

Silent Sherlock

Sherlock Holmes and the Silent Film Era

by

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Part Eight (1913)

New Years Day, 1913 would see the release of "Cousins of Sherlock Holmes". Notable in this film is it's star Fraunie Fraunholz (1876 - 1938) because he will be featured as Burstup Holmes in the next series of films to be discussed for 1913.

1913 - "Cousins of Sherlock Holmes" - Fraunie Fraunholz as Jim Spike, alias Jim Nail. Solax Film Co.

"Cousins of Sherlock Holmes" - Solax Compay Ad - " Because there happens to be a striking resemblance between Edgar Carroll, and a noted criminal, Edgar is pestered by the sleuths. He gets even on some would be detectives by disguising as a woman, and then there ensues a merry chase, and there is a complication in mistaken identities."¹

"Cousins of Sherlock Holmes" - Comments on the Films column - "The police are on the lookout for Jim Spike, alias Jim Nail, a dangerous highway robber, who has been working with more or less success without being apprehended. The chief of the detective bureau puts two detectives on the case and enjoins them to be very careful in their investigations, and not to come back without landing the prisoner. The three detectives soon come upon Edgar Carroll, in whom they immediately see a striking resemblance to Spike, the crook. They shadow Edgar from place to place, and soon his life becomes on long game of hide and seek with the detectives. Finally Edgar consults his friend and they both decide to give the detectives a merry chase. Edgar and his friend dress as women and parade the streets in their ludicrous female attire. They flirt with the detectives and entice them away from their duty. They do not discover the identity of their charming female companions until they accidentally come upon them one evening and see them leisurely, and with enjoyment, smoking clear Havana cigars. This shocking and unfeminine spectacle arouses their suspicions, but the boys are too clever for these cousins of Sherlock Holmes and, with the aid of an

¹ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 14 Oct. - Dec. 1912 pg. 1257

automobile, give them the slip, but the detectives eventually turn up again and arrest the masqueraders. However, they do not remain long in the police station, for the real Jim Spike turns up soon as the crook who tried to snatch Jane Ellery's purse on the ferryboat. Jane is Edgar Carroll's sweetheart, and she recognizes him. A few more complications arise, however, until Edgar and the crook are seen side by side and their likeness discovered, and the cousins of Sherlock Holmes see they have been misguided in their investigations."²

In 1913 Canadian comedian Fraunie Fraunholz played Burstup Holmes in a number of silent film shorts. The director Alice Guy (1873-1968), of the "Burstup Holmes" series, was the film industry's first ever female director.



1913 - "Burstup Holmes, Detective" - Fraunie Fraunholz as Burstup Holmes. Solax Film Co.

1913 - "The Case of the Missing Girl" - Fraunie Fraunholz as Burstup Holmes. Solax Film Co.

1913 - "The Mystery of the Lost Cat" - Fraunie Fraunholz as Burstup Holmes. Solax Film Co.

1913 - "Burstup Holmes' Murder Case" - Fraunie Fraunholz as Burstup Holmes. Solax Film Co.

"Burstup Homes' Murder Case" - Comments on the Films column - "Broad farce. There is a burlesque Sherlock Holmes. Blanche Cornwall and Darwin

² "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 14 Oct. - Dec. 1912 pg. 1332

Karr have the leads. The former is more convincing in her laughter than she is in her tears. The story is slight."³

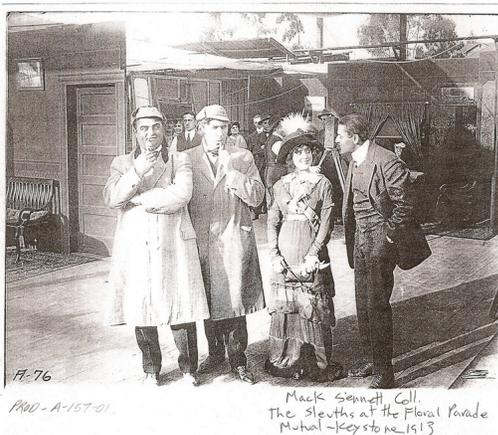
You can view "Burstup Homes' Murder Case" at:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gFm9glpURdE>

