

Silent Sherlock

Sherlock Holmes and the Silent Film Era

by

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Part Four (1911)

The year 1911 witnessed the final two films of the first actual Sherlock Holmes film series by Nordisk Film Company of Denmark.

1911 - "Hotelrotterne" or, "Hotelmysterierne" or, "Sherlock Holmes' Sidste Bedrifter" (Denmark) or, "Hotel Thieves", - Einar Zangenberg as Sherlock Holmes. Nordisk Film Co.



1911 - "Den Sorte Hoette" (Denmark) or, "The Black Hood" or, "The Conspirators"- Lauritz Olsen as Sherlock Holmes. Nordisk Film Co.



Here are bits of interesting information from old magazines about these final two 1911 Great Northern films.

Comments on the films column - "Hotel Thieves" - (Great Northern) - "This film affords sufficient excitement for once. Thieves are seen at work. Sherlock Holmes is engaged to run down the criminals, and the adventures that befall him are much more numerous and serious than is usually the case with this detective. But even though hurled from a train and subjected to much other unkind, not to say severe, treatment he succeeds in rolling the arch criminal over a precipice in Switzerland, half a world away."¹

Comments on the films column - "The Conspirators" - (Great Northern) - Sept. 16 - "Mr. Wilson, a solicitor, receives a wire from a client who is a confirmed invalid, asking him to call upon him and arrange for the disposal of stocks and shares. When the wire arrives, Mrs. Wilson is at the office. Bidding adieu to her, her husband accompanies her to the street. His clerk, who is a noted member of a band of scoundrels, during his absence reads the telegram and hastily prepares a message to the gang, apprising them that there is a good haul to be made. His first epistle does not suit him, and he crumples this up and throws it on the floor. This ultimately brings about his undoing. The clerk leaves the office and joins his confederates, and soon plans are matured. As Mr. Wilson is hailing a cab preparatory to calling on his client, the gang overpower him and confine him in a dungeon at old mother S's. Armed with his employer's bag, the clerk then proceeds to call on the client. At the solicitor's office, however, a trusted servant has picked up the incriminating note which says that Wilson must be robbed. He informs Mrs. Wilson, and then Sherlock Holmes is called in. He speedily determines on a course of action, and going to the client, takes that gentleman's place, and is disguised to represent the infirm old man. When the clerk calls, Sherlock Holmes overpowers him, and makes him a prisoner. He then disguises as the clerk, and goes to the place where Wilson is detained, and liberates him. The other members of the gang rush in, but are covered by the detective's pistol. Suddenly one of them pulls a cord by the window and Sherlock Holmes disappears into the space below. But the police arrive and overpower the ruffians. They are forced to disclose Holmes whereabouts, and eventually the robbers are consigned to duress vile, and Wilson is restored to his family."²

¹ Source: "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 8 Jan. - July 1911 pg. 1521

² Source: "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 9 July - Sep. 1911 pgs. 830, 1000

Comments on the Films column - "The Conspirators" - (Great Northern) - Sept. 16 - "A Sherlock Holmes detective story which has a number of thrilling situations. Perhaps the most interesting is where the robbers pull a string and drop the detective into someplace unknown. However he is speedily rescued, by the police, the gang is captured and the unfortunate lawyer is returned to him family unhurt. And all this came about through the arch conspirator neglecting to throw away a telegram he had written to send to his confederates. The assumption of a number of different disguises by the detective is a clever bit of work and adds greatly to the film."³

Also 1911 saw the conclusion of a series of films, featuring "**Arsene Lupin vs. Sherlock Holmes**", from Vitascope Pictures (Germany) with the familiar face of Viggo Larsen.

1911 - "Arsene Lupin's Ende" or, "The Finish of Arsene Lupin" - Viggo Larsen as Sherlock Holmes. Vitascope Pictures (Germany).



