

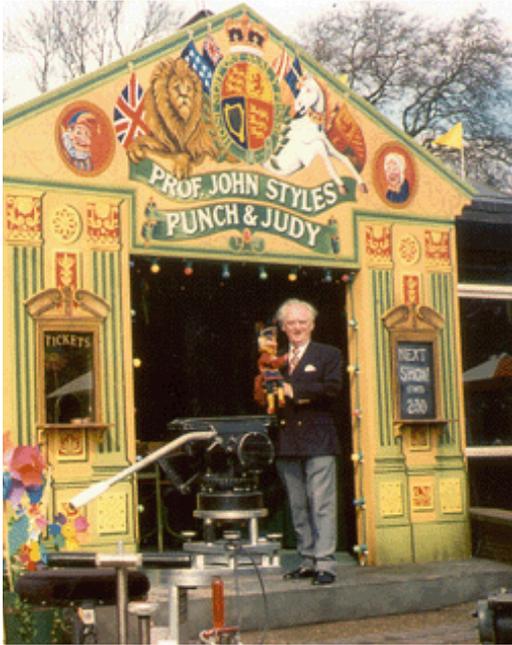


Around The World With Mr. Punch

The Online Journal of the worldwide friends of punch and judy

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MR. PUNCH IN SHOWBIZ



John Styles on the set of 102 Dalmatians

One of the fascinating things about Mr. Punch is that he crosses so many boundaries - from folk art to children's entertainment to opera and to ballet and to mainstream entertainment. Although we have dealt with most of these facets in the the course of the past few years we have possibly given least prominence to the last of these. Thus it is that we've given over the front page of this edition to some observations about Mr. Punch the Showbiz Superstar. It also provides an opportunity to showcase a couple of backstage images of John Styles on the set of '102 Dalmatians'. If any proof were needed of the acceptability of Mr. Punch in the modern world, the unquestioned use of him within a product from the Disney organisation is just about as strong an endorsement as you can get. (Please note this is not to make any moral judgement on Disney's role in global culture, merely to observe that Punch isn't registering on the political correctness radar of one of the world's major purveyors of family

entertainment.) But this is nothing new for Mr. Punch - he's an old Broadway trouper with an enviable track record. In Bil Baird's book *The Art of The Puppet* (Macmillan, 1965) he tells of veteran USA Prof George Prentice of California and says "When Ed. Wynn was starring in *The Laugh Parade on Broadway in the early 1930s he had a number in which he appeared dressed as Punch and pushing a booth on casters. He turned the booth so that the audience could see backstage, turned it again and ducked inside, and the little curtain opened on a most amusing Punch play. When it was over Ed came out with Punch on one hand, the Devil on the other and a squeaker in his mouth. But it was the young George Prentice, unacknowledged, who slipped under the backdrop every night to do the show*". You can find out a little more about *The Laugh Parade* (but not George Prentice) on the Internet Broadway Database at www.ibdb.com - where you can also learn that in 1903 a 'musical extravaganza' called *Punch, Judy and Co.* opened at the Paradise Roof Garden and ran for 72 performances. No famous names we recognise today are listed in the cast but there's a surprise when you see that it was produced by a certain Oscar Hammerstein, with book and music by his grandson Oscar Hammerstein II. Yes, the Broadway legend who wrote the lyrics for *Oklahoma*, *My Fair Lady*, *The Sound of Music*, *South Pacific* and many other timeless musicals turns out to have a connection with Old Red Nose. Now, where will we find an archive with that music? Revival anyone?

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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the second online edition of the Journal. The technological learning curve here at Punch's Oak continues apace. The main result you will notice is that there are even more colour photos in this issue. For those of you interested in following the Editor's roller-coaster ride on the learning curve the particular lessons being learned at present are to do with photo file size. If the file size is too large then the finished Journal is much too large to upload into the available space - and takes much too long to download as well. If the file size is too small then the photos look pretty poor quality. Of course, for printing out the download the file sizes need to be much larger - which is why the images in this issue look better on the screen than they will if you print a hard copy. The name of the game at the moment is to strike the right balance and hope for the best. Once tests have been completed the task can begin of scanning in all the first five volumes and creating an online archive. In the meantime the new technology is certainly proving to add a new dimension to the Journal and the Editor thanks those of you who have emailed appreciative comments.

So far as 'password protecting' the downloads is concerned there will be - in future - an ever changing password to allow access to each new issue but the back catalogue of online issues will all be available with just one all-purpose password. Diane Rains is in charge of this end of the operation and will keep everyone informed.

Glyn Edwards.