The year 1913 would also see the final three films of the series of Sherlock Holmes parody-comedies featuring the legendary Mack Sennett (1880 - 1960) and Fred Mace (1878 -1917), as "The Sleuths", now a part of Mack Sennett's Keystone studios. The films featured both men in full Sherlockian garb. After the Fred Mace departure to Majestic Studios, Sennett would still make one more Holmes parody without Mace. Also, Mace would make a Sherlock Holmes parody for his new studio.

1913 - "The Stolen Purse" - Mack Sennett and Fred Mace. Keystone Films.

1913 - "The Sleuths' Last Stand" - Mack Sennett and Fred Mace. Keystone Films.

1913 - "The Sleuths at the Floral Parade" - Mack Sennett and Fred Mace. Keystone Films.



FF-76
PAID - A-167-01
Mack Sennett Coll.
The Sleuths at the Floral Parade
Mutual - Keystone 1913



Sleuths of the Floral Parade (Keystone 1913)

Mack Sennett & Mabel Normand

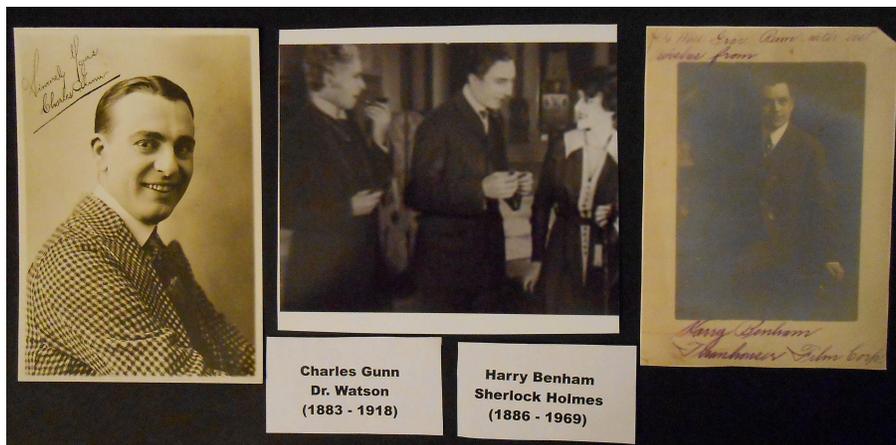
³ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 16 Apr. - Jun. 1913 pg. 49

1913 - "Their First Execution" - Mack Sennett without Fred Mace. Keystone Films.

1913 - "The Tongue Mark" - Fred Mace as Surelock Holmes. Majestic Motion Picture Co.

"The Tongue Mark" - "Surelock Homes is called to detect a burglar. He looks for finger prints and discovers a "tongue mark" made by a dog, although he does not know this. He rushes through the street, examining tongues with various amusing results and finally arrests the dog. Proudly he brings his captive before the fair victim of the burglary, but in the meantime the real culprit has been arrested by a policeman and the valuables discovered. So Surelock Homes gets nothing for all his trouble, not even a kind word."⁴

1913 - "Sherlock Holmes Solves 'The Sign of The Four'" - Henry Benham (1886 - 1969) as Sherlock Holmes and Charles Gunn (1883 - 1918) as Dr. Watson. Thanhouser Picture Co.



"Sherlock Holmes Solves 'The Sign of The Four'" - "Major Sholto, a retired British army officer, who has amassed wealth in India in a mysterious manner, dies suddenly. His two sons were unable to find any trace of the wealth. Search the house patiently, and at last in an attic, concealed by a secret panel, discovered a brass bound box. It contains jewels of almost fabulous value and a letter, telling them that Mary Morstan, the orphan

