NAXOS
AudioBooks

CLASSIC FICTION

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

The Complete Sherlock Holmes

Read by **David Timson**

THE COMPLETE CLASSICS

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picture: Hemesh Alles

Sir Arthur
Conan Doyle

A Study in Scarlet

Read by
David Timson

1	PART 1: Being a reprint from the Reminiscences of John H. Watson M.D. Mr Sherlock Holmes	4:14
2	Standing in the Criterion Bar	5:49
3	‘Dr Watson, Mr Sherlock Holmes…’	8:06
4	The Science of Deduction	4:26
5	His ignorance was as remarkable as his knowledge.	7:21
6	It was upon the 4th of March…	11:27
7	The Lauriston Garden Mystery	5:55
8	It was a foggy, cloudy morning…	4:42
9	A short passage, bare-planked and dusty…	5:24
10	‘We have it all here,’ said Gregson…	9:03
11	What John Rance Had to Tell	7:35
12	Audley Court was not an attractive locality.	9:04
13	Our Advertisement Brings a Visitor	8:20
14	As he spoke there was a sharp ring at the bell.	8:12
15	Tobias Gregson Shows What He Can Do	5:53
16	There was a violent peal at the bell…	6:43
17	‘Mr Drebber has been with us nearly three weeks…’	8:03
18	Light in the Darkness	4:41
19	There was something so methodical and so incomprehensible…	7:23
20	Sherlock Holmes drew a long breath…	5:16
21	Gregson and Lestrade seemed to be far from satisfied…	4:02

22	PART 2: The Country of the Saints: The Great Alkali Plain	6:44
23	‘You’ve hurt me,’ said a childish voice, reproachfully.	7:41
24	Had the wanderer remained awake…	4:04
25	On the little plateau which crowned the barren hill…	7:31
26	The Flower of Utah	6:52
27	It was a warm June morning…	9:47
28	John Ferrier Talks with the Prophet	4:34
29	One fine morning…	8:23
30	A Flight for Life	4:30
31	It was, indeed, high time…	6:23
32	Outside all was calm and quiet.	10:40
33	The Avenging Angels	6:34
34	He had now come to the mouth of the very defile…	8:45
35	The prediction of the Mormon was only too well fulfilled.	7:51
36	A Continuation of the Reminiscences of John Watson, M.D.	6:11
37	With these words Jefferson Hope leaned back…	6:21
38	‘The moment for which I had waited so long had at last come.’	5:32
39	‘It was nearer one…’	7:12
40	‘That was how Enoch Debber came to his end.’	4:19
41	The Conclusion	4:48
42	‘On entering the house this last inference was confirmed.’	8:59

Total time: 66:38

picture: Hemesh Alles

Sir Arthur
Conan Doyle

The Sign of Four

Read by
David Timson

1	The Science of Deduction	6:57
2	‘My practice has extended recently to the Continent.’	5:53
3	I handed him over the watch…	6:35
4	The Statement of the Case	9:42
5	Standing at the window…	3:15
6	In Quest of a Solution	5:49
7	It was a September evening…	5:52
8	The Story of the Bald Headed Man	8:27
9	‘My father was, as you may have guessed…’	9:02
10	The little man stopped to relight his hookah…	7:38
11	The Tragedy of Pondicherry Lodge	8:01
12	At that moment the door of the house burst open…	4:39
13	It appeared to have been fitted up as a chemical laboratory.	4:14
14	Sherlock Holmes Gives a Demonstration	5:47
15	The chamber in which we found ourselves…	5:26
16	As he spoke, the steps which had been coming nearer…	9:02
17	The Episode of the Barrel	7:10
18	Toby proved to be an ugly, long-haired, lop-eared creature…	5:51
19	The east had been gradually whitening…	9:58
20	We had during this time been following…	3:09

21	The Baker Street Irregulars	2:58
22	He was approaching the door of the house…	6:44
23	It was between eight and nine o'clock…	5:58
23	He handed them a shilling each…	5:21
25	A Break in the Chain	7:02
26	We did not, however…	3:47
27	It was a long day.	4:43
28	A heavy step was heard ascending the stair…	3:09
29	We both started in our chairs.	3:42
30	The End of the Islander	9:04
31	While this conversation had been proceeding…	4:05
32	At that moment, however…	7:02
33	The Great Agra Treasure	7:40
34	They landed me at Vauxhall…	7:30
35	The Strange Story of Jonathan Small	6:34
36	'I am a Worcestershire man myself…'	7:04
36	'The city of Agra is a great place…'	3:48
38	'The third night of my watch was dark and dirty…'	7:29
39	'In Worcestershire the life of a man…'	6:56
40	He stopped, and held out his manacled hands…	7:05

41	‘It was rather a queer position that we found ourselves in then.’	6:45
42	‘Two nights later he and his friend Captain Morstan…’	4:42
9	‘Well, gentlemen, I weary you with my long story…’	4:42
10	‘Well, if I were to tell you all the adventures…’	5:07
11	‘A very remarkable account,’ said Sherlock Holmes.	4:57

Total time: 65:16

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes

Read by **David Timson**

picture: Hemesh Alles

The Adventure of the Speckled Band

1	Early morning in Baker Street	4:07
2	‘It is not cold which makes me shiver...’	3:54
3	‘My name is Helen Stoner...’	8:19
4	‘I could not sleep that night…’	7:15
5	‘This is a very deep business...’	3:14
6	A huge man and an iron bar	3:50
7	A will, and a journey to Stoke Moran	13:26
8	I have never seen my friend’s face look so grim…	6:37
9	A night visit to the Manor House	3:14
10	A dreadful vigil	5:40
11	Such are the true facts…	4:29

The Adventure of the Stock-Broker’s Clerk

12	At my practice in Paddington	5:37
13	Mr Hall Pycroft	10:54
14	Next day, I was off to Birmingham…’	9:08
15	To the company’s offices	6:48
16	‘Pooh! All that is clear enough,’ said Holmes impatiently.	8:40

The Adventure of the Copper Beeches

17 Breakfast at Baker Street 6:52
18 Miss Violet Hunter begins her story 8:17
19 A persuasive letter 5:30
20 A prediction fulfilled 2:14
21 Miss Hunter's account of curious happenings 7:44
22 'I shall try not to miss anything of importance.' 7:07
23 'The warning was no idle one…' 5:51
24 In the deserted rooms 9:19
25 We reach the Copper Beeches 5:19
26 Mrs Toller explains 3:44

The Adventure of the Red-Headed League

27 An elderly gentleman with fiery red hair… 7:04
28 Mr Jabez Wilson laughed heavily… 5:27
29 The Red-Headed League 10:11
30 Abbots, Archery, Armour, Architecture – and a curt announcement 7:58
31 A visit to Saxe-Coburg Square 3:52
32 A concert before the crime 7:06
33 Down in the dark cellar 6:20
34 A lurid spark 3:56
35 'You see, Watson…' 5:16

A Scandal in Bohemia

36	To Holmes, she is always the woman.	8.21
37	A letter by the last post – a new case	4:48
38	A large man enters No 221b Baker Street	5:40
39	The background of Irene Adler, adventuress	6:22
40	At three o'clock precisely I was at Baker Street.	5:21
41	'The church of St Monica – and drive like the devil'	8:03
42	In Serpentine Street, in front of Briony Lodge	4:39
43	Holmes is carried into Briony Lodge	6:17
44	The King of Bohemia and Holmes face an unexpected conclusion	8:24

The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb

45	The case of Mr Hatherley's thumb	5:42
46	He unwound the handkerchief and held out his hand.	3:41
47	Sherlock Holmes, the agony column and the before-breakfast pipe	6:01
48	The emaciated German states his fee and demands	5:53
49	'I threw all fears to the winds…'	5:26
50	'A vague feeling of uneasiness began to steal over me.'	5:22
51	Within the hydraulic press	5:11
52	Help at hand	5:20
53	Sherlock Holmes takes up the case	4:33
54	A gigantic column of smoke	4:52

The Five Orange Pips

55	A case remarkable in detail and startling in result	4:53
56	A visitor, an anxious young man	2:32
57	‘My name is John Openshaw…’	8:25
58	Holmes interposes	6:04
59	Five little dried orange pips	6:38
60	Sherlock Holmes sat for some time in silence	7:22
61	‘Have you never heard of the Ku Klux Klan?’	3:47
62	‘Holmes,‘ I cried, ‘You are too late.’	9:06

The Adventure of Silver Blaze

63	The disappearance of Silver Blaze	6:15
64	The precautions taken	8:37
65	The police action	4:25
66	Arrival at the little town of Tavistock	4:53
67	Holmes leaned back in the carriage…	8:09
68	‘It’s this way, Watson…’	5:13
69	A bully cowed	7:19
70	The race for the Wessex Cup	6:03
71	In the corner of a Pullman car, Holmes explains	8:31

The Adventure of the Man with the Twisted Lip

72	An addiction to opium	8:46
73	‘Walk past me, and then look back at me.’	7:05
74	The facts of the case of Neville St Clair	9:30
75	‘Mrs St Clair had fainted at the sight of blood…’	4:18
76	The outskirts of Lee	10:16
77	A large and comfortable double-bedded room…	3:50
78	‘It has been in some points a singular case,’ said Holmes…	7:13
79	‘You are the first who have ever heard my story.’	7:48

The Adventure of the Musgrave Ritual

80	A Most Untidy Man	4:58
81	A Small Wooden Box	6:24
82	Reginald Musgrave tells his story	8:02
83	‘“For two days after this, Brunton was most assiduous…”’	4:43
84	‘You can imagine, Watson, with what eagerness I listened…’	4:13
85	‘The same afternoon saw us both at Hurlstone.’	4:46
86	Simple calculations	5:58
87	Need for thought	10:23

The Adventure of the Cardboard Box

88 A Fair Field For His Talents 7:17
89 Miss Sarah Cushing, of Cross Street, Croydon?' 3:21
90 Croydon, Inspector Lestrade and Miss Cushing 8:02
91 'I have a few questions to ask Miss Cushing…' 6:28
92 A Stradivarius Purchased For Fifty-five Shillings 10:34
93 Two days later he received a bulky envelope… 2:44
94 A Clean Breast of it 9:12
95 Misery and Ruin 6:24

The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle

96 I had called upon my friend, Sherlock Holmes…' 7:13
97 'I can see nothing,' said I… 6:11
98 'The Goose,' Mr Holmes, 'The Goose'… 9:06
99 A Tall Man in a Scotch Bonnet 4:52
100 'Follow up this clue while it is still hot.' 7:49
101 A Hearty Noiseless Laugh 6:17
102 'The game's up Ryder,' said Holmes quietly. 4:40
103 The Pick of Her Geese 5:30

A Case of Identity

104 ‘My dear fellow, said Sherlock Holmes… 6:44
105 Miss Mary Sutherland Enters 4:37
106 Miss Sutherland tells her story 10:35
107 Sherlock Holmes considers the matter 7:55
108 I return to Baker Street.… 5:31
109 Our visitor collapsed into a chair… 8:59

The Adventure of the Crooked Man

110 One summer night, a few months after my marriage… 6:07
111 ‘The facts are only two days old.’ 11:44
112 ‘Having gathered these facts, Watson…’ 7:22
113 Miss Morrison’s Statement 6:13
114 At the scene of the tragedy 5:55
115 ‘My way ran down a dried-up watercourse…’ 7:38

The Adventure of the Naval Treaty

116 The July which immediately succeeded my marriage… 4:53
117 Holmes was seated at his side-table… 5:29
118 ‘I won’t waste your time,’ said he… 7:27
119 ‘The commissionaire, seeing by my pale face…’ 7:06
120 ‘Then for the first time the horror of my situation…’ 8:55
121 Mr Joseph Harrison drove us down to the station…’ 5:10
122 It was twenty past three when we reached our terminus… 8:44
123 I met him accordingly next morning… 9:42
124 It was arranged as he suggested… 6:16
125 It was seven o’clock when I awoke… 7:02
126 ‘The night was fine, but still it was a very weary vigil.’ 8:41

The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter

127 During my long and intimate acquaintance with… 6:56
128 Mycroft Holmes was a much larger and stouter man than Sherlock. 4:10
129 A few minutes later we were joined by… 6:50
130 ‘As he spoke, he opened a door…’ 7:03
131 ‘I was hurried through the hall and into the vehicle…’ 6:05
132 We had reached our house in Baker Street… 3:11
133 Our hope was that, by taking the train… 5:08
134 It was a simple story which he had to tell… 4:17

The Adventure of the Reigate Squire

135	It was some time before the health of my friend…	5:15
136	It was destined, however…	2:52
137	‘Inspector Forrester, sir.’	5:21
138	An hour and a half had elapsed…	3:56
139	We passed the pretty cottage…	7:13
140	A stone-flagged passage…	6:18
141	Sherlock Holmes was as good as his word…	7:51
142	‘And now I have to consider the motive…’	6:10

The Boscombe Valley Mystery

143	We were seated at breakfast…	3:32
144	‘Boscombe Valley is a country district’	9:43
145	He picked out from his bundle…	7:09
146	It was nearly four o’clock…	6:32
147	I walked down to the station with them…	6:29
148	There was no rain…	4:51
149	The Boscombe Pool…	6:16
150	Having left Lestrade at his rooms…	5:30
151	The man who entered was…	3:49
152	‘It was in the early ‘60s at the diggings.’	8:02

The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet

153 ‘Holmes,’ said I… 6:00
154 ‘It is, of course, well known to you…’ 6:22
155 ‘And now a word as to my household…’ 7:51
156 ‘I come to a part of my story now…’ 5:40
157 Sherlock Holmes sat silent for some few minutes… 5:00
158 Fairbank was a good-sized house… 6:25
159 The banker’s dressing-room… 4:10
160 It was obvious to me that my companion’s mind… 2:42
161 I waited until midnight… 7:07
162 ‘I will tell you, then, what occurred…’ 7:04
163 ‘It is an old maxim of mine…’ 5:00

The Adventure of the Yellow Face

164 In publishing these short sketches… 7:14
165 An instant later our door opened… 4:30
166 ‘I’ll tell you what I know about Effie’s history.’ 4:06
167 ‘Well, last Monday evening I was taking a stroll…’ 6:46
168 ‘I should have gone to the city that day…’ 6:09
169 ‘It was all still and quiet upon the ground floor…’ 2:47
170 Holmes and I had listened with the utmost interest… 6:53
171 He was waiting on the platform… 4:59
172 ‘That is John Hebron of Atlanta…’ 5:28

The Adventure of the 'Gloria Scott'

173	'I have some papers here,' said my friend…	5:21
174	'One evening, shortly after my arrival…'	5:08
175	'On the very day, however…'	3:40
176	'All this occurred during the first month…'	3:16
177	'"Well, matters went from bad to worse…"'	4:10
178	'My friend ascended with the doctor…'	5:50
179	'These are the very papers, Watson…'	7:18
180	'That was his style of talk…'	7:39
181	'And now I come to the most surprising part…'	6:51

The Adventure of the Resident Patient

182	In glancing over the somewhat incoherent…	6:37
183	'I am compelled, to begin with…'	4:58
184	'Some weeks ago, Blessington came down…'	5:29
185	'Well, I never thought I should see anything…'	4:16
186	Within a quarter of an hour…	6:39
187	Sherlock Holmes' prophesy was soon fulfilled…	5:25
188	He went over to the door…	4:28
189	'I'll be back by three...'	3:59

The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor

190 The Lord St Simon marriage… 5:23
191 He picked a red-covered volume from a line… 4:45
192 ‘Such as they are, they are set forth…’ 3:44
193 ‘Lord Robert St Simon.’ 5:16
194 He opened a locket… 4:47
195 Lord St Simon shrugged his shoulders… 3:47
196 ‘It is very good of Lord St Simon to honour my head…’ 7:37
197 It was after five o’clock… 5:22
198 ‘Frank here and I met in ’84…’ 6:59
199 Lord St Simon had by no means relaxed… 7:10

The Adventure of the Final Problem

200	It is with a heavy heart…	5:33
201	There was something very strange in all this.	3:38
202	‘He is the Napoleon of crime, Watson.’	3:35
203	I was sitting in my room…	6:34
204	‘That was my singular interview with Professor Moriarty.’	4:58
205	In the morning I obeyed Holmes’ injunction…	3:15
206	The train had already begun to move…	4:23
207	We made our way to Brussels that night…	4:41
208	I shall be brief and yet exact…	4:39
209	It may have been a little over an hour…	3:31
210	But it was destined that I should…	5:07

Total time on CD 26: 50:01

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

The Hound of the Baskervilles

Read by **David Timson**

picture: Hemesh Alles

1 Mr Sherlock Holmes, who was usually very late in the mornings… 3:59
2 He now took the stick from my hands… 3:23
3 I laughed incredulously… 2:59
4 The appearance of our visitor was a surprise to me… 4:42
5 ‘I have in my pocket a manuscript.’ 2:23
6 ‘Of the origin of the Hound of the Baskervilles…’ 4:07
7 ‘Now, for some space the revellers stood agape…’ 5:07
8 When Dr Mortimer had finished reading… 3:21
9 ‘The facts of the case are simple.’ 3:02
10 ‘I must thank you,’ said Sherlock Holmes… 2:57
11 ‘I can well remember…’ 3:36
12 I confess at these words a shudder passed through me. 3:19
13 Sherlock Holmes struck his hand against his knee… 4:20
14 ‘Why should he not go to the home of his fathers?’ 3:09
15 Holmes returned to his seat… 4:39
16 ‘It must be a wild place.’ 3:51
17 Our breakfast-table was cleared early… 4:13
18 Dr Mortimer looked at Holmes… 4:30
19 ‘We are coming now rather into the region of guesswork.’ 3:58
20 ‘And, now, gentlemen…’ 3:29

21	We heard the steps of our visitors descend…	2:25
22	‘There now!’ said Holmes bitterly…	2:42
23	We had been sauntering slowly down Regent Street…	3:37
24	Sherlock Holmes had, in a very remarkable degree…	4:57
25	We had a pleasant luncheon…	5:13
26	‘Well, Sir Henry, I am of one mind with you…’	4:44
27	The ring at the bell proved to be something…	5:54
28	Sir Henry Baskerville and Dr Mortimer…	4:29
29	The journey was a swift and pleasant one…	4:00
30	The wagonette swung round into a side road…	3:23
31	We had left the fertile country behind…	3:51
32	The wheels died away down the drive…	3:09
33	A square balustraded gallery ran round the top…	4:10
34	The fresh beauty of the following morning…	6:08
35	Suddenly my thoughts were interrupted…	4:32
36	We had come to a point where a narrow grassy path…	4:28
37	‘Halloa!’ I cried. ‘What is that?’	4:00
38	I could not doubt that this was the Miss Stapleton…	3:39
39	A short walk brought us to it.	3:58
40	It seems, however, that there must have been some short cut…	4:41

41	From this point onward…	4:34
42	He came over to call upon Baskerville…	4:22
43	One other neighbour I have met since I wrote last.	3:36
44	Mrs Barrymore is of interest to me.	3:40
45	Baskerville Hall, October 15th.	4:01
46	The baronet has been in communication…	4:13
47	Our friend, Sir Henry, and the lady…	5:53
48	I tried one or two explanations…	4:29
49	Very stealthily we heard it pass along…	4:29
50	'No, no, sir; no, not against you!'	4:05
51	When they were gone we looked out of the window again.	2:10
52	In five minutes we were outside the door…	5:07
53	We stumbled slowly along in the darkness…	3:35
54	And it was at this moment…	3:14
55	So far I have been able to quote from the reports…	5:28
56	We had a small scene this morning after breakfast.	3:03
57	With a few broken words of gratitude…	4:54
58	October 17th. All day today the rain poured down.	5:00
59	I have only one other incident to record…	4:18
60	The extract from my private diary…	4:08

61	‘It was about the late Sir Charles Baskerville…’	4:24
62	Again and again I cross-questioned her…	5:14
63	Luck had been against us again and again…	5:02
64	Here was luck indeed!	3:58
65	The sun was already sinking…	3:18
66	For a minute I stood there with the paper…	3:30
67	For a moment or two I sat breathless…	4:26
68	‘But why keep me in the dark?’	4:14
69	The shape of some monstrous villainy…	3:07
70	A terrible scream.	5:51
71	We stood with bitter hearts…	4:59
72	A figure was approaching us over the moor…	4:54
73	‘We’re at close grips at last,’ said Holmes…	3:43
74	Sir Henry was more pleased than surprised…	3:24
75	He stopped suddenly and stared fixedly…	5:26
76	I was up betimes in the morning…	3:11
77	‘One more direction!’	3:04
78	Mrs Laura Lyons was in her office…	3:42
79	The sending of this letter was suggested…	4:08
80	One of Sherlock Holmes’s defects…	4:18

81	As I watched them Stapleton rose…	4:03
82	A sound of quick steps broke the silence…	5:12
83	In mere size and strength it was a terrible creature…	3:19
84	The room had been fashioned into a small museum…	4:23
85	And now I come rapidly to the conclusion…	6:14
86	It was the end of November…	4:31
87	‘We now come to that portion of his life…’	4:10
88	‘Driving back in the evening…’	4:57
89	‘Then we had the visit from our friends…’	3:40
90	‘It was my game to watch Stapleton.’	3:03
91	‘It only remains to indicate…’	5:17

Total time: 67:21

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

The Return of Sherlock Holmes

Read by **David Timson**

picture: Hemesh Alles

1	**The Adventure of the Empty House**	3:09
2	All day as I drove upon my round…	3:43
3	A minute examination of the circumstances…	3:42
4	I had not been in my study five minutes…	3:10
5	He sat opposite to me…	3:01
6	It came about in this way…	3:13
7	'A confederate…'	4:49
8	It was indeed like old times…	3:45
9	I crept forward and looked across…	4:10
10	At last, as midnight approached…	3:03
11	He passed close beside us…	4:56
12	'I have not introduced you yet…'	3:56
13	Our old chambers had been left unchanged…	3:08
14	He turned over the pages…	3:28
15	'When we were in Switzerland…'	4:24
16	**The Adventure of the Norwood Builder**	3:07
17	Mr Sherlock Holmes was leaning back…	3:54
18	I looked with interest upon this man…	3:57
19	Sherlock Holmes listened with closed eyes…	2:49
20	I must explain first…	3:12

21	I was shown by this woman…	5:02
22	‘It strikes me, my good Lestrade…’	3:59
23	It was late when my friend returned…	3:12
24	‘Well I tried one or two leads…’	3:03
25	‘Finally, having drawn every other cover…’	4:04
26	I do not know how far…	2:48
27	He led us through the passage…	3:16
28	Lestrade looked at Holmes…	3:40
29	Five minutes later…	3:12
30	‘What’s this then?’…	3:09
31	‘The thumb mark, Lestrade…’	3:22
32	‘It was a masterpiece of villainy…’	2:56
33	**The Adventure of the Six Napoleons**	3:41
34	‘The second case, however, was more serious…’	3:03
35	‘There are no limits to the possibilities…’	2:24
36	In half an hour…	3:11
37	I was sitting in my den…	3:56
38	The spot where the fragments…	4:45
39	Sherlock Holmes and I…	2:41
40	In rapid succession we passed through the fringe…	3:58

41	The afternoon was far advanced…	3:06
42	Sure enough, when we reached Baker Street…	5:08
43	A four-wheeler was at the door…	3:27
44	He had just completed his examination.	2:16
45	When we met again…	3:35
46	When our visitor had disappeared…	2:52
47	‘Now you clearly see…’	5:15
48	**The Adventure of the Three Students**	3:10
49	‘I must explain to you…’	3:06
50	‘Bannister was very much upset…’	3:40
51	The sitting-room of our client…	3:40
52	Mr Soames was somewhat overwhelmed…	3:27
53	‘Surely there is another alternative, Mr Holmes?’	3:08
54	‘I understand,’ said Holmes…	3:23
55	‘No names please!’	5:29
56	Holmes made no further allusion…	2:59
57	Bannister entered…	3:06
58	For a moment Gilchrist, with upraised hand…	4:51
59	‘Have I told the truth, Mr Gilchrist?’	3:52
60	**The Adventure of the Dancing Men**	4:10

61 A heavy step was heard upon the stairs… 3:54
62 ‘Well, we have been married now for a year…’ 4:51
63 The interview left Sherlock Holmes… 4:34
64 Suddenly, as she spoke… 6:11
65 So indeed, it proved… 4:43
66 Inspector Martin had the good sense to allow… 4:13
67 The study proved to be a small chamber… 4:50
68 A flower-bed extended up to the study window… 4:11
69 ‘I think that I can help you to pass an hour…’ 4:33
70 ‘Even now I was in considerable difficulty…’ 4:02
71 ‘It is a privilege to be associated with you…’ 4:43
72 ‘If Elsie dies, I care nothing what becomes of me…’ 4:27
73 A cab had driven up whilst the American… 2:24
74 **The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist** 4:01
75 My friend took the lady’s ungloved hand… 4:23
76 ‘The first flaw in my happiness…’ 4:00
77 Holmes chuckled and rubbed his hands… 4:19
78 We had ascertained from the lady… 4:20
79 Mr Sherlock Holmes listened with attention… 3:49

80	‘I found that country pub…’	4:45
81	A rainy night had been followed…	4:31
82	It was a young fellow about seventeen…	4:34
83	The strong, masterful personality of Holmes…	4:03
84	‘Your reverence need not be excited…’	6:26
85	**The Adventure of the Priory School**	3:53
86	Holmes shot out his long, thin arm…	4:18
87	‘His absence was discovered at seven o’clock…’	4:22
88	‘Well now, you do not mean to seriously suggest…’	3:29
89	That evening found us in the cold…	4:35
90	‘One more question, your Grace…’	4:16
91	‘There is an inn here, The Red Bull…’	4:03
92	The day was just breaking…	4:53
93	We continued our systematic survey…	4:17
94	‘Now Watson,’ said he…	3:41
95	As we approached the forbidding and squalid inn…	3:20
96	When we were left alone…	4:46
97	We did not go very far along the road…	4:35
98	At eleven o’clock next morning…	4:10
99	His Grace sat very stern and upright in his chair…	4:00
100	‘I appreciate your conduct in coming here…’	4:00

101 ‘The fellow was a rascal from the beginning…’ 4:50
102 ‘In the first place, your Grace…’ 5:13
103 **The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton** 4:18
104 I had seldom heard my friend speak… 4:00
105 Milverton chuckled. 2:56
106 ‘Now, you remember the sudden end…’ 3:50
107 For some days Holmes came and went at all hours… 3:09
108 ‘Exactly.’ 3:43
109 ‘It’s a business that needs delicate treatment…’ 4:17
110 No sound came from within. 4:15
111 It was evident that we had entirely miscalculated… 4:14
112 The woman, without a word, had raised her veil… 5:30
113 We had breakfasted and were smoking… 4:52
114 **The Adventure of Black Peter** 4:10
115 Our visitor was an exceedingly alert man… 3:56
116 ‘You must have read in the account…’ 4:25
117 The young inspector winced… 6:08
118 Alighting at the small wayside station… 4:08
119 It was past eleven o’clock… 3:55
120 The man pulled himself together… 6:01

121 ‘Well, Watson, what do you think of it?’ 5:03
122 There had been some talking in gruff voices… 4:17
123 ‘It’s soon told…’ 3:51
124 ‘Now I’ll tell you the queerest part…’ 4:13
125 **The Adventure of the Golden Pince-Nez** 3:53
126 When the light of the hall lamp… 4:43
127 ‘Now I will give you the evidence of Susan Tarlton…’ 3:44
128 He unfolded the rough chart… 4:13
129 Sherlock Holmes took the glasses… 4:40
130 The gale had blown itself out next day… 4:32
131 ‘Now we are making a little progress.’ 4:22
132 Holmes was pacing up and down… 3:58
133 Holmes was curiously distrait… 3:48
134 The old man had just finished his lunch… 4:49
135 I saw the old man throw up his arms… 4:47
136 The old man reached out a trembling hand… 4:59
137 She tore from the bosom of her dress… 4:04
138 **The Adventure of the Missing Three-Quarter** 4:07
139 My friend had listened with amused surprise… 5:54
140 Sherlock Holmes was a past-master… 4:24

141 There were a number of letters… 4:40
142 There was a telegraph-office… 4:20
143 It was already dark… 4:04
144 Holmes replaced the bill in his notebook. 3:51
145 ‘Could you not follow it?’ 6:38
146 I was horrified by my first glimpse of Holmes… 4:08
147 There could be no doubt… 3:44
148 Dr Armstrong took a quick step forward… 3:11
149 **The Adventure of the Abbey Grange** 4:12
150 A drive of a couple of miles… 4:54
151 At last she continued… 5:11
152 The keen interest had passed… 4:12
153 Holmes was down on his knees… 5:21
154 During our return journey… 5:21
155 The household at the Abbey Grange… 4:06
156 She was an interesting person… 4:25
157 Holmes’s card sent in to the manager… 2:37
158 Before evening, we had a visit… 3:55
159 There was a sound upon the stairs… 4:06
160 ‘Well, I never thought to see her again…’ 6:51

161	**The Adventure of the Second Stain**	4:43
162	‘That can be done in a very few words…’	4:21
163	Sherlock Holmes rose with a smile.	4:34
164	Holmes shook his head mournfully.	3:19
165	When our illustrious visitors had departed…	5:09
166	Mrs Hudson had appeared with a lady’s card…	4:05
167	‘One more question, Mr Holmes.’	3:05
168	All that day and the next…	5:32
169	‘What do you think of that, Holmes?’	4:03
170	‘What is it, then?’	4:09
171	The big constable, very hot and penitent…	4:28
172	When we arrived at the residence…	4:12
173	The butler had hardly closed the door…	4:06
174	‘What happened there, madam?’	3:02
175	‘The Prime Minister’s manner was subdued…’	4:24

Total time: 63:18

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

Reminiscences of Sherlock Holmes (His Last Bow)

Read by **David Timson**

picture: Hemesh Alles

1	**Reminiscences of Sherlock Holmes – The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge**	3:14
2	A measured step was heard on the stairs...	4:04
3	Our client had sat up with staring eyes...	4:16
4	'One thing comes back to my memory...'	3:52
5	'I am sure of it, Mr. Scott Eccles...'	3:08
6	'As to Garcia,' said Gregson....	3:31
7	We sat for some time in silence...	4:24
8	'But how about the disappearance of the others?'	3:49
9	**Part 2** The Tiger of San Pedro	4:17
10	The various bedrooms and sitting rooms...	5:27
11	I waited, therefore – but to my ever deepening disappointment...	5:36
12	'Just sit down in that chair, Watson,' said Sherlock Holmes...	4:37
13	'These two men, close and confidential friends...'	2:47
14	'Well now, Watson, let us judge the situation...'	3:40
15	But it was not destined that our investigation...	4:32
16	'Yes sir, Don Murillo, the Tiger of San Pedro...'	5:07
17	'But everything went wrong with us.'	2:57
18	We had all listened intently to this remarkable statement.	5:27
19	**The Adventure of the Bruce-Partington Plans**	4:09
20	Holmes handed me his brother's telegram.	4:03

