

Because of the pandemic, the Baker Street Irregulars are planning two virtual events in January, with the Distinguished Speaker Lecture on Thursday evening, Jan. 7, and the BSI Annual dinner on Friday, Jan. 8. Visit the BSI web-site <[www.bakerstreetirregulars.com/bsi-event-dates](http://www.bakerstreetirregulars.com/bsi-event-dates)>, and sign up for "News from the BSI" to receive additional information about the birthday festivities when it's available.

If you would like know more about the Baker Street Irregulars, and our new Wiggins, Michael H. Kean, he was interviewed by Scott Monty and Burt Wolder for episode 198 of their "I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere" blog, on-line at <[www.tinyurl.com/y698vb4b](http://www.tinyurl.com/y698vb4b)>.

The lawsuit that was filed by the Conan Doyle Estate Ltd. over the upcoming Netflix television film based on Nancy Springer's "Enola Holmes" series of book (Jul 20 #1) will be contested: the film defendants (all those except Nancy Springer and her publishers) have filed a response, denying any infringement on copyrights and trademarks, demanding a jury trial, and asking the court to require the CDEL to reimburse the defendants for their costs.

The defendants state in their response that the CDEL's "claims are barred, in whole or in part, by the equitable doctrine of unclean hands." That's nicely theological: according to Wikipedia, the doctrine can be traced as far back as the Fourth Lateran Council, which was held in 1215. There's much more to the response, of course, and the documents in the case conveniently are available on-line at <[www.free-sherlock.com](http://www.free-sherlock.com)>

Netflix has released an official teaser for the film, available on-line at <[www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrChuCpgbT0](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrChuCpgbT0)>, and has announced that the film is to be released on Sept. 23.

Elinor Gray, coordinator of the Left Coast Sherlockian Symposium, has announced that the Symposium will be a virtual event via Zoom this year, on Oct. 10, with a four-hour cocktail hour followed by presentations by Les Klinger, Bonnie MacBird, Angela Misri, Rob Nunn, and Mina Hoffman. You're invited to name your own ticket price; details about the symposium (and a link to registration) are at <[www.leftcoastsherlock.com](http://www.leftcoastsherlock.com)>.

"Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss Reveal Their Top Picks for Female Sherlock Holmes" was the headline on a story in Radio Times (July 27): Moffat also noted a potential problem with casting a woman as Watson (the story's on-line at <[www.tinyurl.com/y28wkqtr](http://www.tinyurl.com/y28wkqtr)>).

Otto Penzler is both the proprietor of the Mysterious Bookshop in New York and a publisher, and Penzler Publishers is issuing a long series of American Classic Mysteries, reprinting some fine books, often with new introductions and afterwords <[www.tinyurl.com/yyrdpkm4](http://www.tinyurl.com/yyrdpkm4)> (\$25.95 in cloth/\$15.95 in paper). Titles of interest to Sherlockians include Anthony Boucher's *Rocket to the Morgue* and H. F. Heard's *A Taste for Honey* (2019), and Anthony Boucher's *The Case of the Baker Street Irregulars* (2020). Vincent Starrett's *The Great Hotel Murder* (2020), with an introduction by Lyndsay Faye, isn't Sherlockian, but nevertheless a nice mystery.

Aug 20 #2 Edward D. Hoch's *Hoch's Ladies* (Cincinnati: Crippen & Landru, 2019; 288 pp., \$45.00 cloth/\$19.00 paper) has an introduction by Michael Dirda and includes Hoch's "A Parcel of Deerstalkers" (reprinted from Ellery Queen's *Mystery Magazine*, Jan. 1995) <[www.crippenlandru.com](http://www.crippenlandru.com)>. Jeffrey Marks now is the publisher at Crippen & Landru, which was founded by Douglas G. Greene (now the series editor), and they continue to publish grand collections of short stories by Ed Hoch and others, as well as long-out-of-print novels.

"I'm a writer but then nobody's perfect" is a delightful epitaph, chosen by someone who was far more than a writer, and had Sherlockian credentials <[www.flickr.com/photos/jrlogue/5199635955](http://www.flickr.com/photos/jrlogue/5199635955)>. A tip of the deerstalker to Al Gregory for reporting this.