1911 - "Sherlock Holmes contra Professor Moryarty" or, "Der Erbe von Bloomrod", or "Sherlock Holmes vs. Professor Moriarty" or, "The Heir of Bloomrod" - Viggo Larsen as Sherlock Holmes. Vitascope Pictures (Germany).

1911 - "Who Killed Max?" or, "Quel est l'assassin?" or Wer ist der Täter? - Charles Mosnier as Professor Searchem, the prize pupil of Sherlock Holmes. Pathe Film Co.

³ Source: "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 9 July - Sep. 1911 pg. 976



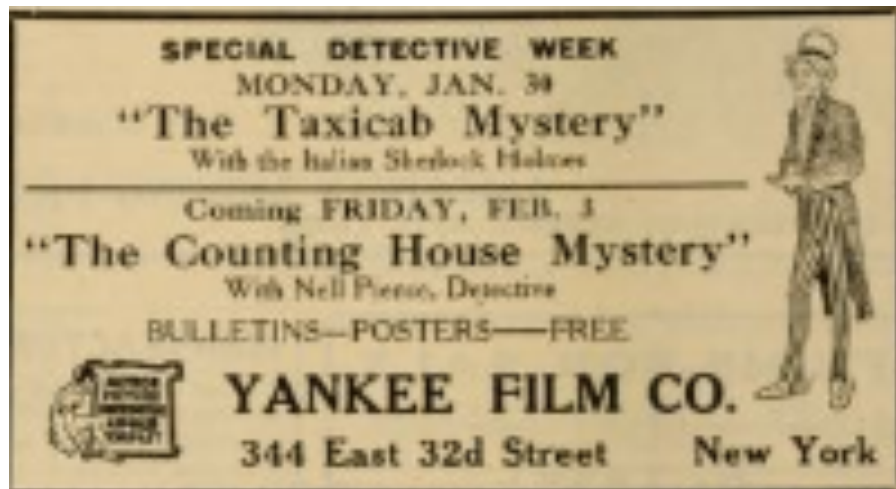
"Who Killed Max?" - (Pathe) - 689 feet - "Max has been off on a terrible toot and when he gets home, he proceeds to break up housekeeping in a most efficacious manner. Retiring to his own room he shoots the heads off a bust of Psyche and breaks up things generally. Finally, going to sleep in the midst of chaos he presents the appearance of having been murdered. His parents rush in and find him thus and grief stricken send for the police. Professor Searchem, the prize pupil of Sherlock Holmes, gets on the job, and by a series of extremely deductions, captures the assassin and takes him to his office and summons the victim's parents to see this awful criminal. What the detective's sensations are when the parents discover that the man whom he has arrested is their own beloved son, whom they thought dead, and whom in the meantime had come back to life and started on a new round of pleasure is difficult to describe."⁴

1911 - "The Taxi Cab Mystery" - The part of Petrosio, detective, is played by Mr. Krohner, 'The Italian Sherlock Holmes'. Yankee Film Co.

Independent Film Stories Column - "The Taxi Cab Mystery" (Yankee) - "... He is aided by a pretty stenographer who, in one scene, climbs to the transom and breaks the glass with her slipper to allow the deadly fumes of gas to escape. The chase through New York's busy streets is both novel and thrilling,The part of Petrosio, detective, is played by Mr. Krohner, who is familiar to our friends as 'The Italian Sherlock Holmes'. ..."⁵

⁴ "The Nickelodeon" Page 229 - Feb. 5, 1911

⁵ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 8 Jan. - July 1911 pg. 206



1911 - "The Counting House Mystery" - Elsie Albert (1888 - 1981) as Nell Pierce, "The Yankee Girl Detective". Yankee Film Co.

"The Counting House Mystery" (Yankee) - "Yes the money disappeared while every member of the counting room was present. ... Nell Pierce did not accept the popular verdict, however, but unerringly hit upon a solution of the problem, which proved her wonderful power of deduction.Nell "The Yankee Girl Detective" finally brought her man to bay, and saved an innocent boy from prison...."⁶

1911 - "Foiling the Camorra" - The part of Petrosio, detective, is played by Mr. Krohner, 'The Italian Sherlock Holmes'. Yankee Film Co.

