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hadows of Sherlock Holmes

Edited by

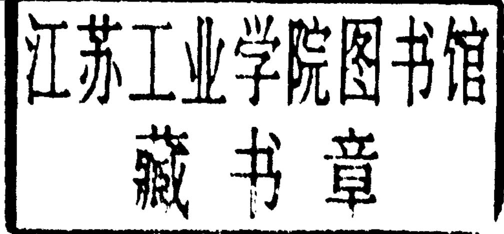
DAVID STUART DAVIES

SELECTED STORIES

SHADOWS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

Selected and introduced by

David Stuart Davies



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INTRODUCTION

The Hub and its Spokes

> There has been murder done, and the murderer was a man. He was more than six feet high, was in the prime of life, had small feet for his height, wore coarse, square-toed boots and smoked a Trichinopoly cigar. He came here with his victim in a four-wheeled cab, which was drawn by a horse with three old shoes and one new one on his off foreleg. In all probability the murderer had a florid face, and the fingernails of his right hand were remarkably long. These are only a few indications, but they may assist you.

The words are those of Sherlock Holmes making a series of startling deductions in what has become his very imitable way. Later in the scene, set in a derelict house on the Brixton Road complete with a corpse and strange writing in blood on the wall, Holmes justifies all his descriptions regarding the circumstances of the murder and his assessment of the killer. To him, it is all elementary.

The story was *A Study in Scarlet*, the novella, first published in *Beeton's Christmas Annual* for 1887, which introduced this now famous character and detective icon to the reading public. Sherlock Holmes was created by an impoverished doctor by the name of Arthur Ignatius Conan Doyle (1859–1930), who was living in Portsmouth when he hit upon the idea of creating a scientific detective. In the longueurs between the infrequent patients, he played around with the idea that his detective would reach the solution to a mystery by deduction and rationality, not by accident or through the carelessness of the criminal. Later in life, he explained his thoughts on the genesis of the most famous sleuth of all time:

> I was educated in a very severe and critical school of medical thought, especially coming under the influence of Dr Bell of Edinburgh who had the most remarkable powers of observation. He prided himself that when he looked at a patient he could tell not only their disease, but very often their occupation and place of residence. Reading some detective stories I was struck by the fact that their results were obtained in nearly every case by chance. I thought I would try my hand at writing a story in which the hero would treat crime as Dr Bell treated disease and where science would take the place of chance.

Conan Doyle's hero, originally christened Sherringford and then changed to Sherlock, demonstrated this facility within the opening pages of *A Study in Scarlet* when, on meeting Dr Watson for the first time, he observed: 'You have have been in Afghanistan, I perceive.' Holmes goes on to explain how he reached this conclusion very much in the manner of Dr Bell:

> The train of reasoning ran: 'Here is a gentleman of a medical type, but with the air of a military man. Clearly an army doctor, then. He has just come from the tropics, for his face is dark, and that is not the natural tint of his skin, for his wrists are fair. He has undergone hardship and sickness, as his haggard face says clearly. His left arm has been injured. He holds it in a stiff and unnatural manner. Where in the tropics could an English army doctor have seen such hardship and got his arm wounded? Clearly in Afghanistan.' The whole train of thought did not occupy a second.

If we compare that *tour de force* with a description of Bell's own methods with a patient, as described by Conan Doyle in his autobiography *Memories and Adventures*, we can see how closely the author followed Bell's approach to analysis:

> In one of [Bell's] best cases he said to a civilian patient: 'Well, my man, you've served in the army.'
> 'Aye sir.'
> 'Not long discharged?'
> 'No, sir.'
> 'A Highland regiment?'
> 'Aye, sir.'
> 'A non-com. officer?'
> 'Aye, sir.'
> 'Stationed at Barbados?'