The "Holmes in the Heartland" conference that was scheduled in St. Louis this summer has been rescheduled, and it will now take place on July 9-11, 2021 <[www.tinyurl.com/yd5elmpj](http://www.tinyurl.com/yd5elmpj)>.

Cade Deverell has reported a new publisher of miniature books: Tony Firman Bookbinding <[www.tonyfirmanbookbinding.com](http://www.tonyfirmanbookbinding.com)>; you can click on "Plum Park Press" and then on "Doyle" to see their edition of "The Five Orange Pips" (\$47.00 postpaid). Earlier editions of "A Scandal in Bohemia", "The Red-Headed League" and "The Blue Carbuncle" are out of print, but might be reprinted, and "The Copper Beeches" is planned for January; if you're interested in any of these, contact Tony Firman at <[tonyfirmanbooks@gmail.com](mailto:tonyfirmanbooks@gmail.com)>.

Chris Redmond's "Sherlock Holmes, Socks, and Simpson" (his latest contribution to Scott Monty's "I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere") shows that there always is something new to be said about things mentioned only in passing in the Canon <[www.tinyurl.com/y22nq27z](http://www.tinyurl.com/y22nq27z)>.

John Sutherland's *Curiosities of Literature* (New York: Skyhorse, 2011; 289 pp., \$12.95), accurately sub-titled "a feast for book-lovers," presents a collection of short entries covering a wide variety of literary trivia and miscellanea; the section on "morbid curiosity" includes a brief discussion of "the Baskerville Effect" (can one actually be frightened to death?) and the fascinating story of the only person to have committed suicide in the London Library (the suicide's not Sherlockian, but the London Library is mentioned in the Canon).

The manuscript of "The Land of Mist" (Jun 20 #1), at auction at Christie's in London, was sold July 30 for £47,500 (including the buyer's premium). Randall Stock offers a discussion of the manuscript at his "Best of Sherlock" web-site <[www.bestofsherlock.com/mss/land-mist-2020.htm](http://www.bestofsherlock.com/mss/land-mist-2020.htm)>.

*Remote Sensing in Action: The Curious Case of Sherlock Holmes and Albert Einstein*, by Enders A. Robinson and Dean Clark (Tulsa: Society of Exploration Geophysicists, 2014; 374 pp., \$122.00), is an interesting example of "scientific fiction" combining a fictional narrative with real science; in this book Robinson (a geophysicist) and Clark (a Sherlockian as well as an editor) use Holmes and Watson to explain the impact of Einstein's theory of relativity on the science of remote sensing <[www.library.seg.org](http://www.library.seg.org)>.

Aug 20 #3 Just in case you weren't watching television in 1959: there's no mention Sherlock Holmes in "Count the Man Down" (an unsold pilot broadcast by CBS-TV), but it features Nero Wolfe (who of course does have a Sherlockian connection) and Archie Goodwin (played by an actor who may surprise you); kindly reported by J. P. Van Gordon, it's available at YouTube <[www.youtube.com/watch?v=9\\_AoebAAig4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_AoebAAig4)>.

History Extra (the web-site of the BBC History Magazine) offers a 34-minute podcast in which Sarah LeFanu discussing her recent book *Something of Themselves: Kipling, Kingsley, Conan Doyle, and the Anglo-Boer War* (Jun 20 #7) <[www.tinyurl.com/y4qe4cmu](http://www.tinyurl.com/y4qe4cmu)>.

An addition to the list of actors who have played Conan Doyle: Michael McElhatton, in the British film "Agatha and the Truth of Murder" (2018), now available on Netflix. It's a 92-minute film, almost completely fictional, opening with Agatha Christie, who has encountered writer's block, discussing writing and golf with Conan Doyle; she then goes on to investigate a murder, and there are amusing mentions of Sherlock Holmes and Conan Doyle at 29 and 69 minutes.



