

**NAXOS**  
AudioBooks

**CLASSIC  
FICTION**

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle  
**The Casebook of  
Sherlock Holmes 1**

Read by **David Timson**

**THE  
COMPLETE  
CLASSICS**

**UNABRIDGED**



NA446512D

---

<b>1</b>	<b>The Problem of Thor Bridge</b>	5:59
2	The letter which he handed me...	7:04
3	'Well! Well!' said Holmes...	6:02
4	Our visitor made a noisy exit...	6:47
5	'It is only for the young lady's sake...'	5:18
6	There was some delay in the official pass...	6:01
7	Suddenly he sprang up again....	6:08
8	We were compelled to spend the night at Winchester...	4:52
9	'I went down as I had promised...'	4:45
10	It was not a long journey from Winchester to Thor Place...	5:35
11	Late that evening, as we sat together...	3:20
<b>12</b>	<b>The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone</b>	6:46
13	Watson's honest face was twitching with anxiety.	5:14
14	It was therefore an empty room...	6:25
15	The Count looked sharply at his companion.	4:29
16	Billy had appeared in answer to a ring.	3:34
17	Holmes withdrew, picking up his violin from the corner...	7:04
18	The Count gave a gesture of resignation.	7:22

---

<b>19</b>	<b>The Adventure of the Creeping Man</b>	6:12
20	There was a quick step on the stairs...	6:11
21	Mr Bennett drew a little diary book from his pocket...	4:57
22	What Sherlock Holmes was about to suggest...	5:18
23	Monday morning found us on our way...	6:30
24	Mr. Bennett pushed his way through some shrubs...	6:37
5	I saw nothing of my friend for the next few days...	6:45
26	And then in a moment it happened!	7:05
<b>27</b>	<b>The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire</b>	5:36
28	He handed the letter across.	6:08
29	Promptly at ten o'clock next morning...	7:48
30	It was evening of a dull foggy November day...	5:05
31	On the bed a woman was lying...	6:01
32	He took her aside and spoke earnestly for a few minutes.	4:20
33	'Let me tell you then the train of reasoning...'	5:06

---

<b>34</b>	<b>The Adventure of the Three Garridebs</b>	6:13
35	Our visitor's angry face gradually cleared.	7:23
36	It was twilight of a lovely spring evening...	5:41
37	'I merely called to make your acquaintance...'	4:48
38	I noticed that my friend's face cleared...	3:31
39	Holmes was up and out early...	5:51
40	That hour was not long in striking.	7:11
<b>41</b>	<b>The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier</b>	7:15
42	Mr. James M. Dodd appeared to be the sort of person...	5:31
43	'It was a large, bare room on the ground floor...'	5:50
44	'Next day I found the colonel rather more conciliatory...'	3:53
45	'I was hesitating as to what I should do...'	4:34
46	As we drove to Euston...	6:06
47	At the end of that time we passed down the garden path...	7:11
48	Colonel Emsworth pointed to me.	7:42

**Total time: 4:41:32**

---

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

# The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes

To think of Sherlock Holmes, conjures up an image of a gas-lit room, filled with tobacco smoke from the sleuth's pipe, and the gentle clip-clop of a Hansom Cab passing outside beneath the grimy fog-ridden window of No. 221b Baker Street. A time caught in aspic, a sepia tinted image from the end of the nineteenth century.

It seems amazing therefore that a new series of Sherlock Holmes stories should have appeared as late as the 1920s. But despite the 1920s being the age of jazz and the flapper, where such items as telephones, electric light, electric bells, motor cars, and gramophones were becoming commonplace, the Holmes phenomenon showed no signs of diminishing. The stories, despite being set for the most part in the early 1900s, were still as eagerly read as ever. Indeed, modern technology was encouraging Holmes's popularity. 'By 1921 the

developing silent film industry already had 15 Sherlock Holmes adaptations on its shelves, including a full-length *Hound of the Baskervilles*. Between 1921 and 1927 Conan Doyle once again returned to his great creation for 12 more stories which were first published in *The Strand*, and then published collectively as *The Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes* in 1927.