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> 'Aye, sir.'
>
> 'You see, gentlemen,' he would explain, 'the man was a respectful man but did not remove his hat. They do not in the army, but he would have learned civilian ways had he been long discharged. He has an air of authority and he is obviously Scottish. As to Barbados, his complaint is elephantiasis, which is West Indian and not British.'
>
> To his audience of Watsons it all seemed miraculous until it was explained, and then it became simple enough. It is no wonder that after the study of such a character I used and amplified his methods when in later life I tried to build up a scientific detective who solved cases on his own merits and not through the folly of the criminal.

Thus, using Bell as his basic template, Arthur Conan Doyle created Sherlock Holmes. But the author knew that if Holmes were to appeal to the Victorian reader, he had to be more than a mere scientific cipher, a mechanical detecting machine. He had to be a fascinating character in his own right. To the schizophrenic society of the time – one which allowed prostitution and poverty to flourish in London's East End and yet, for the sake of decorum, covered up the legs of the piano – there was nothing more fascinating than the bohemian, the independent, the flamboyant fellow who disregarded the social conventions of the period. Conan Doyle imbued his detective creation with a fascinating array of idiosyncracies. Before Sherlock Holmes makes his very first appearance in *A Study in Scarlet* we are told that he has a habit of 'beating the subjects in the dissecting rooms with a stick . . . to verify how far bruises may be produced after death'. He is also a misogynist: 'I am not a whole-souled admirer of womankind. Women are never to be entirely trusted – not the best of them.' On one level, he was unemotional. We are told: 'All emotions . . . were abhorrent to his cold, precise, but admirably balanced mind.' And yet he was a man of passion: 'My mind rebels at stagnation. Give me problems, give me work, give me the most abstruse cryptogram or the most intricate analysis, and I am in my proper atmosphere.' The paradoxical and contradictory nature of the man enhanced his fascination for the public.

The reader is afforded a glimpse into the quirky domestic scene at Baker Street in the story 'The Musgrave Ritual', which begins with a catalogue of the detective's *outré* habits:

> . . . when I find a man who keeps his cigars in the coal-scuttle, his tobacco in the toe end of a Persian slipper, and his unanswered

> correspondence transfixed by a jack-knife into the very centre of his wooden mantelpiece, then I begin to give myself virtuous airs. I have always held, too, that pistol practice should distinctly be an open-air pastime: and when Holmes in one of his queer humours would sit in an armchair, with his hair-trigger and a hundred Boxer cartridges, and proceed to adorn the opposite wall with a patriotic V.R. done in bullet-pocks, I felt strongly that neither the atmosphere nor the appearance of our room was improved by it.

Here Conan Doyle is reinforcing Sherlock Holmes's oddness. He knew the character's appeal lay in his total difference from the man in the street, the reader: an important point that other detective story writers were to pick up – and, in fact, still do. One need only think of Colin Dexter's Inspector Morse with his miserly ways, fondness for real ale and his passions for crosswords and opera to realise that he is following the tradition initiated by Conan Doyle.

And then of course there was Holmes's drug-taking: a seven-per-cent solution of cocaine. This habit, first mentioned in the second novel *The Sign of the Four*, was a further extension of Holmes's bohemian character. Conan Doyle had been commissioned to write this novel by the editor of *Lippincott's Magazine* during a lunch engagement at the Langham Hotel. Also present on this occasion was Oscar Wilde, whose extravagant behaviour Conan Doyle found fascinating. Indeed, there are echoes of Wilde in the character of Thaddeus Sholto in the novel, but Conan Doyle's meeting with Wilde prompted him to add a more outrageous element to his detective hero and drug-taking was his choice. So by the time Sherlock Holmes appeared in the *Strand Magazine*, in a series of short stories from 1891, his character was fully formed in a most imaginative and engaging way. Here was a detective unlike any other and, while the two novels had enjoyed only moderate success, his stories in this new monthly magazine very soon captured the reading public's imagination. Within less than six months, the main selling point of the *Strand* was the new adventure of Sherlock Holmes within its pages.

