

fluence is abiding, however, and the boy battles his grief, armed with the resolve to be himself. Diamond's illustrations are superb extras. (10-up)

#### **RUNNING IN CIRCLES.**

*Achim Bröger; translated by Patricia Crampton.* Morrow, \$6.95 ISBN 0-688-22119-X

Critics and readers both appreciate the German author's previous inventions. His new book is also rewarding reading but markedly different from the others, which struck the funny bone. This is a serious story of a 14-year-old boy in trouble. Jens, falsely accused of hurting an old man, perhaps fatally, escapes from the police. In desperation, he spends days in directionless flight. Jens's parents are out of touch, on vacation, and he has no hope of finding help until he gets the idea of traveling to the faraway home of a sympathetic uncle. During the long trek the youth has experiences which force him to examine his life so far. When he reaches his uncle at last, the meeting is a sad disillusionment. But that event is another step on the way to maturity and Jens goes home, to face his problem. (12-up)

#### **ORDINARY JACK.**

*Helen Cresswell.* Macmillan, \$6.95 ISBN 0-02-725540-9

The author of "The Winter of the Birds" ought to get a standing ovation when she takes the cover off her type-writer. Cresswell introduces The Bagthorpe Saga in this, the first of a trilogy. The extended Bagthorpe family are individually and collectively fascinating, thanks to their creator's insights and dashing style. The leading player in the first comedy is 11-year-old Jack. Every one of the Bagthorpes is a genius in several areas, except Jack. He has no talents at all. His irreverent Uncle Parker, seeing the boy's need to be special in some way rather than tolerated, devises The Campaign. The two soon have their relatives flummoxed with "proofs" that Jack is clairvoyant. There is no letup in the action and surprises (to say nothing of laughs) as the story careens on. It's a treat for all ages and would make a marvelous film, properly handled. (10-up)

#### **YEAR KING.**

*Penelope Farmer.* Margaret K. McElderry (Atheneum), \$6.95 ISBN 0-689-50090-4

This novel is a sorry disappointment, coming from Farmer who thrilled readers with "A Castle of Bone" and other brilliant books. The sleazy cast in her latest is headed by Lan who flees to a cottage in southwest England to escape his nagging mother but mostly to brood. Lan's life is blighted by his twin brother, Lew. Lew has a scholarship to Cambridge, girls, friends and many talents that Lan lacks. In his isolation, the

envious brother finds himself suddenly in Lew's body, excelling in athletic feats, including sex. Lan feels the temptation to kill his gregarious brother during these supernatural episodes. The crunch comes when Lan gets a girl of his own. A promiscuous American, she introduces him to amorous joys but he discovers that Lew is also her bed partner. The writing is posturing and self-indulgent, like the characters. (15-up)

#### **THE WONDERFUL STORY OF HENRY SUGAR AND SIX MORE.**

*Roald Dahl.* Knopf, \$5.95 ISBN 0-394-83604-9

Few modern writers have attracted such an appreciative audience among adults and children as Dahl. His "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" has been a hit with boys and girls for years. They will welcome the short stories in his latest collection, a book which includes the author's factual account of how he became an author and his first story, "A Piece of Cake." The latter is an astonishingly convincing fiction describing the hallucinations of a British flyer, shot down during World War II. "The Hitchhiker" tells the funny tale of a motorist who picks up a fellow who turns out to be an adroit pick-pocket, stealing everything removable from the driver without giving himself away but paying for the ride in a hilarious way. All the tales are entrancing inventions. (All ages)

**THE TOP OF THE PIZZAS.** *Bill Basso, illustrated by the author.* Dodd, Mead, \$6.50 ISBN 0-396-07463-4

Illustrated with expertly ridiculous cartoons, Basso's specialty, his new book is a broad comedy with an improbable hero. Ogre is so named because he is an ogre, a hideous man but a gentle, kindly person and a whiz at concocting pizzas. He has a good job, working in the kitchen of a thriving restaurant, until the day when a prominent party-giver, Mrs. Worthington Flaunt, meets the chef, to pay her compliments. Horrified she spreads the word that an ogre is behind the scenes at the eating place and Ogre is out of work. The poor fellow wanders in misery until the super of a skyscraper hires him to take the place of a missing gargoyle on top of the building. And what happens later is a wonderful change in the hero's fortunes that will make the reader as happy as Ogre and friends. (7-10)

#### **NONFICTION**

##### **SEVEN TRUE DOG STORIES.**

*Margaret Davidson. Illustrated by Susanne Suba.* Hastings House, \$5.95 ISBN 0-8038-6738-7

Meet Dox, a German Shepherd that helped to put 400 criminals behind bars during the 15 years the dog worked with the police in Turin, Italy. One of

the animal's feats was nosing out an escaped thief whose scent Dox remembered after six years. On the other hand, Grip was a dog who enjoyed a long career as a highway robber, 300 years ago in London. His master, Tom, taught the dog to snatch purses from passersby, the unwary attracted to the frisky canine. All went merry as a wedding bell for Tom and Grip until the master wound up in jail and the dog was homeless. It's sort of nice to know that Grip was finally adopted by a minister. Dox and Grip are two of the dogs Davidson tells about here, in a delightful book enhanced by Suba's illuminating pictures. Bibliography, index. (7-11)

##### **MIRACLE AT MIDWAY.**

*Charles Mercer.* Putnam, \$6.95 ISBN 0-399-20612-4

Mercer's book is remarkable for more reasons than one. He writes with clarity and feeling for large events, he presents the people who were part of history as human beings and he tells what he knows frankly. Thus the author brings World War II in the Pacific to life much more effectively than those who produce textbooks or official reports. Giving the background for the attack on Pearl Harbor, Mercer describes the confusion and heartbreak that followed. Of all the heroes among those who made the American victory a "Miracle at Midway," Rear Admiral Spruance comes through in this account as the most respected and attractive. The Battle of the Coral Seas and the exploits of the American fleet are recreated with all the tensions and terrors of the time. Maps, photos and an index, plus the author's acknowledgments, are instructive extras. (12-up)

##### **A TIME TO KEEP.**

*Tasha Tudor, illustrated by the author.* Rand McNally, \$5.95 ISBN 0-528-82019-2

The author-illustrator has been creating phenomenal best sellers for over 30 years, and her latest is sure to be no exception. Among the lovely, softly colored paintings that decorate her recollections of family holidays is a picture of Tudor herself, and her grandchild, who wants to know what life was like when "Mummy" was a child. That's something that all little ones ask and they will love exploring the long ago as described here in text and scenes of New England seasons. A happy New Year meant a bonfire and a feast. Twelfth Night was children racing sleighs, pulled by goats, and charades in the evening. All the special days of the year, including family birthdays, were enthusiastically celebrated in simpler but unarguably more memorable and satisfying ways than they are today, except by the Tudors who cling to traditions. (4-8)