

The winter issue of *Canadian Holmes* (the journal of the Bootmakers of Toronto) offers Donny Zaldin's article about the Agony Column (in Victorian culture and in the Canon), Mark Jones' discussion of Conan Doyle's short story "The Black Doctor", and much more. Subscriptions are included with membership, \$50.00 a year (print) or \$35.00 (PDF), and \$12.00 postpaid for a single issue <www.torontobootmakers.com/membership>.

"Money back if not satisfied" was an offer made by Harper Brothers to its customers in 1929, and the Japanese publisher Hayakawa makes the same offer for its new translation of Tom Mead's *Death and the Conjuror*. You can read all about it at <www.tinyurl.com/2s426afz>.

"The Case of Sherlock Holmes' Motorcycle" offers Brendan McAleer's amusing discussion of (and answer to) the question: "what kind of motorcycle did Sherlock Holmes ride?" You can read his article (and answer) at the Hagerty Media web-site <www.tinyurl.com/5epuncsd>.

Jennie Paton has reported the discovery of some interesting footage from the long-lost Universal film "Sherlock Holmes Meets Dracula" (now available at YouTube <www.youtube.com/watch?v=ov0WnRzLrhQ>).

Sasha Archibald's article in the *Public Domain Review* about P. H. Ditchfield's *Books Fatal to Their Authors* (1895) isn't Sherlockian, but it's a fascinating look at how dangerous being an author can be; you can read all about it at <www.tinyurl.com/5n77vupc>.

The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes, edited by Jonathan Cranfield (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2023; 359 pp., £125.00), is the second volume in *The Edinburgh Edition of the Works of Arthur Conan Doyle*, and includes the text of the book, detailed introductions; comparisons of first serial appearances and first editions, the text of "The Cardboard Box" and a discussion of the story's history, and explanatory notes. Some may question the publisher's boast that it's "the first scholarly edition" of the book (if they are aware of *The Oxford Sherlock Holmes* and Leslie S. Klinger's *The Sherlock Holmes Reference Library and New Annotated Sherlock Holmes*), but Edinburgh's project will include much of Conan Doyle's non-Sherlockian work).

The artist's sketchbooks owned by Henry Marriott Paget and Walter Stanley Paget (Sidney Paget's brothers), offered at Chorley's in Gloucestershire on Feb. 6 (Jan 24 #2) each estimated at £200-£300, were sold for £150 each <www.tinyurl.com/mz9mhvyf>.

The Daily Beast says that "Benny Hill, classic '80s video games, Voltron, and Sherlock Holmes are components of this zany gem," its review (Feb. 27) of the film "Hundreds of Beavers" <www.tinyurl.com/3zruvp55>. There is a trailer at the official web-site <www.hundredsofbeavers.com>, and you can see images of the Holmes and Watson beavers at the film's page at Facebook <www.tinyurl.com/52vzt53u>.

Mar 24 #2 Sad news for those who have procrastinated about visiting Lew Trenchard, the home of Sabine Baring-Gould (Dec 88 #2 and May 18 #2). He wrote about the folk-tales of Dartmoor, including the spectral hounds, and his grandson William S. Baring-Gould's biography of Sherlock Holmes used details from his grandfather's life in describing Holmes' early years. Sabine Baring-Gould also was visited by Mary Russell and Sherlock Holmes in Laurie R. King's novel *The Moor* (1998). Lew Trenchard, run as a luxury hotel and restaurant for the last twelve years, has now been closed due to "difficult trading conditions, "and is expected to return to Baring-Gould family ownership. Oliver Mundy kindly forwarded one of the on-line reports <www.tinyurl.com/3v5dn57a>. One of the very best items on the restaurant menu (in 2004) was the Devonshire clotted cream ice cream.

The Japanese eight-episode series "Miss Sherlock" (Oct 18 #5) is available on HBO Max, and it is well worth watching; it stars Yûko Takeuchi as Sherlock and Shihori Kanjiya as her friend Wato-san, and is full of Canonical echoes <www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miss_Sherlock>.