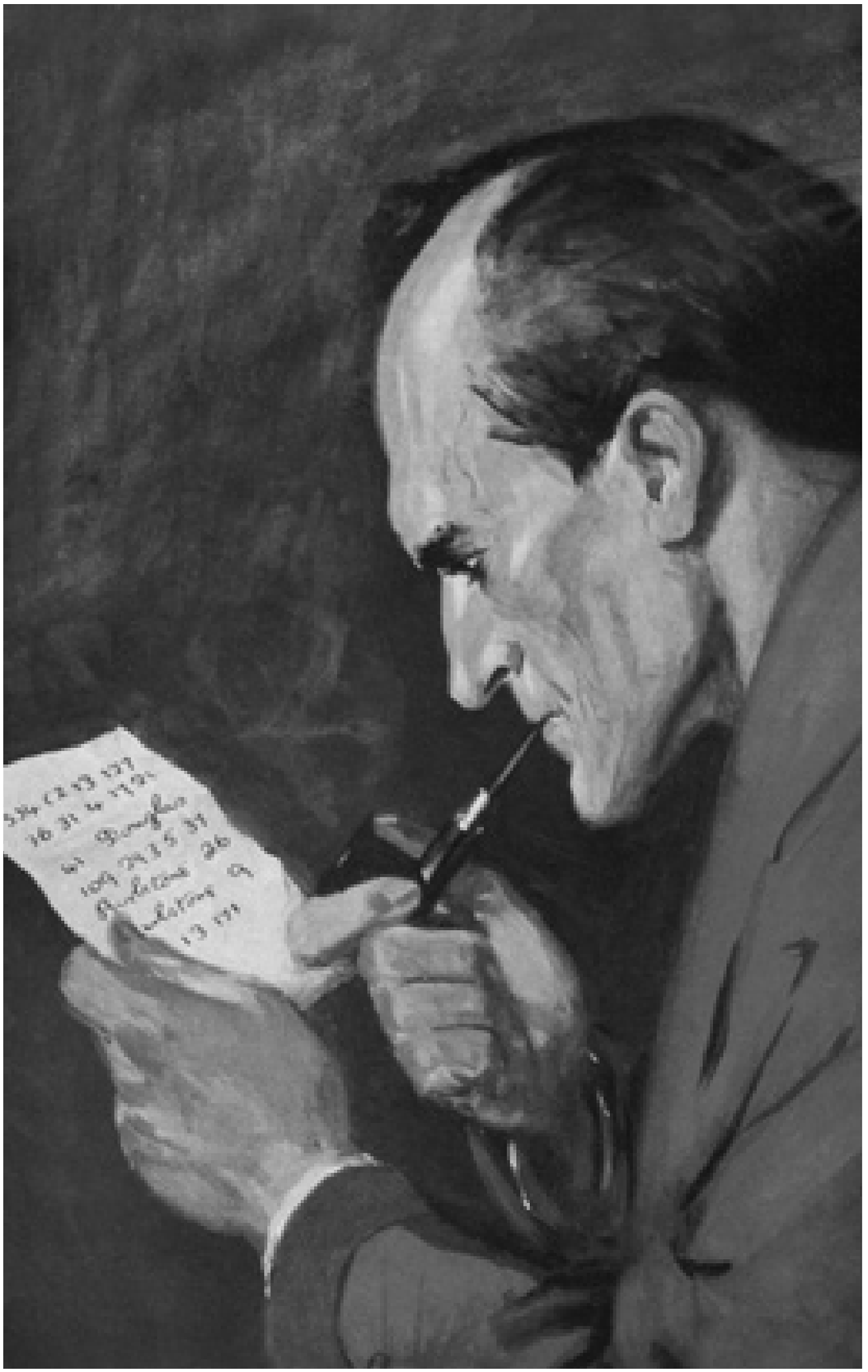
21	‘The man’s name was Arthur Cadogan West.’	3:08
22	A moment later the tall and portly form of Mycroft Holmes...	4:33
23	‘I have jotted down the more essential ones...’	3:10
24	‘We will suppose that he was travelling back...’	3:40
25	An hour later, Holmes, Lestrade and I stood...	4:03
26	His eager face still wore that expression...	5:02
27	A small but well-kept house in the outskirts...	4:45
28	Mr Sidney Johnson, the senior clerk, met us...	3:54
29	He examined the lock of the safe, the door of the room...	4:04
30	Surely enough a note awaited us at Baker Street.	3:02
31	‘Now it must be evident to you Watson...’	4:41
32	Caulfield Gardens was one of those lines...	3:44
33	At the end of an hour he was no further...	3:50
34	One of the most remarkable characteristics of Sherlock Holmes...	3:24
35	We had carried the prostrate body to the sofa.	4:27
36	There was silence in the room.	3:34
37	**The Adventure of the Devil’s Foot**	4:17
38	On the land side our surroundings were as sombre...	3:52
39	I glared at the intrusive vicar with no very friendly eyes.	4:30
40	‘Tell me about last night.’	4:49

41	Our proceedings of that first morning did little...	4:48
42	It was not until long after we were back in Poldhu Cottage...	4:32
43	I may have commented upon my friend's power...	5:25
44	Little did I think how soon the words of Holmes...	4:56
45	It may be that the police resented the intrusion...	4:27
46	'Now, Watson, we will light our lamp...'	3:18
47	'Upon my word, Watson!' said Holmes at last...	3:33
48	I had heard the click of the garden gate...	3:09
49	Sterndale mopped his forehead with his handkerchief.	2:53
50	Our visitor's face had turned ashen grey as he listened...	3:16
51	'I am about to tell you, Mr Holmes...'	4:56
52	Holmes sat for some little time in silence.	2:54
53	**The Adventure of the Red Circle – Part 1**	3:04
54	'If I take it up I must understand every detail,' said he.	2:35
55	'Dear me, Watson,' said Holmes...	4:02
56	'There are certainly some points of interest in this case....'	3:53
57	So it proved; for in the morning I found my friend...	3:36
58	At half-past twelve we found ourselves upon the steps...	5:07
59	When we returned to Mrs. Warren's rooms...	4:45
60	**Part 2** As we walked rapidly down...	4:10

61 Our official detectives may blunder in the matter of intelligence… 3:53
62 Then I heard a sudden sharp intake of her breath... 3:13
63 Half an hour later we were seated... 4:15
64 'He told me, and my own heart grew cold as ice...' 3:11
65 'At the meeting it was arranged that he and his house...' 4:39
66 **The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax** 4:13
67 I was relieved at this sudden descent from the general... 3:22
68 Two days later found me at the Hotel National at Lausanne... 3:18
69 At Baden the track was not difficult to follow. 4:46
70 So far she had got in her narrative, when suddenly... 3:03
71 A card had come up on a salver... 3:38
72 A telegram was awaiting... 3:50
73 Three times had our bearded friend from the Langham… 5:08
74 'Let us try to reconstruct the situation,' said he... 3:20
75 He had rung loudly at the door of a great dark house... 4:01
76 With a quick movement Holmes pushed the fellow to one side... 3:08
77 A minute later we were in the street once more. 3:10
78 Five minutes had not passed... 3:29
79 'Should you care to add the case to your annals..' 3:21
80 **The Adventure of the Dying Detective** 3:34

81	He was indeed a deplorable spectacle.	3:55
82	I was bitterly hurt.	3:46
83	But it was destined to be resumed long before that hour...	3:50
84	To tell the truth, my desire to fetch a doctor...	5:27
85	Lower Burke Street proved to be a line of fine houses...	3:05
86	The man motioned me to a chair...	3:04
87	It was with a sinking heart...	2:53
88	'Holmes!' he cried.	4:06
89	'Yes, I will help you.'	3:50
90	There were footfalls outside, the door opened...	5:08
91	**His Last Bow – The War Years of Sherlock Holmes**	4:07
92	'As an example I may quote one of my own worst blunders...'	5:47
93	He sat in the armchair with the light shining...	4:59
93	They had strolled out on to the terrace again...	3:03
95	He was just in time to see the lights of a small car...	4:21
96	'What do you mean?' Von Bork asked sharply.	2:44
97	Von Bork had mastered his anger.	3:13
98	'Another glass Watson?' said Mr. Sherlock Holmes...	4:15
99	But you have retired Holmes.'	3:07
100	The prisoner had raised himself with some difficulty...	3:36
101	It was no easy task to move Von Bork...	4:51

Total time: 60:10



picture: courtesy Mary Evans Picture Library

Sir Arthur
Conan Doyle

The Valley of Fear

Read by
David Timson

1	**The Valley of Fear Part 1: The Tragedy of Birlstone** **Chapter 1: The Warning**	4:33
2	‘May I be there to see!’	6:02
3	Sherlock Holmes had pushed away...	5:30
4	‘We pay the price, Watson...’	5:59
5	**Chapter 2: Sherlock Holmes Discourses**	5:23
6	The inspector’s eyes grew abstracted.	6:07
7	‘Queer, certainly! But what do you gather from it?’	6:37
8	**Chapter 3: The Tragedy of Birlstone**	5:58
9	It was remarked, sometimes...	5:28
10	The country policeman was unnerved and troubled...	5:38
11	‘When the lamps were lit,’ said the butler.	4:15
12	**Chapter 4: Darkness**	4:10
13	White Mason gazed at my friend...	4:38
14	‘I have worked with Mr Holmes before,’...	4:33
15	He impressed me this country specialist.	4:05
16	‘That’s all clear enough.’	4:01
17	‘It gives me the impression of a secret society...’	4:04
18	**Chapter 5: The People of the Drama**	4:56
19	Cecil Barker succeeded Mrs Allen as a witness.	5:08
20	‘I should like these dates a little clearer,’ said MacDonald.	4:13

21 ‘I don’t know that I’ve anything else...’ 5:45
22 ‘The Valley of Fear,’ the lady answered. 6:27
23 **Chapter 6: A Dawning Light** 4:30
24 ‘I beg – I implore that you will, Dr Watson!’ 3:59
25 ‘How do I know that they are lying?’ 4:54
26 ‘There is an appalling directness about your questions...’ 5:06
27 ‘Well now, to continue our supposititious case...’ 4:46
28 MacDonald referred to his notebook. 6:31
29 **Chapter 7: The Solution** 4:21
30 ‘You are making fools of us, Mr Holmes!’ 2:52
31 ‘Well, we’re bound to take you on your own terms...’ 5:47
32 We all had good reason to join in the aspiration... 4:21
33 Sherlock Holmes put the sopping bundle upon the table... 4:39
34 The man stood blinking at us... 4:27
35 ‘I’m not going to begin at the beginning.’ 4:45
36 ‘It was at that instant that the idea came to me.’ 5:23
37 **The Valley of Fear Part 2: The Scowrers**
Chapter 1: The Man 4:37
38 The iron and coal valleys of the Vermissa district... 4:47
39 ‘All right, mate, no offence meant.’ 4:39
40 The country had been a place of terror... 3:17

41 It was opened at once by someone very different... 3:19
42 **Chapter 2: The Bodymaster** 4:33
43 Scanlan looked at him long and fixedly. 4:15
44 'I can but tell you vat the whole vorld knows, mister.' 5:24
45 Again there was the struggle upon McMurdo's face... 4:12
46 For a few moments, McMurdo and the girl stood in silence. 4:14
47 All else in the man – his noble proportions... 3:30
48 There was a small room there... 5:19
49 'You seem to have a good nerve.' 6:37
50 **Chapter 3: Lodge 341, Vermissa** 4:22
51 McMurdo shrank away from him. 2:48
52 On a Saturday night... 4:28
53 It was pitch dark and very oppressive under his hood. 4:32
54 When the drinks which followed the ceremony of initiation... 4:23
55 There was great applause at this. 4:46
56 There was a hush at these ominous words... 4:39
57 'I protest against that,' said Brother Morris... 3:55
58 The company broke up with shouts and yells... 3:55
59 **Chapter 4: The Valley of Fear** 4:54
60 McMurdo, who had been watching his companion... 4:25

61 ‘It was a lonely house, twenty miles from here...’ 4:42
62 The question came so suddenly that it was as well... 5:57
63 So determined was the appearance of the captain... 4:04
64 **Chapter 5: The Darkest Hour** 4:36
65 ‘It’s to another woman...’ 4:53
66 It was the most that Ettie could obtain... 4:18
67 In spite of the reticence of their guests... 4:43
68 There was high revel in the lodge room... 3:10
69 It had been a great day for the Scowrers. 4:21
70 Two nights later they met outside the town... 4:34
71 **Chapter 6: Danger** 4:27
72 But his words had moved McMurdo deeply. 4:21
73 And yet it was clear from his actions... 4:11
74 ‘Indeed, it’s glad we are to see you, Brother!’ 5:23
75 ‘Now, McMurdo!’ said McGinty when they were alone. 4:26
76 **Chapter 7: The Trapping of Birdy Edwards** 5:20
77 McMurdo shrugged his shoulders. 5:32
78 Their host had placed whisky upon the table... 3:51
79 There were ten seconds after that brief speech... 4:48
80 ‘You blasted traitor!’ 5:13
81 Epilogue 5:42

Total time: 79:24

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes

Read by **David Timson**

picture: Hemesh Alles

1	**The Problem of Thor Bridge**	5:59
2	The letter which he handed me...	7:04
3	‘Well! Well!’ said Holmes...	6:02
4	Our visitor made a noisy exit...	6:47
5	‘It is only for the young lady’s sake...’	5:18
6	There was some delay in the official pass...	6:01
7	Suddenly he sprang up again....	6:08
8	We were compelled to spend the night at Winchester...	4:52
9	‘I went down as I had promised...’	4:45
10	It was not a long journey from Winchester to Thor Place...	5:35
11	Late that evening, as we sat together...	3:20
12	**The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone**	6:46
13	Watson’s honest face was twitching with anxiety.	5:14
14	It was therefore an empty room...	6:25
15	The Count looked sharply at his companion.	4:29
16	Billy had appeared in answer to a ring.	3:34
17	Holmes withdrew, picking up his violin from the corner...	7:04
18	The Count gave a gesture of resignation.	7:22
19	**The Adventure of the Creeping Man**	6:12
20	There was a quick step on the stairs...	6:11

21 Mr Bennett drew a little diary book from his pocket. 4:57
22 What Sherlock Holmes was about to suggest... 5:18
23 Monday morning found us on our way... 6:30
24 Mr. Bennett pushed his way through some shrubs... 6:37
25 I saw nothing of my friend for the next few days... 6:45
26 And then in a moment it happened! 7:05
27 **The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire** 5:36
28 He handed the letter across. 6:08
29 Promptly at ten o'clock next morning... 7:48
30 It was evening of a dull foggy November day... 5:05
31 On the bed a woman was lying... 6:01
32 He took her aside and spoke earnestly for a few minutes. 4:20
33 'Let me tell you then the train of reasoning...' 5:06
34 **The Adventure of the Three Garridebs** 6:13
35 Our visitor's angry face gradually cleared. 7:23
36 It was twilight of a lovely spring evening... 5:41
37 'I merely called to make your acquaintance...' 4:48
38 I noticed that my friend's face cleared... 3:31
39 Holmes was up and out early. 5:51
40 That hour was not long in striking. 7:11

41 **The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier** 7:15
42 Mr. James M. Dodd appeared to be the sort of person... 5:31
43 'It was a large, bare room on the ground floor...' 5:50
44 'Next day I found the colonel rather more conciliatory...' 3:53
45 'I was hesitating as to what I should do...' 4:34
46 As we drove to Euston... 6:06
47 At the end of that time we passed down the garden path... 7:11
48 Colonel Emsworth pointed to me. 7:42
49 **The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger** 7:16
50 Our visitor had no sooner waddled out of the… 8:04
51 When our hansom deposited us at the house… 7:49
52 'It was a pitch-dark night when my husband…' 6:36
53 **The Adventure of the Illustrious Client** 6:53
54 Our visitor was greatly disturbed. 6:05
55 When our visitor had left us… 8:14
56 'So there you are Watson. You are up to date…' 7:51
57 I did not see Holmes again until the following… 7:43
58 And it did. Their blow fell… 6:03
59 On the seventh day the stitches were taken out… 6:50
60 **The Adventure of the Illustrious Client** *(cont.)*: He was standing… 7:37

61 And then! It was done in an instant… 8:32
62 **The Adventure of the Three Gables** 6:47
63 A short railway journey and a shorter drive… 7:51
64 ‘But what do they want?’ 8:19
65 We found the Three Gables a very different… 7:32
66 We had taken a cab and were speeding to some… 6:22
67 She broke into a ripple of laughter… 5:27
68 **The Adventure of the Retired Colourman** 4:26
69 It was late that evening before I returned… 5:45
70 ‘That is most satisfactory. What else did he…’ 5:01
71 In the morning, I was up betimes… 5:49
72 **The Adventure of the Retired Colourman** *(cont.)*: It was soon apparent… 6:51
73 Holmes led us along the passage… 8:46
74 **The Adventure of the Lion’s Mane** 6:27
75 I was kneeling and Stackhurst standing by… 6:23
76 Stackhurst was round in an hour or two… 6:03
77 But the words were taken from his mouth… 5:28
78 A week passed. 6:14
79 He had gleaned along the same furrows as I had. 4:43
80 My outer door was flung open… 5:34

81	When we reached my study…	6:31
82	**The Adventure of Shoscombe Old Place**	4:41
83	The door had opened…	7:06
84	Holmes sat for some time lost in thought.	4:38
85	**The Adventure of Shoscombe Old Place** *(cont.)*: 'When does this…'	2:00
86	Thus it was that on a bright May evening…	6:11
87	In the morning Holmes discovered that we had…	5:23
88	When John Mason had left us…	5:05
89	Sir Robert gave him a glance of contempt.	5:56

Plus

The Adventure of the Wonderful Toy by David Timson

90	January 1927. Sifting through my papers recently…	5:54
91	Our friend, whose eyes had been twinkling…	5:28
92	I have often remarked that Holmes was a born…	4:08
93	Two weeks has elapsed…	7:07
94	‘But surely this is a little far-fetched?’	5:45
95	Before we left Baker Street…	7:45
96	It was already past nine o’clock…	4:27
97	Interesting as her performance was, however…	4:37
98	Whilst Mansfield sat in front of the mirror…	3:14
99	In the early hours of the morning…	5:52

Total time: 78:59

Total time on downloads: 72:57:00

NOTES

Written by David Timson

picture: Hemesh Alles

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle
Courtesy of Mary Evans Picture Library

Arthur Conan Doyle was born in 1859 in Edinburgh, a city soaked in history, which gave him a strong sense of the past which he never lost. He was educated at Stonyhurst School, where he excelled at sport, a lifelong interest, and developed a passion for reading. The ideals he read about in his history books influenced him all his life.

He trained to be a doctor at Edinburgh University, and before qualifying signed on as ship's surgeon aboard a whaler. The hardened crew's tough stories of life at sea were to have a strong influence on his own burgeoning skill as a writer. Doyle began in medical practice at Southsea, in 1882, where he met his wife Louise

Hawkins, later they moved to London. His lack of success as a doctor was balanced by his growing reputation as an author. His future was assured after the creation of the scientific detective Sherlock Holmes, though Doyle was always of the opinion that his historical novels were his true life's work. These included *The White Company* (1891) and *The Exploits of Brigadier Gerard* (1896). He also ventured into science fiction, having a great success with *The Lost World* (1912).

His interest in history encouraged his patriotism, and at the time of the Boer War (1900) he published a pamphlet explaining the causes and true course of the war. It made him 'the most famous man in England'.

His first wife died in 1906, and he married Jean Leckie, with whom he'd had a platonic relationship for some time. In his later years, Doyle developed a deep interest in Spiritualism, and espoused many minority causes. He travelled the world furthering the cause of Spiritualism, and died peacefully, convinced his spirit was eternal, in 1930.

His simple philosophy of life was caught perfectly in the epitaph on his tombstone 'Steel true, blade straight'. But Conan Doyle will always be remembered as the creator of the greatest fictional detective in the world, in those works his spirit is truly immortal.

THE COMPLETE SHORT STORIES AND NOVELS

A STUDY IN SCARLET

Dr Stamford of Barts Hospital is one of the unsung heroes of the 19th century. This is not for any particular medical accomplishment, though for all we know of him he may have become a celebrated surgeon; nor for any lasting service to the British Empire in its heyday either. Furthermore, he will not be found in *Who's Who* or *The Dictionary of National Biography.*

His achievement was in the world of literature, and lovers of crime literature are indebted to him the world over. For it was Dr Stamford of Barts Hospital who, some time in or around 1881, hit upon the bright idea of introducing his old friend Dr John Watson (then in search of lodgings) to Mr Sherlock Holmes, who was likewise situated.

'Dr Watson, Mr Sherlock Holmes,' said Stamford introducing us.
'How are you?' he said cordially, gripping my hand with a strength for which I should hardly have given him credit. 'You have been in Afghanistan I perceive…'

And thus with this relatively insignificant act of friendship, which probably he never thought of in future years, Stamford set in motion a sequence of adventures in criminal detection the like of which has never been equalled in world literature. Of course 'Stamford' is fictitious, and it is to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle we must give thanks.

The writing of fiction proved to be more satisfactory to Dr Conan Doyle in Southsea in 1886, than the practice of medicine. So he determined to

put his considerable energies into the creation of a full-length novel – his first in that genre. It began life as the awkwardly titled *The Tangled Skein,* but during its gestation became *A Study in Scarlet* and introduced to the world the unforgettable characters of Sherlock Holmes and Dr Watson.

It was no easy birth. Conan Doyle struggled to get the names of his most famous characters right. Doyle's notes show he experimented with 'Sherrinford' as Holmes's Christian name, and Watson's first incarnation was as 'Ormond Sacker'. Perhaps thinking this too eccentric a name for the down-to-earth character that was developing, he chose plain John Watson instead, maybe remembering a real doctor of that name with whom he was then acquainted in Southsea.

The evolution of the name that is now famous the world over is more complex. The origins of 'Sherlock' have been variously attributed to an Irish name, a well-known cricketer, or even one of Doyle's old school friends at Stonyhurst, a Peter Sherlock. What is more certain is that his surname, 'Holmes', was a conscious tribute to the American author Oliver Wendell Holmes (1809–1894). Doyle never met him, but admired him as a 'glorious fellow, so tolerant, so witty, so worldly-wise'.

It is the merging of the unusual Christian name (Sherlock) with the commonplace surname (Holmes) that gives us the first clues about the detective's personality – methodical routine analysis on the one hand, linked with a flash of deductive genius on the other.

Doyle had long enjoyed the Dupin stories of Edgar Alan Poe, and the lesser-known detective stories of the French writer Gaborieau, but felt he could improve on the formula. Whilst training to be a doctor at Edinburgh University, he had come under the influence of a remarkable man, Dr Joseph Bell, a professor of medicine. His insistence that his students observe their patients minutely before making a diagnosis had stayed in Doyle's mind. Bell had made the art of deduction into a science, and it was this scientific

approach to solving crime that Doyle so successfully grafted on to the creations of Poe and Gaborieau to produce the world's greatest detective – 'a scientific detective who solved cases on his own merits and not through the folly of the criminal'. Familiar as we are today with fictional detectives using such methods, this was entirely original in 1886, when the detective story was in its infancy.

Originality, however, often takes time to be recognised. Doyle sent his manuscript off to the *Cornhill Magazine* and met with rejection. Two other publishers followed suit. A fourth, Ward, Lock & Co, showed a whiff of interest but declared that 'cheap fiction' was flooding the market just then, and all they were prepared to offer was £25 for the copyright. It was a blow to the confidence of a developing young writer who wavered, and considered putting the manuscript back in a drawer, and concentrating a little more on his medical practice.

With great reluctance Doyle accepted the offer and, as he said cynically in his autobiography, 'I never at any time received another penny for it'. The novel scarcely caused a ripple when it did eventually appear. Perhaps this was because it was sandwiched between short stories, seasonal articles and advertisements in *Beeton's Christmas Annual* of 1887. However, it was thought promising enough to be published separately a year later.

It is a curious novel, as the central character, Holmes, disappears for a third of the book, while Doyle in a flashback sequence explains the crime's origins in America. In this section Doyle adopts the 'Western' style of the American writer Bret Harte (1836–1902), but tension and excitement replace historical and geographical accuracy.

'Sierra Blanca' (or 'Blanco' in *Study*), for instance, does exist but is in New Mexico, several hundred miles south of the Mormon territories. Likewise, Doyle's epic description of the Mormons' arrival at Salt Lake Valley – 'nigh upon ten thousand' – belies the truth of the event. The first settlement in 1847 was a mere 148 Mormons, though thousands followed in the months after.

Perhaps Conan Doyle would say as he once said of other discrepancies in his stories: 'These little things happen'.

It is intriguing to ponder on why Conan Doyle chose to include a lengthy section illustrating the foundation and habits of the Mormon state of Utah. The Mormons, properly known as the Latter-day Saints, had had a troubled existence since their founder Joseph Smith (1805–1844) had received a vision of the Book of Mormon in New York in 1830. It records the relations of the early inhabitants of America with God. The Mormon religion rejects the harshness of Calvinism for a more optimistic creed of free will and effort for man's salvation. Such freethinking, which included a belief in polygamy, made the sect unpopular with ordinary Americans. Mistrust and violence led them on a number of occasions to move on and seek a 'holy land' for themselves. It was Brigham Young (1801–1877) who succeeded Joseph Smith as leader, who entered the valley of Salt Lake with 148 followers, declaring 'This is the right place'.

Doyle, with an eye for topicality in his stories, reflects the strong feelings of opposition to the Mormons in America in the late 1880s. The issue of polygamy had come to a head, and by 1887 (the year of the publication of *A Study in Scarlet*), the U.S. Government succeeded in making the Mormons submit to the law that made polygamy a crime. Conan Doyle was looking for an American audience when he wrote this novel and he found one. Sales of the novel in America when it first appeared were healthier than in Britain.

But Doyle may have had other motives for attacking the Mormons so viciously in this tale. Since the early 1880s, he had begun to lose his faith in Roman Catholicism, and was becoming an agnostic. He naturally felt an aversion therefore to confident religious cults like the Mormons who retained many traditional Christian values. 'The evils of religion', he said, 'have all come from accepting things which cannot be proved.' By 1889 he had 'laid aside the old charts as useless and had quite despaired of ever finding a new one

which would enable me to steer an intelligible course'. This search for faith would encourage him to adopt some very strange 'causes' (including many lost ones), and to settle eventually on the controversial faith of spiritualism.

Yet perhaps the most remarkable feature of *A Study in Scarlet* is that here, in the very first Sherlock Holmes novel, Doyle succeeded in creating not only a unique and vivid character in the detective himself, but also the key relationship with Dr Watson that proved very much a part of the success of the many subsequent stories.

THE SIGN OF FOUR

'It is always a joy to me to meet an American…' says Sherlock Holmes in *The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor*, and these feelings must have been most assuredly in the breast of Conan Doyle in August 1889, as he turned up at the Langham Hotel in central London, for a dinner with Mr. Joseph Marshall Stoddart from Philadelphia. Stoddart was the editor of *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine*, and was seeking to commission new work from aspiring young English writers; he offered Doyle £100 for a short novel to be serialised in the magazine. These terms were considerably more advantageous than those he had agreed to for *A Study in Scarlet,* having signed away all his rights for a mere £25. The success of the first Holmes novel in America prompted Doyle to make the detective the subject for this new commission, for as he said, 'I notice that everyone who has read the book wants to know more of that young man', and more is what we discover in *The Sign of Four* as the new novel was titled (although in America it was published as *'The Sign of the Four'*).

Doyle is at pains to show us that his hero is not without certain flaws, flaunting convention and generally a law unto himself – characteristics that were associated with another aspiring writer that Doyle met at the dinner at the Langham, Mr Oscar Wilde. Two more dissimilar characters it is hard to imagine than Wilde and Doyle, yet the latter recalled that Wilde's conversation 'left an indelible impression upon my mind'. As he set about expanding the character of Holmes, maybe Oscar's conversation, languidness and louche Bohemianism suggested to Doyle some interesting dimensions to add to the personality of his burgeoning detective creation. The very opening of the novel, for instance, introduces us to Holmes's use of cocaine for stimulation; his arm is 'dotted and scarred with innumerable puncture marks', from its obviously regular use. Cocaine was readily

available over chemist's counter in Victorian Britain, when it was frequently used as a tonic for nerves, nevertheless Dr Watson's admonition of Holmes indicates that doctors at least were well aware the drug was open to abuse and could lead to addiction.

It is certain that the character of Thaddeus Sholto is a thinly veiled caricature of Wilde, the figurehead of Aestheticism. He is prone to speak like Wilde. Sholto describes his 'sanctum' as 'An oasis of art in the howling desert of South London', and his mannerism wickedly apes Wilde's own: 'Nature had given him… a too visible line of yellow and irregular teeth, which he strove feebly to conceal by constantly passing his hand over the lower part of his face.' This was a well-known habit of Wilde's, developed after a mercury treatment for syphilis had turned his teeth black.

The first impression that Holmes had given Watson, and thereby the reader, in *A Study in Scarlet* was of a single-minded man devoted to the cause of scientific detection. Holmes said that 'he would acquire no knowledge which did not bear upon his object. Therefore all the knowledge which he possessed was such as would be useful to him.' Watson even went as far as making a memorandum of the pros and cons of his new friend's interests, which included: 'Knowledge of Literature – Nil… Knowledge of Philosophy – Nil… Knowledge of Sensational Literature – Immense'.

However, in *The Sign of Four,* Doyle seems eager to impress the reader with Holmes's wide-ranging knowledge of both literature and philosophy, thereby implying that first impressions should not be relied upon. Indeed, Holmes refers twice in passing to Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), the German poet and playwright; and also to two philosophers, more obscure to a modern reader than they would have been in the nineteenth century. Winwood Reade (1838–75) was a traveller and novelist whose 'daring speculations' formulated within his book *The Martyrdom of Man* (1872) shocked Victorian society with the notion that, 'The soul must be sacrificed; the hope in immortality

must die'. A book perhaps well suited to Holmes's neurotic temperament but hardly likely to appeal to the lovesick Watson! Holmes also quotes Jean Paul Richter (1763–1825), a German writer whose works were introduced into England by Thomas Carlyle. Among his analects, there is one on *The Grandeur of Man in His Littleness*. Indeed, Holmes carries a philosophical air about him throughout *The Sign of Four*. Earlier he had impressed Watson by talking 'on miracle plays, on medieval pottery, on Stradivarius violins, on the Buddhism of Ceylon, and on the warships of the future – handling each as though he had made a special study of it'. Doyle did not want to leave his reader in any doubt about the eclectic and eccentric nature of his hero.