The lean, ascetic sleuth of Baker Street has maintained a hypnotic hold on the public ever since. Conan Doyle's Holmes tales have never been out of print and they are found in most languages of the world. One can even obtain braille and shorthand editions. And, of course, Sherlock Holmes is the most filmed of all fictional characters.

One other aspect of these stories which makes them so marvellous is the use of the narrator, Dr Watson. All events are presented to us as Watson sees them, interpreted through his commonsense but limited understanding of things. This allows the reader to feel somewhat superior to Watson, while at the same time realising that Sherlock Holmes is streets ahead of everyone at all times. That is part of the genius of these tales. While Watson may not be particularly astute as a detective, he is a wonderful word painter and his descriptions add the richness to the text which graces both the plot and the characters with such vivid qualities.

Notwithstanding all this, Conan Doyle did not invent the detective or the detective story. Actually the history of detective fiction is far from straightforward and elements of it can be found in ancient and classical writings. A case has been made that Sophocles' play *Oedipus the King* (*circa* 430 BC) approaches the genre in that it deals with an attempt to discover the identity of a murderer which is raised as a central problem at the beginning of the drama and solved in a most dramatic fashion at the end. Oedipus, charged with the task of discovering who killed his wife's first husband, spends a great deal of the play in this inquiry and a final interrogation of a shepherd reveals the horrible truth: Oedipus himself is the murderer. Dramatic events are further heightened by the fact that unknown to him the murdered man was his father and therefore he has unwittingly married his mother.

Similarly Herodotus, often called the 'father of history', provided a tale in Book II of his *Histories* which Conan Doyle would no doubt have called 'The Adventure of the Headless Thief'. The incident deals with an Egyptian monarch, King Rhampsinitus, who had a vast chamber of stone built to house his great wealth. The builder was greedy and had designs on these treasures for himself and so contrived to insert a loose stone in the wall of the treasure house which could easily be removed to allow access. For some time he availed himself of small portions of the king's riches. Time passed and he fell fatally ill. On his deathbed he revealed his secret to his two sons who, before their father's corpse was cold, began raiding the treasure house. They were not as cautious or as prudent as their father and helped themselves to large quantities of gold and trinkets. It was not long before Rhampsinitus noticed the deficit in his store of riches. Puzzled as to how anyone could gain access to the chamber when all the seals were perfect and the fastenings of the room were secure, the king, acting now as detective, determined to solve this mystery and set a series of traps in the room. That very

night one of the brothers, more eager than the other, rushed into the treasure chamber and was caught in a vicious trap. There was no escape. He begged his brother to cut off his head so that when his body was found it wouldn't be recognised, thus it would not implicate his brother and sully their dead father's reputation. Reluctantly the other thief agreed and decapitated his brother, taking his head away with him. The next day the king entered the chamber and was shocked to discover a headless corpse. It was in essence a locked-room murder mystery.

The king ordered the corpse to be exhibited on the walls of the city and set two of his men to guard it. Rhampsinitus reasoned that someone would mourn the death of this headless man – a wife, a mother or sister – and they would not be able to resist visiting the place of his exhibition to mourn. Anyone doing so would be seized and brought to him. His reasoning was sound, for the dead thief's mother ordered the surviving brother to devise some scheme to retrieve the corpse in order for it to have a proper burial. If he did not, she would expose his crime. With the aid of a some skins of wine, the thief disabled the guards. While they slumbered in an alcoholic daze, he removed the body and took it home for his mother, but not before shaving half the beards of the two sleeping guards for devilment.

The king was both perplexed and annoyed to receive the news of the thief's audacious actions. He contrived another ploy to trap him. It was an equally audacious scheme. He sent his daughter out into the town, into the lowest dives, to beg men to tell her what was the cleverest and most wicked thing they had ever done. If anyone told her the story of how he robbed the king, she was to lay hold of him and not allow him to escape. Now the thief heard of this and was well aware of the king's motive. He decided to accept the challenge. He procured a fresh corpse and cut off one of the arms at the shoulder and secreted it under his tunic. He went off into the town and found the king's daughter. He told her the most wicked thing he had ever done was cutting off the head of his brother when he was caught in a trap in the king's treasury, and the cleverest was making the guards drunk so that he could carry off his body. As he confessed these things, the princess caught hold of his arm – or what she thought was his arm. It was in fact the arm of the corpse. With ease, the thief slipped away and made his escape.

