

## Sid James A Biography

The Life and Times of a Scallywag is an autobiography by the flamboyant Sidney (Siddy) James Carter. It tells of his exploits as a child on the streets and in the fields of the infamous Cray area of north Kent, through his brief school years and onto his chosen profession, one of the most notorious cat burglars in Britain. The book is brilliantly funny, heartbreakingly sad in places and features some colourful characters from The Crays and surrounding areas. His family features of course, through the good times and bad. This book is also somewhat of a history lesson of what life was like in the Crays during the 40's, 50's and 60's. Young Steak and Kidney (Sidney) went from skint to having so much money he didn't know what to do with it, but he learnt very quickly. His nickname around the Crays was "Champagne Sid", when he drank, everybody drank, life was one long party. Ultimately he got his collar felt, more than once, but his tales of escape and evasion will bring a smile to your face. It is written in the style of Sid himself, plenty of Cockney Slang and plenty of local dialect spoken by the travelling community. You will have to look past the odd grammatical error as well, but when a story is this good, it's more than worth it.

The hardback of this first and authorised biography received very good reviews and immediately reprinted. It tells the story of one of the heroines of post-war British comedy, on radio, film and TV. Hattie Jacques is known as the billowing, imposing Matron in the Carry On films, as the star of such BBC radio classics as ITMA, Educating Archie and Hancock's Half Hour, and as the fictional sister of Eric Sykes in his long-running TV sitcom. But the formidable, frumpy galleon-in-full-sail screen persona could not have been more at odds with the real-life woman, as this biography reveals for the first time. She had a tempestuous wartime affair with an American officer, and then a strange marriage to the actor John le Mesurier (Corporal Wilson in Dad's Army) whose dissatisfactions she circumnavigated by moving her lover, a flashy Cockney car dealer, into the matrimonial home. But as well as being warm and sexy and generous she was also, owing to her lifelong struggle with her weight, needy and melancholic, and rueful that her size persistently typecast her and excluded her from many roles. This biography has been written with full co-operation from Hattie's son, and show business friends like Barbara Windsor, Clive Dunn, Galton and Simpson and Ian Carmichael.

Sidney "Sid" James, born Solomon Joel Cohen on 8th May 1913, Johannesburg, Transvaal, South Africa, was a character and comic actor born into a middle-class Jewish family in South Africa. Appearing in British movies from 1947, James was cast in many small and supporting roles into the '50s, his profile being raised as Tony Hancock's co-star in Hancock's Half Hour, first in the radio series then following its adaptation for TV, running from 1954 to 1961.

For more than 40 years broadcaster and comedian Kenneth Williams kept a journal of his experiences. This book is a selection of these diaries.

The sixth book in the James Runcie's much-loved series, adapted for ITV's Grantchester which stars James Norton as Sidney Chambers. Perfect for fans of M. C. Beaton. It is May 1971 and the Cambridgeshire countryside is bursting into summer. Archdeacon Sidney Chambers is walking in a bluebell wood with his daughter Anna and their ageing Labrador Byron when they stumble upon a body. Plunged into another murder investigation, Sidney discovers a world of hippies and psychedelic plants, where permissive behaviour seems to hide something darker. This is the first of many disturbing secrets that Sidney unearths beneath the tranquil surface of the diocese: a celebrated photographer is accused of rape; a priceless religious text vanishes from a Cambridge college; the authentication of a lost masterpiece proves a slippery business; and Sidney's own nephew goes missing. Endeavouring to fit in his clerical duties around sleuthing, Sidney continues to reflect on the divine mysteries of love, life and faith, while wrestling with the earthly problems of parish scandals, a progressive new secretary, the challenges of parenthood, and a great loss.

Kenneth Williams was the stand-out comic actor of his generation. Beloved as the manic star of Carry On films and as a peerless raconteur on TV chat shows, he was also acclaimed for serious stage roles. Born Brilliant will include much previously unseen material from Williams's candid daily journal and also draw on rare in-depth interviews with friends and colleagues. Since the publication of edited extracts from his diaries, much controversy has surrounded Williams's personal and professional lives. This biography traces the complex contradictions that characterised an extraordinary life and presents the first full portrait of a star who was born brilliant.

