

Silent Sherlock
Sherlock Holmes and the Silent Film Era

by

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Part Seven (1912 Continued)

Continuing onward from part six, we have an unusual assortment of more films and facts from the year 1912, most I'm sure you've never heard of.

1912 - "The Flag of Distress" - H. S. 'Red' Mack as Mr. Sherlocko, J. W. Cumpson as Reuben Wilson. Imp Films Co.

"The Flag of Distress" - Imp Players - Hayward Seaton Mack (1882 - 1921), J. W. Cumpson (1866 - 1913).

H. S. Mack - Biography pièce states - "... familiarly known as 'Red Mack' He in two or three Imp comedies, gave an excellent modern embodiment of Sherlock Holmes."¹

1912 - "The Kid and The Sleuth" - H. S. 'Red' Mack as Mr. Sherlocko, J. W. Cumpson as Reuben Wilson. Imp Films Co.

1912 - "The Right Clue" - H. S. 'Red' Mack as Mr. Sherlocko, J. W. Cumpson as Reuben Wilson. Imp Films Co.

The character Sherlocko would show up again in 1912, but this time with a Dr. Watso, in a film apparently not related to the H.S. Mack, Imp Films series, but for Champion Films.

1912 - "The Robbery at The Railroad Station" - Unknown actors as Sherlocko & Dr. Watso. Champion Film Co.

1912 - "Mr. Whoops, The Detective" - Unknown actors.. Comet Film Co.

"Mr. Whoops is a milliner detective, and for a long time has little to do in the sleuth line. He is a personal friend of the great Sherlock Holmes and invariably follows his methods in unraveling crime. Mr. Holmes receives a

¹ "The Implet", May 4, 1912 Vol 1 #16, pg. 4

case. It is to run to earth a band of kidnappers which has stolen "the darling" of a Duke and Duchess who visit a fashionable summer resort. The little one has been placed in the care of a negligent maid and the disappearance of the little one raises a cry all over the place. Mr. Holmes tries his utmost to find the missing one, but is unsuccessful; so he suggests to the Duke and Duchess to employ Mr. Whoops, which they readily do. Whoops has his own idea of how the kidnappers should be captured. It is needless to say that they are most absurd and impossible. He undergoes a lot of deductions entailing humorous adventures and mishaps. But in the end he reaches a clue and eventually restores the "darling" to the distracted Duke and Duchess. The "darling" turns out to be a plain, but educated monkey."²

1912 - "He Insisted on Being A Cashier" - Unknown actors. Gaumont Film Co.

"He Insisted on Being A Cashier" - "Harry Cower just longed to get a job as a bank cashier. But eccentric tramp that he was, he had neither clothes nor experience to recommend him. His application was turned down most coldly; so he stole the president's pocketbook full of currency just for spite, and while being hotly pursued by bank employees, hid it unseen in a hat rack bench. He is captured but refuses to reveal the location of the stolen pocketbook. Sherlock Holmes is put on the job. He in the guise of a fellow tramp prisoner does focus the light to a head, only, however, after Cower has succeeded in obtaining the desired cashiership, in which capacity he cashes the check that gives Holmes the payment for his services rendered."³

1912 - "The Great Diamond Robbery" - Tom Powers as D'Ahseen, the first detective, and Arthur Rosson as Dr. Cyclop, the second detective.. Vitagraph Film Co.

"The Great Diamond Robbery" "A soubrette loses her dog and diamond ring. Two "Sherlock Holmes" deduct that the dog swallowed the ring, and that Kraut used the dog for sausages. They buy all Kraut's sausages. The dog and the ring are found. The detectives lose their money and their reputations as sleuths."⁴

² The Motion Picture World, Vol 11 (Jan-Mar 1912) pg.68

³ The Motion Picture World, Vol 11 (Jan-Mar 1912) pg. 516

⁴ The Motion Picture World, Vol 11 (Jan-Mar 1912) pg. 935

1912 - "A Midget Sherlock Holmes" - Actors unknown. Pathé Frères Film Co. (France)

"A Midget Sherlock Holmes" - "Happy Hooligan and Dinky Mike, looking for food are presented with an entire fruit store by an Italian. The reason for this generosity is, that the Italian is threatened by the black hand. After our two heroes get the store, the black-hand representatives appear and demand that the \$1,000 be left at the old stone bridge. Dinky Mike evolves a method of outwitting the black hand, which he does successfully."⁵

"A Midget Sherlock Holmes" review - "A very small boy with beard and make-up to look like a detective is the center of interest in this farce. He and his friend, the hobo, have an amusing adventure with the black-hand. There are several good laughs. The photographs are good. It is a fair filler."⁶

Also from Pathé Films in 1912 came a series of three Holmes' parodies



featuring Georges Coquet as Charlie Colms.

