# The ARMCHAIR DETECTIVE

A QUARTERLY JOURNAL DEVOTED
TO THE APPRECIATION OF MYSTERY,
DETECTIVE AND SUSPENSE FICTION
Volume 9 Number 4 October 1976

# The ARMCHAIR DETECTIVE



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# The Uneasy Chair

## NOTE FROM THE PUBLISHER

We at Publisher's Inc. are particularly pleased and delighted to be working with Al Hubin and *TAD* subscribers. Since the last issue, our mailbox has been jammed with encouraging letters and cards—many are reprinted in the letter column. New subscriptions and renewals have been coming in at an extraordinary rate. Thank you!

Al Hubin and Publisher's Inc. pledge to you that we will preserve the integrity of *TAD* and continue to improve upon the format and content. However, we need help from our readers. We would like to know what you think about *TAD* and specifically what you would like to see added to the magazine. What do you like and dislike? Would you like to see longer or shorter articles? Would you like to have more ads for mystery books and materials? Would you like to have the journal published more frequently—bimonthly, monthly? Last issue we introduced some art in the magazine and this will improve in each forthcoming issue. Would you like more graphics?

I hope this will be the start of a rewarding dialogue between reader, editor, and publisher that will contribute to the growth and improvement of *TAD*.

Richard L. Roe

Richard L. Roe
Publisher

## TAD "HISTORY" POSTPONED

Due to the exceptional volume of editorial material on hand for this issue of TAD, the "history" of *The Armchair Detective* mentioned in "The Uneasy Chair" in the last issue (TAD Vol. 9 No. 3) has been postponed to a future edition.


From Bob Briney:

The new TAD arrived in this afternoon's mail, and naturally has prevented me from getting anything else done today. Since there is no telling how much of TAD's new format is permanent, a lengthy reaction to the changes may not be appropriate; but in general I am quite impressed by the new physical accoutrements. The use of photographs and illustrations (to a much greater extent than before) opens the way for interesting features.

Illustrations, however, must be (a) appropriate to the subject or mood of the piece they accompany, and (b) well produced. Some of the illustrations in the present issue are little more than blotches. Also, even if old, public-domain material is used, the artists should be identified wherever known. Although—to take only one example—Maxfield Parrish might be just as happy *not* to accept responsibility for the botch which bad printing has made of his drawing on page 204. . . .

I am very pleased to see "Shadow Gallery" and hope that this series will be continued. Cover art for mysteries (both hardcover and paperback) is one of the unjustly neglected aspects of the field. Even though MWA gives two annual awards for cover art, the lists of nominees and the awards presentations themselves all too often focus on the book title and publisher and do not even mention the artist. At the Awards dinners the Ravens are frequently accepted by the publisher's art director, again with no mention of the artist. This downplaying of the primary creative role is—you should excuse the expression—criminal.

Perhaps future installments can pay some attention to Tom Adams, who did the remarkable covers for the Ballantine paperback reprints of Raymond Chandler a few years ago, and J. Lombardero, who did much good work for Pyramid Books and other publishers.

Ed Lauterbach ("Our Heroes in Motley") quotes Henry Brandon's joke about a Chinese chain being only as strong as its weakest chink. A similar play on words once appeared in one of Will Cuppy's *Mystery Book* columns (March 1947), in the course of some comments on Chinese characters in mystery fiction:

> "P.S.—Speaking of Fu Manchu, I hope I shall not be accused of poor taste if I reveal that a friend of mine who likes an Oriental touch in his fiction attempted to satisfy his craving with the wrong volume. He grabbed a copy of Mrs. Belloc Lowndes's excellent story, *The Chink in the Armour*."

In R. Jeff Banks's "Mr. & Mrs. North" there are a couple of slightly askew names. It is *Merton* Heimrich, not Milton (although in his appearances in the early North books no first name at all was given; in *Think of Death* he was Captain P. T. Heimrich; 'Merton' did not emerge until the beginning of the Heimrich series *per se*); and Dorian *Hunt*, not Hunter.

Knowing the multiple vicissitudes to which a writer's words are susceptible in the journey from typewriter to print, I hesitate to assign responsibility for such things as misspelled names. There do, however, seem to be rather a lot of them in this issue: Father Ronald Know, Isadora Persane, Paul Ernest, etc. Since one of TAD's primary functions is the conveying of (accurate) information, I hope some effort will be made by the expanded editorial and production staff to catch such small annoyances.

It was good to see "Doc" Lowndes's article on Father Brown again. I hope that TAD will be able to reprint others in this series. They are too good to remain buried in the pages of such a relatively little-known and increasingly rare magazine (*Startling Mystery Stories*).

David Brownell's article on LeFanu is a welcome and balanced discussion of this author. In the accompanying bibliography, it is unfortunate that no room could be found for a mention of the two Arkham House hardcover collections by LeFanu, *Green Tea and Other Ghost Stories* (1945) and *The Purcell Papers* (1975). The latter is not just a reprinting of the original 1880 edition, but is a new assortment of stories. It also contains "The Churchyard Yew," an interesting pastiche with which August Derleth once hoaxed the editor of *Weird Tales* magazine.

The "Indefinite Library of Detective-Crime-Mystery Fiction Since 1949" is a fruitful source of discussion and argument, as well as an interesting reading list. I can foresee each of the contributors being deluged with "But why did you include. . . " or "How could you have left out . . ." conversations (some of which I will undoubtedly start myself). Some of the omissions are surprising: only one Ruth Rendell title, and none at all by (just a small sample) Frank McAuliffe, Robert Parker, Ellis Peters, John Holbrook Vance. . . . Tch.

It is good to see that a volunteer has been found to continue the useful "Checklist of Mystery, Detective and Suspense Fiction." (Wouldn't it be great if a similarly ambitious individual could be found to produce a British counterpart to this list?) In the current installment, I note the omission of the Pyramid reprints of the Fu Manchu books. In case you want to remedy past (and possible future) omissions, here is the complete list (all by Sax Rohmer, all reissues of earlier editions, all with excellent new cover designs by—if I have deciphered the signature correctly—R. Krepel; also all $1.25):

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *The Insidious Dr. Fu Manchu* | V3945 | December 1975 |
| *The Return of Dr. Fu Manchu* | V3943 | December 1975 |
| *The Hand of Fu Manchu* | V3941 | January 1976 |
| *(The) Daughter of Fu Manchu* | V4024 | February 1976 |
| *The Mask of Fu Manchu* | V3942 | March 1976 |
| *The Bride of Fu Manchu* | V3940 | April 1976 |
| *The Trail of Fu Manchu* | V4070 | May 1976 |
| *President Fu Manchu* | V4056 | June 1976 |

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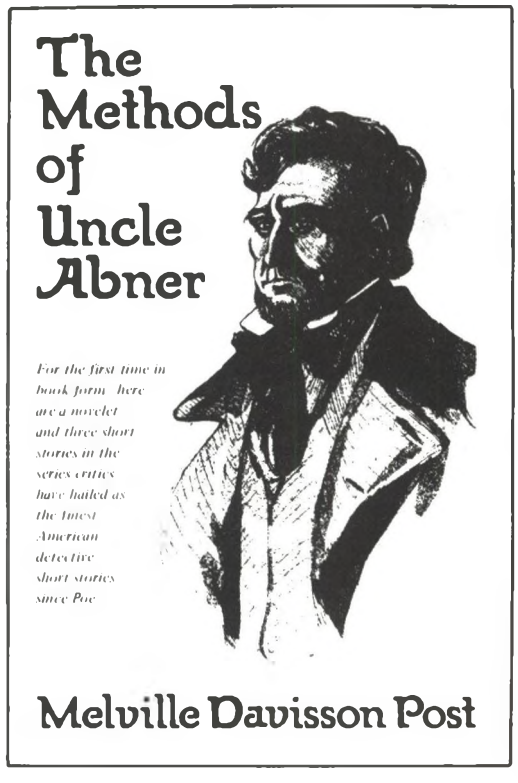
*—Stuart Schiff, Whispers*

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Originally published by James Hogg, London, in 1888, the story may well have been written—as Jacques Barzun and Wendell Hertig Taylor suggest—as an advertisement for the London and North-Western Railway, since the plot hinges on the inheritance of a sizeable fortune largely composed of stock issued by that firm. Edition limited to 500 copies. Pictorial wraps, 44pp. ***$4.00***

***THE ARSENE LEPINE-HERLOCK SOAMES AFFAIR, by S. Beach Chester.*** This lively burlesque is a double-barreled frolic in which the West End wizard, Sherlock Holmes, matches wits with the French national thief, Arsene Lupin (herein masquerading under the nimble aliases of Herlock Soames and Arsene Lepine). Our narrator is not Soames' faithful companion, Dr. Watts (though he is present), but rather a beleaguered Italian headwaiter who serves as a dim-witted foil in this classic contest in the art of one-upsmanship. Other characters include the noted Parisian detective Inspector Animal and the incredibly ancient Chevalier Auguste Dupin.

Written in 1912, *The Arsene Lepine-Herlock Soames Affair* sees its first United States publication here. The introduction is by Hugo award-winning science fiction writer Philip Jose Farmer, and the illustrations are by the much-praised cartoonist Rob Pudim. Edition limited to 750 copies, 550 bound in pictorial paper wraps, 200 in pictorial boards. 88pp., illustrated.

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# Letters

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| *The Drums of Fu Manchu* | V4030 | July 1976 |
| *The Island of Fu Manchu* | V4055 | August 1976 |
| *Shadow of Fu Manchu* | V4053 | September 1976 |
| *Emperor Fu Manchu* | V3946 | October 1976 |
| *Re-Enter Fu Manchu* | V3944 | November 1976 |

This series makes a nice case-study in publishers' stock numbers. The ones assigned to the Fu books do not follow the chronological order of the stories, nor the order of publication, nor the alphabetical order of titles, nor any other pattern I can detect.

Re: your description of the *Encyclopedia of Mystery & Detection*–Robert *A*. Briney, indeed! The Affair of the Altered Initial has by now passed the point of being funny. It was bad enough in the book itself (though it got corrected in a second printing–completists will therefore require *two* copies of the book!). Also, why mention only four of the Contributing Editors? Don't tell me you failed to turn the page and discover the other four?? [Sob! I confess I did! The names omitted are Daniel Morrow, Sam Moskowitz, Norman S. Nolan and Hans Stefan Santesson. Apologies . . .–AJH]

It was annoying to discover that the "Continued on page. . ." notices were omitted from the Letters column. Readers who consult the contents page and are referred to page 167 may conclude that there are only three pages of letters in this issue. It is then a minor surprise to find further installments on pages 232, 236 and 238, none of them signalled in advance.

Anyway: congratulations on getting the production work of TAD off your back, and long life to the magazine's new incarnation.

* * * * * * * * * *

From Jack Tannen:

In regards to the lead article in the Feb., 1976 issue of *The Armchair Detective* the authors should have done a little more research on the book *Murder for Pleasure* by Howard Haycraft. It is true that the book was published by Appleton in 1941 and was out of print for many years until reprinted with the text of the "Haycraft-Queen Definitive Library of Detective-Crime-Mystery Fiction" by Biblo & Tannen, Inc. in 1962. It is still in print, and Biblo & Tannen have also reprinted *The Art of the Mystery Story*, which Haycraft edited.

* * * * * * * * * *

From Howard Rapp:

I have just received my copy of TAD as published by you. It is very well done and I am very pleased with it. The double column page is a great improvement. The whole format is well done. My compliments to you.

* * * * * * * * *

From Margaret Jacoby:

I want to write and tell you how successful was the ad I put in TAD to sell my back issues. I had twenty-one responses in all–three foreign (Oslo, Australia and Germany), two from bookstores, six from the New York area, also Virginia, Indianapolis, District of Columbia, Lansing, North Carolina, Georgia, Iowa, California, New Jersey and Chicago. I finally sold them. Thank you very much for your help.

I also had a wonderful time writing and talking to people on the phone. I was surprised to see no response from around Boston at all and also there were only two women in the whole lot. . . .

* * * * * * * * * *

From Mitchell Grand:

I knew my subscription hadn't run out, but I was so enthused with the *new* Armchair Detective, that I thought the least I could do was send you a renewal. As someone with bad eyes (spent reading mysteries for 50 years), the old TAD gave me some reading problems. The new TAD is perfect.

* * * * * * * * *

From John Vining:

Your new format is great, and easy on the eyes. The articles were especially good this issue also.

I especially enjoyed Jeff Banks' article on Mr. and Mrs. North. Mr. Banks is rapidly becoming my favorite TAD contributor. His prior articles on the Carmody western series, and Ron Goulart's Avenger were much enjoyed by me. His college course on Mickey Spillane excites me. Spillane has written some good books. *The Erection Set* is much better than some of the stuff written by the geniuses of the genre. My recommendations for Mr. Banks to cover in his course are *I, The Jury* and *The Girl Hunters.*

In the hopes that I can prod someone into doing an article on the solve-'em-yourself mini-mysteries, I am enclosing a list of authors and detectives of such.

| Author | Detective |
|---|---|
| Julia Remine Piggin | Sara Hull, Librarian |
| Austin Ripley | Professor Fordney |
| Eric Doubleday | Insp. George Carter |
| A. C. Gordon | you, the reader |
| Donald J. Sobol | Dr. Haledjian |

These characters and authors all appear in written narrative. There are several who appeared in comic form. There is also Hannibal Cobb, who appeared in the old Look magazine Photo Crime series.

The new paperback best seller, *The Peoples Almanac*, has a number of interesting items for TAD readers. There are short fictionalized biographies of Sherlock Holmes, and borderline characters Tarzan, Superman, Wonder Woman, and The Lone Ranger (?). Also biographies of famous real spies, and histories of well-known murder cases.

Continued on page 296

# IN PRAISE OF GLADYS MITCHELL

By B. A. Pike

1976 offers admirers of Gladys Mitchell double cause for celebration: Miss Mitchell herself has her 75th birthday, and Michael Joseph publishes her 50th detective novel, *Late, Late in the Evening*.

## 1. BIOGRAPHICAL

Gladys Mitchell was born in the village of Cowley, near Oxford, in April 1901; she is of Scottish descent on her father's side. Her early years were spent in Oxfordshire and Hampshire, but in 1909 her family moved to Middlesex, where she was educated, at the Rothschild School, Brentford, and the Green School, Isleworth. She went on to Goldsmiths' College and University College, London, qualifying as a teacher, and gaining an extra-mural diploma in European history.

She became a teacher, of English, history, and games, and though she found success as a writer, she remained in the teaching profession until her first retirement in 1950. Her first post was in a small C. of E. school, St. Paul's, Brentford, where she stayed for four and a half years. She then taught at St. Ann's Senior Girls' School in Hanwell, remaining until the outbreak of war in 1939, specializing in history and athletics, and coaching, among others, a county hurdles champion in the mid-30s. After a year's enforced absence from teaching owing to illness, she joined the staff of Brentford Senior Girls' School, where, in addition to her usual history and games, she taught elementary Spanish, and where she remained until she retired in 1950.

After nearly three years of retirement, Miss Mitchell was invited to the Matthew Arnold County Secondary School for Girls to judge an inter-House gymnastics competition and to address the school. At the conclusion of her speech, the headmistress invited Miss Mitchell to join her staff the following term, and although she had had no intention of returning to teaching, the omens seemed favourable and she accepted the post offered her. In addition to teaching history and English, she wrote a number of plays for the girls to perform, including versions of the Greek legends of Theseus and Jason, the story of Jonah, and the Norse legends; an adaptation of 'The Frogs' of Aristophanes; and a musical called 'Alice Again,' based on the Lewis Carroll classics. Miss Mitchell finally retired from teaching in 1961, at the age of 60.

During her teaching career, Miss Mitchell lived first in Brentford and then in Ealing, but on her retirement she moved to the country, to Corfe Mullen in Dorset, where she is able to pursue two of her principal interests, the investigation of pre-historic sites and the study of mediaeval architecture. She has long been an enthusiastic student of Freud; and she attributes her interest in witchcraft to the influence of her friend, the late Helen Simpson. Her membership of the British Olympic Association witnesses to her enduring interest in athletics.

Miss Mitchell wrote her first novel in 1923, but it was rejected, as were three others: in desperation, she tried her hand at a detective story, and the result was *Speedy Death*, which Victor Gollancz agreed to publish despite the fact that it 'had every fault under the sun.' Since then, there have been forty-nine other detective novels to date, as well as the five novels which appeared in the Thirties under the pseudonym 'Stephen Hockaby.' Miss Mitchell was an early member of the Detection Club and contributed to one of the three concerted Club novels, *Ask a Policeman* (1934). She has also written nine novels for children, and a number of short stories, featured originally in *The Evening Standard*.

In 1966, under the pseudonym 'Malcolm Torrie,' she published *Heavy as Lead* and created a new detective, Timothy Herring, the Hon. Secretary of Phisbe, the Society for the Preservation of Historic Buildings. Five further Torrie novels have appeared to date, all featuring Timothy, latterly in collaboration with his wife, Alison.

Miss Mitchell also gave two radio talks, one, 'The Plaid Bag,' about her teaching life, and the other, 'Maps, Chaps & Murder,' about her writing methods.

## 2. QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q. Dame Beatrice, your detective, is a marvelous imaginative creation—how did she come about? Was it evolution or sudden total inspiration, pure invention or was she based on someone? Has she changed at all since 1929?

A. Physically—that is to say, in appearance—Dame Beatrice is based on two delightful and most intelligent ladies I knew in my youth. Her mannerisms and costume and her formidable brains are entirely my own invention. When I began to write *Speedy Death* I had no intention of making her my detective. She simply 'took over' and I became so superstitious about her that I would not *dare* to have another detective! I think she has changed a good deal since 1929, probably because I have changed too. She is much more mellow, I think, more sympathetic and kindly; also I have ironed out (I hope) her more irritating mannerisms. (I can understand why some critics don't like her. Personally, I should hate to meet her in real life.)

Q. Dame B. has not effectually aged since 1929. How old did you imagine her to be in *Speedy Death*? Did you make a conscious decision at some stage to ignore the passage of time, or did this just happen?

A. In *Speedy Death* I think I meant her to be about fifty-five years old, so I have had to ignore the passage of time in her case.

Q. Have you ever become tired of her and tempted to invent another investigator? Was Laura perhaps a way of achieving this?

A. No, I have never tired of her and Laura could never have taken her place. Laura is merely her Watson, as I found it necessary to have one. Laura is the kind of person I would *like* to be!

Q. A newspaper article once claimed that you returned to teaching because your books deteriorated, and Penguin say you were bored without the constant stimulus of teaching. Are these statements true? If so, which books were you unhappy about, and which marks the return to teaching?

A. The newspaper article is quite wrong. I know I have written some bad books, but I thought they were all right when I wrote them. I can't bear to look at some of them now, but that certainly is *not* why I went back to teaching. Penguin is right, insofar as I missed the stimulus of teaching, and also, of course, my books have never made much money. The book which marks my return to teaching is *Faintly Speaking*.

Q. Further to the previous question, were you really *bored* when not teaching? You seem an enthusiast for so many aspects of life that I can't imagine this.

A. No, of course I wasn't bored when I was not teaching. Boredom is a curse which has never descended on me, thank goodness. I think I missed the daily self-discipline and the irritations of classroom work, and, in any case, I had to make up my mind in rather a hurry if I wanted the post offered me. Having said I would take it, I could hardly duck out later, and I am very glad the decision was forced upon me at such very short notice.

Q. Which of your books do you dislike or consider sub-standard?

A. The books I dislike most are *Printer's Error* and *Brazen Tongue*—a horrible book—but there are others I'm not exactly proud of, and these are too many to mention.

Q. Which of your books do you like best, apart from *Laurels Are Poison*, which you are on record as liking particularly, since it reminds you of your college days?

A. Apart from *Laurels Are Poison*, I like best *The Rising of the Moon*, which recalls much of my Brentford childhood (I am Simon in that story and my adorable brother Reginald is Keith, and the same two children appear as Margaret and Kenneth in the fiftieth book, *Late, Late in the Evening*, which is about the two of us at Cowley before the motor works got there); and I also like *A Javelin for Jonah*, because it is about athletics and swimming; *Winking at the Brim* (I am a firm and fervent believer in the Loch Ness Monster), and *Convent on Styx*. My much younger sister is a Dominican nun, although we are not a Roman Catholic family, and she gave me the setting and most of the behind-the-scenes convent detail.

Q. The imminence of Dame Beatrice's fiftieth case suggests that your invention flows easily. Do you ever labour and grind away at a book, or do ideas always come freely? Which book(s) was/were easiest to write? How long does a book take to write? Do you write or type them?

A. I find every book difficult to write, partly because, even if I make a plan, I seldom keep to it. Then I am apt to get new ideas as I go along, and this often necessitates a certain amount of rewriting. I can't think of any book which it was easiest to write, but I have, fortunately, immense powers of concentration and a single-track mind, so, on the whole, I suppose each book takes about seven months to write, but I do a great deal of revision and a certain amount of research as I go along. I write in long-hand and send the MS away to be typed. Then I make alterations to the typescript, so that means more typing. I can't stand the sound of a typewriter, and can't *spell* on a machine, either.

Q. The Nine Stones of Winterborne Abbas—and may they be forever blessed—suggested *The Dancing Druids* to you. Did they do precisely that? Or did they fit in with an idea you already had? Can you think of any other starting-points like this? How *do* ideas suggest themselves?

A. Yes, the Nine Stones did suggest the book. The setting often does. I also heard a child say 'Soppy runner' to a young man in a track suit (as at the opening of this same novel). In the same way, I once saw a boy dressed as I have described Simon in *The Rising of the Moon*, and I coupled this with a dirty little junk shop in Brentford high street, although there was no connection between the two things until I made one.

Q. You are, as a novelist, a specialist in eccentric behaviour. Do your characters 'take over' and strike out on their own, or are you always fully in control of them?

A. No, I am *never* in control of my characters. They do and say things I never intended.

Q. Did you decide Dame B's profession before you read Freud or after? How great an influence (or source) was Freud for characters and emotional situations in your books?

A. I had read some of Freud's work before I thought of Mrs. Bradley, but Freud has no influence, so far as I know, on my characters.

Q. You were a member of the Detection Club (a founder-member?), but do not, I think, belong to the Crime Writers' Association. Is the latter part of this true, and, if so, is there any reason why not? Have you any specially happy or picturesque memories of the Detection Club, its meetings, its ritual, and your fellow-members? How did those collaborations work?

A. On the contrary, I have been a member of the Crime Writers' Association for many years, although I have never attended any of their meetings. Of the Detection Club, I have many happy memories. One of my proudest is that I was sponsored by Anthony Berkeley (Francis Iles) and Helen Simpson, and was initiated by G. K. Chesterton, our first president.

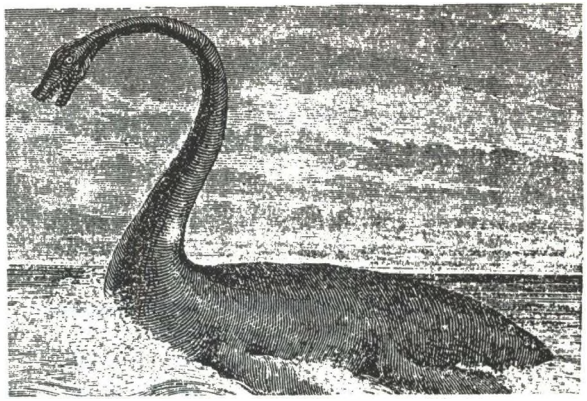
Apart from the brilliant, witty, charming and highly intellectual Helen Simpson, I liked Freeman Wills Crofts and Anthony Berkeley best of the early members, and, later, the delightful *boy* (as I thought and think of him) Edmund Crispin, always so courteous, happy and kind. I myself was one of the earliest members of the club, though not a founder. The main rules, according to the ritual, were that we should furnish all necessary clues to our murderers, ignore sinister Chinamen and poisons unknown to science, promise never to steal other people's plots, whether these were disclosed to us under the influence of drink or otherwise, and (as it began as a dining-club, although we had premises later) not to eat peas with a knife or put our feet on the dining-table.

I remember that at one annual dinner some important 'prop' or other for the initiation ceremony had been left at the club rooms to which, of course, nobody had thought to bring his or her key, and we took an Assistant Commissioner of Police with us to break into the house. He was a co-opted member, but did not seem to be exactly delighted to join us in committing the crime of breaking and entering, particularly as there were other daytime occupants of the building besides ourselves.

I was engaged in only one of the collaborations, which were for the benefit of club funds. Anthony Berkeley and Dorothy L. Sayers exchanged detectives and, of course, Anthony's manipulation of Lord Peter Wimsey caused the massive lady anything but pleasure. Helen Simpson took over Mrs. Bradley in exchange for Sir John Saumarez. We two, I am glad to say, got along famously and it is to her that I owe, as you know, Dame Beatrice's second name, Adela.

Q. Dame Beatrice's omniscience annoys some people (e.g., Barzun & Taylor). How often is she wrong? Do knowing readers delight in pointing out her (or your) mistakes?

A. I am not a bit surprised that she annoys people, because she never *is* wrong. Besides, she has a god-like quality of being much larger than life, and of being so much superior



to ordinary people that she can afford to be benign and kind even to my murderers, who seldom get hanged (in the old days) or suffer life imprisonment (in the later books).

People who write to me usually do so to point out errors of *fact*. A Scottish lady told me that one cannot put a car on the train from London to Glasgow, an Irish priest pointed out my misuse of Hibernian dialect, and a very irate Scotsman complained that no elderly female could perform the feats I attributed to Dame Beatrice. As, at the age of seventy-four-plus I can perform most of them myself, including throwing a knife, and hitting a post-card ten times out of ten at twenty-five paces with a rifle (a thing I don't believe I have ever mentioned as being one of *her* accomplishments, as her favourite weapon is a small revolver), I think the gentleman is wrong.

Q. Do you read other people's detective stories? If so, whose do you most enjoy? What sort of crime novels do you avoid? Which straight novelists do you admire? Who besides Wodehouse makes you laugh?

A. Yes, I do read other people's detective stories, but by no means all. I have a big collection of Agatha Christie, Ngaio Marsh (what a *superb* writer! How I wish I had written some of hers!), Dorothy L. Sayers and Edmund Crispin. Sad to say, I can't enjoy Margery Allingham or Michael Innes, but I like and admire all Nicholas Blake's detective stories. The only American writer that I can read is Hillary Waugh. I very much like John Dickson Carr as a person, but can't read his books.

As for straight novelists, by far my favourite is that very 'odd bod,' Ivy Compton-Burnett, of whose works I have a collection which I read and re-read. The authors, apart from Wodehouse, who make me laugh, are both American, Damon Runyon (although sometimes he is over-sentimental) and the creator (Leonard Q. Ross) of the immortal Hyman Kaplan.

Q. Are your non-fictional reading tastes clearly defined, or are you continually breaking new ground as new areas of interest catch your attention?

A. My non-fictional reading tastes are very clearly defined. I read poetry, mostly the Elizabethans, the Border ballads and the not-quite moderns up to about 1940, and I also read about real-life murders and the reminiscences of the great lawyers.

Q. Society is much changed since 1929, but the horrors of modern life seem happily not to impinge on your novels. Do you consider this to be fair comment, or have you in fact attempted to change with the times?

A. No, I don't think I have attempted to change with the times. In fact, I was glad to retire from teaching because I realised that my lovely and sweet-natured girls, although we were very fond of one another, were not on the same wavelength, kind to me though they were, and most patient with an old fuddy-duddy.

Q. You began as a novelist, but turned to detection because your novels failed to find a publisher. What sort of novels did you write? What are the Stephen Hockaby novels like? Why did you abandon 'him' and why did you use a male pseudonym?

A. I suppose my first novels were love stories, some with a historical background, but I've forgotten about them. The Stephen Hockaby books were rather good, I think, but I received very little encouragement over them. *Marsh Hay* was romantic, colourful and full of action and received splendid notices from the critics. *Seven Stars and Orion* was a historical novel set in the fourteenth century. *Gabriel's Hold* was set in a lighthouse, on detailed information supplied by one of the keepers of The Needles light, and the last one, *Grand Master,* was concerned with the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem and the Siege of Malta.

I abandoned them because the rewards were so utterly inadequate considering the amount of research involved and also because, after *Grand Master,* I wrote a book about the First Crusade which Michael [Joseph] turned down. so I felt that, one way and another, I had shot my bolt. I chose a male pseudonym because *Marsh Hay* was told in the first person by a young man.

Q. Do you read reviews of your books? Have you ever been hurt by a harsh criticism or exhilarated by a glowing one?

A. Before the war, I subscribed to a press-cutting agency. Nowadays, I read such reviews as come my way. Some are sent by the publishers, others by friends. No, I have never been hurt by harsh criticism and have had very little of it. People who rebuke me are very helpful, in fact, and I almost always agree with what they say. The good reviews always give me great pleasure and wonderful encouragement.

Q. Despite the fact that you deal in crime and specifically in murder, your work is essentially cheerful: however dark the deeds, you transmute them into entertainment. Are you an optimist? Is the writing of crime novels in any way therapeutic for you?

A. Yes, I suppose I am an optimist. I would far rather ignore (from cowardice, I think) the seamy side of life. I have only academic knowledge of romance and sex, love to laugh, and hate and detest violence and cruelty. The writing of crime novels is in no way therapeutic to me. I am fascinated by murder because it is about the last thing I would think of committing, apart from blackmail.

3. CRITICAL

Gladys Mitchell is a prolific writer, and her work is decidedly uneven. She has some formidable failings such as might sink a lesser writer altogether. Her books are sui generis, genial, high-spirited, bold and complicated, but lacking in the formal disciplines of the genre at the pitch of classical perfection. But it would be absurd to expect orthodoxy from a fantasist of genius.

Over-complication is probably Miss Mitchell's besetting sin: even the best of her books show signs of this, and in some the failure of organisation is such that the movement of the plot is at times barely comprehensible. *Here Comes a Chopper* (1946) begins admirably, only to tail off into vagaries of character, motive and incident that topple it over into incoherence long before the end. Maurice Richardson complained of *Dance to Your Daddy* (1969) that it is 'a murder mystery so mysterious that it's not easy to find out what is being done to whom, much less who by'; and Edmund Crispin's observation that Miss Mitchell narrates less well than she writes surely also refers to this sort of thing.

So much of Miss Mitchell's dialogue is allusive and inconclusive, and so many of her characters lay false trails in conversation, from the delicate half-truth to the lie direct, that the reader is sometimes in danger of not knowing what he is to believe, and is left floundering, still vague, even at the end, about details of the action and its motivation. *Death and the Maiden* (1947) is a distinct success and thoroughly entertaining, and yet it is possible to read it without being entirely sure of the motive for the crime.

Edmund Crispin has applauded Miss Mitchell's ear for distinctive idiom, justly, since much of her dialogue is sharp and savoursome. But here, too, there are lapses—in some of the banter in the earliest books, now sorely dated; in the casual exchanges of schoolboys and students (even when, somehow, the right spirit is achieved); and, specifically, in the uncouth roars of the amateur athletes at the beginning of *Adders on the Heath* (1963). Mr. Crispin regrets the resort to 'generalised Mummerset' for the servants in *Dance to Your Daddy*. Even when Miss Mitchell has clearly worked hard to achieve a particular dialect, the results are not always happy: all that careful Cockney in *Gory Dew* (1970) makes for decidedly uphill reading. The characteristic utterance of Laura, secretary and Watson to Dame Beatrice Lestrange Bradley, is a law unto itself: picturesque yet pertinent, with a vigorous crackle of metaphor, it moves in a headlong rush of slang, quotation, imprecation and flight of fancy, flippant, fervent, awestruck, satiric, literary, sporty, maddening at times, but always incisive and never dull.

In her narrative prose, Miss Mitchell is more consistent, and the melodramatic crudities of *Speedy Death* (1929) are not repeated; the account of Eleanor Bing, rampaging round the old home with a knife in her hand and murder in her

heart is not one's favourite passage from the works. In *The Longer Bodies* (1930), a reassuring advance in sophistication is apparent, and the cultured fluency of Miss Mitchell's style is well-maintained over the years (and was recently described –again by Edmund Crispin–as 'pellucid').

Despite her shortcomings, Gladys Mitchell remains one of the most consistently entertaining of detective novelists, her vices more than atoned for by her virtues. Much may be forgiven so colourful, varied and exuberant a writer, whose vivid inventive flair, after fifty books, happily shows no sign of declining. Repeatedly, the sheer verve of the narrative, the teasing intricacy and driving energy of the action carry the reader over obscurities of motive, and improbabilities of character and incident.

A feature of the novels is the uncommonly literal sense Miss Mitchell attaches to the word 'action.' Her most typical plots involve considerable outdoor activity, and an immense amount of ground is covered by her detectives: tramping the terrain is a sine qua non. Miss Mitchell explained some years ago, in a broadcast talk called 'Maps, Chaps and Murder,' that she uses the one-inch Ordnance Survey map, both in plotting the action of a novel in an actual setting and in adapting a real environment to a fictional one; and such books as *The Worsted Viper* (1943) and *Death and the Maiden* receive an added interest from the close co-ordination of setting and action encountered in them. *The Dancing Druids* (1948) is another very 'physical' book, and so, too, is *Dead Men's Morris* (1936), where the meticulously detailed locality is that of Miss Mitchell's own native heath. Laura treks and climbs, scrambles and swims in the interests of detection, and Dame Beatrice is equally game for any amount of leg-work, in the Western Highlands or the New Forest, or on a Lundy-like island called Great Skua. At other times, they sail all over the Norfolk Broads, or cruise around the islands off the West coast of Scotland.

Anything is liable to be grist to Miss Mitchell's mill–archaeology or athletics, black magic or clan lore, castles or caves, Shakespeare or Freud, classical mythology or natural history, folklore or beards in literature, psychic phenomena or the Loch Ness Monster. Islands and convents exercise their fascination, and schools and colleges felicitously recur. We get ferns in *Faintley Speaking* (1954), Old Crome in *The Dancing Druids*, Sherlock Holmes in *Watson's Choice* (1955), and word-association and nudism in *Printer's Error* (1939). The range of reference is wide and challenging: in *Laurels Are Poison* (1942) alone, Miss Mitchell invokes Webster, Keats, Shakespeare, George Eliot, Will Hay, M. R. James, Timothy Shy, 'the Grave of a Hundred Heads,' Toby Weller, Little Lord Fauntleroy, 'the doomed cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum,' Drayton, Ouida, Patrick Mahon, Swinburne, and Gilbert and Sullivan.

Miss Mitchell's sharp eye to eccentricities of character is further decided advantage. 'Hoodoo, Voodoo and Just Plain Nastiness' is the title of a chapter from *Tom Brown's Body* (1949), but it would serve equally well as a succinct overall statement of the kind of goings-on in which the author involves her characters. A critic described the characteristic ambience of Gladys Mitchell's fiction as 'rich, fantastical and tuppence-coloured,' and it is in just such an atmosphere, at once bizarre and engaging, that her characters move. Eccentrics abound, and, as if the author were declaring her hand at the outset, even the corpse is odd in *Speedy Death*–it is female, whereas the celebrated explorer to whom it belonged in life was male. *The Echoing Strangers* (1952) has a blackguardly old baronet with unnerving twin grandsons and a passion for cricket; *Merlin's Furlong* (1953), an unspeakable old don of staggering depravity, with a Negro maid and a mulatto valet; *Death of a Delft Blue* (1964), a trifurcate family of multi-national exotics, with names like Binnen, Opal, Florian, Derde, Sweyn, Rebekah and Sigismund; and *My Bones Will Keep* (1962), a lurid laird, 'big, red-headed, red-bearded, and with a wild and bright blue eye,' fixated on 'fabulous animals,' 'the petrified fauna of another and more picturesque age,' the basilisk, the gryphon, the werewolf, the salamander and the gorgon. In *Death and the Maiden*, Edris Tidson watches the River Itchen for a naiad; and in *Winking at the Brim* (1974), Sir Humphrey Calshott surveys Loch na Tannasg for a 'monster.' In *Come Away, Death* (1937), Sir Rudri Hopkinson convenes an expedition to probe the nature of the Eleusinian Mysteries, during which the head of one of the party is substituted for the serpents of Aesculapius, and in *Watson's Choice*, Sir Bohun Chantrey celebrates a Sherlock Holmes anniversary with a party at which the Hound of the Baskervilles makes an unexpected appearance.

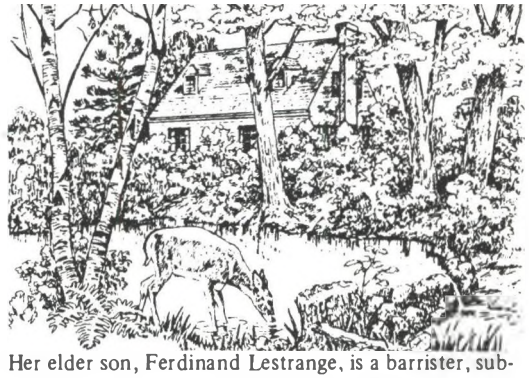
## 4. DAME BEATRICE

At the centre of all the fun and games, all the treasons, stratagems and spoils, from the first in 1929 to the latest in 1976, is that 'singular old lady,' Dame Beatrice Adela Lestrange Bradley. (Of enduring detectives, only Poirot has been active longer, and his last case came recently before the public. Leonard Gribble's Anthony Slade made his debut in the same year as Mrs. Bradley, but has not been heard from since 1967. Miss Marple, whose final exploit is being held in reserve, made her first appearance the year after Mrs. Bradley, in *Murder at the Vicarage* [1930].) We receive constant reminders of all four of her names: to Chief Constables and other old friends she is 'Beatrice'; to her principal nephews 'Aunt Adela'; and her family comprises both Lestrange and Bradley elements. (She also tells an old school friend that Helen Simpson instituted the fashion of calling her 'Adela'—and Miss Mitchell confirms that Miss Simpson did, in fact, give Dame Beatrice her second name.) She is Mrs. Bradley until 1955, making her first appearance thus in *Watson's Choice*, where there is a curious passage in which Laura seems to be laying false claim to the honour of D.B.E. for her employer, to impress a gullible matron; but she is Dame Beatrice in earnest in *Twelve Horses and the Hangman's Noose* (1956), and so she remains.

She is already old on her first appearance in 1929, and as the years advance Miss Mitchell solves the problem they present by ignoring it. Laura ages, and so does Hamish, her son: Dame Beatrice does not. Were she subject to the aging process like the rest of us, she would be over a hundred now, conceivably older, even, than Poirot: if 55 in 1929, as Miss Mitchell suggests, she would be 102 now; if 60, 107; and if 70, 117! In the same way, Miss Mitchell from time to time takes up members of the Lestrange-Bradley family when she has a use for them, but without any great concern for the march of time; thus, the Sally who is making her own way to her cousin Carey's farm in *Laurels Are Poison* in 1942, is presumably the young woman of the same name who goes monster-hunting in 1974, in *Winking at the Brim*, a mere 32 years later!

Dame Beatrice has a large and devoted family of whom we meet only one who is her co-eval, her 'massive sister-in-law,' Lady Selina Lestrange. Lady Selina's title must be her own, that of a nobleman's daughter who took her husband's surname on marriage, like Lady Violet Powell or Lady Antonia Fraser: it follows that she married one Lestrange brother and Dame Beatrice another—and a third must have fathered Carey. Lady Selina has two children, John, removed at 16 from Rugby to receive the benefits of co-education at Hillmaston, and Sallie (not to be confused with her cousin Ferdinand's daughter Sally). She alone of Dame Beatrice's relatives seems to dislike her, disapproving of her unconventional approach to life, and rather in awe of her gifts and her fame.

Dame Beatrice has been three times married, and she has at least two sons, one by her first husband, a Lestrange 'of French and Spanish descent,' and one by her second, whose name we never learn (and Miss Mitchell doesn't know it, either). Bradley must be the name of her third husband, the one who put an end to her 'brief second widowhood.' She refers in *Tom Brown's Body* to 'other sons' whom she likes less than her nephews, but she is trying to disconcert Miss Loveday at the time, and the only documented sons are these two.