PUNCH AT HOGGETOWNE

Gregg Jones is a professional actor and a theatre instructor at Santa Fe Community College in Gainesville, Florida. He has sent us this report on an annual project he's involved in with Old Red Nose.

These photos are of our recent stint here in Gainesville at the 16th annual Hoggetowne Medieval Faire. I have done the Punch puppet for the past five years and this partner had his second year as Judy. The faire is attended by around 75,000 people each year and is complete with jousting, a human chessboard, many vendors of food and crafts, and of course the omnipotent Punch and Judy. The current version (the second i have worked with) was built by Carlos Asse (pronounced ASSAY) and Marilyn Waal, a set and costume designer from the Hippodrome State Theatre, a professional theatre located here in Gainesville. The faire extends over two consecutive weekends with two days designated as kids days during

which local schools are bussed in. We had 7000 children last Friday, and some of them get pretty feisty. The middle schoolers (ahh yes adolescence) seem to be the most prone to antagonizing the puppets. They take it as a personal challenge to take us down a peg. But we make a habit of being escorted by a couple of well-built pages who keep the order for us. The young children are definitely the most enchanted by the puppets. When we hug the little ones they literally disappear!

*(Photos: John Creveling
Punch: Gregg Jones
Judy: Joshua Lederma)*



WIRED FOR SOUND

Technical information has always been a popular feature of this journal and we're glad to see the flow of information resume now we are online. The item below was solicited from 'Prof' Brian Davey, of Lyme Regis, Dorset, UK who had been answering a query from the USA which seemed well worth disseminating to a wider audience.

I recently received an e-mail from Brian Patterson, a fellow Prof. from the USA asking for details about the P/A sound system I use for my shows. He had seen us in action at Covent Garden and later at The Slapstick Symposium May 2000. I replied to Brian with the following information, for what it is worth, with the hope that he (and indeed any other reader) may find it useful.

Firstly I would like to make it clear to everyone that I know absolutely nothing about sound systems, (that's a good start), and I am only marginally better at electrical wiring, but if I still have your interest read on!

Shortly after starting performing with Punch it will become apparent that your poor, straining voice needs some assistance to be heard over the other many distractions, so I am sure you will be aware that the components needed for a P/A (Personal Address) system consist of: a) a speaker(s) b) amplifier c) microphone d) power source, and an optional music source

e) tape recorder, CD or "Walkman". Nowadays it is possible to find all these in single units, which are horrendously priced, but are not necessarily best, suited for our requirements.

You will need to find a stockist specialising in this equipment and, if possible, explain to them what you hope to achieve. The supplier of some or my equipment is: -

**HENRY'S AUDIO
ELECTRONICS,
404 Edgware Road, London
W2 1ED. U.K.
Tel: (+44) 20 7724 3564
Fax: (+44) 20 7724 0322**

Or visit the website at
www.henrys.co.uk.

They accept debit/credit cards and will dispatch goods to you overseas.

The equipment I use is an EAGLE F4 12W Vehicle Amplifier plus 8ohm Horn Speakers. (If you want to play music I recommend you also get a Bass Speaker as well.) I also use a Tie Clip Microphone which is cheap and effective. I have made my own headset fashioned from some suitable wire and fixed the mic. to it. This ensures that the mic. is located at the optimum position i.e. near to the mouth at all times.

My 12V power source comes from an ageing KINGAVON Portable Power Station, which I think is no longer obtainable, but you can buy 12V dry cell batteries of the kind used in

security systems that can be re-charged. You could also try Dan Bishop's idea for a 12V power supply. (See Vol.5 No 1.) You will also need about 3 metres of, what I call bell wire, to connect everything together. Follow the instructions that should be with your amplifier. Oh!.. And have a few spare fuses to hand in case you get the wiring wrong.

If you have any doubts or have any problems, get advice from a professional electrician.....Not me!!!

Brian Davey, The Puppetree Company, Dorset, UK.

The Editor writes: Henry's Audio is something of an institution and I bought an amplifier from them in the 1970s at the suggestion from a BBC audio engineer friend. They thus come with a reputation for reliability and quality. Meanwhile (from a different company) the wondrous Kigavon Power Pack has mutated into a new version so far as I can tell. The next issue will deal with attempts to track it down (as well as locating non-UK suppliers of similar equipment). Other technical information to share is always very welcome.



Prof. Brian Davey

WHY COVENT GARDEN?

This is a re-print of an article your Editor was asked to write for the Covent Garden website www.coventgardenlife.com Although the information it contains is well known to most Punch enthusiasts there may be some value in drawing it to the attention of new readers. You can - of course - visit the website itself to gain an insight into what this major London tourist site is like today.

