



The Final Adventures of Sherlock Holmes

Arthur Conan Doyle

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A collection of stories, plays, & poems provide the final account of the great sleuth Holmes.

The Final Adventures of Sherlock Holmes Details

Date : Published June 5th 1993 by Barnes Noble Books

ISBN : 9781566191982

Author : Arthur Conan Doyle

Format : Hardcover 216 pages

Genre : Mystery, Fiction, Classics, Short Stories, Historical, Victorian, Crime, Suspense, Thriller, Mystery
Thriller, Literature, Detective



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From Reader Review The Final Adventures of Sherlock Holmes for online ebook

Aishu Rehman says

: A collection of stories, plays and essays about Holmes that are not part of the Canon but certainly make nice supplementary reading. An excellent addition to any Holmes library... This book is similar to the out of print and often difficult to find Sherlock Holmes: The Published Apocrypha by Jack Tracy. Both books include the "almost Sherlock Holmes?? stories and plays that don't fit in the Canon, but are certainly in the neighborhood.

The introduction discusses the pieces that make up the book and you will find some interesting tidbits (much of which was previously in Tracy's book)... Peter Haining's book is an outstanding collection that any Holmes fan should enjoy. If you already have Tracy's Apocrypha, or vice versa, you will find they complement each other and you shouldn't ignore one because you own the other.

Bev says

When The Final Adventures of Sherlock Holmes was first published, it had long been established that the adventures of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's celebrated sleuth Sherlock Holmes was made up of fifty-six short stories and four novels. There had also long been rumors of various other materials by Doyle that had never been collected and published in one volume. Peter Haining hunted down some of the most elusive items and brought them all together in this book. And what we have is a grand mish-mash of early stories, plays, poems, and essays about Holmes--all written by Doyle. Well, purportedly in some cases.

I am quite sure that I've read some of these pieces before....probably re-collected in other places once Haining had done the leg-work of hunting them down for first time. I can't say that any of the stories or other pieces are particularly earth-shatteringly great, but the pieces are interesting for anyone who has more than a passing interest in all things Holmes. We are given everything from "The Mystery of Uncle Jeremy's Household" which is a clear precursor to The Study in Scarlet to Doyle's own explanation of how he came to kill off his most famous literary offspring. There is also the list of Doyle's favorite stories--Holmes fans can see how their own favorites match up.

The dust jacket blurb says that this volume "will undoubtedly be welcomed by every Holmes enthusiast and find a place of honour in Sherlockian Libraries throughout the world...." Well, maybe there was great joy in Holmes-ville when this was first published, but coming to it now I would say that it's a decent collection of early and obscure material on Holmes.

This was first posted on my blog My Reader's Block. Please request permission before reposting. Thanks.

Christopher Anson says

I enjoyed the book. These stories are fun to read.

Nathalie Nelson says

Except for the died in the wool Holmes afficianado, who needs any more Sherlock Holmes stories? But, I do like them so o.k. I read them. The best part was Doyle's article on the inspiration for the detective in the first place. That was new, at least to me.

Allison says

A fun little grouping! They're not all new Holmes tales, some of them are just Doyle writing about his character and the success he's enjoyed. Some are precursors of Holmes tales. There are are a few actual tales, though, two in the form of letters written by Holmes to suggest solutions from afar, two short little scenes that don't have much to do with anything besides astonishing Watson, and a couple more that take the shape of those stories we are more familiar with.

Haining gives his reasoning for including each piece, and I mostly agree with his choices. The only one I wasn't sure really had a place was Sasassa Valley, it was a pleasant read but I couldn't really find the thread that should have connected it to the other pieces in the book.

Still, a fun read and absolutely something to have on your shelf if you love Holmes!

Grace Best-Page says

A must read/have for devoted Sherlockians. I laughed my head off at The Adventure of the Two Collaborators (a small bit in the Doyle essay The Truth About Sherlock Holmes).

Ronald says

read some time in 2001

François Vincent says

A must for Sherlock fans.

Bob says

A recent article in the Wall Street Journal was about Barnes & Noble's in-house publishing imprint. They have been reproducing classic works for years and selling them at affordable prices. But they range father

afield than that, and my Sherlockian bookshelf includes several of their titles, such as *The Sherlock Holmes Companion*, *The Lost Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* and *The Final Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*.

