyone could have dismissed Watson's reference to the case as a joke. Highly recommended.

Clive Brooks' SHERLOCK HOLMES REVISITED vol. 2 will be published on 1st November (SpyGlass Books, Special Order Dept, 23 Sylvan Avenue, Bitterne, Southampton SO2 5JW). Copies may be ordered now; cost is £11.99 (+£1 postage UK or £4 overseas) for a copy inscribed by the author. Mr Brooks hasn't quite got June Thomson's touch with the Watsonian style, but his plotting is superb. Also published in November is SHERLOCK HOLMES IN GIBRALTAR ("The Abandoned Brigantine" and "The Gibraltar Letter") by Sam Benady, published by Gibraltar Books Ltd (38, Main Road, Gendon, Northampton NN7 1JW). Last issue's information about THE UNTOLD CASES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES no. 1, by Tom Bullimore & Ian Anderson, was premature. Ravette Books Ltd tell me that publication has been postponed till further notice. Glen Petrie's second Mycroft Holmes adventure MONSTROUS REGIMENT was published by Bantam Press last month at £12.95; the first, THE DORKING GAP AFFAIR, comes out in Corgi paperback on 7th December at £3.50.

The current issue of W.H. Smith's INSIGHT magazine (no. 22) contains a good article about the Brett/Burke/Hardwicke videos from Hendring. Stephen Farrell notes that WITHOUT A CLUE is expected to be available on sell-through around the end of the year "at a price of approx. £10". Francine Swift sends a cutting to the effect that Engelbert Humperdinck will star is a syndicated mini series SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE LEADING LADY; don't worry though - he won't be playing Holmes (phew!) as this is a part of the series announced as THE GOLDEN YEARS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, with Christopher Lee & Patrick Macnee. Michael Cox reports good progress on the latest Granada series, with the exciting news that Anthony Valentine plays Baron Gruner in ILLU casting that should rival my happy memories of Peter Wyngarde in the mid 60s. John Brazzill notes that one of the STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION episodes will be "Elementary, My Dear Data", with strong Holmesian echoes.

Catherine Cooke tells of a forthcoming treat at Victoria Library in Buckingham Palace Road. On Tuesday 27th November, at 6.30 pm, Stanley MacKenzie will present a showing of THE TRIUMPH OF SHERLOCK HOLMES on the big screen. Admission £2 (£1.50 concessions). Also from Catherine news of a curious book, SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE GREAT DETECTIVE IN PAPERBACK by Gary Lovisi (Gryphon Books, on sale at Murder One for £7.60. Marc Bourdet passes on information: a young Sherlockian society issues an interesting, varied bulletin (M.A.G., 10 rue Jean Baptiste Bandin, 21000 Dijon, France - write for details). Claude Lefrancq Edition (386 chaussee d'Alsemberg, 1180 Bruxelles, Belgium) has published a strikingly good graphic novel, LA SANGSUE ROUGE (I hope I've spelt that right), telling the story of the red leech.

A reminder that the Northern Musgraves' Christmas card is available from David Stuart Davies (Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER) at £3.50 the pack (overseas £6*50 or $14 US). The very nice illustration shows Holmes & Watson on the trail of a snowman that bears a suspicious resemblance to the Napoleon of Crime. The Musgraves also offer handsome bookplates at £2 for 20. Finally, Lou Novacheck (Hohenweg 10, D 7184 Kirchberg Lendsie West Germany) is an agent for several different companies that can supply lapel pins, T shirts end other advertising novelties at competitive prices for custom designed items.



THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

ROGER JOHNSON, 210 RAINSFORD ROAD, CHELMSFORD CM1 2PD

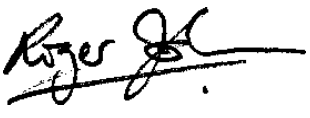
no. 103 17th November 1990

Two excellent Sherlock Holmes stories have just been published. THE GLENDOWER CONSPIRACY by Lloyd Biggle Jr (Council Oak Books, 1428 South St Louis, Tulsa, OK 74120; $14.25) is a full-length novel, the second "memoir of Sherlock Holmes from the papers of Edward Porter Jones, his late assistant". Porter, a former Baker Street Irregular, became Holmes' main helper in the late years after Dr Watson's second marriage, and because of his Welsh ancestry he rather than Holmes is despatched to rural Montgomeryshire to investigate two curious murders. The investigation reveals something much bigger, and even darker than murder. Fortunately, the combined efforts of Porter Jones and Sherlock Holmes are enough - just - to defeat the monstrous Glendower Conspiracy. All too often the reader has to make allowances for anachronisms and (especially with American authors) incongruities in new Holmes stories. Not so in the case of Mr Biggle's tales. His research is immense and his use of it impeccable. Everything rings true, whether in London or in remotest Wales. Further (and this is all too rare), he creates mystery and excitement without an excess of blood and shock-horror. Highly recommended - as is Mr Biggle's first Holmes novel THE QUALLSFORD INHERITANCE.

Ron Weighell's "The Case of the Fiery Messengers" appears in Richard Dalby's splendid anthology MYSTERY FOR CHRISTMAS (Michael O'Mara, £12.95). It's not only a very good Holmes pastiche (yes, Watson is the narrator this time), but the only story I've read which convincingly involves Holmes with the supernatural. The detective's client is one Dr M.R. James of King's College, Cambridge; others involved include Aleister Crowley and Dr John Dee - but this is something much better than the usual Sherlock-Holmes-meets-all-sorts-of-famous-people effort. For this story and many others, MYSTERY FOR CHRISTMAS is a first-rate seasonal purchase.

Studio Gallery Decorative Editions (50 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DP), responsible for the magnificent "Portrayals of Sherlock Holmes" plate, have just produced "The Sherlock Holmes" - a sepia pictorial plate, showing the Sherlock Holmes pub in Northumberland Street. If you order this 8" plate before 30th November it will cost £19.95 inclusive ($45.00); after that the price will be £20 + £1.95 postage ($40 + $10). Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW; phone 031-661 2822) has a catalogue available of Sherlock Holmes Collectables including theatre programmes, stamps, cassettes, postcards and metal & earthenware sculptures. Fascinating stuff at reasonable prices. Granada Studios Tour Ltd has issued a mail order gift catalogue, with a very tempting Sherlock Holmes section in full colour (Sales Department, Granada Studios Tour Ltd, Quay Street, Manchester M60 9EA). The magnificent T shirts from Tinderbox are now available (in decreasing numbers) only from Jane Sayle (6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants PO14 3RU). The three designs are of Paget illustrations in black on a white background: a) the railway carriage (SILV) in large only; b) the slogging ruffian (SOLI) in large and extra large; c) the Reichenbach struggle (FINA) in large and extra large. Prices: (UK) £7, (EEC), £8 or $16, (rest of world £9 or $18. Make sterling cheques payable to The Franco-Midland Hardware Company; US dollar payments in cash only, please. (These prices include a donation to The Samaritans.)

Currently filming at Pinewood is THE CRUCIFER OF BLOOD, starring Charlton Heston. The director is Charlton's son Fraser Heston. Pam Clarke & Yvonne Parkin have just published the 2nd in their series of theatrical interviews (after the success of "Partners in Crime", interviews with Jeremy Brett & Edward Hardwicke): this is "Beauty, Royalty & Genius, a rare interview with Derek Jacobi". Price. £2.50 (+ 40p UK, 70p Europe, £1.80 elsewhere). Cheques payable to P.M. Clarke (in sterling, please); proceeds go to the British Diabetic Association. Newly available is a 4½- hour cassette set from ISIS: THE SIGN OF FOUR, unabridged, read by Patrick Tull (£21.50 + VAT). From the Warrens comes news of a weekend course on SHERLOCK HOLMES & HIS WORLD (19-21 April 1991 at Westham House College, Barford, Warwicks. CV35 8DP, phone 0926 624206), cost £62. Geoffrey Stavert passes on news of an IBM PC disc with associated search programme (sic) featuring THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES and THE CASEBOOK. Details from Patterson & Co., Bramble Cottage, Briar Way, Berkhamsted, Herts. HP4 2JJ.



THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

ROGER JOHNSON, 210 RAINSFORD ROAD, CHELMSFORD CM1 2PD

no. 104 17th December 1990

Two new books of great importance from Fordham University Press (University Box L, Bronx, NY 10458-5172, USA). IRREGULAR MEMORIES OF THE 'THIRTIES, edited by Jon L. Lellenberg, is the 2nd volume in the BSI Archival Series. This is where history really begins, with the founding and unexpected flourishing of the Baker Street Irregulars. Unexpected, at least, to that remarkable bookman Christopher Morley to whom it was just another of the ephemeral clubs he delighted in forming. Some of the book is devoted to Morley's own accounts, contemporary and retrospective, but there are contributions from Robert K. Leavitt, George S. Fletcher, Vincent Starrett, Frederic Dorr Steele... Now at last we know, as far as we can, what actually happened at that memorable first BSI dinner that gave rise to such varying reports at the time. We learn how Anthony Boucher, discovered the BSI before they discovered him. History or anecdote, it's fascinating stuff. ($18.95). THE STANDARD DOYLE COMPANY: CHRISTOPHER MORLEY ON SHERLOCK HOLMES, edited by Steven Rothman ($19.95) inevitably overlaps with IRREGULAR MEMORIES to an extent, but in each case the inclusion of the relevant essay (letter or whatever) in its proper place is vital. Here are Morley's introductions to various Sherlockian works, his more than competent poems, the appropriate observations from his newspaper columns, and - perhaps most important - "Clinical Notes by a Resident Patient". This last was Morley's long-running column of personal observations and scholarly ramblings from the BAKER STREET JOURNAL; there's much gold and hardly any dross in this, the first and best column of its kind. Purely as Sherlockian scholarship the book is valuable; perhaps more important, it's a chance to meet an astonishingly versatile, scholarly, whimsical and gregarious friend.

SHERLOCK HOLMES IN GIBRALTAR by Sam Benady (Gibraltar Books Ltd, 38 Main Road, Grendon, Northamptonshire NN7 1JW; £2.95) is something quite unexpected. Mr Benady gives us two of Holmes' adventures from the pre-Watson days. "The Abandoned Brigantine" tells the "true" story of the Mary Celeste, .a complicated tale that is at least no more unlikely than other explanations, and rather less so than ACD's own fantasy. We learn that in his youth Holmes worked for Pinkerton's in New York - more, that he was actually on board the Mary Celeste! There's little detection in either tale, but they're neatly written, and the author clearly knows his Gibraltar and his Sherlock Holmes.

Out now in the video stores are the following Rathbone/Bruce films, all at a reasonable £9.99: THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES, THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, THE SCARLET CLAW, SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE SECRET WEAPON, SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE VOICE OF TERROR. Something of an improvement on the release earlier this year at a price ranging from £17.95 to £24.95! CBS/Fox have ensured high quality prints, and the packaging is attractive. What more could you want?

Andrew McLean recommends what seems to be a fascinating new book, YOUNG & MARTEN'S VICTORIAN HOUSE CATALOGUE (Sidgwick & Jackson, £19.99). Carol Whitlam reports finding "Sherlock Holmes & The Case of The Missing Body", a one-act play in which Holmes & Watson discuss the resurrection of Christ. It's in a book called POTTERS CLAY DRAMA: ACT FIVE, published by Potters Clay Drama of Lutterworth in 1988 (probably available from Christian bookshops). Carol also recently found a rather handsome porcelain, group entitled "A Most Mysterious Case", showing Holmes standing & Watson sitting before the fireplace. The thing stands about 7" high and costs, about £22. Unfortunately the shop wasn't able to say who made it! Desmond Tyler provides more information on the IBM PC discs containing THE HOUND and THE CASEBOOK (Patterson & Co., Bramble Cottage, Briar Way, Berkhampstead, Herts. HP4 2JJ; £8 each disc including VAT & postage). Each disc comes with a Lightning Word Search programme and is available in either 3½ or 5¼ IBM format for running on either a twin disc computer with at least 512K or a computer with a hard disc. More information can be had from Patterson & Co.

From Jon Lellenberg: Harold Orel has two books of interest out next year. SIR ARTHUR CONAN. DOYLE, INTERVIEWS & RECOLLECTIONS appears in Britain

in March/April from Macmillan, while CRITICAL ESSAYS ON ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE comes out in the USA in late '91 from G.K. Hall. A new book from Kelvin I. Jones (Sir Hugo Books, 10 Athelstan Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 6EJ), is not strictly Holmesian: THE OBSIDIAN & OTHER STORIES tells three tales of an Edwardian psychic detective, John Carter. (Limited edition of 100, 60 pages, £2 + 30p postage. Cheques, to Kelvin I. Jones, please.) ISIS tapes have released a complete reading of THE SIGN OF FOUR by Patrick Tull; it lasts 4½ hours and costs £21.50 plus VAT. The fifteenth issue of Geoff Bradley's magazine CADS (CRIME AND DETECTIVE STORIES) is now out, packed full of fascinating articles and comments (£3.50 from 9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex SS7 1PA; please ask Geoff about overseas rates).

The Northern Musgraves' meeting on Saturday 12th January will feature an auction. Among the very special items for sale will be a copy of the script for the forthcoming Granada adaptation of "The Creeping Man", autographed by Jeremy Brett, Edward Hardwicke & Michael Cox, as well as two (2 - count 'em! - 2) of Bert Coules' scripts from the current BBC radio series THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, both signed by Bert. Further information from David Stuart Davies, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER. Those interested in Holmes' relationships with the police should consider joining The Constabulary, a corresponding scion of the Baker Street Irregulars (John B. Taylor, PO Box 804, Midlothian, Texas 76065, USA). The first 1991 meeting of The Priory Scholars will, be on the 2nd February at The Old Tudor Rectory, Main Street, Glenfield, Leicester; the speaker will be the ubiquitous David Stuart Davies (further details from Sheila Redfern, 12 Groby Road, Glenfield, Leicester LE3 8GJ).

The December issue of the BAKER STREET JOURNAL consists largely of a well-deserved tribute to our old friend John Bennett Shaw ("The Hans Sloane of My Age", BSI). Apart from John only Julian Wolff (and I think Vincent Starrett) have been honoured with a portrait on the title-page. Congratulations, John!

Rupert Books (59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE) has (have?) issued a Christmas list, being a selection of new titles in the Holmesian field, including Kelvin Jones' THE OBSIDIAN (£2.30), June Thomson's THE SECRET FILES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (£11.95), Clive Brooks' SHERLOCK HOLMES REVISITED vol. 2 (£11.99), Ronald C. Weyman's THE MARK OF THE BEAST (£9.95), M.J. Trow's LESTRADE & THE DEADLY GAME (£11.95) and John North's SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE ARABIAN PRINCESS (£9.95). And that's just a selection from the selection! You can order by phone on 0954 781861.

