

Sotheby's offered "The library of Dr. Rodney P. Swantko" at auction in New York on June 26 <www.tinyurl.com/bdexvft5>, and the catalog is well worth browsing, to see the sort of interesting rarities he pursued and added to his collection. He also was a generous donor to libraries such as the Lilly Library at Indiana University, the Newberry Library in Chicago, and the Chicago History Museum, but he appears to have kept all of his Sherlockiana in his own collection.

Lots 9 through 13 in the auction were of particular interest to Sherlockians and Doyleans, beginning with the manuscript of *The Sign of the Four*, and their detailed description of the manuscript certainly is well worth reading <www.tinyurl.com/5dhz4d2h>. Estimated at \$800,000-\$1,200,000, the manuscript sold for \$960,000 (including the buyer's premium), making it the most valuable Sherlockian item ever sold at auction. There's more information about the manuscript to be found at Randall Stock's "The Best of Sherlock Holmes" web-site <www.tinyurl.com/466ccmhw>.

The auction continued with Sidney Paget's spectacular original artwork for "The Death of Sherlock Holmes" <www.tinyurl.com/2dche4ep>, with an estimate of \$250,000-\$350,000, it sold for \$384,000. Randall Stock has more information about the artwork at <www.tinyurl.com/yc4keu93>.

The next item was a copy of the first British edition of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* <www.tinyurl.com/22pjuuxr>. Estimated at \$6,000-\$8,000, it sold for \$7,200.

Then came an inscribed copy of Vincent Starrett's *The Unique Hamlet*, one of the only ten copies of his iconic pastiche that were stated as printed for the friends of Vincent Starrett <www.tinyurl.com/537763j9>; the estimate was \$30,000-\$40,000, and bidding didn't reach the reserve. Randall Stock's page about the pastiche is at <www.tinyurl.com/y2c2b6ve>.

And last, but certainly not least, was a copy of the large-paper edition of Starrett's *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*, inscribed to his friend Lloyd Springer <www.tinyurl.com/57ed8n53>. There were only three copies of the large-paper edition; they were specially bound for the author, and this is the only copy known to have survived. Estimated at \$1,500-\$2,000, it sold for \$1,320. Randall Stock has more information about the book at <www.tinyurl.com/5b7c7rub>.

One can get a sense that Swantko's interests included more than books: the 47 items in the auction included 8 volumes about golf.

You can also see a Canonical manuscript in Washington (a fine excuse for a visit to the nation's capital): the Folger Shakespeare Library reopened on June 21, and there's a temporary exhibition of literary treasures from the Stuart and Mimi Rose Collection on display, one of them the manuscript of "The Valley of Fear" <www.tinyurl.com/5a5mdhv9>. The exhibition will end on Jan. 5. The game's also afoot in their 82 copies of First Folios (with the quote in "Henry IV Part 1" and "Henry V").

Jun 24 #2 The spring issue of *The Magic Door* (published by the Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at the Toronto Public Library) has Cliff Goldfarb's warm tribute to the "Bigelow Index" card file (which now has about 53,000 cards, and was thoroughly useful when a cyber-attack last October shut down the on-line catalog for all 100 branches of the Library for three months); Jessie Amaolo's report on the collection's acquisition of the one important edition of the Canon that Cameron Hollyer noted in 1986 that they did not have: the first book edition of *A Study in Scarlet*, illustrated by Conan Doyle's father; and much more. You can ask for a copy of the newsletter from Cliff at the Toronto Public Library, 789 Yonge Street, Toronto, ON M4W 2G8, Canada <cgoldfarb@sympatico.ca>.

Roger Corman died on May 9. He had a long Hollywood career as a director and producer, and became famous (or infamous) for making low-budget films. He also helped launch the careers of Jack Nicholson, Francis Ford Coppola, Robert De Niro, and others, and in 2009 was awarded an honorary Oscar for lifetime achievement. *Sherlock Holmes: The Detective Magazine* (edited by David Stuart Davies) reported in 1999 on a rumor that Corman was planning to film "The Hound of the Baskervilles" (he never did, but one can be sure it would have been interesting).

Howard Ostrom has reported that 6,000 people follow his "Sherlock Holmes on Screens" group at Facebook (which covers stage, screen, radio, television, and the Internet) <www.facebook.com/groups/sherlockholmesonscreens>; it's a lively group indeed.