What's the connection between Covent Garden and Punch and Judy? Well, it starts 340 years ago in May this year. On 9 May 1662 Samuel Pepys was coming back from visiting a nearby ale-house when he stopped to watch a puppet show that was performing in Covent Garden. It was the month that King Charles II (recently restored to the throne) was getting married and hordes of entertainers from all over Europe had thronged to the city hoping to make some money. The Italian puppet play that Pepys saw was presented by puppetmaster Pietro Gimonde - or 'Signor Bologna' as he was known to his audience - and starred one of the great comic characters of all time. The star puppet came originally from Naples, where he was known as Pulcinella, then toured across Europe to France - where he was called Polichinelle - and finally came to captivate English audiences who settled for calling him

Punchinello. Pepys diary entry for 9th May reporting that he had seen the show is taken by today's performers as marking Punch's 'birthday'.

It wasn't a Punch and Judy Show as we know it today: that developed later. Punchinello was a marionette - a puppet on strings - whose vulgar and boisterous antics pleased high and low alike. He appeared in all manner of plays and frivolities and was copied by countless English showmen who took him on the road touring the great English Country Fair circuit which, in the days before container lorries took produce to the supermarkets, was the way that goods (and entertainment) came to the people. With his name shortened to Punch he became a nationwide favourite. Performed by a troupe of puppeteers on a stage within a fairground tent, the shows were different in style to the ones we are familiar with today. Punch's role was to dominate whatever play he was set within (not unlike the Marx Bros unleashed within their 'Night at the Opera') and even the sight of his big nose poking round the edge of the scenery was enough to set the audience off laughing. This phase of his career lasted for almost hundred years until in the mid 1700s it all changed and someone cut Punch's strings.

Was it because the Fairground circuit was losing customers to the newly springing up towns and cities of the Industrial Age? Was it because another Italian puppeteer came to England and showed a different way of presenting the show? Historians argue about the reasons, but whatever they were they led Punch to change into the hand puppet we know today, to take a wife called Judy (Punchinello's wife was called Joan) and to star in a show performed by one person in a small puppet stage. Forsaking the fairgrounds he became a street entertainer who passed the hat round rather than charging admission. Re-inventing himself in this way Punch became a hit all over again.

The early 1800's were the years when the modern Punch and Judy Show tradition was forged. It was the great era of pantomime at Saddlers Wells, which is where Punch both 'borrowed' his slapstick from Harlequin and also added Joey the Clown to the cast in homage to his immortal contemporary Joey Grimaldi. Charles Dickens was a young man at the time and developed a life long passion for Punch, including him in several of his works. A group of young radical humourists wanted a street-cred name for the new magazine they were founding and so called it 'Punch' and a few decades later - with the invention of the railway and the beginning of day excursions - Punch went to the seaside and

made himself such a fixture that people often forget that his roots were far away from the sand and donkey rides. This madcap little entertainment with its powerful undertones has lasted right up to today and shows no signs of running out of steam.

If you look on the portico of St Paul's Church you will see a plaque put up in 1962 at the instigation of George Speaight - the man who wrote the definitive history of the English puppet theatre - to mark the 300th anniversary of Pepys 'discovering' Punchinello. I was the youngest Punch 'Prof' at the unveiling ceremony: done at a time when Covent Garden was

still a thriving fruit and vegetable market. It was a large gathering of performers and featured a birthday cake and a giant stage that we all performed inside. It impressed me so much that 25 years later in 1987 I organised a similar event to mark the passing of a quarter of a century and to celebrate Mr Punch's 325th 'birthday'. Some 150 Profs attended - along with many of Punch's overseas relatives. A photograph of the event was featured in the Guinness Book or Records in 1990 - and I'm looking forward to being back ten years from now to attend his 350th.

Meanwhile Mr Punch is flourishing as he always has done. You'll find good shows, bad shows, average shows and superb shows - all depending on the skills of whoever is inside the

puppet theatre. His history is long and varied and he is known around the world. He has relatives in very many cultures - probably in every culture where there are people upon whom authority sits (be it in the shape of a dictator or a traffic warden) - and thus he is unlikely to fade away in the foreseeable future. If you want to know more about him, then Profs invite you to visit his many websites. As he himself says "That's the way to do it!"