Her elder son, Ferdinand Lestrange, is a barrister, subsequently a K.C. and, at least as early as *St. Peter's Finger* (1937), Sir Ferdinand. He is of 'distinguished' appearance and has, like his mother, a 'beautiful voice.' In court, defending his mother against a murder charge, he is 'suave' and 'hypnotic,' with 'the stage sense of the born actor.' We learn from his mother that he 'never quite accustomed himself' to her second marriage 'and its aftermath of a half-brother,' but the adult Ferdinand has no cause for unease on that score, since his half-brother takes himself off to India as a young man, to specialise in tropical diseases, and we learn little more of him. His son, John, 'a lively child, healthy and quite well-behaved,' appears in *Watson's Choice*. Ferdinand has two sons, Derek and Sebastian, and one daughter, Sally. Derek seems not to have a case of his own, but the others do, Sebastian in *Gory Dew*, where he emerges as a chip off the old block, defending the Moonrocket Kid with attack and finesse; and Sally in *Winking at the Brim*, where she joins Sir Humphrey Calshott's ill-fated monster-hunt. Ferdinand also appears to have at least two wives: Mrs. Bradley sends her love to Juliet in *St. Peter's Finger*, but it is Caroline who joins the Christmas reunion in *Laurels Are Poison*.

Of the nephews whom Mrs. Bradley prefers to her sons, Carey Lestrange is perhaps the most prominent. He is an amateur painter (of inn-signs in *Printer's Error*), and a professional pig-breeder, long-haired, good-looking, and with a 'lean and graceful strength.' *Dead Men's Morris* takes place in and around his Oxfordshire pig-farm, Old Farm, Stanton St. John, and he is notably active in *Printer's Error*, where he enters a nudist colony in the cause, and *Spotted Hemlock* (1958), where the popularity of his classes among the young ladies of Calladale Agricultural College shows that he retains his looks into middle age. Even when not in the front line, he is 'kept alive' by constant reference, as are his wife Jenny, his two children, and his devoted servants, the Ditch family.

Another nephew, Denis, is something of a changeling, since he is distinctly referred to as 'Lestrange' by a schoolfellow in *Laurels Are Poison*; but six years earlier, in *Dead Men's Morris,* he is established as a Bradley, and so he remains in *The Dancing Druids* and *Adders on the Heath.* He is at least ten years Carey's junior, though, like him, 'middle' rather than 'youngest' generation, his status as a nephew assured even if his surname is uncertain. He rides a motor-cycle and plays the flute, the violin, and the organ, and is known to his intimates as 'Scab.' There are hints of war-service in *The Dancing Druids,* not impossible if he left school in the summer of 1943 and enlisted at once. He is certainly no longer a boy on his later appearances, but a young man, 'discreet . . . bold and mettlesome.'

One other nephew, the 'saturnine' Jonathan, is indisputably a Bradley, and thus a courtesy cousin to the Lestranges. He meets his lovely wife Deborah during the action of *Laurels Are Poison*, when she is Mrs. Bradley's assistant at Cartaret College, and they recur together, married, in *The Worsted Viper* and *My Father Sleeps* (1944). Reflecting on the marriage, Mrs. Bradley is 'relieved and amused to note' that Jonathan 'appeared to have asserted himself with the simple, beautiful, selfish and comforting decisiveness for which his mother . . . was celebrated throughout the family, and which it had been evident for some time her son had inherited in full measure.' A further consequence of the marriage is twins.

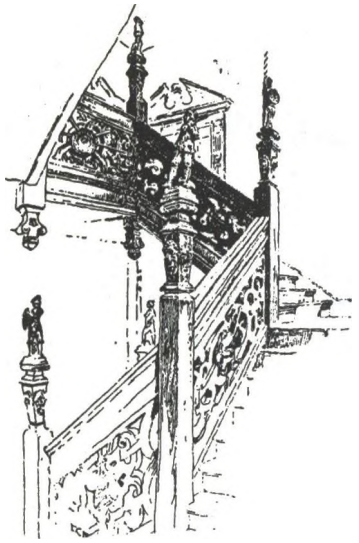
Other relatives occur from time to time, including another Lestrange nephew, Brian, active in *My Father Sleeps*; a great-niece, Fenella, also a Lestrange, to whom weird things happen in *A Hearse on Mayday* (1972); an unnamed sister-in-law and her son and daughter; and a named nephew, Philip, who knows about gas appliances and calls Mrs. Bradley 'Aunt Beatrice' (all in *St. Peter's Finger*). To tie these in to the main family would require more data than we are given, and, conceivably, more ingenuity than even Miss Mitchell possesses.

On her first appearance, Mrs. Bradley is described as 'dry without being shrivelled, and bird-like without being pretty,' reminding Alastair Bing 'of the reconstruction of a pterodactyl he had once seen in a German museum. There was the same inhuman malignity in her expression as in that of the defunct bird, and, like it, she had a cynical smirk about her mouth even when her face was in repose. She possessed nasty, dry, claw-like hands, and her arms, yellow and curiously repulsive, suggested the plucked wings of a fowl.' (Interestingly, that first image persists, recurring as late as 1970, when Toby Sparowe, in *Gory Dew,* is reminded by Dame Beatrice's 'yellow hands and wrists' of 'the wings of a pterodactyl.') If this is pitched rather strongly (like the description of Mrs. Bradley's teeth as 'the teeth of a relentless beast of prey; a creature tigerish, carnivorous, untamed'), its impact is undeniable, and Miss Mitchell maintains and diversifies the saurian image in subsequent books: in *The Mystery of a Butcher's Shop* (1930), where Jim Redsey reflects that he has 'never seen such a wicked old woman. She reminded him of some dreadful bald-headed bird he had seen in a picture at some time . . .you got the same sort of sick feeling when you looked at her . . . her little smile was like that he had seen on the face of a newt—no, a sand lizard—no, one of those repulsive-looking giant frogs. But when the woman . . . grinned a bit wider . . . then you could see what she must have been in a former existence! . . . an alligator!'; and in *The Saltmarsh Murders* (1932), where the curate Noel Wells, who 'liked ole women to be soothing,' is reminded of 'a deadly serpent basking in the sun, or of an alligator smiling gently while birds removed animal irritants from its armoured frame.' Over the years, the picture is sustained with remarkable consistency and vigour, Dame Beatrice continually unnerving people with the 'fiendish, anticipatory grin' of one or other of the larger Sauria (and even, once, with 'a herpetological leer'!).

There are variations: there is one striking comparison to 'the gargoyles on Notre Dame'; Richard Cowes in *The Longer Bodies* calls her 'a man-eating shark in disguise'; she is on record as 'howling like a hyena'; and her 'witch-like aspect' is noted from time to time. There are also numerous bird-like references—to the 'hawk-like gaze'; to the 'little beak' into which she purses her mouth; to the 'quick glance' like that 'of a bird seeing a worm'; to the hoots and screeches that punctuate her progress; and to her appearance on one occasion 'dressed like a macaw.' But it is the saurian aspect that most memorably persists, and the motif is developed in a host of metaphors, and recognised and preserved in the familiar name of her employer perpetuated by Laura (though originated by Mrs. Getty of Saltmarsh): Mrs. Crocodile, or Mrs. Croc. (During the earliest days of their acquaintance, Laura also refers to Mrs. Bradley as 'the Old Trout,' 'the First Grave-Digger,' 'the Third Witch,' 'the Duchess of Malfi,' 'Aunt Glegg,' 'La Belle Dame Sans Merci,' and 'Boadicea'!).

Despite her years, Dame Beatrice has 'raven hair' with 'not a touch of grey'; her 'snapping black eyes' are often 'brilliant'; and she has what Laura's friend Kitty calls 'the bones,' that give a face distinction regardless of age or lack of conventional appeal. We are constantly reminded, too, of her 'rich, remarkable voice,' 'no bird-like twitter nor harsh parrot cry, but a mellifluous utterance, rich and full, and curiously, definitely, superlatively attractive,' its exceptional beauty in dignified contrast to the clamorous cackles and shrieks with which she expresses her delight at the discomfiture even of those she loves.

Her clothes are invariably 'hideous,' and come 'as P.G. Wodehouse would put it, from another and a dreadful world.' She is on one occasion 'an easily-recognised figure' in a tweed suit in a 'lordly purple,' a jumper in 'another shade of purple' and a 'bright yellow hat'; or she outfaces all comers in a 'blue and sulphur jumper,' or an outfit in 'sage-green, purple and yellow.' En route for the dance at Cartaret College, she encounters Kitty, whose face visibly drops at the sight of Mrs. Bradley's 'orange and royal blue evening frock which was then in its fourth season.' At Saxon Wall,



she descends the stairs 'fearful and wonderful in a bright blue silk dressing-gown on which great dragons, gold, and red-gold and bronze, sprawled in the insolent splender of Chinese hideousness.' Some of her garments are evidently made by her own hands, since she is forever clicking away at her 'indescribable knitting,' and is once observed as being engaged on 'a shapeless piece of work in a particularly oppressive shade of gamboge.'

She is, as Deborah realizes on their first meeting, 'one of the most famous of modern women,' pre-eminent in her sphere, and of commanding intellect and erudition. Both to Deborah and the staff of Hillmaston School, she is '*the* Mrs. Bradley.' As 'psychiatrist and consulting psychologist to the Home Office,' with, in Laura's words, 'degrees from every university except Tokio,' she is immensely distinguished, her services in constant demand, her reputation, both in her professional and amateur capacities, wide and unquestioned. Her publications include 'her famous popular book on hereditary tendencies towards crime,' the 'Small Handbook to Psycho-Analysis' (1929), a paper on 'the psychology of martyrs, both Christian and otherwise,' and another 'On the Psychology of the Re-orientation of Paranoiacs.' At the Scheveningen Conference in 1964, she delivers a paper on 'Traumatic Regicides, with special reference to the death of Charles I.'

Her town base is a 'tall house in Kensington,' and she has lived at the Stone House in the village of Wandles Parva in Hampshire since 1930, when her arrival as a neighbour greatly distressed Mrs. Bryce Harringay. (Hannibal Jones' telegram from Saxon Wall places the village in Bucks, but this is clearly attributable to his distracted state at the time of dispatch). She is impeccably served by Henri, her cook, Celestine, his wife, who doubles as housekeeper and lady's maid, and George, her chauffeur, a notably fine driver, who maintains his employer's car to perfection, and is acknowledged as 'an advance on Henry Straker.' He gives perhaps the noblest service of all, far beyond the call of his primary duty; tough and intelligent, level-headed and resourceful in a crisis, he is absolutely rock-like in his reliability.

Laura Menzies becomes Mrs. Bradley's secretary after *The Worsted Viper* (1943) and before *My Father Sleeps* (1944) (possibly in *Sunset Over Soho* [1944], which comes between these two), and she plays some part in most of her employer's subsequent investigations. As Watsons go, she is notably flamboyant and positive, handsome, confident and clever, full of energy and ideas, of 'Amazonian' physique and extrovert disposition. Rather reluctantly, she marries a policeman, the 'handsome young Highlander' Robert Gavin (but 'David' in *Tom Brown's Body*); and their son, Ian Alastair Hamish, known by the last of his baptismal names, creates something of a precedent by maturing from infancy (in *The Twenty-Third Man* [1957]) through boyhood (in *The Croaking Raven* [1966]), to young manhood (in *A Javelin for Jonah* [1974]).

Two fellow-students of Laura's at Cartaret also recur: Kitty Trevelyan, later a celebrated hair-stylist and contributor to 'Vogue'; and Alice Boorman, who is married to a farmer called Cartwright in *Watson's Choice* (1955), but six years later, in *The Nodding Canaries* (1961), is 'Miss Boorman' again when, a P.E. mistress at Nodding, she sends an S.O.S. to Dame Beatrice. Wild attempts to rationalise Alice's situation through the death of her husband, the adoption of her children, and a simultaneous return to teaching and single blessedness, are totally confounded by the flat, unequivocal statement that Alice is 'a spinster' and, by implication, a virgin. (Miss Mitchell comments: 'This was a dreadful mistake of mine. I am quite sure that Alice never would have married, in spite of something she says, I believe, in *Laurels Are Poison*.')

Kitty is the glamorous one of the three, the one who transforms Mrs. Bradley's appearance at the dance, who is bored by the Broads, and who is clearly not destined to become a teacher. She marries Rafe Vinnicombe, by whom she has three children; but at the time of the Brayne historical pageant, of which she becomes organiser (in *Pageant of Murder* (1965)), she is known as Kitty Trevelyan-Twigg, either because she has remarried, or because she has adopted this as her professional name, 'Kitty Vinnicombe' having rather less chic. Alice is sensitive, serious and law-abiding, but by no means lacking in spirit. A fine gymnast, 'all india-rubber and muscle,' she makes a good job of both her manifestations, a capable farmer's wife in one, and a dedicated teacher in the other.

As a detective, Dame Beatrice is a striking exemplar of the omniscient school. Messrs. Barzun & Taylor refer, in *Catalogue of Crime*, to a story, 'Daisy Bell,' in which Mrs. Bradley is 'cut down to size'; but this is probably the unique instance of that process, since it is rare to find her even disconcerted, and the usual turn of events is quite the reverse. It is a safe prediction that she will 'lay down her cards and scoop the pool . . . She always does. She weaves the web and, in the end, the flies walk into it.' Her overall mental ascendancy is quite remarkable. Deep-dyed villains blush and fumble and fail to meet her

gaze, and Alastair Bing and Mrs. Bryce Harringay are only the first and second of a long line of people who are 'afraid of her.' Her habit of addressing most of the males she encounters, from schoolboys to Chief Constables, as 'child,' is further indicative of her benign Olympian supremacy.

In addition, she leads a charmed life. Other detectives get cracked over the head, or have boulders hurled down upon them, or bullets avoiding brain or heart by a hairs-breadth. But however many dark passages, or dank caves, or sinister, twilit gardens she may investigate, Dame Beatrice escapes all hurt, often turning the tables on those who foolishly imagine they can better her, protected at such times by 'a curious sixth sense which she trusted' (as well she might, since it informs her when 'all was not as it should be'). 'She was not unaccustomed to homicidal maniacs,' and predictably knows just what to do when one such threatens her with her own revolver: 'Mrs. Bradley suddenly moved faster than could possibly have been expected of an elderly lady. She seized, not her notebook, but a beautiful little bronze which she used as a paperweight. It represented the shepherd boy David.

"Down with Goliath," she said with an unearthly cackle, as the heavy missile found its mark and she, like a tigress, leapt after it towards the bulge. The bulge fell forward with a crash which shook the room.'

On an earlier occasion, during her visit to Saxon Wall, her reactions are equally quick, her behaviour just as picturesque: 'Something sang through the air. Mrs. Bradley jerked her body to the left. A large hammer swung past her, and cut a chunk of turf out of the lawn when it fell. Mrs. Bradley retrieved it, swung it thrice round her head as the arm clothed in white samite once had waved the sword Excalibur, and then darted in among the rhododendron bushes.' It is good to know that in Miss Mitchell's most recently completed novel, *Noonday and Night*, she is still evading ill-wishers by the time-honoured device of retreating to the powdering-closet while a deceptive dummy awaits the murderous attack.

Physically, she is very much stronger than she looks, her arm 'deceptively stick-like' and capable of exerting and sustaining considerable pressure, and even the 'yellow forefinger' with which she habitually prods people in the ribs, 'like an iron bolt.' When Laura is downed in a fight, Mrs. Bradley performs 'a feat . . . to make strong men quail,' picking up 'the hefty Laura in her arms' and carrying her off 'to put her to bed as though she had been a small child.' (Laura returns the compliment in *My Father Sleeps*, bearing Mrs. Bradley in her 'powerful grasp . . . on to Scottish soil, much . . . in the manner of the Roman eagles being carried on to disputed territory'). Elsewhere, she proves herself 'no mean performer at a game in which muscle and temper, skill, boldness and patience all played a considerable part.'

She has nerves of steel, and 'alone among those present seemed entirely unimpressed by the manifestations' of the

Athelstan ghost. No one as adept as she at avoiding injury from the forces of evil in this world could possibly fear harm from the agents of any other. At times, even, she seems herself in tune with other worlds, with her 'eldritch' cries and oracular pronouncements, and it is notable that even before we first meet her Bertie Philipson expresses the view that she 'would have been smelt out as a witch in a less tolerant age.' To Nao, the Japanese servant at Saxon Wall, she is 'the small wise woman,' and in *Tom Brown's Body*, Mrs. Bradley herself acknowledges her curious kinship with the witch Lecky Harries, from whom she obtains 'the magic book of her ancestress, Mary Toadflax': 'We be of one blood, thou and I.' As if that were not sufficiently explicit, a chapter is entitled 'Hecate at School House'; and, at the end, as Mrs. Bradley departs with her treasure, 'a small hedgehog remained motionless. Then it lifted its tiny snout and whined three times.' She shares with the Ancient Mariner not only a 'skinny hand,' but the capacity to hold a man 'grounded as though by some magic spell.'

Once involved in a case, Dame Beatrice spares no effort or expense, conducting innumerable interviews regardless of the sometimes considerable distances separating those whom she wishes to consult, and instructing George to drive her the length and breadth of England and Scotland (Wales, too, in the fifty-first book, *Noonday and Night*). Nor does she jib at jaunts overseas: if the caves at Lascaux seem germane to an enquiry, to Lascaux they go: and no sooner has she decided that 'the visit to Naples *was* necessary,' than she is organising the aeroplane tickets. She also takes physical discomfort in her vigorous stride, scrambling over mountainsides in streaming rain; sinking on her stomach in 'the harsh and saturated heather'; or crawling her way painfully but with infinite patience through a narrow, cramping tunnel. Far from dying of pneumonia, or even aching all over, after these and comparable experiences, she emerges serenely unaffected, immune to the ills of lesser mortals.

Dame Beatrice has three or four principal props: 'the small notebook which was her invariable companion,' in which she records her perceptions and suspicions in 'her neat, illegible script,' usually in a shorthand of her own devising; 'the small magnifying-glass which she invariably carried'; and the 'small electric torch' that also accompanies her everywhere. All three are accommodated in 'her capacious skirt pocket,' at moments of crisis together with her revolver; at other times, with a small tin of biscuits or a flask of brandy.

There is no predicting what she will do next, or what other accomplishments she will manifest. Aubrey Halliday praises her as a 'hot' billiards player, and she delights the boy Richard at Saxon Wall by 'teaching him how to throw a knife,' scoring a spectacular bulls-eye herself 'with what looked like a negligent flick of the wrist.' Also at Saxon Wall, she practises a 'thirties form of karate on the vicar. She startles a nun by lip-reading, and frequently exercises her power to induce hypnosis. Not the least of her many remarkable achievements are the one and a half murders she commits, for the first of which she composedly stands trial (on the second occasion, to be scrupulously accurate, she knowingly causes a death rather than commits a murder).

Two final instances must suffice to indicate the range of her capacity to take us by surprise. When the ballcocks at Athelstan Hall give trouble, there is no need to send for a plumber: '"Student," said Mrs. Bradley . . . "do you understand the nature and function of the ballcock?"

"N-no, Warden," replied the girl, looking thoroughly alarmed.

"Good," said Mrs. Bradley, thoughtfully taking her arm in a firm grip. "Roll up your sleeves as we go. I will teach you all about them."'

On the other occasion, an indisposed lady cellist is unable to continue with her concert, and Mrs. Bradley deputises for her, stilling a restive audience with her renderings of the 'Ave Maria' and a Spanish dance, and 'smirking' the while 'like a satisfied boa-constrictor.'

Beyond all question, 'She scoops the pool.' There is no one quite like her: nor, of course, could there be.

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AVAILABILITY NOTE

Only the most recent titles are likely to be available from Michael Joseph, with the exception of *Faintley Speaking*, which they have just reissued.

Four titles were reissued by the now defunct firm of Tom Stacey: *The Rising of the Moon* in 1971; *St. Peter's Finger* and *Here Comes a Chopper* in 1972; and *Laurels Are Poison* in 1973. The last at least was remaindered and available from Claude Gill of Oxford Street during 1975.

Lythway Press of Bath, a branch of Cedric Chivers, reissued *Death and the Maiden* in 1973.

Severn House of Wanstead, London, reissued four titles in 1975: *The Echoing Strangers; Merlin's Furlong; The Dancing Druids;* and *The Devil's Elbow. The Man Who Grew Tomatoes* appeared early in 1976, and others are likely to be revived later.

Penguin issued thirteen titles altogether, marked with a P in the checklist. None is currently available, but old copies are worth raking the second-hand shelves for.

# THE American REGIONAL MYSTERY

By Marvin Lachman

## XII: Hawaii and Northern California

We ended the last article in this series in Alaska and resume in Hawaii, a state very dissimilar except that neither is contiguous to the "original 48," and each achieved statehood almost half a century later than their fellows. If Alaska's climate is extremely harsh, Hawaii's is very pleasant. Mysteries set in Hawaii frequently emphasize the contrast between violent death and the almost ideal climate and physical beauty of these islands.

Some writers have enjoyed Hawaii so much that they settled there. William E. Huntsberry and his wife were on a round-the-world trip when they reached Hawaii—and they went no further. There he set two books, *Harbor of the Little Boats* (1958) and *Oscar Mooney's Head* (1961), and received Lenore Glen Offord's accolades for his "lovingly accurate Hawaiian background." Don Von Elsner now lives on the island of Hilo where, in addition to writing, he has been in the real estate business. His *How to Succeed at Murder Without Really Trying* (1963) is one of the few Hawaii-based mysteries which takes place largely indoors, not surprising since Von Elsner's protagonist is bridge "bum" Jake Winkman, and the setting is a tournament at a Honolulu luxury hotel.

If a few mystery writers have settled in Hawaii, many more have visited there and fictionally brought their detectives along. In Gardner's A. A. Fair novel, *Some Women Won't Wait* (1953), we have the traditional leis for visitors, views of Koko Head, Diamond Head, and the Royal Hawaiian Hotel where Bertha Cool stays. We also see Donald Lam, built to be more adventurous, on an outrigger canoe.

When Matt Helm visits Hawaii in Donald Hamilton's *The Betrayers* (1966), he is unhappy at first. His vacation has been spoiled by a secret assignment, and he is disappointed at not getting "leid" on his arrival. Nor does he like the too concealing muumuus in which many girls are garbed. Not impressed with his initial view of Honolulu's Waikiki Beach on Oahu, he soon loses himself in travel and action, visiting some of the other islands, including Hawaii, Molokai, and Maui where he sees the hula performed and engages in a memorable fight in a sugar cane field.

"Leslie Ford" traveled throughout the world, absorbing local color for her novels. Out of a short stay in Hawaii came *The Honolulu Story* (1946). It is testimony to Hawaii's romantic qualities that in this book Colonel John Primrose proposes to Mrs. Grace Latham.

Although the Leslie Ford books are not strictly Gothics, they have always had their greatest appeal to feminine readers, and Grace Latham does have a tendency to get her-

self into H-I-B-K situations. Interestingly, two decades after *The Honolulu Story* there has sprung up a sub-subgenre which I call "Hawaiian Gothics" because it uses the usual trappings of Gothica against the background of the islands.

Mildred Davis's *Strange Corner* (1967) tells of the return from the mainland of a young bride whose recurring nightmare is that someone wants to kill her. Mrs. Davis includes a brief Hawaiian-English dictionary, defining some of the local words she uses, e.g. "haole," "wahine," and "imu." In *The Chinese Door* (1967), Virginia Coffman gives us some "visual" definitions of Hawaiian words, describing women's clothing, ranging from the loose muumuus and the princess-shaped holokus to the sexy cheong sam which originated in Hong Kong. Her book opens as a famous young woman (now secretly a CIA spy) is given a traditional welcome in Honolulu Harbor. The band from the Royal Hawaiian Hotel plays "Aloha," and leis of white-gold plumeria, vanda orchids, carnations, and pikake are distributed.

*The Chinese Door* and *Thunder Over the Reefs* (1967) by Paula Minton stress the extremely congenial mixing of the yellow, white, and black races in Hawaii. Miss Minton dedicated her book to "Mark Egan, Managing Director, North America Hawaiian Visitors' Bureau. His concept of brotherhood and gracious living epitomizes the true Aloha spirit of all Hawaii. May that spirit of our 50th and newest state pervade all the other 49." The Minton book also defines many local words, describes local customs, and gives the reader some useful lessons on local geography, flora, and the popular Hawaiian sport of surfing. Its values as a mystery, however, are minimal.

Other Gothic mysteries include Naomi Hintze's *Aloha Means Goodbye* (1972), set on the island of Hawaii, and two books by Jean Francis Webb, *Roses from a Haunted Garden* (1971) and *Somewhere Within This House* (1973). The latter, set in Honolulu during the 1880s, the last days of the monarchy of Queen Liliuokalani, has, as heroine, the governess to a wealthy landowner's blind daughter.

The male equivalent to the Gothic heroine, the hard-boiled hero (both are subject to many, albeit different, clichés), is often found in Hawaii. An early visitor was Jo Gar, Raoul Whitfield's Philippine detective in "Yellow Death" and "Red Dawn," two chapters of *The Rainbow Murders* (1937); reprinted in *EQMM* (April-May 1949). The Asian-Pacific scene is the specialty of Norman Lee, who wrote such books as *Sydney for Sin* (1956) and *The Lady from Tokyo* (1961) under the pseudonym "Mark Corrigan." One Corrigan mystery is *Honolulu Snatch* (1958).

Thomas B. Dewey's tough detective Pete Schofield visits the islands during the course of *Too Hot for Hawaii* (1960). *Hawaiian Eye* (1962) by Frank Castle is a paperback novel based upon a popular television show. A number of years later, *Hawaii Five-O* achieved popularity with a similar format, and waiting in the wings to turn it into two novels was another mystery writer, Michael Avallone,

who penned 1968 and 1969 derivations. Patrick Morgan has written several hard-boiled Hawaiian mysteries including *Hang Dead Hawaiian Style* (1970), featuring a secret agent named Bill Cartright whose hobby, surfing, helps him to solve a case involving opium distribution among local "beach bums."

One of Ross Macdonald's early efforts, *Trouble Follows Me* (1946), originally published under his own name, Kenneth Millar, provides an excellent picture of wartime Hawaii:

> In February, 1945, Honolulu was a small blend of Los Angeles and prewar Shanghai, shaken up with the carnival end of a county fair, and poured out carelessly at the edge of the sea. Men in uniform, white, tan, khaki, grey, green, pullulated in the streets looking for a place like home and not finding it.

The hero is a navy officer on Pacific duty—as was Millar. The Paula Minton book previously mentioned is the only mystery of which I am aware which is set in Honolulu on December 6 and 7, 1941, just prior to and during Japan's infamous raid on Pearl Harbor.

More remote in time, but of equal historical interest, are two works by Jack London, who spent considerable time in Hawaii. His "Koolau the Leper" (*House of Pride*, 1912; reprinted in *EQMM*, August 1956, as "King of the Lepers") is a moving picture of the leper colony on Molokai. *The Assassination Bureau* (1963) was completed by Robert L. Fish from a manuscript left unfinished by London at his death in 1916. It includes descriptions of a then sparsely populated Honolulu with its Waikiki Beach and Diamond Head as "the mountains seem to sweep up from the city. The clouds are like puff-balls hanging over the peaks."

Juanita Sheridan, who lived in Hawaii for seven years, has received more praise for the authenticity of her Hawaiian settings than any other mystery writer. She started slowly; of *The Kahuna Killer* (1951) Anthony Boucher said, "The local color may be a little lushly laid on for some tastes." However, becoming a Sheridan convert, he said of *The Mamo Murders* (1952), "... no glamorized touristic-technicolor

picture of Hawaii, but a detailed portrayal of many conflicting ways of life."

Continuing to give readers much more of Hawaii than can be found in travel folders, Miss Sheridan wrote *The Waikiki Widow* (1953) and a novelette, *There Are No Snakes in Hawaii* (*EQMM*, October 1954) which one second prize in that magazine's then-annual contest. In the latter, very few aspects of Hawaiian life escaped the author's eye (and pen). We have mountains, beaches, canyons, and waterfalls along with the flora and fauna found therein. We learn of local costumes and customs and vicariously attend a mouth-watering luau (native feast) with its seemingly infinite variety of food cooking in the imu (oven). Introducing the novelette, Ellery Queen aptly said that a Juanita Sheridan mystery is "the next best thing to an all-expense paid trip to Hawaii."

Commenting on Honolulu's mixture of Caucasians and Orientals, John P. Marquand described it as "that city that was neither East nor West." It is a locale in which the famous Japanese secret agent Mr. Moto operates effectively, especially with his proficiency in different Asian dialects. He is in prewar Hawaii in *Think Fast, Mr. Moto* (1937) to investigate a possible source of American money being smuggled into Manchuria. He also becomes involved with a local gambling house.

Mr. Moto is actually a malahini (Hawaiian for stranger), but the most famous Oriental sleuth of them all, Charlie Chan, is just the opposite—very much kamaaina. He is a detective-sergeant (later inspector) in the Honolulu police and resides in a house on the city's Punchbowl Hill with his wife and eleven "honorable children." Biggers declared that Chan was not based on a real person, but Chang Apana of the Honolulu police claimed he was the basis for the detective. Though well traveled (especially in the movies, which are not based upon the Chan novels of Earl Derr Biggers), Chan did solve mysteries at home in *The House Without a Key* (1925) and *The Black Camel* (1929). The first page of the former book, the first Chan novel, includes a description of Waikiki at sunset as "the shadows cast by the tall cocoanut palms lengthened and deepened, the light of the falling sun flamed on Diamond Head and tinted with gold the rollers sweeping in from the coral reef." Hawaii's customs, as well as its physical setting, are seen through the eyes of a proper Bostonian spinster who has fallen in love with the islands. In a chapter prophetically entitled "Beyond the Bamboo Curtain," she discovers local food at a luau, sampling "poi served in individual calabashes, chicken stewed in cocoanut milk, squid and shrimps, limu, or seaweed—even raw fish." In the same chapter she also discovers a murder; enter Charlie Chan. *The Black Camel*, about the murder of a beautiful movie star at Waikiki Beach, begins with an ocean liner sailing into Honolulu's harbor.

> There stood Diamond Head, like a great lion . . . the curved beach of Waikiki and, up ahead, the white walls of Honolulu half hidden in the foliage behind the Aloha Tower.

Charlie Chan has also spent considerable time in Northern California, and Biggers frequently describes San Francisco, especially its harbor and the fog which makes the city so distinctive. Writing before he created Chan, Biggers in a 1924 novelette, *The Dollar Chasers* (reprinted in *EQMM*, February 1970), tells of a poor reporter about to sail on a millionaire's yacht for a weekend cruise down to Monterey. The entire party resolves to get a good night's sleep preparatory to an early departure the next morning, but "late in the afternoon, the fog comes rolling in, and vim and vigor take the place of that cold-gray-dawn sensation," and they head for a night on the town.

Fog is a recurrent theme in *Behind That Curtain* (1928). Sixteen years previously, on a foggy January night, a man was slain in his London office. Now, a visiting Scotland Yard detective is killed in San Francisco. Charlie Chan, passing through that city on his way home, is fortunately on hand to investigate this crime and its connection to the earlier murder. Biggers provides another excellent description of a San Franciscan's reaction to the fog:

> . . . he heard the tolling of the fog bell over by Belvedere, and he knew that the sea mist was drifting in through the Gate. By midnight it would whirl and eddy about his lofty home, shutting him off from the world like a veil of filmy tulle. He loved the fog. Heavy with the scent of distant gardens, salt with the breath of the Pacific, it was the trademark of his town.

*Charlie Chan Carries On* (1930) is another novel which begins with a murder in the London fog and includes, among many stops, one in San Francisco—where, inevitably, it is also foggy.

Others have less romantic views of the harbor especially because of the presence of that island prison, Alcatraz. Joe Rayter described it in *Asking for Trouble* (1955), as "a decayed tooth in the harbor." In his first book, *The Stalker* (1971), Bill Pronzini describes the rain, chill, and "smell of acrid brine in the air." He also pictures "the ugly dead gray rock of Alcatraz, a toad's wart in the leaden surface of the bay." Two other mysteries, not otherwise strong in description, which manage to convey an unromantic picture of the harbor and fog are David Dodge's *It Ain't Hay* (1946) and Hugh Lawrence Nelson's *Dead Giveaway* (1950).

It is more than fog coming in from the Pacific which makes San Francisco such a distinctive city and the favorite of so many people, including this writer. One feature is San Francisco's hilly topography with cable cars riding up through Chinatown, over Nob Hill, and then down to Fisherman's Wharf at the harbor.

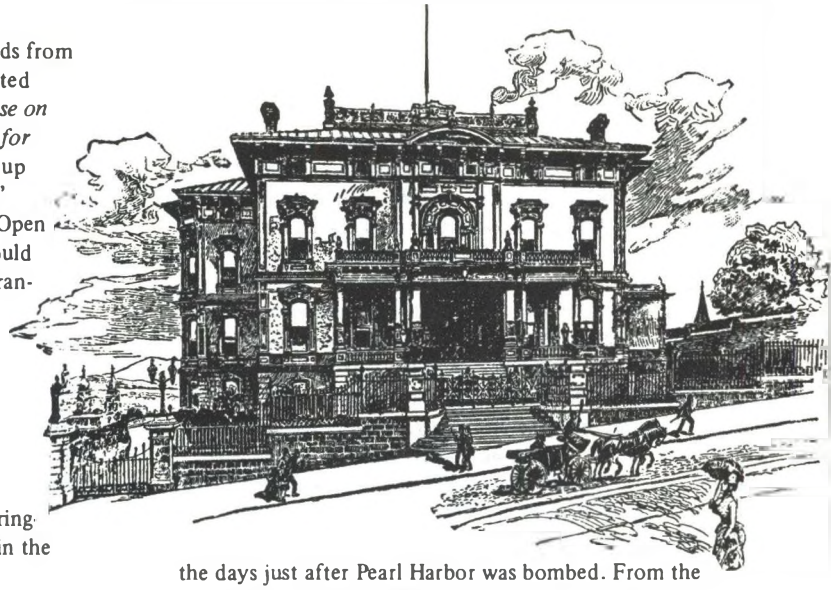
Lenore Glen Offord, mystery reviewer for the *San Francisco Chronicle*, knows the hills. Her *Murder on Russian*

*Hill* (1938) is set on Lombard Street where it descends from Hyde with ten hairpin turns in a single block (I counted them when I was there). Dana Lyon wrote *The House on Telegraph Hill* (1948), and Howard Rigsby's *Murder for the Holidays* (1951) begins with a character walking up "the steep incline of the saucy hill called Telegraph."

Charles Caldwell Dobie's 1935 short story, "The Open Window" (reprinted in *EQMM*, September 1944), could be set anywhere but for one description of its San Francisco setting:

> He had a room in an old-fashioned house on the east side of Telegraph Hill. The room was shabby enough, but it caught glimpses of the bay and there was a gnarled pepper tree that came almost to its windows and gave Fernet a sense of eternal, though grotesque, spring.

San Francisco with its almost complete absence of extremes of temperature comes closer to having a spring like climate (albeit a damp one) than any other city in the United States.



San Francisco's growth was due to its fortuitous location: a natural harbor and nearby gold fields where the precious ore was found in 1848. Bret Harte wrote many stories of this era, a number of which may be classified as mysteries. Credit Ellery Queen, editor, with *this* discovery. He reprinted several Harte stories which are set in Northern California, including "An Ingenue of the Sierras" (*EQMM*, April 1955), "A Ghost of the Sierras" (*EQMM*, August 1955), and "The Story of See Yup" (*EQMM*, November 1955). Harte was once Secretary of the California Mint. Two modern writers, Donald E. Westlake and Brian Garfield, combined their talents in a 1973 novel, *Gangway,* set in San Francisco in 1874, about Gabe Beauchamps, a New York crook, and his scheme to steal the gold in that mint.

San Francisco's Chinatown, the largest Chinese community outside Asia, sprang up following the large-scale immigration of Oriental labor for the transcontinental railroad which terminated in that city. Lemuel De Bra wrote many stories of San Francisco's Chinatown, including such mysteries as "The Knife of the Celestial Brotherhood" (1925; reprinted in *EQMM*, July 1948) and "A Life–A Bowl of Rice" (1933; reprinted in *EQMM*, February 1948). Erle Stanley Gardner was a well-known Sinophile, a trait he gave to protagonist Terry Clane in *Murder Up My Sleeve* (1937), a novel set in "the weird intermarriage of the Occident and the Orient which is San Francisco's Chinatown." In this book, Gardner is much stronger on description and local color than he normally is.

San Francisco's most famous event, the 1906 earthquake and fire, has not been used as background for any mystery of which I am aware. Quite possibly it would overwhelm any plot by the enormity of its catastrophic events. Another catastrophe, World War II, touched San Francisco less directly. Several books, written during the war, capture the city's flavor at the time. *The Yellow Violet* (1943) by Frances Crane is set during the days just after Pearl Harbor was bombed. From the pen of the one mystery writer who more than any other is aware of color, we get pictures of the harbor, including the following:

> The cloud which had stood behind Tamalpais an hour ago now blotted the mountains from view. In the other direction the air was clear and the colors were pink, blue and amethyst, but the daintily colored scene had an odd somnolent violence. A stately row of warships was moving slowly towards the Golden Gate.

Mrs. Crane describes the pleasant eucalyptus tree scent in the San Francisco air as does her contemporary, Leslie Ford, in *Siren in the Night* (1943). Grace Latham and Colonel Primrose are in San Francisco during the spring of 1942, a time of air raid drills (a murder occurs during one). Because this is before the later realization that this had been a shameful period in our history, there is gladness at the forced internment and evacuation of the city's Japanese population. There are descriptions of the harbor and the breathtaking view from the Top of the Mark (Mark Hopkins Hotel). Leslie Ford, who visited San Francisco to write this book, also notes, "the cable cars clanging up the hill [California Street] were jammed with people sticking on like caviar on a 45° oblong of toast." With considerable accuracy, the author has one character say, "I sometimes think San Francisco is the last stronghold of colorful individualism left in the country."

In Patrick Quentin's *Puzzle for Puppets* (1944), Peter Duluth, a naval officer, is in San Francisco on leave, and he is acutely aware of the city's crowded wartime condition. "Sailors, thousands of them, crawled up and down Market Street like a plague of blue locusts." He hopes to spend a weekend with his wife, Iris, but finds overcrowded hotels, nonexistent taxis, and murder all conspiring against him. Soon the Duluths are on an involuntary whirlwind tour of the city including Chinatown's narrow streets, a cable car ride: "That crosstown ride lurching up hills and zooming down hills, added the final touch of insanity to our mission."

San Francisco is a wealthy city and one jealous of its reputation for promoting the arts. A 1953 Quentin novelette, *The Laughing Man Murders* (reprinted in *EQMM*, August 1963), has a cast of prosperous characters and a murder committed in a San Francisco art gallery. At least three novels deal with the arts (and murder) in this city. Dolores Hitches's first novel, published as by D. B. Olsen, was *The Clue in the Clay* (1938), about the murder of a sculptress in her San Francisco studio. In Lenore Glen Offord's *My True Love Lies* (1947), there is a very Bohemian art studio party, following which a corpse is discovered inside an unfinished clay model. *The Smell of Money* (1943) by Matthew Head deals with art circles near San Francisco, the narrator being a young painter. Head's credentials for using this subject matter are excellent. Under his own name, John Canaday, he has been art critic of *The New York Times* for many years.

Jealous of their preeminent position in the history and culture of California (as opposed to Los Angeles), San Franciscans have developed a pride found in few other cities. At its worst, it leads to the kind of snobbery exemplified by Pat Abbott in Frances Crane's *The Golden Box* (1942), when he objects to people calling his city "Frisco." Incidentally, Mrs. Crane knows the restaurants of many cities in the world, including San Francisco, which is justifiably proud of its many good eating places. Anthony Boucher, himself a local gourmet, praised the "splendid [and very accurately reported] eating in San Francisco restaurants" contained in her *Thirteen White Tulips* (1953).

Within the past decade San Francisco has undergone enough changes to cause some disenchantment on the part of her former supporters. Perhaps typical (though I feel, on the basis of my last trip there in 1971, he is overreacting) is John D. MacDonald. In *The Quick Red Fox* (1964) Travis McGee, who used to love San Francisco, calls it "the most depressing city in America." After citing the good things about San Francisco (the hills, bridges, fog, culture, et al), McGee compares the city to a wild, individualistic young girl, saying,

> She used to give it away, and now she sells it to the tourists. She imitates herself. Her figure has thickened. The things she says now are mechanical and memorized. She overcharges for cynical services.