When the king heard what had happened he was amazed at the nerve and ingenuity of this man and he sent messengers out to proclaim a free pardon for the thief and the promise of a rich

reward if he came to the palace and made himself known. The thief, believing the proclamation, duly appeared before him. The king kept his word. Admiring the wisdom of the thief, he gave him his daughter in marriage, saying: 'The Egyptians excel all the rest of the world in wisdom, and this man excels all other Egyptians.'

This story contains many of the elements found in the Holmes stories and those of his rivals: the apparently inexplicable crime, the use of a central character as bait, the brilliant criminal and the determined sleuth and the surprise ending in which the 'detective' pronounces his own judgement on the matter rather than that of the law.

Since words were written there have been instances of mysteries presented and then solved in an ingenious manner and I could fill a substantial volume with examples, but, for the purposes of this introduction, let me refer to just one more. And for this I go to the great Aesop, in his fable of the fox and the lion. 'Why do you not come to pay your respects to me?' asks the lion of the fox. 'I beg your majesty's pardon,' replies the fox, 'but I notice the track of many animals that have already come to you; and, while I see many hoof and paw marks going in, I see none coming out. Till the animals that have entered your cave come out again, I prefer to remain in the open air.' One might add, 'Elementary, my dear Leo.' Certainly, Sherlock Holmes could not have reasoned more lucidly from these observations.

So while there were elements of detective fiction found in many diverse sources and guises, it was not until the nineteenth century dawned that all these elements became focused and gradually formalised into the detective story as we know it. For this we must thank Edgar Allan Poe, for it is this strange American writer who is considered to be the father of the modern detective story. In five stories published in the first half of the nineteenth century, 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue', 'The Purloined Letter', 'The Mystery of Marie Roget', 'Thou Art the Man' and 'The Gold Bug', he laid out and clarified most of the ground rules. The first three stories feature C. Auguste Dupin, a brilliant private detective residing in Paris. His activities are recorded by an unnamed chronicler, an admiring and somewhat slow-witted fellow – the Watson figure. Dupin is not only brilliant and disdainful of the official police, he is also eccentric. Shunning daylight, he lives behind closed shutters, his room illuminated only by 'a couple of tapers which, strongly perfumed, threw out only the ghastliest and feeblest of rays'. Like a sleuthing vampire, he takes to the streets at night to enjoy the

'infinity of mental excitement'. He is also given to astounding his companion by reading his thought processes. Conan Doyle thought Poe 'the master of all'. In his book *Through the Magic Door*, Conan Doyle was generous and admiring enough to confess:

> To him must be ascribed the monstrous progeny of writers on the detection of crime . . . But not only is Poe the originator of the detective story; all treasure-hunting, cryptogram-solving yarns trace back to his 'Gold Bug' . . .

Perhaps the most famous and certainly the grisliest of the Dupin tales is 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue'. An old woman and her daughter are found murdered in a locked room with no apparent means of entry or exit. The police are baffled. Dupin deduces and solves the mystery. This is a seminal story in crime fiction. Dorothy L. Sayers in her introduction to *The Omnibus of Crime* presented a brilliant analysis of this tale:

> [The story features] a combination of three typical motifs: the wrongly suspected man, to whom all the superficial evidence (motive, access, etc.) points; the hermetically sealed death chamber (still a favourite theme); finally the *solution by unexpected means*. In addition we have Dupin drawing deductions, which the police have overlooked, from evidence of witnesses (superiority in inference), and discovering clues which the police had not thought of looking for owing to obsession by an *idée fixe* (superiority in observation based on inference). In this story also are enunciated for the first time those two great aphorisms of detective science: first, that when you have eliminated all the possibilities, then whatever remains, *however improbable*, must be the truth; and secondly that the more *outré* a case may appear, the easier it is to solve. Indeed, take it all round, 'The Murders in the Rue Morgue' constitutes in itself almost a complete manual of detective theory and practice.