1912 - "Charlie Colms and the Knave of Spades" - Georges Coquet as Charlie Colms. Pathé Frères Film Co. (France)

1912 - "Charlie Colms and the Dancer's Necklace" - Georges Coquet as Charlie Colms. Pathé Frères Film Co. (France)

⁵ The Motion Picture World, Vol 11 (Jan-Mar 1912) pg. 996

⁶ The Motion Picture World, Vol 11 (Jan-Mar 1912) pg. 1165

1912 - "The Dandies Club" - Georges Coquet as Charlie Colms. Pathé Frères Film Co. (France)

1912 - "The Rube Detective" - John E. Brennan as Rube. Kalem Film Co.

Jolly, over-weight, bald, comedian John E. Brennan (1865 - 1940), later to appear as Chief of Police Ivorytop in 1914's "Sherlock Bonehead", was



one of the most well-known silent comedy stars of the early 1910's.

"The Rube Detective" - "Rube, learning through a newspaper advertisement that anyone can be taught to be a detective for \$25.00, sends in his money and receives instruction. In following the directions of the detective school, Rube is arrested for being a general nuisance. That night burglars enter and rob the village post office. The town constable is at his wits' end to find the perpetrators of the crime and in despair at his helplessness, he decides to liberate Rube for the purpose of trailing the crooks. Rube is taken to the scene of the robbery and quickly finds valuable clues, namely a piece of cheese and a broken package of fly paper. The amateur detective proceeds to emulate the example of Sherlock Holmes, and thanks to his private instructions, he eventually succeeds in capturing the burglars. He marches them back to the village store where he is proclaimed the 'hero of the hour' and receives a handsome reward."⁷

1912 - "Diamond Cut Diamond" - Flora Finch as the wife who does the Sherlock Holmes bit. Vitagraph Film Co.

⁷ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 12 Apr. - Jun. 1912 pg. 1056

Flora Finch (1867 - 1940) also played a female Sherlock Holmes, known as Serena Slim - the slender sleuth, in "Heavy Villains" (1915). You can read more about Flora and other female Holmes/Watson actresses in my "Original Baker Street Babes" article at: <http://www.nplh.co.uk/2/post/2013/11/the-original-baker-street-babes-part-1.html>



"Diamond Cut Diamond" - Manufacturers Advance notes - "John Bunny and Flora Finch as man and wife. is a comedy After being frustrated numerous times, the old boy's wife decides to do some Sherlock Holmes work on her own account. She disguise herself as an Englishman and presents a letter of introduction to her husband at his office."⁸

Maurice Costello (1877 - 1950) (often erroneously credited as films first Sherlock Holmes) was Lambert Chase, Detective, in nine films in 1912-1913. The two films I'm including comments on (due to their Sherlock Holmes mentions) ironically indicate Mr. Costello could never be a detective. The description on the trading card photo of Costello below, from 1915, states he has been with Vitagraph 7 years, which would be in line with his joining Vitagraph in late 1907/early 1908.



⁸ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 12 Apr. - Jun. 1912 pg. 539

1912 - "On The Pupil of His Eye" - Maurice Costello as Chase Lambert, Detective. Vitagraph Film Co.

"On The Pupil of His Eye" - Comments on the Films column - "Van Dyke Brooke takes the leading part in a drama that holds all the way. He shares the honors with Maurice Costello, who takes the part of a detective. It is too bad Vitagraph in a serious work of this sort did not get way from the worn out, hackneyed Sherlock Holmes cap, pipe and mannerisms. There is a real plot in this picture, and it is well executed. The flashlight scene is particularly effective."⁹

1912 - "The Adventure of the Thumb Print" - Maurice Costello as Chase Lambert, Detective. Vitagraph Film Co.