Norman Wisdom's early years could easily have come straight from the pages of a Dickens novel. Left by their frightened mother, ill-treated by a brutal father, Norman and his brother were forced to fend for themselves, sleeping rough in London and stealing food to survive. This is a rags to riches tale of the man Charlie Chaplin said would take his mantle and who went on to make millions laugh around the world for over five decades. Here are the hardships, tragedies and triumphs that gave him his inspiration. From the days working the seasons at Scarborough, to the unforgettable and endearing character Norman Pitkin - the little man in a tight fitting suit, read of his rapid climb up the showbiz ladder.

With a career spanning 27 years including 19 starring roles in the Carry On series, Sid James is remembered as one of Britain's most endearing character actors. However, this biography seeks to reveal the true man as a scheming, gambling-mad, heartless, alcoholic and lecherous skinflint.

Regarded as the best radio and TV comic of his era, Tony Hancock was a man whose star burned brightly in the eyes and ears of millions before his untimely death in 1968. Now, forty years on, critically acclaimed biographer John Fisher brings the first fully authorised account of his life. Tony Hancock was one of post-war Britain's most popular comedians -- his radio show 'Hancock's Half Hour' would clear the streets as whole families tuned in to listen. His peerless timing and subtle changes in intonation marked Hancock out as a comic genius. His character 'Anthony Aloysius St John Hancock' was an amplification of his own persona, a pompous prat whose dreams of success are constantly thwarted. The original British loser that we recognise in Victor Meldrew and Alan Partridge. Wonderfully supported by a cast including Sid James, Hattie Jacques and Kenneth Williams, and working with scripts from Ray Galton and Alan Simpson, Hancock became a huge star. The show was commissioned for TV, showcasing his talent for hilarious facial expression, and he became the first British comedian to earn a thousand pounds a week. Behind Tony Hancock's success however hid the self-destructive behaviour that plagued him all his life. Prone to self-doubt, and wanting to be the star of his own show, he got rid of James, and finally dismissed Galton and Simpson who had created the platform for his success. His private life was wracked by his ever increasing alcoholism and bouts of depression, and his relationships shattered by his capacity for violence. His ratings fell and, feeling washed up and alone after divorcing his second wife, he committed suicide in an Australian hotel room in 1968. Now, forty years after his death John Fisher explores the turbulent life of a man regarded by his peers as one of the greatest British comics to have ever lived.

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Covering Sid's early years in South Africa and life as a ladies' hairdresser, his obsession with gambling and women, his questioning by Scotland Yard in a murder case, Hancock's Half Hour and the Carry On films, and Sid's death on stage at the age of 63, Cliff Goodwin reveals the amazing truth behind the legend.

Following the bestselling publication of THE KENNETH WILLIAMS DIARIES, the devastating self-portrait of one of our most loved and complex performers is completed with this marvellous selection of his letters. This is a wonderful treasure trove of correspondence with all manner of people, including Alec Guinness, Maggie Smith, Joe Orton, Richard Burton and Elizabeth Taylor, and the Stokers' Mess of HMS Leverton. Kenneth Williams took letters very seriously, and he was always disgusted by a morning that failed to provide him with some material to pore over. Letters called forth the performer in Williams in a way that his diaries never did: many of them are virtual comic monologues, and in general they suggest more strongly than the diaries the likeable and constructive side of a man who remains, nevertheless, as outrageous and 'difficult' as ever.

In May 1999, after a 40-year career including 100 films, Oliver Reed died, as he had invariably lived, drinking with friends while making a film - his well-reviewed performance in the blockbuster Gladiator. Having risen through Hammer Horror films to international stardom as Bill Sykes in Oliver!, Reed became, in his own words, 'the biggest star this country has got'. With his legendary off-screen exploits and blunt opinions - especially of his co-stars - he was also one of the most infamous. Bestselling author Cliff Goodwin uses material from first-hand interviews with Reed's family, friends and colleagues and never before seen photographs to explore Reed's eventful career. But he also reveals another side to this unique and complex man.