Late news about the 12th January Musgraves meeting! (The lateness is my fault, not the Musgraves'.) Besides the auction, this 4th birthday celebration will feature a new drama, FIXED POINT: THE LIFE & DEATH OF SHERLOCK HOLMES. The meeting will start at 12.30 pm. at the Huddersfield Hotel in the town centre, and for £9.75 you'll get a champagne toast, buffet lunch and coffee. Applications to David Stuart Davies.

From Evelyn Herzog of the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes comes news of the great Trans-Atlantic Junketings. The Martha Hudson Breakfast takes place at the Algonquin Hotel in New. York from 8.30 to 10.30 am ($17 - send cheques, playable to the Baker Street Irregulars, to The Stetaks, 15529 Diagonal Road, LaGrange, Ohio 44050). At the same hotel, at 6 pm on the same day, the Adventuresses will hold their own Birthday Dinner ($50 - send cheques, payable to the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes - to Evelyn A. Herzog, 235 West 15th Street, New York, NY 10011). Finally "the annual reception for all Sherlockians and their friends, will be held on Saturday January 12, 1991, at 24 Fifth Avenue from 2.30 to 5.00 pm". ($28 - send cheques, payable to the Baker Street Irregulars, to Robert E. Thomalen BSI, 69 Glen Road, Eastchester, NY 10709.)

PUNCH is currently running a 3-part, serial by Julian Symons, "Sherlock's Christmas", a case for Sheridan Haynes. The catch is that you have to work out whodunnit; get it right and you could win a prize. From Peter Blau: GOOD NIGHT, MR HOLMES by Carole Nelson Douglas (Tor Books, #18.95) tells the story of Irene Adler from her viewpoint; "entertaining and well written", says Peter. Along with Charlton Heston in the new film of THE CRUCIFER OF BLOOD will be Richard Johnson as Watson, Edward Fox, Simon Callow & John Castle. Director is Fraser Heston. Looks good.

The Compliments of the Season to all.

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

ROGER JOHNSON, 210 RAINSFORD ROAD, CHELMSFORD CM1 2PD

no. 105 22nd January 1991

FIXED POINT: THE LIFE & DEATH OF SHERLOCK HOLMES is " a dramatic presentation " by David Stuart Davies . In other words, it's a one-act play, and its premiere at the Northern Musgraves ' meeting on 12th January was received enthusiastically. David presents to us an elderly (in fact dying) Watson trying to convey to an unenthusiastic young reporter what sort of man stood behind the mythic figure of Sherlock Holmes . The reporter remains unimpressed, but the audience doesn ' t : with no sense of undue compression , David presents to us a remarkably complete picture of the true Holmes - and the true Watson as well . This is a limited edition of 150 copies , available at £ 3 each , including postage, from David at Overdale , 69 Greenhead Road , Huddersfield HD1 4ER .

News from Michael Cox . THE CASEBOOK OF SHERLOCK HOLMES , the final Granada TV series , with Jeremy Brett & Edward Hardwicke , starts transmission on ITV on Thursday 21st February. Meanwhile, Virgin Books has just published a revised edition of Peter Haining ' s THE TELEVISION SHERLOCK HOLMES as an £ 11.99 paperback . I haven't seen this new edition , so can't comment on it .

Christopher Roden tells me that the first Convention/Dinner of the Arthur Conan Doyle Society will be held at the Grand Hotel in Birmingham over the weekend of the 25th/26th May . Prices range from £ 25 for the dinner to £ 90 for the full weekend . Along with the dinner , it's hoped to include the British premiere of Mark McPherson's one-man play AN EVENING WITH SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE . The West Midlands have many associations with Conan Doyle ; it's intended during the weekend to present a plaque commemorating the four months that he spent as a medical assistant in the village of Ruyton-XI-Towns . For full details of the weekend, write to Christopher at Grasmere , 35 Penfold Way , Dodleston , Chester CH4 9ML . Further news from Christopher : Canongate of Edinburgh plans to publish a new edition of THE EXPLOITS OF BRIGADIER GERARD with an introduction by Owen Dudley Edwards ; and Oxford University Press has put out a huge anthology edited by Patricia Craig , THE OXFORD BOOK OF ENGLISH DETECTIVE STORIES (£ 15), including " Silver Blaze " .

Thanks to Bernard Davies for the news that The Picture Palace (65 Westow Street , London SE19 ; phone 081-771 1966) offers beautifully accurate full-sized reproductions of the famous Vanity Fair cartoon by " Spy " , " William Gillette as Sherlock Holmes " ; mounted and unframed it costs £ 16 , in a handsome " mahogany style " frame it's £ 37 . 50 . There are only 850 numbered copies , and a good many have already been sold to Japanese enthusiasts .

Barbara Alder kindly sent a copy of SHERLOCK HOLMES IN THE ADVENTURE OF THE ANCIENT GODS by Ralph Vaughn (Gryphon Books , PO Box 209 , Brooklyn , NY 11228-0209 , USA ; $ 5). This 40-page brochure is a jolly , though not entirely successful , attempt to introduce Holmes into the world of H . P . Lovecraft . Good fun .

Wai-Ming Chan is after some books : BAKER STREET CHRONOLOGY by E . B . Zeisler (Magico reprint) , Michael Druxman ' s biography of Basil Rathbone , Andrew Jay Peck ' s THE DATE BEING ? and the Sons of the Copper Beeches ' 1st collection LEAVES FROM THE COPPER BEECHES . If you can help , please contact Mr Chan at 312 Marlowe Road , Walthamstow , London E17 3HQ . K . Oxley (36 Peterhouse Close , Darlington , County Durham) asks if anyone can help him find a video recording of THE MONOCLED MUTINEER .

Look out for MILLION : THE MAGAZINE OF POPULAR FICTION (bimonthly, £ 1 . 95) ; the first issue contains an article about the dinner party that produced both THE SIGN OF FOUR and THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY .

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

ROGER JOHNSON, 210 RAINSFORD ROAD, CHELMSFORD CM1 2PD

no. 106 1st March 1991

My profound apologies for the lateness of this DM. I've been laid up for most of February with two successive viral infections (and no, you wouldn't want to know the details).

Very sad news to start this issue: Sheila Redfern, Founder and School Secretary of The Priory Scholars died suddenly on the evening of Saturday the 2nd February. Not long before, Sheila had invited Philip Weller to accept the post of President of the Society - an unexpectedly timely move. For the moment, at least, enquiries about The Priory Scholars should be addressed to Philip at 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU.

But the world of Sherlock Holmes continues, and so must we. On the 18th February, Constable & Co. published a fascinating first novel, THE DISAPPEARANCE OF EDWIN DROOD by Peter Rowland (£11.99). This isn't the first attempt to introduce Sherlock Holmes as the completing factor in Charles Dickens' last and unfinished novel, but it is, I think, the first in which Holmes is actually commissioned to investigate the case by one of the major participants -a tragic, decrepit John Jasper, who seems to exist simultaneously in 1870 and in 1894. Mr Rowland plays fair with Dickens' characters and with the events of the uncompleted mystery. Likewise, he plays fair with the world of Holmes and Watson. The narrative rattles' along at a cracking pace in a very acceptable simulacrum of the Watsonian style (but was the verb "familiarise" in use in the 1890s?). There's one glorious joke, not truly Dickensian or Doylean, but deriving from a misidentification on the part of that jack-ass Thomas Sapsea and perfectly in character. All the loose ends are neatly accounted for, with the single exception of the identity of Mr Datchery, and here we are left with a rather mind-boggling hint - perfectly fair, given Holmes' remarks about the confusion between fact and fiction. As I said, fascinating.

The Argo spoken word catalogue has now been taken over by EMI/Music For Pleasure, who are busy re-releasing material from Argo's enormous range of prose, verse and drama. Of particular interest to us are new issues of FOUR SHERLOCK HOLMES STORIES (Argo 1004) and MORE SHERLOCK HOLMES STORIES (Argo 1202), both sets read impeccably by Robert Hardy. The first contains 3STU, SUSS, GREE & CHAS; the second has DYIN, SHOS, MUSG & CROO. Sound quality is excellent, and at £6.99 for 2½ hours one could hardly want more. On a similar subject, Bert Coules reminds me that cassette packs of the recently-broadcast ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES are now in the shops, 3 volumes, each containing 4 plays. Because of the international crisis several of the broadcasts were relegated to long wave only; here they can be heard as intended, first-rate sound quality, stereo and all. A bargain at £6.99 for 3 hours. Further news is that the 2nd stage of the project is now set: THE MEMOIRS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES will be recorded this summer, again with Clive Merrison & Michael Williams as Holmes & Watson. The transmission date has yet to be announced. Bert himself will write the scripts for SILV, CROO and FINA.

News from Granada Studios Tour Ltd (Quay Street, Manchester M60 9EA; phone 061-833 0880): to celebrate the birthday of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle on 22nd May, they plan a special open day just for members of Holmesian (& Doylean?) societies with a pre-booked reduced price of £6.95. If you've any queries, please contact the Public Relations Officer, Sandra Dempsey, at the above address or phone number.

I understand from Yvonne Parkin (44 Wimslow Close, Redesdale Park, Wallsend, Tyne & Wear NE28 8TB) that that there are still copies for sale of the first two issues of STAGE STRUCK: "Partners in Crime" is a series of illustrated interviews with Jeremy Brett & Edward Hardwicke (£2.50 + postage), and "Beauty, Royalty & Genius" an illustrated interview with Derek Jacobi (£2.50 + postage). Please make cheques payable to P.M. Clarke; proceeds go to the

British Diabetic Association. In a similar vein, the Franco-Midland Hardware Company has produced the first two in a series of monographs under the general title of Company Shares. The 1st, "Under the Deerstalker" is a transcript of an interview with Douglas Wilmer, who was the Sherlock Holmes of British TV in the mid-1960s and is now an Honorary Member of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London; the 2nd Share, "Holmesian Attire: Costume for Canonical Activities" by Anna Smyth & Roger Matthews, is aimed particularly at those preparing to take part in Holmesian expeditions (could be very useful for Switzerland). Price of each Share is £3.50/$7 (UK & EEC), £4/$8 (rest of Europe), £5/$10 (USA & Canada), £5.50/$11 (rest of world). Please make cheques payable to The Franco-Midland Hardware Company (sterling only; US dollar payment should be in cash), and send orders to The Stock-broker's Clerk, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU.

Exciting news from Cristina Macia (Bajada de la Plana 8, Atico 10, 08032 Barcelona, Spain): Cristina is Editorial Director for a new project, LOS ARCHIVOS DE BAKER STREET, published by Valdemar Ediciones of Madrid. The first volume is LAS HAZANAS DE SHERLOCK HOLMES, a new Spanish translation of THE EXPLOITS by Adrian Conan Doyle & John Dickson Carr. Cristina has provided a general introduction, and there's a scholarly prologue (in Spanish) by David Kirby of Rupert Books, as well as a brief account of the Baker Street Irregulars by way of afterword. This 1st volume is attractively presented, and bodes well for the success of the venture. Further books will appear at 3-month intervals. Copies of LAS HAZANAS are available at 2600 pesetas (including postage) each from Libreria Gigamesh, Ronda de San Pedro 53, 08010 Barcelona, Spain. Cheques or postal orders should be made payable to GIGAMESH (Spanish currency only, please).

There's a fine new addition to the numerous Holmesian journals available. This is VARIETIES OF ASH, edited by Susan E. Dahlinger, whose premiere issue appeared in January. VOA is intended as a semiannual (January & June). No. 1 contains a good mixture of the very worthwhile (a fascinating article on "The Drinking Habits of Snakes"), the interesting, and the downright silly. Subscription rates are: $10 per volume or $6.50 per single issue. All communications should be addressed to S.E. Dahlinger, 30 East Elm Street, 11B, Chicago, Illinois 60611, U.S.A. Other magazines worth your attention include CANADIAN HOLMES, published four times a year by the Bootmakers of Toronto at $12 (Canadian) p.a. (details from Maureen Green, CGA, 47 Manor Road West, Toronto, Ontario M5P 1E6, Canada); THE SERPENTINE MUSE, quarterly from the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes at $6 p.a. (Evelyn Herzog, 235 West 15th Street, New York, NY 10011, USA); and BAKER STREET MISCELLANEA, another quarterly, $10 p.a. domestic or $12.50 international (The Sciolist Press, PO Box 225, Winnetka, Illinois 60093-0225, U.S.A.).

Ann O'Neill passes on the information that issue 4 of her magazine "221B" has been delayed for the foreseeable future for financial reasons. Please be patient.

Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) hasn't been idle. His latest project consists of 3 new postcards sold in packs of 10, each containing 4 x Holmes in deerstalker with pipe & magnifying glass, 3 x Holmes in frock coat & top hat, 3 x group of famous detectives (Charlie Chan, Hercule Poirot, Father Brown). These are very attractive full-colour caricatures, good value at the UK price of £4.20 for the pack of 10 (including postage). Please enquire of Mr Hall for international rates (and he adds, "trade enquiries welcome").

It all seems to be happening in April and May! Heather Owen sends details of a new play at the Polka Theatre for Children (240 The Broadway, Wimbledon, London SW19 1SB; phone 081-543 4888) running from 17th April to 25th May. This is ELEMENTARY, MR HOLMES by Robin Kingsland, in which Jo Watson from the late 20th century finds herself transported back to the late 19th century, where she's caught up in the Holmes/Moriarty feud. We have high hopes, as the last Holmesian production at the Polka was superb.

Information from Stanley MacKenzie. The elegant Polurrian Hotel (Mullion, South Cornwall TR12 7EN; phone 0326 240421) will host a Murder Weekend from the 22nd to 24th March. For £175 you get slap-up accommodation as well as the Murder Mystery; solve it and you could win a return weekend stay at the Polurrian. From the 8th to the 16th June, Ilfracombe will hold its 4th annual Victorian Week; full details of events and accommodation from Philip Mahoney, The Woodlands Hotel, Torrs Park, Ilfracombe, North Devon EX34 8AZ (phone 0271 863098).

Finally, a few posters (23"x 16") & programmes from the play PARTNERS IN CRIME (reviewed in the Winter 1990 SHJ) are available to UK applicants. Posters £1.40, programmes £1.30 (prices include postage) from Elissa Swinglehurst, 15 Woodland Gardens, London N10 3UE.

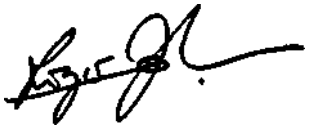
SHERLOCK HOLMES LOG claims to be a nearly complete listing of the appearances of Holmes & Watson in the audio & visual media - British & American radio programmes, commercial recordings, silent & sound movies, TV plays & movies. The 36 page log is available for $10 postpaid from Gordon Kelley, 8600 University Boulevard, Evansville, Indiana 47712, USA. And while we're on such things, the list of canonical recordings available from Isis Audio Books (55 St Thomas' Street, Oxford OX1 1JG) is: THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES read by Patrick Tull (10 cassettes, £37.95), THE MEMOIRS read by Alexander Spencer (7 cassettes, £30.50), THE SIGN OF FOUR read by Patrick Tull (4 cassettes, £23.95); forthcoming in April is A STUDY IN SCARLET read by Peter Mesney (4 cassettes, £23.95), and in August THE VALLEY OF FEAR (5 cassettes, £25.95) - these latter two won't be available in Canada.