⁴ <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0175247/mediaindex>

daughter of one of Sholto's brother officers in India was entitled to an equal share of the treasure. Thaddeus, the younger brother, is willing to carry out his dead father's wishes, but Bartholomew, the elder, insists that they alone should possess the jewels. Finally Thaddeus, unable to persuade his brother to relent, writes Miss Morstan an anonymous letter, telling her that she has been wronged, and naming the place where they can meet. Miss Morstan, perplexed by the strange communication, consults Sherlock Holmes. Holmes and Dr. Watson, his associate, keep the appointment with Miss Morstan and are led by Thaddeus Sholto to his home. Thaddeus tells Miss Morstan of her inheritance, and that he intends to force his brother Bartholomew to surrender her share of the treasure. They reach the Sholto mansion, and Thaddeus goes to his brother's room to summon him. But he comes dashing down stairs, terror stricken. Holmes and Watson dash up the stairs, leading to the room. There, huddled in his chair, is Bartholomew and on his breast a torn sheet of paper, with five words scrawled upon it. "The Sign of the Four." The treasure is gone! A quick examination shows that the man has been killed by a poisoned thorn which is lodged in his head. In the garret Holmes comes upon fresh evidence of intruder. In the heavy dust are impressions of a boot and of a wooden leg, and the imprint of two little bare feet. The detective hurries to the roof, where, dangling to the ground below, is a heavy rope. Securing a blood hound he racks the fugitive down, he chase finally leading him and his co-worker, Dr. Watson, to the little ship-yard where he learned that a man with a wooden leg, accompanied by a little East Indian, had hired a motor boat and sailed up the river. Holmes, in another boat, pursues. The fugitives are captured, but not before they throw the treasure overboard. Then Jonathan Small, the man with the wooden leg, and his faithful follower, little Tonga, whose deadly blow pipe had killed Sholto, are brought to Holmes' rooms and the casket opened. The jewels are not there. The treasure had disappeared forever."⁵

"Sherlock Holmes Solves 'The Sign of The Four'" - "This two-reel film gives us a new kind of Sherlock Holmes, a younger and heavier built man than we usually see in the part. But once the story gets into action, with its weird, oriental atmosphere, we forget everything else. The story of the Agra treasure is pictured in an intensely fascinating manner. The one-legged man, the East Indian with his blow-pipe, the Sholtos, the Baker street lodgings, the scenes in India, and the various exciting episodes combine to make this a successful offering. The treasure never comes into the hands of the rightful

⁵ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 15 Jan. - Mar. 1913 pg. 822

owner, Mary, as it was cast into the river. A strong production of a famous narrative."⁶

"The Intermission"

Here are a potpourri of articles and fan letters from movie magazines of 1913 with Sherlock Holmes mentions in them.

Article - Making Pictures with Bloodhounds - Long article about a a Mr. Oldcott and a Mr. Clark and the dangers of working with dogs in film "The Mystery of Pine Tree Camp". The article ends with these two lines - "And there he hung until these six canine Sherlock Holmeses were corralled and tied together. Since the Mr. Oldcott walks with a limp and every time I see a pup I have a quiet smile to myself."⁷

Chicago Letter by Jas. S. McQuade - Commentary about "gun play" in moving pictures being taken up by the judiciary, police authorities and reformers in Chicago. In his argument against banning such action he says, "... Why allow any drama or novel containing a robbery or murder to be performed or published? Let us take Sherlock Holmes away from the shelves of the library. ..."⁸

The Photoplaywright column - Man writes in - A Three Finger Script - "I am sending you drawing of my right hand, which has two fingers missing. I have been a railroad brakeman for seven years and can be useful to you in a railroad scenario or maybe you can use my hand in some Sherlock Holmes plays..."⁹ (He would be perfect for "The Engineer's Thumb")

Facts and Comments - Directors discussion - "... It needs no Sherlock Holmes to deduce the director's taste, his breeding, his views of life and his environments from what he shows us on the screen. ..."¹⁰

"Please Take Your Seats for the Rest of the Programme"

⁶ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 15 Jan. - Mar. 1913 pg.998

⁷ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 16 Apr. - Jun. 1913 pg. 53

⁸ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 18 Oct. - Dec. 1913 pg. 249

⁹ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 18 Oct. - Dec. 1913 pg. 1001

¹⁰ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 18 Oct. - Dec. 1913 pg. 1387

1913 - "The Eye of Krishla" - Henry Benham (1886 - 1969) as Police Captain Smith. Thanhouser Picture Co.