Perhaps because they have discovered that what they first thought to be paradise is not perfect, many unstable people have carried McGee's temporary depression much further and committed suicide in San Francisco. In this city with the highest suicide rate in the United States, a frequent method has been the leap from the Golden Gate Bridge which was opened in 1937. In her "Farewell to the Faulkners" (*EQMM*, March 1946), a subtle portrayal of wealthy, cultured San Franciscans, Miriam Allen de Ford has a character threaten to jump from that bridge, "the way fifty people have done before, where the current will take me out to sea, they'll never find me." By September 1973, 496 people had taken this fatal plunge, and city officials were reported ready to take precautions to discourage potential suicides.

Other writers have noted the weaknesses of San Francisco. In *The Assassination Bureau, Ltd.* Jack London's viewpoint seems clear as we read, "Rincon Hill, once the aristocratic residence district of San Francisco, lifts its head of decayed gentility from out of the muck and ruck of the great labor ghetto that spreads away south of Market Street." Many factors, of which poverty is only one, have led to San Francisco's drug trade described in an early mystery, Olive Harper's *Opium Smugglers of 'Frisco* (1908). Always a city with an itinerant population, San Francisco has recently attracted young people in great numbers in what has been described as "a new gold rush." In the late 1950s it was the beatniks who settled in the city's North Beach area. Their nightclubs were described by Steve Ward in his *Odds Against Linda* (1960), the story of a former war-hero-turned-artist, seeking his wife's abductors in San Francisco. Also set in the North Beach was Frances Crane's *Death-Wish Green* (1960), a book which Boucher felt "captures its geography accurately and its spirit not at all."

A decade later the section of San Francisco centering around Haight and Ashbury Streets became world-famous as the central point of the hippie culture. Runaway youngsters from every part of the United States and Canada drifted there, and soon the streets were thronged with "flower children," many of whom were on hard drugs. Compare what happened in "Hashbury" with some of the ideas about that relatively soft drug, marijuana, as expressed in David Dodge's 1946 San Francisco mystery *It Ain't Hay*, in which one character says, ". . . the surest and quickest road to insanity was the continued use of marijuana."

Mysteries have used this scene as background, but none as effectively as Joe Gores' "Stakeout on Page St." (*EQMM*, January 1968). In it he describes the area at 3:00 A.M.: ". . . teens and post-teens, juveniles up to forty years old, white, black, and brown; bearded, long-haired, mini-skirted, ponchoed; acid-heads, pot-blowers, freak-outs; the tuned-in, turned-on, dropped-out, unwashed hippies of the Haight-Ashbury Psychodelphia."

A poignant part of this is the search by parents for their runaway children. This is the subject of several books including *Hildagarde Withers Makes the Scene* (1969), which Fletcher Flora finished after the death of its author, Stuart Palmer. In it Hildegarde Withers journeys from Los Angeles to San Francisco, at the unofficial request of her old friend, Inspector Oscar Piper, to search for a New York girl. Allen J. Hubin especially praised the depiction of "Miss Withers' insight and incredulity in dealing with the Haight-Ashbury flower children." Another traveler

from Los Angeles to San Francisco is private eye Max Roper in Kin Platt's *The Pushbutton Butterfly* (1970). Searching for a missing Berkeley coed, he is thrust into that school's off-campus life, a "love-in" in Golden Gate Park, and, inevitably, "Hashbury," with its drugs, signs proclaiming "Love," and everywhere the heavy odor of incense.

*The Lonely Hunter* (1969) by Collin Wilcox is a police procedural about San Francisco Homicide Bureau Detective Lt. Frank Hastings, who investigates a murder among the hippies in which his own teenage daughter may be involved. A later Wilcox book, *Hiding Place* (1973), has a similar theme as Hastings's books for the slayer of a teenage girl found murdered in Golden State Park.

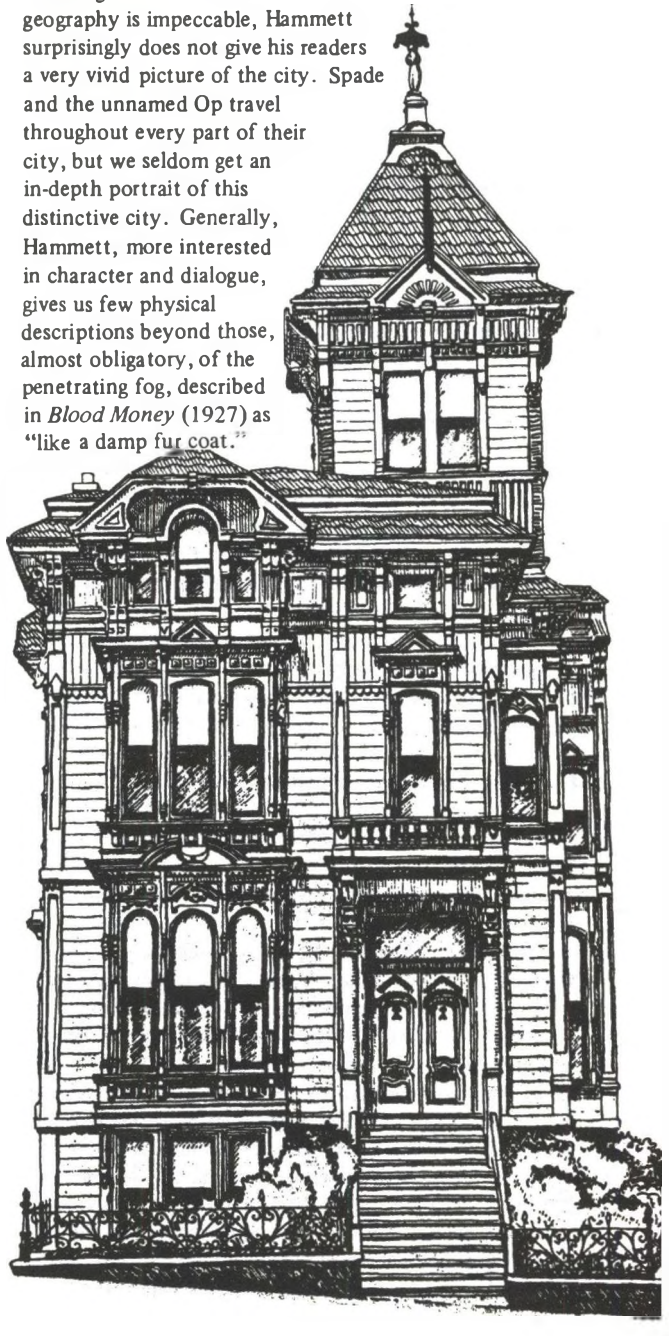
San Francisco is a city of famous fictional detectives. In addition to Hastings, there are other official police detectives such as Breni James's Sergeant Gun Matson, who appeared in *Night of the Kill* (1961) and *The Shake-Up* (1964). Both books are good in portraying the seamy side of San Francisco life; the latter makes effective use of the fog and the city's beatnik community. There is Homicide Captain Steve Johnson of Hugh Lawrence Nelson's *Dead Giveaway* and John K. Butler's persistent Lt. Lonergan. In "The Walking Dead" (*Dime Detective,* February 1937), a wealthy woman dined in a Chinese restaurant with her young daughter. She left the table for a few minutes—and never came back. Fourteen years later, Lonergan still follows the case in his spare time. His failure to solve it at the time cost him a promotion.

Of more than passing interest are the roots of the detective, Reardon, in Robert L. Pike's 1970 novel of that name. In the early 1960s Pike (an ichthyological pseudonym for Robert L. Fish) wrote a series about Lt. Clancy of New York's 52nd Precinct. When one book, *Mute Witness* (1963), was filmed, the detective became Lt. Bullitt (played by Steve McQueen), and the locale was shifted to San Francisco, whose hills were used in one of the best car chases in film history. Shortly after *Bullitt* (1968), Pike began a series about San Francisco Police Lt. Reardon.

San Francisco is even more famous for its private eyes, of whom none is better known than Dashiell Hammett's Sam Spade. Though he appeared in only three short stories and one novel, *The Maltest Falcon* (1930), he has come to symbolize San Francisco to many. In 1973 Herb Caen reported, in the *San Francisco Chronicle,* that an apparent Hammett fan had spray painted "Miles Archer Was Shot Here" on the sidewalk at the corner of Bush and Stockton Streets. Tak Matsuba, manager of the Bush Gardens Restaurant, was about to have the words removed when a mystery fan explained their meaning, and he allowed the graffiti to stay.

Hammett's other great San Francisco detective is the Continental Op (Nick Charles is from San Francisco, but he operates in New York City in his only appearance), who works for the Continental Agency on Market Street. In writing of this detective, the author drew heavily on his own experience as an operative for the Pinkerton Agency which was located on Market Street. According to his biographer, William F. Nolan, Hammett did his early writing for the pulps while living under poverty conditions in a San Francisco hotel. He dedicated *The Dain Curse* (1929) to Albert S. Samuels, a San Francisco jeweler who had given him his first writing job, doing advertising copy for his store. The book begins with the Continental Op's investigation of a theft from a local jeweler.

Though his use of San Francisco geography is impeccable, Hammett surprisingly does not give his readers a very vivid picture of the city. Spade and the unnamed Op travel throughout every part of their city, but we seldom get an in-depth portrait of this distinctive city. Generally, Hammett, more interested in character and dialogue, gives us few physical descriptions beyond those, almost obligatory, of the penetrating fog, described in *Blood Money* (1927) as "like a damp fur coat."



Joe Gores, a former private detective himself, has fallen heir to Hammett's San Francisco tradition. He created Daniel Kearney Associates, a local agency involved in "skip tracing"—i.e., tracking down cars whose owners have fallen behind in payments. Often what starts as routine car recovery turns into the investigation of a more complex crime. Especially recommended in this series are "Beyond the Shadow" (*EQMM*, January 1972) and the novels *Dead Skip* (1972) and *Final Notice* (1973), the latter praised by Lenore Glen Offord for its "beautifully vivid background of San Francisco and vicinity."

In 1975 Gores carried his interest in Dashiell Hammett and San Francisco to its logical conclusion with the novel *Hammett*. The idea of using Hammett as a fictional character in a mystery set in San Francisco during Prohibition is an awesome one, but Gores carries it off by a combination of diligent research and considerable writing skill.

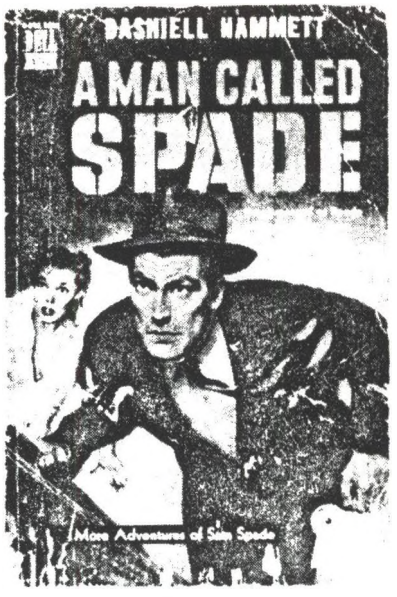
Hammett is forced to return to detection (he is on the brink of writing success) to avenge the death of an old friend. The case takes him throughout San Francisco and into nearby Marin County. Unlike Hammett, the writer, who tended to mention locales rather than describe them, Gores does more. In addition to the inevitable winddriven fog, he gives us excellent word pictures of City Hall, the Southern Pacific Train Station, Chinatown, the Ferry Building at the Embarcadero, and the fishing village of Sausalito.

Novelist Bill Pronzini, a relatively new writer in the Black Mask tradition, has created a series of protagonists as tough as Spade and company—e.g., the private eye in *Undercurrent* (1973). Pronzini's heroes know their way around the motels and topless-bottomless joints (a unique San Francisco creation) in the same way that Hammett's people were at home in speakeasies.

As mentioned, San Francisco is famous for its large Oriental population, and in mystery fiction this has included such visitors as Charlie Chan from Hawaii and Raoul Whitfield's Jo Gar from Manila, who ends his quest for stolen jewelry in San Francisco in *The Rainbow Murders*. A local private eye of Norwegian and Japanese ancestry is Poul Anderson's Trygve Yamamura, a judo expert and Samurai sword collector who appeared in three novels beginning with *Perish by the Sword* (1959).

Sam Benedict is a San Francisco attorney who originally appeared in a television series and then began to appear in books. *A Singular Fury* (1968) by Howard Oleck was praised by Allen J. Hubin. Subsequently, Brad Williams has taken up chronicling Benedict's adventures with the assistance of famous local lawyer Jake Ehrlich in such books as *A Conflict of Interest* (1971) and *A Matter of Confidence* (1973).

There is more to Northern California than San Francisco. While Alcatraz in San Francisco Bay has been closed, San Quentin, still in operation, was described in Malcolm Braly's *Felony Tank* (1961), written while he was in that prison. Another Northern California institution, but one with a different reputation, is Yosemite National Park, scene of the climax to Richard Powell's *Say It With Bullets* (1953). Powell's book ranges widely over the western half of the




United States and includes Yosemite's trees, cliffs, and the spectacular fireworks display put on by its forest rangers. Owen Cameron showed considerable ability in depicting Northern California's forests. His short story "The Quick and the Dead" (*EQMM*, November 1945) beautifully conveyed the sense of the outdoors as did his novels *To Catch a Tiger* (1952) and *The Silent One* (1958).

One of the best evocations of small-town life has come from the pen of John Holbrook Vance in the promising series he started about Sheriff Joe Bain of fictional San Rodrigo County—just south of San Jose. Thus far he has written *The Fox Valley Murders* (1966) and *The Pleasant Grove Murder* (1967). Vance knows this area from having lived in Salinas, and he is excellent in limning the topography and customs, as well as small-town politics and government.

Sixty-five miles north of San Francisco is the fishing area used in Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds* (1963), filmed at Bodega Bay. A number of mysteries are set here, including Eleanor Lee Waddell's *Murder at Drake's Anchorage* (1949), Joe Rayter's *Asking for Trouble*, and Pronzini's *The Stalker*. Rayter and Pronzini provided effective descriptions of Alcatraz, and they do likewise for the Tomales-Petaluma region, stressing its fog and dampness.

It is appropriate that the last Northern California mystery to be considered, *The Marble Forest* (1951) by Theo Durrant, appears to have been a collaboration of that region's MWA chapter. Under the direction of Anthony Boucher, local writers Terry Adler, Eunice Mays Boyd, Florence Ostern Faulkner, Allen Hymson, Cary Lucas, Dana Lyon, Lenore Glen Offord, Virginia Rath, Richard Shattuck, Darwin L. Teilhet, and William Worley produced a novel set in the mining town of "Red Forks," apparently a fictionalization of Red Bluff, several hours drive north of San Francisco. Dampness and cold pervade this suspense novel, and its setting, largely a local cemetery, only adds to the clammy feeling.

# the Paul Temple saga

By Derek Adley

Paul Temple—the creation of British scriptwriter and novelist Francis Durbridge—is by profession both a well-known and highly successful novelist and also a famed private investigator. This comfortably off, somewhat "upper crust" sleuth dates back to just prior to World War II, when the "soap-opera" "Send for Paul Temple" was the rage of BBC Radio.

Later, in 1938, Durbridge wrote the novelization of this successful serial, and its further popularity in book form assured the fame of the characters and fully established the author.

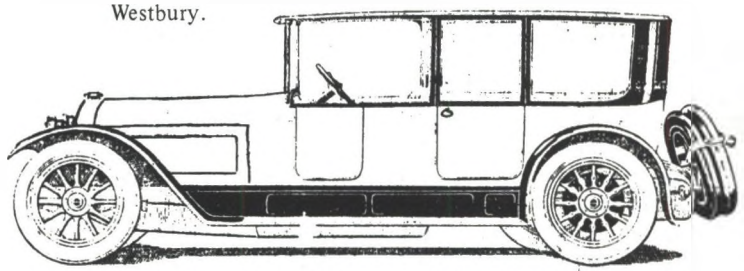
When interviewed later, Durbridge had this to say:

> It was in April 1938, that I created the character of "Paul Temple," and Martyn C. Webster, the famous BBC producer, put the first of the the radio.
>
> I had been thinking about the character for almost three months before I actually came across the person whose manner, voice and attitude suggested to me the man-of-the-world novelist with an interest in criminology. I was hurrying to catch a train to Birmingham, where I lived in those days, after a visit to London. The train was, in fact, already moving as I scrambled in.
>
> There was one other occupant of the compartment and he slowly raised his head at my unexpected entrance. As far as I can remember he was tall and dark and was reading a battered copy of Arnold Bennett's *Imperial Palace*. We never spoke, but for some unknown reason after he had left the train—he got out at Leamington Spa—I started thinking about him.
>
> I remembered the quiet, casual manner in which he inserted a cigarette in an unusual type of holder; the keen, intelligent face; the smiling eyes a little crinkled at the corners; the friendly nod he gave the inspector as he showed his season ticket.
>
> The man had other characteristics which fascinated me. He was obviously interested in literature and not merely a casual reader; one could tell by the way he pondered over the novel he was reading.
>
> That night, when I arrived home, I started to read Somerset Maugham's *First Person Singular*, and I came across the following paragraph: "I think, indeed, that most novelists, and surely the best, have worked from life. But though they have in mind a particular person, this is not to say they have copied him, or that the character they have devised is to be taken for a portrait. In the first place they have seen him through their own temperament, and if they are writers of originality this means that what they have seen is somewhat different from the fact."
>
> This passage by Somerset Maugham made me think again about the man on the train. I jotted down a few details about him. From these details, plus, of course, a certain amount of elaboration, emerged the character of Paul Temple.

In the course of time Temple was to appear in all the media: radio, in book form, the cinema, strip syndication, comic book, and television. Essentially, however, his initial fame must rest with the form in which he was created—as a radio hero, surpassing, in quality at least, the talents of the famous Dick Barton.

There was always something more adult in the presentation of Temple as opposed to that of Barton. Where the latter had a great appeal to the juvenile element, and indeed today is classed as a boyhood favourite, Temple definitely was aimed at a higher plane.

The first actor to play the part on radio was Hugh Morton. He was followed by Carl Bernard, Richard Williams, Howard Marion Crawford, Barry Morse, Kim Peacock and Peter Coke. All the radio plays were produced by Martyn C. Webster. The part of Steve, Temple's wife, was originally acted by a Midland Regional actress and radio announcer called Bernadette Hodgson; later the part was played by Marjorie Westbury.



The first radio serial was called "Send for Paul Temple" and this was followed by:

"Paul Temple and the Front Page Men"
"News of Paul Temple"
"Paul Temple Intervenes"
"Send for Paul Temple Again"
"A Case for Paul Temple"
"Paul Temple and the Gregory Affair"
"Paul Temple and Steve"
"Paul Temple and the Sullivan Mystery"
"Paul Temple and the Curzon Case"
"Paul Temple and the Madison Mystery"
"Paul Temple and the Vandyke Affair"
"Paul Temple and the Jonathan Mystery"
"Paul Temple and the Gilbert Case"
"Paul Temple and the Lawrence Affair"
"Paul Temple and the Spencer Affair"
"Paul Temple and the Conrad Case"
"Paul Temple and the Margo Mystery"
"Paul Temple and the Geneva Mystery"

There have not been a large number of Paul Temple novels, but his appearances in this form have spanned the period from the character's conception on radio to current times. We may hope that some future fresh revival in the broadcast media will encourage further printed editions of his adventures.

Basically the books have all been inspired by either the radio or television appearances and therefore can be classed as "novelizations." This permanent form does at least ensure that Temple cannot die—the books are here forever whereas the radio show is merely a nostalgic memory. The publication order of these novels is as follows:

*Send for Paul Temple*, 1938
*Paul Temple and the Front Page Men*, 1939
*News of Paul Temple*, 1940
*Paul Temple Intervenes*, 1944
*Send for Paul Temple Again*, 1948
*The Tyler Mystery*, 1957
*Paul Temple and the Harkdale Robbery*, 1970
*Paul Temple and the Kelby Affair*, 1970

In the forties, with the cinema still so popular in England (television had yet to destroy cinema's hold on this community), it was natural that Paul Temple should venture in this direction. The first film was *Send for Paul Temple*, released in 1946 with Anthony Hulme in the starring role. Steve was played by Joy Shelton.

Two years later (1948) John Bentley, a good-looking and competent actor, took over the part of Temple for the film *Calling Paul Temple*. There was also a new Steve in the shape of Diana Sheridan, completing a delightful husband-and-wife team, and these two continued with *Paul Temple Triumphs*.

These films, directed by MacLean Rogers, were well acted and well scripted and were quite expensively produced by Butchers Film Service. Unfortunately none of these qualities was quite equal to the competition from the States. Stars like Humphrey Bogart and Alan Ladd dominated the thriller scene and placed films like those of Paul Temple in the second-feature category.

Although it would be true to state that Paul Temple's appearances in the printed word have not made a tremendous impact, he has had a considerable and highly successful exposure in picture-strip form in the daily newspapers.

These adventures were part and parcel of Londoners' reading habits when they appeared in the *Evening News*. A fair measure of success must have been achieved, for in 1964 these adventures were being syndicated throughout the country and infiltrating even into Erin's Isle.

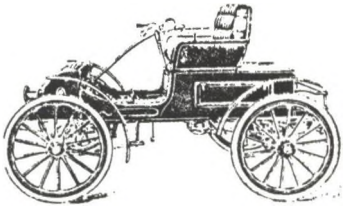
Strange to say, this success was not repeated when a few years ago an attempt was made to launch a series of Paul Temple paperbacks in picture-story form—a sort of sophisticated comic book.

G. M. Smith Publishing Company, known as Micron Publications, launched the Paul Temple Library in March 1964. Issues were widely advertised as to appear at the rate of two per month, modestly priced at one shilling and threepence each.

Four titles have been traced, and it would appear that through lack of support—though it is quite likely that the lamentable distribution situation that existed in England played a part—the publication simply died.

It is possible that these were in fact collections of the previous newspaper strips, but the scarcity of the publication does not allow for examination of content. For the record, here are the titles:

*Paul Temple and the Magpie Mystery*
*Paul Temple and the Gun Runners*
*Paul Temple and the Nerve Gas Gang*
*Paul Temple in Operation Shrike*

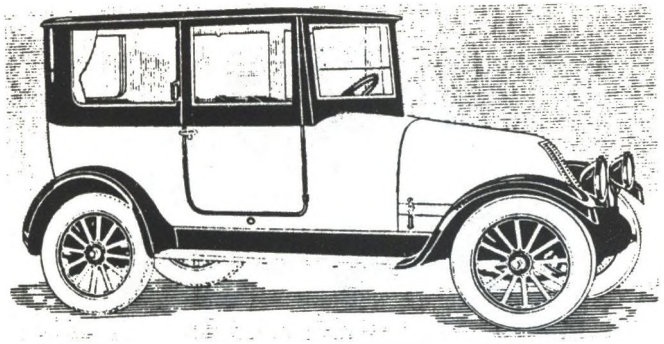


In 1969 the inevitable took place, as Paul Temple turned up on British television. A whole new world was built around the character and a series of thirteen shows appeared on the BBC, with the stories being provided by a wide range of authors, all gifted in the art of TV scripting. The stories usually involved very tricky parts with equally tricky characters.

For this "new" Paul Temple the "blurbs" ran as follows: Aged thirty, Temple is a successful novelist and most of what he writes is sold to the films. Writes one book a year taking him three months work in his elegant Chelsea pad. Spends nine months travelling with his wife, Steve, beautiful and intelligent. Has a Rolls Royce "Silver Shadow" drophead coupe. His insatiable curiosity, quick mind and growing reputation as a private eye give Temple the excitement and adventure he needs to compensate for the three months tied to his desk. Married two years and madly in love, he is a latter Sherlock Holmes with 007 overtones.

In the series Francis Matthews played Paul, and Ros Drinkwater played his artistic and very clothes-conscious wife, Steve. Possibly because the series consisted mainly of complete episodes, this latest mass exposure of the character did not have the same sort of popularity as the earlier radio serial programmes. Nevertheless, the shows were screened at peak viewing times, and the audience therefore was quite large—large enough to inspire a second series of thirteen shows in 1970 and yet a third series of thirteen in 1971. But this—at least for the present—seems to be the end of Temple's career.

During the second series of shows a new character was added, giving further colour to the programme. This was the rather well-informed Sammy Carson, played by George Sewell. Carson, ready to help Temple at a moment's notice, himself had a shady background and was useful because of his knowledge of the underworld, giving Temple quite a start on his rivals.



Here then is a complete list of all the Paul Temple television shows together with the name of the writer and the date of the first London screening.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **First Series** | | |
| 23 Nov. 1969 | Who Dies Next? | Paul Miller |
| 30 Nov. 1969 | Message From a Dead Man | John Roddick |
| 7 Dec. 1969 | There Must Be a Mr. X | David Ellis |
| 14 Dec. 1969 | Missing Penny | Paul Abraham |
| 21 Dec. 1969 | The Man Who Wasn't There | John Tully |
| 28 Dec. 1969 | Which of Us Is Me? | David Chantler |
| 4 Jan. 1970 | Inside Information | David Ellis |
| 11 Jan. 1970 | The Masked Lady | John Tully |
| 18 Jan. 1970 | Swan Song for Colonel Harp | David Chantler |
| 25 Jan. 1970 | Mr. Wallace Predicts | John Tully |
| 1 Feb. 1970 | Letters From Robert | John Tully |
| 8 Feb. 1970 | The Man From the Sea | Cyril Abraham |
| 15 Feb. 1970 | The Victim | David Whittaker |
| **Second Series** | | |
| 5 Apr. 1970 | Right Villain | Derrick Sherwin |
| 12 Apr. 1970 | Kill or Cure | Bill Strutton |
| 19 Apr. 1970 | Games People Play | John Gould |
| 26 Apr. 1970 | The Artnappers | Bill Strutton |
| 3 May 1970 | The Black Room | Moris Farhi |
| 10 May 1970 | Antique Death. Part 1 | Michael Chapman |
| 17 May 1970 | Antique Death. Part 2 | Michael Chapman |
| 24 May 1970 | Double Vision | Jeremy Burnham |
| 28 June 1970 | Steal a Little Happiness | Bill Strutton |
| 5 July 1970 | The Suitcase | John Tully |
| 12 July 1970 | Murder in Munich. Part 1 | David Roberts |
| 19 July 1970 | Murder in Munich. Part 2 | David Roberts |
| 26 July 1970 | Retake | Paul Erickson |
| **Third Series** | | |
| 10 Jan. 1971 | House of the Dead | David Roberts |
| 17 Jan. 1971 | Sea Burial | David Roberts |
| 24 Jan. 1971 | Night Train | Michael J. Bird |
| 7 Feb. 1971 | Corrida | Lindsay Galloway |
| 14 Feb. 1971 | Dead for Divers Reason | John Lucarotti |
| 21 Feb. 1971 | A Greek Tragedy | Lindsay Galloway |
| 28 Feb. 1971 | The Specialists | Michael Winder |
| 7 Mar. 1971 | Has Anybody Here Seen Kelly? | Dennis Spooner |
| 14 Mar. 1971 | Requiem for a Don | Jeremy Burnham |
| 21 Mar. 1971 | Motel | David Simon |
| 28 Mar. 1971 | Cue Murder | David Simon |
| 4 Apr. 1971 | Death of Fasching | Wolf Rilla |
| 11 Apr. 1971 | Catch Your Death | Patrick Alexander |

## SOME NOTES TOWARD A CHECKLIST OF

# A. A. MILNE'S

## SHORT TALES OF CRIME AND DETECTION

By J. Randolph Cox

In checking back on my recent statement that the author of *The Red House Mystery* and *Four Days Wonder* (not to mention *The Perfect Alibi*) had written but two short tales that could be called detective stories, I came up with the following amendments. A few of these have been listed because they seem to reflect his use of themes common to crime fiction, although the stories themselves may not be true detective stories. Some have more puzzle than detection. Wherever possible, original magazine appearances in the United States have been noted. Three of the stories ("Bread Upon the Waters," "Nearly Perfect," and "A Savage Game") have not been seen.

"The Balcony," *A Table Near the Band* (New York: Dutton, 1950).

"Bread Upon the Waters," *Evening Standard Detective Book*, 1950.

"Breitenstein," *Birthday Party and Other Stories* (New York: Dutton, 1948).

"Dear Dead Days," *Collier's*, July 10, 1948. Reprinted as "I Don't Like Blackmailers," in *Birthday Party*, and as "A Perfectly Ordinary Case of Blackmail," *EQMM*, November 1952.

"Greatly Beloved," *Good Housekeeping*, February 1950. Reprinted as "A Man Greatly Beloved," in *A Table Near the Band*.

"It Could Have Happened That Way," *EQMM*, May 1951.

"It Was a Long Time Ago," *EQMM*, July 1950. Reprinted as "Portrait of Lydia," in *A Table Near the Band*.

"Murder at Eleven," *A Table Near the Band*. Reprinted in *EQMM*, March 1954.

"Nearly Perfect," *Cosmopolitan*, 1950? Reprinted in *Best Detective Stories of the Year, 1951* (New York: Dutton, 1951), and in *Suspense*, September 1958.

"A Savage Game," *Evening Standard Detective Book*, 1950.

"The Three Dreams of Mr. Findlater," *A Table Near the Band*.

"The Wine Glass," *Cosmopolitan*, 1946? Reprinted as "In Vino Veritas," *Birthday Party*; "The Wine Glass," *Best Detective Stories of the Year, 1947*; "Once a Murderer," *EQMM*, November 1963; "The Wine Glass," *Best of the Best Detective Stories* (New York: Dutton, 1971).

Additions are welcome, as well as copies of the stories not seen.

# Marie Corelli's VENDETTA!

**By Michael Avallone**

Marie Corelli was born in London in 1855 and died in the same city some seventy years later on April 21, 1924. She was presumably the adopted daughter of Charles Mackay, a Scottish songwriter of some renown. She spent the first six years of her life in Surrey, and a few years later, when Charles Mackay's wife died, he married the actual woman who very probably had given birth to Marie Corelli. Only Marie Corelli's name then was Mary Mackay and she was "Minnie" to her closest friends. Her formative years were spent with governesses and in a convent, where her brilliance as a pianist first led to her plan to live a lifetime with a concert career. She adopted the alias of *Marie Corelli* to further that desire. But in 1885, she underwent a "mystical experience" which plunged her headlong into the world of books and letters.

Historians, of course, have no proof of Mary Mackay's birth or any knowledge of exactly the nature of the mystical experience. But the new Marie Corelli invented for herself a Scottish mother and an Italian father and went on to write twenty-eight novels of romance and mysticism that added to her legend. She never married and chose to live the rest of her life in a house at Stratford-on-Avon which was rumored to have belonged to Shakespeare's daughter.

As an English popular novelist, she had a considerable vogue with such high-flown, floridly written works as *A Romance Of Two Worlds* (1886), *Vendetta!* (1886), *Wormwood* (1891), *The Soul of Lilith* (1892), *Barabbas* (1893), *Sorrows of Satan* (1895), *The Mighty Atom* (1896), *God's Good Man* (1904), and many others until her last work, *The Open Confession*, in 1924, when she was in her seventieth year.

She was a little blonde woman with many individual faults. She was vain, self-dramatizing, and firmly convinced that she was blessed with a touch of genius, and she relied far too heavily on a logic leavened with mystical belief and opinion. She was hypersensitive to criticism and refused to have her books sent to the reviewers of the day.

She was also warmly generous, kindly to a fault, and ever ready to donate her time and her enthusiasm to causes she deemed on the side of the angels. She was both Victorian and passionate; a contradiction.

Her staunchest critics admitted she had a genius for "painting a scene" and a "strongly poetic moodiness" that made even her lesser works worth reading. Her closest friends, and they were few—for genius is basically a loner's life—thought of her as some rare demigoddess, a supernatural human being, not quite of this earth.

All of which seems to suggest that Marie Corelli, the woman, is even a greater mystery than Marie Corelli, the author.

It's no secret that love can cloud the critical judgment and time itself cancel any fault, but I have been as enchanted as any Dante for more than three decades with a Beatrice I never met. For it was as long ago as 1938 that I first encountered a book called *Vendetta!* by Marie Corelli.

Rediscovering the book on the crowded shelves of the New York Public Library in 1969 merely served as a reaffirmation of what the man felt as a boy. The dark and masterful grandeurs of the time and the place and the story of *Vendetta!* are still intact. Signorina Corelli has to bow to no one in the art of writing. I marvel still at her lyrical command of the language, the evocative *mise-en-scènes* of an Italy of long ago and the sheer fabric and rich tapestry of her narrative. She had all the tools for the job of recreating life through the fictional process.

Vendetta is an Italian word which simply means vengeance. It became the sad property of the Mafia in America, and then thousands of storytellers in Hollywood and television butchered and trifled with the concept so much that most can be forgiven for thinking it is no more than an eye-for-an-eye sort of one-upmanship. It isn't as easy as all that. I think you have to have the hot blood of the doges flowing in your own veins to appreciate the extreme aptness of the word; to properly understand the finer points of the *condition* of wanting to get even—of knowing the desire to kill the man or woman or thing which has taken from you what is rightfully yours. My father would stick his fist in his mouth, bite his thumb, and look heavenwward to invoke the powers of the Gods if you ever cheated him. It is something like that in *Vendetta!*; and nowhere in the Romance languages is there a chronicle to rival the hauntingly excessive lengths to which the Count Fabio Romani of this tale goes to get revenge.

In *Vendetta!* you will find a terror-in-the-tomb scene worthy of Poe; and a banquet set-piece, in which Fabio Romani stages his duel with Guido Ferrari, that is a rival

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# A CATALOGUE OF CRIME

(Supplement Three) By J. B. and W. H. T.

**S 19 ANDERSON, JOHN R. L.**
*Death on the Rocks*
S & D 1975

The author is a small-boat sailor, and in this first of a series featuring Major Peter Blair (ex-army, divorced, now a cabinet-maker) much of the interest derives from the sailing scene off the south coast of England. Two excellent maps make Blair's investigation a pleasure to follow, and the author's skill as a narrator is shown by his ability to hold the reader's interest despite his almost too classical use of a timeworn motive for seaside murder. Anyone who prefers fresh water to salt will find *Death in the Thames* equally satisfactory.

**S 20 CHANDLER, RAYMOND**
*The Blue Dahlia*
So. Ill. Univ. Press 1976

Even if reading a movie script differs equally from reading a book and from seeing a movie, one can recommend that the attempt be made, for the imagination sufficiently adjusts to the mixture of dialogue with instructions for the camera, and one gets caught up in what happens. The trial is especially worth making when the object is to fill out one's idea of Chandler's work, and of his life as well, for this printing of a somewhat obvious tale is flanked by two excellent essays—John Houseman's vivid recollections of collaborating with Chandler on this very script, and Matthew A. Bruccoli's fine summing up of Chandler and Hollywood. (480+)

**S 21 CLARK, DOUGLAS**
*Premedicated Murder*
Scrib 1975

Friction in fiction has been useful to detective-story writers: it has long since displaced the unlikely smoothness of officialdom at work solving crime. But it has also proved such an easy device that it tends to be overdone. Douglas Clark, who has shown in other tales how to handle it credibly, now grossly exaggerates the impertinent self-assertion of D. I. Green. No longer impulsive and in character, he is predictable and tiresome. The suave intelligence of his coworker, Detective Superintendent George Masters, does not make up for the irritation the other generates. It is too bad, because the byplay spoils an ingenious plot of delayed revenge stuffed with good scenes, good clues, and good characters. Villain and victim are particularly memorable for being what they are and not what they seem. (539+)

**S 22 JOBSON, HAMILTON**
*The Evidence You Will Hear*
Scrib 1975

This English writer (said to have been a policeman) produced eight mysteries before this one, but his work is only now becoming known in the United States. A tribute to the author's talent is his ability to invade the ranks of the American "police procedural" with a splendid example of the English version of this overworked subspecies. Details of the massive search for a missing eight-year-old girl are expertly handled and interwoven with views of the strangler of four previous victims. The pace is excellent and the "human interest" is telling because not overworked.

**S 23 KEITH, CARLTON**
*A Taste of Sangria*
Dday 1968

*The Diamond-Studded Typewriter* (1958) introduced Jeff Green, expert in questioned documents, who has since appeared in a half-dozen other suspense novels of unequal merit. One of the best of these is the present tale, which for smoothness and highly enjoyable narration would be hard to beat. Jeff's hunt for a missing man who may have made off with $200,000 intended for Swiss deposit ranges from Zurich to Segovia; it is facilitated by plenty of cash and enlivened by the company of a charming girl. The sharp-nosed zombie who provides the only menace threatens in a peculiar way, and the whole thing is truly an "entertainment" of the best sort—fine local color and a satisfying ending. To see how Jeff operates in his native land, read *The Crayfish Dinner* (1966).

**Association Item**

**S 24 MacSHANE, FRANK**
*The Life of Raymond Chandler*
Dutt 1976

The glimpses of Chandler in No. S20 above, like those furnished earlier in his letters and in *Chandler Before Marlowe*, prepared his admirers for the portrait of a complicated mind which Mr. MacShane has now given in his admirable *Life*. It is fully documented and thought out, sympathetic and critical, and written with the modesty and firmness that define the true biographer. Every Chandler devotee and anybody curious about California as the storyteller remade it emotionally will want to read this book. The biographer makes out a case for treating Chandler's works as novels, though he notes the distinction JB suggested between a novel and a tale. The debate is perhaps not closed, for Chandler as novelist runs into a competition he is ill-fitted to survive, whereas in his guise as a teller of tales he has no peers within his genre. (480B)

**S 25 MARSH, NGAIO**
*When in Rome*
LB 1971

Not all the productions of Dame Ngaio's later years have matched the best of her earlier triumphs, but the flame still burns and here it is steady and strong. The writing is elegant and Detective Superintendent Alleyn is impressive as he works with the Roman police in a case of double murder set in an ancient basilica. Blackmail is neatly interwoven with the activities of "Il Cicerone," who operates

super-deluxe tours of Roman high and low spots. The participants in one of these excursions form the group of skillfully depicted suspects, including a remarkable brother-and-sister pair. (1553+)

**S 26 MURRAY, MAX**
*The Voice of the Corpse*
Farr 1947

This talented Australian, concerning whom biographical information is scarce, wrote a dozen mysteries before his death in 1956. Except for the use of "Corpse" in each title, the tales have little in common—no series character appears and the settings are most diverse, ranging from Canberra and Singapore, or an ocean liner at sea, to a quiet English village in the present book. The detestable Angela Pusey—a putative writer of anonymous letters—has been murdered, and the quiet amateur detection of solicitor Firth Prentice is credible as he operates amidst a group of interesting and well-drawn suspects. The writing is on a high level throughout. (1638)

**S 27 WILSON, COLIN**
*The Schoolgirl Murder Case*
Crown 1974

Mr. Wilson is an English writer of whom critics made much when at an early age he published *The Outsider*, a work of philosophical criticism, and whom amateurs of true crime came to know through the *Encyclopedia of Crime* he compiled with Patricia Pitman in 1962. He has done important work since—novels, cultural criticism, and autobiography—and this score of books are well worth getting acquainted with. Their listing on the author page of a regular detective history is perhaps the first example of a "serious" writer's admission that he carries his mind with him whatever his hand may turn to.

The present tale was announced as first of a round dozen in which the strictest realism will prevail. Judging from Sample One, this means that, on the one side, manufactured horrors are excluded, and on the other, legitimate shock is made full use of—for instance, the detailed description of an autopsy, instead of the usual relegation of it to hardened medicos. The rest is in keeping: One should not think that the murder is that of a schoolgirl. The reality is grimmer and more subtle, as is the handling of homosexuality and similar components of the tough modern genre. Why then is this new effort a disappointment? Humor, observation, good prose are there; what is missing is somebody to care about, however flawed-for-realism he or she might be. Saltfleet and Crisp are deadpan dicks and they move deliberately from crime to solution, but some subjective hope or boredom or despair remains indispensable to telling a tale.

# DETECTIVE FICTION

**By K. Arne Blom and Jan Broberg**

The detective novel in Sweden is rather young. One might say it was born sometime around 1890, although in 1834 Carl Jones Love Almqvist published his *Drottningens Juvelsmycke*, which one might call a crime novel or a political thriller. In 1838 Almqvist wrote "Skållnora Kvarn," a short story that for many reasons might be called the first such Swedish tale within the detection field.