Bill Seil has reported that Harry Bliss' comic strip was nicely Sherlockian on Feb. 26 <www.gocomics.com/bliss/2024/02/26>.

Country Life continues to publish interesting articles about stately homes in Britain, including one (on Jan. 28) on Madresfield Court (in Worcestershire) <www.tinyurl.com/yxzv8kyv>; a house that has been owned by the same family for more than 900 years.

The first of the "obligatory Canonical toasts" listed in the Constitution and Buy-Laws of the Baker Street Irregulars is to The Woman, and episode #282 of the interviews by Scott Monty and Burt Wolder at their "I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere" blog <www.tinyurl.com/bzce3t8b> is their discussion of "A History of The Woman" with Beverly Wolov, who was honored with that toast in 1997.

"The Holmes You Never Knew: Black American Adaptations Then and Now" is a virtual lecture by Ann McClellan at the Public Library in Groton, Mass., on Apr. 23 (7:00-8:00 pm); she will discuss the Broadway musical "In Dahomey" (1902), the silent film "A Black Sherlock Holmes" (1918), jazz references, graphic novels, and modern fan fiction, and the registration link for the Zoom event is at <www.tinyurl.com/5n7uekbn>.

There was a colorful report about The Langham in Upscale Living Magazine on Feb. 15 <www.upscalelivingmag.com/features/the-langham-hotel>; it's a lot fancier now than it was in 1889, when Conan Doyle dined there (and was commissioned to write "The Sign of the Four").

Marvin Lachman died on Oct. 21. Marv was an outstanding scholar of crime and mystery fiction, and won an Edgar from the Mystery Writers of America for his work on *The Encyclopedia of Mystery and Detection* (1976). He also received their Raven Award (for significant contributions to the genre) in 1997, and his later books included *The Heirs of Anthony Boucher* (2005) and *The Villainous Stage* (2014). He was the fan guest of honor at Bouchercon in 1984, and was knowledgeable and helpful to a host of friends.

Mar 24 #3 The Internet continues to offer a flood of rumors about, and comment on, the BBC's "Sherlock" television series, and occasionally older news turns up. "Sherlock creators reveal their choices for female Sherlock Holmes," was the announcement at the Digital Spy web-site on July 27, 2020 <www.tinyurl.com/2sfbtadra>. Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss had suggested Michelle Gomez, Phoebe Waller-Bridge, and Olivia Colman, and producer Sue Vertue proposed Jodie Comer (you can easily find their images and resumes on-line). But there were no suggestions for a female Watson; "You know what I get stuck on?" Moffat said, "Who is John Watson as a woman?" And yes, all seven seasons of "Elementary" had aired by then.

Yes, that interesting footage from the long-lost Universal film "Sherlock Holmes Meets Dracula" (Mar 24 #2) might well have been posted on Apr. 1.

The Kyodo News reported on Mar. 1 <www.tinyurl.com/3kntkn2v> that the "Immersive Fort Tokyo" theme park is now open; its web-site shows some of its Sherlockian atmosphere <www.immersivefort.com/en>. There's much more in a full-scale (and colorful) review posted to the Japan Wireless web-magazine on Mar. 7 <www.tinyurl.com/mww6tuzn>.

Mark Johann <mkr9905@gmail.com> wonders if anyone knows anything about a plastic token, 1.25" in diameter, with interesting Sherlockian artwork. The M.A.T.C.A. was the Maryland Amusement Token Collectors Association, founded in 1979 (but apparently no longer active).



Possibly something truly new for Sherlockians: Jennie Paton reports a video review <www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZO7f7XgHBpw> of Jorge Félix's *The Baker Street Canon* (2024), which can be found easily at Amazon (for Kindle only); the video was created by someone who used invideo AI, and it's quite possible that the book also is an AI product. There's another video from invideo AI at YouTube <www.youtube.com/watch?v=z6J0k2_l368>, but Jorge may be the first AI author of a Sherlockian book. There is a lot more about Amazon and AI at <www.tinyurl.com/2md975sk>. Note that invideo AI should not be confused with Nvidia, which is a dominant supplier of artificial intelligence hardware and software.