Glyn Edwards



Forwarded by Richard Fowler (UK puppet aficionado temporarily resident in Paris) this cartoon is from the satirical magazine 'Private Eye' as is reprinted here with all due acknowledgement. For the benefit of non-UK residents, the scorn of the cartoonist is directed at the waning star TV chat show duo 'Richard and Judy' whose transfer from a daytime to an early evening slot has left their vacuous style of interviewing open to critical onslaught.

In an earlier tabloid feeding frenzy The 'Richard' of the duo was once falsely accused of shoplifting - thus causing the pair to be renamed behind their backs as 'Pinch and Judy'

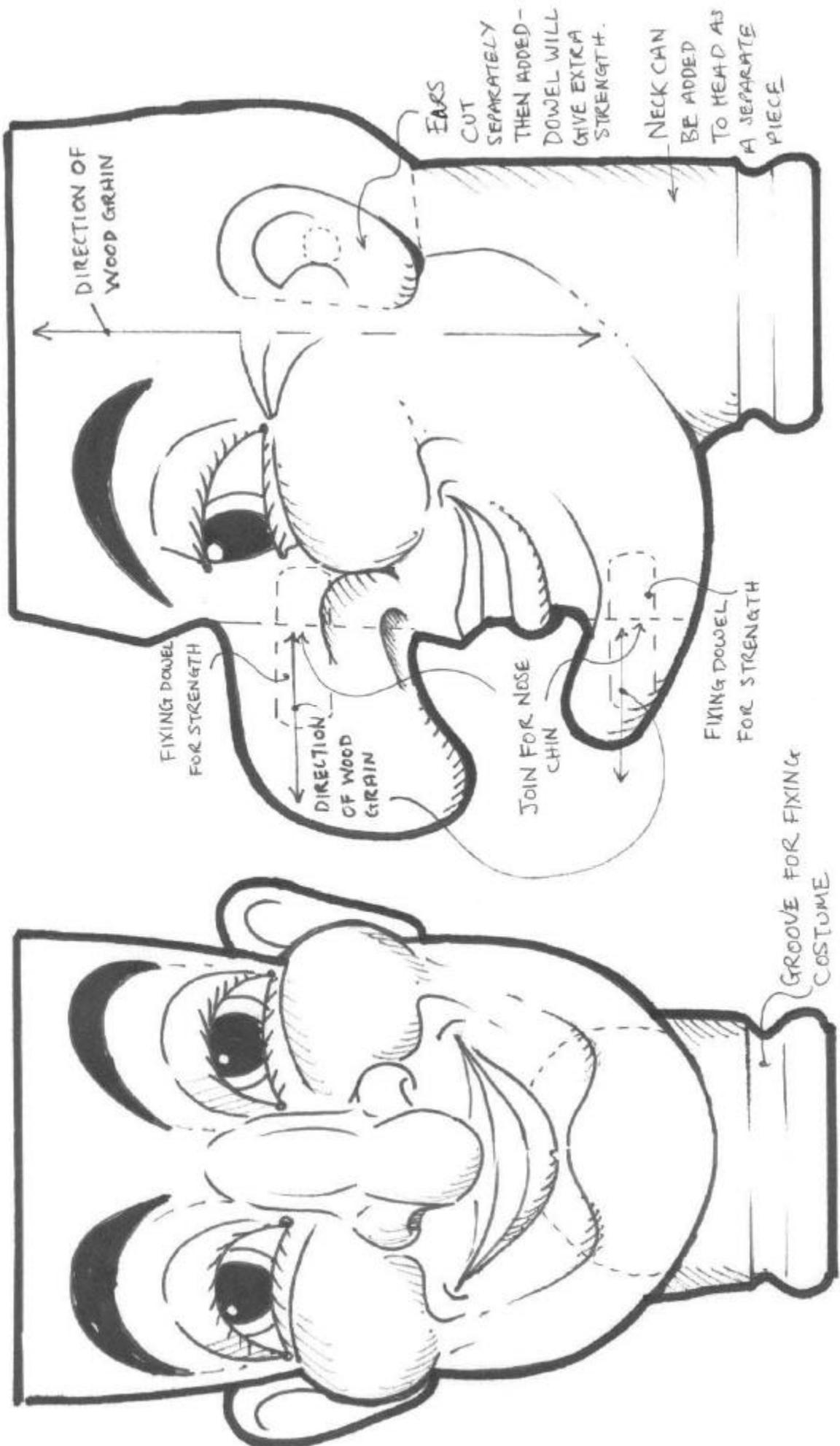
The only reason for including any of this in the Journal is to demonstrate to non-Brits how common it is to find cultural references to the Punch and Judy show in the UK.

CARVING OLD RED NOSE!