Watson's character, too, is broadened in this novel; he is given a love interest, which is prefaced by a reference to a romantic past: '… an experience of women which extends over many nations and three separate continents'. Sadly, we never again get to hear of this fascinating aspect of Watson's life. The Doctor's inherent modesty no doubt forbids it, but it is obvious throughout the canon that he is always susceptible to a pretty face. Here he falls hopelessly for the 'sweet and amiable' Mary Morstan, and after much noble struggling over the differences in their financial positions, proposes and is accepted by her. Holmes characteristically receives the news with 'a dismal groan'. The completely opposite natures of Holmes and Watson, which leads to much friendly chaff and debate in the stories – and is one of the joys of reading them – are established here for the first time. As for Watson's war wound, about which whole libraries of books have been written, it is perhaps best not to enquire too deeply. In *A Study in Scarlet* it is clearly stated that he was hit in the shoulder during the Afghan campaign by a Jezail bullet, but in *The Sign of Four* he nurses his wounded leg. Was he shot twice? Or, as one ingenious medic proposed, did the bullet ricochet downwards describing a spiral curve deep under the skin of the chest and

abdomen… coming to rest in the calf muscles? Or is it just another example of Doyle's carelessness through not correcting his manuscripts?

The Sign of Four was written within a month of its commission; Doyle did not wish to spend too much time away from the serious work he had in hand – his novel of knights and chivalry, *The White Company*. The recent success of his novel *Micah Clarke*, published in 1889, had persuaded him that this was where his true talents lay – in historical novels, which in his opinion gave an author a degree of 'literary dignity'. Nevertheless, in *The Sign of Four* Doyle produced a cracking yarn crowded with incident; the pace and excitement he maintains in the river chase, for instance, is worthy of a modern action film. The American public was delighted with this new story when it duly appeared in *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine* in 1890.

Once again, as in *A Study in Scarlet*, Doyle draws upon his substantial knowledge of history to provide a convincing backdrop for his story, in this case the Indian Mutiny of 1857. That event, still recent history for Doyle's readers in 1890, provided a sinister oriental air to this tale of stolen treasure, clashing cultures and broken oaths. In *The Adventure of the Crooked Man*, Col. Barclay's regiment too had fought in the Mutiny (see notes in *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*). However, if Doyle is historically accurate, he is geographically uncertain. To enhance still further the exotic atmosphere of his story, Doyle created Tonga, the native of the Andaman Islands, but he is anthropologically inaccurate in portraying these natives as vicious and cannibalistic, when they were in fact anything but. When the Islanders heard how they were portrayed in *The Sign of Four* they were appalled.

The adventure begins properly when Holmes, Watson and Miss Morstan keep an assignation with Thaddeus Sholto's servant at 'the third pillar from the left outside the Lyceum Theatre', and it may be of interest in passing to recall Doyle's involvement with that establishment. From 1878, the Lyceum was the Victorian equivalent

of a National Theatre, presided over for more than 25 years by that theatrical legend, Sir Henry Irving. Doyle had admired Irving for years, and in 1894 offered him a one-act play entitled *A Story of Waterloo* – a slight story about a veteran of the great battle. Irving knew a good part when he saw it, and despite George Bernard Shaw, a perennial thorn in Irving's flesh, who reviewed it scathingly ('he depicts with convincing art the state of an old man's joints'), the piece was played as a curtain-raiser over 300 times. Every time it was played Doyle received a royalty of one guinea. It was to the Lyceum as well**,** in 1901, that William Gillette, an American actor, brought his play, simply entitled *Sherlock Holmes* (see Holmes in the Media).

TRANSLATIONS OF HOLMES'S FOREIGN PHRASES

To show that Holmes is considerably more erudite than he may have at first appeared in *A Study in Scarlet*, Doyle peppers Holmes's conversation in *The Sign of Four* with apposite foreign phrases and quotes from Goethe. The listener may find the following translations useful:

'*Le mauvais goût, mené au crime*.' (Stendhal) – 'Bad taste leads to crime'.

'*Il n'y a pas des sots si incommodes, que ceux qui ont de l'esprit!*' (Rochefoucauld) – 'There are no fools so troublesome as those that have some wit'.

'*Wir sind gewohnt dass die Menschen verhöhnen was sie nicht verstehen.*' (Goethe) – 'We are used to see that Man despises what he never comprehends'.

'*Schade, dass die Natur nur einen Mensch aus dir schuf, denn zum würdigen Mann war und zum Schelmen der Stoff*.' (Goethe) – 'Nature, alas, made only one being out of you although there was material for a good man and a rogue'.

THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

The Adventure of the Speckled Band
The Adventure of the Stock-Broker's Clerk
The Adventure of the Copper Beeches
The Red-Headed League
A Scandal in Bohemia
The Five Orange Pips
The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb
The Adventure of Silver Blaze
The Man With the Twisted Lip
The Adventure of the Musgrave Ritual
The Adventure of the Cardboard Box
The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle
A Case of Identity
The Adventure of the Crooked Man
The Adventure of the Naval Treaty
The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter
The Adventure of the Reigate Squire
The Boscombe Valley Mystery
The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet
The Adventure of the Yellow Face
The Adventure of the 'Gloria Scott'
The Adventure of the Resident Patient
The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor
The Adventure of the Final Problem

In 1891 Arthur Conan Doyle was struggling to make his name as a doctor, renting two rooms in fashionable Wimpole Street for use as a consulting room and waiting room. As he ruefully remarked in later years: 'I was soon to find that they were both *waiting* rooms.' Medicine's loss was literature's gain, and whilst waiting for patients he dabbled with writing fiction, and had the inspiration of his life: 'I felt that Sherlock Holmes, whom I had already handled in two little books, would easily lend himself to a succession of short stories.'

It was the age of the short story; new magazines were springing up in abundance, and they needed material. *The Strand* magazine was one such. Doyle tentatively sent his first efforts at short story writing, *A Scandal in Bohemia* and *The Red-Headed League*, to the editor of *The Strand,* Greenhough Smith, who was delighted: 'What a God-send to an editor jaded with wading through reams of impossible stuff!' he later recalled. It was the beginning of a partnership that would last the rest of Doyle's professional life. Immediately six stories were commissioned, for each of which Doyle received £35. They were sensationally successful, and Doyle wrote modestly to his mother: 'Sherlock Holmes appears to have caught on.'

Encouraged by the public's response, he decided to 'throw physic to the dogs' and become a full-time author.

Following hard upon the success of the first set of Holmes short stories in 1891, Greenhough Smith eagerly commissioned six more. They were written at white-hot speed by Doyle in a matter of weeks. Among them was a small masterpiece:

THE ADVENTURE OF THE SPECKLED BAND

Along with a later gem *The Adventure of Silver Blaze*, this adventure has probably appeared in more anthologies of short stories than any other Holmes story. It was in fact Doyle's own favourite story; he put it first in a list he compiled of the twelve best Holmes stories for *The Strand* in 1927.

The story is set in Surrey, which seems to be a particularly unlawful county, as Doyle set no less than five stories there. *The Adventure of the Speckled Band* possesses one of the most odious villains in all the canon, Dr Grimesby Roylott. Holmes later comments that 'when a Doctor goes wrong he is the first of criminals', and cites as examples Dr William Palmer who poisoned a friend, for which he was executed in 1856; and the Glasgow practitioner Edward Pritchard, who killed his wife and mother-in-law and was hanged in 1865.

Violence is second nature to Roylott, who famously took the poker in the Baker Street rooms and 'bent [it] into a curve with his huge brown hands'. He intimidates his step-daughters, even threatening them with a deadly snake that is the 'speckled band' of the title. Zoologists have had difficulty in identifying this snake. Holmes at a glance describes it as 'a swamp adder – the deadliest snake in India'; but this is not a type recognised by students of the snake. The puff-adder might be a contender, but is a native of Africa, not India. The banded krail is venomous, but its alternate rings of black and yellow are hardly to be described as 'speckled'. The cobra seems the most likely, having the colouration, and ability to rear itself when roused, though its venom could *not* kill in 10 seconds. Experts, too, find difficulty with Dr Roylott's ability to whistle his venomous pet back and reward him with a saucer of milk, as snakes are stone-deaf and loathe milk! Once again it is evidence of Conan Doyle's habitual lack of research in his stories; but why should we quibble when it is such a cracking tale!

THE ADVENTURE OF THE COPPER BEECHES

Miss Violet Hunter, the client of this story, is the prototype of the Conan Doyle Sherlockian heroine. The stories contain a veritable 'bunch' of Violets: she shares her name with the athletic Miss Smith in *The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist* (see *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*), the tragic Miss Westbury in

The Adventure of the Bruce-Partington Plans, and the infuriating Miss de Merville in *The Adventure of the Illustrious Client.* The latter is described as a 'wonder woman', and Miss Hunter is no shrinking Violet. Her no-nonsense, practical approach to her situation, not to mention her courage, impress Holmes who praises her as a 'quite exceptional woman'. Some commentators go so far as to suggest the attraction was mutual, and that her exhortation in her letter to Holmes, 'Do come!' is more of a personal, even romantic appeal, than a matter of business. Miss Hunter would have been far too 'modern' for Dr Watson's tastes no doubt, but he expresses regret that Holmes did not take an interest in the girl once the case was over, and took the trouble to note her subsequent career: 'She is now the head of a private school at Walsall.'

Did the name have some significance perhaps for Conan Doyle, as it is always attached to young women with great strength of character; or is it merely coincidence, as every tenth woman in Victorian England was called Violet!

It is worth noting that before he wrote this story, Conan Doyle was already beginning to have murderous intentions towards his creation, and it was only his mother's suggestion for the plot of *The Adventure of the Copper Beeches* that earned Sherlock Holmes a reprieve.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE STOCKBROKER'S CLERK

This story takes place in the months just after Watson's marriage to Mary Morstan, whom he had met in the first case he chronicled, *A Study in Scarlet*. He had established himself in a practice in Paddington, then still a fashionable part of London, despite the proximity of the railway station where Watson is called to attend to the young engineer's thumb in the adventure of the same name. Watson is all optimism, happily married and convinced that his 'youth and energy' will enable him to make a success of a dwindling practice. So how and why has he moved back into Baker Street

by the time we hear of *The Adventure of the Copper Beeches*? It is one of the enduring puzzles: had his wife left him, or died? No convincing explanation is ever given by Dr Watson.

The eponymous Hall Pycroft seems a very modern young man to us – he is from humble origins, building a reputation on the stock exchange, like so many young high fliers today, so it is no wonder he is eager to take on the dubious job offered him by 'Mr Pinner' at the Franco-Midland Hardware Company at the extraordinary salary of £500 a year. Like Mr Jabez Wilson in *The Red-Headed League*, it is the financial inducement that persuades him, despite having to take up residence in Birmingham. It is nostalgic to think that despite it being 1889, when Holmes and Watson alighted at New Street station they would have been greeted by cobbled streets, eighteenth-century houses and a town still largely undeveloped. Such quaintness did not survive the bombs of World War II, or twentieth-century planning.

THE RED-HEADED LEAGUE

Mr Jabez Wilson, who brings this 'three pipe problem' to Holmes' attention, is set the elaborate task of copying out the entire *Encyclopaedia Britannica* to apparently satisfy the curious whim of Mr Ezekiah Hopkins, an eccentric American millionaire. Dazzled by the lure of easy money (£4 a week for an undemanding task), he is completely taken in by the inventive criminals. In fact so enthusiastic is he for his new job, that after eight weeks' progress on the As, he hoped ere long to move on to the Bs. Wishful thinking: the first volume of the Encyclopaedia (1875 edition) is 928 pages long, and the article on 'Attica' referred to by Wilson is a further 794 pages in to Volume 2! That would mean that in eight weeks, working merely four hours a day, to reach 'Attica' he would have had to copy 33,435 words an hour!! It was an understatement by Holmes that Mr Wilson 'has done a considerable amount of writing lately'.

To assist him to 'introspect', Holmes goes with Watson to hear the

internationally-renowned violinist Pablo Sarasate (1844–1908), performing a concert of largely German music, which would no doubt have also included pieces of his own composition, such as *Gypsy Airs* which he recorded in the early years of the phonograph. Holmes may have felt a particular affinity with Sarasate, as they both were fortunate enough to own violins made by the master, Stradivarius.

John Clay, the villain in this story, is described by Holmes as 'the fourth smartest man in London'. Professor Moriarty was no doubt the first; his right-hand man, Colonel Moran, whom Holmes encounters in *The Adventure of the Empty House* (see The Return of Sherlock Holmes) was probably the second, but as to the third it is anyone's guess. However, a likely contender must surely be Charles Augustus Milverton, the arch-blackmailer (see notes on *The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton* in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*). For Clay to be included in such a list shows that he must be a very dangerous man. He had committed murder, according to Detective Jones, and may have got rid of Jabez Wilson, Holmes's client who unaccountably disappears from the story. Clay's smartness is testified to by the ingenious way he was able to dig a tunnel, single-handed, without arousing the suspicion of his master, and only using basic tools! Holmes may also have deduced that such an exceptional opponent was most probably a leading figure in Professor Moriarty's criminal network. The quote from Flaubert that ends this tale that has required considerable brain-power on the part of Holmes translates aptly as: 'The man is nothing, the work is everything.'

A SCANDAL IN BOHEMIA

'To Sherlock Holmes she is always the woman…' and as far as we know Irene Adler is the only woman to have touched the great detective emotionally. In fact there is a strong sense of sexual attraction throughout the whole story. The King of Bohemia seeks Holmes's help to avert a blackmail scandal after his liaison with the woman has

ended. This is the very first story in the collection entitled *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, published in 1892, and it is curious that Doyle should begin with one of Holmes's rare failures. Irene Adler is an operatic diva of some reputation and proves almost a match for Sherlock Holmes, which seems to lead the great man to reassess his chauvinistic views: 'He used to make merry over the cleverness of women, but I have not heard him do it of late,' writes Watson. Perhaps there is an autobiographical touch here, as Conan Doyle, though opposed to the Suffragettes, nevertheless worked hard to get the outmoded divorce laws, so biased against the interests of women, changed. In this story Holmes shows he is a master of disguise, appearing as an eccentric clergyman, which brings to Watson's mind the real-life comic actor John Hare. He flourished in the London theatre during the 1860s and 70s, creating parts in the naturalistic dramas of T.W. Robertson, such as *Caste.* 'Whatever part Mr Hare undertakes we may be quite assured the utmost amount of pains will be bestowed on every detail…', says a contemporary critic, so Watson's comparison is the highest praise he can confer on his friend. Though unknown today, a bust of him still graces the foyer of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.

THE FIVE ORANGE PIPS

A haunting tale where the sins of the fathers have a fatal influence on the succeeding generation. Holmes himself remarks, '…of all our cases we have had none more fantastic than this'. The sense of urgency and impending doom is brilliantly caught by Conan Doyle. It was in 1889 that an inquiry from an American magazine, as to whether the author of *A Study in Scarlet*, the first Sherlock Holmes story, would be interested in repeating the exercise, first heralded the success of the stories. It seems the American reading public saw the potential of a character that Conan Doyle always regarded as something of a pot-boiler. To gratify his many American fans, Doyle included in this

story sinister elements from their recent history, the Civil War (1861–5).

The reference to sailing ships in the story brings to mind that Doyle himself, whilst a young man, had been a surgeon on board a whaler. The seafaring stories of the crew taught him a great deal about how to construct a good narrative (see notes on *The Adventure of the 'Gloria Scott'*). No doubt, too, he was a keen reader, like Watson at the beginning of this story, of the now largely forgotten writer of nautical adventures, William Clark Russell (1844–1911). He wrote over 60 tales of the sea, and had been a merchant seaman. His writings led to improvements in the merchant service, which Doyle would have approved of as an espouser of causes.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE ENGINEER'S THUMB

The gruesome beginning to this story, when Watson is aroused in the early morning to attend to an injured man, testifies to Doyle's medical training. The detailed description of the hand minus its thumb reads as a medical textbook description, and it is ironic to think this story might never have been written if Doyle had been a successful doctor. In a fever of creativity Conan Doyle wrote the first six short stories about Sherlock Holmes between April and July 1891. A testimony to his phenomenal energy, and his lack of patients.

THE ADVENTURE OF SILVER BLAZE

This case is one of the very best of the whole cycle. It shows Doyle getting into his stride, having set a formula which would change little – the two companions, setting out from Baker Street to some remote part of England where the local police are baffled by singular events. The format is repeated often, but seldom restricts Doyle's inventiveness. In this story Holmes and Watson, investigating the disappearance of the racehorse Silver Blaze, are plunged into the shady world of the Turf, with its dapper, moneyed owners, touts and less than honest trainers. The

story has as many turns as a racetrack, and we should marvel at Doyle's ability to write on a subject about which he confessed himself he knew absolutely nothing. The tale contains the famous reference to '…the curious incident of the dog in the night-time'. Doyle seems not to have been fond of dogs, at least in his fiction. In *The Adventure of the Copper Beeches* he relates with relish the shooting by Watson of a 'brute' of a mastiff, and his anti-canine feelings reached their peak in his masterpiece *The Hound of the Baskervilles* in 1902. Doyle used the desolate and eerie background of Dartmoor as a backdrop for his tale; the same setting he had used to create the mood and atmosphere of *The Adventure of Silver Blaze.*

THE MAN WITH THE TWISTED LIP

Appearances are deceptive in this story shrouded in the mists of opium. Watson wrote: 'I cannot recall any case… which looked at the first glance so simple, and yet which presented such difficulties…' We first meet Holmes in the sordid world of the opium den disguised as an addict. It is perhaps surprising to us that drugs we consider harmful and anti-social were readily available to the Victorians. Holmes's 'little weakness', cocaine, could be bought over the chemist's counter without prescription, as could laudanum, without which many a respectable elderly lady would have complained of a sleepless night. Opium, for the trade of which England had fought a war with China, was almost an addiction of epidemic proportions. But by far the most widely used drug was tobacco. Holmes, with his old briar pipe and 'an ounce of shag tobacco' to consume, solves this mystery, and Conan Doyle himself was a prodigious smoker, though he tended to smoke and eat less when writing. Even women by the 1890s were known to indulge in a discreet cigarette.

As a doctor, Watson's distaste for drug abuse sets the tone for the opening of this tale of disguise, false names and deception. To help sustain the unreal atmosphere Doyle, unusually

for him, creates a fictional London. 'Upper Swandam Lane', 'Fresno St' and their environs do not exist.

But why does Mrs Watson call her husband James, when we all know he is John? It adds to the air of uncertainty in the story, but was it deliberate? Conan Doyle was notorious for not revising his stories, which were often written in a rush of creativity. But whether it was a mistake or not, it has spawned amongst Sherlockian scholars a score of explanations, including Dorothy Sayers's brilliant invention that Watson's middle name was Hamish, a Scottish name, which his wife anglicised to her pet name for him, James.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE MUSGRAVE RITUAL

'A collection of my trifling experiences would certainly be incomplete which contained no account of this very singular business…' Thus Holmes introduced to Watson one of his very first cases, from the 1870s, which he undertook on behalf of an old university friend, Reginald Musgrave. The case centres round the hidden meaning of the ancient Musgrave family ritual, with its echoes of Freemasonry. Doyle had joined the Freemasons early in his medical career at Portsmouth, presumably in an attempt to make contacts, but although references are made to the Masonic Craft elsewhere in the Holmes stories, he does not seem to have taken an active part in their proceedings.

Doyle makes splendid use of his sense of history in this story. He always felt his historical novels were of more literary value than the 'trivial' Holmes stories. They were meticulously researched, and he once declared the most influential book he had ever read was Macaulay's *Essays.*

Here, Doyle creates atmosphere with glimpses of the complicated political times that followed the execution of Charles I. The opening description of the Bohemian lifestyle at Baker Street is one of the best of the whole canon, and fixes forever the popular image of the rented rooms, and Holmes's 'queer humours'.

Though his antics with his hair-trigger pistol would probably, according to the experts, have demolished the decor!

THE ADVENTURE OF THE CARDBOARD BOX

This deeply sinister and disturbing story comes from the early years of Holmes and Watson's partnership. Holmes himself makes reference in this story to their first recorded case together, *A Study in Scarlet.*

Watson is still a struggling general practitioner, not yet having established himself sufficiently to afford a holiday by 'the shingle of Southsea'. This suburb of Portsmouth was in fact where Conan Doyle struggled as a young man to make a living as a GP and where he met his future wife. Doyle uses his medical knowledge here, as in many other stories, with a clinical assessment of the two grisly severed ears.

Dr Doyle undoubtedly put a lot of himself into Dr Watson, and it is surprising that, like Watson, he did not become a soldier. His height, six feet, and athletic prowess acquired during his schooldays, not to mention his innate sense of patriotism, would surely have given him a sound military career. He was certainly tempted to join up when he moved his practice to London, and still met with little success. Fortunately the might of his pen saved him from the sword.

The tale begins with one of Holmes's characteristic displays of his powers as he minutely describes Watson's unspoken train of thought. The archetype of the fictional detective, Edgar Alan Poe's Dupin, was similarly gifted with close observation, and Doyle pays homage to him here through the mouth of his own creation.

Watson's thoughts are dwelling on General Gordon, a soldier and administrator of the Egyptian Sudan, who perished at the siege of Khartoum in 1885 – redoubtable Victorian hero of the British Empire. But he also thinks of Henry Ward Beecher, an American, who eloquently preached the anti-slavery cause of the North in the American Civil War of 1865. His message, however, fell

on deaf ears when he visited England in 1863. Clearly, Doyle, despite his patriotism, wishes to remind us of this disgraceful English response.

Holmes finds time in the investigation for a musical reminiscence: he describes how he used his powers to detect a genuine Stradivarius in a junk shop, and reflects on the artistry of Niccolo Paganini (1782–1840). This violinist, whose skills were so astounding it was rumoured he was in league with the devil, was an early 'star', performing everywhere and making a fortune. His published *Caprices* require considerable proficiency for an amateur player, like Holmes, to perform.

A set piece of deduction by Holmes in this story of Watson's thoughts, as he sits in a 'brown study', was later reproduced in *The Adventure of the Resident Patient* when published in book form. It is included here as Conan Doyle originally published it in *The Strand* magazine (see notes on *The Adventure of the Resident Patient* in The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes)

THE ADVENTURE OF THE BLUE CARBUNCLE

This 'whimsical' seasonal tale is the only time we see our two heroes in a Christmas setting. Holmes has a positive twinkle in his eye as he proceeds on this literal wild-goose chase through central London. Doyle provides a detailed description of the streets they traverse, and it would be an easy journey to reconstruct today, as London has changed so little, though Covent Garden Market (in its original state) is no more.

A CASE OF IDENTITY

This case, written in 1891, centres on the personality of Miss Mary Sutherland, a representative of the new type of woman that was beginning to emerge in the decade of the 1890s. A woman with a profession. Even by the end of the nineteenth century there were few areas of work open to young women, but the typewriter, which had been invented in America in 1867,

was now opening doors to the world of commerce. Hitherto, young women with their way to make in the world had to rely on such jobs as a governess, with an income of £40 a year. Miss Violet Hunter in *The Adventure of the Copper Beeches* was one such.

Mary Sutherland also had a private income from stocks and shares amounting to a gross income of around £100 a year, which would give her a considerable degree of independence. As Holmes says, 'a single lady can get on very nicely upon an income of about sixty pounds'. Her strength of purpose in determining her own future by defying her stepfather, Mr Windibank, makes one think that perhaps, in the new century, she would have been 'shoulder to shoulder' with the suffragettes.

Conan Doyle seems to have liked these independent young women who crop up throughout these stories. He was by no means a supporter of the 'new woman', but where he saw a social injustice being committed, as in the divorce laws, which were heavily weighted against women, he threw his considerable support behind the efforts to change them. On the subject of income, it is interesting to examine Holmes's own. He was still establishing himself in these early stories, set in the 1880s, and Conan Doyle makes a particular point of Holmes showing off his considerable acquisitions from recent successfully concluded cases. His 'snuff box of old gold, with a great amethyst in the centre of the lid', and a 'remarkable' ring on his finger, were both gifts from Royal Houses of Europe, who seem to prefer this method of acknowledging their debt to Holmes rather than give him hard cash. Indeed, the fledgling detective may have been distinctly short of funds at this time, which led to Dr Watson sharing the Baker Street rooms and the connected expenses.

It should be noted, though, that these expenses seem to have included a 'boy in buttons' to usher clients in! However, one should remember Holmes's own philosophy from *The Adventure of the Speckled Band*, that, 'as to reward, my profession is its

reward'. A particularly interesting case was always pursued, even if there was little chance of a fee. It is doubtful, in view of the outcome of *A Case of Identity*, that Holmes would have expected a payment from Miss Mary Sutherland.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE CROOKED MAN

The Indian Mutiny of 1857 – the revolt of Sepoy troops against their British masters, who with the utmost insensitivity disregarded the religious beliefs of the Hindu religion – forms the colourful background to this case, as it does in the earlier novel *The Sign of Four*. Cartridges at this time were sealed with pork grease; to load them, it was necessary to bite off the seal. This direct contact with pork was anathema to the Hindu soldiers, whose protestations were ignored. The ensuing conflict unleashed decades of pent-up resentment and the end results were bloody and savage. The mutiny was finally quelled by the British in 1858.

With the skill of a born storyteller Conan Doyle mixes truth with fiction. Thus, whilst the besieged town of Bhurtee is fictional, it was relieved by a genuine hero of the mutiny, James George Smith Neill (1810-1857), a British soldier and Indian administrator who was one of the leaders of the relief column that journeyed towards Lucknow, relieving besieged towns on its way. He met his death in the lifting of the siege there. This clever mingling of fact and fiction by Doyle gives edge and immediacy to the stories, such as when he places invented London street names next to genuine ones, a device he was fond of using.

Although the popular image of Sherlock Holmes is of a brilliant mind solving crimes single-handedly, it is evident that he relied on a network of helpers that could be called upon when needed. Watson seems always to be available at a moment's notice, and able to change his plans and follow wherever Holmes leads. At the start of this story, for instance, though late at night when Holmes turns up, without

so much as a hesitation Watson agrees to go with Holmes on the morrow to Aldershot. His newly-married wife, and his neighbour Dr Jackson, seem ever to be accommodating. Holmes made frequent use of a group of beggar-boys (only too common in the streets of London in the 1880s), whom he organised into an efficient band known as the Baker Street Irregulars. They were to 'go everywhere, see everything, overhear everyone'. It is certain that their relative anonymity as street urchins produced results, and young Simpson in this story, assigned to keep a watch on Henry Wood in Aldershot, would have been well rewarded for his keenness, for Holmes paid the boys a shilling a day, with the bonus of a guinea for any boy bringing in the information first.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE NAVAL TREATY

Secret political negotiations at the highest levels of government are at the core of this case. The Naval Treaty of the title deals with the sensitive issue of Great Britain's attitude towards the Triple Alliance. This league between Austria–Hungary, Germany and Italy, formed for mutual benefit in 1883, seriously threatened the balance of power in Europe. The position Britain adopted towards the Alliance was crucial. Thus when the papers are stolen and a 'leak' seems inevitable, Holmes is put on his mettle to prevent a serious international complication. Once again Conan Doyle cleverly mingles historical fact with fiction.

Throughout these stories the official police force often seem less than enamoured with Holmes's interventions in their investigations. Here, it is the detective Forbes who is 'decidedly frigid' towards Holmes. Holmes, for his part, does not seem to have a very high opinion of Scotland Yard. The Detective Department of the Metropolitan Police only came into being in 1842 and by 1868 had a force of only 15! So it was a relatively new branch of policing in Holmes's day, and developed slowly – too slowly for Sherlock Holmes. He was ever pursuing the very latest

developments in criminology. A student of chemistry, like his creator Conan Doyle, Holmes used science to prove his theories, as in this story: '… if this paper remains blue all is well. If it turns red it means a man's life.' His readiness to use new methods of detection accounts for his frustration with the plodding ways of Scotland Yard.

However, techniques were changing fast towards the end of the century, and the Bertillon system discussed in this story by Holmes and Watson – a method of cataloguing criminals by measuring their bones, introduced in 1879 – was completely superseded by the development of fingerprinting adopted by Scotland Yard in 1901.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE GREEK INTERPRETER

In this case we get a glimpse, and only a glimpse, of Holmes's family and its ancestry. Conan Doyle was wise to keep these facts few and scattered throughout the stories, it adds to the air of mystery so essential to Holmes's character. Here, though, we meet his brother Mycroft for the first time, a brilliant man, as de-energised as Holmes is hyperactive. Mycroft's home-from-home is the Diogenes Club.

Club-land proliferated during the 19th century. There were clubs for all complexions of society – male society of course – from the grand political establishments such as the Carlton or the Reform, through to the military, gambling, artistic, Bohemian or just plain eccentric organisations. The Diogenes belonged to this last variety, with its rules demanding unsociability. Other contenders for oddness were the Travellers Club, where it was essential that members had made a continental journey to some resort at least 500 miles in a straight line from London, and the Eclectic, which had a short life because so many candidates were refused entry!

It is worth noting that one of the hotels in Northumberland Avenue, where Mr Melas the interpreter found employment as a guide, is now the location of the famous Sherlock Holmes

pub, containing a meticulous recreation of the sleuth's study at 221B Baker Street.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE REIGATE SQUIRE

'I am utterly unable to account for your result. I have not seen the vestige of a clue.' So states Colonel Hayter at the end of this tale of murder and blackmail in a suburban setting. Despite the Colonel's perplexity at the outcome, however, the case does not seem to offer an enormous challenge to Holmes, although he is not at his full powers after the strain of a particularly taxing case on the continent. He remarks that he follows 'docilely wherever fact may lead me'.

Once again Holmes uses his thespian skills in this story to help his investigations. As Watson remarks elsewhere 'the stage lost a fine actor' when Holmes chose to devote his formidable talents to the solution of crime. In *The Adventure of the Reigate Squire*, without resorting to disguise he is able even to deceive Watson's medical instincts when he feigns a sudden collapse from a 'nervous attack': 'His eyes rolled upwards, his features writhed in agony, and with a suppressed groan he dropped on his face upon the ground.' It is a description reminiscent of the great Sir Henry Irving at his finest in the melodrama *The Bells*! In *The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet* he disguises himself as a 'common loafer' to aid his investigations, but sadly we don't see him in action.

It is his use of science in deduction that separates Holmes from the other fictional detectives of his day, and in this story he displays his considerable knowledge of cryptology (the study of handwriting), though some experts say while it is doubtful whether a writer's age can be fixed by his hand, his state of health almost certainly can be. Holmes's belief, however, that handwriting style is hereditary, has raised the eyebrows of several genuine cryptologists.