"The Wonderful Story of Henry Sugar" is a new film, nominated for an Oscar (best live action short film), based on a short story by Roald Dahl, now available on Netflix, with some fine actors, and well done indeed. Samantha Wolov has noted that in an early scene in a hospital a doctor is seen sitting at a table holding a book that has a Sherlock Holmes silhouette on its cover (a nod, perhaps, to Benedict Cumberbatch, who's one of the stars in the film. We'll be seeing more Roald Dahl stories on Netflix: in Sept. 2021 Netflix bought the Roald Dahl Story Company for \$686 million.

Sonia Fetherston has reported a tea available from the Republic of Tea in Larkspur, Calif. <www.republicoftea.com/calm-focus/p/v20851>, that may be of interest to Sherlockians: it's a green tea, with uplifting peppermint and lion's mane mushroom extract, and a touch of bright lemon. She found it in her CostPlus World Market, so it might be in other local stores.

Mar 24 #4 The winter issue of *The Magic Door* (published by the friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at the Toronto Public Library) has Gareth A. Reeves' article on "Examining Trace Fossils in 'The Terror of Blue John Gap'", David Sanders' report on Dana Richards' lecture on "Conan Doyle and The Fires of Fate", and much more. You can request a copy of the newsletter from Cliff Goldfarb at the Toronto Public Library, 789 Yonge Street, Toronto, ON M4W 2G8, Canada <cgoldfarb@sympatico.ca>.

Elizabeth Crowens, author of *Hounds of the Hollywood Baskervilles* (Feb 24 #8) will be happy to speak to Sherlockian societies via Zoom or in person. She lives in New York City, e-mail at <greatyear111@gmail.com>, and website at <www.elizabethcrowens.com>.

You can watch Sherlock's Jewel come from behind to finish second on Mar. 9 at Tampa Bay Downs <www.youtube.com/watch?v=A7MQZxigEMc>; video kindly reported by Jennie Paton.

Philip Cunningham is compiling a census of Michael Murphy's *Conferment by Needle*, a pamphlet issued in 1980 reprinting Vincent Starrett's correspondence with T. S. Eliot about Eliot's honorary membership in the Hounds of the Baskerville (sic); there were 230 copies, 1-221 numbered and nine unnumbered, some signed or inscribed by Murphy in black or green ink. Phil would like to hear from anyone who has a copy <pjcl21@comcast.net>.

In case you weren't watching the Oscars ceremony this month, Robert Downey Jr., who has played Sherlock Holmes in two films, won as best actor in a supporting role as (Lewis S. Strauss in "Oppenheimer"), and "The Wonderful World of Henry Sugar" (Mar 24 #3) won as best live-action short film.

Japanese director Hayao Miyazaki won his second Oscar (for best animated feature film) for "The Boy and the Heron". His first Oscar was for "Spirited Away" (2001), and he was the director of six early episodes of "The Adventures of Sherlock Hound" (1983).

The manuscripts of four unpublished short stories by A. A. Milne, one of them an amusing Sherlock Holmes pastiche, have been published in the new *The Complete Short Stories of A. A. Milne* (Richmond: Farrago, 2024); 304 pp., £12.99/\$22.27). The stories were found by the agent of the Milne estate in his papers at the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas, and the new book has an introduction written by Gyles Brandreth, who imagines Milne in the next world, sitting on a heavenly cloud with two of his good friends and personal heroes, Conan Doyle and Barrie. If you'd like to see the manuscript of the Sherlock Holmes story, it sold at auction in 2018 <www.tinyurl.com/4krrckc6> for \$900 (including the buyer's premium).

The new story ("Elementary, My Dear Vincent") appears to have been written and sent in 1933 to Vincent Seligman, and it's a nice addition to Milne's Sherlockian credentials, which started with "The Rape of the Sherlock" in *Vanity Fair* (Oct. 15, 1903). The burlesque was his first published fiction; it's not in the new book, but was reprinted in *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine* (Feb. 1974).