The crime novels that were published during the 1890s and around 1900 are highly unreadable today, and are only of historical interest. But in 1905 *Doktor Glas*, by the mainstream novelist Hjalmar Söderberg, was published, and for the same reasons that *Crime and Punishment* by Feodor Dostoevski might be called a very good crime novel, *Doktor Glas* can be considered as not only one of the first Swedish crime novels but also still one of the best ever written.

The clergyman Oskar Wågman, under his pen name Sture Stig, published a collection of short stories titled *Sherlock Holmes: I Ny Belysning* in 1908. These stories were about Sherlock Holmes, but not the Holmes one meets in the stories written by Conan Doyle. They are very well written and very amusing tales, and might still be considered as among the best Sherlock Holmes pastiches ever written. The sequel, *Nya Sherlock Holmes-Historier* (1910), was not quite as successful.

In 1914 Gunner Serner published his first stories, using his Frank Heller pen name. In all, he wrote about twenty-five crime novels and collections of short stories. He was influenced by Maurice Leblanc, but nevertheless his work is very amusing and very cleverly plotted. Heller's books were translated into many languages, and he continued to be published until 1945.

S. A. Duse wrote his first book, *Stillettkäppen*, in 1913, and it reveals the great influence of Conan Doyle. Duse was interested in the whodunit puzzle and wrote some ten books about his private investigator Leo Carring, who thought and acted mostly like Sherlock Holmes.

Jules Regis first appeared in print in 1916. His best book is probably his collection of short stories, *Wallion*, from 1918. Regis's books rather suggest a blend of Nick Carter and Sherlock Holmes stories. They contain less detection than adventure, and the plots are fast moving and thrilling.

From the 1930s, few writers are worth mentioning. Most, if not all, the Swedish crime writers so far had been strongly influenced by their English colleagues. But Yngve Hedwall was a good stylist and a good plotter, which he shows in *Tragedin I Villa Siola* (1934). Here one finds *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* in a well-written Swedish version.

In 1939 World War II broke out in Europe, and in Sweden Kjerstin Göransson-Ljungman wrote her wonderful crime novel, *27 Sekundmeter Snö*. A crime-writing

# IN SWEDEN

queen was born. The book is about a group of people isolated in a small cottage during a snowstorm somewhere in the northern part of Sweden—but not isolated from murder.

In a way this book gave birth to a genuine Swedish tradition of detective novels. But war stopped the development for some years. However, in 1943 came the first book by Stieg Trenter, who is regarded as the founder of the modern Swedish detective novel tradition.

Stieg Trenter was a journalist, a good plotter, a fine stylist, and a clever inventor of puzzles. Most of his books are set in the Swedish capital, Stockholm. Stieg Trenter is mentioned as one of the finest writers about Stockholm among Swedish authors. He wrote very lyrically about the city and showed a fine journalistic skill in catching the characteristic way of life, the certain atmosphere, and the typical features of a big city in development and progress. Among his finest books about Stockholm are *I Dag Röd . . .* (1945) and *Lysande Landning* (1946).

Stieg Trenter had good psychological insight into criminals' minds, and he created a memorable portrait of a writer who had reason to commit suicide in his *Träff I Helfigur* (1948). Among his best books are also *Aldrig Näcken* (1953) and *Roparen* (1954).

It is said that Stieg Trenter wrote his best books between 1944 and 1955. It is true that his later books are not as ingenious, but *Dockan Till Samarkand* (1959) shows what a master can create. Well worth mentioning also is the very thrilling *Som Man Ropar . . .* , published in 1944, and one of the first Swedish political thrillers.

Beside Göransson-Ljungman, Stieg Trenter was the first Swedish crime writer of international skill. His three or four best books are of high international class and not derivative of the works of English and American crime writers.

Vic Suneson, a pen name for Sune Lundquist, was in a way the first Swedish crime writer to produce police procedurals. But his books are above all puzzles in the Anglo-Saxon tradition. He wrote rather realistically about police work, and *Så Spelar Döden* (1956) is a particularly good example of a well-written and early Swedish police procedural. Vic Suneson loved to experiment in his books. *Är Jag Mördaren* (1953) and *Fäll Inga Tårar* (1953) are interesting efforts to find a totally new and very personal way of writing surprising crime novels.

Maria Lang is sometimes mentioned as the queen of Swedish crime novelists. But it would be more accurate to call her a rather uninteresting hybrid of Agatha Christie and Mary Roberts Rinehart.

The 1950s were to become the first golden age of Swedish crime fiction. Trenter and Suneson wrote very good books. H-K Rönblom entered the scene. Anders Jonason wrote three very clever hardboiled crime novels. Helena Poloni wrote two books, set in a typical Swedish small town.

H-K Rönblom was one of the best crime writers Sweden has ever had. He wrote ten books before his sudden death, all books highly believable as tales of life in the Swedish countryside. He told about the transformation of Sweden, about a country on the doorstep of a new society: the industrial society taking over from the agricultural. One might very well call his books sociological accounts of Sweden. In addition, they were perfectly plotted, and the psychological portraits of the characters were very convincing. His best books are *Höstvind Och Djupa Vatten* (1954), *Tola Om Rep* (1958), and *Krans Åt Den Sköna* (1960).

H-K Rönblom had an academic background, but he earned his living as a political journalist. Anders Jonason was a journalist as well. He wrote about cynical people and very human criminals in the tradition of Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler. It is a pity he stopped writing after four books. *Mord Med Mera* (1953) and *Mördaren Kommer Strax* (1956) are his best.

Helena Poloni wrote about a typical Swedish little town in a way that suggests she was very much in love with life in such a setting. She wrote in the traditional whodunit manner and created clever puzzles. One might add that her books, when read today, seem a bit nostalgic.

The 1960s gave Sweden three great authors. First there was Jan Ekström, the best writer of locked-room mysteries Sweden has ever had. *Ålkistan* (1967) is as clever and intriguing as any of the best books written by John Dickson Carr or Clayton Rawson. Ekström is not great as a stylist or as a creator of characters, but his puzzles are perfect and highly intellectual.

Kerstin Ekman wrote two books in the manner of the school created by Julian Symons and John Bingham. *Den Brinnande Ugnen* (1962) and *Dödsklockan* (1963) are masterpieces within the psychological crime novel tradition and of international class. Alas, Kerstin Ekman has stopped writing crime fiction in favor of straight novels.

In the year 1965 the Swedish crime novel was given new life, when *Roseanna* was published. This was the work of Maj Sjöwall and Per Wahlöö, and was the first title in a series of ten books. Sjöwall and Wahlöö very soon achieved a worldwide reputation for their extremely well-written police procedurals. Their books have been translated into many languages, and they were awarded an Edgar by MWA for *Den Skrattande Polisen (The Laughing Policeman)* (1968).

They made clear from the beginning that they wanted to use the police procedural as a tool for analyzing and describing the Swedish welfare society. And so they did on a Marxist basis.

One can divide the ten books about Martin Beck and his colleagues into three categories. In the first three books Martin Beck is rather like the Maigret-type of policeman, who reflects upon criminals and tries to understand their actions in relation to the society. In the four following books the police team operates in an 87th Precinct manner, and the criminals are viewed through the eyes of the different policemen.

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# DETECTIVE FICTION IN THE WADE COLLECTION

By J. R. Christopher

A valuable, if very limited, collection of detective fiction is in a western suburb of Chicago. In Wheaton, Illinois the Marion E. Wade Collection is endowed at Wheaton College and housed in a suite upstairs in the old library building. The original impulse for the collection was religious (the school is a nondenominational, conservative religious college)–primarily based on the appeal of C. S. Lewis. The collection was developed by the curator, Clyde S. Kilby, to cover Lewis's close friends, Charles Williams, Owen Barfield, and J. R. R. Tolkien (Williams's Gothic novels have some relationship to the mystery field–this Charles Williams is *not* the American suspense writer of the same name); Dorothy L. Sayers–a close friend of Williams and a fellow religious dramatist ("Aha!" says the mystery fan, "she wrote some other books before the dramas"); and two men who had religious influence on these writers–George MacDonald in the Victorian period, and G. K. Chesterton in the early modern. ("Yes," says the mystery fan, "I see what you mean by *limited*: only two mystery writers–ignoring Williams–even if two important ones.")

The Chesterton collection was acquired from a Chicago bookdealer who specializes in G. K. Chesterton and Hilaire Belloc, A. C. Prosser, Jr., in May of 1974–that is, the bulk of it was; a small beginning was made before that time, of course. It consists of 726 books, pamphlets, and hard-bound volumes, not counting some unbound magazines. This doesn't match the main Chesterton collection with all its letters–currently near Chesterton's old home, Beaconsfield, but scheduled to eventually go to the British Museum; but the Wade Collection *is* said to be the best Chesterton library in the United States.

Of course, mystery fans are interested mainly in the Father Brown stories. Of *The Wisdom of Father Brown*, the collection has only the first British edition without a dust jacket; but with all the other volumes–*The Innocence*, *The Incredulity*, *The Secret*, and *The Scandal*–the visitor may see the original British *and* American editions in dust jackets.[1] There are also six other collections of the Father Brown stories of various sorts. (I was sorry to see missing the 1961 Dell paperback [Chapel Books No. F133], *Ten Adventures of Father Brown*, because of its admirable introduction by Anthony Boucher on religious detectives.)

There are a number of secondary works of interest, also. Ellery Queen's *20th Century Detective Stories* (1948) is there in its dust jacket because it contains "The Vampire of the Village." E. C. Bentley's *Those Days* (his autobiography) is there because of his friendship with Chesterton, and also *Trent's Last Case*, with its dedication to Chesterton (both in first editions; the former with its dust jacket, the latter without). John O'Connor's *Father Brown on Chesterton* (1937) you would expect, but one oddity was *The Smiling Corpse*, an anonymous work in the second printing of the first edition, "wherein G. K. Chesterton, S. S. Van Dine, Sax Rohmer, and Dashiell Hammett are surprised to find themselves at a murder." There were at least two more anthologies and several secondary works on detective fiction; I suggested some other volumes of the latter type when I was there in July of 1975.[2] The collection, with its emphasis only on Chesterton and Sayers, will never have anything like a complete research library on detective fiction (even excluding Doyle); but no doubt it will gradually grow.

One object which aroused my curiosity was a monochrome painting of Chesterton. The curator was off in Britain during my visit, and Barbara Griffin, the secretary, didn't know the details of it. So I contacted Mr. Prosser, and he gave me this information:

> The painter was Stanley Gedwellas. . . . [He died] several years ago as result of a fire. After he finished at Lane Technical HS about 1934, he won a scholarship at the American Academy of Art, Chicago.
>
> He never painted professionally. His great burden was the complete loss of hearing when he was about 12. . . . [He] earned his living as a combination carpenter, painter, plasterer, cement man. . . .
>
> Stan produced the portrait as a gift to me. . . the back of the canvas is boldly inscribed something like "for my friend Andy from his pal Stan," about 1940. The subject for the portrait was taken from the frontispiece that is in the first edition of the book *G. K. Chesterton: A Portrait* by W. R. Titterton, 1936.[3]

One item which I added to the collection was a hardback reprint edition of Philip MacDonald's *Warrant for X*, which I ran across in a Chicago bookstore one weekend while I was in the area. I thought a mystery novel which starts with an allusion to Chesterton's *The Napoleon of Notting Hill* and which was written by a grandson of George MacDonald belonged in the Wade Collection![4]

The Sayers part of the collection when I was there was just so-so. There was one signed book but it was not a mystery (for that matter, none of the several signed Chesterton volumes are mysteries). Besides *Lord Peter*, only the first American edition of *In the Teeth of Evidence* had a dust jacket (among the detective stories). There were first British editions of most of the mysteries (excluding *Clouds of Witness*, *Lord Peter Views the Body*, and *Have His Carcase*), but only four American firsts. There was also a copy of the Detective Club collaboration, *The Floating Admiral*, as well as some copies of Sayers's anthologies.[5]

This sounds rather negative, but a very important event has happened since I was there. On September 26, 1975, Professor Kilby purchased for the collection an additional 8,000 pages of Dorothy L. Sayers's papers.[6] In addition to letters and pictures, this includes manuscripts of some of Sayers's mysteries; of the radio plays, *The Man Born to Be King*; and of her theological treatise, *The Mind of the Maker*; it does not include her Dantean papers. Until

these papers are officially opened in March of 1976 (I write this in January), exactly what is contained will not be publicly known–but I was lucky enough to see the list of materials offered by the London bookdealer, and so I am fairly certain these sensational materials are there:

*The Mousehold, A Detective Phantasia in Three Acts* (Act One only).

"The House of the Poplars" (complete, unpublished short story; part one of "Smith & Smith, Removals," of which "The Leopard Lady" [in *In the Teeth of Evidence*] is part two).

"The Master Key" (incomplete Lord Peter Wimsey short story).

Untitled, incomplete short story introducing Lord Peter Wimsey–early work.

First five chapters of an unfinished sequel to *Busman's Honeymoon*.[7]

And I have stressed only the detective material in what I have mentioned! It is a great collection of manuscripts from the detective fan's point of view, and it gives the collection the best Sayers library in the world.

The Wade Collection exists to be used. I hope, when the new Sayers papers are properly housed (which will probably mean that only photocopies are available for public reading, as has been done with C. S. Lewis's letters), that fans will flock to read the unpublished materials. And the Chesterton books and the periodicals he edited are also there for serious study–or bibliophilic admiration.

FOOTNOTES:

1. I may be wrong about the American edition of *The Incredulity of Father Brown*. I marked it with a question mark in my notes, and then forgot to check whatever caught my attention about it.

2. The mention of my visit seems an appropriate point at which to thank the Research Committee of Tarleton State University for supporting my research there. Despite the emphasis of this note, my major concern while there was C. S. Lewis.

3. From a personal letter to the author, dated 5 August 1975.

4. Running across *Warrant for X* aroused my curiosity about how many mysteries refer to Chesterton or his works. I have started building a collection of annotated bibliography cards on the subject, and I would appreciate all titles which readers of this magazine would care to suggest. So far the least known item I have found is Manual Peyron's *Thunder of the Roses*, translated by Donald Yates (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), in which a murderer writes a brief message on the margin of a page in *Orthodoxy*.

5. For a list of the few letters by Sayers in the collection at that time, see my checklist, "A Sayers Bibliography, Part 5," *Unicorn: A Miscellaneous Journal*, 3:2 (May 1975), 51-52. (Copies at $1 each from Karen Rockow, 1153 E. 26 St., Brooklyn, NY 11210.)

6. I wish to thank Barbara Griffin, secretary of the collection, for sending me a copy of the 3 October 1975 newsstory in *The Wheaton Record* (Wheaton College). Indeed, I need to thank her not only for that, but for showing me the bookseller's list mentioned above, as well as numerous other courtesies while I was studying there.

7. Although the listing does not say so, this is presumably the volume announced under the title *Thrones, Dominations*.

# GOTHICS  HASTLY RUESOME & Romantic

By Veronica M. S. Kennedy

First, may I say that if Joe, the Bat Boy of *Pickwick Papers*, had said to *me*, "I wants to make your flesh creep," I would undoubtedly have replied, "Please do!" I am always hoping for the *frisson nouveau*, the new shudder.

In *The Pack* (Putnam, 1976; 249 pp.; $7.95) David Fisher uses basically the same idea as Robert Calder in *The Dogs*, and Berton Roueche in *Feral*. Mr. Fisher's feral creatures are dogs, abandoned deliberately, not by chance as in *The Dogs*, on a small island off Long Island. He overtly states what was only implied by Mr. Roueche, namely, that the animals are exacting vengeance on those callous human beings who used them as pets in the summer, and then heartlessly left them to die in the winter's cold. *The Pack* is genuinely frightening and is more credible than *Feral*, simply because German Shepherds and Airedales are obviously more lethal than house cats—it is easier to suspend one's disbelief. In all fairness, however, *The Pack*, though grippingly suspenseful, is at times so extremely gory that it might well turn the stomach of the sensitive reader. *Cave canem!* as Mr. Fisher's epigraph remarks!

Rather unwisely, on the dust-jacket of *Summer Solstice*, by Michael T. Hinkemeyer (Berkeley, distributed by Putnam, 1976; 256 pp.; $7.95), the publishers have printed: "The most chilling tale since Thomas Tryon's *Harvest Home*." Unfortunately, *Solstice* is all too similar in theme to Mr. Tryon's book, with touches of *Rosemary's Baby*, time travel, and incest thrown in. It has its moments of genuine terror, and some good atmospheric descriptions of the northern Minnesota farm country, but, all in all, it is rather too predictable.

Here, let me hasten to say that, although *The Killing Gift* by Bari Wood (Putnam, 1976; 320 pp.; $8.95) won the Putnam Award, this in no way influenced my judgment: after all, some of the Nobel Prize novels that Alfred Knopf was brave enough to publish were unreadable. But *The Killing Gift* is original and powerful; terrifying without being nauseatingly gory. The characterization of the leading figures in the novel, Jennifer Gilbert and David Stavistky, is convincing, and they are credibly drawn together at the denouement in a way that is surprising, yet that has been prepared for since the beginning of the novel. Without giving away the plot, let me say that Bari Wood has used one of the commonest of childhood's wishes to devastating effect. Let us hope that when the promised movie version appears, it will do the book justice.

Elizabeth, the horrendous child who is the central figure in Jessica Hamilton's novel, *Elizabeth: A Novel of the Unnatural* (Random House, 1976; 153 pp.; $6.95), is a girl in the *Bad Seed* tradition, and the mysterious Miss Barton is a governess who recalls Henry James's Miss Jessel rather than Jane Eyre. *Elizabeth* is, on one level, a nasty chronicle of as odious a child and a family as a lover of the gruesome could wish to meet—members of the family commit incest, matricide and other crimes, practice various bizarre sexual aberrations, and are hereditary witches, among other things. But is Jessica Hamilton narrating what actually happened, or what, in the morbid imagination of Elizabeth, merely seemed to happen? This novel, short and intense, evokes a real *frisson*: the evil in it is truly against nature.

Joan Fleming is always original, often quirky, and frequently very offbeat in her subject matter, as well as being ingenious in her plots and deft in her characterization. *Too Late! Too Late! The Maiden Cried* (Putnam, 1975; 264 pp.; $7.95), though it is subtitled "A Novel," and is set in the Victorian period, has many of the typical Fleming characteristics—a central female figure of exotic heritage (Nokomis Pennyform is half American Indian), a touch of the supernatural (poltergeists, this time), bizarre marital relationships, and a strain of cool humor. Two mysteries are presented, and both are solved, but there is perhaps just a trifle too much crammed into this novel—yet too much from Joan Fleming is welcome anyway!

For enthusiasts of the American Gothic and picaresque, *The Raven and the Phantom* by Dana Ross (Pocket Books, 1976; 357 pp.; $1.95) has something of everything. The great Poe is himself a character in the novel, and Dana Ross seems to have drawn on other Gothic writers as well as from mainstream novels. The opening description of Uncle Silas (remember LeFanu's *Uncle Silas*?) and his travelling medicine show recalls Esther Forbes's *Rainbow on the Road*; the waxworks lady who changes her display of "The Fathers of Our Country" to "Great Monsters of History" to draw in more business is reminiscent of Dickens's Mrs. Jarley, in *The Old Curiosity Shop*; and for good measure we have several murders and rumors of ghosts imported from Britain with the stones of the house they haunted. The pace is rousing; the heroine, Ellen, is brave and resourceful; and for those who, even in rather derivative Gothics, like the author to play fair, the clues to the solution of the mystery are given. This is a good read for those who like a mixture of the familiar and the unfamiliar.

For fanciers of British historical Gothics, *Whitton's Folly* by Pamela Hill (St. Martin's Press, 1975; 224 pp.; $7.95) offers romantic settings in Scotland, interweaves the lamentable story of the decline of Clive of India with the fictional saga of Edmond Whitton, and adds a touch of witchcraft. Some of the atmospheric descriptions are fine, and I especially liked a witchlike woman, "Skelley [squinting] Ailie." However, I found rather too many reminders of other works: the fey Peg Torrance is modeled too closely on Goethe's Mignon, and the whole work, especially the ending, has plot elements that are too reminiscent of some of Verdi's operas, notably *Il Trovatore*.

Finally, lovers of light romances that have strong over-

tones of Gothic mystery and are set in pleasantly exotic or glamorous milieus fraught with peril for attractive and often extremely resilient heroines, will find much to enjoy in Sara Cardiff's *The Speaking Stones* (Coward McCann & Geohagan, 1976; 223 pp.; $7.95), Celeste de Blais's *Suffer a Sea Change* (Coward McCann & Geohagan, 1976; 219 pp.; $7.95), Dorothy Eden's *The Time of the Dragon* (Coward McCann & Geohagan, 1976; 284 pp.; $8.95), Marlys Millhiser's *Willing Hostage* (Putnam, 1976; 247 pp.; $7.95), Elisabeth Macdonald's *The House at Grey Eagle* (Putnam, 1976; 201 pp.; $7.95), and Margaret Ritter's *Caroline, Caroline* (Scribners, 1976; 245 pp.; $7.95). These offer settings including Southern California, Colorado, New England, Bermuda, and China, and a gallery of talented, beleaguered ladies. Perhaps *Caroline, Caroline*, with its evocation of the mist-shrouded, sandy world of Cape Cod and the highly exotic *Time of the Dragon* are the most exciting. (Here I note a minor subgenre, perhaps inspired by the opening up of mainland China to the West again—Gothic novels with a Chinese setting or flavor: lately Anne Maybury, Victoria Holt, R. M. Shimer, and Andre Norton have also written Gothics of this kind.) At any rate, all the six, if not worthy of a place beside the greatest Gothics, are pleasantly alarming pastimes for a summer afternoon.

The reader has been warned: but all the novels under review offer something of interest and note to most lovers of the Gothic genre.

# PAPER CRIMES

By Fred Dueren

I was disappointed with Carter Brown's *The Savage Sisters* (Signet, 1976). I was probably just expecting too much because of the ubiquity of Brown's books. The plot is basically okay: Erica Radcliffe is fed up with the sex and rotteness of a swinging, swindling group and hires private eye Danny Boyd to help her escape in one piece. But the characters never come to life, and we don't care if Erica and Boyd get out or not. The twist at the end is neither prepared for nor very realistic.

Hans Holzer of psychic energy and supernatural phenomenon fame has now turned to fictional treatment of these matters in *Psychic Detective: The Unicorn* (Manor Books, 1976), the first of a series. Randy Knowles, the titular detective, is a refreshing, slow-paced change from the violent hard heroes of most original paperbacks. Knowles is not brought in until the second third of the book, when he's hired to use his psychic powers to decipher an old treasure map leading to gold from the Spanish Armada. As a sidelight he projects his Inner Self through walls and doors to put a stop to the drug trafficking of his employer, Adam Pitt. Though *Psychic Detective* is faulty in execution and consistency of details and poorly written, it does get passing marks for originality and willingness to try something different.

Later in the season another psychic crime novel appeared —*Warlock* by J. M. Flynn (Pocket Books, 1976). There is little real comparison for *Warlock* is far superior. John Christian Fifer is a warlock who uses his humble powers only as an aid in locating and rescuing a seventeen-year-old heir to billions. The search for Clint Rayles III takes Fifer across Europe and finally to Ireland's castles, strife, and mysticism. Fifer is a believable person, able to read a witness's mind well enough to know when he's lying, but not well enough to know the truth. He uses logic, psychic clues, and scientific checking to find young Rayles and along the way solve another mystery related to the odd family. Well-written and interesting, *Warlock* has a lot going for it.

A pleasant, different hour or so can be had with the first of a series of "comic books," *Schlomo Raven: Public Detective* by Byron Preiss (Pyramid Press, 1976). This new series, called Fiction Illustrated, is to include three mystery titles in the first four; *Son of Sherlock Holmes* and *Chandler* are to follow *Raven*. *Raven* itself is made up of two stories. The first is (as the introduction admits) a "no-puns-barred" farce of the Farx Brothers, a 1930s movies team. The illustrations are over half of it and highly reminiscent of *MAD* magazine. The second story, "Rosebug," involves theatrical genius Orsoni Wells, the

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# INTRUDER in the ROSE GARDEN

By George N. Dove

The old classic detective story tended to be a very tidy sort of narrative. Although its ostensible subject was murder, the dramatis personae was made up of the last sort of people one would expect to find involved in criminal deeds: members of Parliament, wealthy landowners and industrialists, renowned surgeons, and well-bred young ladies fresh out of convent schools. Its setting was also characteristically genteel: an old English country home, an exclusive luxury train speeding across the south of France, or a New York penthouse. Into this neat world murder would step just long enough to provide a corpse and some clues, the whole business to be inexorably cleared up by a transcendent intellectual, more often than not an amateur who would disdain the title of detective or inquiry agent.

During the 1930s and 1940s, largely as a result of the success of Dashiell Hammett and Raymond Chandler, the ambience of the detective story was drastically changed. Murder, as Chandler said, was moved out of the vicar's rose garden and back into the hands of people who are really good at it, and the brilliant supersleuth gave way to the tough minded private eye who pursued men and women instead of obscure clues and who was willing to get his hands dirty and his head bloody if necessary in gangsters' hideouts, small-town jails, and cheap hotels. The writers of the hard-boiled school, as George Grella says, "took the professional investigator of real life—usually considered a seedy voyeur—and transformed him into a familiar figure of the popular media. . . ."[1]

The fictional private eye does not emerge in the stories of our own time as a brilliant amateur willing to take time out to help his less gifted friends, because he must ply his craft in order to make a living. He is not a consulting detective, because he does not have the esoteric knowledge necessary to translate hieroglyphics and analyze chemical compounds in the same story. He is not an expert in some field like medical jurisprudence, because he lacks the training that so specialized a field would demand. Chiefly, though, the figure of the private eye is a result of the emphasis of the writer and the expectations of the reader, because he is set against a background of doubt and chaos in contrast to the certainty and order of the world of the transcendent eccentric sleuth of the old school.

Thus the reader, accustomed to the sharp difference between the stability of Sherlock Holmes's London and the violence of Philip Marlowe's Los Angeles, may feel a sense of shock when the private eye (customarily called a private inquiry agent in England) shows up—as he occasionally does—in one of the stories in the classic tradition. It is almost as if Cooper's Leatherstocking should intrude into a novel of Jane Austen.

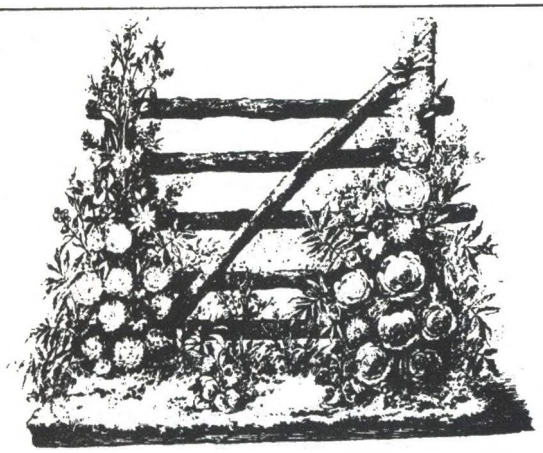
We can feel the indignation of this intrusion in that scene in Dorothy Sayers's *Gaudy Night* when Harriet Vane and the ladies of the Senior Common Room are discussing a possible attack on the problem of the poison-pen poltergeist who is upsetting the dignity of Shrewsbury College. The Warden turns to Harriet and asks, "Do you propose the private inquiry agent, Miss Vane?" "Not the ordinary sort," Harriet replies; "you wouldn't like them at all." The final sense of distaste of the subject is expressed by the Treasurer: "Fees paid to a Detective Agency will have an odd appearance in the Annual Audit."[2] The suggestion is obviously intolerable. The problem is turned over to Harriet, who shares it with Lord Peter Wimsey, a personage more amenable to the Oxonian landscape than any ill-bred private inquiry agent.

There is, however, a private detective who plays an important role in a much older story of the classic school, *The Lost Mr. Linthwaite,* by J. S. Fletcher. The protagonist in this novel is Richard Brixey, a journalist and nephew of the elderly Mr. Linthwaite, who has unaccountably disappeared. Fairly early in the story, Brixey sends for his uncle's former law clerk, William Gaffkin, who has since become a private inquiry agent. The old gentleman is finally found, thanks mainly to the dogged effort of Brixey, but it is Gaffkin who does the tailing, the bribery when necessary, and most of the errand-running. Gaffkin is neither a boor nor a clod; he knows his job and is willing to undertake the tasks Brixey is unwilling or unable to carry out, but his profession is obviously an embarrassment to the genteel Brixey. Gaffkin takes snuff while the other men in the story smoke pipes and cigars (XIX),[3] and it may strike the reader as significant that, when Brixey introduces his confederate to the local vicar, he does not identify Gaffkin's profession (IX). At the end of the story Brixey gets the credit and the girl; Gaffkin simply leaves the scene.

The private eye in Philip MacDonald's *The Rasp* comes off much worse. Pellet, "one of those filthy private inquiry agents," is engaged by James Masterson in a desperate last resort to exonerate himself. Confronted by Anthony Gethryn, the sleuth-protagonist of the story, Masterson apologizes for resorting to such extremes and hastens to add that he has kicked Pellet out (XIII). In his only direct appearance in the story, Pellet fills Gethryn with loathing: He is dapper, sly-eyed, and obsequious; he lisps; and—significantly—he is a Jew (XV). He does, for a goodly fee, deliver some information necessary to the resolution of the mystery, but the respectable people in the story want to be quit of him as soon as possible.

Terry Ring, in Ellery Queen's *The Door Between,* is a private detective who barges into the story much to the annoyance of Inspector Queen and the police, and although Ellery treats him with good-natured forbearance, he is obviously a lowbrow intruder among the literati and pro-

fessional folk of the novel. In contrast to the ethical Ellery, Terry Ring does not hesitate to rearrange or destroy evidence for the benefit of a prospective client, nor does he stint at suggesting to Eva McClure that he expects a sexual reward for protecting her interests (VII). Francis Nevins describes him as a "witling" and an "idiot hero."[4] In one of the most revealing scenes in the story, Terry's muscular directness is played off in fine counterpoint against Ellery's suave ratiocination (XIII).



*This floral five-barred gate for funerals is an interesting example of an American fashion taken up in Britain.*

The fourth intruder in the rose garden is Mr. Goby, in Agatha Christie's *Funerals Are Fatal.* Unlike Terry Ring, Mr. Goby is invited in by Hercule Poirot for consultation, and, unlike Pellet, he is treated by Poirot with considerable respect. Mr. Goby has talent, and as head of a private inquiry agency he also has connections Poirot can use to advantage. Needing information on the whereabouts of the suspects at the time of a murder and disdaining to ring doorbells and examine witnesses, Poirot engages Mr. Goby to do these jobs for him, recognizing that the private agent will stoop to things Poirot does not wish to touch, because Mr. Goby recognizes no limitations placed upon himself by the dictates of delicacy (XII).

Here, indeed, is the sharpest contrast between the Great Man of the Dupin-Holmes school and the interloper from the mean streets: The private detective-inquiry agent will do jobs the intellectual mastermind will not undertake because they are not "mental" tasks or because they involve activities that are legally, morally, or socially questionable. Thus Gaffkin is sent out to solicit information while Brixey goes off to write an exclusive for the *Sentinel* (VII). Pellet, already engaged and then discharged by Masterson, is paid by Gethryn to undertake a smelly job Gethryn does not want to get involved in (XV). Terry Ring enters the action of *The Door Between* because Karen Leith had hired him to find her sister. Mr. Goby, whose little notebook seems to be a gazette of the misdeeds of others, delivers to Poirot an abundance of valuable information that saves the fastidious Belgian a considerable amount of time for exercise of the famous Little Gray Cells.

Essentially, the attitude of the classic detective story toward the private eye is based in social snobbery. In each of the cases I have cited, the private detective is lower on the social scale than the sleuth-protagonist. Gaffkin's addiction to snuff is an example, and the fact that Pellet is a Jew is another. Terry Ring grudgingly admits his humble origin to Eva McClure: "I know I must seem like some kind of a freak or greaseball to you. . . . No education except what I've picked up, dragged up on the streets, no manners or anything," (XVII) and his speech is peppered with "damn" and "lousy," while Ellery Queen vents only an occastional "tut" or "pshaw." In contrast to Poirot's impeccably butchered English, Mr. Goby refers to racehorses as "gee-gees" and speaks of one character in the story as having "been in Queer Street," and the reader should not miss the point that, while turning the pages of his notebook, Mr. Goby licks his finger (XII).

Of the four I have cited, Gaffkin is the only one who is not openly mercenary, probably because he is an old friend of the family. Pellet, on the other hand, is in the business for all he can get: He had "smelt a big thing," says Gethryn, "and consequently big money" (XVII). Paid fifty pounds by Masterson for his first involvement, Pellet demands two hundred for a bigger job, and gets it (XV). Terry Ring, represented as one who has come up the hard way, has obviously profited in the past from his involvement in a Hollywood jewel robbery. In *The Door Between*, however, he is more interested in a sexual reward from Eva than a fat fee. Mr. Goby is, admittedly, "very expensive"; his clients are few, but they are "extremely rich" (XII). We remember that Sherlock Holmes happily pocketed a sizeable check from the Duke of Holdernesse,[5] but usually Holmes and his successors of the old school of detective fiction enjoy other rewards than money: Richard Brixey has the satisfaction of finding his lost uncle and the girl of his dreams; both he and Anthony Gethryn get stories for their newspapers; and Ellery Queen has the material for a new novel. If Poirot receives a fee for his work in *Funerals Are Fatal,* it is left discreetly unmentioned.

In at least one respect the private eyes in these four stories definitely foreshadow such other fictional characters as Sam Spade, Philip Marlowe, and Lew Archer. They think and act in terms of concrete situations and personal involvements, avoiding theory, intellect, and sentiment. Mr. Goby is specifically anti-intellectual, but in matters mechanical he puts Poirot to shame:

> "What exactly was wrong with the car?" Poirot asks.
> "Do you want the exact details, M. Poirot?"
> "Heaven forbid. I have no mechanical knowledge." (XII)

Pellet knows a good thing when he sees one, and Terry Ring, for all his lack of formal education, can make a lightning-quick practical analysis of a situation. At one point in *The Lost Mr. Linthwaite,* Gaffkin recommends some direct action for fast results and is told by the indignant Brixey that his suggestion is abominable. "Sentiment, Mr. Brixey," is Gaffkin's smiling reply, as if condescendingly tolerant of the more delicate feelings of his colleague (XX).

The fifth point of difference between the private eyes and the intellectuals with whom they appear is their willingness to use, when necessary, methods that are beneath the ethical standards of the more genteel sleuth. The most blatant in this respect is Terry Ring, who tries to grab a client as soon as he happens upon the murder scene, and who does not hesitate to destroy and rearrange evidence that seems to implicate his prospective client (VII). William Gaffkin freely uses bribery as a method of obtaining evidence, in neat contrast to the more ethical Brixey, who offers public rewards (VII). Pellet is open for any job: "Discreet Inquiries. Divorces. Watching, etc." (XV). Mr. Goby is a little less obvious. When Poirot expresses amazement at his ability to get information, Mr. Goby merely murmurs "that there were ways. . . . " (XII).

Considered as a group, then, these intruders in the rose garden are not only far less "sympathetic" characters than the mastermind-sleuths; they are represented as professionally, socially, and intellectually inferior. They do the dirty work of detection while the more brilliant Poirots and Queens exercise their minds. They have disagreeable habits of speech and action in contrast to the almost impeccable manners of their better-bred colleagues. They have a keen nose for the dollar or the pound, whereas the others stand disdainfully aloof from monetary reward. Their methods are pragmatic and utilitarian, as distinguished from the more theoretical and abstract approaches of the masterminds. Finally, they will stoop to practices that the Brixeys and the Gethryns would consider not cricket.

Earlier I compared the appearance of the private eye in a story of the classic school with the intrusion of Leatherstocking into the rural gentility of a Jane Austen novel. The analogy is more than fortuitous: George Grella sees the fictional private detective as "another avatar of that prototypical American hero, Natty Bumppo. . . ," skilled, courageous, just, and innately anti-intellectual.[6] Such a man would be at home in the hostile wilderness or the urban alley, but in the vicar's rose garden he is an intruder.

Except for their skill and their opportunism, though, the four I have discussed are not the forerunners of such fictional private eyes as Philip Marlowe, Lew Archer, and Travis McGee, partly because they lack the nobility of stature of these men, but chiefly because they are interlopers in a world that is not theirs. Not one of them measures up to Raymond Chandler's characterization of the fictional private detective, the man of the mean streets "who is not himself mean, who is neither tarnished nor afraid."[7]

The treatment of Gaffkin, Pellet, Ring, and Goby in the stories in which they appear does, however, illustrate the essential differences between the classic and the hard-boiled detective novel: the one ratiocinative and snobbish, the other pragmatic and egalitarian. Each is set in a "real" world in its own way; the basic difference is one of attitude and emphasis.



NOTES:

1 George Grella, "Murder and the Mean Streets: The Hard-Boiled Detective Novel," in *Detective Fiction: Crime and Compromise*, Dick Allen and David Chacko, eds. (New York: Harcourt, Brace Janovich, 1974), p. 414.

2 Dorothy Sayers, *Gaudy Night* (New York: Harper and Row, 1936), pp. 91-93.

3 Since most of these novels have gone through several editions, references are to chapters rather than pages.

4 Francis Nevins, *Royal Bloodline* (Bowling Green: The Popular Press, 1974), pp. 56-57, 72.

5 In "The Adventure of the Priory School."

6 Grella, *op. cit.*, p. 414.

7 Raymond Chandler, "The Simple Art of Murder," in *The Art of the Mystery Story*, Howard Haycraft, ed. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1946), p. 237.

# The PAPERBACK REVOLUTION

By Charles Shibuk

JOHN DICKSON CARR

A susceptible police inspector emulates Philip Trent by falling in love with the chief suspect in a poisoning case. Further evidence continues to point the finger of suspicion even more strongly at this lovely, but unhelpful, lady until her guardian dies, and it looks like another case of poisoning. Unlike Trent, this policeman is able to issue a call for help to the inimitable Dr. Gideon Fell in *The Problem of the Green Capsule* (Award, 1939). This is a much better than average Carr novel and a welcome reminder of the golden age.

AGATHA CHRISTIE

*Murder at the Vicarage* (Dell, 1930) introduces Miss Jane Marple in her first book appearance. You may have some difficulty recognizing that dear lady of the later novels in this work, but you will be gratified by the intricacy of the crime problem that occurs in St. Mary Mead, and you will also get to learn a great deal about that famous novelist Raymond West, who has been such a great comfort to his Aunt Jane in her declining years.

DICK FRANCIS

In *Knockdown* (Pocket Books, 1974) we have ex-jockey Jonah Dereham, turned horse buyer, trying to earn an honest pound in his new profession. Opposing him are various people who think Dereham's ethics are getting in the way of their conspiracy to raise prices for their own crooked financial gain. This is the usual Dick Francis combination of suspense, excitement, and readability.

P. D. JAMES

Nightingale House is a training school for nurses, but murder puts a permanent end to the careers of two would-be aspirants in *Shroud for a Nightingale* (Popular Library, 1971), and Chief Superintendent Adam Dalgliesh is called upon for radical surgery in order to remove a killer. This is Miss James's best novel (I exclude the as yet unread *The Black Tower*) and outstanding proof that the classic form is far from moribund.

PETER LOVESEY

Messrs. Cribb and Thackeray return to the soft cover ranks with *The Tick of Death* (Penguin, 1974). Set against the background of the 1884 dynamite plot that destroyed part of Scotland Yard, this understated thriller turns out to be one of that team's best cases. When Detective-Sergeant Cribb attempts to infiltrate a gange of Irish-American extremists, his efforts are so successful that over-confidence leads to deadly peril in an edge-of-the-chair climax.

ARTHUR LYONS

*All God's Children* (Ballantine, 1976) is a conventional tale wherein a California private eye is hired to find a runaway daughter. Kidnapping and murders follow as series character Jacob Asch collaborates with an intelligent policeman until he can finally put all the pieces together. This is a hard-boiled novel that is simple, direct, and, mercifully, unpretentious. Also of value is Asch's debut novel, *The Dead Are Discreet* (1974), from the same publisher.

JOHN D. MACDONALD

Many of the best elements of the above-mentioned hard-boiled school can be found in this writer's pre-Travis McGee works, which owe their many reissues to the success of this series character. For fast action, incisive characterization, and just plain excitement try *The Damned* (1952) and *On the Run* (1963). Both are published by Fawcett.