Harry H. Corbett rose from the slums of Manchester to become one of the best-known television stars of the 20th century. Having left home as a 17-year-old Royal Marine during the Second World War, he fought in the North Atlantic and the jungles of the Pacific and witnessed first-hand the devastation wrought by the Hiroshima bomb. On his return home he wandered into the local theatre company and landed a starring role – The Front Legs of the Cow. Soon becoming a leading light in Joan Littlewood's Theatre Workshop and a widely-respected classical stage actor, his life was changed forever by the television comedy Steptoe and Son. Overnight he became a household name as the series drew unparalleled viewing figures of over 28 million, with fans ranging from the working classes to the Royal Family. Naturally shy and a committed socialist, fame and fortune didn't sit easily on his shoulders, and for the next twenty years, until his untimely death at the age of only 57, he had to learn how to be 'Arold'. Written by his daughter, Susannah Corbett, an actor herself, this is the first biography of Harry H. Corbett, the man who was once described as being 'the English Marlon Brando'.

In this long overdue and affectionate salute, celebrated comedy historian Robert Ross pays tribute to some of the finest, funniest and most fascinating names in comedy from both sides of the Atlantic. Monty Python's Terry Jones wrote the foreword. With the passionate input of such comics as Tim Brooke-Taylor, Hattie Hayridge, Roy Hudd, Michael Palin, Ross Noble, Chris Addison and Bernard Cribbins, Ross honours these legends of humor who, for a variety of reasons, didn't quite reach the heady heights of stardom or, once they had, couldn't cope with the pressures. Whether it is a favorite from the distant smoke- and ale-stained world of the Music Hall like the great George Robey, or the downbeat poetry of Hovis Presley, who dropped disenchanting bombs on the late 1990s, Forgotten Heroes of Comedy will finally elevate them to the Hall of Fame where they belong. Forgotten, no longer. UK Joe Baker UK Eric Barker UK Alfie Bass UK Michael Bates India (to English parents) David Battley UK Michael Bentine UK Harold Berens UK Willie Best USA Alec Bregonzi UK Michael Ward UK Douglas Byng UK Marti Caine UK Esmá Cannon Australia (but moved to UK) Patrick Cargill UK Jimmy Clitheroe UK Danny Ross UK Billy Dainty UK Janet Davies UK Florence Desmond UK Jerry Desmonde UK Eddie Leslie UK Maidie Dickson UK Charlie Drake UK Jimmy Edwards UK Gus Elen UK Ray Ellington UK Dick Emery UK Pierre Etaix France Barry Evans UK Mario Fabrizi UK Doug Fisher UK Ronald Frankau UK Leslie Fuller UK Dustin Gee UK Peter Glaze UK Tommy Godfrey UK Harry Locke UK Ken Goodwin UK Bernard Gorcey Russia (died USA) Bert Gordon USA Monsewer' Eddie Gray UK Raymond Griffith USA Deryck Guyler UK Brian Hall UK Lloyd Hamilton USA Arthur Haynes UK Richard Hearne UK Dickie Henderson UK Gerard Hoffnung Germany (died UK) Shemp Howard USA Nat Jackley UK Rex Jameson UK Spike Jones USA John Junkin UK Dave King UK Roy Kinnear UK Dennis Kirkland UK Patsy Knox USA Debbie Linden UK Hugh Lloyd UK Malcolm McFee UK Moore Marriott UK Graham Moffatt UK Ray Martine UK Zeppo Marx USA Glenn Melvyn UK Eric Merriman UK Christopher Mitchell UK Albert Modley UK Robert Moreton UK Gladys Morgan UK Lily Morris UK Richard Murdoch UK Tom E. Murray USA David Nixon UK Larry Noble UK Ole Olsen USA Chic Johnson USA Ken Platt UK Sandy Powell UK Vince Powell UK Hovis Presley UK Cardew Robinson UK Joe E. Ross USA Patsy Rowlands UK Derek Roy UK Derek Royle UK Leslie Sarony UK Larry Semon USA Ronald Shiner UK Johnnie Silver USA Dennis Spicer UK Larry Stephens UK Jake Thackray UK Thelma Todd USA Jack Train UK Karl Valentin Germany Liesl Karlstadt Germany Norman Vaughan UK Tom Walls UK Ralph Lynn UK Elsie and Doris Waters UK Rita Webb UK John Wells UK George and Kenneth Western UK Gordon Wharmby UK Bert Wheeler USA Robert Woolsey USA Albert Whelan Australia (died UK) Robb Wilton UK Mike and Bernie Winters UK Georgie Wood UK Dolly Harmer UK Harry Worth UK Mario Zampi Italy (died UK)