Mar 24 #5 *A West Wind*, edited by Thomas A. Horrocks and Ray Betzner (New York: Baker Street Irregulars, 2024; 204 pp., \$39.95), is subtitled "How America and Americans Influenced the Sherlockian Canon," and offers interesting essays that include Curtis Armstrong's expert analysis of just how good an actor Sherlock Holmes was when he pretended to be an American, Burt Wolder's well-illustrated examination of how Americans saw Holmes when the stories were first published, and many more. You can order the book from the BSI at <www.bakerstreetirregulars.com/tag/books>.

Michael Culver died on Feb. 27. He began acting on stage in Britain, and went on to a career that lasted more than 50 years. Best known, perhaps, for his death scene (as Captain Needa) in "Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back" (1980), he also played Sir Reginald Musgrave in the Granada version of "The Musgrave Ritual" (1986).

For everyone who fondly remembers Sherlock Hemlock: Jennie Paton has found a nice compilation of his many appearances on "Sesame Street" at YouTube <www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLxVUNwZo_UyO02nZVQyDlPQDBrALPFl_C>.

"Remembering Gene Wilder" (a new 92-minute documentary now in limited release in U.S. theaters) <www.tinyurl.com/2m8kjymp> has had nice reviews; one hopes that it includes footage from "The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother" (1975), a film which he wrote, directed, and starred in, and that it will soon be available on one of the cable channels.



Petri Wine was heavily advertised in the good old days, and an unusual porcelain enamel garage sign was recently offered at eBay <www.tinyurl.com/5ddj7wu7> by a dealer in Australia, for AU\$180.00 (plus shipping, of course). It would seem that Petri's advertising was different down under than here (there is no date for the sign).

UNESCO (the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) has recognized Exeter as a City of Literature, and Exeter is celebrating the event with colorful murals at the city's Great Western Railways station. The murals include scenes from books by famous authors, and the announcement by the Exeter City Council allows you to see one of the murals <www.tinyurl.com/yc5e537k>. There's no mention of the Great Western in the Canon, but Holmes and Watson must have used it when they traveled to Exeter in two of their cases.

Joel Cohen has reported a colorful slide-show on "Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Poisonous Plants" at the web-site of the Science History Institute in Philadelphia <www.tinyurl.com/yckb3ust>.

The first volume of Tripwire's graphic novel *Sherlock Holmes and the Empire Builders: The Gene Genie* <www.tinyurl.com/4zk7an7p> is now in print (96 pp., \$35.00), and the first few pages are available (free) on the Global Comix digital platform <www.tinyurl.com/5n83r7sa>. It's an alternate-universe science fiction story, with striking artwork, and Oswald Mosely (leader of the British Union of Fascists) as the villain. Tripwire's web-site's at <www.trpwire1001.bigcartel.com>.

Mar 24 #6 "Conan Doyle's books are always so good," the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII) wrote in 1911, thanking someone for sending him three charming books. The letter was offered at International Autograph Auctions Europe on Mar. 14 <www.tinyurl.com/x58f5axv>, with an estimate of €200-€300, and it was bought for €320 (plus buyer's premium). One hopes, of course, that the fortunate buyer will eventually some-day be able to identify those three charming books.

It's always interesting when films and television are reviewed by real experts: Jennie Paton spotted the Thoroughbred Racing Commentary web-site's review of various versions of "Silver Blaze" on Feb. 25 (Granada came in first) <www.tinyurl.com/2b5h2v9z>.

The 2023 Baker Street Almanac is now on-line and available without charge <www.greenbag.org/almanacs/BS/2023.html>; more than 364 pages, so it takes a while to download the PDF file, but it's well worth it. That means that the print version of the 2024 Almanac is almost ready; the URL also offers information on how to subscribe.

Laurie R. King has begun work on her next novel, about Mary Russell's Uncle Jake (who gave her, and then taught her how to use, her first throwing knife. You can read the (possible) opening of the Prologue at her blog at <www.tinyurl.com/ymx4n6bh>.