Sherlock, Stock & Barrel (PO Box 8261, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80933-8261, USA) sell "Sherlockian collectibles". The current list includes Atlas Stone figurines, paperweights, T-shirts and lapel pins.

From Ivy & Douglas Warren: there's a residential course on SHERLOCK HOLMES & HIS WORLD over the weekend 19th to 21st April at Westham House College, Barford, Warwick CV35 8DP (phone 0926 624206), The tutor is Peter Street, and the fee for the weekend, including accommodation, is £62. Quote the course number R82.

Prom Peter E. Blau: the 2nd mini-series with Christopher Lee & Patrick Macnee as Holmes & Watson will be SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE INCIDENT AT VICTORIA PALLS; no transmission date has yet been set for the 1st, SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE LEADING LADY. Ah! and news of a more than welcome break with precedent: at the BSI's cocktail party in January full investiture into the Baker Street Irregulars was awarded to Dame Jean Conan Doyle ("A Certain Gracious Lady"), Katherine McMahon ("Lucy Ferrier"), Edith Meiser ("A Fascinating & Beautiful Woman"), Evelyn Herzog ("The Daintiest Thing Under a Bonnet"), Julia Carlson Rosenblatt ("Mrs Turner") and Susan Rice ("Beeswing"); this isn't the first time that women have been invested, but it is the first time that their rights & privileges as full members have been stressed. Well deserved congratulations to all concerned. Published last year by Magico Magazine was A SINGULAR SET OP PEOPLE, edited by Marlene Aig & David Galerstein ($14.95), an anthology of Holmesian essays by scholarly members of New York scion societies. (I'm delighted to learn that Magico is still in business....) A recently formed Holmesian society is Stimson & Co. (details from Michael W. McClure, 1415 Swanwick Street, Chester, Illinois 62233, USA); membership is aimed principally at undertakers (sorry, funeral directors). The Abbey National, whose address actually is (or at least includes) 221B Baker Street, has appointed a new secretary to Sherlock Holmes: her name is Erica Harper. Meanwhile, despite its own publicity, mail for the Sherlock Holmes Museum should be addressed to 239 Baker Street and <u>not</u> to 221B. You may already know that the manuscripts of "The Dying Detective" and "The Lion's Mane" are now on indefinite loan from their owner to the Sherlock Holmes Collection at Marylebone Library. Catherine Cooke, the Librarian-in-Charge, intends to have microfilm copies available shortly for research purposes.

Finally, from John E. Stephenson: Richard Dalby's anthology MYSTERY FOR CHRISTMAS, including Ron Weighell's admirable Holmes pastiche "The Case of the Fiery Messengers", is available in America from Gallery Books at $5.95. UNIVERSAL HORRORS: THE STUDIO'S CLASSIC FILMS 1931-1946, by Michael Brunas, John Brunas & Tom Weaver (McFarland & Co., 1990), features lengthy discussion of the 12 Universal Rathbone/Bruce Holmes films.



THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

ROGER JOHNSON, 210 RAINSFORD ROAD, CHELMSFORD CM1 2PD

no. 107 31st March 1991

To be published on the 11th April is SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE HENTZAU AFFAIR by our very own David Stuart Davies (Ian Henry Publications, £9.95). The dust-jacket design, uniform with those of the earlier Ian Henry pastiches, is graced with Peter Cushing's characterful sketch of Sherlock Holmes. Perhaps I should declare an interest in this particular book: I had the pleasure of reading it in manuscript, my name has been appropriated for one of the characters, and the book is dedicated to me. So, yes, I like it! What we have, as the title suggests, is a sequel to THE PRISONER OF ZENDA. A sequel: not the official sequel that Anthony Hope gave us, under the title of RUPERT OF HENTZAU. David has speculated on what might have happened if Sherlock Holmes had been brought into the affair, & a jolly good job he's made of it, re-creating Hope's world of romantic intrigue and the vivid characters that inhabit it. THE HENTZAU AFFAIR is a less reflective, less elegaic tale than RUPERT OF HENTZAU, with a much happier conclusion: a comedy rather than a tragedy, and a cracking good read. (There's one tiny error that I seem to have missed the first time around: Queen Flavia's hair was not "raven-black" but red - "the glorious Elphberg hair". Just thought I'd mention it.)

Exciting news from the Northern Musgraves: contrary to various press announcements (in this newsletter as elsewhere) there will be at least one more Sherlock Holmes series from Granada TV. Jeremy Brett has told David Stuart Davies that he's signed up for a two-hour Christmas special (will this be THE VALLEY OF FEAR at last?) plus some more one-hour episodes. Edward Hardwicke will be back as Dr Watson, of course. Opened a couple of days ago was a further Holmesian development on the Granada Studios Tour, enlarging the exterior set, making the interior set more accessible, and adding an exhibition, a bookshop & refreshment facilities. Kathryn White, Christopher Roden & David Stuart Davies have been closely involved from the beginning as advisers and collaborators in the design, and the exhibition is headed by the Musgraves' logo. Finally, David Stuart Davies (I promise this is the last mention of him in this issue) asks me to remind members that subscriptions to the Musgraves are now due (£10 UK; £14 Europe; US$26 elsewhere - and dollars in cash, please) to the Membership Secretary, John Addy (23 East Street, Lightcliffe, Halifax. HX3 8TU).

Two booksellers' catalogues just out: SH 23 from Sylvian Hamilton (Hermitage, Mount Pleasant, Duns, Berwickshire TD11 3HU), listing books and much more, and Geoff Bradley's CRIME & DETECTIVE FICTION list no. 13 (9 Vicarage Hill, South Benfleet, Essex SS7 1PA), which covers all aspects of the field, including Holmesiana, of course. While on the subject, The Old Soldiers of Baker Street of the Two Saults (W.T. Rabe, 1204 Davitt, Sault Ste Marie, Michigan 49783, USA) offer a selection of interesting material, including Bill Rabe's fascinating study of a popular song that has passed into oral tradition and Sherlockian legend, WE ALWAYS MENTION AUNT CLARA. Write to Mr Rabe for details.

Mark Chadderton passes on news of something I'd missed: just before Christmas the BBC published RUSS ABBOT'S FUN BOOK by Peter Vincent & Barry Cryer (£5.99), containing several pages of Abbot's travesty "Barrett Holmes". And Kelvin Jones has already published a second slim volume of the exploits of Dr John Carter, the Edwardian psychic detective. This is THE DARK ENTRY (Sir Hugo Books, 10 Athelstan Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 6EJ; £2.50 including postage - cheques payable to Kelvin I. Jones, please). Like its predecessor (THE OBSIDIAN; £2.30), the booklet is very strikingly illustrated by Douglas Walters.

Michael Cox has kindly passed on a copy of SCARLET STREET no. 1, a magazine devoted to mystery & horror on film & TV (formerly THE MYSTERY NEWSLETTER). It's handsomely printed, well written & illustrated, and contains a great, deal of Holmesian interest. It's available from SCARLET STREET, PO Box 604, Glen Rock, New Jersey 07452, U.S.A. The price is $3.50. (It 's likely to be

available in this country from Murder One.)

John Bennett Shaw and Cristina Macia have sent further information about LOS ARCHIVOS DE BAKER STREET, the new project from Valdemar Ediciones of Madrid, for which Cristina is Editorial Director, Following the first volume (LAS HAZANAS DE SHERLOCK HOLMES, a translation of THE EXPLOITS by Conan Doyle & Dickson Carr) will be translations of SHERLOCK HOLMES OF BAKER STREET by William S. Baring-Gould and A THREE PIPE PROBLEM by Julian Symons. I don't know about the Baring-Gould, but the Symons will have a (no doubt scholarly) critical introduction by John Bennett Shaw. The books may be had from Libreria Gigamesh, Ronda de San Pedro 53, 08010 Barcelona, Spain. The price is 2600 pesetas each, including postage; Spanish currency only, please (cheques & postal orders payable to Gigamesh).

And another update. Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) has added three more designs to his collection of Sherlock Holmes caricature postcards. The pack of ten cards for £3.50 now includes two each of: Holmes in deerstalker & Inverness; Holmes in topper & frock coat; Charlie Chan, Hercule Poirot & Father Brown; Watson telling Holmes about the Battle of Maiwand; Holmes & Moriarty. The third new card shows Holmes & Watson at Loch Ness; it's available at 35p the copy. Mr Hall has plans for at least half a dozen more. Write to him for details.

Ivy & Douglas Warren send news of another Holmesian play: A STUDY IN SCARLET (no author named; presumably it's Christopher Martin's adaptation) will be at the Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton from Monday 13 May to Saturday 18 May. Evening performances: Monday - Thursday 7.30 pm, Friday 8.00 pm, Saturday 7.30 pm; matinee: Saturday 4.00 pm. Evening tickets £4.50 - £7.50; matinee tickets £3.00 - £5.00. It's a Nick Orchard production featuring William Boyd & James Coombes. The theatre is 200 yards from the railway station, and the phone number is 0902 29212.

Another link with the past has been severed. Michael Hardwick died earlier this month at the age of 66. On his own or in collaboration with his wife Mollie, Michael was responsible for THE SHERLOCK HOLMES COMPANION, THE MAW WHO WAS SHERLOCK HOLMES, the novelisation of Billy Wilder's film THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, PRISONER OF THE DEVIL, THE PRIVATE LIFE OF DR WATSON, SHERLOCK HOLMES: MY LIFE & CRIMES, THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO SHERLOCK HOLMES, and THE REVENGE OF THE HOUND. Perhaps his most lasting achievement in our field will prove to be his radio adaptations of the canon, performed so memorably by Carleton Hobbs & Norman Shelley. A few years ago, the Hardwicks cut themselves off from our Society, and in 1988 Dame Jean Conan Doyle forbade the American publication of any more Hardwick pastiches. This effectively ended the long-standing Hardwick-Holmes connection, but the Hardwick influence will remain. (Thanks to Desmond Tyler & Stephen Farrell, who each sent me a copy of the Daily Telegraph obituary.)

News from John E. Stephenson: a dinner will be held at the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York, on Saturday 4th May to celebrate the centenary of the fatal struggle at Reichenbach. Cost is $80.00, cheques payable to Albert M. Rosenblatt (Freedom Road, Pleasant Valley, New York 12569, USA). New from Gasogene Press (Box 1041, Dubuque, Iowa 52004-1041, USA) is David Hammer's TO PLAY THE GAME: THE TRAVEL GUIDE TO THE NORTH AMERICA OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (hardback $39.95, paperback $19.95), This is Mr Hammer's 3rd volume of topological detection; the first two were excellent. Forthcoming from Gasogene are Dick Warner's own account of the history of Holmes Peak, a book of Sherlockian poems by Deborah Sage illustrated by Jeff Decker; Michael Harrison's SHEAF OF SHERLOCK, being his collected Sherlockian stories, each with an extensive introduction. Michael Hardwick's death has presumably put paid to plans for completion & publication of his Holmesian memoirs. Dr Ben Wood (The Pleasant Places of Florida, PO Box 740, Ellenton, Florida 43222, USA) offers SHERLOCKIAN SING-ALONG by Mike Carroll & Ben Wood, "a dandy batch of Baker Street ballads & Doylean ditties". Cost is $6.00, which includes postage (presumably in North America only).

From Peter Blau: the 10th NEW ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES cassette from Simon & Schuster is now out, containing "In Flanders' Fields" & "The Eyes of Mr Leyton". A comedy-adventure film, SHERLOCK HOLMES' ARCANE ADVENTURE, is scheduled to begin shooting in Estonia next month. Bruce Holmes (64 Maple Circle, Dollard des Ormeaux, Quebec H9B 1E5, Canada) offers a sales list of Sherlockian collectibles, mostly philatelic.

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

ROGER JOHNSON, 210 RAINSFORD ROAD, CHELMSFORD CM1 2PD

no. 108 24th April 1991

New from Ian Henry Publications is Jeremy Paul's script of THE PROBLEM OF THOR BRIDGE from the recent series of THE CASE-BOOK OF SHERLOCK HOLMES. Mr Paul has provided an informative introduction explaining why and how he reconstructed the original narrative. The publisher has clearly taken note of various criticisms made of his edition of Mr Paul's script for the stage play THE SECRET OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, and the result is a slim volume that looks and feels good. There are six good illustrations, excellently reproduced. The price is £5.45 (£5.80 by post, or $11.50, from Ian Henry Publications Ltd, 20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH). Forthcoming are Mr Paul's scripts for THE NAVAL TREATY and THE SPECKLED BAND. Good-oh!

More books. Published last month by Hawk Books at £2.99 was THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES, a volume in the Classic Comics Series. Coming in October from Robinson Books is THE REAL WORLD OF SHERLOCK HOLMES by Peter Costello (£14.95). A reminder that copies of THE LIGHT IS DARK ENOUGH (essays on Holmes and Cambridge) are available from Jonathan McCafferty (5 Jonathan Court, Chiswick Common Road, London W4 1SA) £8 or $17.50. (Other Society items - neckties, headscarves & back issues of the SHJ - may be had from Captain W.R. Michell, The Old Crown Inn, Lopen, South Petherton, Somerset TA13 5JX. Send a stamped & addressed envelope for details.)

The Weekend Guardian for the 13th/14th April contained an interesting article, "Defective Detective", on Holmes' mental constitution, by Professor John Radford, a chartered psychologist and a member of our Society. Issue 2 of SOVEREIGN magazine, published by Jaguar Cars Ltd in March at £3.50, has a well-written and superbly illustrated article about the Sherlock Holmes Society of London by our own Philip Porter (Sovereign Magazine Ltd, PO Box 94, Coventry CV3 5RD).

Geoffrey Stavert has passed on a letter from the Federation of Master Builders (30 Richmond Terrace, Haymarket, Edinburgh EH1 1BY), the body behind the proposed Holmes statue to be erected in Edinburgh. A limited edition of 2" diameter polished gilt finish three dimensional modelled relief medals are to be struck and will be available in light navy blue presentation cases at a cost of £50 each". Orders, accompanied by a cheque, may be sent now to the Federation of Master Builders, Medal Sales, c/o Ian Baird, 206 Ferry Road, Edinburgh EH6 4QZ. It's anticipated that the medals will be sent out in November.