A complete manual it may have been but it was not fully utilised until Conan Doyle created Sherlock Holmes and this initiated an explosion of Sherlockian copycats and wannabees. In the interim there had been some interesting experiments: Inspector Bucket in Charles Dickens's *Bleak House* (1853) and Sergeant Cuff in Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone* (1868), perhaps the first detective novel.

And then there was Eugène François Vidocq (1775–1857). He was a real-life criminal who became the first chief of the French Sûreté. His ghosted autobiography not only had a great influence

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on authors of mystery fiction in his own lifetime, but also on detective writers after his death. In his *Mémoires* Vidocq records many instances of adopting a disguise to carry out his policework. He seems to relish changing his appearance in a most spectacular manner. He writes of staining his face with walnut liquor, creating false wrinkles and garnishing his features with coffee beans plastered on with gum arabic to create various effects. In his old age Vidocq visited London and told *The Times* that 'by some strange process connected with my physical formation, I have the faculty of contracting my height by several inches'. Of course Sherlock Holmes was also an expert at disguise and, in 'The Empty House', Conan Doyle actually has him state: 'I am glad to stretch myself, Watson. It is no joke when a tall man has to take a foot off his stature for several hours on end.' The link is obvious.

Staying with the French for the moment, mention must also be made of Émile Gaboriau (1835–73), who created the detective Monsieur Lecoq in *L'Affaire Lerouge* (1866). This and subsequent novels focused attention on Lecoq's gathering and interpreting of evidence in the detection of crime. We know for a fact that Conan Doyle had read Gaboriau's works for, rather tongue in cheek, he has Sherlock Holmes comment on one in *A Study in Scarlet*:

> 'Lecoq was a miserable bungler,' [Holmes] said in an angry voice; 'he had only one thing to recommend him, and that was his energy. That book made me positively ill. The question was how to identify an unknown prisoner. I could have done it in twenty-four hours. Lecoq took six months or so. It might be made a text book for detectives to teach them what to avoid.'

In the same sequence, Conan Doyle also has his detective blasting Poe's Dupin;

> 'Now in my opinion, Dupin was a very inferior fellow. That trick of his of breaking in on his friends' thoughts with an apropos remark after a quarter of an hour's silence is really very showy and superficial.'

Showy and superficial it may be, but it was a trick perpetrated by Holmes on Watson several times.

So Arthur Conan Doyle, like all writers beachcombing along the shores of literature, was not only influenced by what had gone before, but he adopted and adapted elements of what had gone before, too. He also drew on his personal experiences. The real genius was to blend these disparate parts with his own ingredients

into one of the most potent and remarkable fictional characters of all time.

Once the success of Holmes was established, other authors were inspired either to copy or experiment with the ingredients found in the stories. Conan Doyle had fashioned the hub of this magical wheel, and then others created their own spokes which radiated outwards. From that time onwards the reading public has been swamped with brilliant, idiosyncratic crime-solvers. At first there was a trend for writers to give their detective one very peculiar trait, a novelty element which made the character unique in some way, like the blind Max Carrados who could make the most incredible deductions through the senses of smell, touch and hearing. Or the 'crime doctor', who treated crime as a disease and approached it from a psychological angle. There were female detectives, too, like Loveday Brooke. And purely scientific ones such as Professor van Dusen who became known as The Thinking Machine. And there were those characters who worked on the other side of the law, like A.J. Raffles, Colonel Clay and Simon Carne, the Prince of Swindlers, all, in various ways, echoing Conan Doyle's criminal mastermind, Professor Moriarty, Sherlock Holmes's arch enemy.