"The Adventure of the Thumb Print" - "A detective story picture featuring Mr. Costello as Lambert Chase, a sleuth something on the Sherlock Holmes pattern. He is called in after a robbery and makes a few significant discoveries which, with the help of chance, lead him straight to his victim. The picture is interesting; but one feels Mr. Costello is no detective and never could be. Mr. Geo. Cooper is a better burglar. As a whole the release is fair; it is well put together, it has a story that will interest and will get past. It never rises above the commonplace, but never drags. the photography is good."¹⁰

1912 - "Baby Sherlock" - Baby Early Gorman (Earle E. Gehrig 1906 - 1982) as Little Margaret, Baby Sherlock. Powers Film Co.

Baby Early Gorman was 6 when she played Baby Sherlock and would eventually retire at age 11 – one wonders what she did for the rest of her (long) life.

"Baby Sherlock" - Universal Film Mfg. Co. Ad - (Split Reel with "The American Olympic Victors") - "A child cleverly secures the restoration of a sum of money that has been stolen. The story is most charmingly interpreted amid beautiful rural surroundings. Just the kind of release that will please the 'kiddies'."¹¹

⁹ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 13 Jul. - Sep. 1912 pg. 243

¹⁰ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 13 Jul. - Sep. 1912 pg. 446

¹¹ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 13 Jul. - Sep. 1912 pg. 309

"Baby Sherlock" - Comments on the Films column - "Grandpa is set up bound and robbed by two tramps. Baby Sherlock sees the tramps dividing the money and gives the alarm."¹²



"Baby Sherlock" - Independent Film Comments column - "John Dobbs, an aged farmer, comes to the village with his family, and while there makes the sale of a cow for a good sum. The farm wagon drives away, filled with pleased country folk, who have been to the hamlet to do some shopping. The payment of the money is witnessed by two tramps, who follow farmer Dobbs home. He is set upon and robbed and the tramps make their escape, running in view of little Margaret, a granddaughter of the old farmer. Another child discovers the plight of the robbed man, who is bound, and neighbors set him free. There is a search for the highwaymen and the irate farmers are aided by Margaret in a most ingenious manner to capture the tramps by reason of their leaving tell-tale evidence. The story is interpreted in a most charming manner. Baby Early plays the role of the child detective in a most astute way, and is rewarded for her vigilance."¹³

1912 - "Dublin Dan" - Barney Gilmore (1869 - 1949) as Dublin Dan - Secret Service Detective (Not a Sherlock Holmes clone). Solax Film Co.

"Dublin Dan" - Reviewed by Louis Reeves Harrison - "... Dublin Dan of the Secret Service, a detective of valorous rather than subtle methods. Freed from the restrictions of Sherlock Holmes cautious methods, he penetrates the very centers of villainy without being killed or even seriously injured."¹⁴

¹² "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 13 Jul. - Sep. 1912 pg. 447

¹³ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 13 Jul. - Sep. 1912 pg. 484

¹⁴ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 13 Jul. - Sep. 1912 pg. 654

1912 - "The Adventure of The Button" - John Stepping (1870 -1932) or E. H. Calvert (1863 - 1941) as Young Sherlock. Essanay Film Co.

"The Adventure of The Button" - Licensed Film Stories column - "Caught in a drenching downpour of rain one day, Hobbs hikes for the nearest store and purchases a raincoat. Arriving home with his purchase he finds that one of the buttons is missing. Meanwhile a crook buys a duplicate of the raincoat at the same store and, that night, enters the place and escapes with the contents of the cash draw. The only clue found by the frantic storekeeper is a button torn from the coat as the thief has escaped out the window. Next morning the storekeeper posts a notice in his window with the button, offering a reward for the capture of the thief. Passing the window Mrs. Hobbs sees the advertised button and immediately suspects it to be the one from her husband's raincoat. Meanwhile, the thief who has a room directly above the Hobbs' apartment, also sees the sign, hastens to the house, secretes the money under the bed mattress, then calls the janitor and makes him a preset of the raincoat. Young Sherlock, a would-be detective, having been informed of the robbery, catches sight of Hobbs on the street wearing the raincoat with the missing button and attempts to arrest him as he is entering the apartment, but Hobbs takes him for a lunatic. Seeing this from the window, Mrs. Hobbs, fearing for Hubby's safety, locks him in a bedroom and has an awful time with a bill collector whom she takes for a sleuth. It is not until the janitor is called in and explains where he got his raincoat that the capture of the real thief is made by Mrs. Hobbs as he attempts to jump from the window. Consequently she is handed over the reward and matters end happily after all."¹⁵

1912 - "A Clue in The Dust" - James Craig as Brien the Sherlock Holmes Detective. Majestic Film Co.