This last book is similar to the out of print and often difficult to find *Sherlock Holmes: The Published Apocrypha* by Jack Tracy (also reviewed on this site). Both books include the “almost Sherlock Holmes” stories and plays that don’t fit in the Canon, but are certainly in the neighborhood.

The introduction discusses the pieces that make up the book and you will find some interesting tidbits (much of which was previously in Tracy’s book).

The book starts off nicely with *The Truth About Sherlock Holmes*, which is an essay by Doyle that appeared in *Colliers* in 1923. Much of this essay would find its way into Doyle’s own autobiography, *Memories and Adventures*. It is a very interesting essay and worth reading by all Sherlockians.

The Mystery of Uncle Jeremy’s Household appeared in *Boy’s Own Journal* in early 1887, after *A Study in Scarlet* was written, but before the first Holmes novel was published. I would suggest reading this story and amusing yourself by listing the Holmesian overtones. You will find more than one!

Next up is *The Field Bazaar*, one of Doyle’s two parodies that he wrote about Holmes. It recounts a breakfast conversation between Holmes and Watson and was written as a fundraiser for the student newspaper at Edinburgh University.

Two tales from 1898 follow. *The Story of the Man With the Watches* and *The Story of the Lost Special* both feature an unnamed detective and are quite Sherlock Holmes-like in their feel. Either of these books could easily have been written as Holmes adventures, or even transformed into *Solar Pons* tales. While not Doyle’s best detective stories, they are better than some of the official tales from the Canon. Since they were published after the detective’s supposed death and before his return, was Doyle just “getting some Holmes” out of his system?

Hesketh Pearson was researching a biography of Doyle when he found the outline of an unwritten Holmes story, and a completed Holmes tale, *The Case of the Man Who Was Wanted* (mentioned below). The outline is included here. It is immediately followed by a completed version of the tale, written by Robert A. Cutter, in 1947. It is titled *The Adventure of the Tall Man*.

I’m quite a fan of William Gillette’s marvelous play, *Sherlock Holmes*. However, his adventure into the parody world, the curtain raiser *The Painful Predicament of Sherlock Holmes*, is not one of my favorites. The novelty of Holmes not uttering a single word is original, but I just don’t find the play very funny.

For *The Case of the Man Who Was Wanted*, I have included the contents of my review of Tracy’s *Apocrypha*:

Pearson also discovered an entire previously unknown Sherlock Holmes tale in 1942. The Doyle estate (always quick to try and make a buck) surprisingly enough resisted pressure to publish it. Finally, in 1948, they accepted an offer from *Cosmopolitan* and it was published.

Then the bad news: Arthur Whitaker said that he had written the tale and sent it to Doyle in 1910, hoping it would become a collaboration. Doyle declined and suggested Whitaker rewrite it as a non-Holmes tale. Finally, Doyle purchased it for 10 pounds. Doyle set it aside, never using it. Whitaker produced the carbon copy of his typescript, as well as Doyle’s own hand-written letter in which the author had offered to buy the script.

The Doyle Estate refunded some of the money they received for selling the story and Whitaker was paid 150 pounds to be quiet about the affair. He died not long after and the matter was dropped by all parties. Cosmopolitan never admitted the story wasn't by Doyle, and the Estate had no comments.

Haining's explanation includes the following quote from Pearson's description of the story. "The opening scene between Holmes and Watson betrays the hand of the master." Haining also mentions a reference to the story made in John Dickson Carr's biography of Sir Arthur. Haining speculates that Doyle himself may have contributed somewhat to the tale and that it was not all Whitaker's work. Regardless, it is an enjoyable Holmes pastiche.

Some Personalia About Sherlock Holmes was written by Doyle and appeared in a 1917 edition of *The Strand*. Doyle discusses receiving letters written to Holmes and ruminates on true life crimes that the author had some involvement in investigating. One such, involving a man who disappeared, I wrote as a story involving Doyle and William Gillette. It was published as *The Case of the Tired Captain* in a collection entitled *Curious Incidents*.