NGAIO MARSH

Superintendent Alleyn's old school friend is now the president of an emerging African nation in *Black as He's Painted* (Pyramid, 1974). He's slated for a visit to London, but refuses to have the slightest concern for his personal safety. The Special Branch and Scotland Yard are up in arms for justifiable reasons, but you will be vastly entertained—especially by the first few chapters—before Miss Marsh gets down to business and Alleyn assumes command in his usual adroit fashion.

DOUGLAS RUTHERFORD

Valentine Kroll steals a famous diamond and leaves a dead body behind him as he attempts to establish a perfect alibi via motorcycle in *Kick Start* (Ballantine, 1973). His efforts are unavailing and a pursuit to Tunisia follows. Good plotting, headlong pace, sex, and a rousing flood climaxes this thriller by an excellent writer who deserves a much wider audience than his few recent hardcover appearances in the U. S. have brought him.

REX STOUT

*The Rubber Band* (Pyramid, 1936) bounces back for the ninth time in a dozen years. The third recorded case of Nero Wolfe and Archie Goodwin features blackmail and murder and commences when a lady accused of stealing from her employers approaches the famed team of detectives to vindicate her good name. This is one more example of Stout's pre-World War II mastery of the classic detective novel.

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# PART 1

## PARADOX AND PLOT: THE FICTION OF FREDRIC BROWN

By Newton Baird

*WARNING: THE DETECTIVE/MYSTERY STORY IN THIS WRAPPER MAY NOT BE IN THE PUBLIC INTEREST. IT MAY CONTAIN TOO MUCH HAPPINESS. . .*

Fortunately this warning does not appear on the jackets of our favorite books. I hope it never will. But have you ever wanted *more* happiness from your favorite detective stories? There is a problem. The paradox exists in the detective/mystery genre: The overall artistic direction is naturalistic, but the plot is romantic. In other words, you start out to find something better than what exists now, but you end up being told that having found it, things remain the same. Naturalism is a deterministic belief. It says, "that's the way it is . . . " Romantic fiction says, "this is life as it should be and could be. . ."

Romantic fiction should have an inventive plot, rise above the everyday, and have a universal meaning. And another element, rarely achieved: a purposeful, confident hero. But even though romantic fiction encourages a happier existence and greater pleasure, the admixture of romantic and naturalistic conventions continues to give us the paradox in the detective novel. The tradition has changed little since Wilkie Collins's *The Moonstone*, in which the riddle of "who done it" is solved by detection, but the mystery of life remains a riddle.

Fredric Brown was a genius of plot. It is the plot, where invention and originality begin, that harbors the paradox. The following study of Brown's fiction tells about the delights and problems that confront the exceptional inventor working within a paradoxical genre.

The author wishes to thank Mrs. Fredric Brown and Mr. Eugene J. West for their help in the research for this article.

### Variegations in Plotting

Fredric Brown (1906-1972) wrote detective, mystery, fantasy, and science fiction. His plots are as variegated as a magpie's colors. His narrative pace at its best is as infectious as the music of Benny Goodman. His serious novels have themes and plot construction like great music and its forms, and music is a motif in much of his work. Reading a Fredric Brown story is an unusual experience, unusual in the way things happen, how and why they happen. Unusual also in the clarity with which past, present, and future ponderables are shown. But his genius as an innovator apparently caused him as much pain as delight. As with every genius, he sought a better world than the one around him. He did not do this by rejection but rather by projecting himself and the reader into a world of his own creation by means of his brilliant imagination.

He stopped publishing in 1968. His principal publisher from 1947 on was E. P. Dutton, who published him in the "Guilt Edged Mystery" line for many years. Mickey Spillane, an early innovator and a champion seller, is still with Dutton. (They no longer publish "Guilt Edged Mysteries," and Spillane says he is the only detective novelist left in the Dutton catalog.) Shortly before Fredric Brown's death in 1972, Spillane was interviewed and asked about Brown:

> Did Mickey know Fredric Brown, the mystery writer from Milwaukee who was a star of the Dutton list for many years?
>
> "Fredric Brown!" Mickey gasped. "Why, he's my favorite writer of all times! I've got every one of his books. Do you know he wrote the greatest opening lines ever written in any story?–'The last man in the world sat alone in his room. Suddenly there was a knock on the door'"[1]
>
> Mickey had assumed that Brown was dead, since he had not published a book for many years. Assured that he was not at that time . . . Mickey picked up the telephone and called a succession of Browns in Tucson, Arizona, where his fellow writer had been living. He had no luck and after a while hung up.[2]

Spillane's enthusiasm is shared by many Fredric Brown fans. Ayn Rand described him as "unusually ingenious."[3] Anthony Boucher, the mystery reader's favorite critic, praised Brown's work highly in several reviews. But relatively little enthusiasm for his work actually appeared while he was publishing. Today it is difficult to find information about this neglected author. Few rewards came to him in proportion to the quality of work he produced. At this writing, only three titles are in print.

The ground breaking for a belated Brown evaluation was done by William F. Nolan, who led the way when he published an enjoyable reminiscence of his long friendship with Fredric Brown. One part is especially provocative:

> I had just purchased a new tape recorder, and I still have an old 1951 tape of Fredric Brown playing his Chinese flute. He had lived in Taos, New Mexico . . . and claimed he was "the finest flute player in Taos," adding with a sly mouse-grin, "That's because no one else in town played a flute."[4]

The phrase, "sly mouse-grin," is the kind of concise characterization that Brown himself did so well. It suggests some of his piquant, satirical stories, and, especially, "The Star Mouse," its hero, "Mitki," and the numerous other stories in which small creatures baffle the mind of man. Ironically, it characterizes also the relationship of Fredric Brown to the intellectual world of his time. One by one his small, clever books appeared upon the market for twenty-five years, giving benefits and pleasure to thousands. The serious-minded critic responded more often than not as if to an irritant, small and hard to get hold of, different, and baffling.

Brown stresses characterization in a quote on the dust jacket of his second novel, *The Dead Ringer* (1948):

> Mr. Brown believes that a good book, detective story or no, should emphasize characterization. "The

> straight whodunit," he says, "is an intellectual exercise for the reader. A second type of mystery depends upon pace; characterization is vivid but typed, and the plot is subordinate. The third and, in my opinion, the best type, which I try to write, stresses character development."

This emphasis on character development led him into psychological areas. But he did not subordinate plot. Various tales have been published about the bus trips he took to help him plot his books. This one is from the introduction by his wife, Elizabeth Brown, to the posthumous collection of stories, *Paradox Lost*:

> There came a time when Fred's plotting would bog down. Despite all of his pacing he couldn't get anywhere. When this happened on one of his earlier books, he though perhaps a trip, by night, by bus, might help. He was not an early-to-bed person, and he though that after the bus lights were out and all was quiet, he might be able to concentrate better. He took a pencil flashlight and note pad along. He stayed away a few days, and when he came home his plot had been worked out. (p. X; all page numbers cited from Fredric Brown titles refer to first editions.)

This is a down-to-earth description of the lonely task of invention. It may seem surprising, then, that invention brings satisfaction and rewards to others, coming as it does from such purposeful, lonely struggle.

The enjoyment of Brown's work is like the enjoyment of great, inventive music. Many may take the pleasure for granted, but most also respond to the new, the different, and the surprising. Fredric Brown enjoyed playing his flute for his "own amazement,"[5] and his many plot variations in their ingeniousness suggest the same kind of enjoyment in the process of plotting as in the process of creating music. His best novels of detection/mystery are like symphonic variations in their intricately woven diversity of plots and themes. His forms were more than molds; form appears to have been an essential concept in the invention of his plots. And the one essential in good storytelling, as Brown's work demonstrates, is an inviting plot. As in music, as in architecture, as in all art, without the form, whether original or traditional, all other essentials collapse. In a few cases where Fredric Brown's plots are not strong enough to support the rest of a heavy structure (see Sections 11 and 12 of this study), allegory and theme collapse.

The author seems to have been like his stories: deceptively simple and ordinary-appearing in surface character, a rare and complex intelligence underneath. His books do not seem complex at all. Every plot, with a very few exceptions, reads rapidly and enjoyably. But they have complex meaning of plot, character, and setting, sometimes symbolic and metaphysical meaning. Each is a "conceptual work of art." That phrase is used so poorly today that I will quote a precise definition from Ayn Rand's introduction to the twenty-fifth anniversary edition of her novel, *The Fountainhead*:

> Longevity—predominantly, though not exclusively is the prerogative of a literary school which is virtually non-existent today: Romanticism . . . the conceptual school of art. It deals, not with the random trivia of the day, but the timeless, fundamental, universal problems and *values* of human existence.[6]

Fredric Brown's stories sometimes appear to be simple narratives of events as they are, but with more careful thought the overall conception of each one can be seen, the "timeless, fundamental, and universal problems and values" in each plot. He shows things as they are not ordinarily seen and as we may hope they could be. But in some of his novels, paradoxically, he reverses this and writes not as one might hope existence to be, but as one might have a horror of it being. He began his long career of novel writing with the story of an idealistic and adventuresome young hero, and reached the apex in the struggle with the paradox in his work with the creation of a rogue-hero who rejects a corrupt world and creates a new one.

Notes: Variegations in Plotting

1. The story is "Knock," first published in 1948, and still in print in *Paradox Lost*.
2. Leslie Cross, "An Afternoon with Mickey Spillane," *Milwaukee Journal*, August 1972. (I do not have the exact issue of this interview.)
3. Ayn Rand, *The Romantic Manifesto* (World, 1969), p. 110.
4. William F. Nolan, "Thoughts on Fredric Brown," *TAD*, 5:4, July 1972, 191-193.
5. From the dusk jacket of *The Fabulous Clipjoint*: "His other activities include playing the flute—'purely for my own amazement.'"
6. Ayn Rand, Introduction to the 25th Anniversary Ed. of *The Fountainhead* (Bobbs-Merrill, 35th Printing, 1972), p. vii.

## For Amazement Only

In 1956, after he had published more than twenty novels and dozens of stories, Fredric Brown penned an article entitled "Where Do You Get Your Plot?"[1] In it he demonstrated in his usual lighthearted manner his method of plotting. He begins by stating his belief that "all writers use identically the same system in plotting, but that very few have ever consciously analyzed the process." He then defined that method as "accretion," adding, "I'll save you a trip to the dictionary–it means *increase by gradual addition*." He started his demonstration of how he himself plotted by saying he would start "from scratch–a single word–and build it toward a plot." He cautioned that he was not going to build an actual story, but merely begin the process of "getting" a plot, that he would make it a plot for a mystery novel, because "mystery novels are my main racket." The single word he starts his example with is "goldfish."

It all seems very simple. No doubt a good many read the article and finished with the thought, "Simple. . . ," then added in afterthought, "but very clever." And despite Brown's offhand statement that all writers use the method of plotting he demonstrates, I suspect many writers would be puzzled, and some inclined to dismiss the demonstration as "silly."

The "accretion method of plotting" is an adaptation of the basis of all creative thought, beginning with perceptions, identifying abstractions. In Brown's example, goldfish, a type of fish that is most often found in artificial pools, becomes part of the concept of "crime" or "murder." So the author asks himself the conceptual question: "Why murder a goldfish?"–moving to the idea in the answer: "profit." Finally the construction arrives at the overall plot conception. "Profit" leads to the abstraction "business," so that the plot concept is: the murder of a goldfish to destroy a business.

Fredric Brown's stories show that he used the accretion method. But there is a constant in his simplest plot which he did not identify in the article. That is the use of imagination–the method of altering reality for surprise, paradox, and the unusual. The process can be seen easily in the vignettes he wrote. The best of these are pure, distilled, delightful plot. A good one, called "Too Far," is in the paperback collection *Honeymoon in Hell.* Like the demonstration in the article, this vignette's plot is built on a word-concept–"buck." To paraphrase it would be to commit a travesty. It involves word-play, connotations, denotations, inferences, jumping back and forth from abstractions to simple concepts–deer, and so on–all meanings in the word "buck," in a smooth narrative of twelve paragraphs.

A play on words may not seem to explain the construction of a mystery plot, but one does this every day in telling events experienced, adding events, character, movements of time, and action of events. The difference is that the inventor does it with his imagination, improving by ordering reality. The plot method depends most upon imagination and invention when it integrates concepts to achieve metaphysical meaning or theme, a level that Brown, unlike many of his contemporaries, seemed to take for granted as part of the goal of his art.

Most writers today add to their plots by accretion from two sources: everyday events (too often the daily news) and from the plots of others. One need only watch television drama to see this. Imitation is the elementary level of creativity. Reality, of course, supplies the imagination (what else?), but it is the effectiveness and quality of the imagination that feeds invention. Fredric Brown's everyday method was innovation, not imitation, and he needed freedom to stretch that imagination. Fortunately, when he began to write there was a creative stretching-ground, a ragged publication tossed around at newsstands, billiard parlors, and barber shops: the late lamented pulps.

Many collectors of Fredric Brown may not have a copy of the first mystery story he published. It is in the 1938 issue of *Detective Story.* Its title summed up the sense of imagination in his fiction: "The Moon for a Nickel." The title suggests that Brown's spontaneity and economy of phrase had begun even then. I suspect he was an avid reader of pulp magazines from an early age. In a scene in his 1950 novel, *Here Comes a Candle,* the troubled hero, Joe Bailey, tells his girl that she ought to read science fiction. Joe's friend, Ray, comments to Joe:

> ". . . you think some, or you wouldn't read the kind of stuff you read. It takes imagination to like science fiction and fantasy. . ." (p. 47)

It takes imagination to appreciate or write good detective/mystery stories also. In one detective story after another, Brown's heroes buy a pocket mystery, a detective or science fiction magazine for an evening of reading.

His early stories appeared in the pulps by the hundreds, mostly in the 1940s. His first published science fiction story, "Not Yet the End," was in the pulp *Captain Future* in 1941. Considering the creative events to come in his career as a prolific author, it was a prophetic title. The story was reprinted in *Nightmares and Geezenstacks* in 1961 and is one of his best.

With some exceptions the early stories are slight, but lively. One can study Brown's improvement as a writer by comparing the early, embryo versions of his novels that appeared in the pulps with the final versions. For instance, consider the short story "Compliments of a Fiend" in the May 1945 issue of *Thrilling Detective.* The expanded novel, titled *The Bloody Moonlight* (1949),[2] was the third in the Ed Hunter and Uncle Am detective series. The embryo story was 25 pages in the magazine; the expanded version was 256 pages. The early version contains the later version's plot in a nutshell. The character of private detective Tommy Lederer in the short version became Ed Hunter in the novel. (Note that "Ed Hunter," said fast enough, sounds like "Head Hunter," an example of the puns Brown loved.) Tommy (much as with Ed later) is given an assignment to go down state to investigate an inventor who claims to be getting signals from space on a "receiver." The later novel adds a whole set of characters, subplots, and sex-interest–the usual sidetrack in Ed's adventures. The best

character in the novel, the lady editor of the local paper, is not in the early story. Although the embryo version is primitive and even juvenile, the ingenuity of the plot nucleus is already evident.

Another early story, not reprinted, is "A Matter of Death," in *Thrilling Detective*, November 1944. The plot involves a man who returns to town and encounters hostility, eventually violence, for no apparent reason. The explanation is fairly predictable–rivalry for an inheritance –and the style is about as primitive as Brown's work ever got. But it has the saving grace of a malevolent atmosphere that is, in the end, believably transformed into one of light and happiness. Not many pulp stories make you want to smile when they end.

Just as plots reappear, so do characters. One such character is in the story "Why, Benny, Why?" which was published in the offspring of the pulps, *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine,* in November 1964. This short thriller involves a college girl and a "moron." It is very similar to the plot idea in *Knock Three-One-Two*, in which another character named Benny, a mentally retarded news vendor, appears as a minor but pivotal character. There is a similar character, named Sammy, in the Dell novel of 1953, *Madball,* published first as "The Pickled Punks" in the *Saint Detective Magazine.* "Why, Benny, Why?" is effortless reading, with none of the tendency toward pulp style and convention that is noticeable in the earliest work. However, its conclusion is weak and lacks meaning. Certain of these lesser stories (I will discuss the better ones later) deserve some limited reprinting to demonstrate to present-day writers and readers how, in stretching the imagination, a beginning writer gains the ability that can bring success. In Brown's case, with startling suddenness he had an audience.


Notes: For Amazement Only

1. In *The Mystery Writer's Handbook*, edited by Herbert Brean (Harper, 1956), pp. 13-18.
2. The novel, *Compliments of a Fiend*(1950), uses the story's title, but not the plot.

**Crack Up and Break Through**

Elizabeth Brown says in her introduction to *Paradox Lost* that her husband hated to write, but loved having written. She tells of his procrastinations before settling down to write an average day's output of about three pages. In a recent letter she recalled that her husband wrote "finished copy."[1] In view of the quantity of stories he wrote and the high quality of style, this is remarkable. A letter from his publisher states that Brown was reticent about biographical facts and that personal publicity did not figure prominently in his career.[2] The biographical information that has been found for this article appears in the chronology that follows the final section. Briefly, here are a few of the early facts.

He was born in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1906. He attended public schools there, and both of his parents died while he was in high school (although dates here are uncertain). He took summer jobs during vacations and went to work right after his high school graduation for a company that jobbed machine tool supplies (though, again, exact chronology is uncertain). His experience there as an office boy is the story in his novel, *The Office.* He attended the University of Cincinnati (apparently evenings) and was enrolled at Hanover College in Indiana for about half-a-year, but it appears he attended the well-known school of "hard knocks" for longer duration.[3]

He was employed until about 1930 in various office jobs. During this period he married his first wife, Helen R. Brown (maiden name also Brown). They had two sons, James, born in 1930, and Linn, born in 1932. During this period of approximately 1930 until 1947 he worked at various printing jobs for trade papers, mostly proofreading, in Milwaukee. In 1945 he went to work for the *Milwaukee Journal,* again as a proofreader, but also as a book reviewer, writing stories for the pulps in his spare time. At this point his career expanded in several ways. He began to publish longer and more complex stories. Most important was "Dead Man's Indemnity," published in 1946, which he expanded into his first and one of his most successful novels, *The Fabulous Clipjoint.*

However, the first important breakthrough came in 1946 when "Madman's Holiday," which appeared in *Detective Story* magazine in 1943, was released in its adaptation as an RKO-Studios film. It was scripted by three writers, one of whom was John Paxton, and was released in 1946 as *Crack Up.* It is the only full-length film in which Fredric Brown's plot ingenuity is adequately served on the screen, but it is still only an average film for its kind. It had a good cast, but its production values are, unfortunately, mediocre.[4]

I have not read the original story, but the script seems inspired by the notorious art forgeries of the World War II period, in particular the Van Meegeren case involving several fake Vermeers. Both the Dutch and Nazi governments got involved in the Van Meegeren case, and it made headlines for a long time. *Crack Up* has an art professor for its hero-detective, a World War II veteran with combat experience. He is brought to a Chicago museum to give lectures on the museum's masterpieces. One night while he hurriedly rushes

to catch a commuter train, the professor, in the best scene in the movie, experiences a puzzling and sinister series of events, culminating in his unconsciousness at the moment of a seeming collision of the train with another oncoming train. The detective's view of the outside world through the window of the car is used for the passage of both time and space in a rather clever way, and the music builds a mood of apprehension.

The hero, played interestingly by Pat O'Brien, overcoming what at first seems miscasting, wakes up on a couch in a wealthy collector's house, surrounded by his girl friend (played excellently by Claire Trevor) and a bevy of policemen, including a tough inspector who is one of O'Brien's numerous nemeses. O'Brien cannot make his listeners believe his story since no train wreck has occurred. His unconsciousness appears to be related to his wartime amnesia. The police and the art collector (played with marvelous ploy by Ray Collins) seem convinced that O'Brien is mentally unbalanced. His GI history gives the idea plausability, and the professor sets out to prove that his mind is stable by retracing the events of the night. The question in the hero's mind becomes the movie's theme: Can we believe our senses, or do world-shaking events like war reduce our minds to useless, undependable tools? O'Brien gets more than he bargains for when he sets out to explore the past. What seemed at first incongruous casting now makes sense in the hero's image. Art critic becomes detective; intellectual becomes man of action. Unfortunately the script does not point up this metamorphosis as it should.

The denouement in which the detective proves himself sane, partly through a propitious turn of events, might have been weak, following anticlimactically as it does upon several poor chases. But it is given strength by Ray Collins who, particularly in a single close-up, becomes the devil personified as art collector. There is a startling moment also when in the "lost objects revealed" shot we suddenly see a close-up of Vermeer's *Lady with Pearl Necklace*, rather out-of-context, but still recalling the Van Meegeren case. (However, the forged paintings in the film are not Vermeers.) Also, in an earlier scene, O'Brien processes some x-ray photographs of different versions of one of the paintings which is a suspected forgery in the plot. This is much like the method used to reveal the truth about the Van Meegeren forgeries, a rather unfamiliar bit of art detection at the time.

*Crack Up* seems a treasure compared to the awful use made of Brown's excellent *The Screaming Mimi*, which was turned into a grade-Z film a few years later. Fredric Brown, intentionally or unintentionally, avenged the travesty neatly and humorously in "Abominable," a story which appeared in *Nightmares and Geezenstacks*. Amusingly the "star" who played Yolanda Lang in the movie version of *Mimi*—the publicity said she also posed for the statue—gets a chance in the story "Abominable" to make a *big* comeback as a prototype of quite a different breed.

Notes: Crack Up and Break Through

1. Elizabeth Brown in a letter to Newton Baird, dated Tucson, AZ, 1/31/75. (Astonishing though the idea of finished copy is, it is not unique. Victor Hugo wrote finished copy when he produced his massive novels. Once when Hugo was leaving Jersey to sail to Guernsey a trunk containing five of his most famous manuscripts hung poised over stormy waves for several moments before being flung roughly aboard. One of the manuscripts was the original and only copy of the as yet unpublished *Les Miserables*. See A. Maurois, *Victor Hugo and His World*, Viking, 1966, p. 87).
2. Letter from Elliot Graham, Publicity, E. P. Dutton & Co., Inc., dated 3/5/75.
3. A transcript from Hanover College shows that he entered as a freshman on Jan. 3, 1927 and transferred on Aug. 2, 1927, but apparently took courses only during the winter and spring quarters. His grades include: 2 "B's" for History I & II; an "A/B" for one semester of English I; 2 "A's" for Bible IV; an "A" and a "B" for English Ia; the same for English Ib; and an "A" for one quarter of English Novel. His home address is given as "4224 Williamson Place, Cincinnati, Ohio." He placed third in the James Blythe Oratorical Contest at Hanover in May, 1927. (My thanks to J. Dresselhaus, Registrar's Office, Hanover College, for providing this information.)
4. The director, Irving Reis, directed some of "The Falcon" series, and later the screen version of *All My Sons*. The co-scripter, John Paxton, wrote scripts for a number of detective films, including *Farewell My Lovely* and *Murder My Sweet*, as well as the well-known *The Wild One* and *On the Beach*. Leigh Harline did the music, and is famous for *Pinnocchio*. (Not to be confused with Peter Lorre's 1936 *Crack-Up*.)

### Fabulous Debut

The years 1947 and 1948 were ones of decision: In 1947 Fredric and Helen Brown were divorced, and in October of 1948, having left the *Journal* to write full time, Fredric Brown married Elizabeth Charlier in New York City. He achieved a second career breakthrough in 1947 with the publication of his first novel, *The Fabulous Clipjoint,* the success of which induced him to risk earning his living as a writer.[1] It was one of his most popular novels, and he was awarded the Edgar by the Mystery Writers of America for Best First Mystery. It was the first in a series of seven detective novels that featured Ed Hunter and his uncle, Am Hunter, all told in the first person by Ed Hunter.

Ed is eighteen and his father has been found murdered in a Chicago alley. The police can find no leads to the killer. Ed's mother is an alcoholic, and he has a sister who is fifteen and "dangerously boy crazy," as Ed sees it. As the novel opens he is discouraged and looks down from the window of their apartment at the people in the street, saying to himself, "I hate them . . . they don't give a damn what happens to anyone else." His collective hatred for all people is allayed somewhat when his Uncle Am (for Ambrose), a carnival follower, convinces him that together they can solve his father's murder. Detection is in the knight-squire tradition, with Ed, as learner, benefitting from Am's years and experience, and Ed's need revitalizing his older uncle. (See my earlier comment on this novel, *TAD*, 8:1, 11/74, 18-19.)

Detecting in the side streets and alleys is dangerous. The plot skips in and around several tangential red-herring false leads. But Ed and Am get on the track as Am guides Ed through a present-tense deduction into the family past. Ed's interest in the opposite sex is amusingly naive, and though it fits into the too-abundant red-herring plot, the narrative does not bog down, and the novel is remarkably fast-paced, suspenseful, and interesting, especially for a first effort. Although the narrative style is the best thing about the book, characters, plot, and theme are all integrated well. The uncle-nephew relationship is substantive and purposeful. Ed's moments of obstinacy to his uncle's advice, and his discouragements, are countered by Am's constant encouragement and channeling of thought and action, always accenting the positive.

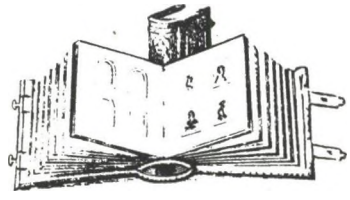
They successfully find the truth about the death of Ed's father and identify the killer. Ed overcomes the psychological wound from his first personal experience with death and faces the problem of coming to terms with reality when the temptation is to turn from it. He looks out at the city skyline again at the end of the novel, and it seems to him that now, by understanding the particulars of the events that seemed at first some cruel act of the whole of mankind, he can see that most people and existence are good again. The city is beautiful now and the buildings seem "like fingers reaching to the sky." The spirit of happy comradeship is carried into the future as Ed and Uncle Am, the happy detectives of an understandable world, laugh together on a train ride.

Fredric Brown's first novel is diametrical in its sense of life to the *a priori* social consciousness of naturalistic novels of the American city. In Brown's novel the ethical and moral concept of the city is not predetermined; human understanding and individual effort can affect events and influence the spiritual state of existence. The author did not compromise his young hero's ideals, enriching him instead with the knowledge and experience acquired from an "average man." His independence and youthful spirit carry on.

### Forethought and Fun

One of the first things one notices about *The Fabulous Clipjoint* is the style. Brown's style is often compared to other writers, especially James M. Cain and Raymond Chandler, but it is really his own and unique. I define it as *objective forethought.* Objective narration is just what the dictionary says about "objective": ". . . having to do with a known or perceived object as distinguished from something existing only in the mind of the subject, or the person thinking."[1] As to "forethought," the most distinguishing characteristic of Fredric Brown's narrative style is that the character whose point of view is being presented to the reader is *thinking ahead.*

In practical terms Brown uses the technique in ways such as a process for searching out clues: finding a missing person, planning how to search a house undetected at midnight, placing future actions in the most practical and logical order. The narrator—the detective—plans *ahead* of events. But most detectives do this; the distinguishing part of Brown's method is its objectivity, objectivity regarding tangibles and intangibles. A passage from *The Fabulous Clipjoint* can be taken as an example of "objective forethought." In this passage Ed is searching out a scene from his childhood, the house where he and his family have lived. Notice how his mind is active, not passive, to the tangibles that he sees ahead of him, and note how he controls his wandering objectivity—the tendency to give in to his emotional responses to the evocative scene—all the while thinking ahead and discovering by means of his objectivity the intangibles that he is searching for in the scene.



Notes: Fabulous Debut

1. "*The Fabulous Clipjoint* was his firstborn and he remained partial to it." Elizabeth Brown, introduction to *Paradox Lost* (x-xi).

Alone, I walked a couple of times around the block. I kept across the street from our house when I went by, so the dog wouldn't distract me by keeping pace along the fence. I stopped and leaned against a tree where I could watch the house, and see the windows of the upper front room where I'd slept, the windows of the dining room.

I wanted to cry, a little bit, but I swallowed the lump in my throat and let myself go back and remember things. I tried to keep my mind on the last month we'd been there.

One of the last weeks, it came to me, Pop hadn't been working, exactly. Yet he'd been gone. For a few days he's been gone day and night, doing something. Not out of town, or was it? No.

I had it, and wondered why I hadn't remembered before. Maybe because, for some reason, it had never been talked about afterwards. It seemed to me that Pop had gone out of his way not to mention it again, now that I remembered.

I went over to where Uncle Am was waiting under the awning of the drugstore. There was a streetcar coming. I just nodded to him and we caught the car. (p. 162)

Ed returns to the scene of the experience, much the way a criminal traditionally is supposed to return to the scene of the crime. He wants to take control of the experience in his mind, and returning to it, making it tangible–making it objective–he gets control of it. His subjective thought might have directed his mind away from the focused view of reality which is needed to remember the exact conditions of the past. He focuses on neutral objects, as they are: the tree, the windows, the dining room. He deliberately controls his sorrow, avoids the dog and all distractions. This is an intentionally deductive narrative.

At its best this objective forethought method has a pace which captures the interest of the reader and carries him forward. The pace, however, depends also upon inspiration and confidence in the plot construction. When confidence or interest is lacking, the detective's point of view slows down. This happens to Ed's narration in the last novel in the series, *Mrs. Murphy's Underpants* (1963), where the story moves slowly, as the author seemed more interested in thought than action, in light humor and character relationships. But the spirit in even this last adventure is that same one of choosing the most effective action, risks be damned. Ed identifies that spirit in *The Fabulous Clipjoint*, and it did not change in the sixteen years of the series.

We went out and down the stairs, out into the clean night air.

I thought, we have a name now. We know who we're looking for. We got a name and a phone number. And this time we were up against the big time. Hoods; not mugs like Kaufman.

And we were going it by ourselves; Uncle Am wasn't giving Bassett that phone number.

Under the street light on Oak Street, Uncle Am looked at me. He asked, "Scared kid?"

My throat was a little dry. I nodded.

He said, "So am I. Scared spitless. Shall we level with Bassett or shall we have some fun?"

I said, "Let's–try the fun." (p. 135)

The Ed and Am series features the dream and the American way of obtaining it. Up "against the big time," they are "scared spitless," but they choose the danger, the fun. The American way: "going it by ourselves."

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Notes: Forethought and Fun

1. *Webster's New Twentieth Century Dictionary of the English Language*. Unabridged, Second Edition (World, 1970).

(Continued next issue)

## OBITUARY

**FRITZ LANG (1890–1976).** Film sophisticates will be familiar with the eminent Austrian director's summer death; perhaps even with the most useful notices: *NY Times* 1 August 76; *Village Voice* 16 August 76. Just as Hitchcock's sick film, *Psycho*, has since warped the overall picture of his career, the obit-writers on Lang all seem haunted by his famous sick film, *M.* (1931; Lang at least omitted the worst part of the facts about the Dusseldorf child-killer, that he peddled the bodies as meat to *regular* customers.)

Shortly after *M*, Lang became a Hitler refugee (1933) and his most available films over here presently are not his famous German silents (1919-33) but his 1936-56 Hollywood product. These are realist-crime films; although he expanded into all segments of the action-film genre, he never escaped what are obviously program-film budgets. Of those Lang titles not automatically described in all film histories, I would recommend *Testament of Dr. Mabuse* (1933); *Big Heat* (1953) and his spy-film adaptations of Household and Greene: *Manhunt* (1941) and *Ministry of Fear* (1945).

However, the main point about Lang's career is not reflected in these American assignments; in the "Lang stories" by his actors, which reflect his interest in the shot rather than in the "performance"; nor even in terms of his enormous influence on the early and middle Hitchcock. Lang was in fact a great narrative formalist in the Feuillade-Flash Gordon-Franju tradition. The disastrous U. S. Cinemascope historical epics of the fifties by rights should nearly all have been shot by Lang, and he became unemployable (1960 ff.) with the moneymen just as contemporary directors once again learned how to shoot his silent-German type of far-out adventure film: *From Russia, with Love*, Franju's *Judex* (1963-4). Lang shot, successfully, the *Nibelungenlied*, two science-fiction features, and spy-western-private-eye-"socially conscious" melodramatic features. Hitchcock has his own virtues but he has never shown Lang's formal range.

Lang once rated his favorite films as *M* (German) and *Scarlet Street* (1945, American). Probably his hip American films would now be said to be *Rancho Notorious*, the 1952 Dietrich western, and *You Only Live Once* (1937, early Fonda), the film-source for *Bonnie and Clyde*.

– J. M. Purcell

# CLASSIC and HARD-BOILED Detective Fiction

By John M. Reilly

From its inception, criticism of detective literature has been insistent upon developing a formal taxonomy. As a result we are used to distinguishing, following the lead of Dorothy Sayers, among stories of pure sensation, pure analysis, and a variety of mixed types subdivided according to the presence of detectives who are scientific or intuitive, amateur or professional.[1] And, if Sayers is not sufficiently comprehensive to cover all developments, we can observe that tales of police procedure, thrillers, and pure detective stories exhibit differences also. Such typing of detective fiction makes at best an elementary contribution to understanding, however, since it serves mainly to legitimize popular literature by indicating that it is more complex than it appears. Much more useful, though still taxonomic, is the critical discussion that has established the more general distinction between detective literature of the so-called Golden Age and that called Hard-Boiled.

We are all familiar with the distinction. In the classic form of the Golden Age, flourishing between the end of World War I and the 1930s but nevertheless begun earlier and continuing to the present, authors deploy their eccentric amateur detectives to solve puzzles created by murderers' ingenious attempts to conceal the outcome of their comparatively simple desires for wealth or revenge in commission of a perfect crime. The process of detection supplies plot, curious traits constitute characterization, and restoration of order is the theme of the narrative. On the other hand, Hard-Boiled detective stories are touted as realistic portrayals of criminal life. In these stories the detective is in many ways as low as the criminal, and the solution of the crime achieves at best a tentative sense of order.

I say the critical distinction between the classic detective fiction of the Golden Age and the Hard-Boiled variety is useful, not because it is absolute but rather because it is provocative. One type appears to be the literary manifestation of a conservative point of view, the other a more liberal one; yet, a study of the two types reveals no such easy contrast, and one is challenged to explain a fundamental similarity in such apparently disparate forms. As a consequence we come to see that the detective story is both a predetermined framework and a terrain for authors to deploy varieties of social outlook.

We may begin to explain this point by examining A. A. Milne's *The Red House Mystery* (1922), a work of double significance since it appears in most lists of important classic detective works and also was chosen by Raymond Chandler for particular scorn in his denunciation of the "unrealistic" Golden Age type of story.[2]

As the novel opens, the Red House provides the setting for a manners tale. Its inviting appearance, quiet atmosphere, and function as the home of a well-to-do gentleman mark it as the residence of an idealized British upper class. The various house guests, going about their play, and the servants, engaging in comic dialogue, enforce the sense we have that here is a social microcosm neatly structured and ideally set. Milne obtrusively manages the narrative, giving us brief snatches of conversation to establish the central fact of the plot's initiation: the imminent arrival of Mark Ablett's black-sheep brother from Australia. The author's obtrusiveness also provides a brief flashback, after the sound of the fatal shot is heard from the study, in order to show house guests at breakfast. Indeed, as befits a stage writer, whenever we need detail Milne steps in with physical description, for example, of the study and then of Anthony Gillingham, an uninvited guest soon to become the novel's amateur detective, though his background, which Milne also describes for us, shows him to be without technical preparation for the job.

The obtrusive author functions to shape the narrative almost as a Dr. Watson figure would in other novels and stories, but in this book there is also a mock Watson in the person of Bill Beverly, one of the house guests who is acquainted with Gillingham. As soon as the game is afoot, Gillingham and Beverly begin jocularly to refer to each other as Holmes and Watson and describe their detection method with good-natured allusion to the famous pair, a device always reminding us, of course, that this is a fiction we are reading.

As for the detection method itself, Milne elaborately describes it as the outcome of Gillingham's remarkable memory. With a demonstration by Gillingham of his recollection of the precise number of steps at the entry to his London club, we are given the substantial basis of the amateur's method. Then in frequent scenes such as reconstruction of the moment of the crime's discovery, patient turning over of alternative explanations, and reflection on the relationships of the house's owner and his secretary, a cousin, we are provided assurance that the detection method is available to the unaided rational mind but also the possession of a superior person since Gillingham alone has the peculiar memory and disciplined process to carry it to fruition.

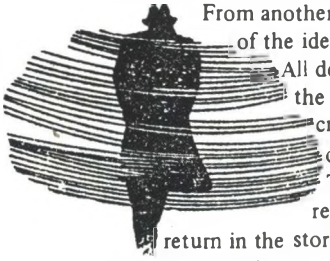
Naturally the police are present doing their job after the discovery of the dead body, but, as Chandler makes clear, they go about it with dullness and lack of imagination. Chandler's knowledge of police procedure shakes our faith, jars us into recognition of the Milne police as incompetents,

but within the novel, managed as they are by the author, the police serve merely as friendly colleagues. Perhaps there is potential rivalry between amateur and professional, but it is in no way antagonistic. The amateur simply does the job better in achieving the end for which police exist: maintenance of social order for the benefit of those with a stake in society.

While other characteristics of the novel may represent further the Golden Age classic story, what has been mentioned is sufficient to make the point that the craft of the story is bent to achieve, first, certainty that the world is under control, a consequence of the strong authorial presence. Secondly, the author's craft creates a distance from the criminal realities we may know from popular newspapers where sensation and irrationality are characteristics of crime. The distance is great enough to replace with a relaxed tolerance the nervousness one feels about the possibilities of order when reading the newspaper. The closed society, the obtrusive authorial presence, and the self-consciousness about method, accompanied in this case by jocular tone and reference to fictional detectives, make the story of crime, as the Golden Age preferred, very much a game. It is a game, though, that reflects a world, in this case a world constructed out of faith in reason, preference for simplicity, and confidence that leisured upper-class existence in its patterns and habits represents civilization.

While the Milne novel serves as an extremely good example of the conservative detective story, it must be remembered that the idealization of detection has never been absent from mystery literature. The literary form we call detective story makes its appearance at the time detectives and official police forces do, but there has never been a point in the subsequent history of the form when those who took the detective for literary purposes did not stress the masterful mind and the surety of a class-based social order. Consider even those works allegedly based on the actual exploits of real detectives. Julian Hawthorne's novels about the famous Thomas Byrnes of New York portrays him as a mastermind directing from his office the procedures to protect the deserving from chaos, and, though Alan Pinkerton's memoirs of detective work admit to use of informants and trickery—that is to say standard police practices—the overall impression Pinkerton wishes to give is of disinterested application of rational processes to maintaining social stability.[3]

These examples of tales based upon actual detective work suggest that from one perspective the detective story is a deliberate ideological creation. In this regard we can say that the ideology works by distancing readers from reality. The simplicity of motives for crime assures us the good old deadly sins predominate. The clarity of the detection procedure, always fulfilled when the culprit is uncovered, mystifies reality by its very simplicity, just as ideology mystifies by simplifying cause and effect. Furthermore, the autonomy of the detective novel's world desensitizes us to fear of the unknown. Whatever surprises there may be are finally explained in a way that is completely tolerable. And finally, viewed as ideological creations, detective stories make alienation tolerable. Things may be out of our hands, individual power in historical life may be dubious, but there is a world, that of the novel, composed of values derived from our social beliefs, a world where individualism flourishes within, be it noted, a well-ordered and complete society. Seen under the aspect of ideology, the famous rules of the game so dear to the Golden Age authors and critics are guidelines for designing a product to affect readers' consciousness of themselves in the world in the same way that on a somewhat baser level advertising stressing the desirability of a youthful appearance influences our habits of hygiene and dress.



From another perspective, however, this description of the ideological detective novel is too simple. All detective stories, after all, must be about the same thing, so that in any fiction of crime-solving there is a tendency to closure inherent in the narrative. Though resolution of the plot may result in but a brief restoration of order, return in the story to conditions as they were at the beginning constitutes an assertion of normative order. Furthermore, if an author uses a detective at all, inevitably there results a suggestion of at least limited individual force of mind or ability to reconstruct order.

These literary imperatives of a detective novel are modified but not transcended.[4] To be sure, Philip Marlowe's self-conscious irony about detective work contributes to our finding a theme of meditation upon values in his adventures, and his satiric eye for sleazy details aptly represents a corrupt, commodity society; yet, it is only the degree to which Chandler carries all this that differs from other detective writing. Self-consciousness and awareness of detail are consistently part of the form, whether Golden Age or Hard-Boiled. Chandler's achievement is great, for his craft introduces a significant portrayal of modern America into detective fiction. We make too much of his differences from other detective writers, however, if we do not observe that what he achieves is within the demands of formula.