"A Clue in The Dust" - "A detective story just filmed by the Majestic, in one reel, under the title of 'A Clue in The Dust', contains 124 scenes. The action is clean cut and the story is excellently told. James Craig as a Sherlock Holmes detective does some very good work."¹⁶

A list of other Holmes related silent films from 1912 includes the following.

1912 - "The Pipe" - Marshall P. Wilder (1859 -1915) as Sherlie Holmes, Detective. Vitagraph Film Co.

¹⁵ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 14 Oct. - Dec. 1912 pg. 1198

¹⁶ "The Moving Picture World" magazine Vol. 14 Oct. - Dec. 1912 pg. 1304

1912 - "Il violino e la pipa" or, "A Violin and a Pipe" - Giuseppe Gambardella (1880 - 1950). Società Italiana Cines.

1912 - "Sureluck Jones, Detective" - Actors unknown. Thanhouser Film Co.

1912 - "The Right Clue" - William Robert Daly as The Master Detective. Independant Moving Pictures Co.

1912 - "The Hypnotic Detective" - Charles Clary (1873 - 1931) as Professor Locksley. Selig Polyscope Company.

"The Hypnotic Detective" was "based on 'The Norwood Builder' with Professor Locksley as a Sherlock Holmes-like character"¹⁷



CHARLES CLARY

"The Hypnotic Detective" - "As revenge for being rejected by the Widow Morton, Dr. Pelham fakes his own death and frames her son Alfred for the crime. Alfred enlists the help of Professor Locksley, The Hypnotic Detective, to solve the crime."¹⁸

1912 - "Sherlock Holmes und seine Arbeit" - Actors unknown. k. Ang. Films? (Germany).

1912 - "Dupin and the Stolen Necklace" - Actors unknown. Urbanova Film Co.

¹⁷ Bergem, Phil, "Checklist of Holmes and Holmes Related Films", 2012

¹⁸ <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0479480/>

1912 - "Schlau, Schluar, am Schlauesten" - Actors unknown. Eclipse (France) "Smart, Smarter and Smartest" - a meeting of detectives Nick Winter, Nick Carter, Nat Pinkerton and Sherlock Holmes.

The year 1912 also saw the final three episodes of the Sheerluck Finch series of comedies parodying Sherlock Holmes, and Sheerluck Finch was still tracking down Three Fingered Kate.

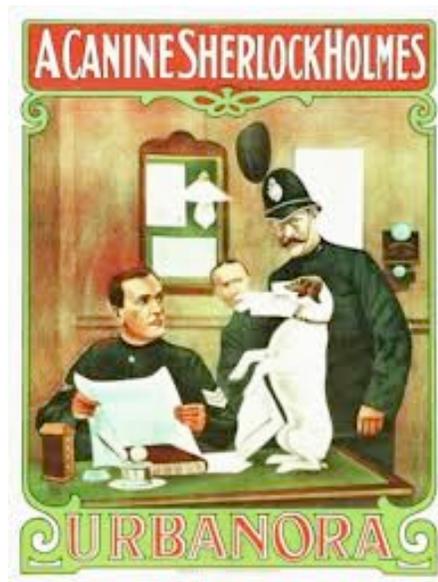
1912 - "Three Fingered Kate, The Case of The Chemical Fumes" - Charles Calvert as Sheerluck Finch. Cosmos Pictures (U.K.).

1912 - "Three Fingered Kate, The Wedding Presents" - Charles Calvert as Sheerluck Finch. Cosmos Pictures (U.K.).

1912 - "Three-Fingered Kate: The Pseudo-Quartette" - Charles Calvert as Sheerluck Finch. Cosmos Pictures (U.K.).

Last but not least, we have a predecessor to Wishbone, in Spot the Urbanora Dog.

1912 - "A Canine Sherlock Holmes" - Starring Spot, a dog who leads a detective to a robber's hideout and fetches the police. Urban Trading Co. (U.K.).



End of Part Seven
1913 starts in Part Eight