The Swann Galleries auction of material from the Steve Forbes Collection included a lot with nine manuscript pages from, and other material related to, the last chapter ("Singular Records of a Circle") of Conan Doyle's *The Edge of the Unknown* (1930), estimated at \$3,000-\$4,000; it sold for \$2,400 (plus the buyer's premium). Randall Stock's discussion of the manuscript is at <www.bestofsherlock.com/mss/edge-unknown-2024.htm>.

There's continuing discussion of what can happen when characters enter the public domain, and what has happened with and to Winnie the Pooh. "Winnie the Pooh: Blood and Honey" (2023) was so successful that there's now a sequel <www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Winnie-the-Pooh:_Blood_and_Honey>.

There are some people who still have 16mm projectors: a print of Christopher Plummer's television film "Silver Blaze" (1977) was sold this month at eBay for \$115 <www.tinyurl.com/yved86hw>.

The two "Moriarty" series now available at Audible (Sep 23 #5) continue to be well-reviewed and there was an interesting interview with Phil LaMarr (who plays Sherlock Holmes) posted at the Bleeding Cool web-site (Nov. 16) <www.tinyurl.com/23zjvj94>.

Ross Davies has discovered an interesting (and expensive) letter from F. Scott Fitzgerald offered by a New York dealer <www.tinyurl.com/mvhwwf8s> in which Fitzgerald mentions having written an "utterly imitative" Sherlock Holmes story. This may (or may not) have become his first appearance in print: "The Mystery of the Raymond Mortgage" (non-Sherlockian), which was published in a school magazine in 1909 (Mar 17 #6). Fred Dannay found the story and reprinted it in *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine* (Mar. 1960) and in *Ellery Queen's 15th Mystery Annual* (1960).

Mar 24 #7 John Allen's *Stylometric Analysis of the Sherlock Holmes Canon* (Allen & Allen Semiotics, 2021; 57 pp., \$5.95) offers the basis behind his earlier *Shadow Woman: The Creator of Sherlock Holmes and Brimstone* (Mar 18 #4); Allen has used the function-word frequencies of Conan Doyle's stories and concluded this his first wife Louise wrote 27 of the Sherlock Holmes short stories and that his second wife Jean wrote 28 (with "The Empty House" being the only one written by Conan Doyle). Some of his non-Sherlockian stories also were written by Louise and Jean. Allen also has a Louise Conan Doyle Cyclopedia web-site, where he has been blogging since June 2017 <www.louiseconandoyle.com>.

It may not be the better-known Guinness World Records, but on Feb. 16 the World Record Academy listed the world's largest Sherlock Holmes collection at the University of Minnesota <www.tinyurl.com/2pyn2x7c> (with some nice images of the collection).

Christian Klaver's *Sherlock Holmes & Dorian Gray* (New York, Titan, 2024; 353 pp., \$25.99) is the third in his "classified dossier" series. There are vampires galore, including Dracula and Mina and (now) Watson, who with Holmes are confronted with vicious enemies that include H. G. Wells' Doctor Moreau. Dorian Gray is decidedly different from the character in Oscar Wilde's story, and the focus of Klaver's book is on Watson rather than Holmes. The author's web-site is at <www.christianklaver.com>.

The March issue of the Beacon Society's Not-So-Quarterly Newsletter now is available at the society's web-site <www.beaconsociety.com>, with the latest news from the society and its efforts to offer "teachers, librarians, children's museums, and children's theaters with local resources to bring the magic of Sherlock Holmes to life."

Further to the item (Jan 24 #5) about the celebration of the 40th anniversary of "The Adventures of Sherlock Hound", Jennie Paton discovered a nice post to the SoraNews24 web-site (Mar. 26) <www.tinyurl.com/4t7yttj7>, with an image of the poster for the new theatrical release (and a trailer for the older Blu-ray collection).