In these stories, Conan Doyle seems to be struggling to find a new narrative style. Nine are related by Watson as the reader would expect, but one is narrated in the third person, and two by Holmes himself. Watson is at pains in the opening narrative to *Thor Bridge* to explain the change: 'In some [cases] I was myself concerned and can speak as an eye-witness, while in others I was either not present or played so small a part that they could only be told as by a third person.'

The experiment of allowing Holmes to write up his own cases was not met with

---

unmitigated delight by the reading public. Watson had his own admirers. *The Times* reviewer wrote: 'Why is Holmes the only proloner of his own life, the only survivor of his own biographer, the only personage privileged to be his creator's never-failing resource?'

Conan Doyle's struggle to ring the changes on what had become for him a tired formula reflected his personal literary journey: he was reluctant to write fiction at all by the 1920s in view of his commitment to spiritualism. He poured money into the furtherance of the spiritualist cause, which may well account for the appearance of these last twelve Sherlock Holmes stories. By the 1920s he was being paid £800 per story for the British rights alone, a dozen pot-boilers hurriedly dashed off would result in considerably increased funds.

Indeed, some devoted followers have suggested that these stories are not by Conan Doyle at all, but mere pastiche by lesser hands, and certainly there is an inconsistency in the characterisation of Holmes, or had Conan Doyle reached the point with his creation of deliberately writing to shock his reading public? Perhaps he had realized that Holmes was immortal and however he chose to

represent him the public would lap it up anyway.

## THE PROBLEM OF THOR BRIDGE

Conan Doyle knew this collection of stories would be the last, but he could not help dangling a carrot before his faithful readers and tantalising them with the contents of Watson's tin-box as described at the start of *Thor Bridge*.

Likewise, could Sherlock Holmes's public ever have had a surfeit of stories about their favourite detective as Watson feared in his opening narrative to this tale? 'A surfeit which might react upon the reputation of the man whom above all others I revere.' Watson wrote, and misjudged his readers. Conan Doyle no doubt chuckled as he mercilessly teased his public.

Cox and Co.'s Bank was destroyed by an air raid in World War 2. It is hoped that Watson's box was not among the casualties. If it was, it may account for the non-appearance of any more Watson cases, and the modern proliferation of those based on the titles he has left us.

This ingenious case may well be based on the writings of Hans Gross, a professor

---

of criminology who published a book on criminal investigation in the 1890s. he was one of the founders of modern police science.

## THE ADVENTURE OF THE MAZARIN STONE

Things certainly seem to have changed at Baker Street since Watson moved out to pursue his medical practice. A bow window seems to have been installed, of which no mention is made in any other story. Connecting doors between bedrooms have been constructed too, and Holmes, displaying an uncharacteristic aptitude to move with the times, now has an electric bell and a gramophone, still a luxury item in the year in which this story is set, 1902. The 'gramophone' was not a player of cylinders, but flat discs and was invented by Emil Berliner in 1887. It was Berliner who first used the logo of the dog listening to a gramophone, popularly known as 'His Master's Voice.' As there is no recording listed of a solo violin version of the Barcarolle from *The Tales of Hoffman*, perhaps Holmes paid for a private recording of the piece as rendered by himself, indicative, along with the employment of the page Billy, of the

success Holmes has made of the detective business.

The changes to the familiar Baker Street room may well be as a result of the stage-set designed and constructed for Conan Doyle's play *The Crown Diamond*; or an evening with *Sherlock Holmes*, which had had a modest success when produced in 1921. This story seems to have been based on the play. The fact that the whole case takes place in one setting (unique in the canon) supports this. It may also account for the very theatrical way in which Holmes behaves and speaks in this story. Never has Holmes been more manic or 'impish' than in the *Mazarin Stone*, and one feels that he might even have resorted once more to the 7% solution!

The diamond of the title is associated with the great French Cardinal Jules Mazarin (1602-1661) who was chief minister to the young Louis XIV. He exercised enormous political power and at his death bequeathed his jewels to the French Crown, including 18 diamonds, known as the 'Mazarin Diamonds'. Apparently none of them were apparently yellow as the one identified here!

Despite its idiosyncrasies, Lloyd George, the Liberal Prime Minister, considered *The Mazarin Stone* 'one of the

---

best Sherlock Holmes stories I have read.’