Independent Film Stories Column - "Foiling the Camorra" - (Yankee) - "It remained for the fearless "Italian Sherlock Holmes" to run down the boldest and most merciless band of kidnapers ever recorded in the annals of the Black Hand. Headed by a Sicilian Camorrist who had escaped from Italy, and become a small banker in New York ... a young Italian police lieutenant, Victor Petrosio, begged for a chance to break up the gang Not only do we show "The Italian Sherlock Holmes" fighting against terrible odds. ..."⁷

⁶ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 8 Jan. - July 1911 pg. 210

⁷ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 8 Jan. - July 1911 pg. 268

1911 - "The Stolen Necklace" - Actors unknown. Nestor Film Co.

Nestor Film Co. Ad



Scene from "THE STOLEN NECKLACE"

The science of deduction and elimination, as applied by Detective Hatfield, not only fails to solve the mysterious disappearance of Mrs. Rodwell's diamond necklace, but comes near wrecking the life of innocent Virginia, the lady's companion. Nora, the impish maid, assisted by good common sense, restores the missing jewels; uncovers and saves the real culprit (who is the sensation of this dazzling picture) and paves the way for the happiness of "two souls with but a single thought, two hearts that beat as one."

"The Stolen Necklace" (Nestor) April 5, 1911 - "Sherlock Holmes' Theory Exploded" in 875 feet - also a photo of scene from "The Stolen Necklace".⁸

1911 - "A Matrimonial Affair" - Sam D. Drane as Mutt and Gus Alexander as Jeff. Nestor Film Co.

Independent Film Stories column - "A Matrimonial Affair" - (Nestor) - A Mutt and Jeff movie - the description has this one line - "...In fact, the moment that Mutt departs to mail his billet doux, the little fellow starts an investigation a la Sherlock Holmes. ..."⁹

⁸ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 8 Jan. - July 1911 pg. 774-775

⁹ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 9 July - Sep. 1911 pg. 64

1911 - "Sherlock Holmes, Jr." - Helen Anderson, a wonderful child actress plays Sherlock Holmes, Jr. Rex Motion Picture Company.

*Sherlock Holmes
never solved a mystery*

more absorbing and suspense-compelling than the one presented in and solved by



**"SHERLOCK
HOLMES, Jr."**

THE REX BOY DETECTIVE!

In a picture released Thursday, July 20th, a juvenile sleuth worthy of the great name with which we have endowed him and endowed with the great analytical gift that made that name what it is, solves the great mystery of

The Shrinking Whiskey Bottle!
A picture with Mystery and Mirth!

A kid picture equal to our last kid masterpiece, "The Little Major."
Let SHERLOCK HOLMES, JR.
Help you get new business!

REX Motion Picture Company
573 Eleventh Ave. New York City

Sales Co. says it's a mystery how REX does it.

Independent Film Stories column - "Sherlock Holmes, Jr." - (Rex) - "Little Sherlock Holmes, Jr., reads the doughty doings of his hero-god, and at once determines to become a detective himself. Providence at once favors him by giving him a mystery to solve. His father has noticed that in some weird, unaccountable fashion the whiskey in the decanter is ever vanishing, and father swears he drink it as fast as all that. So Sherlock Holmes, Jr. assigns himself the task of discovering who tampers with his father's soothing beverage. Concealed behind a table, he sees Bridget, the cook, come in and at once proceed to get on the outside of a man's size pull on the flask. At once the embryo detective makes his report to his father, with the astounding solution of the mystery. The father decides to use Dr. Brown's Sure Cure for the Liquor Habit on the cook, and obtains a bottle of the fluid.