This story ranks as the twelfth in Conan Doyle's personal list of the 12 best Holmes short stories. Its title was

changed for the American edition to *The Reigate Puzzle*, as 'Squire' was thought too archaic for an American audience, a precedent that is still followed with titles today.

THE BOSCOMBE VALLEY MYSTERY

Once again, Watson abandons his busy practice to accompany Holmes on his foray into the wilds of Herefordshire to unravel the mystery at Boscombe Valley. Doyle, as has been noted in previous stories, does not worry about accuracy of geographical location, as Boscombe is actually in Somerset, and not Herefordshire. This was also the first Holmes adventure to take place outside the confines of London.

It is always remarkable that Watson's wife is so understanding and Anstruther, the locum who watches over his practice, so readily accommodating! It seems that Watson cannot resist the chance of adventure although his marriage is a comparatively recent one. This adventure is dated only about two years after the adventure of *The Sign of Four,* in which he met his future wife Mary Morstan. Maybe he still has a hankering for his bachelor days, when to Holmes he was 'someone… on whom I can thoroughly rely'. Tomes have been written on the possible state of Watson's marriage, but that particular investigation is perhaps best left unexplored!

There's a number of literary allusions in this tale. Watson, in *A Study in Scarlet*, assesses Holmes as a man whose literary knowledge is nil, yet whose knowledge of sensational literature, that is the gory and violent accounts of crime, is 'immense'. Yet Watson's first assessment, based upon a few days' acquaintance, was incorrect. In *The Sign of Four* Holmes displayed a wide and eclectic knowledge of literature, and here we have Holmes indulging himself with the love sonnets of the Italian poet Petrarch (1304–1374), and later in the adventure, wishes to talk of George Meredith (1828–1909), a poet and psychological novelist. Some commentators read into his eclectic reading habits, his still burning

obsession with Irene Adler, the heroine of *A Scandal in Bohemia,* ('to Sherlock Holmes she is always *the* woman'), and who, like Petrarch's Laura, could never be possessed. Similarly, George Meredith loved in vain. Obsession or not, throughout the canon we are shown how wrong Watson's first impressions were of his friend's literary tastes, as references are made to authors as diverse as Horace, Flaubert, Goethe, Thoreau and Carlyle. At the end of this tale Holmes quotes from the not often read 17th-century divine Richard Baxter (1615–1691), showing the extent of his reading, although the quote actually is attributed to John Bradford (1510–1555).

Watson's literary taste more often than not consists of a 'yellow-back novel' (the cheap paperback of its day), as in this adventure, or sea-stories (as in *The Five Orange Pips*).

Doyle himself had always been an avid reader since his schooldays, and in his book about books, *Through the Magic Door,* he points out the value of a wide-ranging collection: 'No matter what mood a man may be in, when once he has passed through the magic door he can summon the world's greatest to sympathise with him in it.'

It should be remembered, too, that Holmes himself was an author of monographs, one of which is referred to in this story. His *Upon the Distinction Between the Ashes of Various Tobaccos* assists Holmes in identifying the Indian cigar at the site of the murder.

Holmes comments in this case that circumstantial evidence is a tricky thing. This reminds us that his creator Doyle twice risked his reputation in the causes of George Edalji and Oscar Slater, both wrongfully imprisoned on flimsy evidence, which Doyle uncovered. A case of fact imitating fiction.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE BERYL CORONET

In this story Holmes finds himself called upon to save the honour of a banker, and more importantly avoid a scandal that would have had repercussions at the highest level of society, possibly not

excluding the royal family! Holmes's reputation by this time, the mid-1880s, was obviously soaring. It had even spread to Europe for, as Watson proudly recorded, he had handled a delicate matter for the 'reigning family of Holland', assisted the King of Scandinavia, and been rewarded by a grateful King of Bohemia with gifts and a £1000 fee. So it is apparent that Holmes was doing well financially, for in this story he uses his own money, £3000, to assure the happy outcome of the plot. He is rewarded with a reimbursement and an additional £1000 for his fee.

The identity of the illustrious client who leaves the Beryl Coronet as security on a loan is never disclosed. Watson is far too discreet a recorder of events for that, he merely says he is 'one of the highest, noblest, most exalted names in England'. It leads one to wonder whether it was not a member of the royal family itself. Could it even be the Prince of Wales, Albert Edward, perhaps? He was well known as a gambler, and his essential need for £50,000 'at once', perhaps to repay a debt, could have led him to enter into this clandestine business arrangement with a banker where secrecy would prevail. It is certainly doubtful, whoever the client was, that he would be legally allowed to put up a national possession, a Duke's Coronet, as security for a loan. His trust in the banker, Mr Holder, seems sadly misplaced, for the manager completely goes to pieces, and locks this priceless possession in his bureau at home which 'any old key will fit'! It does not inspire confidence in the security at his bank!

THE ADVENTURE OF THE YELLOW FACE

This curious story is remarkable as being one of only a half-dozen or so stories in which Holmes gets it wrong. He completely misjudges the facts of the case, thinking it to be one of blackmail. 'Watson,' he says at the tale's resolution, 'If it should ever strike you that I am getting a little overconfident in my powers…

kindly whisper 'Norbury' in my ear...' It is a rare, uncharacteristic glimpse of Holmes's humanity, and the whole story has an air of the unusual about it; some commentators even call it 'unsavoury'. For though this story is set in Norbury, now absorbed into the borough of Croydon, its origins are firmly rooted in America and its recent history. Yet the fact that Doyle, as in *A Study in Scarlet*, makes several errors about that country – for instance there was never a yellow fever outbreak in Atlanta, and only a great fire there during the Civil War – indicates that he is writing a story more akin to a 'romance' or a piece of wishful thinking. Mixed marriages were virtually impossible in 19th-century America, even if in the chaos that followed the Civil War, when the slaves were freed, the laws about inter-racial marriages in the South were more relaxed. By the time this story is set, the early 1880s, segregation of the whites and blacks was again being rigorously enforced. Such racism would have disgusted the liberal, cause-espousing Conan Doyle (note, for example, how he attacks the Ku Klux Klan in *The Five Orange Pips*), so, in this story he seems to send out a message to a future multicultural world. The happy solution to a disturbing story, in the words of Watson, is 'one of which I love to think'. Doyle too, I'm sure, would hope we would agree.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE 'GLORIA SCOTT'

Perhaps this case is the most significant of all Holmes's cases, for we are told it is his very first one, occurring when he was still a student in the 1870s, and led him, as he said in *The Adventure of the Musgrave Ritual*, another early case, 'in the direction of the profession which has become my life's work'.

Doyle tactfully does not specify which college Holmes attended, and Holmes scholars have convincing arguments for both Oxford and Cambridge (see also notes for *The Adventure of the Three Students* in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*).

Whichever it was, Holmes, never the most sociable of men, appears to

have had a lonely and solitary time as a student, for he claims that Victor Trevor was his only college friend. He had had a 'slight acquaintance' with Reginald Musgrave who was in his college, but Musgrave's aristocratic bearing made him 'generally unpopular among the undergraduates' (see *The Adventure of the Musgrave Ritual*). One imagines that Holmes himself was not the easiest of men to get on with, and though not always appreciative, he was most fortunate to find so accommodating, generous and understanding a friend as Watson.

Although in this case we get a glimpse of the embryonic detective at work, it is hardly a detective story at all. There are few deductions for Holmes to get his teeth into, beyond the initial one of uncovering old Trevor's guilty past. The whole thrust of the story, in fact, is more in the style of a criminal's true confession, or a good old-fashioned seaman's yarn packed with thrills. Doyle's best writing is often to be found in his vivid descriptions of action. It was a skill he had first honed as a young man in 1880, when he signed on as a surgeon on board a whaling ship. During the long Arctic voyage he listened to the tales of the ship's rough crew and, as an exercise, turned them into fiction. It gave him the confidence to be a writer and left him with a taste for writing adventure stories that he was never to lose. Doyle, too, must have felt that he had not entirely done his detective's powers justice in this story, for in *The Adventure of the Resident Patient*, Watson laments the fact that Holmes's involvement in *The Adventure of the Gloria Scott* case 'has been less pronounced than I, as his biographer, could wish'.

Nevertheless the prophetic words of Trevor Senior: '…it seems to me that all the detectives of fact and of fancy would be children in your hands', persuaded young Holmes of his destiny. Shortly afterwards, his other college friend Musgrave endorsed Holmes's instincts by engaging him to solve the fascinating puzzle of the *Musgrave Ritual* and the profession of consulting detective was born.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE RESIDENT PATIENT

It is Dr Percy Trevelyan who brings this curious case to the notice of Holmes. As a brilliant but impoverished medical student he agrees to accept financial help from the enigmatic Blessington in return for his becoming Trevelyan's resident patient. As Dr Trevelyan recounts his early struggles, we are inevitably reminded of the hardships Conan Doyle himself suffered as he endeavoured to establish himself in medicine. How he would have grabbed at the chance to have a wealthy benefactor like Blessington. Dr Trevelyan, whose ambition was to be a specialist in nervous diseases, states ruefully: 'A specialist who aims high is compelled to start in one of a dozen streets in the Cavendish Square quarter, all of which entail enormous rents and furnishing expenses.' Doyle is no doubt speaking from the heart, as in 1891 he had taken the decision to become an eye specialist after a rudimentary training in the subject in Vienna, and had rashly set up a surgery in fashionable Wimpole Street. It was a moment of psychological struggle for Doyle. He had already had success with the first Sherlock Holmes novel *A Study in Scarlet*, but he was reluctant to admit to himself that all his medical training had been in vain. To become a fashionable eye specialist was his last bid to secure for himself a medical reputation. It was an unmitigated failure. He must have known it was a fool's errand, for on the very day he moved into his practice, he had begun to write the first of the Holmes short stories, *A Scandal in Bohemia.*

When Doyle published this story in book form, he included a set piece of deduction by Holmes of Watson's thoughts, as he sits in a 'brown study'. The section had been lifted from *The Adventure of the Cardboard Box,* and it would seem that the illicit love affair which is at the centre of that story was too close for comfort for Doyle. He refused to allow the story to be reprinted in book form. His own difficult private life during the 1890s may have

prompted his moral conscience. In 1893 his wife Louisa showed the first signs of consumption. It was a long and wasting disease, and Doyle loyally nursed his sick wife for the rest of her days, but by 1897 he had formed a platonic liaison with Jean Leckie. Later she would become his second wife. Perhaps these circumstances explain why *The Adventure of the Cardboard Box* was not published officially until 1917 in the collection of stories entitled *His Last Bow.*

But the professional writer in Doyle could not waste so excellent a piece as the mind-reading sequence, so it was imported into *The Adventure of the Resident Patient* when it appeared in book form. Naxos AudioBooks follows the original *Strand* magazine versions for these recordings, as expressing Doyle's first thoughts and original intentions, so the 'deduction' sequence does not appear in this story. However, if the listener refers to the recording of *The Adventure of the Cardboard Box*, it can be heard in its original context.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE NOBLE BACHELOR

There is more than a whiff of radicalism in this story. Lord Robert Walsingham de Vere St Simon, second son of the Duke of Balmoral, consults Holmes about the mysterious disappearance of his wife on their wedding day, but a more unsympathetic client Holmes seldom had the misfortune to encounter. Stiff and bristling with aristocratic privilege, Doyle tells us he had 'a touch of petulance about the mouth… a man whose pleasant lot it had ever been to command and to be obeyed'.

To complete the picture of an upper-class ne'er-do-well, St Simon's dress is described as 'careful to the verge of foppishness'. To emphasise his distaste with the habits of the rich, Doyle brings a contemporary element into his story: aristocratic liaisons with chorus girls and American heiresses. The list of girls who appeared at the Gaiety Theatre, for instance, and charmed the titled young men across the footlights, was endless in this period, so much so that the press

called them 'the actressocracy'.

When Doyle wrote this story in 1892 the most recent in the line, Connie Gilchrist, the beautiful daughter of a civil engineer, had married the Seventh Earl of Orkney. Their marriage proved successful, lasting 54 years, but many such ended in the divorce courts, or in the ruined reputation of the actress. Doyle implies that St Simon's former flirtation, Miss Flora Miller, 'a *danseuse* at the Allegro', is likely to suffer such a fate. Weddings between the daughters of wealthy Americans and English aristocrats, such as St Simon's to Hatty Doran, were also increasing, the most famous being that of Jenny Jerome to Lord Randolph Churchill, Sir Winston's parents. It is certain that such 'arrangements' provided much-needed American dollars for the impoverished coffers of England's jaded aristocracy; in exchange the heiress got a title. If Doyle in this story displays his radicalism by being less than supportive of the establishment as represented by St Simon, his solution to the problem is nothing short of revolutionary! Doyle loved the frankness of the American people, their literature and their championing of liberty and he puts into Holmes's mouth his belief that civilisation depended on the union of Britain and America, and its peoples becoming 'citizens of the same worldwide country under a flag which shall be a quartering of the Union Jack with the Stars and Stripes'. When Doyle wrote that, with the British Empire at its height, he no doubt envisaged Britain being the dominant partner; today he might not be so sure.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE FINAL PROBLEM

Without doubt this is the most controversial Sherlock Holmes story Doyle ever wrote. For it is in this tale that Doyle ruthlessly kills off the great detective. The shock on the unsuspecting reading public was profound; young men besieged the offices of *The Strand* wearing black armbands, the Americans thought the story must be a fake, even Doyle's mother thought it a 'beastly'

thing to do. So why did he do it? It seems that Doyle never took his Holmes stories seriously. They had been a means of keeping body and soul together whilst he struggled to be a doctor but, as he said himself of Holmes, 'he takes my mind from better things'. The 'better things' were what he termed his serious literary efforts, his carefully researched historical novels, such as *The White Company*, a tale of medieval chivalry, and *Rodney Stone*, set in the Regency period. He complained that Holmes was killing him as a serious writer and no one – publishers or friends – could persuade him to relent.

A trip to Switzerland in 1893, for his wife Louise's health, had given him a suitably impressive scene for Holmes's demise, the Reichenbach Falls – 'a worthy tomb for poor Sherlock, even if I buried my banking account along with him'. To kill off the detective that feeds you shows how strongly Doyle felt about his serious writing. Angry at the outcry Holmes's death produced, he said: 'I feel towards him as I do towards pâté de foie gras, of which I once ate too much, so that the name of it gives me a sickly feeling to this day.' But the 'final problem' turned out to be Doyle's. For eight years, the public showed no signs of letting Sherlock Holmes lie down and die, and most reluctantly Doyle was forced to turn away from the literature he considered to be his life's work and, as he saw it, trivialise his talents on pot-boilers. Posterity is grateful for his artistic sacrifice: the Sherlock Holmes canon is read again and again worldwide; the historical novels are read today by only the most loyal of aficionados.

THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES

It was the book that Arthur Conan Doyle did not want to write. As far as he was concerned, after two novels and 24 short stories, Holmes was definitely dead, and unquestionably buried beneath the gallons of water produced by the Reichenbach Falls, as related in *The Adventure of the Final Problem,* Conan Doyle was happy to have buried a troublesome and demanding creation who threatened to keep him from his 'serious' literary efforts, but he had not reckoned with the collective will of the reading public. Since Holmes's watery death in 1893, Doyle had received a relentless barrage of requests from the public, as well as from magazine proprietors, to resurrect the world's leading fictional detective. To all entreaties, and sometimes threats, Doyle was impervious. But the barrage showed no signs of weakening; after nearly 10 years of silence on the subject of Holmes, Doyle finally relented, and as a compromise reluctantly agreed to relate what purported to be an early case of Holmes's involving a monstrous beast and the terrible consequences of its appearance on Dartmoor – *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.

The gestation of the book had been quietly taking place for two years before its publication in 1902. The year before, in 1901, Conan Doyle had taken a golfing holiday in Cromer, on the Norfolk coast. He had just returned from the Boer War, where he had been unceremoniously turned down as a participant (he was 41), and had served, in what was to him, the less appealing job of supervisor in a field hospital (see notes for *The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier* in *The Case-book of Sherlock Holmes*.) On the return journey, he had met a young and energetic war correspondent, Bertram Fletcher Robinson, and, liking his youthful enthusiasm, Doyle invited Robinson to join him on the links at Cromer. During their holiday together, on a windy day unsuitable for golf, they sat in a private sitting room of the

Royal Links Hotel regaling each other with stories. Robinson told Doyle of the legend of a great black demon dog which had terrorised the West Country – he may have also mentioned a local Norfolk legend: Black Shuck, who was 'the size of a calf, easily recognisable by his saucer-shaped eyes weeping green or red fire.' Doyle's imagination was always fired by the bizarre, and within hours, the two had concocted the outlines of a sensational story. Doyle wrote to his mother that it would be 'a real creeper'.

Doyle went to stay with Robinson at his family home near Dartmoor in Devon for further research. The wild and desolate moorland had many mysterious legends of black dogs attached to it – not least the story of Sir Richard Cabell of Buckfastleigh who murdered his wife, and was so evil, that on the night of his death in 1677, black hounds breathing fire and smoke raced over Dartmoor and howled around his manor house. This legend appeared in the Revd Sabine Baring-Gould's *Little Guide to Devon*, and it was the Reverend's later guide, *A Book of Dartmoor*, which was to prove invaluable to Doyle as he developed his plot.

The Cabell legend, and others, sparked the fertile imagination of Conan Doyle. His mind was always at its most alert when he was writing, and he seized on anything that came to hand to flesh out the story – the coachman, for instance who drove Doyle and Robinson around Dartmoor on their researches was called Harry Baskerville, and much of the geographical and geological detail of Dartmoor that gives the tale so much atmosphere, was copied almost word for word from Baring-Gould's Guide.

At first Doyle intended to use the real names of locations on the moor, but perhaps to give himself a greater opportunity to fantasise the moor, which appears almost as a main character in the story, he changed them. Thus, Newton Abbot became the fictional 'Coombe Tracey'; Laughter Tor was converted to 'Lafter Hall'; the Fox Tor Mire was transformed into

the treacherous 'Grimpen Mire', and so on. As so often in his stories, Doyle liked to mix fact and fiction, and the prehistoric huts, the Belliver and Vixen Tors, not to mention the famous prison at Princetown, all real places, feature significantly in the story. It is difficult to ascertain for certain the house Doyle used as a model for Baskerville Hall, but it is interesting to note that the makers of the 1932 film version of the novel used the Manor House at North Bovey for the ancestral home.

As the novel began to take shape in Doyle's mind, there was a large question looming that he was avoiding having to answer. A story involving death, mystery, suspense and legend needed a strong protagonist to bind all these elements together – a brilliant detective perhaps? It was foolish to avoid the obvious solution. Nevertheless, Doyle seems eager to show that his great creation, about whom there had been so much fuss, has feet of clay; Holmes is not always at his best in this novel. He underestimates the power of the Hound, despite Sir Charles and the convict having been literally frightened to death by it, and consequently puts his client Sir Henry Baskerville in danger of attack. For a moment, when he believes that it is Sir Henry's corpse he and Watson have discovered on the moor, he has a nasty turn: 'It is the greatest blow which has befallen me in my career.' His actions in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* are consistent with *The Five Orange Pips* and *The Adventure of the Dancing Men*, where he recklessly puts his clients' lives in danger with tragic results, seemingly for the aesthetic satisfaction of neatly tying up the loose ends of a case before cornering the suspect. Doyle, by giving so much of the investigation over to Dr Watson, seems to emphasise that the success of their cases, was in fact the result of teamwork, rather than Holmes's singular powers.

If Holmes at times misjudges, we can put it down to the fact that this is described as one of his early investigations. Yet it cannot be *that* early. Watson describes himself as 'fleet of foot' as he sprints across the

moor after the convict – but what has happened to Watson's infamous Afghan war wound that was causing him so much trouble when he and Holmes first met? We must believe that the Doctor has been in training, and that Holmes, who outruns Watson at one point, is not yet suffering from the effects of his cocaine habit. Weaknesses aside, Holmes shines and reminds us of his intensely scientific approach by noting the differences between typefaces used by newspapers and his knowledge of the fragrances of 75 different perfumes!

The Hound of the Baskervilles is considered by many, the distinguished crime writer P.D. James among them, to be the finest detective story ever written. It is Conan Doyle's inspired mix of the supernatural, the unexplained, with the entirely rational approach of his detective that gives the book a tension that excites. The moor is presented as nature uncontrolled, something primeval, prehistoric, where man's nature becomes uncivilised, too, from a close association with it. The convict living rough on the moor is described as an animal; Stapleton, who has intimate knowledge of the moor and its ways, has a brutal nature, sadistically torturing his innocent wife. Other women in the vicinity are victims too – the yeoman's daughter in the 17th-century legend, and Laura Lyons, who suffers 'incessant persecution' from her husband. The manly *virtues,* exemplified by Holmes and Watson, and the fresh American values of Sir Henry, eventually redress the balance. The city subdues the country.

Conan Doyle, as usual, worked fast when he knew he had a good story, and what had started as a mere idea in March 1901, was a completed manuscript by August. That manuscript suffered a strange fate. The American publishers of *The Hound of the Baskervilles,* McLure Phillips in New York, gave away individual sheets to booksellers all over the country for display to publicise the novel, and very little of the original manuscript has survived.

The worldwide success of *The*

Hound of the Baskervilles established Holmes as an international icon. William Gillete's play *Sherlock Holmes,* sanctioned by Conan Doyle, which was playing at the Lyceum in London as the story was being serialised by *The Strand*, contributed to its success. Conan Doyle would bow to the inevitable; he wrote to *The Strand* editor, Greenhough Smith: 'As far as I can judge the revival of Holmes would attract a great deal of attention.' He dutifully resurrected his hero therefore in *The Adventure of the Empty House* in 1903, and went on to write a further novel, *The Valley of Fear* and 31 more short stories.

THE RETURN OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

In 1893 Arthur Conan Doyle made a terse entry into his diary: 'Killed Holmes'. With *The Adventure of the Final Problem,* Conan Doyle had rid himself of 'an old man of the sea' that had hung around his neck. He said later many times that writing the Holmes stories was killing him, and his decision to eradicate his greatest creation by plunging him into the Reichenbach Falls was 'justifiable homicide'. There certainly seems to be evidence that Doyle was on the edge of a nervous breakdown in 1893. The strain of the punishing work schedule he had set himself to produce the Holmes stories was taking its toll. He became moody and short-tempered, and suffered from insomnia. So, despite the worldwide furore that met the news of the death of one of literature's most popular characters, Doyle, having cleared the decks, set about living to the full his life without Holmes. But fate decreed otherwise; shortly after the author's decision to free himself from Holmes, his wife Louisa was diagnosed as having tuberculosis. Doyle at once made his wife's health his first priority and embarked on trips abroad in search of a conducive climate.

In 1894, as if to distance himself once and for all from being identified with Sherlock Holmes, he displayed a lack of rational thinking which would have shocked his hero, by joining the Society for Psychical Research, which would change his way of looking at the world forever. But even a new interest in the paranormal would not lay the ghost of Sherlock Holmes. On a lecture tour of America in 1894, where he had prepared lectures on George Meredith, Kipling, Hardy and Stevenson, all the public wanted to hear about was Holmes.

Conan Doyle had had lapses in his resolve never to write about Holmes again. In 1899 he had collaborated on a play about the detective with the American actor William Gillette, but as this was simply a reworking of material already published as *A Scandal*

in Bohemia and *The Adventure of the Final Problem,* it was not strictly fresh material. Then in 1901, when asked for a story and at a loss for a subject, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* bounded out of the gloom, with Sherlock Holmes in pursuit. Conan Doyle insisted this was an old case carefully filed away by Watson and definitely not heralding the resurrection of his *bête noir*.

But the publication of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* was the thin end of the wedge. In the spring of 1903 the American magazine *Collier's* made Doyle an offer he could not refuse. If he would bring back his hero from his watery grave they would pay $25,000 for six stories, or $30,000 for eight, or $45,000 for 13. These sums were for the American rights only, and *The Strand* joined forces, offered him a further £100 for every 1000 words for the English rights. With some cynicism, and a terseness that echoed his diary entry of 10 years earlier, Conan Doyle sent a postcard to his agent: 'Very Well. A.C.D.'

But a nervous Conan Doyle wrote to his mother: 'Will they take to Holmes?' It had been 10 years since Doyle had written the short stories in which Holmes had first appeared and he was apprehensive. In a letter to his mother, he wrote: 'I am not conscious of any failing powers, and my work is not less conscientious than of old… The writing is easy. It is the plots which butcher me…' He need not have feared. The public was feverish in its anticipation of the 'return' of their hero. When the series began in *The Strand* in 1903, one lady at the time wrote: 'The scenes at the railway bookstalls were worse than anything I ever saw at a bargain sale…' The queues outside the magazine's offices stretched the length of Southampton Street. In America, handbills announced ecstatically: 'Sherlock Holmes Returns!!' *The Strand* showed typical English reserve: 'The news of his death was received with regret as at the loss of a personal friend. Fortunately the news… turns out to be erroneous.'

But *had* the original Sherlock Holmes returned? In this set of stories

he is unpredictable, and given to signs of emotion and strain. Doyle seems to dwell on the weaknesses of his detective, perhaps to deter his adoring public from wanting yet more. Thus Holmes's ambiguous attitude to the 'powerful and wealthy' is referred to by Watson in *The Adventure of Black Peter* – yet we see him happily pocket a cheque for £6,000 from the Duke of Holdernesse in *The Adventure of the Priory School.* Is this hypocrisy? Or just Doyle reminding us, through the voice of Watson, that Holmes *can* be practical when it comes to fees, but is essentially a bohemian, and 'like all great artists, lived for his art's sake'. Likewise, Watson refers in *The Adventure of the Missing Three-Quarter,* to Holmes's 'sleeping fiend' of cocaine addiction – the dark streak that runs beneath all these stories, reminding us that Holmes is unconventional, unpredictable, and dangerous. At times he even defies the law he works to uphold: 'Once or twice in my career I feel that I have done more real harm by my discovery of the criminal than ever he had done by his crime,' Holmes says in *The Adventure of the Abbey Grange*. 'I have learned caution now, and I had rather play tricks with the law of England than with my own conscience.' So, listening to his conscience, he allows the criminal in that story to walk away.

Would the public turn against their hero if Doyle showed them Holmes had feet of clay? The change was not unnoticed. Doyle gleefully reported in an article for *The Strand* that a Cornish fisherman had remarked to him that 'when Mr Holmes had that fall he may not have been killed, but he was certainly injured, for he was never the same afterwards'.

Although these stories were written in 1903, on the threshold of a new century, Conan Doyle chose deliberately to write of past crimes solved by the investigative duo. Watson, in the opening of this story, defines the period more precisely as 'the years 1894 to 1901 inclusive'. Thus, Doyle places his characters forever in aspic; the world of the19th century: gaslight, Hansom cabs, steam trains, London fogs and

the policeman on the beat, whose lot, according to Gilbert and Sullivan, 'was not a happy one'. Electric lights, motor cars, aeroplanes and an efficient police force belonged to the 20th century, and the fictional detectives who would follow in their hundreds in the wake of Sherlock Holmes.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE EMPTY HOUSE

And so in this story, Sherlock Holmes makes his welcome return. But is he the same man? It was 10 years since Doyle had written a short story featuring the detective and there do seem to be differences. Perhaps he is less cold, less steely? Doubtless his range of experiences since he escaped the clutches of Professor Moriarty, and went into hiding, must have had an effect on such a volatile nature. Visiting the Dalai Lama in Tibet; posing as a Norwegian explorer, Sigerson; calling in at Mecca, as well as visiting the Khalifa of Khartoum; and researching the derivatives of coal tar in an obscure laboratory tucked away in Montpellier in the south of France – so diverse is this list, is it not possible that the shock of an attempt on his life brought on a nervous breakdown, and these are the fantasies of a deluded man? This might have been the real reason for the 'Great Hiatus', as Sherlockian scholars call the three-year gap when Holmes's whereabouts were unknown. Sherlock Holmes may have been recuperating in a sanatorium! Moreover, on closer examination we find inconsistencies and irregularities in his account of those years. It would have been next to impossible for a westerner to penetrate the court of the Dalai Lama, let alone Mecca. Disguise, of which he was a master, might have been a possibility, but the supposed meeting of Holmes with the Khalifa in Khartoum was unlikely, the Khalifa having moved to Omdurman in 1885. Also, the questionable researches into coal tar derivatives must surely be a blind to stop any further enquiries from Dr Watson.

Poor Dr Watson! Grieving for the death of his friend Holmes for three

years, when all the time he was so very much alive. How could Holmes be so callously cruel as not to give him a hint at least that he had not perished in Switzerland, but this is the Holmes of old, not quite trusting Watson, who might inadvertently let the truth slip out. As if the loss of his friend was not enough, we also learn that Watson has sustained an even closer loss, that of his wife. It is perhaps no wonder that the good Doctor's constitution had been weakened to such an extent by these trials, that he fainted dead away upon the sight of Holmes. It would seem that the whirlwind romance with Mary Morstan, whom he had met in *The Sign of Four,* had ended in tragedy. The details are not given, but if Mary had died in 1893, the year before Holmes's return, it is perhaps significant that that was the year Conan Doyle's own wife was diagnosed with tuberculosis. Conan Doyle patiently nursed his invalid wife until her death in 1906, whilst maintaining a platonic relationship with a young woman named Jean Leckie. It was Jean, he wrote later, that had given him the idea for the plot of *The Adventure of the Empty House.*

THE ADVENTURE OF THE NORWOOD BUILDER

If Sherlock Holmes had displayed some of his old nature in his lack of concern for Watson's feelings during his absence, in *The Adventure of the Norwood Builder* he shows care and consideration, not always qualities we associate with the great detective. His sympathetic response in *The Adventure of the Empty House* to Watson's loss of his wife: 'Work is the best antidote to grief, my dear Watson' is matched by practicality. He arranges (secretly) to buy Watson's practice, thus making him financially secure, and free to participate in further adventures. Holmes has come to recognise the significant contribution that Watson has made in their cases, and a closer partnership now ensues, with Watson treated more as an equal. It is also true however that Holmes may have been reflecting that, with Watson bound up in his Kensington practice, life

would be very lonely at Baker Street; for it was in 1887, in the case of *The Five Orange Pips*, that Holmes categorically states, when Watson suggests that a ring at the bell might be a friend of Holmes's calling: 'Except yourself I have none.' Perhaps it took a near-fatal encounter for Holmes to realise the value of his only friend.

The identification of the thumbprints, and Lestrade's knowledge that no two are alike, is a little premature for this case set in 1894. Fingerprinting was not introduced at Scotland Yard until 1901, though Holmes's dry comment to Lestrade's observation: 'I have heard something of the kind', leads one to believe he knew about Sir William Herschel's successful experiments in India in the early 1890s. In *The Adventure of the Empty House* Holmes demonstrates how far ahead in the field of scientific detection he is when he claims that Col Moran will be convicted by matching the bullets he has fired with his weapon: 'The bullets alone are enough to put his head in a noose', says Holmes, but the science of ballistics was unknown to the Force until 1909. It's a shame, too, that the burgeoning forensic science of the late Victorian police force could not, in *The Adventure of the Norwood Builder*, differentiate between the charred remains of humans and rabbits!