## THE ADVENTURE OF THE CREEPING MAN

The use of monkey-glands as related in this story to recapture lost youth may seem extreme, and a very 19th century idea, but it also reminds us of the placebos, ointments and moistures advertised daily in the 21st century with similar claims to hold back the ageing process. Nevertheless, the perverted science of this story places it firmly in the era of *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, with a tribute to Conan Doyle's great mentor Edgar Allan Poe's tale *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*.

Holmes seems by 1902, the year of this case, to have reconsidered his attitude towards dogs. Having poisoned one as an experiment in *A Study in Scarlet*; shot one in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and also in *The Adventure of the Copper Beeches* he here says that they are ‘the mirror of the household’ and plans to write a monogram on the subject.

Once again we are in an unidentified University town called Camford, just as it was in *The Missing Three-Quarter* a poorly veiled attempt by Watson to amalgamate features of both Oxford and Cambridge,

and thus not offend presumably either institution or cast aspersions on dons at Holmes's old college, whichever one that was! For what it is worth Holmes does call ‘Camford’ – ‘this charming town’, whereas in *The Adventure of the Missing Three-Quarter*, which is definitely set in Cambridge, he refers to it as ‘this inhospitable town’, which might indicate that ‘Camford’ is really Oxford and that is Holmes's *alma mater*.

## THE ADVENTURE OF THE SUSSEX VAMPIRE

Vampires were a source of endless fascination for the Victorians. The first fictional account was in *The Vampyre* (1816) by John Polidori, based on an idea of Byron's.

In 1872, Sheridan Le Fanu had written *Carmilla* about a female vampire, but Bram Stoker's epic *Dracula* was not published until a year after this case, and would have been unknown to Holmes. Conan Doyle would have known it however, writing in the 1920s and may have even seen the celebrated silent film *Nosferatu* loosely based on *Dracula* which was first shown in 1922.

Despite his own unshakeable belief in

---

spiritualism, Doyle could not finally 'grasp the nettle' and convert Holmes, the great rationalist, to the cause. In fact he goes out of his way to make Holmes in this story dismissive of anything that smatters of the occult. 'This agency stands flat-footed upon the ground, and there it must remain,' says Holmes. 'This world is big enough for us. No ghosts need apply...'

But though Conan Doyle eschewed converting Holmes, he had no such qualms in converting his other popular literary creation, the sceptical Professor Challenger to an absolute believer in the psychic novel *The Land of Mist* in 1926. If it had had Holmes at its centre it would have guaranteed its success. As a result of Conan Doyle's reticence to cheapen his greatest creation, the novel failed.

The unhealthy father/son relationship at the centre of this story is worthy to be referred as a test-case for Dr. Sigmund Freud, whose psychological examinations were contemporary with this story, c.1896. Would Freud have prescribed Holmes's very practical solution to Jacky's problems – 'a year at sea' – one wonders?

## THE ADVENTURE OF THE THREE GARRIDEBS

Watson roots this story very specifically in June 1902, when Sherlock Holmes was offered a knighthood for services rendered. Why did Holmes refuse it? Ever since *A Scandal in Bohemia*, when he was given a 'snuff-box of old gold, with a great amethyst in the centre of the lid' by the King of Bohemia, Holmes had been the recipient of gifts from grateful clients in high places. From France, we learn in *The Adventure of the Golden Pince-nez* he had received the Order of the Legion of Honour – so why not an accolade from his own country? Alongside these tributes, there runs a counter current of anti-establishment attitudes on the part of Holmes. It was his obvious dislike of the Duke of Holderness's attitude towards him that led Holmes to sting him for an enormous £6,000 fee – the largest recorded by Watson. Did Holmes have socialist or radical tendencies? Or was it that he was such an independent spirit he could not be beholden to anyone – least of all the government of the day? It might have been bad for business – Sir Sherlock Holmes on the brass plate outside the door of 221b Baker Street may well have

---

deterred his less well-off clients from approaching him – and as the stories testify, that door was open to all walks of life. ‘I play the game for the game’s own sake,’ he told his brother Mycroft in *The Adventure of the Bruce-Partington Plans*, when an honour seemed a probability for his services. Instead, Holmes preferred to receive ‘a remarkably fine emerald tie-pin’ from his grateful monarch, rather than a tap on the shoulder.