The touring production of Christopher Martin's play A STUDY IN SCARLET mentioned in the last DM is playing at the following venues: 22nd April Devonshire Park Theatre, Eastbourne; 29th April Theatre Royal, Margate; 6th May Futurist Theatre, Scarborough; 13th May Grand Theatre, Wolverhampton; 20th May Beck Theatre, Hayes; 27th May St George's Theatre, Great Yarmouth; 3rd June Palace Theatre, Newark; 10th June King's Theatre, Southsea; 17th June White Rock Theatre, Hastings; 24th June Alexandra Theatre, Bognor Regis; 1st July Pomegranate Theatre, Chesterfield. I've had a very nice letter from the producer, Nick Orchard, in which he says, "Should any of your subscribers wish to see the show please feel free to get in touch with me so we can arrange for them to meet the cast after the show for a drink." A very civilised attitude. You can contact Mr Orchard at Nick Orchard Productions Ltd, 139 Tooley Street, London SE1 (phone 071-357 7868).

Finally: book now to get a place on the Granada Studios Tour celebration of ACD's birthday on Wednesday 22nd May. There's a special discount price of £6.95. Write to Sandra Dempsey, Sales Co-Ordinator, Granada Studios Tour Ltd, Quay Street, Manchester M60 9LA. And A.G. Andrews mentions seeing some nice Holmes & Watson figurines at under £10 each at shops in Kendal and in Blackpool. Can anyone provide further details? Michael Connolly (Tirgarve, Allistragh, Armagh, County Armagh BT61 8EZ, Northern Ireland) has a new list of Holmesiana for sale. Send an SSAE for a copy.

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ROGER JOHNSON, 210 RAINSFORD ROAD, CHELMSFORD CM1 2PD

no. 109 22nd May 1991

Q. What is huge and furry, has vicious fangs, big ears and a long tail, and sings "My Way"?

A. The Giant Rat of Sinatra.

A couple of days ago, Constable & Co. published the ninth of M.J. Trow's Inspector Lestrade novels. Mr Trow's invention and wit show no signs of failing; like its predecessors, LESTRADE & THE GIFT OF THE PRINCE combines high drama, low humour and a very clever detective story. In 1904, Sholto Lestrade is commissioned confidentially by the Duke of Connaught to investigate a murder at Balmoral Castle, and as usual with Lestrade one murder leads to another. Balmoral to Glamis to Skye, Lestrade follows a trail of corpses in his efforts to discover who is after the secret of Drambuie - the gift of Bonnie Prince Charlie. Lestrade is a likable and much put-upon hero, but Holmes (the late Holmes) & Watson are quite scurrilously treated. Not for purists, but I find it great fun. Sample throwaway joke; "They were to have spent their first night at the Loch Laggan Hotel, but... the place was owned by a member of the clan Macdonald. And Sphagnum would rather die than eat at Macdonald's." The book costs £12.99. (Inspector G. Lestrade writes: "Sholto Lestrade? Never heard of him.")

Much slighter, though, is a booklet I bought recently at Murder One: LESTRADE OF THE YARD by J.W. Mort (an anagram). For £2.50 you get a brief summary of each of Mr Trow's novels, along with highly accomplished caricatures of some of the characters and an amusing introduction. More worthy of your attention is the 1st issue of THE SHERLOCK HOLMES GAZETTE, whose 24 A4 pages handsomely printed, contain an interview with Michael Cox, an analysis of the character & career of Sherlock Holmes, a piece about the Society's recent pilgrimage to Switzerland, a brief piece about the Northern Musgraves, a full article about Deirdre Keetley's Studio Gallery and one of its most ambitious projects; the Reichenbach Centenary Jug, based on a design by our own Peter Horrocks (for details write to Studio Gallery, 50 Caledonian Road, Kings Cross, London N1 9DP), a good piece about the Arthur Conan Doyle Society - and much more. Murder One and other outlets are selling it at £2, or you can subscribe at £12.50 for 4 quarterly copies (cheques to Theme Publications). US subscription rate $40; Europe £18 or equivalent; Japan 6000 yen. The address is 43 Bowleaze Coveway, Weymouth, Dorset DT3 6PL. The editor, Elizabeth Wiggins, accompanied the Pilgrims to Switzerland and promises a full report and picture spread in issue 2.

The latest issue of THE BAKER STREET PILLAR BOX, newsletter of the Franco-Midland Hardware Company, is full of interest, including the news that Company Share Issue no. 3, THE DARTMOOR OF "THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES" by Philip Weller will be out shortly; also news of the Welsh Sherlock Holmes Society, recently formed (send an SAE or 2 IRCs to Andrew Bevan, Delfan Station Terrace, Llanydydder, Dyfed SA40 9XX, Wales). The address of the Franco-Midland is: The Stock-Broker's Clerk, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants PO14 3RU. Meanwhile the Northern Musgraves are planning a Reichenbach Memorial Meeting on Saturday 6th July at Hardraw Force Waterfalls near Hawes, North Yorkshire. If you're interested, drop a line for details to Mrs Anne Jordan, Fairbank, Beck Lane, Bingley, West Yorks. BD16 4DN. David Stuart Davies of the Musgraves reports favourably on the current touring production of Christopher Martin's play A STUDY IN SCARLET, as does Richard Dalby; some press reports haven't been so complimentary. David offers for sale 5 coloured lobby stills from the film THE SCARLET CLAW, 13"x 10", at £10 each including postage - first come, first served (Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER).

More books: Kelvin Jones tells me that CONAN DOYLE & THE SPIRITS has been remaindered. He can offer copies (signed if preferred) at £3.95 + £1.25 postage; cheques payable to K.I. Jones, please (10 Athelstan Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 6EJ). Ben Wood's SHERLOCKIAN SING-ALONG ($6 in North America) is available to British buyers for £5 (Rev. Dr Benton Wood, BSI, PO Box 740, Ellenton, Florida 34222,

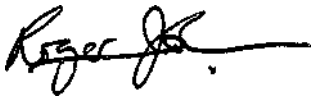
USA). John Bennett Shaw is the author of COLLECTING SHERLOCKIANA: AW ESSAY, a 16 page booklet published by Opuscula Press (6307 Forrester Drive, Bradenton, Florida 34202, USA) at $ 5.50 + $ 1.50 postage for buyers outside the US; payment in US currency, please. A reminder that Ian Henry Ltd (20 Park Drive, Romford, Essex RM1 4LH) has published the following pastiches: SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE EMINENT THESPIAN by Val Andrews (£ 8.95), SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE BRIGHTON PAVILION MYSTERY by Val Andrews (£ 9.95), SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE GERMAN NANNY by John North (£ 9.95), SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE ARABIAN PRINCESS by John North (£ 9.95) and SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE HENTZAU AFFAIR by David Stuart Davies (£ 9.95); plus one play: THE SECRET OF SHERLOCK HOLMES by Jeremy Paul (£ 5.95); one musical: SHERLOCK HOLMES IN THE DEERSTALKER by Terence Mustoo (£ 3.50); and one TV script: THE PROBLEM OF THOR BRIDGE by Jeremy Paul (£ 5.45) with more to come.

Arlington Supplies Ltd (PO Box 1102, Barnet, Herts. EN5 5AF) offer a programme from the Eastbourne venue of the current tour of A STUDY IN SCARLET (£ 2), a programme from the Eastern Angles' production of SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING CAROL at the Sir John Mills Theatre, Ipswich last December (£ 2) (the DM missed this production, alas), and an attractive 1st day cover from Dominica, 6 May 1991, whose stamp shows Holmes and Watson on their way to Reichenbach (£ 3.20). Mark Chadderton draws my attention to a series of miniature character bears in some sort of hard material; naturally Holmes is among them, but - beware - you have to buy the full set of 36 at £ 9.95 the pair (The Teddy Guild, Thistle Mill, Biggar ML12 6LP). Mark also mentions the Marvel comic STAR TREK - THE NEXT GENERATION no. 11, with a full colour poster from the neo-Sherlockian TV episode, "Elementary, My Dear Data" (60p), and a generally amusing strip called BAKER STREET which appears 6 times a week in the COVENTRY EVENING TELEGRAPH.

Kate Prinsley, Curator of the Florence Nightingale Museum (Gassiot House, 2 Lambeth Palace Road, London SE1 7EW) invites members of the Society to a charity dinner, given in aid of the Museum by Fortnum & Mason on Tuesday 4th June at 7.30. Tickets are £ 35 each, from Miss Prinsley at the Museum. The 5 course dinner will be based on the recipes of Alexis Soyer, and there'll be what promises to be a fascinating talk by Admiral Sir William Staveley about the role of Army doctors in the Crimean War. News of yet another new society: ACTAS DE BAKER STREET, founded by our subscriber Cristina Macia, editorial director of the ambitious publishing project LOS ARCHIVOS DE BAKER STREET (Bajada de la Plana 8, 08032 Barcelona, Spain). Correspondence is, naturally, in Spanish. And another: THE REICHENBACH IRREGULARS, three of whose members enlivened the Society's Swiss Pilgrimage (Markus Geisser & Patric Kees, Postfach 678, CH-3860 Meiringen, Switzerland).

Accounts of the Pilgrimage have appeared in: THE DAILY TELEGRAPH 6 May*, TODAY 6 May*, SUNDAY EXPRESS 5 May*, THE ECONOMIST 11 May*, SUNDAY TELEGRAPH 12 May*, EUROPEAN 3 May*, DER BUND 1 May*, BERNER ZEITUNG 1 May*, THUNISCHE TAGBLATT 3 May, OBERLANDISCHE VOLKSBLATT 3 May*, BERNER OBERLANDER 3 May*, OBERLANDISCHE VOLKSBLATT 6 May*, BERNE OBERLANDER 6 May*, DER BUND 6 May*, and LE MONDE 11 May*. Forthcoming, I'm told, are reports in THE UNIVERSE, the Edinburgh EVENING NEWS and the BIRMINGHAM EVENING POST. Those marked * I have and will be happy to make copies for anyone who wants them. If anyone can help with any of the others, or of others that I don't know about, I'd be extremely grateful.

A card reached me today from TOR Books to the effect that Carole Nelson Douglas' well-received novel GOOD NIGHT, MR HOLMES will appear in a TOR paperback edition at $ 4.99 in June, while in July its sequel GOOD MORNING, IRENE will be out in hardback at $ 19.95. Peter Blau reports that there'll be at least one more adventure of Irene Adler. Also reported by Peter, the death on 8th March of Trevor Hall, once a member of our Society and author of SHERLOCK HOLMES: TEN LITERARY STUDIES, THE LATE MR SHERLOCK HOLMES, SHERLOCK HOLMES & HIS CREATOR and THE LAST OF SHERLOCK HOLMES. Our subscriber Robert C. Hess (559 Potters Boulevard, Brightwaters, NY 11718, USA) has a new list of over 100 items of Sherlockian for sale. Sgt David A. Reinhardt (76 Lord Simcoe Drive, Bramalea, Ontario L6S 5G6, Canada) is agent for a number of collectibles (lapel pins, ties, pencils) promoting the Canadian version of HOLMES - Home Office Large Major Enquiry System.



THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

ROGER JOHNSON, 210 RAINSFORD ROAD, CHELMSFORD CM1 2PD

no. 110 23rd June 1991

Earlier this month, this newsletter and I lost a very good friend with the death of David Kirby, Both as the proprietor of Rupert Books, the foremost Doyle/Holmes dealer this side of the Atlantic, and as a friend, I valued him for his knowledge, his wisdom, his honesty and his generosity. He was a gentleman and he'll be greatly missed.

Thanks to Markus Geisser, Peter Horrocks, Philip Porter, Barbara Alder, Philip Barron, BJ Rahn, Jean Upton, Elaine Hamill and Shirley Purves, I can now offer copies of the following reports on the Great Swiss Pilgrimage of 1991:-

29 April: Luzerner Neuste Nachrichten, Luzerner Tagblatt; May: Swissair Magazine; 1 May: Der Bund, Berner Zeitung; 3 May: Berner Oberlander, Oberlandisches Volksblatt, Thuner Tagblatt, The European; 4 May: Financial Times; 5 May: New York Times, Swiss News, Sunday Express; 6 May: Der Bund, Oberlandisches Volksblatt, Berner Oberlander, Vancouver Sun, Stars & Stripes, Daily Telegraph, Today; 7 May: Der Oberhasler; 10 May: Feldkircher Anzeiger; 11 May: Le Monde, The Economist; 12 May: Sunday Telegraph; 18 May: Birmingham Evening Mail; 21 May: The Lady; 16 June: The Universe.

David Stuart Davies' charming "dramatic presentation" FIXED POINT: THE LIFE & DEATH OF SHERLOCK HOLMES has just appeared in a 2nd, slightly revised edition. Text and introduction are extended, there's a new foreword by Jeremy Brett, a reprint of Edward Hardwicke's brief essay from the "Dr Watson" issue of THE MUSGRAVE PAPERS, a frontispiece by Catherine Bates and 5 stills from the Granada TV series. The whole has been newly typeset. It's a must at £4.50 including postage from David (Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER).

From the Northern Musgraves to the Franco-Midland Hardware Company. The FMHC's Share Issue no. 3 is THE DARTMOOR OF "THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES" by Philip Weller. This is an invaluable practical guide to the various candidates for the locations named or described in the novel, together with other relevant places such as the Cabell sepulchre. Practical is the word: full directions are given for reaching or viewing each site. This is Holmesian scholarship of a very high order, firmly based on personal research. I hope that future editions will include a bibliography of the investigations by earlier writers which are referred to only obliquely in the text. The price for this handsomely produced booklet is a reasonable £4.50 (UK), £5 or $10 (Europe), £5.50 or $11 (rest of world); all prices include postage (sterling cheques & Eurocheques, with card number on rear, payable to The Franco-Midland Hardware Company; dollar payments in US dollar bills, please). The Company's address is: 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 3RU.

More books: this month Ian Henry has issued two more of Jeremy Paul's scripts from the Granada TV series, THE SPECKLED BAND and THE NAVAL TREATY, in the same handsome format as THE PROBLEM OF THOR BRIDGE. Each includes an informative introduction by Mr Paul and four nicely reproduced production stills. The price for each is £5.45 (+ 38p postage if ordering direct from the publisher: Ian Henry Publications Ltd, 20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH).

Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) has produced 3 more of his attractive and amusing coloured postcard caricatures: Sherlock Holmes & Mrs Hudson, Sherlock Holmes & Prof. Moriarty at the Reichenbach Falls (both in bathing-costumes and carrying life-belts), and Sherlock Holmes & Solar Pons. No price given, but for information please send a stamped & self-addressed envelope (UK) or 2 International Reply Coupons.

Philip Barron & Shirley Purves pass on information that later in the year WOMAN'S HOUR (BBC Radio 4) will feature a "brilliantly funny" short story, "The Case of the Missing Unmentionables" "by Joan Condon, featuring Mrs Hudson as the detective. Grant Eustace tells me that the Talking Tape; Company cassettes of his canonical adaptations (featuring Roy Marsden & John Moffatt) are available in North

America from BFS Ltd, 350 Newkirk Road N., Richmond Hill, Ontario L4C 3Q7, Canada. They won't be in the shops yet but may be available direct from BFS.