There's also Gavin McIver-Wright, who provided the voice of Conan Doyle, in "I Am Sir Arthur Conan Doyle" (an 11-minute segment of the animated series "Xavier Riddle and the Secret Museum" that aired on PBS Kids on Aug. 6 this year). There are lots of repeats on the channel, so you may still be able to watch it.

If you would like to read "A Study in Scarlet" in Beeton's Christmas Annual, that's easy to do, since the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas has digitized its copy <[www.tinyurl.com/yyfrpt69](http://www.tinyurl.com/yyfrpt69)> (thanks to Jim Hawkins for noting this). There's one living Sherlockian, by the way, who read his very first Sherlock Holmes story in a copy of Beeton's Christmas Annual: Russell Merritt, at the Houghton Library at Harvard.

"Peter Cushing: In His Own Words" is an hour-long video (well, audio with images) of an interview with Cushing, recorded in 1986, long believed to have been lost, recently rediscovered, and issued last year by Rabbit & Snail Films <[www.tinyurl.com/yyomufpr](http://www.tinyurl.com/yyomufpr)>. Cushing discusses his career as an actor, with due attention paid to Sherlock Holmes; there's a trailer at the web-site, and another at YouTube <[www.tinyurl.com/y46x9yn5](http://www.tinyurl.com/y46x9yn5)>.

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the publication of *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, Agatha Christie's first book, celebrated by Publishers Weekly (Aug. 3) with an article ("In the Study, with a Typewriter") by Liz Scheier, who notes that the Guinness World Records credits Agatha Christie as the best-selling fiction writer of all time, as well as the most translated (7,236 translations as of 2017).

On the other hand: Don Hobbs has recorded 11,287 translations of Sherlock Holmes stories, with more to come, in his colorful bibliography. The latest version of "The Galactic Sherlock Holmes" is available on request and without charge (as a 430-MB file via WeTransfer) <[221b@verizon.net](mailto:221b@verizon.net)>.

Aug 20 #4 Bryan Woolley's *Mythic Texas* (2000) is delightful collection of stories about the weird and wonderful people the author has met and written about in the Dallas Morning News (and it's easy to discover such people in Texas); his "The Adventure of the Eccentric Sherlockians" tells about his encounter with Bill Beeson, Don Hobbs, and Jim Webb. The book's out of print, but readily available from on-line booksellers, and great fun.

Rob Nunn's "Interesting Though Elementary" is one of many blogs available on the Internet <[www.interestingthoughelementary.blogspot.com](http://www.interestingthoughelementary.blogspot.com)>; he offers "interesting interviews" with Jerry Margolin, Jacquelynn Morris, Mike McSwiggin, Laurie R. King, Steve Doyle, and many others.

Further to the report (June 20 #4) on "Sherlock: The Russian Chronicles" (the new eight-part Russian television mini-series due later this year), there was a nicely illustrated interview with Nurbek Egen, director of the series, in Drama Quarterly (Aug. 20) <[www.tinyurl.com/y45gmrzk](http://www.tinyurl.com/y45gmrzk)>. And there is a trailer for the series at <[www.tinyurl.com/yxnrdnn3](http://www.tinyurl.com/yxnrdnn3)>.

The Bradford Telegraph & Argus published a nicely-illustrated story (Aug. 4) <[www.tinyurl.com/y57ydxmx](http://www.tinyurl.com/y57ydxmx)> on the Cottingley fairies material owned by the National Science and Media Museum; all three of the cameras are at the museum, along with Elsie Wright's drawings of fairies, made in 1983.

Sherlockian collectors value the Feb. 1890 issue of Lippincott's Monthly Magazine (which contained the first appearance of "The Sign of the Four"); the story was commissioned by the magazine during a dinner at which Arthur Conan Doyle and Oscar Wilde were both asked to write something, and Wilde wrote "The Portrait of Dorian Grey" (which was published in the July 1890 issue). Steven Berkoff's splendid collection of Wilde material, offered at Sotheby's in London on Aug. 4, included both the British and American editions of the magazine <[www.tinyurl.com/y4mg3pax](http://www.tinyurl.com/y4mg3pax)>; the British edition (estimated at £1,500-£2,000) sold for £4,032 (including the buyer's premium) and the American edition (estimated at £1,000-£1,500) went unsold. It should be noted that a copy of the American edition with "The Sign of the Four" was sold at Heritage Auctions in 2018 for \$12,500.