Greg Darak reports that Howlin' Wolf Records offers a CD with the score of "Murder by Decree" (the grand 1979 film that starred Christopher Plummer and James Mason <www.howlinwolfrecords.com/storemurderbydecree.html> for \$18.95; the CD also has some music not used in the film, and the web-site has a link to a 12-minute audio documentary about the score.

Howlin' Wolf also still offers an "In the Name of Sherlock Holmes" CD with Róbert Gulya's score from the 2011 Hungarian film "Sherlock Holmes Néveben" for \$13.95 <www.howlinwolfrecords.com/storeitnosh.html>.

Karen Ellery, who presides over the Tea Brokers of Mincing Lane (a society for Sherlockian lover of tea and tisanes), reports the society's official T-shirt <www.zazzle.com/tea_at_once_t_shirt-256003383475187607>, available for \$22.95 with imaginative artwork by Sidney Paget. The reason why the artwork's imaginative is that Paget never showed Sherlock Holmes drinking tea: the original of his illustration of Holmes with cigar and cigar case (from "The Resident Patient") has been carefully altered to show him with a tea cup and saucer.

Christie & Co. have announced that the Brambletye Hotel in Forest Row (in Sussex) is for sale <www.tinyurl.com/5yn4rfer>. Holmes and Watson stayed at the Brambletye, presumably in one of its 19 rooms, and there's an aptly-named Two Two One Restaurant (alas: Black Peter's Bar & Restaurant now seems to be closed). The hotel also has a Moriarty Boardroom, a Sherlock Holmes Suite, and a Dr. Watson Lounge, all available for £1.5 million.

Jun 24 #3 Conan Doyle's *The Refugees* made news world-wide, thanks to an Agence France-Presse report published in the Guardian on May 29 <www.tinyurl.com/jv6sbxwr> that a copy of a Finnish translation of the book checked out 84 years ago had been returned to the Central Library in Helsinki; the due date of the loan was just a month after the Soviet Union invaded Finland in 1939, and "the return of the book might not have been the first thing on the borrower's mind," librarian Heini Strand suggested.

Editor Carla Kaessinger Coupe has assembled a nice assortment of Sherlockian homages in the latest issue (#33) of the Sherlock Holmes Mystery Magazine, which also has Kim Newman's detailed discussion of the BBC's 1960s Sherlock Holmes television series; the cost is \$13.00 (or \$39.99 for four issues) from the Wildside Press <www.wildsidepress.com>, and the magazine also is available as eBooks (single issues or subscriptions).

Jennie Paton has reported an interesting interview with Sherlockian playwright Jeffrey Hatcher at <www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYd6p59ibs0>.

Maggie Schpak ("The Soup Plate Medal") died on June 23. She was an artistic genius, designing and crafting jewelry and props for movies and television series, as well as medals and awards for members of the Baker Street Irregulars, and spectacular raffle prizes for the Dr. John H. Watson Fund. Her interview for the UCLA oral history library is on-line at <www.tinyurl.com/s4snm2u6>. Maggie received her Investiture from the BSI in 2007.

I've long described this newsletter as "six or more pages a month of whatever gossip I find appropriate, much of it quite trivial, but most of it Sherlockian or Doylean." There was an amusing discussion of gossip (and gossips) by Jonathan Self in a post to the Country Life web-site on June 11 <www.tinyurl.com/48ae69vs>.

This year's "Summer of Sherlock" celebration in Portsmouth, honoring the city's Conan Doyle Collection (which includes the collection of the late Richard Lancelyn Green) <www.tinyurl.com/2s3jret5>, offers (free) on-line presentations by Prof. Christine Ferguson, Paul Chapman, Ross Davies, Mark Jones, Mattis Boström, and Douglas Kerr (July 2-15). You can register for the Zoom lectures at the web-site soon.

Scott Monty and Burt Wolder's "I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere" podcast is now 17 years old, and well deserves their boast that it's the oldest Sherlock Holmes podcast. You can listen to them celebrate the anniversary at <www.tinyurl.com/3ptez74z>. One of the nicest things about the podcast is their archive of all the previous episodes.

The June 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." This issue offers the winning entries in this year's Joel R. Senter essay contest, and it's impressive indeed to see how well youngsters can do.

Jun 24 #4 Karen Murdock notes something for completists who have Charles Wysocki's "The Hound of the Baskervilles" artwork as a print, plate, calendar, or jigsaw puzzle (Sep 10 #7 and Dec 14 #4): a different version of the artwork in his *Americana Adult Coloring Book* (Dayton: Mead, 2016); the artwork's Sherlockian only for the title, and the coloring book is safe for all ages.