Dr Ben Wood (PO Box 740, Ellenton, Florida 34222, USA) is offering Holmesian stamps: San Marino (set of 5) $3.50, Comoro Islands $4, Turks & Caicos (4 stamps + souvenir sheet) $8.50, Dominica (souvenir sheet) $4, Redonda $6 (outside US add $2 postage).

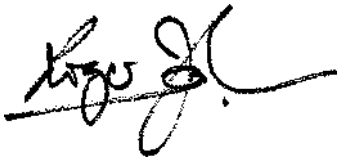
Michael Cox has kindly sent me issue 2 of SCARLET STREET, a well-illustrated magazine devoted to crime, detection & the gothic on the screen, with much emphasis on Holmes & Watson; published quarterly (annual subscription $14, single issue $3.95, from R.H. Enterprises, PO Box 604, Glen Rock, New Jersey 07452, USA). I may have mentioned before MS HOLMES OF BAKER STREET: THE TRUTH ABOUT SHERLOCK by Alan Bradley & William A.S. Sarjeant (Gasogene Press Ltd, Box 1041, Dubuque 52004-1041, USA; $19.95), which is yet another attempt to prove that Holmes was a woman.

Recent and forthcoming books: about Jack the Ripper: Barbara Reader's JACK THE RIPPER PART II (Excalibur Press of London, £3.95; published last year), Paul Harrison's JACK THE RIPPER: THE MYSTERY SOLVED (Hale, £12.95; published last March); JACK THE RIPPER by M. Fairclough (Duckworth, £12.95; due 26 September) and THE JACK THE RIPPER A - Z by Paul Begg, Martin Fido & Keith Skinner (Headline, £16.95; no date given).

Overseas societies. Von Herder Airguns Ltd (Kathrin Jaeck, Berlinerstr. 6E, W-3005 Hemmingen, Germany) has issued the 7th SOFT-NOSED BULLET-IN and the 14th number of THE STRIKING (T)RIFLES. On the other side of the ocean, Capital Holmes of Ottawa (Sheila Vaudrey, c/o 2217 Iris Street, Ottawa K2C 1B7, Canada) plans a Victorian murder party - MURDER WITH MR SHERLOCK HOLMES, featuring Guest of Honour L.B. Greenwood (author of THE RALEIGH LEGACY and other fine apocryphal Holmesiana) and a mystery playlet. If you're free on Saturday 23 June, this should be a great way to spend the day.

Stephen Farrell offers a nice copy of THE MEMOIRS in the John Murray Uniform Edition with the attractive dust-wrapper as the prize in a little competition in aid of his favourite charity, the Donkey Sanctuary. Just answer the following questions: 1) In which story is Cardinal Tosca mentioned? 2) Why was Holmes wasting his time in trying to warm his hands by the gasogene? 3) What beside his stethoscope did Watson conceal in his top hat? (wild speculation is encouraged). Entry to the competition costs £1; please make cheques payable to The Donkey Sanctuary and send your entries to me. Thanks.

From Peter Blau: The TV film of THE CRUCIFER OF BLOOD, starring Charlton Heston & Richard Johnson, is due for transmission in the US in September. A conference honouring "Victorian PUNCH" and including a talk about ACD's uncle Richard Doyle, who designed the magazine's most famous cover, is scheduled for the 12th/13th July. Information from Michael Slater, Department of English, Birkbeck College, Malet Street, London WC1E 7HX. Michael Senuta has published SECOND THOUGHTS ABOUT SHERLOCK HOLMES, a 30 page booklet containing two pastiches and an analysis of THE CASEBOOK ($8 from the author, 881 Columbine Drive, Barberton, Ohio 44203, USA). There are still rumours that Billy Wilder intends to issue a restored and complete version of THE PRIVATE LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES - hard luck on us who bought the recently released video of the cut version. Anthony Hinds' playscript THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES, whose sole (amateur) production was reviewed enthusiastically by Nick Utechin in 1982, has been published at £5.45 by the New Playwrights' Network (35 Sandingham Road, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK10 1QB); Hinds himself isn't exactly new, since he produced the 1959 Hammer HOUND and wrote the story for THE MASKS OF DEATH. SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE INCIDENT AT VICTORIA FALLS, the 2nd miniseries with Christopher Lee & Patrick Macnee, will be broadcast first in the US, over 4 weeks (17 February to 15 March 1992). Also featured are Jenny Seagrove as Lillie Langtry and Claude Akins as Teddy Roosevelt. The following month will see SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE LEADING LADY (20 April to 17 May), which features Morgan Fairchild as Irene Adler & Engelbert Humperdinck as Eberhardt Bohm.



THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

ROGER JOHNSON, 210 RAINSFORD ROAD, CHELMSFORD CM1 2PD

no. 111 24th July 1991

I hope you'll forgive me for taking the cheapskate's way out and using this newsletter to express delighted and overwhelmed thanks to all who've wished well to Jean Upton and me on our engagement. I'm knocked out by the explosion of good feeling we seem to have inspired (can we live up to it, I ask myself?). To all, many thanks!

On a sadder, but not perhaps more sober note, I remember with affection Archie Mitchell, who died last month. Participants in the Great Swiss Pilgrimage of '88 recall what a magnificently, jovially menacing Patrick Cairns he made, complete with ten-foot harpoon - surely one of the more bizarre Holmesian props to be introduced into Switzerland. Archie was a staunch supporter of the DM, and I trust, with his wife Isabel, that he continues to enjoy it, reading over her shoulder with a quiet chuckle now and then.

Fr Francis Hertzberg still deals in Holmesiana. No. 27 of "The Unique Steam list" contains a good many desirable rarities at prices that aren't too close to the outrageous (ROOTS, 48 Shalmarsh Road, Higher Bebington, Cheshire L63 2JZ). One more Jack the Ripper study, published late last year, is SICKERT & THE RIPPER CRIMES by Jean Overton Fuller (Mandrake, £14.95). Forthcoming in December is THE WORLD OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, a selection from the canon edited by Nigel Flynn (Multimedia, £7.95).

When it's published in September, I'll be reviewing THE REAL WORLD OF SHERLOCK HOLMES by Peter Costello, a study of Conan Doyle's criminal investigations (Robinson, £14.95). There'll be a special offer by which Society members can, if they wish, buy copies post-free directly from the publishers. Watch this space. Recently (?) published by Kylix Media Inc. (5165 Sherbrooke Street West, Suite 414, Montreal, Quebec H4A 1T6, Canada) is THE BACCHUS CLUB MYSTERY, "a further adventure of Sherlock Holmes" by Wayne Howell which proves what many had suspected: that Holmes was an enlightened oenophile. Price is $ 10.95 US, or $ 22 US for the hardback (excluding postage).

Mysteriously missing from the last DM was notice of Senlac Theatre's open-air performance at Bateman's, Burwash, East Sussex (a National Trust property) of Kipling's play HARBOUR WATCH and Conan Doyle's WATERLOO (7 pm for 8 pm on the 25th - 27th July). Tickets £4.50 in advance or £5.50 on the night, numbers permitting, from Bateman's (credit card bookings, phone 0892 891001). Thanks to Geoffrey Stavert for this information.

Kevin Jacklin passes on news of two new Holmesian games: SHERLOCK HOLMES & CO., a family boardgame from Germany with simple rules (in German only) and high quality production & artwork (£24.95); and SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE CARD GAME by Roger Heyworth (Gibson's Games, £6.99), with "high-quality Paget-derived illustrations", re-creating a typical Holmes adventure (available from Esdevium Games of Aldershot; phone 0252 311443). Kevin says, "This is definitely one of the best-ever Sherlock Holmes games". Mark Chadderton kindly sent a copy of the BBC Radio Collection cassette catalogue, listing, among many other goodies, the six Holmes sets - three each from the. Hobbs/Shelley series and the Merrison/ Williams series. Also from Mark is a children's bright plastic pencil case, bearing a Holmesian cartoon and the legend (I like this) "The Case of the Missing Pencil". Mark found it in W.H. Smith, reduced from 99P to 49P. Mark's final news is that "Elementary, Dear Data" from the 2nd series of STAR TREK: THE NEXT GENERATION is now out on video.

Michael Cox, though he's no longer connected with the Granada TV Holmes series, confirms that the 2-hour Christmas special, with Brett & Burke, of course, will be Jeremy Paul's adaptation and expansion of "Charles Augustus Milverton". Michael's own current project is THATCHER: THE FINAL DAYS. No comment!

A few people have wondered about the possibility of some sort of suitable memorial to David Kirby. Christopher Roden tells me that David's wife Paula has approved the idea of a memorial essay

competition, "annually inviting people to contribute an essay on any aspect of ACD... depending on the size of the fund, we should be able to arrange for a worthwhile prize each year". The competition would be administered by the Arthur Conan Doyle Society. No-one will disagree, I think, that this would be a happy and practical way to perpetuate the memory of David's immense contribution to our particular hobby.

The price given in the last DM for Anthony Hinds' play script THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES (£5.45) seems to be the cost for overseas purchasers; in Britain it's £4.25 plus 37p postage (New Playwrights' Network, 35 Sandringham Road, Macclesfield, Cheshire SK10 1QB). Some readers have queried my statement that Hinds devised the story for THE MASKS OF DEATH, but it's true: he used, as he occasionally still does, his old pseudonym from Hammer's heyday "John Elder".

I recently received samples from the Quality Badge Company, "makers of traditional enamel badges for companies, associations, clubs, historic houses; crests, logo belt buckles, brooches, pins; in base metal, silver and gold" (68 Wesley House, Fairways, Ferndown, Dorset BH22 8RB). What I have before me are 1) a very attractive lapel pin, about 1" by ⅓", in royal blue with the legend "221B" in silver, and 2) a handsome and practical black leather belt whose buckle is about twice the size of the pin and with the digits in gold. Stylish and discreet is my verdict. Individual belts cost £9.50, including postage within the UK; individual lapel pins (sorry, "tacks" is the correct term, I see) are £3 including postage. Both come attractively and sturdily boxed. There would be reductions for quantity - please contact the company for details. (The company's range of products is prodigious, and the letter that came with the items concludes, "We can also offer items manufactured in silver or gold with our lost wax casting process".)

From John E. Stephenson: the 3rd edition of Henry T. Folsom's Holmes chronology THROUGH THE YEARS AT BAKER STREET is now available at $ 25 from the author (RR no. 1, Box 1413, Randolph, New Hampshire 03750, USA); all copies signed by Mr Folsom. Peter E. Melonas of the Sherlock Holmes Mystery Book Store (1726A Sycamore Square Mall, Memphis, Tennessee 38134, USA) "offers lots of Sherlockian goodies for sale". Another dealer worth considering is Bibliotective (Box 47347, Oak Park, Michigan 48237, USA).

And from Peter Blau: the spring 1991 issue of THE COMPLEAT SMOKER ($ 6.25 including postage from Box 7036, Evanston, Illinois 60201, USA) contains a long illustrated article by Alan Smith, "A Three-Pipe Problem: Pipes, Tobaccos and Sherlock Holmes". "Professor Presbury's Required Reading" is a 12-page list of Sherlockiana, old and new, with much comic-book material, available from Tim O'Connor (R.R.1, Box 138-B, Herscher, Illinois 60941, USA). THE ILLUSTRATED INTERNATIONAL SHERLOCK HOLMES, edited by Tsukasa Kobayashi, Akane Higashiyama & John Bennett Shaw (reviewed in DM 100) is available from William Berner (4712 17th Street, San Francisco, California 94117, USA) at $ 32.50. News of the workshop & conference called SHERLOCK HOLMES IS ALIVE AND WELL IN THE HEARTS OF READERS EVERYWHERE! at Santa Fe Community College, Santa Fe, New Mexico (25th - 26th July) comes too late to be of practical use to those who read about it here first, but - Shaw, Cohen, Dinegar & the rest - my thoughts are with you!

At a stall in the Jubilee Market in Covent Garden I recently saw some rather crude and vivid reproductions in various sizes of the (or at least a) Sherlock Holmes pub sign on sale, as well as those absorbent flannel cloths that you find on bars to soak up spilt drinks; these latter each had the name of a well-known pub woven into them - needless to say, "Sherlock Holmes" was one. Visitors to London might be interested. Then again...

Finally, for anyone who didn't know, the rather handsome statue of Sherlock Holmes presented by the Federation of Master Builders in memory of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was unveiled last month in Picardy Place, Edinburgh. Shirley Purves and Pam Bruxner were there as official representatives of the Society. It all sounds like yet another good reason for visiting that lovely city...

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

ROGER JOHNSON, 210 RAINSFORD ROAD, CHELMSFORD CM1 2PD

no. 112 27th August 1991

Henry T. Folsom's chronological study THROUGH THE YEARS AT BAKER STREET (see DM 111) is now available in the UK from the Franco-Midland Hardware Company. Copies are available at £16.50 each (including postage) from "The Stock-Broker's Clerk", 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 JRU. Please make cheques payable to Sherlock Publications and allow 21 days for delivery. This is cheaper and much more convenient than ordering a copy direct from America.

Forthcoming books. In September, Penguin will publish as a part of the Penguin English Series SIMPLY STORIES LEVEL 2: THE MYSTERY OF BOSCOMBE POOL (£1.50). Also in September comes CONSTABLE CRIME OMNIBUS 2, a big paperback containing the 1st three of M.J. Trow's Inspector Lestrade novels (Constable, £7.99), while in October comes the latest, LESTRADE & THE MAGPIE (Constable, £12.99). In November, Oxford University Press will have DETECTIVE STORIES FROM 'THE STRAND' edited by Jack Adrian (£14.95). For Ripperologists there's THE WOMEN OF WHITECHAPEL, a novel by Paul West (Serpent's Tail, £14.99). From the Five Miles Press in September comes a children's book SHERLOCK Q. JONES' CASEBOOK OF PUZZLES, RIDDLES & MUDDLES (£2.95). And in November, Virgin will publish THE FILMS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (no further details at present). Finally, one I missed before: the Running Press issued in April a "miniature edition" of SHERLOCK HOLMES: TWO COMPLETE ADVENTURES (£3.25).

The 2nd issue of THE SHERLOCK HOLMES GAZETTE is now available, as full of fascinating information as the 1st - there's a day-by-day account of the Society's Swiss Pilgrimage and much more besides, all handsomely presented. UK subscription is £12.50 p.a., and overseas subscription has been rationalised at £18 p.a., provided payment is made in sterling (Theme Publications, 45 Bowleaze Coveway, Weymouth, Dorset DT3 6PL). If you have £140 to spare, by the way, you may care to consider a weekend based at the Sherlock Holmes Hotel in Baker Street, involving an introductory talk by Stanley MacKenzie (and a rare chance to see some of the MacKenzie Collection), a visit to the Black Museum, tea at the Langham Hotel, Sunday lunch at the Brambletye Hotel - and more. It's all happening on the weekend of the 4th-6th October. (Sherlock Holmes Hotel, Baker Street, London W1M 1LB; phone 071-486 6161.) Deirdre Keetley of Studio Gallery Decorative Editions is preparing an exhibition to be mounted at the Sherlock Holmes Hotel; among the many images which will be displayed is "The Librarian", a portrait of our own Catherine Cooke.