Another interesting lot in Sotheby's auction, from the collection of M. T. Johnson, included five Kodak glass lantern slides of the Cottingley fairies <[www.tinyurl.com/yyqzqn6c](http://www.tinyurl.com/yyqzqn6c)>. Marjorie T. Johnson was the secretary of the Fairy Investigation Society, a "semi-secret occult group" founded in 1927. Estimated at £3,000-£5,000, the lot sold for £4,032.

"How Paul McGuigan Crafted the Visual Language of Sherlock" was the title of an interesting interview (Den of Geek, Aug. 5) with the director of the first four episodes of the BBC series <[www.tinyurl.com/y4yxjufb](http://www.tinyurl.com/y4yxjufb)>.

Reported: the SeaWolf Press <[www.seawolfpress.com](http://www.seawolfpress.com)> offers print-on-demand editions of a long list of classic authors, including Conan Doyle; their books are not facsimiles: *A Study in Scarlet*, for example, was published in 2018, but states 1888 on the title page and has text based on an 1892 British edition, and cover art from Beeton's Christmas Annual for 1887.

Aug 20 #5 The Royal Mail has released its long-awaited stamps honoring both Sherlock Holmes and the 10th anniversary of the BBC television series, and offers a wide variety of collectibles: stamps, presentation packs, first day covers, prints, and (courtesy of the Royal Mint) silver medals <[www.shop.royalmail.com/special-stamp-issues/sherlock](http://www.shop.royalmail.com/special-stamp-issues/sherlock)>; the Royal Mail and the Royal Mint are corporations, and are far ahead of the U.S. Postal Service in catering to collectors. There also were plenty of authorized postmarks for the stamps <[www.royalmail.com/postmarks](http://www.royalmail.com/postmarks)>, in addition to the official first-day postmarks.

There are six stamps with designs from the television series, each with a hidden message that can be seen with ultra-violet light, and four stamps in a miniature sheet commemorating stories from the Canon. The miniature sheet was designed by Lithuanian artist Karolis Strautniekas; you can see a selection of his other artwork at <[www.strautniekas.com](http://www.strautniekas.com)>.

Eagle-eyed musicians were quick to report an error in one of the designs, explained at the Classic FM web-site <[www.tinyurl.com/y5rs2ukx](http://www.tinyurl.com/y5rs2ukx)>. And yes, it's the Royal Mail's mistake, which isn't in the episode in the series.

Not the sort of letter an author enjoys: "Probably the most hopeless kind of manuscript a publisher expects to receive from his favourite author is that of poetry for children." According to Barbara Richardson in *Book and Magazine Collector* (Dec. 1998), that is what an editor at Dutton wrote to A. A. Milne about *When We Were Very Young*. Of course Dutton did publish the book, which sold 10,000 copies in the first four weeks, not at all bad for 1924 (in Britain, Methuen's first printing of 5,140 copies sold out on the first day).

Nicholas Basbanes was one of the panelists at the Baker Street Irregulars' conference at the Lilly Library last year, and he has now written the introduction for W. Bolingbroke Johnson's *The Widening Stain*, recently reprinted in Otto Penzler's series of American mystery classics; Otto's 54-minute interview with Nick at the launch party for the book is available at <[www.tinyurl.com/yxam5lw](http://www.tinyurl.com/yxam5lw)>.

Karen Murdock reports that Stanfords offers a "Sherlock Holmes Map of London" showing London as it was in 1891 and keyed to locations in the four novels (£9.99) <[www.tinyurl.com/y2ha3mus](http://www.tinyurl.com/y2ha3mus)>. There is a different (and interesting) interactive Sherlockian map of the world (with descriptions in Spanish) on-line at <[www.sherlockland.com](http://www.sherlockland.com)>.