"Murder by the Book" (promoted as "a criminally good exhibition!") is now on display at the Cambridge University Library, through Aug. 24, with an interesting web-site <www.cam.ac.uk/stories/murder-by-the-book> that shows many of books and other items on display. The exhibition includes a copy of the first edition of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, and much much more, in their "celebration of 20th-century British crime fiction."

The Independent reported on June 18 <www.tinyurl.com/mte6mche> that Enola Holmes will be on display at Madame Tussauds in London when a new film and TV-themed zone opens to the public on July 19, and there's video of Millie Bobby Brown at the unofficial unveiling of the wax figure.

Peter McIntyre and Kate Karlson were at Monmouth Park (in New Jersey) on June 15 to watch Sherlock's Jewel run and (unfortunately) finish dead last <www.tinyurl.com/mtpjwpez>. But the horse has a good record overall, having finished in the money in half the races in which he's run; here's his lifetime record <www.tinyurl.com/7up5xh3w>.

If you enjoyed vol. 1 of Tripwire's graphic novel *Sherlock Holmes and the Empire Builders: The Gene Genie* (Mar 24 #5), the company is offering two different signed covers for the issue <www.tinyurl.com/5956svef> (and lots of other artwork as well).

The latest news from Laurie R. King <www.tinyurl.com/49btsr3r> is that the title of her upcoming book about Mary Russell and her Uncle Jake will be *Diamond Deceiver*. There's also a tribute to her first agent, Linda Allen who died last month, and a free download of "The Marriage of Billie Birdsong" (an extract from the Russell/Martinelli cross-over *The Art of Detection*) available until July 15.

"Baker Street Irregulars Is Still Going Strong 36 Years After Tom Cruise Learned to Sling Bottles for 'Cocktail' at Famous New York Bar" (according to a story at the Morning Honey web-site) <www.tinyurl.com/3cpunty6> (June 10). That's the bar and grill on the Upper West Side, which also charms guests with poker and bingo nights, and occasional magicians.

Michael W. Homer will lecture on "The Adventures of Arthur Conan Doyle and His Spirit Guide Pheneas" on-line on Oct. 6, using previously unpublished material to explore the seances in which Pheneas appeared to Conan Doyle's home circle. Mike has written about Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes for the Baker Street Irregulars Press and many scholarly journals, and there's more information about the event at <www.tinyurl.com/3wkanf9d>. The lecture is sponsored by the Last Tuesday Society, which is headquartered at the Viktor Wynd Museum of Curiosities, Fine Art, & Natural History in London <www.thelasttuesdaysociety.org/museum>.

Jun 24 #5 There's a fine Wikipedia entry for Sir Henry Thompson, but it doesn't mention The Octaves. "Sir Henry Thompson was holding that evening one of those charming 'octave' dinners at which it was my occasional privilege to attend," Conan Doyle wrote, in 1906, in his article "An Incursion into Diplomacy". Eight people at 8:00 for eight courses was the rule for the dinners, and you can read more about Sir Henry in a post at the Inside Croydon" web-site (on June 10) <www.tinyurl.com/55edphuf>. Conan Doyle's article is available (thanks to Alexis Barquin) at the Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia web-site <www.tinyurl.com/2zd5en6y>.

The Frederic Dorr Steele Memorial's seminar on "Murder, Mayhem, and Masterpieces: The Art of Illustrating Mysteries", at the Salmagundi Club in New York (May 24 #1), has been rescheduled to Sept. 13 (4:00 to 6:30 pm). It will feature CrimeReads editor Olivia Rutigliano (on the evolution of British detective fiction, and the role of illustration) and illustrator and graphic designer Jeff Wong (on how his career collides with his passion as a book collector); more information is available from Burt Wolder <burt@fdsteele.org>.

Donald Sutherland died on June 20. He began his acting career on television in 1962, appeared in his first film in 1963, and starred as Hawkeye Pierce in "M*A*S*H" in 1970. He appeared as the spiritualist Robert Lees in "Murder by Decree" (1979), and was cast as Moriarty in a never-produced film "Limehouse", based on the John Gardner novel *The Return of Moriarty* (scheduled for production in Apr. 1976); there's a first-draft screenplay by Erik Lee Preminger in someone's collection.