Norwood was a very fashionable district in late-Victorian London, and a significant place for Conan Doyle, who bought a 16-room house there in 1891, out of the proceeds from the first series of Sherlock Holmes short stories.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE SIX NAPOLEONS

It is in this case that we first notice a marked change in the official police's attitude to their 'amateur' colleague. In *The Adventure of the Norwood Builder*, Inspector Lestrade shows his usual resentment and hostility towards Holmes, but we are told here that 'it was no very unusual thing for Mr Lestrade of Scotland Yard to look in upon us of an evening', and by Lestrade's almost deferential manner to

Holmes – 'it is such an absurd business that I hesitated to bother you about it' – it would seem that the Yard has come to drop its mistrust of Holmes's methods, and value his contribution to its investigations. This case shows Holmes and Lestrade working in harmony, sharing information (Lestrade, most irregularly, lets Holmes keep the photograph of Beppo for instance), with none of the petty jealousies previously exhibited by Lestrade, and winds up with a positive eulogy from the official policeman: 'I've seen you handle a good many cases, Mr Holmes, but I don't know that I ever knew a more workmanlike one than that.'

Holmes helped the police with their enquiries in nine other recorded cases, for which of course, despite being a professional consulting detective, he received no remuneration. It was no doubt worth the effort for the experience, and for the providing of a ready-made audience for his denouement. In *The Adventure of the Six Napoleons* Holmes, never one to miss a theatrical opportunity, contrives a particularly dramatic denouement, when he smashes the sixth and final bust of Napoleon to smithereens. This may not be just for effect however, as by recovering the 'famous black pearl of the Borgias', he is sure to receive a significant payment from the insurance company, which would have more than compensated for all nine of the cases he had worked on with the police for nothing.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE THREE STUDENTS

This case, which takes place in 'one of our great university towns' raises, for Sherlockian scholars, the question as to which university Holmes himself attended. There were of course in 1895, the year of this case, only two possibilities in England: Oxford or Cambridge. Some lean towards Cambridge because Watson refers to a 'town' while Oxford was a city; but then Cambridge's university library was not so well endowed with early English charters, into which Holmes

was carrying out 'laborious researches', as was the Bodleian in Oxford. The eminent crime-writer Dorothy L. Sayers made a case for Cambridge, as it was better for scientific research, Holmes's speciality, but Holmes and Watson refer to the 'quadrangle', an Oxford term; in Cambridge it would be called a 'court'. Holmes refers to his own college days in *The Adventure of the Musgrave Ritual* but does not give the name of his university. One might assume that the aristocratic Reginald Musgrave would have attended the *older* university of Oxford. The case is weighted in favour of Oxford, but the arguments continue. There are no doubts about which university Conan Doyle attended: Edinburgh. It was renowned for its medical learning and was obviously the best place for a potential doctor to study. Doyle, however, had none of the privileges of a Reginald Musgrave to ease his passage through college life. His father, Charles, was confined in an asylum and his mother was hard-pressed for money. Having won a bursary of £40 to assist his family's shaky finances, Doyle was devastated to discover a mistake had been made, and the bursary was only applicable to students studying the arts. This bitter blow may have coloured his views of his time at university: 'Edinburgh University may call herself, with grim jocoseness, the "alma mater" of her students, but if she be a mother at all, she is one of a very stoic and Spartan cast, who conceals her maternal affection with remarkable success.' However, it was whilst at university that he met a man who was to have a significant influence on his future life – Dr Joseph Bell. His unusually acute powers of deduction, and hawk-like nose were to be immortalised in the personality and appearance of Conan Doyle's greatest creation: Sherlock Holmes.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE DANCING MEN

It seems that Conan Doyle came upon the idea for *The Dancing Men* whilst visiting Norfolk on a golfing holiday in 1903. Doyle had just begun writing the

stories for *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* and was consulting his brother-in-law, a celebrated author in his own right, E.W. Hornung, the creator of 'Raffles'. (See also notes for *The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton* in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*.) Hornung lived near Cromer, and Doyle stayed at the Hill House Hotel in Happisburgh. The hotel today has been reduced to the level of a pub, but has not ignored the Holmes connection – press cuttings and a photograph of the Sherlock Holmes Society valiantly recreating the antics of the 'dancing men' adorn its walls. The landlord at the hotel in Doyle's day was called Cubitt, which name he borrowed for one of the central characters, the Norfolk squire, Hilton Cubitt. Also, in an autograph book belonging to the landlord's seven-year-old son, Doyle apparently found the hieroglyph of the dancing men.

So Doyle did not invent this cipher? It seems only too probable that he copied it from Cubitt Junior, who may have been familiar with the cipher, as it appeared in *The Boys Own Paper* in 1881. It is interesting, too, to note that Doyle had contributed a story to this magazine in 1887.

The cipher used, however, is similar to that employed by Edgar Alan Poe in *The Gold Bug*. For the mathematical, it has been noted that, with the various possible positions for the arms and legs of the 'dancing men', 784 different symbols can be produced; and if they are inverted (as some of them are in the examples given in the text) 1,568 symbols are a possibility. It would have been an intriguing exercise for a boy (or celebrated author) to investigate on a wet afternoon in Norfolk.

It should be noted that Holmes appears to be grossly negligent in not seeing the mortal danger his client was in. He delays for two days after having deciphered the code, before journeying to Norfolk! Sometimes it appears that Holmes's desire to assemble all the facts of a case, to 'tidy it up', before divulging his theory conflicts with the necessity at times to be practical and avoid a tragedy. Is Doyle at pains to show us perhaps that, in returning his creation to life, he is not

as flawless in his judgements as his fans would like to believe?

Norfolk proved to be an artistically stimulating county for Conan Doyle, for it was during a golfing holiday in Cromer, that his companion Robinson first came up with the idea for *The Hound of the Baskervilles.*

Inserted into the text of this story are the pictorial representations of the 'dancing men', as communicated to Mr Hilton Cubitt's wife. The line from the text which precedes each drawing is given below:

'The markings were done in pencil…'

Fig. 1

'He unfolded a paper and laid it upon the table. [Here is a copy of the hieroglyphics:]'

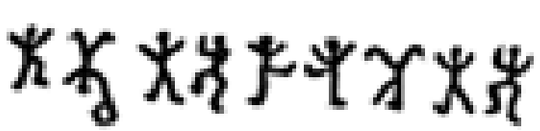


Fig. 2

'…two mornings later a fresh inscription had appeared. I have a copy of it here:'

Fig. 3

'Again he produced a paper. [The new dance was in this form]'

Fig. 4

'…a long inscription had appeared that morning upon the pedestal of the sun-dial. He enclosed a copy of it:'

Fig. 5

Individual letters:
'This symbol… stood for E'

Fig. 6

'…these symbols… stand respectively for N, V, and R.'

Fig. 7

'"See if you can read it Watson," said he, with a smile. It contained no word, but a little line of dancing men:'

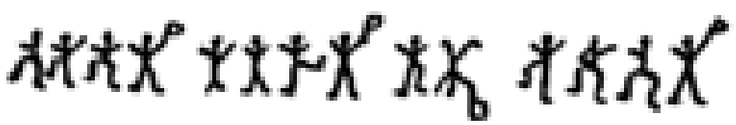


Fig. 8

THE ADVENTURE OF THE SOLITARY CYCLIST

The bicycle was a boon to young women in the latter half of the 19th century. Apart from the obvious advantages for courtship (remember Daisy, 'on a bicycle made for two' – a song published coincidentally in 1895, the year of this case), it gave women the opportunity to be independent and go where they liked, when they chose. They earned themselves the title of 'flying females'. To emphasise this symbol of feminism, women were encouraged to wear 'rational dress': a decidedly masculine style of jacket with – horror of horrors! – trousers or knickerbockers for ease in pedalling. It is not recorded whether Miss Violet Smith dressed in this conspicuous way when cycling; probably not, though, as the daughter of an entertainer (her father was the conductor at the old Imperial Theatre), she may have been 'bohemian' enough to dress the part and be 'modern'. 1895 was also the year of the first safety bicycle with Dr Dunlop's newfangled pneumatic tyres, though 'Raleigh' were the leading manufacturers of bicycles at this date.

Violet seems to be a name that Conan Doyle associates with girls who are self-reliant and enterprising; Miss Smith is remarkably similar to the governess Miss Violet Hunter in *The Adventure of the Copper Beeches.* It would not be at all surprising to learn that she, too, possessed a bicycle.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE PRIORY SCHOOL

If Sherlock Holmes's financial future was not secure by 1901, the year of this case, it certainly was by the conclusion of the adventure. The Duke of Holdernesse had offered as a reward, for information about his missing son, what was then a colossal sum – £6,000. Such a figure would give considerable security to the freelance detective and his full-time assistant (for Watson had given up his practice at the beginning of this collection of cases). Some Sherlockians are disappointed that their hero does not live up to his own dictates: 'As to reward, my profession is its reward', and therefore refuse to accept anything so sordid as payment for solving the case. But Holmes was a practical man, and with a healthy disdain in his voice for the privileged in Victorian society, he accepts the Duke's cheque without a qualm, much to the Duke's disgust.

It may be that Holmes is being ironic when he states, 'I am a poor man', whilst pocketing the cheque; yet equally he may have been concerned that in 1901, the year of this case, income tax had risen to one shilling and tuppence in the pound (approx. six new pence today).

We should recall that only when he was approached by clients who were struggling financially did he waive his fee. Miss Morstan, the future wife of Dr Watson, in *The Sign of Four* is one such; the unfortunate Hatherley in *The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb*, another.

Once again, in this story Conan Doyle pays tribute to the practicalities of that wondrous machine, the bicycle (see *The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist,* above). Conan Doyle was a very athletic man and would have enjoyed riding a bicycle, and its variations, for there is a photograph of him and his first wife, Louisa, outside their South Norwood home, looking most uncomfortable on a large and unwieldy two-seater tricycle. However, his enthusiasm for cycling got the better of him in this story. When Holmes determines the direction a rider has gone by the tracks left by his tyres,

many readers questioned the possibility of this. 'I had so many remonstrances upon this point,' Doyle wrote, 'varying from pity to anger, that I took out my bicycle and tried.' He had to admit that his readers were right.

Holmes is well out of his familiar territory in this case – the North of England – though more correctly the Midlands, as the setting is the Peak District of Derbyshire. It is clear that 'Mackleton' is really Matlock, some 10 miles from Chesterfield.

Watson may be showing once again a tendency towards discretion when writing about the aristocracy's affairs, as the Duke of Holderness may well be a pseudonym for the Eighth Duke of Devonshire, whose ancestral estates were, like the fictional Duke's, in the Peak District, most notably Chatsworth.

THE ADVENTURE OF CHARLES AUGUSTUS MILVERTON

In this case we get a glimpse of the downside of upper class life; the potential vulnerability for blackmail. Holmes must have had a reputation amongst the aristocracy for specialising in this type of case, and indeed he had an excellent track record. He had assisted the King of Bohemia in retrieving compromising photographs. He had had successful dealings, too, with the royal families of Scandinavia and Holland by 1882, the date of this case, which though unrecorded by Watson, may well have involved blackmail. Despite exhibiting a healthy disdain for those who are wealthy and privileged by birth, Holmes's innate sense of fair play comes to the fore when confronted with a parasite like Milverton, whom he unequivocally calls, 'as cunning as the Evil One'.

Watson records that 'his skin went cold', when Holmes revealed he intended to burgle Milverton's house, and the gravity of Holmes and Watson 'breaking and entering' should not be underestimated. At this time, housebreaking carried a maximum sentence of 14 years. By the end of their eventful evening they had committed malicious damage (the burning of

the letters from Milverton's safe) and assault (Watson kicking himself free of the under-gardener). Not to mention the emotional damage Holmes had previously perpetrated on Milverton's housemaid by proposing to her whilst in disguise. No risk seems too great, it would seem, to preserve the reputations of the aristocracy!

Holmes and Watson are in evening dress when they attempt the burglary, which cannot fail to remind the connoisseur of detective fiction of one of the other popular fictional creations of the Victorian era, A.J. Raffles – 'the Gentleman Thief'. Raffles is a mixture of gentleman and criminal, possessing a cool nerve which reminds us of Holmes. He was created in 1899 by E.W. Hornung who was, coin-cidentally, Conan Doyle's brother-in-law.

Why is Watson so reticent to reveal the facts of this case? It is with 'diffidence I allude to them' he writes in the opening sentence; he approaches his task with 'discretion and reticence' and despite the 'principal person' being beyond 'the reach of human law', aspects of the case still require 'suppression'. So, who is the 'principal person' and why all the secrecy?

There were any number of high society scandals during the 1880s and '90s that might have inspired this story, at least one involving that 'principal person', Edward, the Prince of Wales.

It is well known that Edward had an eye for the ladies and in the late 1880s began a secret liaison with Daisy, the Countess of Warwick. She was a society beauty – 'the photographers are pursuing her' wrote the papers, when she was only 17. She married Lord Brooke in 1880, but had a succession of aristocratic lovers before her association with the Prince of Wales. Lord Charles Beresford was one such, to whom she penned a passionate and jealous letter when she discovered Beresford's wife was pregnant. The letter was intercepted by Lady Charles and sent to her solicitor. Daisy appealed to the Prince of Wales for his assistance in recovering the letter before it ignited a scandal. The solicitor refused to give up the letter, the Prince of Wales ostracised Lady Charles from society,

and her husband, Beresford, threatened to expose the whole affair to the Press. Society closed ranks and with the aid of his mother, Queen Victoria, and the Prime Minister, Edward was saved from the facts becoming public property, though rumours rumbled on in the papers for some time after it was settled.

The facts and characters of the case: a Countess involved in a compromising scandal; a 'principal' person implicated; a damaging letter; references to a photographed beauty – is it too fanciful to think that Conan Doyle was turning fact into fiction? The real events alluded to took place in 1891. By 1903, when Watson (or Conan Doyle) compiled his collection of cases included in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*, one of the main actors in those real-life events, the Prince of Wales, had been crowned King Edward VII, and so was technically above the law and 'beyond its reach'. It is characteristic that Dr Watson, loyal and true, might have had a desire to subdue and obscure in fiction the facts of a case that, if known, would rock the new monarch's throne.

THE ADVENTURE OF BLACK PETER

In this story of an old sea-salt murdered with his own harpoon, Doyle draws upon his youthful experiences aboard an Arctic whaling ship. In 1880, whilst still a medical student, he had signed up to join the whaler *Hope* as ship's surgeon, bound on a seven-month voyage into the Arctic. He didn't do much in the way of surgery, but he enjoyed to the full the rough-and-tumble life of a whaler: boxing in the evenings, learning to harpoon and telling tales to the ship's crew. The experience stayed with him for the rest of his life and the haunting world of the frozen wastes of the Arctic contributes to the atmosphere in *Black Peter.* The convincing portrait of the hard-bitten whaler, Patrick Cairns, must have come from life.

But what became of Cairns? Watson fails to tell us whether he was found guilty of murder. Cairns insists it was a just killing, self-defence, though he could not deny the charge of blackmail if it were pressed against him. It is uncharacteristic on Doyle's part for the

reader not to be told the outcome of a case.

We are also introduced for the first time to Holmes's protégé, Inspector Stanley Hopkins. Never one to have a high opinion of the official police force, Holmes nevertheless gives a great deal of time to this young man; he appears in no less than three cases in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*. Perhaps to Holmes, he is the son he never had; and maybe Doyle wants to show that Holmes, far from being a machine, has a human side after all, and wants to pass on his accumulated knowledge to the next generation. Holmes is a severe teacher, however, not averse to ticking Hopkins off if he disappoints:

Hopkins: 'There were no footmarks.'
Holmes: 'My good Hopkins, I have investigated many crimes, but I have never yet seen one which was committed by a flying creature.'

The story also ends curiously, with Holmes's enigmatic reference to Watson and he being in Norway – is this perhaps a joke, as Norway was one of the main starting points for whaling trips into the Arctic Circle? Or is Holmes anticipating that the King of Scandinavia will soon have another delicate case for him to handle, as he did at the time of *The Adventure of the Final Problem*?

THE ADVENTURE OF THE GOLDEN PINCE-NEZ

This case occurred during one of the busiest periods of Holmes's career. He was at the height of his fame and Watson has barely had time to jot down notes on the stream of cases that came to Baker Street. What wouldn't the literary world give to have Watson's account of the case of 'the red leech and terrible death of Crosby the banker'; or to know just what exactly the Ancient British barrow contained; or the capture of Huret, the Boulevard assassin – an event so momentous that Holmes was given the *Légion d'honneur* by the French President. But, alas, we are destined merely to be tantalised by Watson's list (referred to in this and

other stories) that will now never be written or read.

In this story, as in many others, we notice just how commonplace smoking in public places was a century ago, though we should remember that the Victorians did segregate smokers from non-smokers in public houses, with separate bars. No man who wished to be considered a gentleman would smoke in the presence of ladies, but in male company, it was almost obligatory. Doyle himself was a heavy smoker, particularly when writing, and Holmes and Watson followed suit. The atmosphere at 221b must have been heady. If Holmes was not smoking his famous pipe, he would be indulging in cigarettes, though not perhaps to the extent he does in this story to prove a point. In addition to pipe and cigarettes, Holmes was also an inveterate cigar smoker, writing famously a monograph '*Upon the distinction between the Ashes of the various Tobaccos*'.

In the 1890s sinister Russian 'reformers, revolutionists, nihilists', like Professor Coram and his wife Anna in this story, were beginning to appear in London life. After the assassination of the liberal Czar Alexander II in 1881, and the subsequent reactionary policies of the next Czar, Alexander III, pockets of discontented groups were on the increase in Russia, and the Czar's forces were rigorous in rooting them out, driving many to set up headquarters abroad. Lenin, for instance, based himself in Zurich, whilst others fled to London, which led to much resentment among the local population against these 'aliens' or 'anarchists'. These political refugees were blamed for an increase in crime; this prejudice seemed justified when, in 1910, three policemen were murdered in Houndsditch, by supposed Latvian separatists. This sensation led to the Siege of Sidney Street in 1911 at which the young Stalin was alleged to have been present. One commentator at the time said the murderers were 'socialists of the very worse type, men who did not acknowledge God or anything'. Against this colourful background of political refugees with whom he would

have had a great deal of sympathy, Doyle sets his story.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE MISSING THREE-QUARTER

Watson, who refers in *The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire* (see *The Case-book of Sherlock Holmes*) to his experiences as a rugby player, seems to have forgotten his former prowess in this story. Any former player would surely understand the game's terminology used in the telegram; yet he describes it as 'enigmatic' and fails also to recognise the name of its sender, Overton, a well-known player. Likewise, he confesses to having lost touch with the medical profession, not recognising the name of Dr Leslie Armstrong, whom he subsequently discovers to be a leading member of his profession. Maybe this is why in *The Adventure of the Golden Pince-Nez* he is reading a book on surgery in an attempt to keep up to date. Since Holmes had bought out Watson's practice after his return in 1894 and Watson had become so much a part of the investigative team, these lapses are perhaps brought about by his having to devote all his time to writing-up the case-notes of the busiest period in their joint career, as well as keeping an eye on Holmes's cocaine habit!

Doyle himself was an inveterate sportsman all his life – he tried his hand at everything, including football, golf, bowls, skiing, billiards, boxing – but his favourite game was cricket, and once he gained the distinction of bowling out the great W.G. Grace.

Set in Cambridge, this story again raises the question as to which university Holmes attended. He seems to be unfamiliar with the East Anglian countryside, and his reference to Cambridge being 'an inhospitable town' is often cited as proof that he must therefore have studied at Oxford – but we know from *The Adventure of the 'Gloria Scott'* that his student days were not happy or sociable: '…always rather fond of moping in my rooms,' he reflected. The debate continues…

THE ADVENTURE OF THE ABBEY GRANGE

Once again Doyle shows us a less attractive side of Holmes in this story, as Watson is subjected to a bout of literary criticism from his colleague concerning the way he presents his cases. One can hardly blame Watson for responding with a bitter, 'Why do you not write them yourself?' Holmes's attack is undoubtedly a thinly-veiled cry of irritation from Doyle himself at having to turn out these pot-boilers instead of his (as he felt) more important literary output. Holmes vetoed any more stories from Watson's pen until after his retirement; a day no doubt Doyle longed for! Under these terms, *The Adventure of the Second Stain* was not published until 10 years after the events it depicts, when Holmes was keeping bees on the Sussex Downs.

At the crux of this story is the deeply unhappy marriage between Sir Eustace Brackenstall and his Australian wife, Mary Fraser. Doyle wished to highlight the unfair divorce laws then existing in England. In 1909, as President of the Divorce Law Reform Union, he fought a campaign to give women greater equality in divorce settlements, though, conversely, he by no means supported women's emancipation, nor did he necessarily agree with divorce as a solution to domestic problems. Whilst writing this collection of stories, Doyle's own life became complicated through his platonic involvement with Jean Leckie, yet he never contemplated divorcing his invalid wife, Louisa, for his new love. It would have been most uncharacteristic for him to give up on any difficult situation he was in, however much it meant sacrificing his own interests and desires.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE SECOND STAIN

Who was the real Lord Bellinger? Watson, with his usual impeccable discretion when it comes to matters of state secrecy, has surely camouflaged his true identity. But he must surely be the greatest Prime Minister of the

late Victorian period, William Ewart Gladstone – 'Austere, high-nosed, eagle-eyed and dominant'. Paget's drawing in the original publication in *The Strand* certainly suggests Gladstone. In 1894, the time of this scandal, he was in office for the fourth time, and was indeed the Grand Old Man of politics. He would have been 85. This same year, Gladstone resigned because of ill health – and if he was 'Bellinger', maybe its cause was the stress produced by this case!

Doyle himself had had a rough ride in the world of politics. He had stood in the post-Boer War 'Khaki' election of 1900, in Edinburgh, as a Liberal Unionist. He was eager to test himself, as usual, to the full in this new sphere, to go beyond his achievements in literature, and to have lived 'a full and varied and perhaps useful life… and done my duty as a citizen'. During his election campaign he gave as many as 10 speeches a day, but vigour alone would not get him elected. His refusal to indulge in dirty tricks, like the other parties, left him exposed to being constantly heckled and jokingly referred to as 'Sherlock Holmes'. Finally, a smear campaign calling him 'a Papist conspirator' began on polling day and no doubt did him untold damage. Doyle lost the election by 500 votes. It left him disgusted with the whole party political machine. 'A mud bath,' he called it, '– helpful, but messy.' This disillusion may well have contributed to his picture of endemic inefficiency in high office as depicted in this story and *The Adventure of the Naval Treaty.* In *The Adventure of the Naval Treaty*, young Percy Phelps leaves top-secret documents open on his desk while getting a cup of coffee; whilst Mr Alexander Holder kept the precious Beryl Coronet unguarded in his bedroom!

Doyle reflects in this story the growing anti-German feeling in Britain, long before it found expression in World War I. The 'foreign potentate' alluded to by Lord Bellinger is undoubtedly Kaiser Wilhelm II. German products were beginning to flood across the Channel, threatening British trade. Germany in

the early 1900s recognised the military possibilities of the aeroplane, and was increasing its navy to twice its size, in deliberate competition with the British. The unstable temperament of the Kaiser meant it was only a matter of time before there was conflict. Doyle reflects this uneasy state of affairs in this prototype spy story, that was to become a popular genre when conflict did materialise in 1914.

THE REMINISCENCES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (His Last Bow)

Was Conan Doyle paranoid? Judging by the set of six stories first published in *The Strand* as *Reminiscences of Sherlock Holmes*, one might think so. Intrigue, espionage, revenge, foreign agents, even the Mafia make their appearance within the British Isles, and provide a colourful backdrop to this collection that appeared between 1908 and 1913.

Times had changed in the five years since Doyle had last entered the world of 221B Baker Street. Now in 1908, the height of the Edwardian age, technology was advancing – the motor-car, for instance, was becoming almost commonplace. Doyle revelled in cars, and was one of the first drivers in the country to receive a fine for speeding. Indeed, some thought the world was moving too fast. In 1912, the best example of British engineering expertise resulted in tragedy. The liner the *Titanic* was defeated by nature, when a collision with an iceberg led to her sinking with a huge loss of life. In the blaming and name-calling that followed, Doyle valiantly supported the man who stood most accused – the captain.

The *Titanic* disaster shook British confidence, and with the growth of Germany's ambitions, the seemingly impregnable British Empire began to look as if it might be under threat. So Conan Doyle's stories, though set in the 1890s, the late years of the Victorian era, accurately reflect the fears and insecurities of the rapidly changing first decade of the 20th century.

Since he had last written of Sherlock Holmes, in 1903, there had been changes, too, in Doyle's own life. His first wife having died in 1906, his affair with Jean Leckie that had continued to be platonic whilst he nursed his sick wife, was now at last able to be made public. Doyle married Jean Leckie in 1907, and such was his celebrity that even as far afield as the *Buenos*

Aires Standard, there was a headline, 'Sherlock Holmes quietly married'. Yes, the shadow of his greatest creation still fell across everything he attempted to do in life. But Doyle seems, by 1908, to have finally come to terms with the situation; his new wife was more important to him now. More at ease with his fictional sleuth, Doyle even seems to have tried to emulate him by turning his attention to real-life criminal cases, and offering his help to the defendants, whom he felt were the subjects of a miscarriage of justice. In 1906 he had helped an Asian solicitor, George Edalji, wrongfully accused of maiming animals and writing poison pen letters. Evidence of racism had led to his conviction. After his release he appealed for justice, and Doyle taking up the challenge proved that Edalji's poor eyesight made his committing of the crime next to impossible.

Again, in 1912, he metaphorically donned his deerstalker and came to the aid of Oscar Slater, a young Jew imprisoned for the murder of an elderly spinster in Glasgow in 1908. Doyle found the evidence against Slater extremely flimsy and thought it reflected the anti-Semitic feelings prevalent in Britain before World War I. He worked hard to get his conviction reversed, which did not in fact happen until 1927.

Both cases created a lot of publicity but were only a limited success. If he couldn't actually be Sherlock Holmes, as the public seemed to expect, he could at least continue to write about him, which after 1908, he did less reluctantly than in the past.

THE ADVENTURE OF WISTERIA LODGE

South American revolutionaries invade the quiet environs of Esher, Surrey, in this story, set in 1892. The Central American state of 'San Pedro' is fictitious – the colours of the flag too, green and white, do not correspond with any country or state in South America – but almost any of that continent's republics could have been Conan Doyle's model. Cruel tyrants overthrown by popular

revolutions were only too frequent in Central America's history throughout the 19th century. There were heroes too, men such as Simon Bolivar (1783–1830) are revered in South America as its great liberator, or San Martin (1778–1850) and O'Higgins (1776 or 8–1842) who liberated and reformed Chile and Argentina. But many South American governments were unstable and economically weak, which made them easy prey to bloody tyrants like Juan Manuel de Rosas, who ruled Argentina from 1835 to 1852 and could well have been the inspiration for Don Murillo in this story. Furthering his own ambitions, though nominally supporting federalism (the linking of the Central American republics in a common policy), de Rosas assumed the dictatorship of most of Argentina in 1835. He was a ruthless tyrant. Assisted by spies, propagandists and the Mazorca (a secret political society that degenerated into a band of assassins) he instituted a regime of terror. Many revolutions were organised against his rule. Secret revolutionary groups were formed – notably the Asociacion de Mayo, founded by Echeverria Esteban. Esteban, perhaps the model for Garcia in this story, was a romantic poet and political revolutionary, in the mode of Lord Byron.

After a successful revolution in 1852, the dictator de Rosas fled to England, like Murillo, though not to Esher, and lived in England as an exile until his death. Conan Doyle adds further spice to his story by including references to voodoo, perhaps the earliest literary reference to the subject. But although Holmes's textbook, Eckermann's *Voodooism and the Negroid Religions,* sounds impressive, it is entirely fictitious.

This story only received its title, *The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge,* when it was published in book form. In the original *Strand* publication the first part of the story was entitled *The Singular Experience of Mr. Scott Eccles*; and the second part, *The Tiger of San Pedro.*

THE ADVENTURE OF THE BRUCE-PARTINGTON PLANS

Anti-German feelings were growing throughout the first decade of the 20th century. In *The Adventure of the Bruce-Partington Plans,* set in 1895 but written in 1908, Conan Doyle focuses on the important role submarines might play in any forthcoming conflict. It was a far-seeing vision for the time, and Doyle went on to develop this theme in his short story *Danger!,* written in 1914 – on the eve of World War I. In that story he predicted that a foreign power's submarines would be capable of paralysing England's merchant ships supplying essential foods to the United Kingdom. The Admiralty considered the scenario to be ridiculous: 'I do not think that any civilised nation will torpedo unarmed and defenceless merchant ships,' said one Admiral. 'I do not think that territorial waters will be violated, or neutral vessels sunk…' said another. They had to eat their words when, in 1915, the *Lusitania* was sunk by a German U-boat, only one of many less publicised victims of a fierce submarine warfare that developed rapidly once war was declared. There was a report that the German High Command had been inspired by Conan Doyle's story to attack merchant shipping, but this was more likely to be a clever piece of propaganda.

The Adventure of the Bruce-Partington Plans is popular amongst railway enthusiasts, as a significant part of the investigation takes place among the subterranean tunnels of the London Underground system. It is surprising to learn that the Underground was in existence at such an early date – the first journey was made between Paddington and Farringdon in 1863. Baedeker's *Guide to London for 1883* eloquently states: 'An important artery of "intramural" traffic is afforded by the *Metropolitan* and *Metropolitan and District Railways*. These lines, which for the most part run under the houses and streets by means of tunnels, and partly also through cuttings between high walls, form an almost complete belt (the "inner" circle) round the whole of

the inner part of London, while various branch-lines diverge to the outlying suburbs… *The Metropolitan Railway Company* now conveys about 70 million passengers annually, or nearly one and a half million per week, at an average rate of about two pence per journey.'

The Metropolitan line was the first to offer a regular service, and included Baker Street amongst its stations, opened in 1868. Though Holmes and Watson no doubt took advantage of its close proximity, the possibility of delays in a tunnel whilst pursuing a suspect made the swiftness of a Hansom cab infinitely preferable. It makes one shudder also to remember that until the end of the 19th century, Underground trains were steam-driven. The smoke and airlessness must have been intolerable. The pollution was taken for granted, and only warrants a passing mention whilst Holmes and Watson are at 13 Caulfield Gardens: 'Holmes swept his light along the window sill. It was thickly coated with soot from the passing engines.'