Now a major, prime-time six-part series Grantchester for ITV Sidney Chambers, the Vicar of Grantchester, is a thirty-two year old bachelor. Sidney is an unconventional clergyman and can go where the police cannot. Together with his roguish friend Inspector Geordie Keating, Sidney inquires into the suspect suicide of a Cambridge solicitor, a scandalous jewellery theft at a New Year's Eve dinner party, the unexplained death of a well-known jazz promoter and a shocking art forgery, the disclosure of which puts a close friend in danger. Sidney discovers that being a detective, like being a clergyman, means that you are never off duty... Sidney Chambers will be played by James Norton (Death Comes to Pemberley), and Robson Green (Reckless) will take on the role of Geordie Keating. Other cast members include Morven Christie (Twenty Twelve) as the beautiful heiress Amanda Kendall, while Tessa Peake-Jones (Only Fools and Horses) will play Sidney's housekeeper, and Kacey Ainsworth (Eastenders) is to join them as Geordie's wife.

Sid 'One-Punch' Luft, amateur-boxer, producer and Judy Garland's third husband was the one man in her life who stuck around, helping her achieve a meteoric comeback in the 1960s. It was Luft who reversed the fortunes of an apparently faded career, seeing her triumph at Carnegie Hall, in 'A Star Is Born' and 'The Judy Garland Show'. Previously unpublished, Sid Luft's intimate autobiography tells their story in hard-boiled yet elegant prose. It begins on a fateful night in New York City when the not-quite-divorced Judy and the not-quite-divorced Sid meet at Billy Reed's Little Club. A straight-talking sharp shooter, Sid fell for Judy hard and fast and the romance persisted through separations, reconciliations, and later divorce. However, her drug dependencies and suicidal tendencies put a tremendous strain on the relationship. Sid did not complete his memoir; it ended in 1960 after Judy hired David Begelman and Freddie Fields to manage her career. But Randy L. Schmidt, acclaimed editor of Judy Garland on Judy Garland, seamlessly pieced together the final section of the book from extensive interviews with Sid, most previously unpublished. Despite everything, Sid never stopped loving Judy and never forgave himself for not being able to save her from the demons that ultimately drove her to an early death at age forty-seven in 1969. Sid served as chief conservator of the Garland legacy until his death at the age of eighty-nine in 2005. This is his testament to the love of his life. 'In prose so brassy that it bruises the sensibilities, Luft... illuminates the dark side of life in the spotlight and dispels any sentimental illusions about the glories of show business in Hollywood's classic age.' - The New Yorker

Best known for Dad's Army, in which his Sergeant Wilson played the languid, rakish foil to Arthur Lowe's pompous, chippy Captain Mainwaring, John Le Mesurier was one of Britain's favourite and most recognisable character actors. The epitome of insouciance and languor on screen, in real life this charming, quietly-spoken bon viveur was plagued

by private turmoil and heartbreak. Married three times, he saw his first wife succumb to alcoholism, his second – the comedy diva Hattie Jacques – move her lover into the family home, and his third enjoy a passionate dalliance with troubled comic Tony Hancock. As Graham McCann reveals in this fully authorised and moving biography, as an actor John Le Mesurier was a key ingredient in the success of Britain's greatest sitcom, but as a man he was far more courageous than Sergeant Wilson was ever meant to be.

The World Was My Lobster tells the story of George Cole's more than 70 years in the acting profession that began with a walk-on part at the age of 14 in the stage musical The White Horse Inn in 1939, and continues today having included such roles as David Bliss in radio's A Life of Bliss, Flash Harry in the St. Trinian's films, and Arthur Daley in television's Minder.

'Essential' DAILY MAIL CELEBRITY BIOGRAPHIES OF THE YEAR 'The book reads like it's Bernard sitting down and telling a story' Steve Wright, BBC Radio 2 'A fitting celebration of one of our most versatile and enduring acting talents' Sunday Express 'A rollicking good read - charming, unassuming and full of amiable, homespun wit' The Oldie The long-awaited autobiography of national treasure Bernard Cribbins. Bernard Cribbins's life has been an eventful one. In 1943, he left school aged fourteen and joined Oldham Repertory Company where he earned fifteen bob for a seventy-hour week. After being called up for National Service in 1946 he became a paratrooper and spent several months in Palestine being shot at. On returning home, and to the theatre, Bernard was eventually approached by George Martin, then an A&R man for Parlophone Records, who suggested he made a record. Just months away from producing The Beatles, Martin asked Bernard to come to Abbey Road Studios in north London and, after teaching him how to sing into a microphone, they eventually recorded two hit singles - 'The Hole in the Ground' and 'Right Said Fred'. These, together with appearances in now classic films such as Two Way Stretch and The Wrong Arm of the Law (not to mention a certain television programme called Jackanory), catapulted Bernard to stardom and, by the time he started filming The Railway Children in 1970, he was already a national treasure. Since then, Bernard's CV has been an A-Z of the best entertainment that Britain has to offer, and, thanks to programmes such as the aforementioned Jackanory, The Wombles, and, more recently, Old Jack's Boat, he has become the voice of many millions of childhoods. Seventy-five years in the making and packed with entertaining anecdotes, Bernard Who? tells the wonderful story of one of the longest and most celebrated careers in show business.