American critic Arthur Guitterman wrote a poem critical of Doyle for having Holmes insult Edgar Allen Poe's C. August Dupin and Emile Gaboriau's Monsieur Lecoq, in *A Study in Scarlet*. It is included here, followed by Doyle's own poem in response. People were taking the Canon far too seriously long before Sherlockians jumped into the act.

Doyle's short Holmes play, *The Crown Diamond*, is next. It is a weak story and quite inferior to his play adaptation of *The Speckled Band*.

How Watson Learned the Trick is a charming parody written by Doyle for inclusion in the miniature library in a dollhouse made for Queen Anne. I find this to be a greatly underappreciated Holmes piece and is one of my favorites. You can find a parody of this parody, *Watson's Christmas Trick*, on my own website, *Sherlock Holmes on Oxford Lane* (see Links)..

On December 15, 1900, *A Gaudy Death: Conan Doyle Tells the True Story of Sherlock Holmes' End* appeared in *Tit-Bits*, a weekly magazine published by the same folks who owned *The Strand*. Holmes was in that unhappy (for the readers) period after his plunge at the Reichenbach Falls and before his temporary revival in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. This is a fine interview in which Doyle discusses how he came up with the idea for Holmes, and why he switched from novels to serial adventures for the detective. He then moves on to explain why he killed off Holmes. "My lower work" (Holmes) "was obscuring my higher" (*The White Company*) "is as good a summary of his feelings as ever he uttered.

It's hard for us to imagine a Canon that ended with *The Memoirs*. A paltry 26 Sherlock Holmes adventures! So imagine the thrill that the discerning reader of this essay experienced at the following sentence from Doyle: "That does not say, however, that because he is dead I should not write about him again if I wanted to." I get a tingle myself!

The Mystery of Sasassa Valley was Doyle's first published story and is a tale with a supernatural tinge.

The volume wraps up with *My Favourite Sherlock Holmes Adventures*, a short piece Doyle wrote for *The Strand* in 1927. It is a listing of Doyle's own dozen favorite Holmes tales. He does not include any from *The Case-Book*, which was about to be published in book form and had not been readily available to most readers. I like to believe that his statement that he would have included *The Lion's Mane* and *The Illustrious Client* on the list if they were eligible was a selling job. I can't place those two anywhere near the top twelve.

In case you haven't seen the list, The Speckled Band was at number one.

Peter Haining's book is an outstanding collection that any Holmes fan should enjoy. If you already have Tracy's Apocrypha, or vice versa, you will find they complement each other and you shouldn't ignore one because you own the other.

Fraser Sherman says

Haining collects a dozen or so Holmes-related pieces, the best being two Doyle short stories, "The Man With the Watches" and "The Lost Special," in which an unnamed famous investigator offers theories that turn out to be dead wrong. There are also Doyle parodies of his sleuth (pretty funny), Doyle's writings about Sherlock, an unused Holmes outline (wise call by Doyle not to finish it, it's pretty feeble) and a couple of stories Haining holds up (unconvincingly) as precursors to the Canon. Worth reading if you're a fan.

Bill says

Satisfying.

Holger Haase says

Hey, I'd read anything by Arthur Conan Doyle or about Sherlock Holmes that I can put my hands on but claiming that these 12 pieces ought to be added to the Holmesian canon (as Peter Haining did) is straining credibility too much as those stories are either not featuring Holmes, are not written by Doyle or aren't all that good in the first place.

A book for the completist but not for anyone just vaguely interested in the great detective.

Cathy DuPont says

Maybe later...I have draft...maybe later.

C.O. Bonham says

The book for those who just can't get enough Holmes.

This collection doesn't really contain any new Sherlock Holmes stories but is rather made up of little Holmes related articles that Doyle wrote.

One on how he came to create Holmes and one on why he needed to kill him. There was an article where

Doyle some of his real life adventures in crime solving as well as two short plays that he wrote featuring Holmes. The real gems though are two short mystery stories Not featuring Holmes but might very well be meant to insult the Great detective. There are two incomplete Holmes stories which are not very good and two short stories that predate Holmes but contain elements used in Later Holmes stories that may interest Sherlock enthusiasts.

Dane says

More Sherlockiana than stories featuring him, but if you're having a hard time saying goodbye to the real Conan Doyle deal, then that's not a problem. I'm a completist, so it's not a problem.