Brian Davey writes...For those of you intending to have a go at carving your first Mr. Punch, but haven't quite got around to it, you may find the accompanying drawings an incentive. I do not intend to go into the dos and don'ts of carving a set of Punch and Judy puppets. After all, there are many ways of tackling the problem, so it's up to you to find the best method to follow, with the aid of the many carving books available. If you wish you can use the drawings as templates to get you started, as they should be fairly self-explanatory.

Remember to hollow out the head when you have finished carving the features.

Templates for hands and feet will follow in the next issue.



Punch's Postbag

assisted by Punchlines

As well as emailing your comments and news to journal@punchandjudy.org you can also post them on the **Punchlines message board which you will find as part of the **Punch and Judy Worldwide Webring** at www.punchandjudyworld.org**

Hello,

I am an artist who works in 1/12 scale miniature. To date some of my most popular pieces have been a fully articulated French Bebe (ca 1885) doll that was fully articulated and stood 1 1/2 inches tall, and a replica of an 1890's boardwalk Gypsy Automaton. Now I wish to make a seaside puppet theatre complete with all appropriate props and puppets for the Punch and Judy show. I'm trying to find reference for what Punch and Judy should look like at the turn of the century in England vs. America. I need good pictures of actual puppets to sculpt and paint by. What reference would you recommend? I would appreciate any help you might be able to offer. Thank you for your time and have a lovely day!

sincerely,

Tracey Alan Meeker USA

This enquiry was posted on Punchlines and Tracey was directed to the various sites on the Webring. He has promised to keep the WorldWide Friends informed of progress with his project. We shall run pictures of it when finished.

Friends,
I'm interested in acquiring the PUNCH engraving which was featured on the Moody Blues Album cover 'Long Distance Voyager'. This engraving is very large (approx. 2' x 3'), and a print, pulled from the original plates, is hanging in the Gentlemen's Lounge of the Virginia House of Representatives. I purchased the same engraving from Clark Art in Raleigh, North Carolina, but my engraving was recently destroyed by flood at my sister's house. Both engravings were also colored. Can you please tell me where I might find another, also pulled from the original plates? I think the artist was 'Losch'. This is a serious inquiry and I would very much appreciate your response.

Allen Reed Hawthorne, Bogota, Colombia.

A reference to this particular image had hitherto escaped your Editor's notice until he discovered it was one he had on his living room wall. Many readers may have it also, as it is quite often to be found. (see below). It appears in various sizes and formats (both colour and b/w) and the one used on the album sleeve is credited as "courtesy of the Arts Union Glasgow" The concept credit for the 1981 album sleeve is given as the Moody Blues themselves. If readers can shed any light on the origin of the actual engraving the Journal will be delighted to hear. How it came to the attention of both the Moody Blues and the Virginia House of Representatives is no doubt a story in its own right. Can anyone shed any light?



Dear Editor, On Sunday we concluded the run of Mister Punch here in Naples. (*see Vol 6 No 1. Ed.*) In a couple of days we return to Exeter, where we'll continue to work on the show, adapting and developing it for an English audience. When we're more certain of dates for performances in England I'll pass them on, but until then I'm attaching a couple of pictures of the show (and the programme cover) to whet your appetite! All the best.

John Dean, Napoli.

The pictures John mentions (of the Payne-Collier text performed with actors) are shown opposite.



Dear Sir, About ten years ago I was in a game shop which sold a beautifully detailed and hand painted Punch & Judy chess set. Stupidly, I failed to buy it when I had the opportunity. I have searched, in vain, on the internet for the same or similar set. I was hoping you might know of a vendor in the U.K. or the States who might have such a set. My father was working out of Edzell, Scotland when I was very young. While living in Scotland, I took a great liking to all things Punch & Judy. The figures in the set were as I remembered them from my youth and genuinely comical. My present job can be quite soul-draining. I play chess rather regularly; thus the interest in this set. Any assistance or advice you could provide would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely, *Stephen Mize,*
Washington D.C.

Your Editor has seen the set, but can't help Stephen locate one. Any readers able to assist?

Toby's tail piece

Antiquarian booksellers *Dramatis Personae* now have an online site at www.dramatispersonae.com which is where the accompanying image may be located. It is a detail from Item number 180 in their current catalogue and shows some Harlequinade-derived images. The one in the centre shows 'Clown with Baby' and (as Keith Potter suggested in an earlier issue) shows the comical pantomime evolution of Punch's most notorious routine. Acrobatical slapstick involving an 'infant' was still alive and well in the 20th Century and was - of course - how the young Buster Keaton began his career in the family vaudeville act.