Sadly many of the rivals of Sherlock Holmes are out of print today because one assumes that they are considered insignificant beside the colossus of Baker Street. It is true that very few literary characters can compare, but that is no reason to neglect these wonderful creations with their tantalising mysteries, surprising denouements and odd little ways. They are still splendid.

In this edition I have collected a cross section of stories featuring those noble and not so noble men and women who, like Sherlock Holmes, were involved in the world of puzzles, mysteries and crime. We start pre-Holmes with Poe and sample a tale of mystery from Wilkie Collins, before we move to that golden time when Sherlock was ensconsed in Baker Street and, if our friendly scribes are to be believed, London was a place where amateur and professional detectives, all eager to unravel the mystery and point an accurate finger at the villain, were rife. The stories are presented in an approximate order of publication, but I have not kept strictly to this rule in order to maintain a level of variety for the reader.

It is time to open that magic door and step into that strange and exciting world peopled with the shadows of Sherlock Holmes.

THE AUTHORS AND THEIR DETECTIVES

EDGAR ALLAN POE (1809–49)

Often regarded as the father of the detective novel, Poe, an American, is more widely known for his tales of terror such as 'The Fall of the House of Usher' and 'The Pit and the Pendulum'. Poe created the detective Auguste Dupin to perform feats of ratiocination – a word he coined himself – in the solving of a crime. He set the template for fictional detectives which other writers have used and adapted for themselves ever since.

WILKIE COLLINS (1824–89)

English novelist and friend of Charles Dickens, Collins wrote one of the best Victorian mystery stories, *The Moonstone*, which T. S. Eliot regarded as 'the first, longest and best' classical detective story. In 'The Biter Bit', the story featured in this collection, we meet the arrogant and incompetent Matthew Sharpin and the exasperated Chief Inspector Theakstone.

BRETT HARTE (1836–1902)

An American writer who lived in London for a time after serving as US consul in Glasgow, Francis Brett Harte made few forays into detective fiction, but his story 'The Stolen Cigar-Case' was described by Ellery Queen as 'probably the best parody of Sherlock Holmes ever written'. It features the remarkable sleuth Hemlock Jones.

C. L. PIRKIS (1840–1910)

Probably C. L. Pirkis's greatest claim to fame was that, with her husband, she founded the National Canine Defence League in

1894. However, before then she penned several undistinguished novels as well as a lively series of stories featuring Loveday Brooke, Lady Detective. Brooke is one of the earliest female investigators and appeared only a few years after the original Sherlock Holmes stories were published.

ROBERT BARR (1850–1912)

A journalist and editor as well as author, Robert Barr created the French detective Eugène Valmont, who acts as his own storyteller. There are some remarkable similarities between Valmont and that Belgian detective Hercule Poirot, although Barr's creation predates Agatha Christie's by about twenty years.

ANTON CHEKHOV (1860–1904)

A Russian writer, better known as a dramatist of note with plays such as *The Cherry Orchard*, *The Seagull* and *Uncle Vanya*, Chekhov was also a prolific short-story writer. He often provided a surprise ending to his narrative, as he does in *The Swedish Match*, which features a humorous detective duo, Tchubikov and his over-enthusiastic assistant Dyukovsky.

DICK DONOVAN (1843–1924)

(Pseudonym of Joyce Emmerson Preston Muddock.) Donovan wrote what seemed to be an endless stream of short stories which appeared in the *Strand Magazine*. These featured Donovan himself as the detective hero recounting his various adventures with sinister secret societies, supervillains and incredible crimes. What the stories lack in finesse, they make up in pace and panache.

GRANT ALLEN (1848–99)

British author, philosopher and scientist whose two most notable works were literary breakthroughs. The first, *The Woman Who Did* (1895), created a sensation on its publication because of its frank discussion of sexual matters. The second, *An African Millionaire* (1897), contained a series of tales featuring Colonel Clay, the first important rogue in short crime fiction who is the hero, and not a subsidiary character or villain or anti-hero. He preceded Raffles, the gentleman crook, by two years. Allen's friend Arthur Conan Doyle completed his last novel *Hilda Wade*, using the author's notes, when Allen fell ill and died before he was able to finish it.