Dawn Healy tells me of a new regional society, as yet un-named, to be based in the southwest of England. Interested parties from Plymouth, Camelford, Exeter, Tavistock & elsewhere will meet at noon on Sunday the 1st September at the Bank Pub in Plymouth. If you are interested, either go along to this inaugural meeting or write to Dawn at 1 Warleigh Avenue, Keyham, Plymouth PL2 1NW (phone 0752 556125). And while on the subject of regional societies, the 4th issue of THE MUSGRAVE PAPERS is now available; the fullest yet, it runs to 100 pages and is packed with scholarship and wit. Non-Musgraves may buy copies at £5.75 each from David Stuart Davies (Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER).

Roger Matthews reminds me of the fine products of Phoenix Model Developments Ltd (Earls Barton, Northampton NN6 ONA), whose delightful range of 1/32 scale Victorian figures & accessories includes a tableau of "Holmes & Watson at home" - this one costs £13.95, but other items vary in price. These charming figures were mentioned some time ago in the DM, but many readers may not have come across them. The indefatigable Mark Chadderton sends news of THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES, a new game for computer buffs that needs— a CDTV (a sort of combination of Amiga computer plus a CD player; they were officially launched last month and they cost about £600). The game, from Online Entertainment, cost £29.99. Information about this and other Holmesian computer games can be found in the July issue of YOUR AMIGA magazine, whose cover features a portrait of Peter Cushing as Holmes. Also from Mark, a Spanish magazine, CAMBIO 16, has been giving away nicely-produced books containing Spanish translations of some of the Holmes stories.

A correction to DM 111: Michael Cox was the first to point out that THE MASTER BLACKMAILER (Jeremy Paul's adaptation of "Charles Augustus Milverton" - scheduled for showing at Christmas) – will in fact feature Edward Hardwicke as Watson and not, as I carelessly wrote, David Burke.

In DM 110, I announced a competition. What I neglected to mention was the closing date. Other things have come up besides, so let's take it from the top. Thanks to Stephen Farrell, Derek Hinrich, Jean Upton, Barbara Alder & John Bennett Shaw, there are now three (3 - count 'em! - 3) prizes; 1) a nice copy of the John Murray Uniform Edition of THE MEMOIRS OP SHERLOCK HOLMES plus a first edition (paperback) of Basil Copper's THE SECRET PILES OP SOLAR PONS; 2) a very nice copy of the Pinnacle paperback edition of August Derleth's THE MEMOIRS OP SOLAR PONS (this one's extremely difficult to get hold of in any edition, as any reputable dealer will tell you) *plus* Alvin Sapinsley's jolly romp SHERLOCK HOLMES IN NEW YORK, "novelised" by D.R. Bensen 3) two brochures by Kelvin I. Jones: THE CARFAX SYNDROME, BEING A STUDY IN VAMPIRISM IN THE CANON and UPON THE TRACING OP FOOTSTEPS ("by Sherlock Holmes, edited by Kelvin I. Jones"). All these items are in very nice condition. The aim of the competition is to help Stephen's favourite charity, the Donkey Sanctuary; consequently there's an entry fee of £1 (this entitles you to as many entries as you wish) payable to "The Donkey Sanctuary". The closing date will be November 15th, which should give everyone a fighting chance.

As to the competition itself, all you have to do is answer the following questions:

In which canonical story is Cardinal Tosca mentioned?

Why was Holmes wasting his time in trying to warm his hands by the gasogene?*

3. What beside his stethoscope did Watson conceal in his top hat? (Wild speculation is encouraged.)

*Holmes actually attempted this curious feat in one of the less successful pastiches!

Sara Lyford-Smith (8 Highfield Road, Maidenhead, Berkshire SL6 5DP) is engaged in raising funds to help a friend with spinal injuries; to do so she is selling many of her Holmesian books. If you're interested, please drop her a line.

Anvil story cassettes (4 Reed's Corner, Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 2RR), who still have on their list the four grand cassettes, each containing two of Michael & Mollie Hardwick's canonical adaptations featuring Robert Hardy & Nigel Stock (ANV 641, ANV 642, ANV 643, ANY 644 £3.99 each), have just released FAVOURITE MUSIC OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (£4.99). This rather speculative collection includes music by Mendelssohn, Tchaikovsky, Brahms, Offenbach (guess which piece) and Beethoven, among others - but no Wagner. It should be very pleasant listening.

Joseph J. Eckrich (7793 Keswick Place, St Louis, Missouri 63119, USA) asks if anyone can help him build up his collection of Holmesian bookplates - not the commercially produced ones, but those designed by or for Holmesian collectors.

And, getting back for a moment to THE MUSGRAVE PAPERS, Kathryn White points out that for an annual subscription of £10 you can join the Northern Musgraves and receive not only a copy of the journal but also two newsletters, the forthcoming Musgrave Monograph and all the other benefits of membership. The Membership Secretary is John Addy, 23 East Street, Lightcliffe, Halifax HX3 8TU.

Prom Peter E. Blau: Murder Ink (one of the specialist bookshops in our field) has moved to 2486 Broadway, New York, NY 10025, USA. Peter also notes that there are two major British bookshops that can supply overseas customers with just about anything in print; if you open an account and pay with a cheque in your own currency or authorise a charge against a credit card such as Visa or Mastercard, you incur no bank surcharges: W. G. Foyle (119-125 Charing Cross Road, London WC2, England) and Blackwell's (Broad Street, Oxford OX1 3BQ, England). Collectors may find this information useful.

THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

ROGER JOHNSON, 210 RAINSFORD ROAD, CHELMSFORD CM1 2PD

no. 113 24th September 1991

Suddenly we have not one but two new books dealing with Arthur Conan Doyle's investigations into true crime. Published earlier this month was THE REAL WORLD OP SHERLOCK HOLMES by Peter Costello (Robinson Publishing, £14.95), which is by the far the more comprehensive, covering not only the well-known cases of Edalji, Slater et al, but also ACD's interest in criminal exploits past and present in the British Isles, Europe, the Americas and Australasia. It has to be said that much of this is very minor stuff, peripheral to the life and career of Sir Arthur, whose connection is often limited to his having known, or probably known, about the crime leading him to make a single suggestion - as in the case of George Joseph Smith, where he is said to have been the first to realise that a series of murders was in progress. It's all most interesting, helping to round out the picture of ACD that we have from the numerous biographies. A couple of points: Dame Jean Conan Doyle has made it clear that the later Holmes stories were not reworkings of previously discarded plots (SHJ, spring 1979), and Sir Arthur's epitaph reads "Steel True, Blade Straight" and not "... Blade Bright". Published on the 1 October is THE CASEBOOK OF SHERLOCK DOYLE by Harry Stone (Ian Henry, £15.95) which covers only five cases, but in rather more depth: those of Edalji, Slater, the Irish Crown Jewels, Norman Thorne and Mary Emsley (the latter being one of ACD's "Strange Studies Prom Life" - considerations of crimes of the past; this and others are glanced at by Peter Costello). The presentation of the two books is very different. Costello's is soberly factual, and speculation is identified as such. Stone's is that of the storyteller, or of Thucydides, reporting what people probably said and did in the absence of hard evidence. Conversations ring true, but only the trial examinations are quoted from verifiable sources; the accounts themselves are factual, though embellishing details may be conjectural (I fancy that this was also the method of John H. Watson; it was certainly that of John Dickson Carr in his LIFE OP SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE). Two different books, then, each worthy of the attention of those who know, with Dr Joseph Bell, that Conan Doyle <u>was</u> Sherlock Holmes.

Two new magazines have reached me. From Japan comes Hirayama Yuichi's THE NEZIRE ZANMAI ("THE TWISTED"), the first issue of this well-established journal to appear in English. After an introduction by a member of The Men With The Twisted Konjo whose name will be familiar to all, one Stanley MacKenzie, there's a wealth of fascinating monographs. The vexed matter of the cycle-tracks in "The Priory School" is settled by Yuichi himself - settled by reference to HANZAI SOUSA GIJUTURON ("THE TECHNIQUES OF CRIME DETECTION") by Sanekita Masayoshi, who was evidently a sort of Japanese Hans Gross; David Carlile likewise throws welcome light on the authenticity of "Hamish" as a Scottish equivalent of "James"; Iwamoto Tsutomo provides a delightful gallery of Holmesian portraits, parodying the styles of eight major 20th century artists; finally, Yuichi tells of "The Japanese Rivals of Sherlock Holmes", figures little-known to the western reader despite the long and honourable detective tradition in Japanese literature. There are only 100 copies of THE NEZIRE ZANMAI, available at the remarkably cheap price of $4US <u>or</u> 3 International Reply Coupons (that is correct; I checked) from Hirayama Yuichi, 2-10-12 Kamirenjaku, Mitaka-shi, Tokyo, 181 Japan. THE SPARKING PLUG 1990 is a collection of the papers presented to The Fratton Lodgers during their first year, along with a brief account of the society, the Chairman's address from the first annual dinner, and some notes on the 1990 Christmas card (an illustration would have been helpful for the non-Lodger). Ian Smyth considers the canonicity of THE CASEBOOK and THE EXPLOITS; he also investigates the relationship of Sherlock Holmes and the Scotland Yarders, and presents a striking account of what is known or can be deduced about Mycroft Holmes. Then there's a trio of papers about that surprisingly neglected adventure "His Last Bow". Philip Weller discusses the authorship of the story, Ian Smyth makes some geographical deductions, and Geoffrey Stavert considers espionage in the Great War. As with the Japanese journal, this is scholarship of a high order, nicely produced and illustrated. THE SPARKING PLUG 1990 costs £7 (payable to C.

Neale, please) from Chris Neale, Paymaster For The Fratton lodgers, 15 Boldre Close, Bedhampton, Havant, Hampshire PO9 4BN. It's good to know that we have yet another active and scholarly regional society.

The lovely facsimile edition of Conan Doyle's MS for "The Dying Detective" was successfully launched at Marylebone Library on the auspicious date of Friday the 13th. Christopher Roden, Founder of the Arthur Conan Doyle Society, can provide a recording of the occasion (including a reading of the story by the Arthur Conan Doyle Society Players, featuring Owen Dudley Edwards, Richard Lancelyn Green and others) for £3.50 (Grasmere, 35 Penfold Road, Dodleston, Chester CH4 9ML). Chris also has copies available of the new Canongate Classics edition of THE EXPLOITS OF BRIGADIER GERARD, with a 13 page introduction by Owen Dudley Edwards (£4.95 postfree), SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE: INTERVIEWS & RECOLLECTIONS edited by Harold Orel (£45 postfree), and - limited numbers - LETTERS TO SHERLOCK HOLMES, THE SHERLOCK HOLMES LETTERS and all three volumes of THE UNKNOWN CONAN DOYLE (please ask Chris for details).

Paula Kirby tells me that she will be carrying on the business of Rupert Books to a limited extent. She will be sole agent for volume 1 in The Sherlock Holmes Natural History Series: A TROUT IN THE MILK: A MONOGRAPH ON FISH & FISHING IN THE TIME OF SHERLOCK HOLMES by Donald Girard Jewell this handsome limited edition, dedicated to the memory of Dave Kirby, costs £8.50, postfree (Paulina Massey Kirby, 59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE). The book is available in North America at $7.95 + $2 postage from Pinchin Lane Press, 4685 Geeting Road, Westminster, MD 21158, USA.

More news from regional societies. The Franco-Midland Hardware Company has just introduced a series of self-study projects which lead to the awarding of Certificate, Diploma and Master of Holmesian Studies scrolls. They have also commenced production of a second series of Holmesian monographs. Details of the study projects, the monographs produced by the group, and membership of the Company can be obtained by sending two 1st class stamps (from UK) or two International Reply Coupons, or two US dollar bills (from outside UK) to The Stockbroker's Clerk, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 3RU. The FMHC will once again be hosting the SHSL's post-Annual Dinner function, the "Disjecta Membra II", for Saturday 11 January 1992. The all-day coach trip will be open to all SHSL members, and will include a visit to the interior of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's "Windlesham" home and lunch at the ACD Museum in Crowborough, as well as tea at a railway station with a canonical connection.

The Northern Musgraves are planning their first weekend event, "Aspects of Holmes", to be held at the Hollings Hall Hotel, Baildon, near Bradford (in Cottingley Fairies country) on Saturday 28th & Sunday 29th March 1992. The cost will be £95 for .a single room or £85 each to share a twin room. Applications, with a deposit of £20 per person, should reach David Stuart Davies not later than 1 October (Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER); cheques won't be cashed until 30 November. I hope to be there, but don't let that put you off.

Michael Digby (3 Barrymore Walk, Rayleigh, Essex) asks if anyone can help him obtain recordings of the BBC radio adaptations by Felix Felton, originally broadcast on Children's Hour, and featuring Carleton Hobbs & Norman Shelley. Bert Coules tells me that 4 episodes of the Radio 4 ADVENTURES (Merrison & Williams) will be repeated on Sunday evenings starting 27 October; SCAN, REDH, BOSC & COPP. This time FM transmission is guaranteed! THE MEMOIRS will probably be broadcast & released on cassette early next year. The casts will include Brian Blessed, Peter Davison, Roger Hammond, Patrick Malahide, Jack May, Sean Arnold - and Michael Pennington as Moriarty (great!); while the writers, apart from Bert himself, Vincent McInnerny & Peter Mackie, include Gerry Jones, Peter Ling & Denys Hawthorne.

From 5th October to 2nd November, Cambridgeshire Libraries will host a county-wide arts festival called MURDER IN THE LIBRARY, including a specially-commissioned play, music, a literary dinner, visiting authors, and much more. Linda King, the artist responsible for many superb Holmesian portraits, is moving: from 1 November until further notice her address will be c/o 10 Factory Road, Watleys End, Winterbourne, Bristol BS17 1QN (phone 0454 777334). Contact Linda to find out about her splendid drawings and prints. Sylvian Hamilton's latest list of Holmesiana, "SH 24", is out now; it's all here - books, posters, puzzles, Persian slippers -

even a gasogene (Hermitage, Mt Pleasant, Duns, Berwickshire - TD11 3HU, Scotland).