The general principle I am arguing here may be better illustrated by reference to less great works than Chandler's; for example, a Nero Wolfe story. A work such as *League of Frightened Men* (1935), written at the time that Golden Age stories begin to yield their place to Hard-Boiled ones, appears something of a hybrid of the types. The plot offers the material of a puzzle: How does a presumed villain effect the seeming accidents that are frightening a group of former college classmates? Wolfe's clients, whose lives and careers have diverged so since they participated in the college prank that injured one of their number, hardly constitute a closed society; but they are its modified version —a microcosm of the college-trained, middle-class population of the American Northeast. Many are thoroughly unlikeable people, like the falsely accused pseudo-villain, so when the story ends we have little confidence of a paradise regained. Still, order is restored and these typical figures

are to go about their business freed of some of their guilt and fear.

Hybrid, too, is the tone of the story. Archie Goodwin, confidant and Watson to Wolfe's Holmes, talks tough, likes dames, is at odds with police authority, will use his fists and wink at the law. But it is mannerism. Archie is always at the service of his great detective, adjusting his evaluations of people and events to Wolfe's authority. Speaking of mannerisms, we note Wolfe is almost a parody of the eccentric whose constellation of personal traits engender the idea that his mind and abilities are unique. Reggie Fortune, Philo Vance, and Lord Peter Wimsey have been updated. Gourmet and orchidologist on a scale beyond the impractical, peculiar in dress and ritual in ways that are the stuff of popular-magazine personality profiles, Wolfe is the traditional detective living the commodified life style while embracing the values retailed in popular images of the urban upper class.

Wolfe's stories are hybrids, yes, but not of incompatible types of story, for what Wolfe represents is adaptation of the basic detective story form to a new setting. In his case, it is the big American city where the range of social certitude has been restricted. To allow his detective to function, Rex Stout must ensconce him in a brownstone island of stable, ordered living and make him content with bringing order on a limited scale. The brownstone island shows the classic detective under siege, perhaps, but it is in his nature to carry on.

Maybe Nero Wolfe is a set-up. So, then, let's think of the toughest of the tough, a detective who works among the lowest types society has to offer, who comes up against dope and prostitution as well as brutal murder—the crimes that are the daily fare of newspaper readers. How about Mike Hammer? Talking constanting about the "real" world and the way it works, unblinking in the face of violence and social incoherence, it would seem that by the time he appears in *I, The Jury* (1947), twenty-five years after Milne's tame little country house narrative, the detective story had undergone considerable change. Of course it had, but whether the change has been fundamental enough to reconstitute the imperatives of the form is the question.

There is next to no detection method in a Hammer story, at least so far as that implies reasoning through clues and motives. Mike employs in exaggerated form the methods we are told the policeman dreams of, relentlessly hunting down the guilty, breaking and entering to gain evidence, terrorizing witnesses and others to get information, and, as the title of the first novel suggests, rendering justice immediately and infallibly. Other detectives have allowed themselves to become surrogate executioners (Reggie Fortune and Philo Vance, for example), but it is Mike's mission to complete in himself the entire criminal justice system. The vigilante purpose is accompanied in Mike Hammer by unfaltering certainty in speech and attitude. None of the doubts of Marlowe for him. His hatred of evildoers who have offended his sense of honor as well as the continuously felt dislike of women and nonwhite people are deeply structured into his personality. Not only are his motives simple, so too are the motives of others in his world. Profit and self-protection are the usual ones for murder, and where a character such as the evil female psychiatrist Charlotte Manning is concerned, the cause of her actions is deviance from the behavior Mike, and she herself, know is natural for women.

Surely these features are distinct from classic detective stories, but what is their effect? Still, the world is mystified. The presence of violence and shoddy rackets provide topicality, but in turn they are explained and removed by a directness as lacking in social complexity as any detective story exhibits. The very excessiveness of the scenes of resolution—the famous shooting of Charlotte in the belly as she stands naked before Mike—induce a sense of finality that obscures doubt. The world may harbor bad people, but surely it would not, if they were all dealt with in Mike's way.

Hammer is not a member of a group intrinsically elite. He is neither a gentleman nor refined in intelligence, but he nonetheless is a superior individual within his milieu, for he alone has the clear will to act. As for the milieu itself, it only appears to be realistic, in the sense of being a counterpart of the actual historical realm of readers. When Spillane writes he creates an environment as distanced and sealed off as any writer does. Though he does not obtrude himself into the narrative to achieve this and though he dispenses with a fictional recorder, his hand is evident in the magical behavior of Hammer. In other words, every reader knows Hammer's life is a fantasy just as much as Gillingham's, Marlowe's, or Wolfe's. In this case it is just that the fantasy is for those unbothered if they have authoritarian daydreams.

Though Spillane's ideology is never far from the surface of his story and is usually presented directly through Mike Hammer's speeches on law and order, one cannot attribute the ideology's impact solely to the author. What he has done is to exploit the possibilities that inhere in the form of detective stories in the first place. The literary necessities of closure, criminality, individualistic detective, and a distanced world exist already for him to develop in his peculiar light. The tolerable violence of his subject matter does not do violence to the literature.

It is not my intention to explain away differences among detective stories. Instead it is to point out that the differences occur largely in the authors' choice of milieu and stress in characterization. The social world of Hard-Boiled detective fiction has been fragmented, and, therefore, somewhat greater weight lies upon the detective as he proceeds to reconstitute the order disrupted by crime; but reconstitute it he does, because that is his function whether in mean streets or the houses of the country gentry. Because of these generic demands the conservative-minded author has an easier time of it. Critics of the social order may achieve a populist outlook (see the Continental Op in *The Red Harvest*[5]) or produce satire as do G.D.H. and Margaret Cole or Raymond Chandler, but where is the radical or revolutionary Marxist's detective story?

Continued on page 334

# Revisiting the Revisited HAMMETT Checklist

By William F. Nolan

Here we go again! Believe it or not, fellow Hammett readers, three data-crowded years have passed since I mailed in the checklist material for my *TAD* update in mid-1973. In view of the recent upsurge of material by and about Dashiell Hammett, it is now time to update my update. Publisher Bill McNally still talks wistfully of an expanded paperback edition of my *Dashiell Hammett: A Casebook* (1969), but does nothing about getting one out. Meanwhile, Hammett data continues to accumulate in my files . . .

The most exciting "find" comes to me from William Godshalk, now working on a critical biography of DH. Mr. Godshalk was kind enough to send me some sixty-five pages of photocopied notes which he made at the University of Texas in a careful examination of the Hammett papers there. Much is to be gleaned from these notes.

The question has often been asked: Did Hammett leave any unpublished work behind? The answer, now, is a very strong yes. There are at least thirty unpublished manuscripts in the Texas collection, adding up to some 83,000 words of "new" Hammett! These items break down as follows:

A. EARLY WORK (written in his most productive period, while Hammett was living in San Francisco in the early-to-late 1920s):

"The Sign of the Potent Pills." (6000 words) 19 typed pages. (A crime story.)

"Women Are a Lot of Fun, Too." (2500 words) 7 typed pages. (A Hemingway-like "slice of life" story based on his experiences at a lung hospital in Tacoma, Washington, involving a man he knew there.)

"The Hunter." (2500 words) 9 typed pages. (A crime story, with an Op-like detective, Fred Vitt, tracking down a forger.)

"Magic." (5000 words) 15 typed pages. (A story about a magician.)

"An Inch and a Half of Glory." (4500 words) 15 typed pages. (A story about a railroad ticket agent, who has lost many jobs, who becomes a hero in a fire, earning "an inch and a half of news" in the *Morning Post*.)

"Faith." (3500 words) 12 typed pages. (Another "slice of life" story involving migratory workers in a cannery near Baltimore–based, most likely, on a real cannery in which DH worked.)

"The Lovely Strangers." (6000 words) 22 typed pages. (A story involving a rich young lady who is saved from an oily con man by the hero, who marries her.)

"Week-End." (2500 words) 8 typed pages. (A story of Harry Kenny, who spends a weekend in San Francisco with a prudish girl, who leaves him on Monday, telling him "it was more fun than I ever had in my life before.")

"Action and the Quiz Kid." (2500 words) 7 typed pages. (A story about a con artist named Action.)

"So I Shot Him" (3500 words) 12 typed pages. Unfinished. (A crime story told "by an op." Possibly an unfinished Continental Op yarn.)

"A Throne for the Worm." (1000 words) 5 typed pages. (About a shy little man whose "throne" is a barber chair. A sketch.)

"Three Dimes." (1000 words) 4 typed pages. (About a small-time thief on Market Street caught by a detective.)

Untitled, as first page missing. 12 typed pages remain. (A story about an artist who feels he must take special care of his talent, declaring: "This thing [talent] isn't me . . . it's just something that I'm guardian of." Perhaps this is how Hammett felt about his own writing talent.)

"Monk and Johnny Fox." (1200 words) 5 typed pages. (A boxing story about a drunken middleweight and his manager, Monk, told by the boxer.)

Two other early manuscripts were apparently nonfiction sketches, and Hammett notes that he sold the first of these ("Fragments of Justice") to *The Forum*, adding, "Probably never published." (He also submitted at least one book review to *The Forum*.)

"Fragments of Justice." (1200 words) 6 typed pages. (A trio of ironic examples of "injustice.")

"Seven Pages." (No word count) 4 typed pages. (Seven fragments–all, quite likely, based on incidents in Hammett's life. Number 2 deals with the Arbuckle case on which DH worked for Pinkerton: "I sat in the lobby of the Plaza in San Francisco. It was the day before the opening of the second absurd attempt to convict Roscoe Arbuckle. . . . He came into the lobby . . . looked at me and I at him. His eyes were the eyes of a man who expected to be regarded as a monster, but was not yet inured to it. . . . He glared at me. . . . It was amusing [because] I was working for his attorneys at the time, gathering information for his defense."

There is one final manuscript from this period, an unfinished draft for what was to be a 20,000-word novella. Many pages of working notes accompany the unfinished manuscript.

"The Secret Emperor." (No word count) 23 typed pages (plus notes). (A story of political corruption involving a detective named Elfinstone described by Hammett as "ruthless . . . impatient of the stupidity of people with whom he comes in contact, with little love for his fellows. Driven into work by some burning restlessness within him." He is called to Washington to aid a man named Dollard in combatting a "plump" fellow named Sheth Gutman [shades of the Fat Man!] who sets out to be the "secret emperor" of the U.S. by electing one of his dupes as President. Gutman's daughter, Tamar, falls in love with Elfinstone, and there is side violence in Baltimore, etc. Fragment ends

with Gutman trying to "buy off" the detective.)

In addition to these seventeen 1920s manuscripts, there is a working draft, assembled by Hammett, of a short-story collection he intended to publish under the title *Including Murder*. In it he had pasted up tearsheets on five of his 1923-1924 *Black Mask* tales, all involving the Op:

"The Gatewood Caper"
"Bodies Piled Up"
"Night Shots"
"Women, Politics and Murder"
"The Golden Horseshoe"

(There is no record of its having been submitted to a publisher. Had it sold, it would have been Hammett's *first* book. Hammett probably put this collection together in 1925, based on his address at the time.)

B. WORK FROM THE 1930s (including screen ideas Hammett worked out while living in Hollywood):

"The Darkened Face." (No word count) 9 typed pages. (An unfinished crime novella which Hammett planned at 25,000 words, perhaps for *Black Mask*, since it was written in New York early in 1930 before he left for Hollywood—during the same period he wrote the original unfinished "John Guild version" of *The Thin Man*.)

The following six screen outlines all appear to have been written during Hammett's first visit to Hollywood, in 1930 1931. One of them ("The Kiss-Off") apparently formed the early basis for his Paramount film *City Streets* released in 1931.

"Dynamite Carson." (No word count) 7 typed pages.
"The Devil's Playground." (No word count) 6 typed pages.
"The Croaker." (No word count) 6 typed pages.
"Time to Die." (No word count) 5 typed pages.
"The Ungallant." (No word count) 13 typed pages.
"The Kiss-Off." (No word count) 11 typed pages.

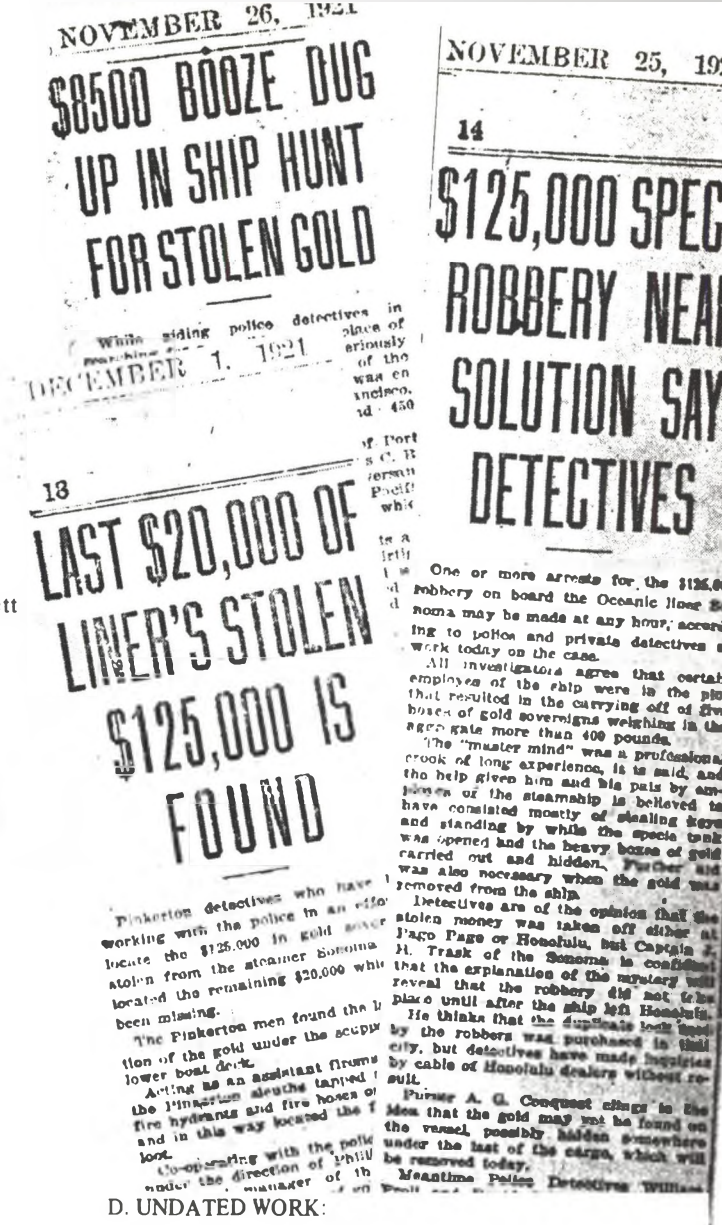
One other unpublished item survives from the 1930s:

"September 20, 1938." (No word count) 17 typed pages.

C. LATER WORK:

"The Good Meal: A Play in Three Acts." (No word count) 8 typed pages. (In my Hammett *Casebook* I listed the title of Hammett's play as *The Summer Meal*. The title was "tentative," and the date was 1947.)

"December First." (Two-page opening of a novel.) (In 1950 Hammett promised Random House they would have this novel from him for publication that year, but if he *did* write it, only these two typed pages survive. It concerns a character named Max Helm, living in New York, whose girl walks out on him, leaving a note. Helm muses, "The first of December already." There is no way to tell what kind of story this novel would encompass.)


NOVEMBER 26, 1921

$8500 BOOZE DUG UP IN SHIP HUNT FOR STOLEN GOLD

DECEMBER 1, 1921

18

LAST $20,000 OF LINER'S STOLEN $125,000 IS FOUND

NOVEMBER 25, 1921

14

$125,000 SPECI ROBBERY NEAR SOLUTION SAY DETECTIVES

D. UNDATED WORK:

Three of Hammett's manuscripts bear no addresses, and it is impossible to tell when he wrote them:

"The Breach-Born." (No word count) 2 typed pages.
"They Die Too." (No word count) 2 typed pages. (Unfinished.)
"The Murderer Who Thought Twice." (No word count) 5 typed pages. (A crime story involving a detective named Oliver Post.)

*Total unpublished Hammett items: 30. Total pages: 278.*

NOTE: Also in the Texas collection: six *published* manuscripts, dating from 1924 into the 1950s.

"Itchy" (Written in 1923) 11 typed pages. Printed in *Brief Stories*, January 1924.
"A Man Named Thin." (Estimated to have been written in 1925) 18 typed pages. Printed in *EQMM*, March 1961.
"This Little Pig." (Written in 1934) 20 typed pages.

Printed in *Collier's*, March 24, 1934. (Hammett's last short story.) With corrections.

*The Thin Man*. (Manuscript for printer, with corrections, of Hammett's 1934 novel.) 229 typed pages.

*Watch on the Rhine*. (Hammett's screenplay from the Hellman stage play, dated April 23, 1942.) 205 typed pages. Warners released the film version in 1943.

"Tulip." (Hammett's unfinished novel, written in the early 1950s, and printed by Hellman in the collection *The Big Knockover* in 1966.) 52 typed pages, with corrections.

A copy of the 1930 Knopf edition of *The Maltese Falcon* is in the Texas collection, inscribed: "For Fred Dannay with all due thanks for his help in keeping the stuff from dying on the vine – Dashiell Hammett, New York, 9 May 1946." (By 1946 Dannay has helped edit and assemble at least four Hammett books, *Blood Money*, *The Adventures of Sam Spade*, *The Continental Op*, and *The Return of the Continental Op*–and Hammett was obviously grateful to him.)

Commentary: A new total for Hammett's fiction emerges as a result of the "find" of the thirty manuscripts in Texas–and now his *known* output stands at over 100 pieces of fiction.

How long is it going to take the editors of *EQMM*–as well as book publishers–to put the best of these thirty "lost" manuscripts into print? It was *EQMM* that printed "A Man Named Thin" after it had gathered dust for some thirty-five years. Surely, there are "gems" in Texas worth printing.

E. LETTERS:

The final section of this "Texas Roundup" involves Hammett's letters–and there are over fifty-five of them in the collection at the university, thirty of these to Lillian Hellman. I shall not attempt to list them here, but sample quotes from a few should be of interest to Hammett buffs:

From a letter to Hellman dated March 5, 1931, written from Hollywood (Hammett included the following bit of verse–using the name of his detective from "The Secret Emperor"):

In San Francisco, Elfinstone
Fell in with a red-haired slut
Whose eyes were bright as the Devil's own. . .
Her body was lean and tough as a whip,
With little of breast and little of hip,
And her voice was thin and hard as her lip,
And her lip was hard as bone."

From a letter to Hellman dated April 30 [1931], written from Hollywood: "Last night I went to see 'City Streets' and found it pretty lousy . . ."

From a letter to Hellman dated March 13, 1937, written from Princeton: "Andre Malraux lectured here yesterday afternoon. . . . Met him last night . . . he insists that I'm the 'technical link' between Dreiser and Hemingway . . . and I don't exactly know what he means by that. On the other hand, when I suggested that he might be the French O'Flaherty he didn't seem to know what *I* meant by that . . ."

From a letter to Hellman dated March 18, 1945, written from the Aleutians: "A couple of days ago I happened to run across a copy of Lenin's 'Theoretical Principles of Marxism' (volume XI in The Selected Works) and am looking forward to a very fine time indeed with it."


And now, on to the rest of the checklist . . .

Basically, this new listing covers the 1974-into-1976 publication of Hammett material–but many items are dated prior to 1974 and reflect information recorded here for the first time. Again, as with my earlier checklist update (*TAD*, August 1973), I am not attempting a formal, bibliographical format. My primary goal is to provide new material for Hammett fans, scholars, and critics.

I. MATERIAL BY HAMMETT

Books:

A major Hammett collection was published by Random House late in 1974 (and is currently available in paperback): *The Continental Op*, compiled, and with a probing critical/biographical introduction by Steven Marcus, professor of English at Columbia (now working on the full Hammett biography). Seven "Op" stories from *Black Mask* are collected here:

"The Tenth Clew"
"The Golden Horseshoe"
"The House on Turk Street"
"The Girl With the Silver Eyes"
"The Whosis Kid"
"The Main Death"
"The Farewell Murder"

They range from 1924 through early 1930, and as originally collected were scattered through four long-out-of-print Hammett paperbacks published in the 1940s.

Still at the "forthcoming" stage (although it was announced for publication over three years ago) is another important Hammett volume: Bill Blackbeard's expert compilation of the complete 1934-1935 Hammett/Raymond *Secret Agent X-9* newspaper strip, due from Nostalgia Press in hardcover format. Since this syndicated strip featured the final crime writing from Hammett, it will be worth the long wait. (For more on "X-9" see Newspaper Work.)

In early 1974 Flare/Avon published a large-size original paperback edition of John Huston's 1941 film version of *The Maltese Falcon*. Edited by Richard J. Anobile, the book contains over 1400 frame blow-up photos from the classic film, combined with the dialogue from Huston's screenplay (based directly on Hammett's novel). Anobile also provides a brief introduction in which he discusses the two earlier film versions of the novel. In all, a unique and valuable addition to any Hammett shelf.

In my Hammett *Casebook* I listed all of the original Hammett paperbacks published by Lawrence E. Spivak (edited by Ellery Queen), but I did not include data on the Dell reprint editions of eight of these titles, issued between 1944 and 1951. These eight Dell books deserve a separate listing. Each of them has a special "murder map" (scene of the crimes) on the back cover, and they can be considered a "matched set."

*Blood Money* – Dell edition No. 53, 1944.
*A Man Called Spade* – Dell edition No. 90, 1945. (Abridged. Reprints five of the seven stories contained in the Spivak edition.)
*The Continental Op* – Dell edition No. 129, 1946. (Not to be confused with the hardcover Random House collection of 1974.)
*The Return of the Continental Op* – Dell edition No. 154, 1946.
*Hammett Homicides* – Dell edition No. 223, 1947.
*Dead Yellow Women* – Dell edition No. 308, 1948.
*Nightmare Town* – Dell edition No. 379, 1949.
*The Creeping Siamese* – Dell edition No. 538, 1951.

Note: The Spivak-published *Woman in the Dark* (1952) was never reprinted by Dell, nor was the Ferman-published *A Man Named Thin* (1962).

Magazine Fiction:

For the first time in more than fourteen years a "new" piece of Hammett magazine fiction has been published (the last being "A Man Named Thin" in *EQMM* for March 1961). In its November 4, 1975 Special Hammett Issue, *City* magazine, of San Francisco, printed the full existing text of Hammett's first version of *The Thin Man*, an 18,000-word manuscript which DH left uncompleted in 1930. The novel he published in 1934 under the same title bears very little relationship to this early draft, and its first printing in *City* is of immense value to Hammett buffs eager to compare the two versions.

I now have a photocopy of "The Parthian Shot" from *Smart Set* for October 1922, and it *is* fiction (though barely more than a fragment)–which makes it Hammett's first *known* short story. However, these beginning years are still hazy, and it is possible that Hammett published fiction even earlier than this. "The Parthian Shot" is a minor item, not worth collecting, with value only for the Hammett completist. (And it is *not* a detective story.)

Two other early Hammett tales, currently unavailable in book format, have been reprinted in magazines. In 1974 an attempt was made to revive *Black Mask* by Lopez Publications in New York, and this one-shot issue (dated August 1974) contained Hammett's "Women, Politics and Murder" (originally printed in September of 1924). The editor claimed it was "uncollected and never before reprinted" which is incorrect; the tale *was* collected, as "Death on Pine Street," in *The Continental Op* in 1945.

*Argosy* magazine, in a 1976 Special Bicentennial Edition celebrating "The Best of Argosy's ninety-four years," reprinted Hammett's novelette *Nightmare Town* (from their December 27, 1924 issue). This one's been out of print since 1949 and is one of Hammett's toughest stories, brimming with violence.

Anthologies:

In my *Casebook*, I listed twenty-nine anthologies containing Hammett fiction and nonfiction, but have made no serious effort to keep up with his post-1968 appearances–yet there are at least five volumes worth noting here:

*The Pulps*, edited by Tony Goldstone (Chelsea House, 1970), reprints Hammett's 1924 *Black Mask* story, "One Hour," for the first time in hardcover.

*Esquire: The Best of Forty Years*, edited by the editors of the magazine (David McKay, 1973), reprints Hammett's story from the premiere issue of *Esquire* (in 1933), "Albert Pastor at Home." First time in hardcover.

*Detective Fiction: Crime and Compromise*, edited by Dick Allen and David Chacko (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974), reprints "Fly Paper" and a section of Hammett's *Maltese Falcon* in this textbook. The volume is typical in its reflection of Hammett's acceptance within academic circles.

*The Fantastic Pulps*, edited by Peter Haining (St. Martin's Press, 1975), reprints one of Hammett's earliest stories, "The Sardonic Star of Tom Doody" (1923), for the first time in hardcover.

The final anthology has not yet been published but is promised from Random House late this year. It is a collection of sixteen *Black Mask* tales edited by Herbert Ruhm–and is of special importance since it contains the first reprinting anywhere of Hammett's initial *BM* story, "The Road Home," which originally appeared under his pen name of "Peter Collinson" (in *BM* for December 1922). A must for all Hammett collectors.

Articles:

The November 4, 1975 issue of *City* reprinted one of Hammett's ad articles, "The Humiliation of Mr. Jones," from the *San Francisco Chronicle* (no date given)–and it

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From Bruce Beaman (1417 Main Street, Stevens Point, Wis.):

I am sure you will receive many letters concerning the new format of TAD. The June number arrived in today's post, and I should like to be counted among those who find the new TAD a most refreshing and delightful change. The quality is most excellent, and I especially like the inclusion of a good many illustrations. These lessen the eye strain one experienced with the old TAD. The double columns in the new format also help in this regard. The new TAD certainly has a very professional look which I'm sure will be appreciated by the readers.

I congratulate you on the many years of hard work you have put into TAD, and you have deserved a well-earned "break."

I was pleased to see your notice about Dr. Hays in the June issue. Mystery buffs in the Wisconsin area or in the vicinity might be interested to know that Dr. Hays's fine collection of mystery/detective books has been donated to the library of the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. I should like to see these volumes kept out of the general stacks, and hopefully a special room could be used to house the collection.

The memorial volume of Dr. Hays's writings should be published in late autumn of this year. We finished our editing work with it last month. If any TAD readers would be interested in obtaining a copy when it is published, they could contact me and I will see if I can direct them as to where copies may be had. I don't know as yet what the cost will be.

If I may be so bold as to put in a plug for myself, Luther Norris of the Pontine Press is going to publish my book, *Sherlockian Quotations*, in the near future. I combed the Sacred Writings and extracted all of the Master's verbal gems. This will be the only *complete* compilation extant. Roy Hunt is doing the illustrations. Five hundred copies will be printed and the cost will be $5.00. Luther tells me it should be out by Christmas.

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From Roger Ackroyd:

It is very kind of you to print Mr. Carl Byron Dickson's article "Edmund Wilson and the Detective Story," but really, at this point it is a case of beating a dead jackass.

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From Forrest Athey:

I consider the three-part article on Edwin Drood one of the finest pieces you have ever run. The author's conclusions are certainly convincing.

It would be interesting to read a rebuttal of his conclusions by some other contemporary expert on Edwin Drood.

From Art Scott:

The *new* new TAD was an even more impressive publication than I had imagined it would be. I hope that Publisher's Inc. will continue to maintain this high standard of packaging in the future (I have no doubts that the editorial standards will remain as extraordinarily high as they have been as long as you are in charge).

One would hope that the aggressive subscriber solicitation now apparently underway will expand the readership significantly, and make possible TADian projects which were beyond your capabilities. One idea I would offer for future consideration would be a "Best of TAD" series, annuals perhaps, reprinting material from the earlier, impossible-to-get-hold-of volumes. 'Twould be a boon to us late-comers.

One particular highlight of this issue is the debut of Frank Eck's "Shadow Gallery" series. I've long been a cover art fancier, and such a series is most welcome; though I must admit to a preference for the cover art of the 50s and 60s.

A bit more about Marvel's Sherlock Holmes comic. . . Their adaptation of *Hound* was stretched over two issues of their Marvel Preview black & white title (Nos. 5 and 6), and totalled nearly 120 pages. The adaptation was extremely faithful to the original, but surprisingly, a failure overall, as the whole tale came off flat and—difficult to believe, but true—*boring*. Val Mayerik's inept and downright ugly art-work did not help matters any. Sherlockians might keep an eye out for the eventual reprinting of "The Great Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" in the Marvel Classic Comics series (originally published by Pendulum Press in black and white in their series of educational comic book adaptations of classics). The text is pared down and simplified for grade schoolers, but the visualization of Doyle by Filipino artist Nestor Redondo is *superb*.

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From Neville Wood (Wheelwrights, Swefling, Saxmundham, Suffolk, England):

I know either personally or by their letters a few of the British TADians. Are there not enough of us to form a "Chapter"? I should be happy to act as a link if others are interested—I mean the readers and collectors rather than the professional booksellers. Not that I have anything against these last named, it's just that their interests are generally wider than the pure 'tec range.

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From John Harwood:

The new TAD format is much better looking than the old style and the saddle stitching prevents the loss of the back pages. However, I was a bit disappointed when I found the letter section ran to only seven and a half pages. Usually it covers ten to twelve pages and sometimes the letters are almost as interesting as the articles. Let's hope future mail sections feature a few more letters.

From Brad Lang:

Thanks to you (and to Bill Crider, of course) for the nice review of *Crockett on the Loose* in your last issue. At the time the review was printed there were two more Crockett books on the stands—*Perdition Express* and *Brand of Fear* (publisher's title). Another one is due out by the end of the year.

The review made mention of Moses Wine. I really enjoyed Roger Simon's books, but I wrote the first two Crockett stories before Roger's books were published. Unfortunately it took me almost two years to find a publisher, so my idea got scooped. I guess there's room for two counter-culture detectives, but I hate being thought of as an imitator. No hard feelings, though; I'm overjoyed to have been published at all. I hope someday to produce something worthy of wider distribution.

I think the two later Crockett books are better than the first one. *Crockett on the Loose* was mostly a stylistic exercise, written under the immediate and powerful influence of Chandler and Millar; I didn't really get around to plotting until the second one.

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From E. T. (Ned) Guymon, Jr. to Allen J. Hubin:

As you are aware I have known of *The Armchair Detective* since its inception nearly nine years ago and, of course, have a complete file. Through the years I have watched with pleasure TAD grow to the status of one of the most important contributions to the detective story. At the same time I have marveled at how you have managed to perform all the functions you have.

Now I am pleased to note that you are being relieved of your more onerous duties and that Publisher's Inc., here on the west coast, will take over the mechanics of publishing while you continue to devote your time to the editorship. I consider the first issue under the new regime a great success. I like the new format and, as usual, I like the content.

Congratulations, Al, on a job well done. We look forward to many years of TAD.

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From J. W. Scheideman:

Susan Harris Smith's "No Orchids for George Orwell," in the February *TAD*, has an interesting and informative focus. Just as a supplementary comment, it is perhaps worth noting that references to *No Orchids for Miss Blandish*, fairly or unfairly using it as a symbolic barometer of the 1940s, occur in at least two fictional works. In Evelyn Waugh's *Officers and Gentlemen* (1955), the second volume of his *Sword of Honour* trilogy, Guy Crouchback tries reading the book while on the Isle of Mugg with the commandos. "After a few minutes Guy shut *No Orchids for Miss Blandish*. 'Unreadable,' he said." Jumbo Trotter remarks: "Other fellows seemed to enjoy it." In "General Knowledge, Private Information," from George MacDonald Fraser's collection of short stories *McAuslan in the Rough* (1974), the Colonel suggests the battalion library for a quiz contest preparation; and, Dand MacNeil ironically reflects about the lack of appropriate books there: "I knew of nothing personally, unless one hoped to study social criminology through the medium of *No Orchids for Miss Blandish* . . ." Moral sensitivity is a major theme in both works, and the inability of the central characters to *like* the book seems in each instance intended to signal their depth of moral awareness. Possibly the title is also used as a sort of negative touchstone in other fiction.

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From William F. Nolan:

The Hammett conference in San Francisco was quite a success—and during the weekend I learned more facts about Hammett, facts I wish to share here with TAD readers . . .

However, before I get into the events of the weekend I want to pass along some newly-discovered Hammett radio titles (sent to me by Ray Stanich). They were all broadcast as part of the *Adventures of Sam Spade* radio series from 1946, extending into 1949, and were all adapted from Hammett magazine stories mainly featuring the Continental Op. Hammett did *not* write the radio adaptations, but he was well paid for the rights on his original stories:

7/26/46: "Sam and the Unhappy Poet" (based on "Too Many Have Lived")
10/4/46: "The Gutting of Couffignal"
10/20/46: "The Fly Paper Chase" ("Fly Paper")
12/29/46: "The Golden Horseshoe"
2/9/47: "The Girl with the Silver Eyes"
3/21/48: "Nightmare Town Caper" ("Nightmare Town")
3/28/48: "Blood Money Caper" – Pt. 1 ) ("The Big
4/4/48: "Blood Money Caper" – Pt. 2 ) Knockover")
2/13/49: "His Brother's Keeper"

Of course there were other "Op-into-Spade" stories (see my revised checklist for these titles) and Stanich quotes a network exec: "The scripts for the summer series had been based on stories by Hammett himself." Thus did Sam Spade solve many of the Op's original cases!

As to the San Francisco saga: I arrived a day early, on July 23, in order to enjoy the hospitality of M. J. "Jack" Kaplan, who is the Western Region's Director of Sales for Pinkerton, Inc. Jack wined and dined me at the historic eatery John's Grill on Ellis St., and special photos were taken to promote the Grill's "Maltese Falcon Room," which Jack helped set up as a tribute to Hammett.

The two-day Hammett program began on the morning of the 24th, at the University of California's Extension Center on Laguna Street. Joe Gores talked about "Hammett the Writer" and narrated a slide show of famed Hammett sites in the San Francisco area. Then the first Falcon film was shown as *Dangerous Female*—the 1931 version with Ricardo Cortez as Spade. (Apparently Warners changed the title back to the original in later release prints—but *this* print was titled *Dangerous Female*.) This '31 Falcon was a slow, bumbling, impossibly stilted film, and Cortez was hopeless as Hammett's tough detective.

After a lunch break the audience reassembled for an


illuminating talk by David Fechheimer (the real-life private detective who put together the all-Hammett issue of *City* last November). Among many new facts presented I jotted down the following:

Hammett was a Pinkerton detective for only thirty months total (over a five-year period)–and resigned from Pinkerton on February 15, 1922. He then attended a secretarial school until May, 1923. He worked for Samuel's Jewelers until July of 1926, when he was making enough from his writing to quit the store. (His salary with Pinkerton, by the way, was $105 per month.)

He was never legally divorced from the woman he married in 1921, Josephine A. Dolan, although she attempted to divorce Hammett in 1937 by mailing in a set of divorce papers to Nogales, Mexico. They considered this to be legal, but it was not–and she is still Hammett's official widow.

Despite his intense relationship with Lillian Hellman, Hammett continued seeing his wife and two daughters–and Mrs. Hammett claims that he lived with his family "off-and-on" until the last years of his life. This relationship endured into 1950, when Hammett lived for half of that year with Josephine. After 1950 he "withdrew" due to his illness.

After his lecture, Fechheimer told me that he is no longer working for Stephen Marcus in researching Hammett's life, and that the Marcus "official" biography is at least two years from completion. Fechheimer has contacted Ballantine Books regarding a volume based, loosely, on the Hammett issue of *City*. The book would reprint the original "Thin Man" manuscript and would be supplemented by photos of "Hammett's San Francisco," as well as a "Hammett Life History" by Fechheimer. This project is now in the works.

Since Ken Millar could not make it to the conference, Jean Backus delivered a talk on "Hammett's Women," followed by a showing of the first *Thin Man* film (1934)–which is still fast, bright and amusing. Then I spoke on "Hammett's Films," covering his years in Hollywood beginning in 1930.

The next morning, at 10 a.m. on Sunday the 25th, the second half of the two-day Hammett affair got underway at the St. Francis Hotel in the heart of downtown San Francisco. This was cosponsored by the local MWA branch and by the California Historical Society, and featured talks by Jack Kaplan, myself, and Irene McCarthy. Miss McCarthy had known Hammett in the 1920s, as she was Samuels's personal secretary during this period, and she recalled the writer as "very tall and thin, always neatly dressed and friendly." But he kept a "distance" between himself and most of the store's workers. Only Peggy O'Toole was "close" to Hammett. "When he became rich in Hollywood," Irene told us, "Hammett would appear at the store in a fancy hat and expensive camel's hair coat to invite Peggy to one of his parties. I never got invited, nor did any of the other employees."

Leaving the St. Francis, Jack Kaplan and I led the group for a "Hammett Walk"–to various downtown spots featured in Hammett's life and work, including the Flood Building on Market where he worked as a Pinkerton. We all ended the day at John's Grill, posing for photos in front of a large Maltese Falcon carved out of ice for the occasion.

A grand two days–and a fine tribute to this "son of San Francisco" who wrote so much about the city by the Golden Gate. . .

One final discovery: On Sunday I talked to a woman who informed me that Hammett had been friends (in San Diego) with a youngster named John Spade whose brother's middle name was Samuel. John Spade is now a junior-high school principal in Martinez, California–and I was told that he's convinced that the detective hero of *The Maltese Falcon* was named after his brother.

Could be.

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From Christine Mitchell:

For your more knowledgeable readers I have two questions. Does anyone know the exact title and author of a suspense fiction novel which concerned a challenge to a team of men to find a way into the NORAD installation in Colorado Springs? I think the title was *On the Stroke of Seven*, or *At the Stroke of Seven*.

My other question was, does anyone know a short story by John D. MacDonald that set forth the background of Travis McGee? I could swear that I read such a story a long time ago, but I can't find any mention of it.

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From Stephen Mertz:

Regarding George Dove's request for information on Nelson DeMille: DeMille is a 33-year-old New Yorker whose first novel, published in 1974 by Leisure Books, was a hardboiled NY police opus starring Detective Sgt. Joe Ryker, a loner cop in the Dirty Harry tradition. DeMille did three more Ryker novels for Leisure before the series was taken over by other writers. DeMille surfaced next with the two Joe Keller books that Dove mentions, published by Manor. The two series are identical, leading me to surmise that there was probably some sort of falling out between DeMille and Leisure, with Leisure holding onto the Ryker character and DeMille continuing the series–with "Ryker" becoming "Keller"–for Manor.

Which brings me in a sort of roundabout way to Bill Crider's reviews in TAD 9/2, since DeMille is one of Crider's subjects. I can't really understand where Crider is coming from. I'm more than happy to see a fuller coverage of paperback originals in TAD, and Crider does seem to have a general liking for the things, but what's this catchphrase of his–"better than average paperback"–that pops up in two of the reviews? The subjects of the reviews aside, what's the sense of propagating this age-old myth that paperback originals are somehow in general of a less-than-acceptable

literary quality? In fact, writers like Hamilton, MacDonald, Prather, Pendleton, Halliday, Avallone, and many, many others are currently producing some of the finest, highest-powered fare presently available to detective/suspense readers. Based on the output of writers like these, I'd argue that the paperback original of today—"average" or otherwise—is more than holding its own in the quality department.

Another point. In Crider's review of Nelson DeMille's *The Terrorists*, our reviewer writes, "You can't believe how bad this book really is, but take my word for it." Is Crider being humorous (after all, he does condemn the book's prose as semi-literate), or is this just another case of someone in a glass house with a handful of stones?

And while I'm being contrary, it seems that I must once again in these pages rise to the defense of Don Pendleton, and take note with John Vining's dismissal of him in John's Series Synopsis column. To say that Pendleton is sadly lacking in definite writing ability is a statement as ludicrous as it is harsh and unfair. What is it that you reviewers have against success?? John—fellow fan that you are—I must accuse you of snobbery. Let's get our heads out of the academic clouds and try and get a realistic perspective for a moment or two, shall we? What are we discussing in TAD? Literature (working definition, anybody?), or *popular* literature, which I daresay is a dustjacket of a decidedly different color.