In this story we once again meet Mycroft Holmes, Sherlock's elder brother, for only the third time in the canon, previous encounters being in *The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter* and *The Adventure of the Final Problem.* In keeping with Conan Doyle's wish to raise the temperature of his stories, he allows Sherlock to reveal the true extent of Mycroft's involvement in the complicated foreign policy of the British government: 'He *is* the British government,' Holmes tells Watson, and with his knowledge, too, of every foreign agent living in London, it is not beyond the bounds of belief that Mycroft was responsible for setting up MI6!

The uncomfortable fact that the spy Oberstein escapes the hangman, despite murdering in cold blood poor patriotic Cadogan West, and serves instead a 15-year sentence in a British prison, smacks of a rotten deal being struck in the murky world of international espionage. Did Oberstein offer information on foreign plans and plots in exchange for his life? If so, it

would not be a surprise if the deal had been brokered by that arch-diplomat, Mycroft Holmes!

Holmes states once again that, as far as detective work goes, he plays 'the game for the game's own sake,' but often, in lieu of a fee, he accepted a gift. In this case, 'a remarkably fine emerald tie-pin' from 'a certain gracious lady'. Sometimes Watson's discretion goes too far; it is obvious in lieu of the fact that Holmes has just done a great service to his country that the 'gracious lady' is Queen Victoria herself.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE DEVIL'S FOOT

This case dates from 1897, and it is shocking to find Holmes being told in no uncertain terms by a Harley Street specialist either to take a holiday or suffer the consequences! Holmes's collapse is caused by a combination of hard work and 'occasional indiscretions of his own', the faithful Watson informs us. Was it his repeated recourse to cocaine over the years that was now finally undermining his iron constitution? Watson had stated in *The Adventure of the Missing Three-Quarter* that 'the fiend was not dead but sleeping… and the waking near'. Twice in this collection of stories does Holmes refer to his mind as racing – 'tearing itself to pieces' (*The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge,* and *The Adventure of the Devil's Foot)* – could this be an indication of the effects of cocaine? By the period of this adventure, Holmes had been addicted to the drug for a number of years, but it is also possible in the light of events in this story, that the curious chemist in Holmes had led him to experiment with even more lethal substances, in the cause of scientific discovery. After Watson narrowly saves both their lives, during Holmes's experiment with the title's eponymous deadly drug, did he recall the words of his medical friend Stamford about Holmes's irrational behaviour, when he had introduced them to each other all those years ago? 'I could well imagine,' observed Stamford, 'his giving a friend a little

pinch of the latest vegetable alkaloid, not out of malevolence, but simply out of a spirit of inquiry in order to have an accurate idea of the effects.' Little did Watson realise at that point the dangerous and exciting turn his life was to take.

Holmes is probably not yet 50 at the time of this collapse, but Conan Doyle is preparing the reader for the idea of Holmes's imminent retirement. Indeed, when published in book form in 1917, Watson included a preface in which he states that Holmes is enjoying a happy retirement on the Sussex Downs. No more dramatic disappearances over the edge of precipitous cliffs for his creation, instead, Doyle allowed Holmes to slip quietly away to a well-earned rest.

In this story, Dr Leon Sterndale, 'the great lion hunter and explorer,' seems to be a blueprint for Conan Doyle's later more famous creation Professor Challenger, the irascible leader of the expedition to *The Lost World.* Sterndale has 'a huge body and deeply-seamed face. Fierce eyes… hawk-like nose… grizzled hair and beard', and Challenger is similarly described. He made his first appearance in 1912, just two years after this story was first published. But eminent scientist and anthropologist though he is, why does Holmes allow him to walk away free after murdering a man with the most horrific tortures? Howsoever Sterndale's act may be justified as revenge, Holmes nevertheless flouts the law and decides to play judge and jury himself, as in *The Adventure of the Abbey Grange*. His nervous illness could be cited as affecting his judgement perhaps, but this is not an isolated incident in the canon, and what excuse is there for the other occasions?

The deadly poison *Radix pedis diaboli*, obtained 'under very extraordinary circumstances in the Ubanghi country' by Dr Sterndale, still remains unknown to medical science – though research since 1897 has shown, with regard to its hallucinatory properties, that it has similarities with a more recent discovery, the drug LSD.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE RED CIRCLE

Despite being set in the heart of Bloomsbury, there is a distinctly American flavour to this story. The sinister shadow of the Italian Mafia looms over it, counteracted by a brief glimpse of the detective of the future, Mr Leverton, of Pinkerton's American Agency. Here, Conan Doyle is cleverly blending fact with fiction – Pinkerton's was just as real an institution as the Mafia. (for more information on Pinkerton's, see notes on *The Valley of Fear*) They were relentless in their pursuit of criminals, and Leverton in following Gorgiano across the Atlantic to London is typical.

Pinkerton's Agency was eager to create links with European forces, such as Scotland Yard in this case, thus creating an international exchange of information and assistance, anticipating Interpol. Holmes would have been very impressed with the efficiency of Pinkerton's, as their methods so closely mirrored his own approach. He was always eager to keep ahead of developments in the science of detection, and it is impressive in this case that he shows he is familiar with the latest thinking with regard to fingerprints. It was Sir Francis Galton, in 1888, who whilst studying fingerprints as a key to race and heredity, noticed that prints remained constant throughout an individual's life and that no two prints were alike. His findings published in 1892 led to finger-printing being adopted by the CID, in 1901. This case takes place in 1902, which shows how up-to-date Holmes's information is, though as early as 1895, in *The Adventure of the Norwood Builder* he claimed to 'have heard something' about no two thumb-prints ever being alike.

The history of 'The Red Circle' – a branch of the Mafia – is so graphically told by Signora Lucca that one is inevitably reminded of Mario Puzo's Mafia novel, and subsequent film, *The Godfather.*

THE DISAPPEARANCE OF LADY FRANCES CARFAX

In this story, Holmes gives Watson another chance, as he had done in *The Hound of the Baskervilles,* to polish his powers of detection and collect information about the case at first hand. As in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, it also gives Holmes the opportunity to criticise poor Watson's efforts and make a dramatic appearance, in disguise, to save Watson from getting a good hiding from his chief suspect. Holmes himself is not at his sparkling best in this story, a fact he admits himself when he tells Watson that should he chronicle these events, 'it can only be as an example of that temporary eclipse to which even the best-balanced mind may be exposed'. Perhaps it is his dislike of Lady Frances's type that hinders him: 'One of the most dangerous classes in the world is the drifting and friendless woman – an inciter of crime in others.' Holmes's renowned misogyny is certainly given full reign in this story.

Watson at least got a good holiday out of the case, Lausanne being a major centre for wealthy British tourists, with its own branch of Cook's travel office. Thomas Cook had developed his travel company, which had begun when he organised a humble train trip in Loughborough for a Temperance group in 1841, and grew to provide tickets and hotels to virtually anywhere in the world for the Victorian traveller. The company exists to this day. On the subject of hotels, the Langham in Portland Place, London, which the Hon. Philip Green gives as his address, and was frequented by the Prince of Wales, is now fully restored to its Edwardian glory, and once more an hotel, after years of neglect while serving as offices for the BBC.

Lady Frances's ordeal calls to mind a story by Edgar Allan Poe, one of Conan Doyle's mentors, entitled *The Premature Burial* (1844).

Lady Frances seems to have been easy prey for the ruthless Dr Shlessinger. For a woman who 'found her comfort and occupation in religion' she does not seem to be well-versed in the

Bible, for Dr Shlessinger claimed to be working on a map of the Holy Land, 'with special reference to the kingdom of the Midianites'. The Midianites were a nomadic tribe, with tribal chiefs, not kings, and no settled territory. Holmes and Watson missed this vital piece of deception in the evidence or they, too, might have rumbled that the Doctor was a fraud more quickly. There is no evidence in the entire canon that Holmes and Watson were regular churchgoers!

THE ADVENTURE OF THE DYING DETECTIVE

This is a surprisingly early case to be included in this collection, for Watson states categorically that it took place in the second year of his marriage, when he was no longer residing at Baker Street, which would make it 1888 or 1889. Judging by the appalling way Holmes treats his closest friend in this story, it is not perhaps surprising that Watson resisted writing the case up until 1913 – 25 years later! It tells us a lot about the steadfastness of the Doctor's friendship for Holmes that it survived beyond this case, for Holmes appears to think so little of Watson's discretion that he feels he must deceive his old friend with a pretended illness. True, he pays the Doctor a handsome compliment to his medical expertise when the case is over: 'Could I fancy that your astute judgement would pass a dying man who, however weak, had no rise of pulse or temperature?' – but this is not an isolated example of his seeming lack of care for his friend's feelings, (see also notes for *The Adventure of the Empty House* in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*). In *The Adventure of the Devil's Foot* he comes close to killing both himself and his friend (see notes above), and we are reminded once again how amazingly accurate Watson's friend Stamford is in assessing Holmes character: 'Holmes is a little too scientific for my tastes – it approaches to cold-bloodedness…'

If Watson is occasionally tetchy with Holmes, it is, in view of the cavalier treatment he has received, forgivable. Let us not forget too, the long-suffering

Mrs Hudson, who is also duped by Holmes in this story. Let's hope that the 'princely sum' paid by Holmes for the privilege of sharing her premises was subject to a substantial increase by way of compensation for housing the 'very worst tenant in London'.

In this story, Holmes indulges his histrionic skills and love of disguise. His realistic make-up as an invalid, and his flair for a melodramatic denouement to this and many another story, make one wonder if at any time he trod the boards professionally. It is no mean achievement to act convincingly off the stage, in real life.

Holmes blinds poor old Watson with his own science: the doctor is unlikely to have treated anyone in his Kensington practice for 'Tapanuli fever' or 'black Formosa corruption'.

Although these diseases sound suspiciously fictitious, they are in fact a form of scrub typhus, found in tropical countries and caught from the bite of infected mites. The symptoms are very close to those assumed by Holmes: black encrusted lesions, fever, swollen glands, delirium etc. It would seem that Dr Conan Doyle had been consulting his medical dictionary for inspiration.

After starving himself in a good cause, Holmes suggests that 'something nutritious at Simpson's would not be out of place'. This classic London restaurant is one of the few Sherlockian haunts that is happily still with us – now known as Simpson's-in-the-Strand, it is quite an exclusive establishment, but in Holmes's day was an economical choice. Dinner from the joint was 2s 6d (about 12p today), or a fish dinner 2s 9d (under 15p). Let us hope that Holmes footed the bill by way of compensation for his treatment of the faithful Doctor, and splashed out on a bottle of Liebfraumilch to celebrate the end of a successful case, which would have set him back a mere 12 shillings (approx. 60p).

HIS LAST BOW

And so we come to the inevitable – the last case for Sherlock Holmes. It is set on 2 August 1914, the day World War I began. Conan Doyle's fear of foreign

spies and agents that is the constant theme of the stories published between 1908 and 1913 has proved to be real, and German spies are established on the south coast of England. The story was written and published in *The Strand* in 1917, when England had been at war with Germany for three years, and the forces of both sides were locked in a seemingly endless stalemate. The German Secretary of War, in that same year, had paid an unwelcome tribute to Arthur Conan Doyle: 'The only prophet of the present economic war was the novelist Conan Doyle.'

Ever the optimist, Doyle once again turned to his great creation, Sherlock Holmes, as the only man who could inspire a dispirited nation. 'There's an east wind coming,' Holmes says to Watson at the end of this story, 'such a wind as never blew on England yet… a good many of us may wither before its blast. But it's God's own wind none the less, and a cleaner, better, stronger land will lie in the sunshine when the storm has cleared.' The rhetoric is positively Churchillian. We learn that since 1903, Holmes has been in retirement on the Sussex Downs, having exchanged the study of the criminal mind for the study of bees. At the call, however, from his country's premier – Mr Herbert Asquith, presumably – Holmes has responded, and for a period of two years has been building a credible identity for himself in the United States as a disenchanted Irish-American, willing to spy for the Kaiser.

Holmes's services are required not as a detective in this story, but as a spy. It would seem that since his retirement he has changed job description, which is no doubt due to the influence of his brother Mycroft, who would surely have recruited Holmes into MI6 soon after its creation in 1909. This story is narrated in the third person, and some commentators believe it is the voice of Mycroft, whose intimate knowledge of the world of espionage would make him a suitable man to record these important world events. So, although Holmes may have officially retired (which may be just a blind for the curious), and this is his last *recorded* case, there would

have been plenty of work for him in the secret service between the years 1914 to 1918, despite his advancing years.

This is the only story in the canon which mentions Holmes's age. Disguised as the Irish-American, he is described as 'a tall gaunt man of 60', whilst Watson is a 'heavily built, elderly man with a grey moustache'. The world has moved on since their days of glory in the 1890s, and as if to emphasise this point, this story records Holmes's only ride in a car, that symbol of the 20th century, and Watson is the driver. Taking up driving so late in life has probably led to Watson being less active and consequently 'heavily built'. However, age apart, the two, despite being in their seventh decade, are able to deal physically with Von Bork, and Watson, according to Holmes is even considering offering his services again to the war department – there seems to be no sign of *his* retiring – good old Watson!

But for all its attempts to lead the reader forward into a 'changing world' for Holmes and Watson, there is also an air of nostalgia, as old cases are recalled (*A Scandal in Bohemia*) and old opponents (Professor Moriarty) – and is it too much to think that Conan Doyle was beginning to identify more closely with Sherlock after all the years of antagonism towards him? Why else would he choose his father's middle name 'Altamont' as the pseudonym Holmes assumes when a spy? It's as if he's become one of the family.

Conan Doyle wrote another Holmes novel, *The Valley of Fear,* in 1915, and far from closing the file on Holmes and Watson after their War Service, he went on to write another 12 short stories, published as *The Case-book of Sherlock Holmes* in 1927.

THE VALLEY OF FEAR

There can be no doubt that Conan Doyle had a long-lasting love affair – with America. The Sherlock Holmes stories teem with Americans on both sides of the law and in *The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor*, Doyle in his zeal even goes so far as to suggest a union between the two countries: 'It is always a joy to me to meet an American,' [says Sherlock Holmes] '... for I am one of those who believe that the folly of a monarch and the blundering of a Minister in far gone years will not prevent our children from being some day citizens of the same world-wide country under a flag which shall be a quartering of the Union Jack with the Stars and Stripes.'

He first visited the USA in 1894 on a lecture tour. The schedule proved to be frenetic, sometimes lecturing in three widely separated cities within 24 hours. It was more work than leisure, but despite his many engagements he did find time to pay homage at the grave of Edgar Alan Poe, the father of the detective novel, and tactfully remarked: 'His detective is the best in fiction.' Doyle returned to England exhausted, but with many favourable impressions of the United States.

In May 1914 he once again embarked on an American tour, travelling across the Atlantic in the *Olympic*, sister ship of the ill-fated *Titanic*, whose captain he had so valiantly supported against the odds only two years previously. He was to tour Canada's National Parks at the invitation of the Government, but spent the first week in New York, a city that had changed out of all proportion since his visit 20 years earlier. He was awestruck by the proliferation of skyscrapers and noted with approval: 'America is a wonderful country, with a big future.'

The Americans in their turn had taken to Conan Doyle, or perhaps in reality had taken to Mr Sherlock Holmes, as one of their own. The *New York Times* went so far as to suggest that perhaps Holmes might be considering

emigrating to New York, quoting his creator: 'It seems that Sir Arthur finds New York a not unworthy field for the exercise of the great detective's abilities…' Maybe it was this article that persuaded Doyle, if he hadn't already thought of it, to set a large part of his next Holmes novel in America, though not specifically in New York.

He seems to have spent his few days in New York with a view to gleaning information that would figure prominently in his forthcoming novel. He met William J. Burns, who had founded a successful detective agency, and was known as 'the Sherlock Holmes of America'. Doyle was eager to hear details of his early career as a member of the famous Pinkerton Detective Agency. Trips were arranged to Sing Sing prison, where he tried out the electric chair for size and experienced a brief confinement in a cramped prison cell, all experiences which no doubt contributed to the grim tone of his next novel.

He had begun work on what was to be the last Holmes novel towards the end of 1913, and for its structure he returned to his first great success, *A Study in Scarlet.* In this, the first Holmes novel, the detective is removed from the stage after investigating a brutal murder of a man with American connections, so the reader may learn of the tangled back-story that led to the crime. 'Of course,' wrote Doyle to his editor at *The Strand*, referring to *The Valley of Fear,* 'in this long stretch we abandon Holmes. That is necessary.' Necessary or not, despite its initial success, the public resented the disappearance of their hero Holmes for more than half the novel, and *The Valley of Fear* has suffered in its popularity as a result. Notwithstanding, a first edition of the novel was sold at Sotheby's in July 2006 for £4,800. Conan Doyle would no doubt have been amused.

A month before the serialisation of *The Valley of Fear* began in *The Strand* in September 1914, World War I had started. The new Holmes novel had an escapist appeal to the British public – it was set in times and a country outside the European conflict – but as a result of

the war, Doyle considered it impossible to present a sympathetic German in the story, so Ettie and her father who were originally German and appeared as such in the American edition of the book, became Swedish.

In *The Valley of Fear* Conan Doyle found a happy compromise for the two opposing strands of his literary output that had always given him so much anguish; he pleases his Holmes fans with a new case, *The Tragedy of Birlstone,* and pleases himself in the flashback section, *The Scowrers,* by writing an atmospheric and gripping tale set in the recent past of America. It is really two novels, and each can be read almost independently of the other. Despite its relative unpopularity with Sherlockians, the novel is what Inspector White-Mason, one of its characters, would call 'a snorter!'.

The Scowrers, which reveals the past of the murdered American and his associates, is written in a distinctly different style from the rest of the book. It is a personal journey for Doyle through the genres of American popular literature, which he had loved since boyhood. In *The Valley of Fear* there are echoes of Mark Twain: Bret Harte's stories of life in the Californian gold-mining camps; the Western; and the Gangster mob story.

There was nothing Doyle enjoyed more than turning history into fiction. His historical novels, which he prized more highly than his Sherlock Holmes stories, were renowned for the meticulous research their author carried out to get every period detail in them correct. In *The Valley of Fear* he recreated the actual terror and violence experienced in the coalfields of Pennsylvania USA in the 1870s. Conditions of labour for the miners in the coal and iron foundries were poor and the men suffered much abuse from ruthless employers. By way of redressing this injustice the miners formed themselves into gangs that retaliated against the mine owners with violence, sabotage and intimidation.

As many in the work force were Irish immigrants these gangs became known as the 'Molly Maguires', recalling similar organisations that had existed in Ireland

to combat unfair rent increases and evictions. One such evicted tenant was apparently called Molly Maguire who led and gave her name to violent rioters in Ireland in the 1840s. They evolved into secret societies such as the 'Ancient Order of Hibernians', which acted as a respectable front to their activities. Their motto was 'Friendship, Unity and Christian Charity', and they were influential in the formation of the IRA in the early 20th century. The structure and power of these societies was transferred to America in the mid-19th century, and Doyle reflects accurately in every detail of his fictitious 'Scowrers', the systematic and cold-blooded approach to revenge and the elimination of their opponents.

In 1877 several top detectives of the Pinkerton Agency infiltrated the organisation and succeeded in bringing to justice many of the key leaders. One such, James McParlan, was Conan Doyle's model for 'Birdy Edwards' in the story, who through his personal testimony sent 10 men to the gallows.

The Pinkerton Detective Agency was world-famous by the time Doyle wrote his novel. The Scottish-American Allan Pinkerton had founded his National Detective Agency in Chicago in 1850. One of its earliest successes was the foiling of an assassination attempt on President Lincoln in 1861. The Agency's motto was 'we never sleep' and its logo was an open unblinking eye – hence the nickname for their agents, 'private eyes'. Pinkerton dreamed that one day his organisation would achieve worldwide control. Its efficiency inspired the founding of a similar body, the FBI, which eventually superseded it. Pinkerton invented the 'mugshot' and developed a file system on criminals that was the envy of the world's police forces. They were relentless in their pursuit of criminals, and represented in their methods the detective of the future.

In a superb *coup de théâtre* Doyle, in *The Valley of Fear,* allows his detective, Holmes, to outwit the best detective in the seemingly invincible Pinkerton Agency, who proves his own outstanding abilities in the flashback sequence of

the book. By way of tribute to the American's skills, Holmes reproduces his methods, when, disguised as the American Altamont in *His Last Bow,* he infiltrates the German spy ring led by Von Bork.

Pinkerton himself had a literary bent, and in 1877 had written an account of the Molly Maguires case, to which Doyle was extremely indebted for a number of the facts used in his fictionalisation of the events. In later life, Pinkerton took to writing detective stories – one wonders if he had heard of Sherlock Holmes, and what he thought of him.

'I fancy this is my swan-song in fiction' Conan Doyle had written to his editor on sending him the manuscript of *The Valley of Fear* in 1914. The implication was that his Baker Street days were finally over, but Holmes was not to release his creator yet. *His Last Bow* was still to come in 1917, and *The Case-book* in 1927.

THE CASE-BOOK OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

To think of Sherlock Holmes conjures up an image of a gas-lit room, filled with tobacco smoke from the sleuth's pipe, and the gentle clip-clop of a Hansom cab passing outside beneath the grimy fog-ridden window of 221b Baker Street. A sepia-tinted image from the end of the 19th century.

It seems amazing, therefore, that a new series of Sherlock Holmes stories should have appeared as late as the 1920s. But despite the 1920s being the age of jazz and the flapper in which such items as telephones, electric light, electric bells, motor cars, and gramophones were becoming commonplace – the Holmes phenomenon showed no signs of diminishing. The stories, despite being set for the most part in the early 1900s, were still as eagerly read as ever. Indeed, modern technology was encouraging Holmes's popularity. By 1921 the developing silent film industry already had 15 Sherlock Holmes adaptations on its shelves, including a full-length *The Hound of the Baskervilles.* Between 1921 and 1927 Conan Doyle once again returned to his great creation for 12 more stories which were first published in *The Strand,* and then published collectively as *The Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes* in 1927.

In these stories, Conan Doyle seems to be struggling to find a new narrative style. Nine are related by Watson, as the reader would expect, but one is narrated in the third person, and two by Holmes himself. Watson is at pains in the opening narrative to *Thor Bridge* to explain the change: 'In some [cases] I was myself concerned and can speak as an eye-witness, while in others I was either not present or played so small a part that they could only be told as by a third person.'

The experiment of allowing Holmes to write up his own cases was not met with unmitigated delight by the reading public. Watson had his own admirers. *The Times* reviewer wrote: 'Why is Holmes the only prolonger of his own life, the only survivor of his

own biographer, the only personage privileged to be his creator's never-failing resource?'

Conan Doyle's struggle to ring the changes on what had become for him a tired formula, reflected his personal literary journey: he was reluctant to write fiction at all by the 1920s in view of his commitment heart and soul to the cause of spiritualism. He published more than 12 books on the subject, bemusing his readers, family and friends alike as to how the creator of such a rational fictional character as Sherlock Holmes could be deluded by this fake-science, and become the victim of charlatans and con-men. He poured money into the furtherance of the spiritualist cause, which may well account for the appearance of these last 12 Sherlock Holmes stories. By the 1920s he was being paid £800 per story for the British rights alone, a dozen pot-boilers hurriedly dashed off would result in considerably increased funds.

Indeed, some devoted followers have suggested that these stories are not by Conan Doyle at all, but mere pastiche by lesser hands, and certainly there is an inconsistency in the characterisation of Holmes; or had Conan Doyle reached the point with his creation of deliberately writing to shock his reading public? Perhaps he had realized that Holmes was immortal and however he chose to represent him the public would lap it up anyway.

In the year of his death, Conan Doyle gave an interview: 'I am rather tired of hearing myself described as the author of "*Sherlock Holmes*". Why not, for a change, the author of *Rodney Stone* or *The White Company* or *The Lost World*? One would think I had written nothing but detective stories.' He had, by the end of his life, decided that his greater purpose was to preach the new religion of spiritualism; the writing of fiction was definitely the lesser calling. He was convinced that it was as a reformer and exponent of a great religion that he would be remembered by posterity: 'I consider spiritualism to be infinitely the most important thing in the world, and the

particular thing which the human race in its present state of development needs more than anything else.'

The editor of *The Strand,* Greenhough Smith, ever-reluctant to accept that there would be no more cases for Sherlock Holmes to solve, persistently asked Conan Doyle: 'More Holmes?' In reply he would say: 'I can only write what comes to me.' What came to him was an endless flow of words, both written and spoken, that furthered the spiritualist cause. His obsession cost him a peerage, and lost him many friends who couldn't square his beliefs with the man they thought they knew. When he publicly declared that he believed photographs of fairies, taken by two young girls in Cottingley, were genuine, many thought he had gone mad. The photographs were later proved fakes.

In *Search for Truth* by Harry Price, written in 1939, which contains a not uncritical account of Doyle's attraction to spiritualism, Price wryly observes: 'The spiritualists themselves have almost forgotten him, and have not even troubled to establish a memorial to his memory.'

Conan Doyle's zeal for the spiritualist cause exhausted and eventually killed him. The stubbornness he could occasionally show increased when illness finally caught up with him in 1929, and against his doctor's advice he continued to lecture and preach the doctrine of spiritualism without regard for his health.

In a moment of reflection on a crowded life, Doyle drew a cartoon of an old work-horse struggling to pull a cart piled high with his life's achievements. Under the sketch he wrote: 'The old horse has pulled a heavy load a long way.'

He died in July 1930, no doubt faithful to his belief that death was merely a gateway to eternal life. He was buried in his Sussex garden. On the headstone over the grave was an epitaph representing his life's creed: 'Steel true, blade straight.'

THE PROBLEM OF THOR BRIDGE

Conan Doyle knew this collection of stories would be the last, but he could not help dangling a carrot before his faithful readers and tantalising them with the contents of Watson's tin-box as described at the start of *The Problem of Thor Bridge.*

Likewise, could Sherlock Holmes's public ever have had a surfeit of stories about their favourite detective, as Watson feared in his opening narrative to this tale? 'A surfeit which might react upon the reputation of the man whom above all others I revere', Watson wrote, and misjudged his readers. Conan Doyle no doubt chuckled as he mercilessly teased his public.

Cox and Co.'s Bank was destroyed by an air raid in World War 2. It is hoped that Watson's box was not among the casualties. If it was, it may account for the non-appearance of any more Watson cases, and the modern proliferation of those based on the titles he has left us.

This ingenious case may well be based on the writings of Hans Gross, a professor of criminology who published a book on criminal investigation in the 1890s. He was one of the founders of modern police science.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE MAZARIN STONE

Things certainly seem to have changed at Baker Street since Watson moved out to pursue his medical practice. A bow window seems to have been installed, of which no mention is made in any other story. Connecting doors between bedrooms have been constructed, too, and Holmes, displaying an uncharacteristic aptitude to move with the times, now has an electric bell and a gramophone, still a luxury item in the year in which this story is set, 1902. The 'gramophone' was not a player of cylinders, but flat discs and was invented by Emil Berliner in 1887. It was Berliner who first used the logo of the dog listening to a gramophone, popularly known as 'His Master's Voice'. As there is

no recording listed of a solo violin version of the Barcarolle from *The Tales of Hoffman*, perhaps Holmes paid for a private recording of the piece as rendered by himself, indicative, along with the employment of the page Billy, of the success Holmes has made of the detective business.

The changes to the familiar Baker Street room may well be as a result of the stage-set designed and constructed for Conan Doyle's play *The Crown Diamond; or an evening with Sherlock Holmes*, which had had a modest success when produced in 1921. This story seems to have been based on the play. The fact that the whole case takes place in one setting (unique in the canon) supports this. It may also account for the very theatrical way in which Holmes behaves and speaks in this story. Never has Holmes been more manic or 'impish' than in the *Mazarin Stone*, and one feels that he might even have resorted once more to the 7% solution!

The diamond of the title is associated with the great French Cardinal, Jules Mazarin (1602-1661) who was chief minister to the young Louis XIV. He exercised enormous political power and at his death bequeathed his jewels to the French Crown, including 18 diamonds, known as the 'Mazarin Diamonds'. Apparently none of them was yellow, as the one identified here! Despite its idiosyncrasies, Lloyd George, the Liberal Prime Minister, considered *The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone* 'one of the best Sherlock Holmes stories I have read'.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE CREEPING MAN

The use of monkey-glands as related in this story to recapture lost youth may seem extreme, and a very 19th century idea, but it also reminds us of the placebos, ointments and moistures advertised daily in the 21st century with similar claims to hold back the ageing process. Nevertheless, the perverted science of this story places it firmly in the era of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde,* with

a tribute to Conan Doyle's great mentor Edgar Allan Poe's tale *The Murders in the Rue Morgue.*

Holmes seems by 1902, the year of this case, to have reconsidered his attitude towards dogs. Having poisoned one as an experiment in *A Study in Scarlet* and shot one in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and also in *The Adventure of the Copper Beeches,* he here says that they are 'the mirror of the household' and plans to write a monogram on the subject (see note to the stories mentioned).

Once again we are in an unidentified university town called Camford, just as it was in *The Adventure of the Missing Three-Quarter,* a poorly veiled attempt by Watson to amalgamate features of both Oxford and Cambridge, and thus not offend presumably either institution or cast aspersions on dons at Holmes's old college, whichever one that was! For what it is worth, Holmes does refer to 'Camford' as 'this charming town', whereas in *The Adventure of the Missing Three-Quarter*, which is definitely set in Cambridge, he refers to it as 'this inhospitable town', which might indicate that 'Camford' is really Oxford and that is Holmes's *alma mater.*

THE ADVENTURE OF THE SUSSEX VAMPIRE

Vampires were a source of endless fascination for the Victorians. The first fictional account was in *The Vampyre* (1816) by John Polidori, based on an idea of Byron's. In 1872, Sheridan Le Fanu had written *Carmilla* about a female vampire, but Bram Stoker's epic *Dracula* was not published until a year after this case, and would have been unknown to Holmes. Conan Doyle would have known it however, writing in the 1920s, and may have even seen the celebrated silent film *Nosferatu* loosely based on *Dracula* which was first shown in 1922.

Despite his own unshakeable belief in spiritualism, Doyle could not finally 'grasp the nettle' and convert Holmes, the great rationalist, to the cause. In fact he goes out of his way to make

Holmes in this story dismissive of anything that smatters of the occult. 'This agency stands flatfooted upon the ground, and there it must remain,' says Holmes. 'This world is big enough for us. No ghosts need apply…'

But though Conan Doyle eschewed converting Holmes, he had no such qualms in converting his other popular literary creation, the sceptical Professor Challenger to an absolute believer in the psychic novel *The Land of Mist* in 1926. If it had had Holmes at its centre it would have guaranteed its success. As a result of Conan Doyle's reticence to cheapen his greatest creation, the novel failed.