Guy Clifford

I could find little information about Guy Clifford. It would seem that he was a jobbing writer who turned his hand to various forms of fiction. His detective, Robert Graceman, whose exploits were described by his 'friend and partner' Halton, was featured in the *Ludgate Monthly*. 'A Clever Capture' appeared in 1895.

E.W. Hornung (1866–1921)

Ernest William Hornung, author of crime and mystery fiction, became Arthur Conan Doyle's brother-in-law and fell under his literary influence. It must have been with a sly smile that he created Raffles, the gentleman crook, who is almost a dark reflection of Sherlock Holmes. It was said that Conan Doyle did not approve of an 'amateur cracksman' being presented as a hero. Hornung's other character, Dr John Dollar, the crime doctor, was firmly on the side of law and order. He was one of the first detectives to solve crimes using psychological means.

Clarence Rook (? –1915)

An American writer who lived in London in the latter years of the nineteenth century. Rook's sleuth was a American female investigator, operating in the British capital. Female detectives were quite rare when the story 'The Stir outside the Café Royal' was published in the *Harmsworth Magazine* in 1898, but it was rarer for a male writer to use one as his central character.

Guy Boothby (1867–1905)

Australian novelist who moved to Britain in 1894. His most masterful creation was the devilish Dr Nikola, a Moriarty-like character who appeared in five novels: *A Bid for Fortune or Dr Nikola's Vendetta* (1895), *Doctor Nikola* (1896), *The Lust of Hate* (1898), *Dr Nikola's Experiment* (1899) and *Farewell, Nikola* (1901). Boothby also created Simon Carne, whose exploits were featured in a series called 'A Prince of Swindlers', published in *Pearson's Magazine*. Carne was another of the gentlemen crooks, in company with the aforementioned Raffles and Colonel Clay.

Jacques Futrelle (1875–1912)

An American journalist who created one of the most unusual investigators of all time, Professor Augustus S. F. X. van Dusen – The Thinking Machine. He is one of the greatest scientific detectives, a master logician who solves cases brought to him by a reporter, Hutchinson Hatch, who also acts as his assistant. The story featured in this collection also contains a preface which explains how this strange little man became known as The Thinking Machine.

Hesketh Prichard (1876–1922)

A great traveller and hunter, Prichard included many of his own exploits in his stories. He used his outdoor experiences as background for his series of stories featuring November Joe, 'the Detective of the Woods'. Possibly the most unusual detective in this collection, November Joe uses his native skills for detective purposes in the wilds of Canada.

Herbert Jenkins (1876–1923)

Jenkins was a prolific writer and he created the Sherlock Holmes would-be clone, Malcolm Sage, who runs his own detective bureau with his secretary Gladys Norman, his assistant James Thompson, and William Johnson, the office junior who has ambitions to become a Great Detective. The tales were lightweight, but the puzzles still remain intriguing.

Ernest Bramah (1868–1942)

(Pseudonym of Ernest Bramah Smith.) Bramah created the fantastic Kai Lung, the Chinese storyteller, and Max Carrados, the blind detective, one of the greatest detectives of all time. Carrados, a charismatic character, is able to sleuth so amazingly well because Bramah enhanced his other senses to a remarkable degree to compensate for his blindness. He is, for instance, able to read the newspaper by running his sensitive fingers over the newsprint. Carrados is assisted in his investigations by his butler Parkinson.

Sexton Blake

Sexton Blake was known as the office boy's Sherlock Holmes probably because there was an air of comic-book heroics about many of the stories. He was created by Harry Blyth (1852–98) and made his first appearance in the boy's weekly paper the *Halfpenny Marvel* in 1893, in the story 'The Missing Millionaire'. Since then

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