Sure, maybe some writers do on occasion slip into print in the mystery/suspense field who, it could possibly be argued, indeed don't have "definite writing ability," but they sure don't sell more than 15 million copies of their books in less than eight years! Pendleton, Spillane, Cheyney, Carter Brown —the list goes on and on of writers whose talents critics have slandered and yet who continue to sell book after book after book. Probably, if the truth were known, to more than a few TAD readers and reviewers themselves.

On second thought, maybe Pendleton's record is all the defense he needs. I would recommend to anyone interested enough, however, a perusal of either Pendleton's *Texas Storm* or *Colorado Kill-Zone* in the Executioner series for fine examples of this dynamic, thoughtful writer at his best. And currently on the Mertz drawing board is a TAD-aimed piece on Pendleton's pre-Executioner detective fiction (done pseudonymously during the mid-sixties for some of the smaller paperback houses).

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From Frank D. McSherry, Jr.:

The latest issues of *Xenophile*, a magazine devoted to the pulps, bring news of the death of two figures long associated with the mystery field: artist Graves Gladney, whose superb oils so long graced so splendidly the covers of *The Shadow*, died this March at his home in Missouri. His magnificent depiction of the villainous Shiwan Khan for "The Golden Master," on the cover of the Sept. 15, 1939 *Shadow*, was one of the two finest cover paintings I ever saw on a pulp, a symphony in gold and brown. Gladney himself is said to have despised his pulp work, regarding it merely as a way to keep alive in the Depression; like many creative people, he may have underrated some of his most striking achievements.

Dead also is the famous, energetic pulp editor Leo Margulies, long editorial director of Standard Magazines (the Thrilling group), totalling twenty-five magazines at one point, with a 1.2 million circulation in 1942, one of the highest-paid of all the pulp editors. At his death, he had his own company, publishing among others *Mike Shayne Mystery Magazine*. The importance of the pulps to American life and culture in providing for most of a generation most of its reading material has long been underestimated; only recently has a realization of the importance of the pulps begun. They brought excitement, romance, and adventure to grey days in the depth of the Depression; they premiered in and created a major market for a new, American writing style, the Hammett-Hemingway-Chandler approach, American rather than British. They were freer, less formula-bound than the slicks, and their average literary quality was considerably higher than is generally realized (higher than the slicks in my opinion). Margulies was one of the leading editors in this movement. Again, a man to be sadly missed. . .

*Xenophile* no. 21, devoted to the hard-boiled detective story, has articles good enough to appear in TAD on high-quality writers in the mystery pulps. Nevin's fine "The Marquis of Unremembered Manhunters" discusses some of the best work of John Lawrence: "For my money," says Nevins, "the king of the unknown pulp mystery writers." And about Marty Marquis stories concerning the Broadway Squad that ruled part of New York in the 1930s with a hand of iron: "No more vivid evocation of an American S.S. has ever appeared in fiction."

Another fine article on Robert Leslie Bellem, his life, his career, and his Dan Turner series from *Spicy Detective*, argues that Bellem is an unjustly neglected writer of some importance. "Most Bellem-Turner fans," says author Steven Mertz, "probably saw the stories only as they were superficially packaged: snappy, fast-paced private-eye yarns. But the Turner stories were that . . . and much, much more. This series . . . composes the longest running pastiche on the American private-eye form ever produced, and taken from that aspect, it is not 'bad writing' at all. It is fantastic!" Goulart in *Cheap Thrills* agrees, calling the series "the best parody private eye ever done." There's also a good article by William Nolan on "Hammett in Hollywood."

*Xenophile* 22 also consists almost entirely of material of interest to mystery fans, including Bill Blackbeard's fine "Foreshadowing"—(and another on the same subject by Don Hutchinson)—which pinpoints Frank L. Packard as the creator of the masked, dual-identity crime fighter, in the person of Jimmie Dale, the Grey Seal, without whom there would never have been any Shadow, any Spider, any Operator No. 5. All in all, fifty-six pages of articles and eighty pages of ads, many reproductions of pulp covers in black-and-white, checklist of Bedford-Jones stories in *Blue Book*, etc. (Issues a buck apiece from P. O. Box 9660, St. Louis, Mo., 63122.)

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# Current Material Reviews

*The Blue Hammer* by Ross Macdonald.
Knopf, $7.95

*The Blue Hammer* begins in the well-traveled fictional town of Santa Teresa, some sixty miles north of Los Angeles. Lew Archer, Ross Macdonald's continuing narrator-detective, hires on to recover a stolen painting by Richard Chantry, who left town mysteriously twenty-five years ago and still remains Santa Teresa's leading citizen.

As in most American detective fiction, crime in *Blue Hammer* is widespread, rather than isolated, permeating three generations, a broad social spectrum, and a sweep of miles reaching from Long Beach, Archer's birthplace, to the fictional town of Copper City, Arizona, where Chantry's brother died in 1943.

Several mysteries surface quickly. A few inquiries, and Archer starts wondering if the stolen painting is a forgery and also if Chantry may still be living in Santa Teresa. Then the art dealer who sold the painting to Archer's clients turns up dead along with a local artist. For a while, it seems that the case hinges on the model who sat for the painting—an aging beauty who lived in Tucson during the war and who won the hearts of several members of the Chantry circle.

During his search for her, Archer explains the key principle of his investigative technique to a witness. He looks for the connection joining the various crimes he uncovers, like a motive, setting, or murder weapon. In *Blue Hammer*, the discovery of a single common root helps him relate murders committed thirty-two years apart: "I've worked on several dozen murder cases, many of them involving multiple murders. And in nearly every case the murders were connected in some way. In fact, the deeper you go into a series of crimes . . . the more connectedness you find."

Once the connection is found, the case releases both its solution and its meaning. Since *The Galton Case* (1959), Ross Macdonald has used the disinterment of a corpse to symbolize truth that can't be suppressed. To convey the alacrity with which corpses sprout, a character in *Blue Hammer*, giving her words an unintended meaning, says, "Once a man is dead, he's dead. It doesn't matter where he's finally planted." A planting isn't the same as a burial. The ease with which a murdered body can be unearthed makes its guilty survivors panic. The people in *Blue Hammer* live under incredible pressure, giving the humdrum and run-down a miraculous look. The lives touch at so many points and the guilt cuts so deeply that we wonder how the people have any energy left for their jobs and families.

The characters also surprise us by rarely acting their age. A boyish art critic, of whom Archer says, "He was young for his age . . . and foolish for a person of his intelligence," surprises us when he gives his age as thirty-two. Yet this same unlicked cub later offers fatherly solace to his sad, lost father. The reversals continue. "A small old limping woman" in her seventies, his grandmother materializes as a sexual force in a masterstroke of literary conjury. Even Archer leaps the generation gap for a delicately nuanced sexual relationship with a winsome news reporter half his age.

The interplay of surprise and inevitability keeps the action flowing. Ross Macdonald's impeccable timing, his ability to distribute his surprises well, and Archer's professional skill, which combines decisiveness with a nearly feline sensitivity to atmospheres, gives *Blue Hammer* a many-sided appeal. The book's finale, combining intellectual climax with moral recognition, will move the most hard-boiled of readers.

— Peter Wolfe

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*The Broker* by Max Collins.
Berkley Medallion, 1976, 217 pp., $1.25

Max Collins is the author of two previous paperback novels about a professional thief named Nolan (*Bait Money* and *Blood Money*, Curtis Books, 1973). These were excellent books, which I enjoyed as much as any of Westlake's "Parker" series.

*The Broker* introduces Quarry, a professional hit-man who gets his jobs through his "agent," a man called The Broker. After five years of smooth collaboration, Quarry finds matters becoming unglued in two successive assignments from Broker—one involving heroin, the other a "hit" of a man already as good as dead. Then Quarry's pay for the second job is stolen, forcing him to turn detective—and leading to a final showdown with Broker.

Quarry is an interesting character, one we will be seeing more of in future novels. Max Collins's writing is crisp, fast paced, and continually interesting.

— Robert J. Randisi

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*Gently Through the Woods* by Alan Hunter.
Macmillan, 191 pp., $6.95

This is the fourth book featuring Chief Superintendent George Gently of New Scotland Yard that Macmillan has brought to American readers after first publication in England. The other titles also play on the Superintendent's name—for which purpose it must have been invented—as in *Gently With the Ladies, Gently in the Highlands,* and *Gently With the Innocents.*

The locale of the murder, obviously, is in the woods: a small, isolated clearing deep in a forest preserve a few miles from London. There is a standard English village on the edge of the woods, a manor house in which the

suspects live, and a smaller house for the "gentry," a writer who is counsin to the manor-house owner, Adrian Stoll, a famous, wealthy, domineering, bloody-minded director, the murder victim. In Stoll's house live his mistress, Maryon Britton, who has become merely housekeeper the last few years and in love with the cousin, and her volatile eighteen-year-old daughter from a legitimate marriage. The writer-cousin, Edwin Keynes, is giving house room, use of his car, and fatherly nurture to Lawrence Turner, a young painter in great emotional turmoil. Other characters include Nina Walling, a beautiful and ruthlessly ambitious young actress for whom Stoll was going to evict Maryon and also cut her and Edwin out of his will; Oscar Walling, Nina's father, now gay, a shady financier with the Fraud Squad on his neck, who has fleeced Stoll out of $50,000; Ivan Webster, a snarling script writer who figured in one of Gently's murder cases thirteen years earlier; and diverse country-town detective types.

The characters' lives, their motives and opportunities, are so intimately involved with the London stage and television world that West Brayling becomes a mere extension of it, with the forest as backdrop. Hunter tries very hard to make the trees an integral part of the action, but, unfortunately, it doesn't come off. The long paragraphs relentlessly detailing the gray boles of Douglas pines, the pinker shafts of Corsicans, a belt of majestic Scots pines, snowberry and purple-leaved bramble with the occasional pallor of white campion, the mass of evergreen conifers skirted with deciduous saplings, beech, maple, larch, sycamore, and that old patriarch, oak, remain long paragraphs relentlessly detailing trees and undergrowth. The long, pointless conversation in which Keynes tells Gently his tree philosophy—that trees civilize man—stops the action as much as the naming of the trees. Everything that happened in this novel, including the final chase in the woods, could have taken place in London without loss. In fact, it would have been an improvement because the means by which Hunter gets the Londoners into the village and woods are clumsy and awkward.

The mystery of who killed Stoll and why is an intricate one, with a surprise ending; a real surprise. I can't say anything about the murderer without giving the whole thing away, but if you can stand wandering among all those trees for so long, the puzzle is interesting and the end unusual.

Unfortunately, too, in this book Gently's personality suffered a forest change. I don't think he liked all those trees, either, because he became an absolute boor. In the other books, he was one of the bright, witty, civilized, and urbane Scotland Yard detectives that I fell in love with when I first met Josephine Tey's Alan Grant thirteen years ago. I was more than willing to continue the affair with Gently in the Highlands and in London with those funny ladies, but not in the woods. I hope he recovers from these aberrations in the next book because he has been too good to write off.

— Pearl G. Aldrich

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*Murder by Death,* directed by Robert Moore from Neil Simon's script. Cast: Peter Sellers, Peter Falk, David Niven, Elsa Lanchester, James Coco, Maggie Smith, Alec Guinness, Nancy Walker, Estelle Winwood, Truman Capote, and Eileen Brennan.

Barzun and Taylor catalog at least three book attempts at the mass-detective mystery; but Neil Simon's *Murder by Death* may be the first official film original to have a try. Most *TAD* readers will by now have therefore seen and enjoyed the thing. It is my reviewer's duty to point out the immorality of our mutual pleasure. Item: generically *Murder* is only a burlesque, not a parody. Those awful bathroom jokes are not a serious attempt to send up either Hammett's or William Powell's Nick Charles. Item (more serious): Simon does not even satirize his advertised targets. Instead, he takes on chiefly the self-parodiable Chan films and radio private-eyes of the late 1940s. Peter Falk does Bogart's Rick from *Casablanca,* not his (or Hammett's) Spade.

The film is only parasitic, not satiric, on its own film sources: *Murder in the Orient Express* (Maggie Smith is playing Vanessa Redgrave from *Orient*; not the advertised Myrna Loy); Ken Adam's sets from *Sleuth;* 1945 Clair-Huston-Fitzgerald *10 Little Indians*). The film is actually less consistent in tone than the audio-visual parodies one can look up in Fred Allen's *Treadmill to Oblivion* or those *Your Show of Shows* satires (to which Simon once contributed) where Sid Caesar remained controllable. Anybody who finds *Murder* not only joky but witty, should compare Simon's death-scene sequence in the five bedrooms with the bedroom-gunman scene in the 1934 *Thin Man*—the scene where Powell slugs Loy—which not only plays funnier and wittier, but is a love scene as well.

*Murder* is band-aided structurally by jokes, *shtiks* and its marvelous cast. While the plot-structure favors Sellers' Chan and Falk's Diamond, that means they're also stuck with the worst dialogue. The most complex characterizations seem to me Brennan's, Guinness's, and perhaps Nancy Walker's bit. One thing about this 1930s revival in films: it brings back the Garbo-Adrian styles for women. It is at least a pleasure to look at Maggie Smith, even if Loy would have walked off the set at MGM and phoned her agent after she took a look at Simon's lines.

— J. M. Purcell

*Swing, Swing Together* by Peter Lovesey.
Dodd, Mead, 217 pp., $6.95

A young lady who is the inmate of a stuffy teachers' training school goes for a midnight bathe, sans suit, with two of her girl friends. They are soon disturbed by the appearance of three men in a boat.

A drowned corpse with suspicious marks of violence on its neck turns up, and so, too, do Sergeant Cribb and Constable Edward Thackeray to investigate.

The policemen, aided by a local constable, and an important witness–the young lady–set out via boat to find those three mysterious boatmen who are now the logical suspects.

Their pursuit leads them to Oxford and victim number two who, while fishing, seems to have met a similar fate.

Later, the three boatmen are discovered and arrested but manage, in the end, to provide impregnable alibis. Cribb is highly disconcerted, to say the least, and there doesn't seem to be any logical suspects until a slight misunderstanding is clarified.

*Swing, Swing Together* is probably Lovesey's most readable and entertaining work to date. But it's also one of his weakest. Plot and puzzle leave a great deal to be desired and the detection is unsatisfactory.

The cast of characters is too limited to cause any serious problems for the experienced reader, and Cribb's ultimate solution is far-fetched.

Lovesey's usual Victorian background, charming though it may be, is really not an integral part of the whole–a failing that afflicted his previous novel *A Case of Spirits* (1975).

There are, however, various references to the notorious Whitechapel murderer of the previous year (1888) who seems to be quite popular today–especially in the pages of this magazine.

– Charles Shibuk

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*Whodunit? Houdini?* edited by Otto Penzler.
Harper & Row, 283 pp., $10.95

An unknown murderer manages to cross through a steel wall to execute his dastardly deed. A pair of gloves with no hands in them shoot to kill with deadly precision. A young band leader cannot escape the vengeance of a voodoo cult even at a distance of thousands of miles. A magician finds himself fighting for his life when locked in a trick Japanese box.

These are some of the thirteen mystifying plots, collected in this new anthology, that unite magic and murder into top-flight escape reading.

Some of the stories feature the "locked room" gambit, in which the crime is perpetrated in an apparently sealed room and the investigator is faced not only with the challenge of whodunit but also with howdunit.

Other notable stories include one by John Collier, master of the bizarre, in a macabre black comedy featuring the Indian rope trick. Rafael Sabatini, known for such historical adventure novels as *Scaramouche,* is represented in this

volume with a stirring yam about Count Cagliostro, master magician and hypnotist. Walter Gibson, who under the pseudonym of Maxwell Grant created The Shadow, famous crime fighter, demonstrates his wild imagination in two stories whose background of magic is authentic, as the author is one of the world's greatest real-life prestidigitators. Erle Stanley Gardner provides a tongue-in-cheek tale about a likeable confidence man who takes possession of a stolen diamond necklace with the help of sleight-of-hand gimmicry and a sexy assistant.

There are two literary gems in the anthology. Ben Hecht's "The Shadow" is a poignant piece about a tender, unusual love affair. A fragile blind girl marries a circus magician but falls under the spell of an evil conjuror with tragic results. "The Moment of Decision" by Stanley Ellin is a psychological riddle story a la "The Lady or the Tiger," leaving the solution of an intriguing, uncertain narrative to the reader himself.

– Amnon Kabatchnik

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ASPECTS OF RAYMOND CHANDLER:

*The Life of Raymond Chandler* by Frank MacShane.
E. P. Dutton, $12.50

*The Blue Dahlia, a screenplay* by Raymond Chandler.
Southern Illinois University Press, $10.00 cloth, $3.95 paper.

*The Lady in the Lake* by Raymond Chandler.
Garland Publishing, $12.00

Raymond Chandler and his work require less introduction to the readers of this journal than to most others. Still, what has been known about his life and the way he approached writing (both novels and screenplays) has been fragmentary and inconclusive. Much of the latter he wrote himself, in a number of essays which are both remarkable and frustrating for their facile combination of acute insight and whining complaint. So Frank MacShane's impressive *Life of Raymond Chandler* is welcome indeed. With an abundance of detail and documentation, the biographer has drawn a clear and unfailingly interesting portrait of Chandler: a sad and lonely man who came to writing late in life after consistent disappointments in other fields, and found it a difficult

and ultimately unsatisfying vocation. He emerges as a rather unpleasant and irritating person. Perhaps these traits were the result of his shyness and lack of self-confidence, and his lack of a sense of place in the southern California environment which formed the background of his stories. But these traits were present in him nonetheless, making him lead a peripatetic and increasingly sodden life marked by difficult relationships with his wife, his friends, his publishers, and especially the motion picture studios which—conflict notwithstanding—often found his work worth even the price of Chandler himself.

He wanted to be regarded as a novelist rather than simply a detective-story writer, and MacShane has attempted to treat him that way. He began writing for the pulps, for the legendary *Black Mask*, but before long found himself aspiring beyond the level of a literature that emphasized action at the expense of most everything else. He stayed within the framework of the detective story, but succeeded in transcending it in order to create something more introspective and emotionally enduring, something simultaneously more brutal and humane than the bulk of mystery and detective fiction being produced in the thirties and forties. Probably he was temperamentally incapable of being satisfied with the results. Yet on the whole he appears to have achieved the status he wanted as both a detective-story writer and a novelist. In seeking to emulate Dashiell Hammett, he surpassed him, and in doing so created one of the most durable sets of detective novels that we are likely to have. His plotting, style of writing, and use of language have had tremendous influence upon later writers as well, among whom Ross Macdonald is the obvious and most celebrated example. But Chandler's books are in fact more than detective stories only, and they possess a significance that exists quite apart from whatever merit they enjoy in that genre. They are also valuable social documents—perhaps the most expressive we have—about a particular place and time of American society that compels and repels at the same time. Relatively few other modern writers of any kind have succeeded in making a milieu as integral a part of the novel as the protagonist and plot.

One work by Raymond Chandler that neither he nor his biographer liked was *The Blue Dahlia*. And it is true that the final version of this 1945 movie was an externally imposed compromise with Chandler's original and superior conception. And it is also true that his screenplay for this Alan Ladd vehicle was written under miserable conditions: a rush job, complicated by what the somewhat self-piteous Chandler felt were insulting terms, and finally completed only under the debilitating influence of an alcoholic binge.

But there is something to be said for the movie nonetheless. Chandler contemptuously called it a routine whodunit, and MacShane echoes this sentiment. But both are wrong. *The Blue Dahlia* may not have been a great film, but it was a good one that succeeded at the box office and won Chandler his second Academy Award nomination for best screenplay. James Agee enjoyed it, a recommendation not to be dismissed lightly. It is still eminently watchable, which is more than most people would say of the more recent film version of Chandler's *The Long Goodbye*. Now the screenplay has been published by Southern Illinois University Press, a good deed which should help to set the record straight. And even if Chandler and his biographer had been correct about the movie, *The Blue Dahlia* screenplay is still worth reading as an example of the mystery writer's screencraft and an insight into Chandler as scenarist. Accompanying the text are a smattering of stills and two valuable essays: a memoir by John Houseman, the movie's producer, about the circumstances and conditions in which the screenplay was written, and an afterword by Matthew Bruccoli about Chandler as screenwriter.

One other movie that Chandler did not like was the successful film version of his novel *The Lady in the Lake*. Whatever the weaknesses of the movie (probably more apparent today than they were then), the novel has some undeniably first-rate qualities of atmosphere and plot. Garland Publishing has brought it back into dignified clothbound status again, as one volume of its new "Fifty Classics of Crime Fiction, 1900-1950" series. Accompanying it is a new preface by the series editors, Jacques Barzun and Wendell Taylor (the authors, needless to say, of a *Catalogue of Crime*); fortunately it is short enough and superficial enough not to distract from the novel itself.

– Jon L. Lellenberg

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*Saratoga Longshot* by Stephen Dobyns.
Antheneum, 1976, 239 pp., $8.95

Charlie Bradshaw, a police sergeant in Saratoga Springs, New York and the protagonist of Stephen Dobyns's second novel, is an incurable romantic. He sometimes feels that "his most important faculty was memory, that much of his pleasure came from recollecting the past, his own and others," and his heroes are the violent men of the old West, lawman and outlaw alike, who showed "nerve" when facing death. This romanticism and tendency toward nostalgia sends Charlie to New York City on his forty-first birthday.

As a lovely blond girl of fifteen, Gladys Cheney initiated Charlie into sexual experience. Now, as an "overweight, potato-like woman with no teeth," she asks Charlie to go to the city to find her son Sam. Charlie knows Sam, a punk who would have been in jail long ago if not for Charlie's influence. It is typical of Charlie that he prefers to see Gladys as the girl she was rather than as the woman she has become, just as he would rather consider Sam a wayward son rather than an amoral junior-grade thug.

In New York, Charlie learns that Sam is involved with cocaine, medium-grade hoods, and ultimately murder. The plot is reasonable, neatly conceived, and fast paced, and for the reader who prefers the comfort of a formal mystery, there is one: Where is Sam Cheney (or, we begin to suspect, where is his corpse)? But a major pleasure of the book lies in Dobyns's characters, with whom he takes great care. There is Stacy Doyle, Sam Cheney's girlfriend, a lovely twenty-three-year-old who reminds Charlie of the younger Gladys. Particularly appealing is Conrad Zack, the police detective lieutenant who is afraid Charlie's meddling is going to gum up a narcotics

bust setup. He is foulmouthed and brash, but paternal affection creeps into his attitude as the action progresses, and we are never really convinced that he is actually going to hang an obstruction rap on Charlie. Even the minor characters catch a reader's attention: Victor Plotz, Sam Cheney's landlord and later Charlie's friend, whose interests in life are beer, tropical fish, and his one-eyed cat, Moshe; the two hard boys, Tateo and Jukes; and the three men in dark suits who turn out to be SWAT snipers, but who look to Charlie like a "Yugoslavian fact-finding team."

Despite his naïveté, Charlie Bradshaw is a competent investigator, and he shows both courage and composure when necessary. The action is realistic and occasionally violent. (Dobyns is particularly inventive when describing corpses. In his first novel, *A Man of Little Evils*, a body is discovered wearing stereo headphones, and the muffled music seems to be issuing from the bullet hole in its forehead.) But Charlie is also a fresh, unique, and very human crime-novel hero. And when filtered through Charlie's perception, Dobyns's New York becomes unique too. Despite the violence and disillusionment he finds there, Charlie sees New York as exciting and somehow benign, as if there were still some hope for the city.

*Saratoga Longshot* is a vivid, carefully written book, certain to please the fan of the contemporary detective novel. Stephen Dobyns is also a serious poet; for readers who might be interested in comparing his crime prose to his verse, the second collection of his poetry, *Griffon*, will be published by Antheneum in the fall of 1976.

– Steven M. Krauzer

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*Adventure, Mystery, and Romance: Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture* by John G. Cawelti.
University of Chicago Press, 1976, 336 pp., $15.00

Popular fiction merits serious critical consideration and scholarly study. After all, books so classified attract and hold a tremendous number of dedicated readers. Impressive reader impact would be impossible if these books were without artistry or cultural value. But traditional aesthetic standards and academic perspectives have generally been turned away from a close focus on popular fiction in terms of its special artistic and cultural significance. Literary scholars read mysteries for fun while usually hesitating to take them seriously.

John G. Cawelti, professor of English and the humanities at the University of Chicago, however, overcomes in large measure the double standard that rather artificially separates "popular" from "serious" reading. *Adventure, Mystery, and Romance* offers high caliber intellectual excitement. Apparently the first study of popular culture to propose a general theoretical strategy for the artistic and cultural interpretation of popular literary formulas, this work deserves the attention of detective-fiction readers.

Rigorously analytic, the book's approach divides into four sections: the history and theory of popular fictional formulas sets down working critical guidelines based on pattern and type, which lead to an explanation of how these principles apply to crime fiction; then there is a brief discussion of the evolution of the western and an essay on Irving Wallace and social melodrama; adequate footnotes, a useful bibliography, and an index round out an effectively written and designed book. The full-color dust jacket displays various implements from the arsenal of popular fictional symbolism, and it is quite an eye-catching departure from usual conservative university press format.

Like good popular fiction, *Adventure, Mystery, and Romance* lives up to the promise of its cover. But it is not light reading. Aimed by the "Chicago School" of New Criticism, the book methodically probes for social and cultural relationships and archetypal and psychological meanings as parts of the approach to formula. Pertinent references to appropriate films are also made. And conveniently capsulized plot summaries are provided to bring the reader close to the actual fictional context. Opinions may differ on the various points raised and on the terminology employed, but with stimulating common sense and wit, like the tone of an outstanding seminar, Professor Cawelti sets up a fruitful critical atmosphere.

Without inflating the topic to unbecoming dimensions, with balance, this critic encourages the reader to be sensitive to the artistic structure of popular literary forms. Fictional characters are seen productively as such, for example, not overread as reflections of Hamlet. And readers are consistently invited to test out the book's general theory and their own reactions by close reading of the texts. Popular fiction invites the immediate engagement of imagination. Here Professor Cawelti does the same for intellect. Adventure, mystery, and romance as literary formulas are surprisingly capable of objectively responding to artistic and cultural scrutiny.

Perhaps this study attempts too wide a view. It is very tightly, almost uncomfortably, packed with stimulating observations. But its theoretical perspective does set a vantage point for a range of reading that has lacked critical definition and adequate scholarly recognition.

Crime fiction, as the most sophisticated and complex of popular literary forms, from the classical detective story through the hard-boiled school, assumes a central position in the book. Using Mario Puzo's *The Godfather* as a signal of changing trends in contemporary crime fiction, Professor Cawelti notes "a significant archetypal shift from the melodrama with the gangster as punished protagonist to the adventure story with the gangster as hero." This development includes the many series with an enforcer as the hero.

Having introduced the mythology of crime through a discussion of *The Godfather's* influence, Professor Cawelti first defines the formulas that characterize the classical detective story, and then discusses Agatha Christie's *An Overdose of Death* and Dorothy L. Sayers' *The Nine Tailors,* along with references to other authors and books, as examples of the artistic possibilities of formulaic writing:

> Christie and Sayers exemplify two possibilities for art within the formula of the classical detective story: the first combines a pure ingenuity of ratiocination and mystification with other narrative interests–character, setting, theme–completely subordinated to their role in this structure, and the second uses the classical formula's pattern to body forth a variety of other narrative interests, in this case a vision of justice and society embedded in an allegory of the mystery of divine providence.

Rather than assuming that writing within a popular formula necessarily hobbles creativity and predetermines second-class accomplishment, this outlook positively sees formula as a medium for possible artistry. *Murder Must Advertise* might be a better choice for study, but the discussion of *The Nine Tailors* is enlightening and there are enjoyable and accurate touches like the description, "A rural society out of Thomas Hardy by Trollope shares the spotlight with an elaborate discussion of the art of campanology." A brief discussion of Simenon is also illuminating.

The hard-boiled detective story, especially as written by Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler, and Mickey Spillane, next is considered as formula and art. In some ways this is an acid test of the book's premise. And the resulting discussion seems serious and fair. Spillane's writing is particularly controversial, but here it appears objectively considered in an able appraisal that interestingly finds an analogue to his work in the nineteenth-century temperance novel!

Formula analysis should emerge as a very useful scholarly tool. And, besides influencing readers, it might also assist writers and prospective writers in becoming more conscious of literary construction of formulas and their artistic potential. *Adventure, Mystery, and Romance* is an absorbing and enjoyable book–a book that will probably be taken down from the shelf frequently for reference and rereading.

– J. W. Scheideman

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*The Viking Process* by Norman Hartley.
Simon & Schuster, 285 pp., $7.95

The central theme of this new novel of suspense is original and intriguing: A great multinational conglomerate sets out to destroy its rivals and competitors by using the techniques of political revolutionaries–terorism, assassination, kidnapping, media exploitation, and sexual blackmail.

The main character is Philip Russell, an authority on terrorism and urban warfare, drawn to participate in the activities of the Vikings, a group of well-organized, superbly trained, and lavishly funded young men and women. At first they seem to be attacking a giant corporation in the name of social justice, but eventually it becomes clear that the true motive is huge financial profit.

Russell utilizes his experience and expertise in a deadly battle against the Vikings. It is a sort of a David versus Goliath combat, full of danger, a number of unexpected twists, some tragic results, and a climactic face-to-face encounter where thousands of innocent lives are at stake.

The author has a gift for exciting storytelling and the build-up of riveting suspense. He also has the knack for atmospheric details, with an emphasis on sophisticated gadgets and advance technological machinery, thus painting the events with futuristic overtones.

– Amnon Kabatchnik

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*Death Toll* by William E. Chambers.
Popular Library, 1976, 160 pp., $1.25

*Death Toll* is the author's first novel and an excellent debut. The book revolves around a retired New York City cop named Marty Callahan, who has gone to a New England town called Paradise Island to recover from wounds and write mysteries. A murder is followed by a note announcing a quarter of a million dollar "Death Toll," and Callahan is reluctantly pulled into the search for the killer. The writing is fast-paced, the character appealing, and the ending clever. As I said, an excellent debut. I can't wait for the encore. (An additional note: That is the author on the cover, in the clutches of a blonde young lady.)

– Robert J. Randisi

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*No Questions Asked* by Oliver Bleeck.
Morrow, 228 pp., $6.95

When I settled in the train for home after a month in Washington, spent mostly in the Library of Congress Rare Book Room, I opened Oliver Bleeck's latest to find it dealt with the theft of a book from the Library of Congress rare book collection. After such an auspicious start, I wish I could report that the working out of the seek-and-find routine was interesting, not obvious; that the language sparkled and scintillated, did not squish along with the consistency of a bowl of soggy corn flakes; that the social commentary was flashing and ironic, not banal; but unfortunately, I can't. Forgive the pun, but this novel *is* bleak.

The plot was so obvious that the bad guy came in practically with a sign saying "Enter the Villain" pinned on his chest. The only thing left after page 45 was to figure out which of the two women was the accomplice, and 183 more pages is too long for such a trifle.

The bulk of these pages are padded with detailed street maps of Washington and Los Angeles, and long passages showing St. Ives's total acceptance of current mores. His girl friend in New York is a female psychiatrist with all the woman libber's ideal characteristics. An "aging gay couple," to whom he gives a Thanksgiving turkey each year, lives down the hall from him. One of the women in LA told him, "I've had my share of lovers—both men and women." His temporary assistant, Johnny Guerriero (a Chicano-like name), is a student political activist who has dropped in and out of several colleges over the years, drives a live-in van such as are currently popular among teenagers in southern California, and sprinkles his conversation with "fucking"; and so on through almost the whole list of what the 100 percent mod swinger is supposed to accept. With such thoroughness, I don't know how he happened to miss one important aspect of contemporary life. I kept waiting for the line, "When I dropped by to see her, she was resting after her latest abortion. . ."

However did the idea get accepted that recasting city street maps in paragraph form was properly a part of mystery novels? John Creasy did a lot of it in the Gideon and Superintendent West novels. Lewin's books tell you how to get around Indianapolis, if anyone could possibly want to get around Indianapolis. Ross Macdonald crisscrosses most of southern California (at impossible speeds, I might point out). From Burns's *The Alvarez Journal,* I know more than I ever wanted about driving, not only around Denver, but down the eastern side of Colorado to Texas; but Bleeck carries it to an extreme in this novel. I think at least a third of the book is devoted to this ploy. Having lived years each in both Washington and LA, I'll gladly testify that Bleeck is entirely accurate, if only this testimonial will cut down on the amount of route giving. You *will* get to the Library of Congress if you follow just that route. The Georgetown streets and Haines Point are just where he says they are. Driving north from Santa Monica on the Pacific Coast Highway will, indeed, get you to Malibu, and those built-up areas are where he placed them. But what has all this to do with storytelling? It's boring and contributes nothing to the plot or characterizations. It just fills space, and I'd much rather have a tight, well-plotted short story than a loose, inept novel.

It's heartbreaking to see the decline of the Ross Thomas-Oliver Bleeck style, for *The Money Harvest,* the current Thomas work, and this one are devoid of the vital, vivid writing that made *The Seersucker Whipsaw, If You Can't Be Good,* and the first books under the Bleeck pseudonym such great reading and rereading. Only a couple of lines in *Questions* echo the master. The one that sticks in mind had to do with the LA city buses which "took mysterious routes on a weekly basis." However, such echoes give hope. According to the notice of copyright, Thomas has incorporated himself under the name of Lucifer, Inc., so maybe there's some fire left in the old boy, and we'll have the real Thomas-Bleeck back in the next books.

— Pearl G. Aldrich

*Agent in Place* by Helen MacInnes.
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 339 pp., $8.95

Helen MacInnes's premise in her latest cloak-and-dagger tale is that beneath the dubious veneer of détente, American and Russian secret agents continue their relentless and dangerous game.

The structure of the novel, already on the best-seller list, is not unlike a sprawling chessboard of espionage. Among the participating pawns is a gullible idealist who steals a classified top secret, thus endangering a number of agents behind the Iron Curtain. Assorted spies of various nationalities join the cat-and-mouse proceedings. The action shifts from Washington to New York to New Jersey, zooming in on the antagonists and their gambits. The end game is played out in a deceptively serene, sunny resort on the French Riviera. Among the more poignant sequences are a mugging-murder of an unidentifiable man in Central Park, the stealing of a hush-hush file from a government office, and a disastrous boat chase.

While somewhat long-winded, interest is sustained by a number of plot twists and at least one surprising revelation. Like its sixteen MacInnes predecessors, *Agent in Place* features a highly literate style and the evocation of well-researched, atmospheric locales, justifying the assertion that the author has "a poet's eye for landscape."

— Amnon Kabatchnik

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*Stoner No. 1: The Golden God* by Ralph Hayes.
Manor Books, 1976, 191 pp., $1.25

Ralph Hayes is a prolific series creator (Agent of Cominsec, Check Force, The Hunter), and this book is the first in a new adventure series. Mark Stoner, the hero, is a modern-day treasure hunter and dealer in antiquities. Johann Strasser is a scientist who has spent his life pushing a "gods from outer space theory" (in fact, on the jacket his name is given as Erik von Richter, a name which must have been changed because of its close resemblance to you-know-whose). At any rate, Strasser comes into possession of a primitive golden idol which seems to him to be holding some sort of tubular instrument in its hands. He believes that if he can go to its source, he will find proof of his theory, but he is murdered before he gets the chance. It is up to Stoner and Strasser's daughter to make the hazardous journey into the jungles of Peru, where they face the dangers of treacherous guides, earthquakes, etc. Routine is the word here. *King Solomon's Mines* it's not, and nothing unexpected happens, but the locale is interesting.

— Bill Crider

*Final Proof* by Marie Reno.
Harper & Row, 153 pp., $7.95

After following Joan Kahn through the exotic locales of many recent book choices, it's relaxing to be back home again in Manhattan, lunching in such well-known places as the Gloucester House with the old, familiar editorial types. The narrator is also a very familiar type—a typical New York girl, twenty-eight years old, from Neenah, Wisconsin, in a second echelon position in publishing, looking for a husband.

The whodonit aspect is reasonably interesting. When the identity of the murderer is revealed, I first thought that person had been on the periphery of the group involved but, on second thought, realized that was not so. I had missed the key clue which had been presented very early, although subsequent ones seemed to be piled on close to the point of denouement. In addition, the detective—yes, he marries the narrator—is overly concerned with a missing book all out of proportion to the routine of policy investigation and his own character, although, of course, it turns out to be vital.

Reno's style and small ironic touches are the elements that keep this book alive. The style is brisk and businesslike and the ironic touches include the fact that the narrator is an associate editor of the Mystery, Suspense, and Intrigue Book Club involved in her first real murder, and, within the book club conglomerate, there were about a million, more or less, small, specialized book clubs. Every time an editor of another one appeared, I wondered how many more would eventually turn up. This had to be one of Reno's in-jokes.

Unfortunately, none of the characters really came alive. They are all so shallow and so alike that they seem the Bobbsey Twins grown up and graduated from college into unisex.

— Pearl G. Aldrich

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*The Man Behind Doc Savage* edited and published by Robert Weinberg, 10533 S. Kenneth, Oak Lawn, IL 60453, 1974.

This paperback should please Doc Savage fans, as well as all serious students of the mystery genre. It's small, 124 pages, but loaded with goodies.

There is a short biography of Lester Dent. About thirty pages are devoted to Doc Savage and his adventures. Most interesting are the chapters devoted to Dent's other writing. He wrote six crime novels, also three adventure serials for *Argosy*. In between he whipped out several short stories, including two hard-boiled tales published in *Black Mask*.

Weinberg reprints an article written by Dent on how to plot, originally published in *Writer's Digest* 1939. Much of what he says is still applicable today.

Finally, two pulp series stories by Dent are reproduced in full. *Funny Faces* features Click Rush, the Gadget Man; and *The Death Blast* stars private eye Lee Nace.

*The Man Behind Doc Savage* offers a nostalgic look at another era. I'm sure any *TAD* reader will like it.

— John Vining

*MYSTERY MONTHLY*

I can see no reason why this magazine should not be successful. For one thing, it is nothing like the *87th Pct. Mystery Magazine* and *The Executioner Mystery Magazine* disasters that came out early last year. *Mystery Monthly* is a much more sophisticated, much better put together magazine, in both packaging and contents.

The major departure for *Mystery Monthly* is that it offers book reviews and reviews of "Mystery on the Stage, in the Movies, and on the Home Screen." Also, each issue of *MM* has a "Mystery Monthly Interview" (Harlan Ellison in the first issue, Dilys Winn, the proprietress of the Murder Ink mystery bookstore, in the second, and New York City's medical examiner, Dr. Michael Baden, in the third issue.

*MM* also offers something else that no other magazine has ever offered: mystery puzzles, games, tests, and cryptograms. How much do you know about mysteries? Here's where you go to find out. There is also a cash-award contest. Would that it—and the other mystery magazines—also had a letters page.

A nonfiction feature that will be appearing regularly in *MM* is "The Crime Lab," written by George O'Toole, the former head of the Problems Analysis Branch of the CIA. "The Crime Lab" will deal with such topics as extrasensory perception and its use in solving crimes, hypnosis, today's private eyes, and the reliability of eyewitnesses. "The Crime Lab" promises to be very interesting.

As for the fiction itself, it ranges from adequate to excellent. The first issue, June 1976, brings us stories by Michael Croft, August Derleth (Solar Pons), Edward D. Hoch (a non-series story), Gil Brewer, Jack Ritchie (this man just cannot write a bad story), Harlan Ellison, and Ed McBain. *MM*'s policy toward subject matter is a bit more open than the others, as in the case of the McBain story, which never would have seen print in any of the other three.

The July 1976 issue gave us stories by Graham Masterton, Barbara Paul, Michael Kerr, John Braine, and four excellent tales by Robert Hoskins, Stanley Cohen, James Howard, and Talmage Powell.

The August issue gives us fiction by Eric Norden (a new series featuring "The Nick and Nora Charles of the Seventies," Tony and Amanda Cross), Rex Anderson, Robert Edmund Alter, Richard Forrest, and myself.

*Mystery Monthly* is a good magazine and it will undoubtedly get better. Whether or not it will offer *EQMM* any real competition (something *EQMM* has not seen since its inception in 1941), remains to be seen. But for *MM* not to go the way of *The Man From Uncle, The Girl From Uncle, The 87th Pct., The Executioner, Shell Scott, Charlie Chan,* and *The Saint Mystery Magazines*, it needs support. I am definitely giving it mine because we need more mystery magazines in the field.