Holly Turner has reported in the March issue of the District Messenger on an antique dealer's offer of a silver salver presented to Dr. Joseph Bell by the Glasgow Infirmary in April 1862 <www.tinyurl.com/727wja85>.

The District Messenger, launched in 1982 as the "grapevine service of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London, is an excellent monthly round-up of go-igs on in the Sherlockian and Doylean world in Britain and elsewhere; current and back issues are available at <www.tinyurl.com/34u876mj>.

Les Klinger has now edited 17 volumes in the Library of Congress' Crime Classics series; the latest is Richard Harding Davis' atmospheric *In the Fog* (1901). You can sample Les' introduction to the reprint at the Crime-Reads web-site <www.tinyurl.com/4bppwczu>. It's not really true that everything has a connection to Sherlock Holmes, but: the book's first edition had grand illustrations by Frederic Dorr Steele, and Davis mentored young Vincent Starrett at the beginning of his brief career as a war correspondent.

Mar 24 #8 There's all sorts of theatrical news: Joe and Brad Dickenson's "Sherlock Holmes: The Melodrama" is on at the Pocket Sandwich Theatre in Carrollton, Tex., through May 11 <www.pocketsandwich.com>.

James Barry's "Sherlock's Excellent Adventure" continues on tour in Britain through July 6 <www.ourstartheatrecompany.com/what-s-on>.

Ken Ludwig's "Baskerville" will be running at the Gateway Theatre in Richmond, B.C., Apr. 11-20 <www.gatewaytheatre.com>; presented in English with traditional and simplified Chinese subtitles (certainly understandable in a city that's said to have a population that's 74% ethnically Chinese). It also is scheduled at the Bell Tower Theater in Dubuque, Iowa, on Apr. 12-28 <www.belltowerthter.net>; and will be touring in England, on Apr. 20-27 <www.facebook.com/minttheatresociety>. It's next at the Greenbrier Valley Theatre in Lewisburg, W.Va., on May 10-18 <www.gvtheatre.org/baskerville>; and at the Ruth Humphreys Brown Theatre in Creede, Colo., May 25-Sept. 14 <www.creederep.org>.

"Sherlock & Cinders" (by Tom Kirkham and Matthew Crosby) is scheduled at the Muse Theater in Jefferson City, Mo., Apr. 18-20; their web-site's at <www.itsybitsyboradway.com>.

Teresa Pesce's "Sherlock" will have its world premiere at the Panida Theater in Sandpoint, Idaho, Apr. 19-27 <www.panida.org>.

Max Bush's "Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of Abbey Grange" and "Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Capper Beeches" will be produced at the Patsy Miller Studio Theatre in St. Paul, Minn., Apr. 25-May 4; their web-site's at <www.tinyurl.com/mps28he7>.

Conan Doyle's "The Speckled Band" has been scheduled at the Placer Repertory Theater in Rocklin, Calif., May 3-4 <www.placerrep.org>.

Ron Kelly Spurles' humorous "Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Missing Heiress" will be performed radio-style (BBC in 1928) at the Sackville Legion in Sackville, NB, May 4 <www.tinyurl.com/ymamsrd2>.

"Sherlock Holmes and the Mystery of the Crown Jewel" (by Janet Yates Vogt and Mark Friedman) is to be performed at Wollondilly Anglican College in Tahmoor, N.S.W., May 7-9 <www.trybooking.com/events/landing/1178632?>.

Bert Coules' "Watson: The Final Problem" is scheduled at the 59E59 Theaters in New York, May 22-June 9 <www.tinyurl.com/mrx9dzkc>; it's a one-man show starring Tim Marriott.

"Sherlock and Watson: A Murder in the Garden" is a new comedy from Calf 2 Cow, launching a tour in Britain at the Maumbury Rings in Dorchester, Dorset, on June 7 <www.calf2cow.co.uk/sherlockandwatson>.

Kate Hamill's "Ms. Holmes & Ms. Watson--Apt. 2B" will be performed at the Robert Shackleton Playhouse in Cape May, N.J., July 17-Aug. 25; web-site at <www.capemaystage.org>.

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