Conan Doyle too was at first reluctant when offered a knighthood by the new king, Edward VII, in the same year as Holmes’s invitation. Conan Doyle was convinced that it would compromise his position, as he saw it, as a free-lance guardian of the State. The knighthood was not in recognition of his creating Sherlock Holmes as the general public mostly believed, but for his expert analysis in print of the Boer War. In a pamphlet he had answered tricky questions convincingly, concerning the British use of concentration camps.

The American geography connected to the background of Killer Evans is pure fiction on Conan Doyle’s part, as elsewhere in the canon. Fort Dodge, for instance, is not in Kansas but Iowa.

The telephone, that essential

component of modern society, features strongly in this story. Although invented as long ago as 1876, Holmes seems only to have acquired one at Baker Street with some reluctance. The police had relied on telephones since 1889, but Holmes always preferred to send telegrams. As late as 1895, in the *The Adventure of the Bruce-Partington Plans* he was still sending them. Maybe Doyle writing these stories in the 1920s, when telephones were becoming common household objects, decided it was time to bring Holmes’s methods of communication up-to-date. He featured it again in *The Adventure of the Retired Colourman* and *The Adventure of the Illustrious Client*

The most moving part of this story, indeed one of the most touching moments in the whole canon, is Holmes’s expression of his deep feelings for his old friend Watson when he is wounded by Killer Evans. His anger and threat to kill his attacker is a completely believable reaction, despite reservations by some that it is not in Holmes’s temperament to go so far in breaking the law. There are many other occasions in the stories when he is prepared to bend the law, if not actually break it. One wonders, however, with Nathan Garrideb, Holmes’s client,

---

suffering terminally from the shock of the experience, if Holmes ever received a fee for the case?

In the original story as published in *The Strand*, Killer Evans's accomplice is named as Presbury. Conan Doyle could be careless in his use of names: this is also the name of the Professor who features in *The Adventure of the Creeping Man*, a story also included in this collection. Conan Doyle corrected this repetition when the stories were published in book-form, changing 'Presbury' to 'Prescott'. Although the texts for these recordings are based on the original *Strand* texts, it seemed unnecessarily pedantic not to follow Conan Doyle's correction.

## **THE ADVENTURE OF THE BLANCHED SOLDIER**

The soldier of the title, Godfrey Emsworth, is a casualty of the South African War, better known as the Boer War (1899–1902). This was a struggle between the Boers, who were Dutch settlers, and the British for dominion over the riches of the South African gold and diamond mines. The Boers led by their President Paul Kruger were not prepared to be pushed

around by the British and demanded that British settlers should leave South Africa all together. Kruger presented an ultimatum in October 1899, which the British government defied. War was thus declared. The British with considerably larger numbers in their forces expected a short and decisive conflict, but their tactics were old-fashioned and unsuited to the rugged terrain of the Transvaal. The Boers, by contrast, knew their country and fought a guerrilla war, weakening the larger British force by surprise attacks. The British army found itself, as so often, in a conflict that was considerably more dangerous and protracted, than it had bargained for. Lord Roberts, briefly referred to in this case, took over as commander-in-chief from Redvers Buller and turned an imminent British defeat into a victory.

Conan Doyle was eager to become actively involved in the war. Bluntly turned down as an able-bodied soldier, he found an opportunity to be near the action as an army doctor working in a privately-funded hospital unit being sent to the front. He arrived as the British took Bloemfontein. His hospital unit was overwhelmed with wounded, and those sick of disease, predominantly typhoid, who formed the

---

majority. Typhoid is not leprosy, but the experience of seeing men debilitated and demoralized by disease may have been recalled when he was working on *The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier*. Doyle was determined to write a book about the war. On his return, the book duly appeared as an 'interim history' as the war was still in progress.

Watson, we are told begrudgingly by Holmes, has married again. We know that Mary Morstan whom Watson had met and married during the case of *The Sign of Four* had died some time between 1891 and 1894, for in *The Adventure of the Empty House* Watson mentions his 'sad bereavement.' But who is this mysterious new wife? Speculation is rife among Sherlockian scholars. There are many candidates in the stories themselves, for Watson was ever susceptible to a pretty face, a 'noble figure' or a queenly presence!