This he puts in the room near the whiskey, intending to pour some in the bottle a little later. Sherlock Holmes, Jr., discovers the bottle and follows the 'Do it Now' maxim. There are friends visiting the house at the time, who are sitting on the lawn with his parents, awaiting tea, which the maid is going to bring them. Sherlock Holmes, Jr. pours a goodly amount of the fluid into the tea. One of the results of taking the liquid is falling into a deep slumber, and in a few moments the host, the hostess, and the guests are fast asleep. Then happen's along Bridget's beau, the policeman, for whose particular benefit Bridget essays to go inside and procure a glass of 'buttermilk.' After imbibing, the policeman forgets all about everything except that he is awful drowsy, and the next thing, he, too, is asleep. It must have been contagious - or could Bridget not have forgotten herself? - but at any rate, she, too, wanders off into the Land of Nod. Then Sherlock dons the policeman's clothes and club, and marches through the house, monarch of all he surveys. At this opportune moment, two burglars arrive at the scene, and seeking the sleepers, think they have been transferred to Burglar's Paradise. They sneak upstairs, fill their bags with silverware and then fall for the whiskey on the table, little Sherlock watching eagerly. At last they get themselves off, followed by the creator of all the mischief, but they have not gone far when they are overcome by the liquor cure and fall in their tracks to sleep. Little Sherlock now takes the manacles from the policeman's coat pocket, and ties both legs of the burglars together. In due time the household awakes, they seek the boy, and eventually find him covering the two burglars, prisoners of Sherlock Holmes, Jr."¹⁰

1911 - "Jimmie as a Footman" - Flora Finch possibly female Sherlock Holmes, Jr. Gaumont Motion Picture Company.

Reviews of Notable Films - "Jimmie as a Footman" - (Gaumont) - Long review includes these lines "... The servants are unaware that the new maid is the women detective in disguise. From the outset the female Sherlock Holmes suspects Jimmie. ..."¹¹

1911 - "Tiny Tom, Detective" - Actors unknown. Ambrosio Film Co.

"Tiny Tom, Detective" - (Ambrosio) - Sept. 20 - "A bright comedy with the favorite Tiny Tom in the role of a successful follower of Sherlock Holmes. He

¹⁰ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 9 July - Sep. 1911 pg. 148

¹¹ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 9 July - Sep. 1911 pg. 609/610

traces the burglar by a necktie and succeeds in restoring to its owner the stolen money, while the burglars are apparently hurried away to prison."¹²

1911 - "Zigomar" - Paulin Broquet as Sherlock Holmes. Eclair Film Co.

"Zigomar" - (Eclair) - (Three reels) - "For some months past a most sensational and fascinating story, published in serial installments in a leading Parisian journal, had aroused the interest and curiosity, not alone of Paris, but of France. The story came from the pen of Leon Sazie, who has on



occasions, show flashes of the wit and power of Hugo and Maupassant. Readers of English fiction had little difficulty to detect, even under the distinct French garb of 'Zigomar,' their old friends Sherlock Holmes and Professor Moriarty. Let it not be inferred, however, that the French version of the Conan Doyle idea yields one jot to the English prototype either in rapidity of action or fertility of invention. The characters of Sherlock Holmes and Professor Moriarty are taken respectfully by Paulin Broquet and Zigomar. It would transcend the limits allowed for this review, were we to attempt even a condensed description of the numerous plots and counterplots, which develop out of a battle of wits between Broquet and Zigomar. The scenes in the Alps, where Zigomar has gone to rob hotels, are taken in nature in a country where nature is most charming, wonderful and impressive. The ascent of the mountain by the disguised robber and a distinguished company, of which Broquet, also in disguise, forms a part, is rich in realistic incident. Zigomar falls down the side of a glacier for a distance which seems alarmingly long to the spectator."¹³

End of Part Four
1911 continues in Part Five

¹² "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 9 July - Sep. 1911 pg. 976

¹³ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 10 Oct. - Dec. 1911 pg 108