The unhealthy father/son relationship at the centre of this story is worthy to be referred as a test-case for Dr Sigmund Freud, whose psychological examinations were contemporary with this story, c.1896. Would Freud have prescribed Holmes's very practical solution to Jacky's problems – 'a year at sea' – one wonders?

THE ADVENTURE OF THE THREE GARRIDEBS

Watson roots this story very specifically in June 1902, when Sherlock Holmes was offered a knighthood for services rendered. Why did Holmes refuse it? Ever since *A Scandal in Bohemia,* when he was given a 'snuff-box of old gold, with a great amethyst in the centre of the lid' by the King of Bohemia, Holmes had been the recipient of gifts from grateful clients in high places. From France, we learn in *The Adventure of the Golden Pince-nez* he had received the Order of the Legion of Honour – so why not an accolade from his own country? Alongside these tributes, there runs a counter current of anti-establishment attitudes on the part of Holmes. It was his obvious dislike of the Duke of Holdernesse's attitude towards him that led Holmes to sting him for an enormous £6,000 fee – the largest recorded by Watson. Did Holmes have socialist or radical tendencies? Or was it that he was such an independent spirit he could not be beholden to anyone –

least of all the government of the day? It might have been bad for business – Sir Sherlock Holmes on the brass plate outside the door of 221b Baker Street may well have deterred his less well-off clients from approaching him – and as the stories testify, that door was open to all walks of life. 'I play the game for the game's own sake,' he told his brother Mycroft in *The Adventure of the Bruce-Partington Plans,* when an honour seemed a probability for his services. Instead, Holmes preferred to receive 'a remarkably fine emerald tie-pin' from his grateful monarch, rather than a tap on the shoulder.

Conan Doyle, too, was at first reluctant when offered a knighthood by the new king, Edward VII, in the same year as Holmes's invitation. Doyle was convinced that it would compromise his position, as he saw it, as a freelance guardian of the State. The knighthood was not in recognition of his creating Sherlock Holmes, as the general public mostly believed, but for his expert analysis in print of the Boer War. In a pamphlet he had answered tricky questions convincingly, concerning the British use of concentration camps.

The American geography connected to the background of Killer Evans is pure fiction on Conan Doyle's part, as elsewhere in the canon. Fort Dodge, for instance, is not in Kansas but Iowa.

The telephone, that essential component of modern society, features strongly in this story. Although invented as long ago as 1876, Holmes seems only to have acquired one at Baker Street with some reluctance. The police had relied on telephones since 1889, but Holmes always preferred to send telegrams. As late as 1895, in *The Adventure of the Bruce-Partington Plans* he was still sending them. Maybe Doyle, writing these stories in the 1920s, when telephones were becoming common household objects, decided it was time to bring Holmes's methods of communication up-to-date. He featured it again in *The Adventure of the Retired Colourman* and *The Adventure of the Illustrious Client.*

The most moving part of this story, indeed one of the most touching

moments in the whole canon, is Holmes's expression of his deep feelings for his old friend Watson when he is wounded by Killer Evans. His anger and threat to kill his attacker is a completely believable reaction, despite reservations by some that it is not in Holmes's temperament to go so far in breaking the law. There are many other occasions in the stories when he is prepared to bend the law, if not actually break it. One wonders, however, with Nathan Garrideb, Holmes's client, suffering terminally from the shock of the experience, if Holmes ever received a fee for the case?

In the original story, as published in *The Strand,* Killer Evans's accomplice is named as Presbury. Conan Doyle could be careless in his use of names: this is also the name of the Professor who features in *The Adventure of the Creeping Man,* a story also included in this collection. Conan Doyle corrected this repetition when the stories were published in book-form, changing 'Presbury' to 'Prescott'. Although the texts for these recordings are based on the original *Strand* texts, it seemed unnecessarily pedantic not to follow Conan Doyle's correction.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE BLANCHED SOLDIER

The soldier of the title, Godfrey Emsworth, is a casualty of the South African War, better known as the Boer War (1899 –1902). This was a struggle between the Boers, who were Dutch settlers, and the British for dominion over the riches of the South African gold and diamond mines. The Boers, led by their President Paul Kruger, were not prepared to be pushed around by the British and demanded that British settlers should leave South Africa altogether. Kruger presented an ultimatum in October 1899, which the British government defied. War was thus declared. The British, with considerably larger numbers in their forces, expected a short and decisive conflict, but their tactics were old-fashioned and unsuited to the rugged terrain of the Transvaal. The Boers, by

contrast, knew their country and fought a guerrilla war, weakening the larger British force by surprise attacks. The British army found itself, as so often, in a conflict that was considerably more dangerous and protracted than it had bargained for. Lord Roberts, briefly referred to in this case, took over as commander-in-chief from Redvers Buller and turned an imminent British defeat into a victory.

Conan Doyle was eager to become actively involved in the war. Bluntly turned down as an able-bodied soldier, he found an opportunity to be near the action as an army doctor working in a privately-funded hospital unit being sent to the front. He arrived as the British took Bloemfontein. His hospital unit was overwhelmed with wounded, and those sick of disease, predominantly typhoid, who formed the majority. Typhoid is not leprosy, but the experience of seeing men debilitated and demoralized by disease may have been recalled when he was working on *The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier.* Doyle was determined to write a book about the war. On his return, the book duly appeared as an 'interim history', as the war was still in progress.

Watson, we are told begrudgingly by Holmes, has married again. We know that Mary Morstan whom Watson had met and married during the case of *The Sign of Four* had died some time between 1891 and 1894, for in *The Adventure of the Empty House* Watson mentions his 'sad bereavement'. But who is this mysterious new wife? Speculation is rife among Sherlockian scholars. There are many candidates in the stories themselves, for Watson was ever susceptible to a pretty face, a 'noble figure' or a queenly presence!

The absence of Watson from this story has prompted Holmes, for the first time, to write his own version of the account. As he freely confesses himself, he is no Watson when it comes to literary talent. An academic monograph on cigars, or Lassus's motets, is child's play for him compared to constructing a convincing narrative. For instance, Holmes confuses the Duke of Greyminster with the Duke

of Holdernesse at one point, who had featured in the case of *The Adventure of the Priory School* not the 'Abbey School'. This error could charitably be put down to his not keeping notes of his cases; that had always been Watson's job. But why, once persuaded to take up his pen, did he choose a case that shows so little of his deductive powers, when the world was longing for, whether ready or not, his account of the Great Rat of Sumatra!

THE ADVENTURE OF THE VEILED LODGER

The world of the 19th-century circus is recalled in this case, a form of entertainment much changed since its heyday in the era of Holmes and Watson, when animal acts and freak shows were commonplace. 'Lord' George Sanger became a millionaire from his circus, which was still in existence in the 1950s. Sanger was the first to introduce lions into the ring, and created the three-ring circus copied by P.T. Barnum. Wombwell's Menagerie toured the kingdom, giving opportunities for people in remote parts of the country to see exotic animals at close quarters. Wombwell's wife met the same fate as 'Mrs Ronder', but did not survive.

Suicide was still a crime in 1896, the probable year of this case, and Holmes shows his own strong feelings about the subject when he feels that Mrs Ronder might be contemplating taking her own life. 'Your life is not your own,' he tells her. Holmes has never really shown any strong religious conviction throughout the canon, so his response here is unusual. In *The Sign of Four,* Holmes had recommended that Watson should read *The Martyrdom of Man,* which he described as one of the most remarkable works ever written. It is against orthodox Christian thinking and talks of the death of the soul and the impossibility of immortality. Such convictions may well have contributed to Holmes's frequent bouts of depression and the attractions of the '7% solution'. Ten years later, however, we find that Holmes has had

a conversion: 'The ways of fate,' he says in this case, 'are indeed hard to understand. If there is not some form of compensation hereafter, then the world is a cruel jest.' It is one of many occasions in *The Case-book of Sherlock Holmes* where Conan Doyle shows Holmes's increasingly philosophical nature.

Watson tells us that by the time of Holmes's retirement in 1903, he had been 23 years in service, which, if one allows for the three years he disappeared after his supposed death at the Reichenbach falls, would give a date of 1877 as the beginning of Holmes's career as a detective.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS CLIENT

In *The Sign of Four* Holmes had declared: 'Love is an emotional thing… opposed to that true, cold reason which I place above all things', and throughout the canon Holmes displays a disregard for, even an irritation with, the opposite sex, referring them to Watson as 'your department'. Yet he was not a complete misogynist. He showed sympathy to many a young woman who came to Baker Street with a distressing problem to be solved, and on one notable occasion was almost conquered by one of them – Irene Adler in *A Scandal in Bohemia.* Holmes does, however, seem unusually taken with Violet de Merville; she gets under his skin. 'She is beautiful,' he tells Watson, 'but with the ethereal other-world beauty of some fanatic whose thoughts are set on high…' In his middle-age, she is an ideal for him, though he is aware of the age difference: 'I thought of her... as I would have thought of a daughter of my own.'

Violet is one of the veritable bloom of Violets that blossom throughout the canon, and Conan Doyle, in this, one of his last stories, could not shake off the charm and significance the name obviously had for him. (See notes on *The Adventure of the Copper Beeches* in The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes.) Who is the 'Illustrious, but anonymous, client'? Possibly the former Prince

of Wales, now, in the year of this case – 1902 – newly crowned as King Edward VII.

He may have been involved in earlier cases too: *The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet* also has an anonymous client, and *if* he was the Lord Balmoral referred to in *The Adventure of the Empty House,* who had been gambling with the murdered Ronald Adair, he narrowly escaped being involved in a scandal himself. His motivation in *this* case seems obscure, apart from helping a pretty girl (which was probably motivation enough for King Edward!).

Despite Damery covering the heraldic arms on the side of his coach with his overcoat, Watson is, with a mere glimpse, instantly able to recognise the client's identity – another hint that it could indeed be the King himself.

Why is Watson living in Queen Anne Street? Is this evidence that Watson had married for a second time? He makes no mention of a wife, however, in this set of stories, and three months earlier, in *The Adventure of the Three Garridebs,* he was living in Baker Street. Some Sherlockian scholars have posed the idea that he had to move out and set up a practice once more to recover his gambling losses, which he refers to in a light-hearted way in *The Adventure of Shoscombe Old Place* (see notes). Also, with Holmes heading towards retirement, Watson may have had to look to his own financial future. We learn in *The Adventure of the Creeping Man* that Watson has a practice that is 'not inconsiderable', and a practice in Queen Anne Street, in the purlieus of Harley Street (the Mecca of medical specialists), would indicate that by 1902 Watson was doing very well indeed. Good old Watson!

Is this case really the 'supreme moment of my friend's career', as Watson describes it? There are surely ones that involved more deduction and skill, and others that had more at stake. In *The Adventure of the Second Stain*, for instance, the ruin of a cabinet minister and the possibility of war are averted by Holmes; whilst in *The Adventure of the Bruce-Partington Plans* he foils foreign attempts to discover

Britain's secret weapon, the submarine. In terms of reward, Holmes has had gifts from the King of Bohemia and Queen Victoria herself. Here he receives no gift, only an undisclosed fee from a grateful monarch. One hopes it was substantial enough to boost his income in retirement.

THE ADVENTURE OF THE THREE GABLES

Every fan of the Sherlock Holmes stories today must shudder at the naked display of racism by Holmes when talking to the Negro, Steve Dixie. Was Conan Doyle striving in these last stories to destroy the idolatry that had developed around Holmes? It seems extreme to turn him into a racist, particularly when in *The Adventure of the Yellow Face* he had shown such sympathy for the young girl's mixed-race origins. The truth is that this story is showing its age. Most Englishmen of the Victorian period, the age of Empire, would have responded to Steve Dixie in a similar way. The white British male's belief in his superiority over the subdued races of the Empire was unquestioned. Holmes is a product of this prevailing 19th-century mood. If there is any mitigating circumstance, it is that Steve Dixie is an unpleasant and violent crook!

THE ADVENTURE OF THE RETIRED COLOURMAN

Who is Barker? Holmes refers to him as his 'hated rival', yet he is not mentioned in any other case. It is evident that by the date of this case, 1898, there were detectives who were adopting Holmes's methods, and perhaps he no longer felt supreme in his field. Maybe that is why Holmes withdrew from the world of crime detection at such a comparatively early age.

The telephone features in this story, and had obviously been installed in Baker Street by this time. It quickly became an indispensable tool of Holmes's trade, as important to him as the telegram was in earlier stories.

This late story shows the closeness and sensitivity that has developed

between the two old friends. Holmes can of course still hurl a sarcastic comment Watson's way: 'Cut out the poetry, Watson!'; but he also exerts great care to give Watson his due. 'You can thank Dr Watson's observation for that… Another of Dr Watson's bull's eyes…'

There seems to be no actual singer of the period called 'Carina'. This is strange, as Conan Doyle's musical references are, with this exception, genuine. It has been suggested (by Mr A. Boucher) that 'Carina' (which means 'darling' in Italian) is Holmes's own pet-name for the singer, giving us a tantalising glimpse, however unlikely, into a possible love-affair which is never explored by the discreet Dr Watson!

THE ADVENTURE OF THE LION'S MANE

Watson tells us that by the spring of 1897 'the constant hard work' was beginning to tell upon Holmes's iron constitution; six years later, after *The Adventure of the Creeping Man*, Holmes retired to a villa in Sussex, which provides the background to this case. Having survived his creator's attempt to kill him off prematurely in *The Adventure of the Final Problem*, and given the erratic attitude that Conan Doyle continued to have towards his greatest creation, it is a wonder Holmes reached retirement unscathed.

One hopes that the old housekeeper who looks after him in his retirement is the indomitable Mrs. Hudson!

The retired Holmes, however, is a changed man. He has convinced himself that he has always had a longing for a life by the sea, but in an earlier case (*The Adventure of the Cardboard Box*), Watson noted that neither 'the country nor the sea presented the slightest attraction to him. He loved to lie in the very centre of five millions of people.'

Holmes seems now to have become a lover of nature, too, and, more surprisingly – as he used to experiment on them (see *A Study in Scarlet*) – dogs! Though he describes himself as slow in solving this case, Holmes seems to have lost none of his old incisive

powers of deduction, or his weakness for a dramatic denouement. Finally, albeit in his more mature years, he has developed an appreciation of beautiful women: Violet de Merville as noted in *The Adventure of the Illustrious Client*, and Miss Maud Bellamy, here. 'She would have graced any assembly in the world,' says Holmes.

Withdrawing from a life crowded with incident, Holmes is content instead to be merely an observer of society – the society in question being the ordered world of bees. He focuses on them all his skills of analysis and deduction, which had so terrified the criminal fraternity. The result of his studies is *The Practical Handbook of Bee Culture, with some Observations upon the Segregation of the Queen.* Holmes proudly calls it his *magnum opus*, though the world would probably have preferred the study of criminality that he once promised to write, which was to be called *The Whole Art of Detection.*

He may have escaped the bovine branch of the London police force, with whom he had to deal on so many occasions, but Sussex has its own breed in Inspector Bardle, whose observation that Holmes likes to do things thoroughly in an investigation prompts the acid reply: 'I should hardly be what I am if I did not.' Perhaps Holmes felt that his reputation was suffering because of the activities of a new breed of detective, such as Barker (*The Adventure of the Retired Colourman*), to whom he refers as his 'hated rival'.

If Holmes retired in 1903 he would have been not yet 50, and at the height of his powers. His statement that he had always longed for a country lifestyle whilst working in the heart of London doesn't quite ring true. He lived for his work, and referred to the countryside in *The Adventure of the Copper Beeches* as being the place where crime could be more easily committed! Why then such an early retirement? Was he now so wealthy that he could at last indulge his hitherto un-confessed passion for bees? Or was Holmes's retirement a blind to conceal his feverish activity in the Secret Service? In the years between his retirement (in 1903) and

1914, the tension between England and Germany grew to alarming proportions, and Holmes's sharp brain would have been invaluable to counter-espionage, as war inevitably approached. *His Last Bow* deals with just such a scenario.

THE ADVENTURE OF SHOSCOMBE OLD PLACE

And so we come to the last Sherlock Holmes story Conan Doyle ever wrote. The last line is fitting as an unintentional tribute to Holmes in his retirement: '[A career which has] ended in an honoured old age.'

The duo, however, are in good form. Holmes displays his usual lack of respect for the idle rich – 'Sir Robert is a man of an honourable stock. But you do occasionally find a carrion crow among the eagles' – while Watson amusingly tugs his forelock, metaphorically, at the monstrous supposition that a nobleman like Sir Robert could be a cad.

Even in 1902, the year before his retirement, Holmes is still pushing back scientific boundaries and experimenting with 'a microscope' – a new tool, he admits, for him, in the fight against crime – along with the aforementioned telephone.

Was Watson a heavy gambler? To admit to spending half his wound pension on betting does seem excessive – or is it merely a heavy-handed joke? Watson's wound is variously described as being in the leg or the shoulder, so it is gratifying that the doctors were able to diagnose its exact location, making him eligible for a pension. If he was wounded twice, maybe the pension reflected this and gave him a comfortable income, or at least enough to be able to risk a flutter on the horses without too much financial inconvenience. Watson's pension was 11s 6d a day in 1881, the year of *A Study in Scarlet,* which is about £200 a year. Holmes did, however, keep Watson's chequebook locked in a drawer during *The Adventure of the Dancing Men.* Was this to prevent him from gambling?

THE ADVENTURE OF THE WONDERFUL TOY

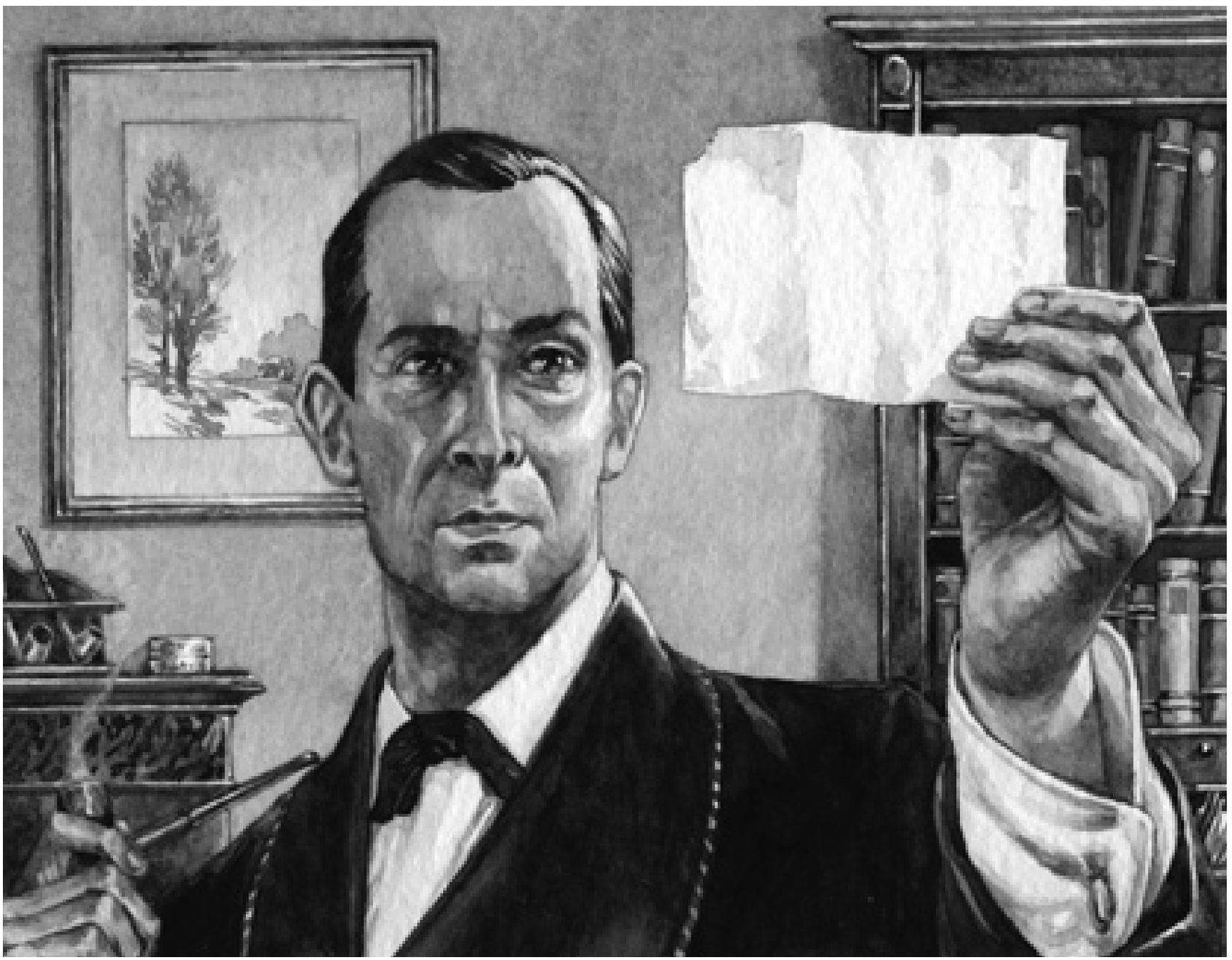
No, Sherlockians, this is not an undiscovered Conan Doyle manuscript, but a pastiche – with perhaps just a hint of parody. This collection of stories marks the end of a 10-year project to record the complete Sherlock Holmes stories for Naxos AudioBooks, and I felt I wanted to pay homage to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, for whom (at least, as a writer of crime fiction) my admiration has grown with each succeeding year, since I recorded the first selection of stories in 1997.

Doyle penned a preface to *The Case-book of Sherlock Holmes* in which he wrote that he hoped there was a 'fantastic limbo' where fictional characters could continue their lives: 'Perhaps in some humble corner of such a Valhalla, Sherlock and his Watson may for a time find a place, while some more astute sleuth with some even less astute comrade may fill the stage which they have vacated.'

The stage *was* filled: in the very year of the publication of *The Case-book of Sherlock Holmes* (1927), Agatha Christie enjoyed her first success with *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*, and the torch – carried (unwillingly, perhaps) by Conan Doyle for so long – passed on to a new talent whose prolific output would secure detective fiction as a successful genre forever.

EXTRAS

Written by David Timson



picture: Hemesh Alles

HOLMES IN THE MEDIA

Many fine actors have portrayed Sherlock Holmes on the stage, screen and radio, but it is intriguing to reflect that Holmes may himself have pursued a theatrical career if his genius for professional detection failed him. Dr Watson frequently refers to Holmes's extraordinary histrionic talents, with remarks such as: '*His expression, his manner, his very soul seemed to vary with every fresh part he assumed. The stage lost a fine actor… when he became a specialist in crime*'.

However, the earliest attempt to put Holmes on stage – in Glasgow in 1894 – presumably failed, as hardly any information survives of the production. And Conan Doyle once confessed: 'I have grave doubts about putting Holmes on the stage at all…' Nevertheless, in 1897 Doyle wrote a five-act play, which was sent to the New York impresario Charles Frohman, who in turn passed it on to the actor **William Gillette**.

At the time, Gillette knew nothing about Sherlock Holmes, but he recognised a good part when he saw it and instantly read all the stories that had been published to date. He sought, and got permission from Conan Doyle to re-write the script, incorporating additional material from the original stories, as well as taking considerable liberties with the character of Holmes, albeit with the author's blessing. By the late 1890s, Doyle was going through a periodic loss of interest in his creation, to the point that, when Gillette, in the midst of writing the play, wired him enthusiastically asking: 'May I marry Holmes?' Doyle replied tetchily: 'You may marry him, or murder him, or do what you like with him'.

Simply titled *Sherlock Holmes*, Gillette's 'absurd, preposterous, and thoroughly delightful melodrama', as one critic described it, opened on Broadway and was an instant success. It ran for 136 performances before embarking on a national US tour and a transfer to London, where it played at the Lyceum for 216 performances.

Gillette made the part his own and is responsible for many of the iconic images we now associate with the detective. He played the part wearing a deerstalker hat, and smoked a curved Meerschaum pipe (because it was easier to keep in the mouth whilst speaking lines). Neither hat nor pipe are mentioned in the original stories, and it was Gilette, and not Doyle, who was responsible for a line in the play that was, with a little adaptation, to become legendary and forever associated with the great detective: 'Oh, this is elementary, my dear Watson'. Gillette appeared in a silent movie version of his play in 1916, but alas no copy has survived. It was the greatest part of his career; Gillette was still playing Holmes on his farewell tour thirty years later.

Various theatrical versions of the Holmes stories appeared in the early years of the 20th century, Conan Doyle himself successfully adapting *The Adventure of the Speckled Band* in 1910, with **H.A. Saintsbury** in the role of Holmes. With the advent of the cinema, Holmes impersonators began to proliferate. By 1921 the developing silent film industry already had fifteen Sherlock Holmes adaptations on its shelves, including a full-length *Hound of the Baskervilles.* It is claimed that there were as many as 115 Holmes movies by the end of the silent era.

Eille Norwood alone played Holmes in forty-seven silent films. His portrayal won favour from Conan Doyle himself: '*He has that rare quality which can only be described as glamour… he has the brooding eye which excites expectation and he has also a quite unrivalled power of disguise*'.

Italian, German, Danish and of course American film companies quickly followed with further productions in the wake of these early successes, though many of the plots bore little relation to anything Doyle had written. In *Sherlock Holmes in the Great Murder Mystery*, for example, Holmes goes into a trance and pins the murder on an escaped gorilla! More ludicrous situations were to appear for Holmes and Watson once Hollywood got hold of them.

Hollywood heart-throb **John**

Barrymore played Holmes in a silent film called *Moriarty* in 1922, but it was the arrival of sound, and the incomparable pairing of **Basil Rathbone** as Holmes, and **Nigel Bruce** as Watson in the 1930s and 1940s, that sealed the popular image of the duo, and for many they are still the ultimate portrayals. The first Rathbone and Bruce collaboration, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1939), with its swirling fog and atmospheric black-and-white photography, is perhaps the definitive version of this story. Rathbone was an English actor who had played in Shakespeare with Frank Benson's touring company before the First World War. Hollywood beckoned in the 1920s and after a few silent films he appeared in many early talkies, his trained voice and noble profile being eminently suitable for the new medium. He was a notable villain, playing Sir Guy of Gisborne opposite Errol Flynn's Robin Hood.

Rathbone and Bruce appeared as Holmes and Watson in fourteen films over seven years, and in 200 radio versions of the duo's adventures. Many of these were not based on Conan Doyle's original stories, but were up-dated versions set in the war-torn 1940s, where their talents were called upon to deal with the threat of the Nazis, as well as more fantastical adversaries such as Spider-Woman. As the series progressed, Nigel Bruce's Watson deteriorated into a bumbling comic stooge for Holmes's brilliance – a characterisation adopted by many other actors, but bearing no resemblance to Conan Doyle's creation. In the books, Watson may be slow on the uptake sometimes, but he is no fool.

Rathbone was one of the first actors, but by no means the last, who suffered from the 'curse' of playing Sherlock Holmes: type-casting, and the impossibility of being taken seriously in any other role. In the 1950s, as a sad ending to his career, he played Holmes in a stage play written by his wife. It ran for only three performances.

In 1959 the Hammer Studios produced the first Sherlock Holmes film in colour, *The Hound of the*

Baskervilles, with that master of horror **Peter Cushing** as Holmes. **Christopher Lee,** who was later also to don the deerstalker, played Sir Henry Baskerville. Cushing also played the sleuth on TV in the 1960s and from the mid-Sixties, film makers seemed keen to explore the life and times of Holmes, rather than the cases themselves. One such, in 1965, linked Holmes with an actual crime of the Victorian period: *A Study in Terror* pitted Holmes against Jack the Ripper. It starred the fine classical actor **John Neville**, who brought more depth to the character of Holmes than had hitherto been seen.

In 1970 *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*, a parody though not quite a spoof, starred National Theatre star **Robert Stephens** as a dashing Holmes, who, reverting to a theme of William Gillette's play of 1897, is given the chance to fall in love.

The Seven Per Cent Solution (1976) focused on Holmes's addiction to cocaine and Watson's effort to have him analysed by Dr Sigmund Freud. **Nicol Williamson** played a jumpy Holmes, whilst the American actor **Robert Duvall**, having trouble with his accent, was an uncomfortable Watson.

In *Murder by Decree* (1980), Holmes once again encountered Jack the Ripper in a complicated story involving freemasons. **Christopher Plummer** was Holmes and a rather mature **James Mason**, Dr Watson. In keeping with other films of its time, it has been dubbed the bloodiest of all the Holmes films.

Holmes made his television debut as early as 1937 in an American production, *The Three Garridebs,* as part of an experimental TV programme. So the first TV Holmes was an American **– Louis Hector** – well known at the time as Holmes in radio dramatisations.

In the UK, too, before television swept all before it, Holmes and Watson featured prominently in BBC radio drama. From the late 1940s to the 1960s the undisputed portrayers of Conan Doyle's characters on the airwaves were **Carleton Hobbs** as Holmes, and **Norman Shelley** as Watson. For a whole generation they were 'household names' as the epitome

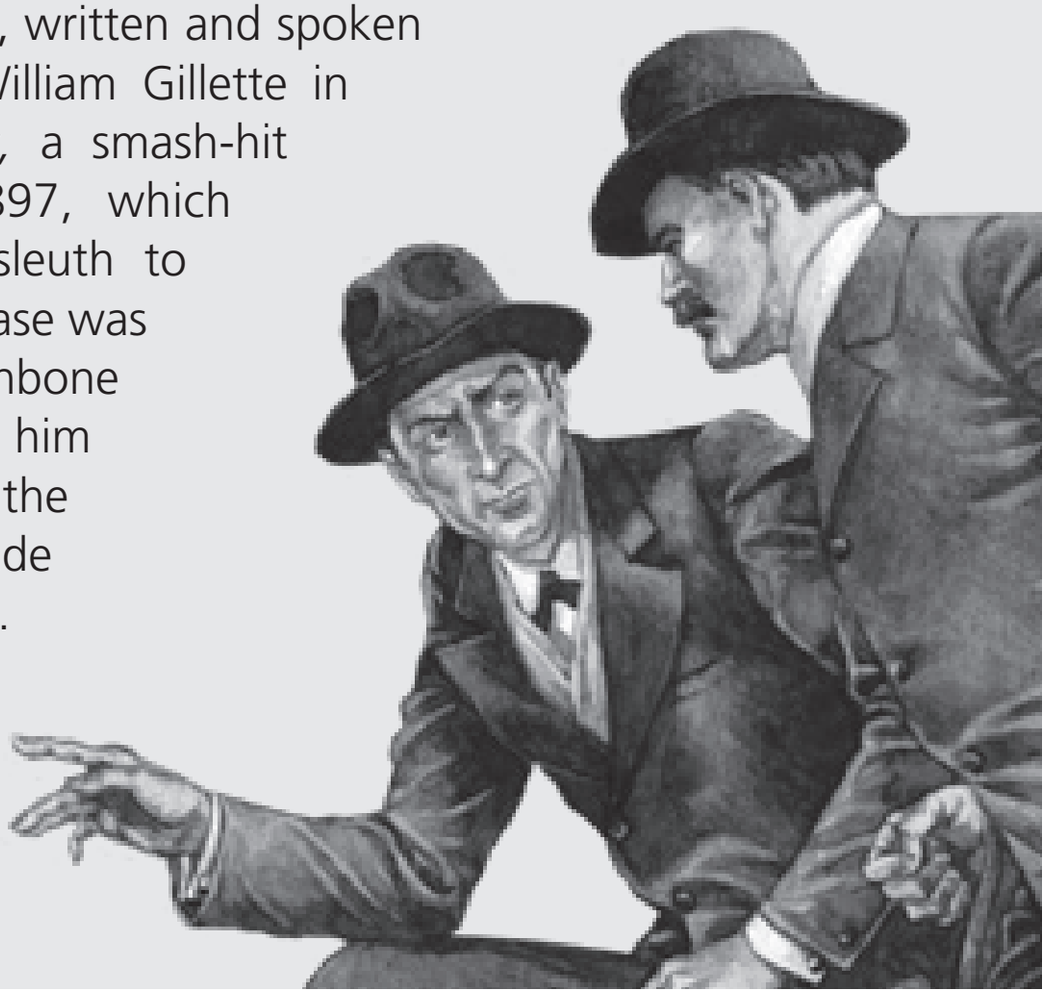
of the detecting duo. Later, in the 1980s, **Clive Merrison** and **Michael Williams** appeared in a new radio series that encompassed the entire canon of Holmes stories.