The absence of Watson from this story has prompted Holmes, for the first time, to write his own version of the account. As he freely confesses himself, he is no Watson when it comes to literary talent. An academic monograph on Cigars, or Lassus's motets, is child's play for him compared to constructing a convincing

narrative. For instance, Holmes confuses the Duke of Greyminster with the Duke of Holderness at one point, who had featured in the case of *The Adventure of the Priory School* not the 'Abbey School'. This error could charitably be put down to his not keeping notes of his cases; that had always been Watson's job. But why, once persuaded to take up his pen, did he choose a case that shows so little of his deductive powers, when the world was longing for, whether ready or not, his account of the Great Rat of Sumatra!

### Notes by David Timson



**David Timson** has made over 1,000 broadcasts for BBC Radio Drama. For Naxos AudioBooks he wrote *The History of the Theatre*, which won an award for most original production from the Spoken Word Publishers Association in 2001. He has also directed for Naxos AudioBooks four Shakespeare plays, including *King Richard III* (with Kenneth Branagh), which won Best Drama Award from the SWPA in 2001. In 2002 he won the Audio of the Year Award for his reading of *A Study in Scarlet*. He also reads *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes I, II, III, IV, V and VI* and *The Return of Sherlock Holmes I, II and III*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *The Sign of Four* and *The Valley of Fear*.

---

**The music on this recording is taken from the  
NAXOS and MARCO POLO catalogues**

- SAINT-SAENS** SONATA NO. 2 IN F MAJOR FOR CELLO & PIANO OP. 123  
Scherzo con variazioni: Allegro animato 8.557880  
Maria Kliegel, cello / François-Joël Thiollier, piano
- SAINT-SAENS** SONATA NO. 1 IN C MINOR FOR CELLO & PIANO OP. 32  
Allegro moderato 8.557880  
Maria Kliegel, cello / François-Joël Thiollier, piano
- SAINT-SAENS** SUITE FOR CELLO & PIANO OP. 16 Scherzo: Allegro grazioso 8.557880  
Maria Kliegel, cello / François-Joël Thiollier, piano
- SAINT-SAENS** SUITE FOR CELLO & PIANO OP. 16 Prélude: Moderato assai 8.557880  
Maria Kliegel, cello / François-Joël Thiollier, piano
- GRIEG** SONATA NO. 3 IN C MINOR OP. 45 FOR VIOLIN & PIANO  
Allegro molto ed appassionato 8.553904  
Henning Kraggerud, violin / Helge Kjekshus, piano
- GRIEG** SONATA NO. 3 IN C MINOR OP. 45 FOR VIOLIN & PIANO  
Allegro animato 8.553904  
Henning Kraggerud, violin / Helge Kjekshus, piano
- BORODIN** SONATA IN B MINOR FOR CELLO & PIANO Allegro 8.223172  
Ottó Kertész Jr., cello / Ilona Prunyi, piano

**Music programmed by Sarah Butcher**

Cover picture by Hemesh Alles

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

# The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes 1

Read by **David Timson**

The six cases here are among the last that Sherlock Holmes undertook before he retired to the Sussex downs to keep bees. The problems facing the sleuth are as diverse and challenging as ever however. From seeking the whereabouts of the stolen **Mazarin Diamond** to discovering the importance of being called **Garrideb**, by way of a mysterious murder on **Thor Bridge**, a search for eternal youth, and the threat of a **Vampire** in Sussex, there is no sign of Holmes's deductive powers slowing down.

With 'The Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes', published in 1927, Conan Doyle ended the canon of 54 short stories and four novels featuring the great detective and his assistant Dr. Watson.

CD ISBN:  
978-962-634-465-1

View our catalogue online at  
[www.naxosaudiobooks.com](http://www.naxosaudiobooks.com)



THE  
COMPLETE  
CLASSICS

UNABRIDGED

Produced & edited by Roy McMillan  
Recorded at Motivation Sound Studios, London  
Mastered by Sarah Butcher

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. UNAUTHORISED PUBLIC PERFORMANCE,  
BROADCASTING AND COPYING OF THESE COMPACT DISCS PROHIBITED.  
© 2007 NAXOS Audiobooks Ltd. © 2007 NAXOS Audiobooks Ltd.  
Made in Germany.

Total time  
4:41:32