A stirring new portrait of one of the most important black leaders of the twentieth century introduces readers to the fiery woman who inspired generations of activists. (Social Science)

At last - the definitive biography of Charles Hawtrey! From Wes Butters, Sony award winning broadcaster and author of Kenneth Williams Unseen, comes an extensively researched and compelling book almost fifteen years in the making, featuring scores of exclusive interviews, including Hawtrey's inner circle and surviving descendents, never-before-seen photographs, and private documents and correspondence. The result is the first definitive account of a life Hawtrey himself was keen to see evaporate into the mist of history. Years before, Hawtrey started out as a child actor in silent films, he was England's leading boy soprano and worked alongside a positive who's who of the thirties and forties. He had directed films and produced West End shows, starred in three hit TV series and was a prolific radio actor for the BBC. Yet he was never content and spent his life desperately searching for stardom and success, which, in his own deluded way of thinking, always failed to live up to expectations. He wasn't the least bit interested in his reputation or leaving a legacy, growing old disgracefully in Deal, the Kent seaside town he lived in for the last twenty years of his life: collapsing in pubs; swearing at autograph-hunting children; and, taking home teenage rent boys (one of whom set fire to Hawtrey's cottage, with Hawtrey still inside it). He died in 1988. Nine people were at his funeral. Little did anyone know, back in 1958 when the first Carry On film, Carry on Sergeant, was produced by Peter Rogers and directed by Gerald Thomas, that 50 years and 31 films later Carry On would have become such a well-loved British comedy institution, and one that continues to have people rolling in the aisles. And what better way to celebrate Carry On's 50th anniversary in 2008 than to dazzle Carry On fans with this incredibly well-researched treasure trove of information, including technical data about each film, interesting facts about every member of the Carry On team and every conceivable statistic that you could ever imagine. With forewords by Carry On cameraman Alan Hume and actor Jack Douglas, and peppered with photographs and actors' anecdotes and memories, this book is an absolute must for every Carry On aficionado.

Republished to mark Antony Sher's sixtieth birthday. This is his "human, funny, nakedly direct memoir."

This title leads readers to the best in the USA's number two destination state, from South Florida and the Gulf Coast to Central Florida and the great north. It covers all the top attractions: Miami and South Beach, the Everglades, the Keys, Daytona Beach, and the worlds number one vacation destination - Orlando and its theme parks.

Sunderland! Thirteen hundred years ago it was the greatest center of learning in the whole of Christendom and the very cradle of English consciousness. In the time of Lewis Carroll it was the greatest shipbuilding port in the world. To this city that gave the world the electric light bulb, the stars and stripes, the millennium, the Liberty Ships and the greatest British dragon legend came Carroll in the years preceding his most famous book, Alice in Wonderland, and here are buried the roots of his surreal masterpiece. Enter the famous Edwardian palace of varieties, The Sunderland Empire, for a unique experience: an entertaining and epic meditation on myth, history and storytelling and decide for yourself — does Sunderland really exist?

In this new publication, Kenneth Connor's son, Jeremy Connor, recalls many of the unique experiences that he shared with his much-loved father. At the same time, readers are given an engaging glimpse into life behind-the-scenes on many of the productions Kenneth worked on. With a foreword by Jeffrey Holland, and recollections from many of Kenneth's friends and colleagues, Life with Kenneth Connor offers a fascinating and personal insight into the actor who passed away in November 1993.