Paul Thomas Miller's "Doyle's Rotary Coffin" (Mar 19 #4), a society whose motto is "All Holmes Is Good Holmes," has published *No Holmes Barred* (its first "scrapbook of Holmesiana"), which is available as a free download at the society's web-site at <[www.sites.google.com/site/doylesrotarycoffin](http://www.sites.google.com/site/doylesrotarycoffin)>.

Greg Ruby reports that the Windsor Mint has issued a set of six "Sherlock Holmes Consulting Detective" gold-plated copper medals that have something new for those who collect this sort of thing: the designs each include a bit of manuscript from one of the stories; £149.50 for the set in a presentation folder <[www.tinyurl.com/y6tbmjpx](http://www.tinyurl.com/y6tbmjpx)>.

Aug 20 #6 Roland-François Lack says his Cine-Tourist web-site is "about connections between maps and films" but there's much more than that, and it's well worth exploring <[www.thecinestourist.net](http://www.thecinestourist.net)>; there isn't a search engine, so: click on "London" and then on "Sherlock Holmes" for a quick tour of his many Sherlockian discoveries. A tip of the deerstalker to Steve Rothman for reporting this interesting web-site.

Linda Hein reports that Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson are available for consultations at Baker Street West in Jackson, Calif.; bring your friends or family, and a problem, and if you don't have a problem, one can easily be arranged. Facemasks and social distancing are required, and tea and refreshments will be available <[www.bakerstreetwest.com](http://www.bakerstreetwest.com)>.

One can still make good use of libraries while staying at home during the pandemic. The Toronto Reference Library has digitized 375 items in their Arthur Conan Doyle Collection: go to <[www.tinyurl.com/yypgdpez](http://www.tinyurl.com/yypgdpez)> and click on "View digitized items" to have fun exploring. They also have created an imaginative virtual Sherlock Holmes Escape Room, which you'll find online at <[www.tinyurl.com/y69x9ghn](http://www.tinyurl.com/y69x9ghn)>.

A few years ago Dana Richards reported Doyle's Delight, the highest peak in Belize, named in honor of "The Lost World" (Jun 17 #6). Now Geraldine Beare has noted Doyle's Delight Street in Balmopan, the capital of Belize; the street's only a few blocks long, but Google Maps shows you can dine at Bellavi's Bistro, and there's a nearby bed-and-breakfast to stay in

It's nice to know that the Sesame Street Workshop has not abandoned Sherlock Hemlock, who appears often (although briefly) in the audience during "The Not-Too-Late Show with Elmo" (which launched on HBO Max on May 27). You can see him, Howard Ostrom reports, in the third row at the far right in a preview available at YouTube <[www.tinyurl.com/yxvzxo9u](http://www.tinyurl.com/yxvzxo9u)>.

Sonia Fetherston reports a wide variety of Sherlockian merchandise at the Redbubble web-site; there are more than 200 Sherlockian jigsaw puzzles in case you're bored during the pandemic <[www.tinyurl.com/y4hxxwje](http://www.tinyurl.com/y4hxxwje)>.

Laurie R. King's web-site <[www.laurierking.com](http://www.laurierking.com)> always is interesting, and her blogs always entertaining; see "The Case of Laurie and the Monegasque Prince" (July 31) and "Feisty Old Ladies" (Aug. 12). She also reports in her occasional newsletter "News & Nonsense" that she is closing in on 200 pages in the first draft of her next Mary Russell novel *Castle Shade*.

All of the seats at the new (and partially improvised) three-actor dramatization of "The Hound of the Baskervilles" (on the lawn at the Watermill Theatre in Newbury, Berks.) sold out in the first 24 hours, so the run has been extended through Sept. 6 <[www.watermill.org.uk](http://www.watermill.org.uk)>.

Christopher M. Walsh's "Miss Holmes" is due at the Muskegon Civic Theatre in Muskegon, Mich., Feb. 12-27 <[www.muskegoncivictheatre.com](http://www.muskegoncivictheatre.com)>.

The Spermaceti Press: Peter E. Blau, 7103 Endicott Court, Bethesda, MD  
20817-4401 (301-229-5669) <[blau7103@comcast.net](mailto:blau7103@comcast.net)>