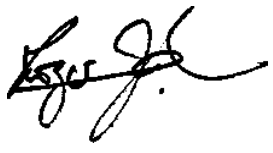
THE SOFT-NOSED BULLET-IN no. 8, journal of Von Herder Airguns Ltd, is now available, along with the 15th issue of the newsletter, THE STRIKING (T)RIFLES. All in German, including a touching tribute to Dave Kirby by Catherine Cooke. For information about the society, contact Kathrin Jaeck, Berliner Strasse 6E, D-3005 Hemmingen, Germany. (Fortunately Kathrin's command of English is excellent.) Also received: UNDER THE ARCH no. 1, the newsletter of The Parallel Case of St Louis - likewise full of interest. For details of this society, contact Joseph J. Eckrich, 7793 Keswick Place, St Louis, MD 63119, USA. Wayne (Giant Rat) Swift points out that THE BAKER STREET JOURNAL is available to all interested parties, not just members of the BSI. Subscription is $17.50 a year (4 issues) from The Baker Street Journal, c/o Fordham University Press, University Box L, Bronx, NY 10458-5172, USA. Postage outside North America is by surface mail with a delay of 2 - 3 months.

Wai-Ming Chan has a small number of Holmesian books for sale, mostly recent pastiches, but a few nice scarce items, all at reasonable prices (312 Marlowe Road, Walthamstow, London E17 3HQ, - please enclose a stamped & addressed envelope). He also reminds me of a newly released tape cassette from Random Century Audiobooks: an adaptation of THE VALLEY OF FEAR "excellently read" by Christopher Lee - £7.99 for approximately 3 hours. John Bennett Shaw's COLLECTING SHERLOCKIANA; AN ESSAY is available in a limited edition of 200 copies from Opuscula Press (6307 Forrester Drive, Bradenton, Florida 34202, USA) at $5.50 postfree (+ $1.50 outside the USA) - payment in US currency, please. Ian Henry Publications Ltd (20 Park Drive, Romford RM1 4LH) has another pastiche forthcoming in what's proving a remarkably comprehensive lists DOCTOR WATSON & THE INVISIBLE MAN by Noel Downing, in which Watson and Langdale Pike investigate the mystery of the Invisible Man and confront Aleister Crowley, Arthur Machen and others. The cost will be £10.95. Watch this space.

Another new title for Ripperologists: forthcoming from Duckworth at £14.95 is THE RIPPER & THE ROYALS by Melvyn Fairclough. Published this month is THE WORLD OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, edited by Nigel Flynn & Richard Widdows (Prion, £7.95): "three of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's most popular sleuthing mysteries abridged for a young audience and illustrated with film stills". Christmas is coming, as the publishers well know; the Holmesian in your life would surely appreciate a copy of THE LIGHT IS DARK ENOUGH, the admirable collection of monographs about Sherlock Holmes and Cambridge, compiled by Jonathan McCafferty for the Society's visit to that enchanting city a, couple of years ago. Jonathan still has some copies left at £8 or $17.50 postfree (5 Jonathan Court, Windmill Road, Chiswick, London W4 1SA) - first come, first served.

Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) has produced another lovely cartoon postcard - full colour - in his "Famous Detectives" series. This one shows Dick Tracy with a backdrop of a cinema showing THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES and an eager queue of patrons at the box-office all wearing deerstalkers. Write to Charles for details. Ann O'Neill (38 Stephens Firs, Mortimer, Reading RG7 3UY) announces that issue no. 4 of her magazine 221B is available from mid-September, containing articles on Moriarty, the pastiches and Holmes's eating habits among other things. £3.50 postfree (+ 50p if ordering from Europe or £1 from elsewhere) - all payments in sterling, please.

The indefatigable Mark Chadderton tells me of THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES, currently available at £2.99 in Fabbri's "Classic Adventures" series, consisting of a copy of the book and a 24 page full-colour magazine. It's aimed at children, and very well produced. Copies can be had by post from Classic Adventures, Distinctive Distribution Ltd, PO Box 16, St Leonard's on Sea, East Sussex TN38 9NZ (cheques payable to Distinctive Distribution Ltd). Douglas Warren reminds me of a dayschool in the Science of Crime Detection at the School of Chemistry in Bristol on Saturday 16 November. The fee is £19. For full details, phone Dr Sue Pringle on Bristol 303611.



THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

ROGER JOHNSON, 210 RAINSFORD ROAD, CHELMSFORD CM1 2PD

no. 114 28th October 1991

More obituaries, alas. Within a few days of each other, Alan Wheatley and Thorley Walters died. Wheatley made his mark back in 1951, the year of this Society's foundation, as the star of the very first Sherlock Holmes TV series. Walters was a memorable Watson, mostly in the silly-ass vein, opposite three Holmeses: Christopher Lee, Christopher Plummer & Douglas Wilmer. More recently, we lost Michael Harrison, a prolific writer in the field, whose IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES is an undisputed classic, while his A STUDY IN SURMISE is an extremely important, though sadly neglected, investigation into the origins of Sherlock Holmes.

Constable has just published two books of great interest. LESTRADE & THE MAGPIE is the 10th of M.J. Trow's clever and very funny adventures of Sholto Lestrade (£12.99). Now retired, Lestrade finds himself thrust into a case of espionage, murder, theft and abduction - and the kidnap victim is his own daughter. Irish revolutionaries, the fledgeling British film industry, George Bernard Shaw, the Russian Royal Family, and lots of throwaway jokes ("You don't like Mungo, Gerry?"). It's a treat. So is THE CONSTABLE CRIME OMNIBUS 2, which reissues in paperback (at last!) the first three Lestrade novels: THE ADVENTURES OP INSPECTOR LESTRADE, BRIGADE, and LESTRADE & THE HALLOWED HOUSE. Purists will detest the scurrilous treatment of Holmes & Watson, but Sholto Lestrade is a likeable protagonist, the plots are elegant, and it's a pleasure to see how Mr Trow's humour has been refined from the hammered-home punchlines of the early books to the artfully careless wit of the later ones. Be warned; if you're a Holmesian fundamentalist, LESTRADE & THE HALLOWED HOUSE is likely to give you brain-fever. (I was going to pass these books to Inspector G. Lestrade for review, but he turned a funny colour - and started foaming at the mouth.)

Collins Lions have published two new graphic novels: THE HOUND OP THE BASKERVILLES and THE SPECKLED BAND/THE BLUE CARBUNCLE told in comic-strip form by Tim Quinn & George Sears. The characters are broadly drawn, the script carries the narrative along rapidly, and it's all good clean fun. Fair value for the young Sherlockian in your life at £3.50 but my advice would be to give such a youngster the real thing rather than an adaptation.

Besides the Company Shares, the Franco-Midland Hardware Company ("The Stock-Broker's Clerk", 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 3HU) has begun a series of Company Bonds, shorter monographs without illustrations. Company Bond no. 001 is SHERLOCK HOLMES & SCOTLAND YARD: A LOVE-HATE RELATIONSHIP? by John Pforr & Philip Weller, interesting in itself, and particularly so when read along-side Ian Smyth's "Sherlock Holmes & the Scotland Yarders" in THE SPARKING PLUG 1990 (see DM 113). This first Bond costs £2 (UK), £2.50 or $5 (Europe), £3 Or $6 (rest of world). All prices include postage - airmail outside the UK. Sterling payments by UK cheques, Girobank or Eurocheques, please; dollar payments in US dollar bills. Make cheques payable to Sherlock Publications. Meanwhile the Northern Musgraves (David Stuart Davies, Overdale, 69 Greenhead Road, Huddersfield HD1 4ER) have produced their second Musgrave Monograph, DIVING DOWN INTO THE CELLAR: USES OP PHOTOGRAPHY IN THE CANON by Matthew Booth. There are only ten copies left, at £2.50 including postage.

The Society's memorable trip to Winchester in August produced a number of very cherishable items. The handbook, THE TRI-METALLIC QUESTION, edited by Peter Horrocks, maintains the tradition of fascinatingly entertaining and scholarly essays, and is beautifully presented. Richard Lancelyn Green tells of Conan Doyle's connections with Hampshire; Peter studies Sherlock Holmes' and Dr Watson's associations with the county; Francine & Wayne Swift investigate the Winchester Races; Geoffrey Stavert and Jonathan McCafferty each offer an identification of Thor Place; Stephen Farrell goes into the matter of fire-arms; Philip Weller reports on railway journeys and on the Hampshire Police; Tim Owen goes to Netley; Grant Eustace adapts, the Hampshire cases for audio; Michael Cox produces them for television... It's not cheap at £15 (including postage), but not expensive for such a lovely, collectable anthology. It's

delightfully illustrated too. (P.L. Horrocks, 22 Old Buildings, Lincoln's Inn, London WC2A 3UJ; make cheques payable to The Sherlock Holmes Society of London.) Then there's the gorgeous spoof commentary on the running of The Wessex Cup by Peter O'Sullevan, introduced by Nick Ross and featuring interruptions by Sherlock Holmes, Dr Watson and Colonel Ross. Those who heard this little masterpiece at Winchester know how good it is. Copies may be had on cassette at £2.50 from the same address (cheques to P.L. Horrocks, please).

Issue no. 4 of Ann O'Neill's magazine "221B" is now out, with a wide variety of articles and illustrations (the latter mostly from the Granada TV series). Most interesting is an account of the often-impromptu script changes that occurred during the West End run of THE SECRET OF SHERLOCK HOLMES. Details from Ann O'Neill (38 Stephens Firs, Mortimer, Reading RG7 3UY). Charles Hall (12 Paisley Terrace, Edinburgh EH8 7JW) has issued a very attractive postcard reproducing the original poster for THE TRIUMPH OF SHERLOCK HOLMES; write to Charles for details.

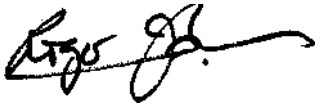
David Stuart Davies and Michael Cox put me on to a real bargain: THE PICTORIAL HISTORY OF SHERLOCK HOLMES by Michael Pointer, a very large, copiously illustrated volume with a pithy commentary by one of the leading authorities. It's exclusively available from W.H. Smith at only £8.99. Stanley MacKenzie tells me of the world premiere of SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES, a specially commissioned play by Nick Fisher, which will be produced at the Playhouse, Malthouse Lane, Salisbury, from the 7th November to the 7th December. Performances will be at 7.30 (Monday to Wednesday), 8 pm (Thursday to Saturday), with Thursday matinees (not 7th November or 5th December) at 2.30, and Saturday matinees at 4 pm. Ticket prices range from £6.30 to £9.40. Box Office telephones 0722 320333. There's free parking nearby after 6 pm.

New in America, is THE VIEW-HALLOA: SHERLOCKIAN ESSAYS, edited by Dana Richards (Donald McGrady, 530 North First Street, Charlottesville, Virginia, 22901, USA), containing studies of the Ku-Klux Klan, the role of the Victorian governess, gentlemen's clubs, and much more. The cost is $9 + $1.50 postage (but check with Mr McGrady about overseas postage). New in this country is MODERN SHERLOCK HOLMES by Judy Williams, published by Broadside Books at £14.95.

The new society in the south-west of England, The Poor Folk Upon The Moors, has two meetings coming up. There'll be an informal gathering at 11.30 am on Saturday 2nd November to elect a committee and hear a short paper. Meet at Worth. Road Station, Plymouth, and proceed to the venue. On Saturday 7th December the group will attend a performance of Patrick Hamilton's marvellous Victorian thriller GASLIGHT at the Theatre Royal, Plymouth, and gather for a seasonal drink in the theatre bar. For details, send a 1st class stamped & self-addressed envelope to Dawn Healy, 1 Warleigh Avenue, Keyham, Plymouth PL2 1NW, (Thanks to Clare Taylor for keeping us up to date.)

The Peter Tauber Press Agency (94 East End Road, London N3 2SX) has been asked by its publisher clients to provide "ingenious, high quality mystery novels set in England in the Victorian or Edwardian eras". If you're under 60 and think you can fill the bill, send a synopsis to the above address, together with an author CV, including age, and copies of all previous rejections from other agents and publishers. Oh, and a stamped & addressed envelope. The length of the story should be about 80,000 words.

The Northern Musgraves have once again produced a charming Christmas card, in large format and bearing an illustration by Kathryn White to "The Blue Carbuncle". There are only 250 printed, and they're sold in batches of 5 at £3 (UK), £4 (Europe), or $9 (elsewhere - US dollar bills, please). The Sherlock Holmes Society of Australia (PO Box 13, Stirling, South Australia 5152) also offers Christmas cards, at $15 the pack (Australian or US?). (Thanks to John E. Stephenson for this information.) Peter Blau notes that THE INTERNATIONAL ILLUSTRATED SHERLOCK HOLMES is once again available from William Berner (4712 17th Street, San Francisco, California 94117, USA) at the slightly increased price of $35 post-paid (check with William about overseas rates). It would make a lovely Christmas present for the Sherlockian you love. Or for yourself, if it comes to that.



THE DISTRICT MESSENGER

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES SOCIETY OF LONDON

ROGER JOHNSON, 210 RAINSFORD ROAD, CHELMSFORD CM1 2PD

no. 115 1st December 1991

First, our competition. You were asked: 1. In which canonical story is Cardinal Tosca mentioned? (Everyone gave the correct answer: "Black Peter".); 2. Why was Holmes wasting his time in trying to warm his hands by the gasogene? (That's ambiguously worded, I'm afraid, but again everyone was right: a gasogene is a device for aerating water.); 3. What beside his stethoscope did Watson conceal in his top hat? This was the tie-breaker. The winners are (taran-tara!): 1. Vosper Arthur for his inspired suggestion "a miniature of brandy - Watson always seemed to be able to produce brandy at, shall I say, a drop of a hat!"; 2. Heather Stevens for her outrageously improbable notion that it was Watson's bull pup (so that's what became of it!); 3. A.N, Other (a pseudonym), who thinks that it was the accounts of all those cases of which Holmes said, "Now, keep this under your hat, Watson..." To the winners go the prizes, and to the Donkey Sanctuary goes a reasonably healthy cheque. Thanks to all for your entries.

Until recently there were four essential books for any serious student of the Whitechapel murders (Donald Rumbelow's THE COMPLETE JACK THE RIPPER, Colin Wilson & Robin Odell's JACK THE RIPPER: SUMMING UP & VERDICT, Paul Begg's JACK THE RIPPER: THE UNCENSORED FACTS, Alexander Kelly's JACK THE RIPPER: A BIBLIOGRAPHY & REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE); now we have another - THE JACK THE RIPPER A TO Z, by Paul Begg, Martin Fido & Keith Skinner (Headline, £16,95), in which are summarised all the relevant facts and theories, with detailed accounts of persons and events, real or conjectural. The research has been immense, and it's all presented with magnificent impartiality (even the authors' own books don't escape criticism: see the entry for THE CRIMES, DETECTION & DEATH OF JACK THE RIPPER). As Rumbelow says in his foreword: "I have no doubt that the mystery will be solved. With the amount of newly discovered material now available and the hope of more to come, this book guarantees it." A bold statement, and probably justified.