This Work of Storytelling, edited by Cathy and Glen Miranker (San Francisco: Quartering Press, 2024; 63 pp., \$60.00), is as close as we'll ever get to Conan Doyle's speech to the Author's Club in London on June 29, 1896. There's a full-color facsimile of the eight-page manuscript, with a transcription and knowledgeable essays by experts. There's only passing mention of Sherlock Holmes (who in 1896 was thoroughly deceased), but it's a grand opportunity to learn more about Conan Doyle. It is available from the Wessex Press <www.wessexpress.com/html/Miranker2.html>, and (signed by the editors) from the Mysterious Bookshop <www.tinyurl.com/29njz3h2> (for \$75.00).

Sherlock Is a Girl's Name, edited by Narrelle M. Harris and Atlin Merrick (Bittern: Clan Destine, 2024; 193 pp., \$21.99), is an anthology of stories inspired by the Canon, all of them presenting Sherlock Holmes as a woman, in genres that include imaginative fantasy, alternate universes, science fiction, and other genres. Harris also edited the anthology *The Only One in the World* (Oct 21 #4).

She also has written a novel, *The She-Wolf of Baker Street* (2024; 290 pp., \$22.99). It's set modern times, and the she-wolf is Mrs. Hudson, who is a werewolf; Holmes and Watson are on hand, along with many other characters from the Canon, some human and some not, some heroes and some not, and the story's told with verve and drama and humor. The author has a web-site at <www.tinyurl.com/47j86e7f>, and Clan Destine has an interesting (and colorful) web-site at <www.clandestinepress.net>.

Jun 24 #6 Powell's Books in Portland, Ore., is one of a very few survivors in a vanishing world of old-time massive bookshops, and it's still a destination for collectors: the line of customers grew until it was nearly two miles long, at a recent warehouse sale at Powell's, according to a story at OPB's web-site (June 3) <www.tinyurl.com/55fc2atk>, kindly forwarded by Bill Seil.

Jennie Paton reports the Sherlock Patisserie in Zamalek in Cairo (Egypt) <www.facebook.com/p/Sherlock-patisserie-61552743720496>.

Sherlock Holmes: The Exhibition (the new name for the International Exhibition of Sherlock Holmes) is now at the Farmington Museum in Farmington, N.M. <www.farmingtonnm.org> through Sept. 28. The exhibition debuted in Portland, Ore., in 2013, and has toured widely since then. It's truly impressive, Doylean as well as Sherlockian, as you can see at the EDG web-site <www.tinyurl.com/yytm7m9s>.

Chloe Robyn Smith has an unusual hobby: creating closed fore-edge artwork on her books. One of them is a collection of the Sherlock Holmes stories, and you can see her at work at <www.youtube.com/watch?v=nL3XQKh24N0>. Her YouTube channel's at <www.youtube.com/channel/UCrUHTnF6deuWhumeQcleZow>.

H. A. Saintsbury appeared as Holmes in the Gillette play, with Kenneth Rivington as Watson and Charlie Chaplin as Billy, touring in Britain in 1903, and a program from the Grand Theatre in Wolverhampton (Sept. 14, for six nights only) was offered at Bonhams in London on June 20 with an estimate of £600-£800 <www.tinyurl.com/pmmbmphd>; it sold for £2,560 (including the buyer's premium).

Theatrical news: "The Hound of the Baskervilles" (by Steven Canny and John Nicholson) is running at the Chester Little Theatre in Chester, Cheshire, through July 6 <www.chesterlittletheatre.co.uk>.

Ken Ludwig's "Baskerville" is due at the Okoboji Summer Theatre in Okoboji, Iowa, July 2-7 <www.okobojisummertheatre.org>; the French Creek Theatre in Sheffield Village, Ohio, on Sept. 13-22 <www.tinyurl.com/23eb8txf>; and at the Wayne Theatre in Waynesboro, Va., Oct. 25 <www.waynetheatre.org>.

Fractal will perform "The Sherlock Files" (an improvised mystery) at the Interchange Theater in Milwaukee, Wis., July 26; the theater's web-site is at <www.interchangetheater.com>.

Oliver Gray's "The Hound of the Baskervilles" will tour in Britain, July 27-Sept. 15 <www.illyria.co.uk>.

Kate Hamill's "Ms. Holmes & Ms. Watson--Apt. 2B" is scheduled at the Caine Lyric Theatre in Logan, Utah, Oct. 4-12 <www.cca.usu.edu/theatre>.

Todd Wallinger's "The Enchanted Bookshop" is due at the New Castle Playhouse in New Castle, Pa., Aug. 9-18 <www.newcastleplayhouse.org>.

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