Benny Hill's saucy smirks at underdressed women are relished the world over. Yet the comedian cut an unlikely figure of global admiration: unmarried and emotionally enfeebled in his few relationships, he

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was a deeply private individual uninterested in the trappings of success, a frugal man content to live in his humble childhood home flooded, freezing and burgled while his building society account bulged with millions of pounds he didn't use and hadn't wanted to earn. Funny, Peculiar is the first objective and full account of Benny Hill's life and work. Tenaciously researched and yet sensitively reported, it charts the highs, lows and many paradoxes of a man whose professional strengths-observation, impression and mime-bought him unimagined success, and whose weakness, especially an inability to change, fashioned his ultimate downfall. - First in-depth biography since Benny's death in April 1992. - A return to favour with audiences who are jaded with 'alternative comedy'. - Existing biographies are unreliable, lightweight and out of date. - Benny has been screened in 109 countries, and enjoyed for over 50 years

'It's pretty rare to come across a motor racing book that tempts you to read the thing in one sitting but "Prof" Watkins has produced a gem ... [he] is a superb raconteur, not afraid to speak his mind yet peppering the gravity with occasionally side-splitting humour. No true motorsport fan should be without this book.' Autosport Grand Prix racing has undergone sweeping changes in the last thirty years. Many of these involve safety and medical rescue. The man behind them - a champion in the racing world although he has never won a race - is the eminent neurosurgeon Sid Watkins. Life at the Limit is his remarkable story. It spans the most exciting years in Grand Prix racing and includes intimate portraits of motorsport's greatest names, from Jackie Stewart and Niki Lauda to Alain Prost and Damon Hill. Sid Watkins has also witnessed, at first hand, some of the most severe and spectacular racing accidents. His account of these is made all the more poignant by the fact that some of the men he has rescued, sometimes at the point of death, have been personal friends. From Monza, in 1978, where Ronnie Petersen suffered a fatal accident, to Imola in May 1994 where Ayrton Senna met his untimely death, the high, and low, points of Grand Prix racing are vividly described. For all fans of Formula One, this is the inside story of the world's most dangerous sport.

Spontaneous, hilarious, irrepressible and, of course, trailblazing - Kenny Everett was revolutionary in television and radio comedy. Chris Evans, Chris Moyles, Rob Brydon and Steve Wright have all cited Kenny as a huge influence on their work - even the great Spike Milligan called him a genius. It was Kenny who developed the radio show format with which we are so familiar today: a mix of music, jingles, funny voices and sound effects. When he seamlessly made the move to television in the seventies, he created unforgettable characters such as Sid Snot, Cupid Stunt and Marcel Wave. Rarely seen without a smile on his face in public, in reality, Kenny was a deeply insecure man who suffered severe bouts of depression. He also struggled with his sexuality, only coming out to the public in 1985. Diagnosed with HIV in 1987, Kenny died in 1995. This in-depth and affectionate biography has been fully authorised by Kenny's family and contains original interviews with Kenny's sister, Kate and with his former wife, Lee, as well as entertainment figures such as Barry Cryer, Cliff Richard, Chris Tarrant and Paul Gambaccini. Packed with fabulous stories about the highs and lows of Kenny's life, his great friendships with The Beatles and Freddie Mercury, this is a book that any fan of comedy and entertainment must read.

Everyone thinks they know Sid James – the Carry On star and womaniser, who drank himself to death after the end of his affair with Barbara Windsor – but despite hundreds of scandalous newspaper exposés the real story of this complex actor has never been told. Now, this fascinating biography lays bare the life of British entertainment's most lovable rogue. Featuring never-before-published correspondence with Sid's friends, family and colleagues, and exclusive tales from his inner circle, Robert Ross shows how a Jewish boy from South Africa grew up to become the archetypal wise-cracking cockney, and explores the many facets of a man who was variously a war hero, serial seducer, inveterate gambler and comic icon.

Sid James: A Biography Random House

Through my grandmother's eyes, I can see clearly The way things used to be, The way things ought to be, The way things really are. Ed Cunningham Long ago, my grandma thought I should write a book about my life. For years, I wondered, "What's so special about my life?" I finally got it. I was physically very different. In this book, I tell of my many struggles and many successes. For the first time, I share my innermost thoughts on life as a triple amputee. This book is the story of my life. This book describes the life of a congenital triple amputee who overcomes incredible odds and finds happiness. This life was quite ordinary and yet, the more one reads into the story, it was nothing short of extraordinary.