"The Eye of Krishla" - Independent Film Stories - "The police captain had solved a couple of mysteries, and as news was light, the papers had given him much publicity, many of the writers declaring that Sherlock Holmes, Vidocq and William J. Burns were in the infant class compared to Police Captain Smith, it tackled his vanity, and caused him to look down upon the young man upon whom his daughter had cast her affections. In fact he forbade them to marry, announcing that his son-in-law must be "a man of brains." The suitor seemingly accepts the edict, and as days passed, the captain gradually forgot him. Then another opportunity to distinguish himself came along, and he accepted it with alacrity. A Countess was robbed of a wonderful diamond, "The Eye of Krishla," and the circumstances surrounding the theft were most mysterious. It seemed to be a case calling for personal attention, and Captain Smith plunged into it. From the Countess he received all the details, which really did not explain anything. The captain, however, picked up several clues, including a glove, which he failed to recognize as his own. Outside the window were plainly marked footprints, and with his faithful police dog, the gallant officer took up the trail. It led to his own house, and worse than that, to his own room. The Countess had followed him, full of admiration of American detective work. Seemingly by accident, she knocked a cake of soap from the washstand. The dog crossed to it, the Countess picked it up. Then the chase ended, for in the cake of soap was embedded the diamond which the Countess called "the Eye of Krishla." The detective could not explain it, but sank helplessly into a chair as the Countess left the room haughtily, the diamond in her hand. Later the detective went downstairs, and was shocked to find the Countess smoking a cigar and talking to his daughter. Then he found that the noblewoman was the suitor he had flouted. He was indignant at first, but when the young man softly said that "your son-in-law can be relied upon to keep the secret of the Eye of Krishla," he realized that the time had come for him to surrender gracefully unless he wanted the city to laugh at "the famous" detective. So, like Davy Crockett's coon, he crawled down gracefully, and gave his consent to the marriage"¹¹

1913 - "The Mystery of West Sedgwick" - Bigelow Cooper (1878 -1953) as Fleming Stone, the older detective, Sherlock Cooper and Augustus Phillips (1874 - 1944) as Herbert Burroughs, the younger detective. Edison Film Mftg. Co.

¹¹ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 16 Apr. - Jun. 1913 pg. 1400



"The Mystery of West Sedgwick" Reviewed by Louis Reeves Harrison - "A detective story of exciting suspense dramatized from "The Gold Bag" by Carolyn Wells.... A true dramatic situation is, however, set up, true according to some critics, when a detective of penetrating intelligence, represented ably by Bigelow Cooper, is brought into a case.....Sir Conan, formerly Dr. Doyle, has accustomed us to the detective who perceives what is so minute or so remote as to leave scarcely any traces of its image on the mind, who can form, from many complex images an idea, draw strange inferences and reach marvelous conclusions. Such is Cooper in this role. He opens with a deduction made from a combination of trivial facts that the unknown wearer of a pair of shoes left with a bootblack is deaf in his right ear and out the previous evening with a young lady in Brooklyn. Sherlock Holmes has so familiarized us with this sort of stuff that we gulp it down and manage to hold it there until Sherlock Cooper is called to solve "The Mystery of West Sedgwick," where his will combats combats and overcomes puzzling and opposing evidence..."¹²

1913 - "A Would Be Detective" - Actors unknown. Gem Film Co.

"A Would Be Detective" - Comments on the film column - "A short picture of burlesque Sherlock comedy. The leading actor may have never seen Fred Mace, in his old Biograph success, but his work is a most excellent imitation of the present Majestic comic."¹³

End of Part Eight
1913 continues in Part Nine

¹² "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 17 Jul. - Sep. 1913 pg. 619

¹³ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 17 Jul. - Sep. 1913 pg. 485