Multimedia Books have just published under their Prion imprint THE WORLD OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (£7.95), abridgements of STUD, SIGN & HOUN, adapted by Nigel Flynn & Richard Widdows. It's a big book, handsomely presented; more importantly, the adaptation is skilful, making for an admirable introduction to the stories for young readers. The stories are attractively illustrated with stills from the Australian cartoon films. I know that I've been very critical of these films, with their stilted animation and poor characterisation, but even though Holmes is shown as too smooth and handsome, and Watson too old and fat, the stills work very nicely as illustrations; the Hound is splendidly fearsome.

By the time this reaches you, DOCTOR WATSON & THE INVISIBLE MAN by Noel Downing will have been published (Ian Henry, £10.95). This remarkable adventure is set in 1907, ten years after the events chronicled by H.G. Wells; Watson is involved by his friend, the journalist Langdale Pike, in a search for the notebooks of the original "Invisible Man", and in a hunt for a murderer. On the way, they encounter the mystical writer Arthur Machen, enlist the reluctant help of Aleister Crowley (who throws new light on the secret of Griffin's invisibility) and uncover a plot that prefigures the Nazism of the 20s and 30s, It's an open secret that Noel Downing is actually the distinguished American Sherlockian (and authority on weird literature) Philip Shreffler; you would expect the book to be well-written and authoritative, and so it is (though I regret the occasional solecism, such as "As Anderson joined Pike and I . . . " Dear me, Mr Downing. Dear me!). It's a rattling good read, in which nothing is predictable.

Recently to hand are the latest issues of various magazines, journals and newsletters, each full of fascinating scholarly and, entertaining material. THE PETREL FLYER vol. 3 no, 5 (The Stormy Petrels of British Columbia, Barbara Alder, 9-8311 Steveston Highway, Richmond, BC V7A 1M4, Canada); THE ANGEL UNDERGROUND vol. 1 no. 1 (The Avenging Angels, Ronald B. De Waal, 638 12th

Avenue, Salt Lake City, UT 84103, USA); UNDER THE ARCH vol. 1 no. 2 (The Parallel Case of St Louis, Joseph J. Eckrich, 7793 Keswick Place, St Louis, M) 63119, USA); THE FRANCO-MIDLAND HARDWARE COMPANY INTERIM REPORT 1991 (The Final Problem Contract Reviewed) (The Stock-Broker's Clerk, 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hampshire PO14 3RU); VARIETIES OP ASH vol. 1 no. 1 (S.E. Dahlinger, 758 Third Street, Secaucus, NJ 07094, USA); THE PRIORY SCHOLARS SCHOOL REPORT no. 7 (Mrs S. Gordon, 69 Kirkland Road, Braunstone, Leicester LE3 2JQ); THE SERPENTINE MUSE vol. 10 no. 1 (Evelyn A. Herzog, 360 West 21st Street, Apt 5A, New York, NY 10011, USA); and not least THE SHERLOCK HOLMES GAZETTE no. 3 (Theme Publications, 43 Bowleaze Coveway, Weymouth, Dorset DT3 6PL).

More for Ripperologists: just out is THE RIPPER & THE ROYALS by Melvyn Fairclough (Duckworth, £14.99); the foreword is by Joseph Sickert, who's been responsible for an awful amount of nonsense on the subject.

The Reichenbach Centenary Jug, based on a concept by the industrious Peter Horrocks, is now available in a strictly limited edition of 1000. It's a beautiful thing, as those who were lucky enough to attend the launch at the Sherlock Holmes Hotel will know. The jugs will be available at selected retail outlets, but you can reserve one by mail order (or request further details) from Studio Gallery Decorative Editions (50 Caledonian Road, London N1 9DP). They don't come cheap - the UK price is £95 - but they really are lovely.

Paula Kirby reminds me that an immense amount of Doyleana and Holmesiana from Rupert Books is available through Murder One, including new assignments from the Gasogene Press and Magico - and the lovely ILLUSTRATED INTERNATIONAL SHERLOCK HOLMES, previously available only in Japan and the USA. If you have any enquiries, please write to Paula at 59 Stonefield, Bar Hill, Cambridge CB3 8TE. On the subject of books, Malibu Graphics (5321 Sterling Center Drive, Westlake Village, CA 91361-4613, USA) have published several comic-strip adventures of Holmes & Watson: SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE WORLD'S GREATEST DETECTIVE by Edith Meiser & Frank Giacoia ($17.95); from the same author and artist SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE AND OTHER STORIES ($5.95) (these two draw on the original newspaper strips); and two by Martin Powell - SHERLOCK HOLMES: A CASE OF BLIND FEAR, pitting Holmes against the Invisible Man ($9.95) and SHERLOCK HOLMES: SCARLET IN GASLIGHT, Holmes versus Dracula ($9.95). These issues are fully authorised by the Conan Doyle Estate. Bill Blake asks me to remind all visitors to London (especially those who have to count their pennies - and who doesn't?) to spend a while in the second-hand and remainder bookshops of the Charing Cross Road before rushing off to pay full price for Holmes material.

Karizzma Enterprises (18 Poland Street, London W1V 3DG), who published the very collectable SHERLOCK HOLMES ALBUM for Granada TV in 1987, have also produced two equally cherishable series of postcards. The first, containing 16 cards, includes 3 stills from the Granada series (Brett & Burke, Brett & Hardwicke, Brett alone) and an eclectic selection of other illustrations: 3 different portraits of Gillette, the poster for the Rathbone HOUND, "A Reverie" from THE STRAND, the Holmes portrait from the Turf cigarette cards, the coloured Dorr Steele illustration to "The Empty House", and the cover pictures from the Murray 2/- editions of THE SIGN OF FOUR, THE ADVENTURES, THE MEMOIRS, THE RETURN and THE VALLEY OF FEAR. The second series contains 32 cards, being stills from each of the 32 adventures so far broadcast (some are interestingly unexpected shots); these come in an attractive cardboard "wallet", based on the cover design of THE STRAND MAGAZINE. The cards are on sale, individually or as sets, at the Granada Studios Tour, and the sets can be bought direct from Karizzma by post; the first (Old Style) costs £5.80, and the second (New Style) £11.10. Both prices include postage worldwide (the increased cost of postage overseas is offset by zero-rated VAT), and the New Style set includes the wallet. All payment in pounds sterling, please, and any customs or other duty is to be paid by the purchaser. There are special rates for bulk orders; please ask Karizzma for details.

On the subject of the Granada series, Michael Cox tells me that THE MASTER BLACKMAILER ("Charles Augustus Milverton") is now scheduled for broadcasting on ITV at 8 pm on the 2nd January. "Something to relieve the hangover?" he suggests. And Bert Coules adds that the Radio 4 series THE MEMOIRS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, with Clive Merrison & Michael Williams, will begin transmission on the afternoon of Wednesday the 8th January. It's going to be a good January, I think.

From the Solar Pons Society of London and (separately) from Geoffrey Stavert, I've received the latest catalogue of Radio Spirits Inc. (PO Box 2141, Schiller Park, Illinois 60176, USA). This is a listing of over 2000 radio recordings, mostly from the 30s, 40s and 50s, and mostly American. Sherlock Holmes is represented by a small selection from the Gielgud/Richardson series and the Hobbs/Shelley series, and by two sets of unabridged readings by "the famous voice actor Charles Fuller". Besides Holmes, there's treasure here for the lover of radio dramas CHARLIE McCARTHY, DRAGNET, GUNSMOKE, INNER SANCTUM, THE MERCURY THEATRE ON THE AIR (including Orson Welles' adaptation of Gillette's play), SUSPENSE... Basic cost of each one-hour tape is $6, which is very reasonable.

Geoffrey also mentions that an American member and his wife will be staying in London at the St Giles Hotel (Bedford Avenue, WC1; phone 071-636 8616) from the 3rd to the 9th December. This is John E. Pforr of Timonium, Maryland. He'd like to meet any available British members for a drink and a chat. John is the co-author of the Franco-Midland Hardware Company Bond no. 001, SHERLOCK HOLMES & SCOTLAND YARD.

I've received a catalogue from Esdevium Games (6 Wellington Street, Aldershot, Hants. GU11 1DZ; phone 0252 311443), who stock a quite mind-boggling selection of board games and computer games (and probably other kinds), including the now-classic CONSULTING DETECTIVE and 221B BAKER STREET, together with the additional cases. There's also a Sherlock Holmes card game. Contact Esdevium for details.

John Brazzill tells of a "pub" in the suburbs of Barcelona, called The Sherlock Holmes ("I hear of Sherlock everywhere . . . ") - "no obvious connection inside except for the fact it's like walking into a 19th century pub, all dark oak and a very English looking bar, but all Spanish beers!" He adds that LOS ARCHIVOS DE BAKER STREET have now reached the fourth volume, a Spanish translation of SHERLOCK HOLMES & THE MYSTERIOUS FRIEND OF OSCAR WILDE by Russell A. Brown. Like the earlier volumes, it's beautifully presented.

Isabel Mitchell has sent a copy of a letter from the Scotland Region of the Federation of Master Builders (540 Gorgie Road, Edinburgh; phone 031-337 3602), advising that the limited edition of Sherlock Holmes medals, commemorating the unveiling of the Holmes statue in Edinburgh, is now ready. Each medal costs the rather remarkable sum of £50, including postage. They can be ordered by sending a cheque to the above address.

Jim Clark (29 Langridge, Rhyl Street, London NW5 4LY) is looking to increase his collection of Sherlock Holmes on video. He's particularly keen to obtain any of the BBC episodes from the Douglas Wilmer and Peter Cushing series, and would be happy to swap copies of some of the rarities already in his possession, including all the Ronald Howard series, a number of the Eille Norwood films, Reginald Owen's A STUDY IN SCARLET, and the John Longden THE MAN WITH THE TWISTED LIP. (The mouth waters . . .)

Michael Cox has very kindly sent a copy of THE SHERLOCK HOLMES REVIEW, vol. 3 no. 2, containing a good long article by Michael himself about the making of the Granada TV series. The SHR is yet another very worthwhile journal, handsomely presented and full of interest. A four-issue subscription costs $15 (overseas $20) from PO Box 583, Zionsville, Indiana 46077, USA.

From John E. Stephenson and Syd Goldberg, news of a Chicago Sherlock Holmes Center, at the Harold Washington Library in downtown Chicago. The Center was opened officially on the 9th November; Peter Blau was a guest speaker, and anything Peter lends his presence to can't be bad.

The Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment will unveil a memorial to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in Crowborough on Saturday the 23rd May 1992. This will be a momentous occasion - for one thing, at last Sir Arthur is being properly honoured for himself and not just for Sherlock Holmes. If you'd like full details, please contact the Establishment's Media Liaison Officer, Philip Weller, at 6 Bramham Moor, Hill Head, Fareham, Hants. PO14 3RU.

John Ruyle (521 Vincente Avenue, Berkeley, CA 94707) is offering a strictly limited edition of just 76 copies of THE BULL PUP. "This slim collection contains 27 remarkable paraphrastic quartets, and is capped by a short poem by Holmes himself, culled from the pages of STUD with true

Canonical assiduity." 50 copies are numbered and hand-sewn in wraps at $15, and 26 - numbered A-Z - are hardbound and signed by John; these cost $35.

The Blessed Ev Herzog sends advance information on the gallivantings in New York over the weekend of the 10th/11th January. To start things in style, the Old Soldiers of Baker Street will hold an Aunt Clara Singalong for those at a loose end on Thursday the 9th. This will be at O'Lunney's Saloon & Restaurant, 12 West 44th Street, from 8 pm. Sherlockians are invited to wine and dine from a moderately priced menu, and raise their voices in traditional and unconventional folksong, led by Hugh O'Lunney's resident folk-singer. Bring your favourite song-sheets. No advance payment is required, but it's not a large establishment, and a cheque for $10 per person will reserve your table (and will be deducted from your bill). Send cheques to Mr O'Lunney at 12 West 44th Street, New York, NY 10036, USA - and remember to explain what it's for!

The Martha Hudson Breakfast will take place from 8.30 am in the Oak Room of the Algonquin Hotel. The cost is $15, and admission is by ticket only. To reserve your place, send a cheque (payable to The Baker Street Irregulars) to The Stetaks, 15529 Diagonal Road, La Grange, Ohio 44050, USA. On the Saturday, the Baker Street Irregulars will host the usual dealers' room at the Algonquin, open to the public from 9.30 am to 12.30 pm. For details, contact Ray Betzner, 2906 Richard Place South, Williamsburg, VA 23185, USA. And the annual reception for all Sherlockians and their friends will be held at 24 Fifth Avenue from 2.30 pm to 5.30 pm that same day. Tickets are available at $30 per person from Robert E. Thomalen, 69 Glen Road, Eastchester, NY 10709, USA. Please make cheques payable to the Baker Street Irregulars.

The evening of Friday the 10th, of course, sees both the Baker Street Irregulars' annual dinner and the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes' annual dinner. The ASH have, I think, always - sensibly - welcomed men; for the first time the BSIs will welcome a privileged few women, in addition to the fully-invested Irregularesses. Another taboo smashed! That same evening, of course, also sees our own Society's 40th annual dinner, held in the fitting fin-de-siecle surroundings of the Langham Hotel.

From Peter Blau: SHERLOCK HOLMES ON THE ROOF OF THE WORLD: OR THE ADVENTURE 10F THE WAYFARING GOD, by Thomas Kent Miller (Rosemill House, Box 7692, Redlands, CA 92375, USA) is the exploits of Leo Vincey and Horace Holly (from Rider Haggard's SHE) in Lhassa in 1891, where they encounter a Norwegian explorer named Sigerson... The book costs $4.50, or $6 postpaid from the publishers. It's also available from the Rupert Books stock at Murder One.

Two Sherlockian wall calendars for 1992, showing dates taken from Baring-Gould's ANNOTATED SHERLOCK HOLMES, have been announced. One, from Mark Alberstat (6258 Payzant Avenue, Halifax, NS B3H 2B1, Canada) has Paget illustrations; this is US $10 postpaid. The other, from Brian & Charlotte Erickson (1029 Judson Drive, Mountain View, CA 94040, USA) has new photographs of the 221B room at the Holiday Inn in San Francisco; this is $15 postpaid.

The third volume in the BSI Archival Series should be available now. This is IRREGULAR RECORDS OF THE EARLY FORTIES, edited by Jon L. Lellenberg (Fordham University Press; $18.95).

Following the first two films in their series THE GOLDEN YEARS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES, with Christopher Lee & Patrick Macnee (when are we going to see these in Britain?), Harmony Gold (it still sounds like a brand of margarine) and Klondike Films are now shooting THE LOST WORLD and RETURN TO THE LOST WORLD, with John Rhys Davies as Challenger & David Warner as Summerlee. Admirable casting!

This will be the last DM of 1991, so I'll take the opportunity to wish you all

THE COMPLIMENTS OF THE SEASON!