This is a small masterpiece of biographical investigation, and fitting testament to a comic genius whose place in British cultural history is now assured. Charles Hawtrey, the skinny one with the granny glasses, was everybody's favourite in the Carry Ons - but who exactly was he? Up to now the man has remained a mystery. Examining Hawtrey's origins as a child star and performer in revue and the Will Hay films, this wonderful little book looks at his career in radio and television, and then to the sad and slow decline of a belligerent recluse on the Kent coast. The high camp exuberance of his acting gave way to bitterness and alcoholism and if you asked Hawtrey for an autograph he'd be more likely to call the police instead. Roger Lewis's short life of Hawtrey opens out like a Chinese box to address such issues as the nature of fame, neglect, loss, sexual confusion, Drambuie, betrayal, marine bandsmen, and fine cambric knickers trimmed with lace and blue ribbon. Its moral would seem to be that you don't necessarily turn out as the person you thought you'd become.

Everyone thinks they know the Sid James story – the wife-beating womaniser who seduced his 'Carry On' leading lady, Barbara Windsor, and drank himself to death after the affair ended. Sid was certainly a lover of the flesh – be it chorus girls or race horses – but the rumours that have enlivened hundreds of newspaper exposes fail to tell the whole story of this complex actor. At turns a quiet, even-tempered family man and the ultimate lad, this book reveals every facet of his character through never before published correspondence with his family, friends and agent Michael Sullivan, forgotten press interviews and exclusive tales from Sid's inner circle including Joan Sims (Carry On co-star), Sally Gleeson (Bless This House co-star), and scriptwriter Vince Powell, who crafted three sitcoms for Sid and made him the star of Thames Television. Sid James: The Authorised Biography reveals the actor's many sides: the war hero, the saviour of Diana Dors, the seducer of his agent's wife, the reluctant broadcaster, shrewd investor, and addicted gambler. Sid, who counts Jonathan Ross, Paul Merton, Ben Elton and Frank Skinner as loyal and devoted fans, is as popular today as he ever was. And this revealing biography will captivate anyone interested in learning more about this national treasure of comic acting. Robert Ross has been writing about and researching British entertainment history for more than a decade, and he has written 15 books dedicated to the best of British comedy from Monty Python to Benny Hill. He has appeared in dozens of TV programmes including What's A Carry On? and Legends: Hattie Jacques.

Mim Lyons is a retired film actress, occasionally still recognized from her last great starring role in the late 1960s, but now more than content to restrict her performances to occasional play-readings with a group of old friends from the theatrical world. But when her agent calls out of the blue with a job offer, her husband begins to have his own

dreams and schemes about the possibility of a comeback in a role that unsettles Mim's perception of how her husband sees her - and of who she really is. As Mim struggles to preserve the quiet surface of the existence she has created away from the limelight, it becomes impossible to ignore the turmoil in the lives of those closest to her. While her friends' marriage hits the rocks, her son struggles to clean up his act, her estranged daughter floats back into her life, and her husband is suddenly rendered vulnerable, Mim gradually comes to reassess the roles she has been playing - as friend, as daughter, as mother and as wife - and to decide who exactly she wants to be.

THE HEART-WARMING AUTOBIOGRAPHY BY BARBARA WINDSOR CHRONICLING HER EARLY CHILDHOOD IN LONDON'S EAST END TO RECEIVING A DBE IN 2000

'A whopping, no-holds-barred rollercoaster of a book' Mail on Sunday `Barbara Windsor emerges from these pages as a personality both strong and sunny' Sunday Telegraph  
Born in the East End of London just before the war, Barbara Windsor made her first stage appearance at the age of 13. From her early roles as the original Carry On dolly bird to her longest role as Peggy Mitchell in the award-winning BBC drama EastEnders, her spectacular success in theatre, film and TV has made her a British icon - the Cockney kid with a dazzling smile and talent to match. Here, for the first time, she talks in depth about the people and events that have shaped her career: her lonely childhood, her doomed marriage to Ronnie Knight, her legendary affairs, how she never let her fans down whatever her personal anguish. This is the heart-warming story of a courageous woman and consummate performer who has always made sure the show goes on. 'By living up to its title alone it makes a nonsense of every other showbiz bleat 'n' brag ever put to paper' Julie Burchill 'Infinitely more interesting than the sentimental schmaltz we have read about her before' Lynn Barber, Daily Telegraph

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