British TV versions began in earnest in the 1960s, when twelve stories were adapted with **Douglas Wilmer** as Holmes and **Nigel Stock** as Watson. Stock is considered by many to be the definitive Watson, combining successfully the character's slowness and his integrity without resorting to buffoonery. Wilmer, a Holmes enthusiast, kept a firm hand on the proceedings to ensure the original stories were not compromised – but he did not want to do a second series and his part was taken by **Peter Cushing**.
There have been numerous adaptations of the Holmes stories on Italian, Russian and French television; and some monumental pieces of mis-casting on British and American TV. **Roger Moore** temporarily relinquished his image as James Bond to play Holmes in a disastrous TV film titled *Sherlock Holmes in New York.* **Stewart Grainger** could not shake off his matinee-idol image to play Holmes with any depth in an American version of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* in 1972. In the same decade **Christopher Plummer** and **Tom Baker** both attempted Holmes but in flawed productions.

It wasn't until the 1980s that television treated the Holmes series with a consistent sensitivity to the original stories. Produced by Granada TV, nearly all the stories were filmed on a specially constructed Baker Street set at its Manchester studios. **Jeremy Brett**, arguably the greatest of all Holmes impersonators, played Holmes. His personal identification with the role and his scrupulous research created for the first time a fully rounded characterisation, dealing in depth with Holmes's addiction, manic personality and misogynistic tendencies – a darker, but to date a more realistic Holmes than has ever been seen before. Brett's performance was controversial at the time, but with the passing years never ceases to fascinate. It will be a long time before we look upon his like again.

‘ELEMENTARY, MY DEAR WATSON’

One of the most famous quotations in the world of literature, and still heard on a regular basis, was never actually spoken by Sherlock Holmes in any of the Conan Doyle stories. Like Humphrey Bogart, who never said ‘Play it again Sam’ in the film *Casablanca*, Holmes’s quote does not exist in the pages of the books. He said ‘My dear Watson’ a number of times throughout the canon, but only once did he use the word ‘elementary’ (in *The Adventure of the Crooked Man)* and, crucially, he never combined the two quotes at any point. So, where did the phrase come from? It was, in fact, written and spoken by the American actor William Gillette in his play *Sherlock Holmes,* a smash-hit Broadway success in 1897, which introduced the fictional sleuth to the United States. The phrase was also taken up by Basil Rathbone and frequently used by him when he played Holmes in the series of Holmes films made in Hollywood in the 1940s.



SHERLOCK HOLMES AND MUSIC

'*Let us escape from this weary workaday world by the side-door of music*'
– from *The Adventure of the Retired Colourman*.

Sherlock Holmes's greatest love, after detection, was music. References to musicians, actual and fictional, abound in the stories; concert and opera visits are mentioned; and, of course, the sleuth himself indulges his passion for music on the violin.

In *The Red-Headed League,* Holmes 'escapes' with Dr Watson to hear the internationally renowned violinist Pablo Sarasate (1844–1908) performing a concert of largely German music, which would no doubt have also included pieces of his own composition, such as *Gypsy Airs,* which he recorded in the early years of the phonograph. Holmes may have felt a particular affinity with Sarasate, as they both were fortunate to own violins made by the master, Stradivarius.

Sarasate's virtuosity clearly had a profound effect on Holmes: '*All the afternoon he sat in the stalls wrapped in the most perfect happiness, gently waving his long thin fingers in time to the music, while his gently smiling face and his languid, dreamy eyes were as unlike those of Holmes the sleuth-hound, Holmes the relentless, keen-witted, ready-handed criminal agent, as it was possible to conceive.*'

There is no strong evidence that Watson shared Holmes's love of music, being of a more practical and sporting frame of mind, and often Holmes would prefer to slip away to attend concerts alone, as he did in *A Study in Scarlet* – to listen to the celebrated violinist Madame Norma-Neruda, who actually existed, being the wife of the founder of the Halle Orchestra. '*Her attack and her bowing are splendid,*' says Holmes. '*What's that little thing of Chopin's she plays so magnificently: Tra-la-la-lira-lira-lay*'. The 'little thing' has not positively been identified, though Guy Warrack, in his study of Holmes and music, suggests the Nocturne No. 15 in F minor. This is a piano piece however, so Holmes,

as with the Barcarolle in *The Mazarin Stone,* would have been listening to a transcription for violin; not always the happiest of arrangements.

In *The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone*, the Barcarolle from *The Tales of Hoffman* is a strange choice of music for a solo violin, as it appears as a vocal duet in Offenbach's opera. Perhaps Count Negretto Silvius's verdict on it, or Holmes's playing of it, is accurate: '*Confound that whining noise; it gets on my nerves'*.

This poses the question: how good a violinist was Holmes? In *A Study in Scarlet*, the ever-faithful Watson says that he played the violin 'well', but adds 'as eccentric as all his other accomplishments'. This eccentricity was certainly expressed in the choice of music he played – a *lied* by Mendelssohn, Watson tells us (perhaps the ever-popular *Spring Song,* one of Mendelssohn's *Songs Without Words*, once again a piece not originally written for the violin, but for the piano).

But violin-playing fulfilled another function for Holmes. He was happy to toss off pot-boilers for Watson's delectation but when alone he would, '*seldom produce any music or attempt any recognised air… he would close his eyes and scrape carelessly at the fiddle which was thrown across his knee*'. The resulting chords reflected Holmes's moods and thought processes as he worked on a case. There is no evidence that he ever played the classical violin repertoire – Bach's solo violin pieces for instance, though Bach's mathematical symmetry in his compositions would surely have appealed to Holmes's rational mind.

His instrument was made by the king of violin makers Antonio Stradivari which, remarkably, as he told Watson in *The Adventure of the Cardboard Box,* Holmes bought in a second-hand shop in London's Tottenham Court Road for a ludicrous 55 shillings (approx. £2.75 today!).

Mention is made once again of actual performers in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (Conan Doyle liked to mingle fact with his fiction) with the de Reszke brothers appearing in Meyerbeer's opera

Les Huguenots. The brothers, Edouard and Jean, did appear in that very opera at the Drury Lane Theatre in 1887. Opera seems to have been a passion for Holmes (and maybe Watson developed a taste for it too). At the conclusion of *The Red Circle* the pair take themselves off to a Wagner night at Covent Garden – a feat of endurance for all but the most dedicated opera-lover!

Holmes comments on his tastes in music in *The Adventure of the Red-Headed League*: '*German music…is rather more to my taste than Italian or French. It is introspective and I want to introspect…*' It is, perhaps, debatable as to how introspective Wagner is!

Of the few fictitious musicians that appear, or are mentioned, in the stories, none is more impressive than Irene Adler in *A Scandal in Bohemia.* We learn that she sang alto roles at La Scala in Milan, and later the Imperial Opera in Warsaw, before coming to England and turning blackmailer. She was '*the* woman' to Holmes; perhaps he had a predilection for the alto voice, and if so, maybe the fictional singer Carina, in *The Adventure of the Retired Colourman,* about whom we know so little, was also an alto?

It has been suggested (by Mr A. Boucher) that 'Carina' (which means 'darling' in Italian) is Holmes's own pet-name for the singer, giving us a tantalising glimpse, however unlikely, into a possible love-affair, which is never explored by the discreet Dr. Watson!

For a man whose brain was crammed with facts and figures on innumerable subjects, Holmes's knowledge of music is quite considerable. He could talk at length about Stradivari violins, and was able to relate '*anecdote after anecdote of that extraordinary man*' Niccolo Paganini (1782–1840), the violin virtuoso whose playing was so vivid, it was thought he had signed a pact with the Devil (see *The Adventure of the Cardboard Box*). He also took an interest in musicology, producing a monograph on the Polyphonic Motets of the Renaissance composer Orlande de Lassus, which, according to Watson, '*was said by experts to be the last word upon the subject*' (*The Bruce-Partington Plans*)

HOLMES'S DEERSTALKER AND INVERNESS CAPE

As Conan Doyle never actually wrote the words 'Elementary my dear Watson', neither did he dress his sleuth hero in the trademark deerstalker hat and long, buttoned tweed coat with a cape, known as an Inverness. It was one of the original illustrators of the Holmes stories, Sidney Paget, who we have to thank for this universal image. Paget chose to portray him in the now iconic idiosyncratic garb in his illustrations for *The Adventure of Silver Blaze,* because he himself wore a deerstalker, and found it extremely comfortable. No mention is made in the Conan Doyle texts of such an outfit, and there is plenty of evidence in the texts and illustrations to show that Holmes, like any other conventional Victorian gentleman, in fact habitually wore a black frockcoat and a top hat or a fedora (?) when out and about, and an assortment of dressing-gowns when lounging at home in Baker Street.

The American actor William Gillette, who portrayed Holmes on Broadway, also chose to identify Holmes with the dress really only suitable for a country ramble. When Gillette arrived in England to meet Conan Doyle for the first time, he stepped off the train wearing a deerstalker and Inverness, much to Conan Doyle's delight, and the image has stuck to this day. It has led to some ludicrous sights, such as in the 1965 film *Murder by Decree*, when Christopher Plummer, as Holmes, adopts the eccentric garb for a visit to the opera. It is most unlikely he would have been allowed entry in the 1890s.

SHERLOCK HOLMES: SPOOFS AND SPIN-OFFS

Parodies and pastiche versions of Sherlock Holmes began to appear almost as soon as Conan Doyle published the first story. In fact, the very first time the character of Holmes appeared on stage was in a spoof of the great detective, presented as part of a revue titled *Under the Clock*, in which Holmes was depicted by a minor actor, Charles Brookfield.

Staged in London's West End in 1893, it made fun of Watson's admiration for Holmes, and one of its songs had the refrain: 'Oh! Sherlock you wonderful man'. Brookfield succumbed to his more serious side in later life when he was appointed the Lord Chamberlain's 'examiner of plays', with responsibility for censorship.

The earliest parody of a Holmes story in print was published in *Punch* magazine in 1893, only two years after the sleuth had made his debut. It was called *Picklock Holes*, written by 'Cunnin Toil', a nom-de-plume of the humorist and regular *Punch* contributor, R.C. Lehmann.

One of the longest-running parodies was *The Adventures of Herlock Sholmes* written by that prolific author for Edwardian boys' papers, Charles Hamilton, under the pen-name of Pewter Todd. More than 100 'Sholmes' stories appeared in forgotten magazines such as *The Gem*, *The Magnet* and *The Penny Popular*. Hamilton is, of course, better known as the creator of Billy Bunter (though under yet another pen-name, Frank Richards.)

The preposterous adaptation of Holmes's name was to be a hallmark of many parodies over the years. Here are just a few variations: Sheerluck Jones, Sherlaw Kombs, Fetlock Jones (by Mark Twain), and Schlock Homes, in a collection of Jewish parodies, *A Bagel Street Dozen*. Parodies have also abounded in comics and graphic novels, even appearing in Spanish comics.

There have been numerous humorous adaptations for film and television.

Comic duo Peter Cook and Dudley Moore travestied *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, and John Cleese (of *Monty Python* and *Fawlty Towers* fame) appeared twice on TV in the 1970s playing a comic version of Holmes.

One of the most entertaining spoofs was the 1990 film *Without a Clue* starring Ben Kingsley as Dr Watson, portrayed as the true solver of the crimes, while Michael Caine played a drunken actor hired to play Holmes, the popular hero of Watson's fictional accounts.

In complete contrast, in 1953 the Royal Ballet staged *The Great Detective* at Sadler's Wells, with the distinguished choreographer Kenneth Macmillan dancing both the part of the sleuth and his arch-enemy 'the Professor'.

Holmes made his Broadway debut in 1965 in a musical version of his life called *Baker Street*, complete with a chorus of dancing girls. It ran for a year, but was nevertheless a financial disaster, and there have been other musicals that met with less success.

SPIN-OFFS

Many writers have attempted novels and short stories based on Holmes and some of the characters that appear regularly in the canon. Holmes's brother Mycroft was an obvious choice, but *The Strange Adventures of Charlotte Holmes*, by Hilary Bailey, explores the cases investigated by Sherlock's sister, and M.J. Trow wrote a whole series of adventures led by Inspector Lestrade (the less than competent policeman in Doyle's stories). Even Mrs Hudson, the housekeeper at 221b Baker Street, has surfaced, purportedly as the 'brains' who solved the cases – the invention of novelist Martin Davies.

In another spin-off, the *Son of Holmes* by John T. Lescroart, Holmes is reputed to be the father of WW1 secret agent Auguste Lupa who investigates the murder of a fellow agent in France.

Other writers have taken many of the tantalising cases simply mentioned by Watson throughout the canon and given them a reality, while others have contrived meetings between the Great

Detective and Jack the Ripper, Dracula and Dr. Jekyll (and Mr. Hyde) – and even sent him off on an adventure in space.

Another book has Holmes and Watson being brought out of retirement to accompany a government secret agent to New York aboard the *Titanic*. Do they perish or are they among the survivors? You'll have to read William Seil's *Sherlock Holmes and the Titanic Tragedy: A Case to Remember* to find out!

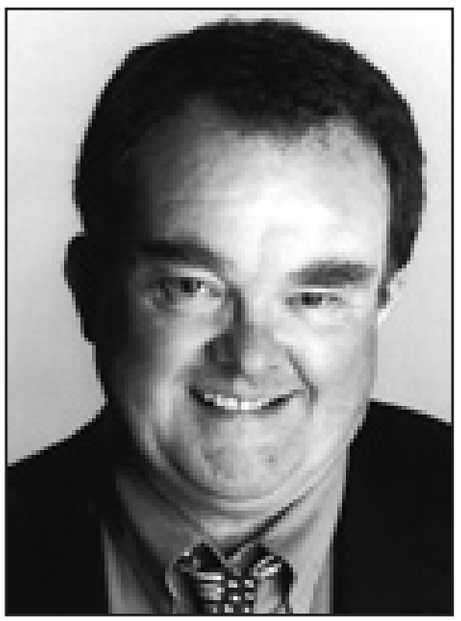
Notes by David Timson

THE PIPE

Holmes, like his creator, was a prodigious smoker – but, like the unsaid quotation and the never-worn deerstalker, the celebrated curved meerschaum pipe is not mentioned in Doyle's canon. Dr Watson does, however, make dozens of references to all sorts of pipes strewn around the Baker Street lodgings – on the mantelpiece, in the coal-scuttle (where he also kept his cigars) – whilst his tobacco, a particularly obnoxious coarse 'shag', was housed in the toe of a Persian slipper. Every morning Holmes would begin his day with a breakfast pipe made up of 'all the plugs and dottles left from his smokes of the day before'. In *The Adventure of the Creeping Man* we are told that Holmes's favourite smoke was an 'old black pipe', sometimes also referred to as a clay pipe, and it was this he would smoke when meditating on a case, often for several hours, producing a poisonous atmosphere in the Baker Street rooms. Other pipes referred to are a cherrywood, a briar and a pipe with an amber stem – all straight, not curved.

Once again, the meerschaum was an invention of William Gillette for his stage production of *Sherlock Holmes.* The actor apparently found it easier to keep a curved pipe in his mouth whilst delivering his lines. Along with the deerstalker, cape and magnifying glass, it has become synonymous with the image, if not the actuality, of Sherlock Holmes.

DAVID TIMSON'S BIOGRAPHY



David Timson has made over 1,000 broadcasts for BBC Radio Drama. For Naxos AudioBooks he wrote *The History of the Theatre*, which won an award for most original production from the Spoken Word Publishers Association in 2001. He has also directed for Naxos AudioBooks four Shakespeare plays, including *King Richard III* (with Kenneth Branagh), which won Best Drama Award from the SWPA in 2001. In 2002 he won the Audio of the Year Award for his reading of *A Study in Scarlet*. He reads the entire Sherlock Holmes canon for Naxos AudioBooks.

The music on this recording is taken from the NAXOS and MARCO POLO catalogues

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Moyzes Quartet / Frantisek Magyar

PAGANINI 24 CAPRICES, OP. 1 8.550717
Ilya Kaler, Violin

Music programming by Sarah Butcher

THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

The Adventure of the Speckled Band
BELLA STRING QUARTET IN E MINOR 8.223839
Moyzes Quartet

BELLA NOTTURNO FOR STRING QUARTET 8.223839
Moyzes Quartet

The Adventure of the Stock-Broker's Clerk
BELLA STRING QUARTET IN C MINOR 8.223658
Moyzes Quartet

The Adventure of the Copper Beeches
GRIEG STRING QUARTET IN G MINOR 8.550879
Oslo String Quartet

The Adventure of the Red-Headed League
BELLA STRING QUINTET IN D MINOR 8.223658
Moyzes Quartet / František Magyar, 2nd viola

Music programming by Sarah Butcher

A Scandal in Bohemia
SMETANA PIANO TRIO OP. 15 8.553415
Joachim Trio

The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb
SUK PIANO TRIO OP. 2 8.553415
Joachim Trio

VAGN HOLMBOE STRING QUARTET NO. 10 8.224101
The Kontra Quartet

The Five Orange Pips
MOERAN STRING QUARTETS 8.554079

The Maggini String Quartet

PAGANINI CAPRICE NO. 4 8.550717
Ilya Kaler, violin

The Adventure of Silver Blaze
MOERAN STRING QUARTETS 8.554079
The Maggini String Quartet

Music programming by Nicolas Soames
Recorded by Alan Smyth, Bucks Audio Productions
Edited by Simon Weir, Classical Recording Company

The Adventure of the Man with the Twisted Lip
HOLBROOKE SEXTET IN D MAJOR/PIANO QUARTET 8.223736
Endre Hegedüs, New Haydn Quartet, Sándor Papp, violin;
János Devic, cello

The Adventure of the Musgrave Ritual
BRIDGE NOVELLETTEN/PHANTASIE QUARTET 8.553718
Maggini String Quartet

The Adventure of the Cardboard Box
MOERAN STRING QUARTETS/TRIO 8.554079
Maggini String Quartet

PAGANINI CAPRICE NO. 9 8.556680
Ilya Kaler

The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle
BRIDGE SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY 8.553718
Maggini String Quartet

Music programming by David Timson
Recorded at Motivation Sound Studios
Edited by Andrew Lang, K&A Productions

A Case of Identity
DVOŘÁK STRING QUARTET NO. 9 8.553373
Vlach Quartet Prague

The Adventure of the Crooked Man
GRIEG STRING QUARTET IN G MINOR 8.550879
Oslo String Quartet

The Adventure of the Naval Treaty
DVOŘÁK STRING QUARTET NO. 14 8.553374
Vlach Quartet Prague

The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter
DVOŘÁK STRING QUARTET NO. 10 8.553374
Vlach Quartet Prague

INDIAN RAGAS 8.554559
Irshad Khan, sitar

Music programming by David Timson
Recorded by Mark Smith, Motivation Sound Studios
Edited by Sarah Butcher, SBS

DVOŘÁK PIANO TRIOS NOS. 3 & 4 — 8.550444
Joachim Trio

DVOŘÁK PIANO TRIOS NOS. 1 & 2 — 8.554309
Joachim Trio

Music programming by Sarah Butcher
Recorded by Mark Smith, Motivation Sound Studios
Edited by Sarah Butcher, SBS

DVOŘÁK STRING QUARTETS NO. 5 OP. 9 & NO. 7 OP. 16 — 8.553377
Vlach Quartet Prague

PAGANINI 24 CAPRICES OP. 1 — 8.550717
Ilya Kaler, Violin

MENDELSSOHN COMPLETE WORKS FOR VIOLIN & PIANO
Nomos Duo — 8.554725

Music programming by Sarah Butcher
Recorded at Motivation Sound Studios
Edited by Sarah Butcher, SBS

THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES

SALTER, DESSAU House of Frankenstein Film Score 8.223748
Moscow Symphony Orchestra / William T Stromberg

SKINNER Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror – Film Score 8.225124
Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra (Bratislava) / William T Stromberg

Music programming by Sarah Butcher

THE RETURN OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

FOOTE STRING QUARTET NO 2 IN E MAJOR, OP 32 8.223875
Da Vinci Quartet

FOOTE STRING QUARTET NO 3 IN D MAJOR, OP 70 8.223875
Da Vinci Quartet

FOOTE STRING QUARTET NO 1 IN G MINOR, OP 4 8.223893
Da Vinci Quartet

MENDELSSOHN String Quartets Volume 1 8.550861
Aurora String Quartet

MENDELSSOHN String Quartets Volume 2 8.550862
Aurora String Quartet

DVOŘÁK PIANO TRIO NO. 2 IN G MINOR 8.554309
Joachim Trio

DVOŘÁK FOUR ROMANTIC PIECES 8.554413
Edmund Battersby, piano / Zhou Qian, violin

DVOŘÁK CYPRESSES 8.553375
Vlach Quartet

Music programming by Sarah Butcher

REMINISCENCES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (HIS LAST BOW)

MENDELSSOHN 8.550863
Scherzo in A minor Op 81 No 2 / String Quartet No 2 in A minor Op 13 /
String Quartet No 5 in E flat major Op 44 No 3
Aurora String Quartet

MENDELSSOHN 8.550861
String Quartet in No 3 in D major Op 44 No 1 /
Capriccio in E minor Op 81 No 3
Aurora String Quartet

MENDELSSOHN 8.550862
String Quartet No 4 in E minor Op 44 No 2
Aurora String Quartet

THE VALLEY OF FEAR

BOTTESINI MUSIC FOR DOUBLE BASS AND PIANO 8.554002
Joel Quarrington, Double Bass / Andrew Burashko, Piano

DELIUS AMERICAN RHAPSODY 8.557143
Royal Scottish National Orchestra / David Lloyd-Jones

JANÁCEK MLÁDÍ 8.554173
Oslo Philharmonic Wind Soloists

JANÁCEK TARAS BULBA 8.550411
Slovak Radio Symphony Orchestra (Bratislava) / Ondrej Lenárd

Music programming by Roy McMillan

THE CASEBOOK OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

SAINT-SAENS SONATA NO. 2 IN F MAJOR FOR CELLO & PIANO OP. 123
Scherzo con variazioni: Allegro animato 8.557880
Maria Kliegel, cello / François-Joël Thiollier, piano

SAINT-SAENS SONATA NO. 1 IN C MINOR FOR CELLO & PIANO OP. 32
Allegro moderato 8.557880
Maria Kliegel, cello / François-Joël Thiollier, piano

SAINT-SAENS SUITE FOR CELLO & PIANO OP. 16
Scherzo: Allegro grazioso 8.557880
Maria Kliegel, cello / François-Joël Thiollier, piano

SAINT-SAENS SUITE FOR CELLO & PIANO OP. 16
Prélude: Moderato assai 8.557880
Maria Kliegel, cello / François-Joël Thiollier, piano

GRIEG SONATA NO. 3 IN C MINOR OP. 45 FOR VIOLIN & PIANO
Allegro molto ed appassionato 8.553904
Henning Kraggerud, violin / Helge Kjekshus, piano

GRIEG SONATA NO. 3 IN C MINOR OP. 45 FOR VIOLIN & PIANO
Allegro animato 8.553904
Henning Kraggerud, violin / Helge Kjekshus, piano

BORODIN SONATA IN B MINOR FOR CELLO & PIANO Allegro 8.223172
Ottó Kertész Jr., cello / Ilona Prunyi, piano

BELLA STRING QUARTETS 8.223839
Moyzes Quartet

ALKAN CHAMBER MUSIC 8.223383
Trio Alkan

MENDELSSOHN PIANO QUARTETS NOS. 2 AND 3 8.550967
Bartholdy Piano Quartet

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Aurora String Quartet

DVOŘÁK STRING QUARTETS VOL. 7 8.557357
Vlach Quartet Prague

Music programming by Sarah Butcher

Credits

A Study in Scarlet

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The Sign of Four

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The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes

Produced by Nicolas Soames

The Hound of the Baskervilles

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Edited by Sarah Butcher

The Return Sherlock Holmes

Produced by Nicolas Soames
Recorded at RNIB Talking Book Studios, London
Edited by Sarah Butcher

Reminiscences of Sherlock Holmes (His Last Bow)

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Recorded at Motivation Sound Studios, London
Edited by Sarah Butcher

The Valley of Fear

Recorded at Motivation Sound Studios, London
Produced and edited by Roy McMillan

The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes

Produced & edited by Roy McMillan and Nicolas Soames
Recorded at Motivation Sound Studios, London
Edited by Sarah Butcher

The Adventure of the Creeping Man
The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire
The Adventure of the Three Garridebs
The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier
and The Problem of Thor Bridge
The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger
The Adventure of the Illustrious Client
The Adventure of the Three Gables
The Adventure of the Retired Colourman
The Adventure of the Lion's Mane
The Adventure of Shoscombe Old Place

Cover image: Sherlock Holmes with a magnifying glass; courtesy Mary Evans Picture Library

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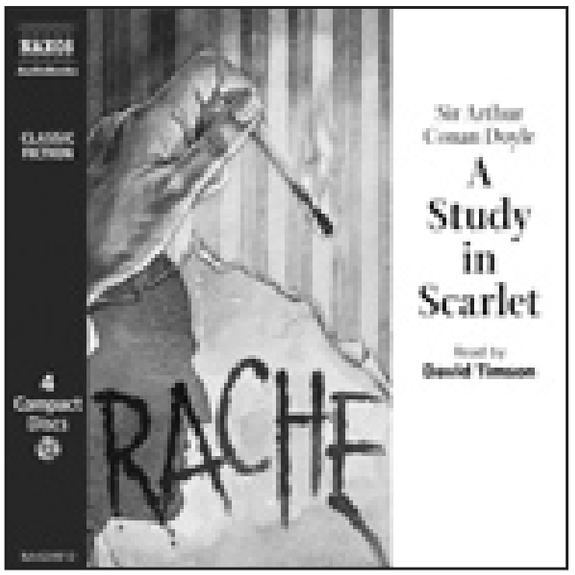

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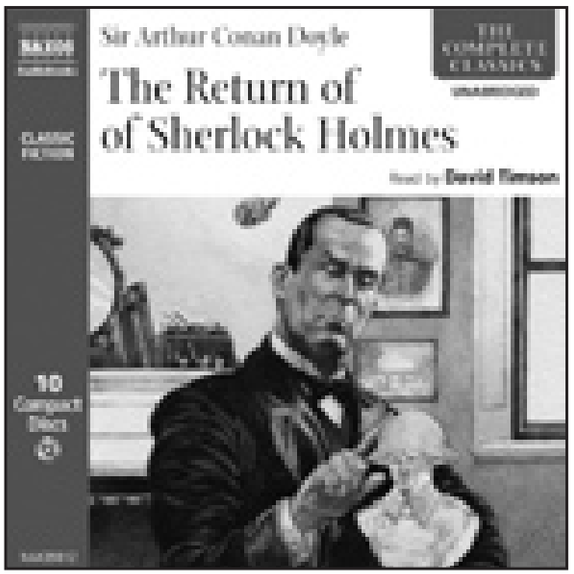

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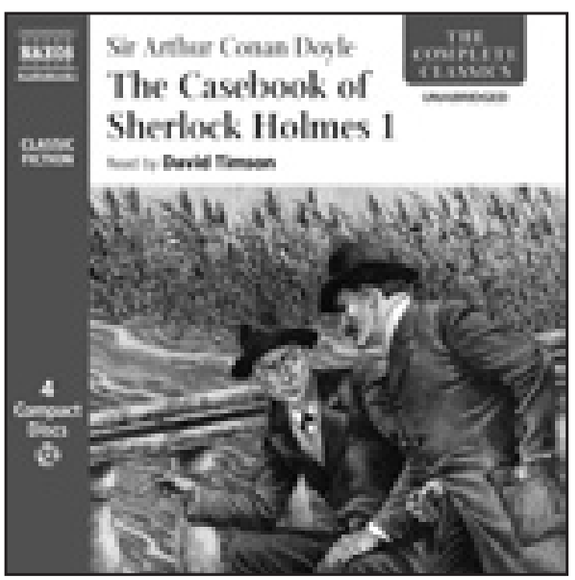

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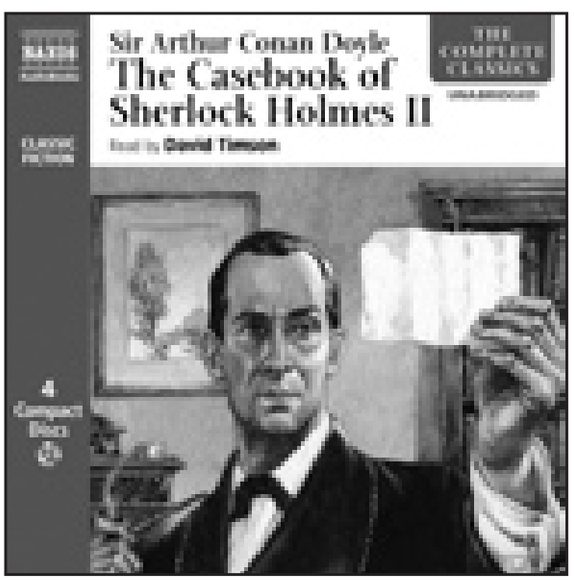

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