*Mystery Monthly* is published by Looking Glass Publications, Inc., 119 W. 57 St., New York, NY 10019. F. Joseph Spieler is the executive editor and its price is $1.00. Buy it, read it, and enjoy it!

— Robert J. Randisi

## RAFFLES AT BAT AGAIN

*Raffles of the Albany* by Barry Perowne.
Hamish Hamilton, 1976, 214 pp., $7.00
(US: St. Martin's, 1977)

*The Return of A. J. Raffles* by Graham Greene.
Simon & Schuster, 1976, 92 pp., $5.95

Two years ago a book entitled *Raffles Revisited* brought together for the first time fourteen of Barry Perowne's fine and faithful pastiches of The Amateur Cracksman from the pages of *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine* and other periodicals. It was a collection whose felicity was limited only by the incompleteness of the volume. We are still some distance away from a complete edition of Perowne's Raffles pastiches, in large and most gratifying part because he is still writing them. But at least this second collection brings more of these stories together between covers. It contains eleven from *Ellery Queen's* and *The Saint Mystery* magazines, including the two recent ones about Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes, first-rate tributes to the great detective and his creator which were published in *EQMM* last year as "The Enigma of the Admiral's Hat" and "Raffles on the Trail of the Hound." All of the stories have been retitled and most revised and fleshed out somewhat for book publication. In them Perowne works his usual formula of combining Raffles's streak of larceny with his impulse toward good intentions, a remarkable and appealing combination of self-interest and altruism. It is formula writing at its best, since Perowne is a literate gentleman who composes the variations upon his familiar theme in an unfailingly entertaining and clever way. In this collection he sends Raffles from London to Samoa to South Africa and back again, crossing his path along the way with more celebrities than he would be likely to meet even in a Sherlock Holmes novel by Nicholas Meyer. Yet Perowne scarcely ever has to strain in order to make a connection, and the result is a delight for anyone with a taste for this kind of *fin de siecle* period piece.

Somewhat less welcome is the new Raffles play by Graham Greene. Mr. Greene attended a performance of the Royal Shakespeare Company's revival of Gillette's *Sherlock Holmes* and was inspired to write this number for the company. He was also moved to make a point in it about British morals and manners at the time of the Oscar Wilde scandal. Unfortunately, the point gets lost in the flow of clever dialogue—given an opportunity (and he makes them for himself), Greene cannot resist trying to sound clever—and in trying to make it he has also eliminated the sense of unserious fun that made *Sherlock Holmes* the great success it has been on both sides of the Atlantic over the past several years.

During one event-packed night, the play throws together Raffles and Bunny, Lord Alfred Douglas and the Marquess of Queensbury, a snobbish Albany porter and a sexually ambiguous lady's maid, a Scotland Yard inspector and a Prussian cavalry officer, and the heir to the throne and one of his mistresses. Raffles enters disguised as a Scottish snoop, and Bunny is presented to us as a homosexual. Prince Edward calls himself Mr. Portland, and a waiter turns out to be a German spy who mistakes Bunny for a Russian adversary. Mr. Greene is right about one thing: It isn't easy to recognize the characters, not even A. J. Raffles and Bunny Manders.

It is an offensive item, written in misguidedly decadent taste and below the previous standards of the author. The play has enjoyed a moderate box-office success at the Aldwych Theatre in London, partly because of the Raffles glamour, partly because of the Royal Shakespeare Company's skills, and partly because Graham Greene's name means something to people. It does to me, too, but rather less than before.

— Jon L. Lellenberg

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*The Mummy Case* by Dermot Morrah.
Harper & Row, 1933; Garland Publishing, 1976, 303 pp., $12.00

This is a definite product of the so-called Golden Age: a time when literary crime admittedly may have been bizarre and even highly improbable, but a time nonetheless when the solution was attained by a sense of logic instead of brass knuckles. *The Mummy Case* is a model of analytical reasoning and the application of scholarly pursuits to criminal investigation, and includes a portrait of English university life that is sure to appeal to the American Anglophile. The author was a journalist rather than a novelist or mystery writer. Still, he concocted a very pleasant little puzzle, indeed, making good use of the popular interest in Egyptology which had been aroused by the Tutankhamen discoveries of a decade before. An Oxford don suffers what appears to be simply a tragic but accidental death, but which is made suspicious to a few by the alternating appearances and disappearances of an ancient mummy and its case. Two younger members of the Beaufort College faculty undertake a private investigation in order to resolve all the anomalies—for "pure academic curiosity," one of them remarks—and proceed in a rational and civilized manner like the scholars they are. The scene ranges from Oxford to the Isle of Wight, and ends up on the high seas where the solution is revealed and the two amateurs compound a felony in best Sherlock Holmes style. It is impossible to take it all seriously, but only a cad would insist upon trying.

— Jon L. Lellenberg

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*The Blood-Red Dream* by Michael Collins.
Dodd, Mead, 186 pp., $6.95

Private eye Dan Fortune is hired by a pretty girl to locate her missing grandfather. He does, only to find that his client has disappeared.

Events become somewhat more exciting with four dead bodies, two close calls, and an additional attempt to strangle the one-armed investigator.

Mixed with this violence are groups of Yugoslav, Lithuanian, and Hungarian patriots, an erratic group of post-juvenile freedom fighters, a priceless chalice that has been stolen, and a

great deal of fanaticism—if not outright madness.

Collins's sheer storytelling ability manages to juggle these disparate elements and keep the reader following his complicated narrative.

Unfortunately, the author's melodramatic nonsense at the climax, which includes not one but two double twists, leaves unsubstantial what could have been a valid theme.

— Charles Shibuk

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*The Boys From Brazil* by Ira Levin.
Random House, $8.95

Levin here leaves the occult of the now-classic *Rosemary's Baby* to deal with a group of modern-day Nazis and produce his best novel to date.

Seven men meet in a Japanese restaurant in South America and plot the deaths of ninety-four men, all sixty-five years old. Why do the deaths of these men interest the six ex-members of the Nazi SS and the infamous German "Angel of Death," Josef Mengele? Only one man, Nazi hunter Yakov Liebermann, seems to care, or even to suspect that there *might* be a pattern in the deaths occurring around the world. And no one really believes the old fellow, anyway. . .

Levin expertly switches from Liebermann's desperate attempts to weave a theory and back to Mengele's plot to rub out the ninety-four men. The suspense is added, layer upon layer, until finally Levin allows us the inevitable confrontation between arch-enemies Mengele and Liebermann.

Don't miss this one—a best-seller and most deservedly so.

— Robert Blaskey

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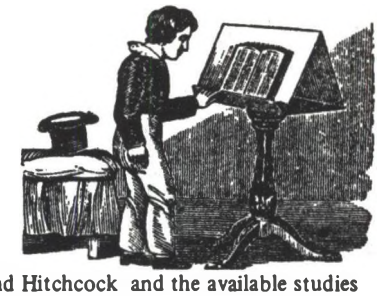
*The Dangerous Edge* by Gavin Lambert.
Grossman (Viking), 1976, 270 pp., $7.95

Gavin Lambert writes well-known fiction and nonfiction about film people. He has also written scripts that adapt works by D. H. Lawrence, Paul Bowles, and himself (*Inside Daisy Clover*). *Dangerous Edge* attempts, and partially succeeds, to provide a neo-Freudian chart of the thriller tradition in English through essays on Wilkie Collins, Doyle, Chesterton, Buchan, Ambler, Greene, Simenon, Chandler, and Alfred Hitchcock. This is surely an acceptable short list of the masters; the only false omission seems to be Hammett, and the only intruder, Chesterton, since Lambert is unconcerned with the development of the purist mystery.

Since these artists are all world famous and, at least in paperback, best-sellers, the *TAD* reader may need a minute's consideration to realize that *Edge* actually fills a gap in our literary criticism. In English the only important books on Doyle and Collins are biographies; the only really successful critique on Hitchcock was written in 1957 in French and remains untranslated; and the only book-length critique on Chesterton worth owning is a 1947 O.P. monograph by the then unknown Hugh Kenner. Only two of Lambert's chosen nine can be said to have been academically over-



studied: Greene and Hitchcock and the available studies aren't that good.

Technically, *Edge*'s viewpoint is not aesthetic but psychoanalytic in the movies' familiar neo-Freudian tradition. Lambert's thesis is that all these nine narrative artists were primarily not trying to develop a common genre, not trying to make money within a form that had a guaranteed commercial audience, not even trying to expand the potentialities of Anglo-American prose or cinematic cutting. Instead their works were meant, unsuccessfully, to relieve the fears from a childhood trauma.

Lambert's nine instant analyses derive from some acquaintance with the original works and (usually) one biography and one critical book. When you have read one of his sources, you appreciate Lambert's novelist's-eye alertness for the telling detail; he spots for instance the throwaway sentence in which Greene tells how he learned to write action-prose. The essays in *Edge* have the virtue of narrative pace, partly because of their thesis that the books-films under review are all a progressive unfolding of a childhood complaint.

In professional terms, you can't of course "Freudianize" nine individuals this way from secondary sources. And a student can only bequeath one common biographical personality to Ambler, Simenon, Buchan, and Chesterton by a terrible strain on their four biographies. To conceal my reviewer's bias no further, thriller artists seem to me to be formalists whose "psychoanalysis" in print should take an Adler-Erikson ego-formation form. *Edge* can significantly do nothing with the fact that while several of his subjects (Collins, Ambler, Simenon) wrote an expertly functional prose, others (Greene, Chesterton, Chandler, Hitchcock) are almost the outstanding stylists of their respective periods, and not simply in the thriller field. As I wrote above, Lambert's thesis of compulsive repetition won't permit him to discuss the development of a common narrative tradition that "semi-originates" in the Collins-Dickens generation of the British novel. Hitch's chase movies are always aware of Buchan, while Greene and Ambler remain aware of each other's books (and of Maugham's *Ashenden*). Chesterton is irrelevant to this book because he remains outside this developing tradition; he influences rather the purist Christie-EQ-Carr mystery and the Empson-Kenner New Critics.

With all these expressed qualifications, the chapter on Collins is good, seven of the other eight are at least useful, and the one on Ambler is probably the best thing available on its subject, a real anthology piece. *Edge* is a novelist's critical contribution in an area where our academics are still insecure when they notice it at all.

— J. M. Purcell

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*The Riddle of the Sands* by Erskine Childers; Introduction by Norman Donaldson.
Dover, 1976, 284 pp., 4 maps, $3.50

Next to the 1903 first edition, this recent repackaging of Childers's only novel is probably the best edition to own. *TAD* readers interested in it are likely to know that its *donnée* is an amateur sailing expedition along the Dutch coast by two Englishmen, which Childers turns into what Donaldson defends as the earliest modern spy novel. His introduction is academic in the good sense, not the bad; and it properly emphasizes the real-life sailing background and complex double-national British-Free State political *mystique* of the author. Donaldson briefly sketches the specialized watch-out-for-Germany genre of British novels (1871-1909) to which *Riddle* belongs; he is of course aware of such titles as "Saki's" *When William Came*, which he doesn't bother to mention.

In *Riddle* a fastidious narrator crams himself onto a converted lifeboat to sail with his eccentric former classmate, who is looking for an enemy flotilla hidden among the tidal flats. His ability to interpret details on coastal charts combines with a fine sense of mystery and a bit of dangerous night navigation. A good yarn, not too technical for landlubbers, and enjoyable for day sailors or a rainy day aboard a cruiser.

– J. M. Purcell

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Short notes on more of the current crop:

Amanda Cross usually takes time to write her mysteries: they have appeared in 1964, 1967, 1970, 1971 and now 1976. (The 1971 book was a mistake.) The latest is *The Question of Max* (Knopf, $6.95), which returns fully to past glories. Cross writes beautifully, revelling in elegance of language (not to mention elegance of culture–the sort well represented by a total absence of masculine leg between trouser and sock). And the plot here is fine as well. Kate Fansler is enjoying her rural retreat when visited by the exceedingly unlikely form of the incredibly cultured Maximillian Reston, who asks her to accompany him to the home of a late novelist whose literary executor he is. There have been reports of intruders, but Kate finds a female body along the rocky shore near the house. Accident, surely, though Kate is astonished to discover she knows the girl. Police interest subsides, but not Kate's; her mind continues to work, through inspections of the novelist's papers and a research visit to England . . . to produce an unpleasant theory and an even less pleasant shock.

There is an indigenous body of German crime fiction, but European TADians advise that it is generally very unremarkable and that we in English-speaking countries lose nothing by its almost completely untranslated state. The one notable exception to this must be Hans Hellmut Kirst, who completes his trilogy about Munich Supt. Konstantin Keller with *Everything Has Its Price* (Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, $8.95). Kirst here continues his merciless dissection of Munich's "beautiful people," describing in detail the nearly total depravity of these jet-setters. One of their number, and yet above them all, is Karl Schlesinger, who–unsuspected by the police–is well on his way to control of crime and vice in the city. The police ask the retired Keller to tackle the mounting Munich crime wave. Private funding is arranged for, and Keller is given a free (and unconstitutional) hand. Marshalling all resources, Keller begins his search for a pattern and the probable master hand behind it. A totally fascinating book . . .

Alternate universes are relatively common in sf/fantasy, but practically nonexistent in mystery fiction. This–but not only this–makes the imaginative Peter Dickinson's latest in our field stand out. I refer to *King & Joker* (Pantheon, $6.95), in which the author creates a whole new royal family for England, with its own intrigues and loves and liaisons, and then plagues it with a practical joker. The king is Victor II, a medical doctor, and his second child, Princess Louise, age about fourteen, is the center of much of Dickinson's attention. Although the joker turns ultimately to murder, the resolution of this mystery proves distinctly less interesting than the author's masterful exploration of character and emotion and relationship, and his ability to comment on the real through the fantastic.

Looking for a chair-edge spellbinder? Look no further than *The Man Who Wasn't There* by Roderick MacLeish, novelist son of painter Norman MacLeish and nephew of poet Archibald MacLeish. Here we have Rex Carnaby, highly successful film actor, who has just completed his greatest performance in front of the cameras–when his world begins to disintegrate. Someone–who?, why?–is determined to drive him mad using the theories of an outre French psychiatrist. Horribly effective is the assault: One by one the props to Carnaby's mental structure are jerked away; he's given terrifying glimpses into his subconscious and memories. He grasps for support; it crumbles . . . Prepare to read this in one sitting.

This seems to be the year for the reappearance of long-inactive mystery writers: John Stephen Strange's first book since 1961 was the recent *The House on 9th Street*, and Dorothea Bennett, whose *The Dry Taste of Fear* and *Under the Skin* appeared in 1960 and 1961, respectively, now offers *The Jigsaw Man*, Coward, McCann & Geoghegan, $8.95). And the waiting has been worth it, for this is a superior international intrigue novel. Philip Kimberly was an agent for the Russians within British Intelligence for decades, and finally fled to Moscow–where he's now become an embarrassment to his hosts, who allow him to read his own obituary. But it's not as final as all that: he is surgically remade and sent back to Britain as Sergei Kuzminski to retrieve a file listing all Soviet agents in Britain–a file Kimberly secreted years before as "insurance." Of course Kimberly, who knows his days are numbered in any event, has some ideas of his own . . . Very nicely

done: polished writing, interesting characterizations, taut suspense.

I was enthusiastic about Thomas Gifford's first novel, *The Wind Chill Factor* (1975), which unaccountably escaped the notice of the MWA award committee. I reckon Gifford's second, *The Cavanaugh Quest* (Putnam, $8.95), is even better, in spite of the fact that the identity of the killer should be apparent to the reader 100 pages before it occurs to the protagonist. That latter worthy is Paul Cavanaugh, fortyish, a writer, the left-over of a failed marriage, who identifies very strongly—and this is certainly one of the strengths of the book—with his city (Minneapolis, where Gifford lives) and its environs. A dweller in Cavanaugh's apartment building commits unseemly suicide; Cavanaugh's neighbor insists the dead man's wife killed him, and asks—tells—Paul to look into it. Out of curiosity he does, to find a 1930's hunting and fishing club in Northern Minnesota, whose members—now socially prominent if not wealthy—begin, one after another, to be murdered. Why? And who? Knotty questions for Cavanaugh, whose quest becomes a compulsion, driven by an emotion of which he'd thought himself no longer capable . . .

*Richmond: Scenes in the Life of a Bow Street Runner* (Dover, $4.50) may be an important volume historically, but that doesn't make it particularly enjoyable reading. Editor E. F. Bleiler describes this as "the first collection of detective stories (1827) in English," which I can't dispute, though the amount of detection in the tales is small. These are the memoirs of Tom Richmond (authorship unknown), whose early life, including a period with a small group of roving gypsies, is described in the first quarter of the book. He then joins Bow Street, and five cases are recounted. Not easy reading, as I have suggested, but not without interest in describing the nature of those early 19th century years and the manner of operation of Bow Street Runners. And Bleiler's introduction is so good as almost to be worth the price of the book by itself.

Those interested in matters Sherlockian should certainly know *Baker Street Miscellania*, a quarterly published by the Sciolist Press ($4.00; Box 2579, Chicago, IL 60690). *BSM* is very nicely done. The 30-page issues are chapbook size. Numbers 5 and 6 contain such goodies as "The Secret Love of Sherlock Holmes" by Julian C. Rosenblatt, several pastiches, a continuing column of news and reviews, and the serial publication of William D. Goodrich's "Sherlock Holmes Reference Guide."

Sherlock Holmes begat Solar Pons, and Luther Norris's *Pontine Dossiers* have been appearing regularly for years to commemorate Pons and his literary agent, August Derleth. The tenth anniversary *Dossier* is now available ($5.00; 40 pp.; 3844 Watseka Ave., Culver City, CA 90230); and it's the usual rewarding affair. Contributors include Frederick Schroyer (on Praed Street), Jon L. Breen (on Craig Kennedy), and A. C. Lamprey (a Fishy fellow with a trifling discourse on nakedness).

I fear that little more than scarcity can recommend Eden Phillpotts's *My Adventure in the Flying Scotsman*, now rescued from near total oblivion by Aspen Press (P. O. Box 4119, Boulder, CO 80302; wraps; 43 pp.; $4.00). This was the prolific Phillpotts's first work; it only appeared as a chapbook in England in 1888; Ellery Queen thought sufficiently of it to make it number thirteen in Queen's Quorum; and every collector's instinct within me rises on its hind legs and bellows "hurrah" at this first American edition. As a story it's not much, though with some historical interest; it's got crime but little detection. The introduction by Tom and Enid Schantz is excellent.

Mine may be the minority view, but among several indications that the search for Sherlockiana has reached the bottom of the barrel I find *The Arsene Lepine–Herlock Soames Affair* by S. Beach Chester (Aspen Press, Box 4119, Boulder, CO 80302; 88 pp.; $5.00 softcover, $12.50 hardcover). This work, resurrected (or, better, disinterred) from some unidentified resting place in 1912, is a burlesque set in a New York hotel and making almost no sense whatsoever. Lepine, French National Thief, and various detectives and police (French, British and American), not to mention Dr. Watts, engage in monumental drinking and sodden cameraderie under the disquieted eye of Giovanni, the headwaiter and narrator. An introduction by Philip Jose Farmer contributes next to nothing.

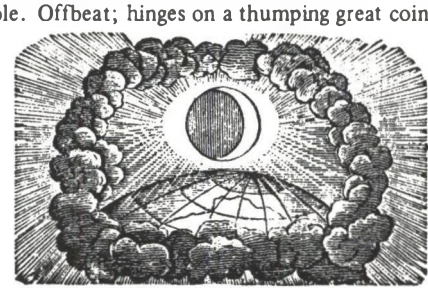
Some alphabetical capsule commentaries . . .

*Navona 1000* By Mel Arrighi (Bobbs-Merrill, $6.95). Plows well-tilled soil about a professional killer who lets sentiment impair his effectiveness. But nicely done . . .

*Death in the Rising Sun* by John Creasey (Walker, $6.95). A Palfrey novel badly dating from 1945 and relating some nonsense about Palfrey and wife impersonating high Nazis to infiltrate a secret Nazi hideout in the mountains of China.

*Drop Dead* by June Drummond (Walker, $6.95). Competent novel by an author who's done better. It's a study of people under stress: a girl threatens to celebrate Christmas by leaping off the top of the most prestigious department store in a South African city. Bad publicity potential here; especially as the girl's connected with a store executive . . .

*Blackjack Hijack* by Charles Einstein (Random, $6.95). About a compulsive gambler who devises a winning system and uses the occasion to drop out—and into a barrel of trouble. Offbeat; hinges on a thumping great coincidence.



*Gentle Albatross* by Elizabeth Foote-Smith (Putnam, $6.95). The author seems compulsively profane, but her private eye and his albatross are interesting; so is the case of the missing college president, at least till the sf ending.

*The Vienna Pursuit* by Anthea Goddard (Walker, $6.95). Gothic and improbable but not unpleasant: a woman searches for the German S. S. officer she's just learned was her father. He's hunted by others as well . . .

*Nobody's Sorry He Got Killed* by Arthur D. Goldstein (Random, $6.95). Detection in geriatrica, told with humor and sympathy, is back in Max Guttman's third adventure. A fellow denizen of Max's Senior Citizen's Home has a granddaughter in jail for a murder she *must* have committed. Except Max pokes around . . .

*The Weirdown Experiment* by Wallace Hildick (Harper & Row, $7.95). An air of inevitability here, but I had to peek ahead to relieve the tension as I read. British schoolteacher Ernest Denham, recovering from illness, perversely agrees to be the subject of a novel by Weirdown, whom he's just encountered. But it's Weirdown, or course, who's perverse.

*Gently with the Painters* by Alan Hunter (Macmillan, $6.95). Promoted into administration, Gently here rebels and dives into the investigation of a murder of an amateur painter in Norchester. One of the artistic group he belongs to–seething with antagonisms and jealousies–must have done it. Entertaining and solidly crafted.

*The Invaders* by Walter Kempley (Saturday Review Press, $8.95). Starts with Lt. Gerald Skilling's assignment to round up deserter gangs in Saigon; turns into a compelling one-on-one duel with a gang leader, who's allied himself with a colonel in the North Vietnam army who has fried brains and a nutty scheme for invading the U. S.

*Night Cover* by Michael Z. Lewin (Knopf, $7.95). Very fine police procedural about Detective Leroy Powder, with excellent characterization and plot detail. Such matters as a series of battered female corpses, a warehouse heist, and a Maoist student with a missing classmate attend Powder, who is also trying to bring his men on the night crew, his restauranteer, and his own life into order.

*Dead Run* by Richard Lockridge (Lippincott, $7.95). A case for Lt. Heimrich, and a stronger novel than recent Lockridge's. Deals with the death by car of an inoffensive attorney in a restaurant parking lot during an inclement winter; it seems to be murder, but whatever for?

*Snake* by James McClure (Harper & Row, $7.95). The Kramer and Zondi South African procedurals are usually extremely good, but this is a lesser manifestation. Zondi is the most entertaining as two cases arise: the murder of an exotic dancer (and her snake), and a series of robbery-murders of black shopkeepers.

*Ripoff* by Arthur Maling (Harper & Row, $7.95). Solid suspense; persuasive writing about the business world and deadly fiscal improprieties in a large corporation.

*Nightshade* by Derek Marlowe (Viking, $7.95). Unabsorbing character study of unattractive people. Sexually repressed Edward Lytton and his wife take their uncon-

summated marriage on vacation to the Caribbean, where their lives, such as they are, fall apart.

*The Manhattan File* by Ian Kennedy Martin (Holt, Rinehart & Winston, $6.95). Number two about Detective Inspector Jack Regan, a British copper far more akin to Dirty Harry than George Gideon. Here Regan earns the unlove of everyone by letting himself be conned out of evidence of a Mafia swindle he's brought to the FBI in New York. Complex plotting, sometimes blunt and sometimes humorous in the telling.

*With Extreme Prejudice* by Berkley Mather (Scribners, $8.95). Peter Feltham, earlier of *The Achilles Affair* (1959), is conned back into the British espionage game–this one having to do with a perambulating $5 million belonging to international criminals. A nice, tense piece of work is this, effectively set in the Middle East.

*No Place Like Home* by J. Bradford Olesker (Putnam, $6.95). Very competent first novel about the police search for an unidentified psycho who lives and murders in a high-security apartment building on Chicago's Lake Shore Drive.

*The Sweetheart Deal* by Robert Rosenblum (Putnam, $8.95). A compelling Mafia shocker about a high chieftain who agrees to defect and testify, the lawyer who arranges the deal, and the earthmoving Mafia efforts to "hit" the traitor.

*The D'Artagnan Signature* by Robert Rostand (Putnam, $7.95). Quite effective exploration of the innocents-caught-up-in-disaster gambit: the Surete is after a left-over OAS terrorist, with a disillusioned Hollywood scripter in the bloody middle.

*The Poor Old Lady's Dead* by Jack Scott (Harper & Row, $6.95). Worthy British first novel about a police detective with a grasping mistress, a loving wife, an unlovely chief inspector, and big trouble–like murder.

*The Great Pebble Affair* by Brit Shelby (Putnam, $7.95). Wholly foolish but good fun: a self-taught criminal and his unlikely henchmen work out The Plan while keeping the jackals of organized crime at bay.

*Tumbleweed* by Janwillem van de Wetering (Houghton Mifflin, $6.95). The second Dutch import about Amsterdam detectives Grijpsta and De Gier, very nicely done in setting and interplay of characters, less in suspense and detection. Which of her regular clients killed the prosperous prostitute aboard her houseboat?

–AJH

# Retrospective Reviews

*Murder Moon* by Henry Leyford (pseudonym) (Macaulay, 1933).

This is a solo mystery effort by the author, and it presents Stephen Trent, patron of the arts and amateur detective, who is assisted by Fouchard, a renowned French detective.

Trent is hired to buy a painting from a princess living on the Riviera. He finds the princess murdered, with a strange stamp on her corpse. A "Lady of Death" is suspected of the crime and trailed. Another murder takes place, and the same "Lady of Death" stamp is found on that corpse. Even Fouchard himself acts more like a suspect than a detective.

The plotting of this tale is relatively good. There are some unnecessary banterings with suspects, but there is a good chase sequence involving a leading suspect, and, surprise of surprises, an altogether strange and beautiful ending is brought about by Trent. Thus, while not of classic vintage, *Murder Moon* is a good combination of adventure, chase, and mystery.

– Hal Brodsky

*The Perils of Josephine* by Lord Ernest Hamilton (Unwin, 1899; Duffield, 1899)

*Perils* is a long, leisurely novel written with a great deal of charm by the author of the impressive *The Four Tragedies of Memworth*–which certainly deserves a detailed review of this sort itself.

Much of *Perils* is devoted to establishing character and setting. Its heroine (and narrator) Josephine de Metrier returns to her uncle and his family in rural England in 1857 after ten years of exile with her maiden aunts.

Joe (as she is frequently called) is an unusual heroine. She spends most of her time walking, running, and climbing trees. She describes herself as being big, tall, and plain looking, but she is only eighteen, has a perfect figure, and soon finds that there are two gentlemen who are just daffy about her.

She is very happy in her "new" home and manages to fall in love with the aristocratic but impecunious Sydney Grayle.

Another suitor for Joe's hand is her cousin Norman, whose insistence that Joe marry him is interlaced with darkly hinted threats that all will not be well if she refuses.

Time passes and the situation becomes more disquieting as Norman continues to press his suit in the face of a firm refusal. A few overheard conversations have sinister connotations, and Joe seeks help from the woman who nursed her father when he was a child. This lady's reputation is none too sound, but she seems to know all and threatens to tell all very soon.

The reader may, at this point, be well ahead of the author, but it matters not as events take a much more serious and melodramatic turn. A group of blackguards have been hired, and they have serious and deadly designs on our heroine's life.

*Perils* is well written enough to keep the reader interested and involved in Hamilton's slowly developing plot, but this novel is not, of course, the equal in literary quality of the later and more celebrated *Memworth* (1928).

If you start to read *Perils* late at night, you may not want to stay up till 4:00 A.M. to finish it, but you will certainly look forward to resuming this tale the next day.

– Charles Shibuk

*This Way Out* by James Ronald (Copyright, 1939) (Rich, 1940; Lippincott, 1940; Popular Library, 1951)

James Ronald has taken some of the tritest ingredients to be found in the inverted form and through sheer narrative skill has fashioned a superb tale that is utterly absorbing, relentlessly gripping, and deeply moving.

Philip Marshall, an aging and unsuccessful clerk, is plagued by a miserable louse of a wife who is doing her best to make life an absolute hell for him. On the other hand, there is young Mary Grey, a plain and lonely girl, whom Marshall innocently meets late one night outside his office building, and a spark of sympathy instantly springs up between them.

As has happened before, sympathy turns to love, and Marshall decides that he cannot live without Mary–who doesn't even know he's married.

Marshall begs his wife for a divorce with predictable results. Furthermore, she threatens him (and Mary) with a number of extremely unpleasant consequences unless this infatuation ceases.

And there you have the eternal triangle that can only lead to murder.

Marshall kills his wife and makes it look like an accident. The Coroner's Officer investigates, and Scotland Yard is soon called in. They are extremely suspicious of Marshall but cannot obtain sufficient evidence to make an arrest.

Marshall marries Mary, but a few problems arise. Marshall's alienated son is trapped into an engagement with a most unsuitable young lady whose character defects promise to turn her into another Mrs. Marshall.

Much more ominous is Marshall's old pub acquaintance, the drunken lout Simmons, who threatens to expose him as a murderer unless he becomes a blackmail victim. And you know what will happen to anyone who tries that game with a murderer.

You've read this type of story before, and you've seen it in the movies many times, but the author has an uncanny knack of penetrating deeply into his characters and making them live and breathe while engaging the reader's empathy–and making him or her keep turning those pages.

– Charles Shibuk

# IT'S A NOVEL WORLD

By Mary Groff

Join me, if you will, on a trip down some of the years of mystery fiction. We shall note some of the things that happened within and without the mystery novel, and you may expect some editorializing.

Our journey begins at a point where, from the middle-class viewpoint at least, this was a secure world—one filled with a formal politeness and respect for the individual, and where an almost laughable servility could be found among servants and shopkeepers. The family grocery store supplied the food and a daily outing for the housewife, and the delivery of ordered goods was cheerfully made. The rich wallowed in luxury, and Fifth Avenue in New York City was lined on both sides with large, private houses usually filled with flourishing Robber Barons.

The journey ends some eighty-three years later in an almost totally mechanized society. Impersonal service reigns in shops and restaurants, where a customer would more likely be known as a Credit Card or Cash Only than by a given name. This is a world in which the wildlife is fast dying out and the lungs are clogged with pollution and green spaces are increasingly difficult to find; a community where children grow up on plates of chemicals at every meal and where a detective would rather drop dead than walk across the street, let alone down an entire, long block. The clue of Page Ten has now given way to emotional or social pressures that produce a confession in the last chapter in the hopes of plea bargaining. No one cares too much about others, and the suspect would ignore any chance of going quietly to his room to shoot himself and save the family from disgrace. If given a gun he would rather shoot the detective, even bearing in mind the cost of cleaning the carpet afterwards.

During 1878 an assassination attempt was made on the life of Wilhelm I of Germany, resulting in some repressive measures against Socialists. In the same year Britain attacked Afghanistan in the Second Afghan War, producing the usual senseless slaughter for no viable reason. In America there was a first in slaughter, this time a fictional one, when Anna Katharine Green's *The Leavenworth Case* appeared in the bookshops. My Gryce of the New York police was introduced to readers for the first time, after the death of a rich man killed with his own gun and in his own library. The setting was refined and gentle; murder was done quietly without accompanying blood, guts, and pieces strewn freely around the room, and the language was moderate—not a single obscenity within earshot. At about this time sewing machines began to be used in bookbinding, resulting in cheaper books and an expansion of the reading public.

This year was quite a bad one for the Criminal Classes in London, as Scotland Yard formed the Criminal Investigation Department. But the Spirit of True Crime was encouraged by Ferdinand Mannlicher, an Austrian engineer, who put a repeater rifle on the market, thus saving much embarrassment to many robbers and murderers in plying their chosen trade. Previously a holdup man was left in a traumatic situation, wondering whether to shoot and use the sole bullet or to save it and pray fervently that no hero would spring forward.

The first performance of *HMS Pinafore* was seen in London and was the usual Gilbert and Sullivan success. Albert W. Aiken in America wrote *The California Detective; or, The Witches of New York*, after which he remained silent until 1927, when he produced five mysteries in one year.

The year 1911 produced another book from Mrs. Green, *Initials Only*, and also a book that was destined to become a classic: Mrs. Marie Adelaide Belloc Lowndes' *The Lodger* resurrected the crimes of Jack the Ripper. This novel gives an excellent portrayal of a freezing, damp London winter, with the usual inadequate heating so prevalent in the British way of life. The scene was set in the heart-chilling rooms so often let in lodging houses, then and now. To some ex-Londoners the very thought of chilly rooms, chilblains, and tepid bath water may prove to be much more disturbing than Jack himself.

This year the fictional violence of London became a reality in other parts of the world. In Russia, the Chief Minister, Stolypin, was assassinated in Kiev, and after nearly 300 years of rule, the Ch'ing (Pure) Dynasty was overthrown in China—apparently it was not pure enough for some tastes. Lord Rutherford first explained the theory of atomic structure in 1911, and thirty-four years later this theory was proved correct when the now-divisible atom split at Hiroshima in 1945.

By 1911 Charles F. Kettering, an American electrical engineer, had invented the self-starter for automobiles. This was to benefit crime tremendously in the years ahead. Before 1911 a bank robber or a kidnapper, leaving by car, would have to spend some minutes cranking up the engine with one hand while holding a gun in the other to keep any potential heroes at bay. This, of course, left the question of which hand to use for which job, as well as which arm could best be spared for breakage in the cranking operation. There was also the problem of the kidnap victim, who might not be content to sit by quietly till the cranking was finished.

We move to 1920, when the invention of the year was destined to benefit police more than the criminal. Juan de la Cierva produced an autogiro, the parent of the helicopter, which would feature in police work in the 1960s and 1970s. But the criminal was not to be totally neglected in 1920, as in England automatic telephones began to be installed. Few people could have felt really relaxed while planning a murder or extortion when there was a good chance the operator might be listening in to the conversation.

The debut of Agatha Christie, with *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, came finally in 1920, after a series of publishers—subsequently suicidal—turned the book down.

A busy year was 1929. Agatha Christie had produced a few more best-sellers; this year's was *The Seven Dials Mystery*. Ellery Queen made his initial appearance with *The Roman Hat Mystery*, Anthony Berkeley wrote *The Poisoned Chocolates Case*, Margery Allingham gave her readers *Crime at Black Dudley*, Dashiell Hammett produced *Red Harvest*, and so did Al Capone on St. Valentine's Day in Chicago. The public was distracted from such fascinating events, however, by the crash of the stock market.

Anthony Berkeley was active again in 1938 with *A Puzzle in Poison*, and Graham Greene produced *Brighton Rock*, not his first crime novel but one of his best. It's a sad story of love and hate, greed and crime, set among the sleazy streets and rooming houses of the poor in a seaside town. At about this time the British government announced that one-third of the country's families were living under the poverty line with another third just above it. The effects of the crash of 1929 were still being felt on both sides of the Atlantic, and only a grim war was to bring about better food and living conditions for the masses.

The brutality of Greene's *Brighton* was being matched this year in Munich, where the Czechoslovakian Sudetenland was being signed over to the Germans by the major European powers in a last desperate attempt to appease Adolph Hitler. This move failed completely, as the Munich Agreement was signed on September 30, 1938 and World War II commenced on September 3, 1939. The Czechs were not consulted as to their own fate and did not attend the meeting.

After ten years of research, Du Pont announced the discovery of nylon. This was to bring great benefits to crime since it was discovered that a nylon stocking pulled over the head rendered the features unidentifiable; this invention did much to make bank robbery refined and artistic, as there is less need to shoot someone who can't pick you out of a lineup. Another excellent little invention, by George Biro, a Hungarian, was a practical and usable ball-point pen. Although this did not appear on the consumer market immediately, it must have been appreciated by the apprentice forger. The pen made it easier to reproduce signatures as the thickness and the ink were mass produced, thus reducing individual quirks in handwriting. Before that the type of nib and ink made the list of suspects shorter, and forgery was more of a craft than it is nowadays.

Another Graham Greene story was published in 1950—*The Third Man*—which originated from the script that he had produced in 1949 for an excellent film starring Orson Welles and Joseph Cotton. Many people were now as familiar with the streets and sewers of Vienna as with their own back yards. The Korean War had started and, amidst all this violence, a number appeared that was to become very famous. With 007, Ian Fleming had a winner, and the first book, *Casino Royale*, helped many tired people forget the austerity of the post-World War world and the horrors of the present war. James Bond was destined to have impossible adventures and survive, healthy and unharmed by communism and capitalism alike. He was to operate in a new world of atomic secrets and fast jets, and have no time for polite interrogation of suspects.

Scottish Nationalists made off with the Stone of Scone in 1950, and Irving Berlin's *Call Me Madam* opened its long run in New York City. Michael Gilbert produced his excellent story, *Smallbone Deceased*.

Eleven years later Gilbert offered his play, *The Bargain*, and Emma Lathen introduced John Putnam Thatcher of the Sloan Guaranty Trust, where criminous involvement is uncommonly common. It is not of record that Mr. Thatcher attended the opening of the new sixty-story Chase Manhattan Bank headquarters this year of 1961.

In London the spy ring of Lonsdale, Blake and the Krogers went on trial. These people had never operated in the exciting, carefree manner of 007. A Russian spaceman, Yuri Gagarin, orbited the earth before Americans had planned that he should, and the Berlin Wall was built to keep East and West safely apart and undefiled by each other's political opinions—and also to provide themes for writers.

This year also saw the first production of *Oliver*, and the publishers produced one or two interesting specimens of their craft: John le Carre wrote *Call for the Dead*, John Creasey produced *Gideon's Fire* as J. J. Marric, and Arthur Upfield gave *Bony and the White Savage* to his fans.

Since 1878 mysteries have traveled far. The gentlemanly amateur, scorning payment, has been done in by taxes and inflation and has been replaced by private eyes that are firmly fixed on the expected check. Those Fifth Avenue mansions that are not museums, colleges, or communes have been divided up into studio apartments or rented out to lodgers. Most people would not now recognize a butler if they saw him face to face. Condominiums have replaced town houses, and suburbs have replaced living.

What about the future of the mystery world? Will science fiction merge with the thriller to provide Murder on the Moon, Blackmail on Mars, and plenty of violated bodies circling endlessly in space? Perhaps computers guiding murderous robots will replace hit men, and malevolent appliances will plot to kill their owners.

The era of the carefully placed clue every dozen pages appears to be over; now nobody has time to collect clues and suspects painstakingly for that last interview in the library. So what is new for the mystery reader? Perhaps the time will come when he tires of his passive role in these dramas, and he will wish to take a much more active part in his favorite sport.

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Lee, Rand. "Dad and Cousin Fred Entered a Writing Contest . . . That's When Ellery Queen Was Born." *TV Guide* 11 Oct 75:20-24. Article on the Queen novels by Manfred Lee's son.

Leonard, John. "Cops and Dicks." *NYTBR* 2 Nov 75:6+. Review of Joseph Wambaugh's *The Choirboys.*

_____. "Ellery Queen Is Smart." *NYT Entertainment* 21 Sep 75:25. Comments on *Switch* and *Ellery Queen.*

_____. "I Care Who Killed Roger Ackroyd." *Esq.* Aug 75:60+.

Lingeman, Richard R. "How to Tell Sam Spade from Philip Marlowe from Lew Archer." *Esq.* Aug 75:62+.

Lovesey, Peter. "Becoming a Novelist." *Writer* 88:21-3 (Aug. 75).

Lyons, Gene. Reviews of Len Deighton's *Spy Story* and *Eleven Declarations of War. NYTBR* 13 Apr 75:5+.

McBain, Ed. Introduction to *A Study in Scarlet.* New York: Ballantine, 1975.

McCarthy, Todd and Charles Flynn, eds. *Kings of the Bs., Working Within the Hollywood System, An Anthology of Film History and Criticism.* New York: Dutton, 1975. 561 pp. + xiii. Filmographies of 325 Hollywood directors. *Passim* for material on the *film noir.*

Marcus, Stephen. "Dashiell Hammett and the Continental Op." *Partisan R* 41:3:362-77 (1974).

Marshall, Karen K. "The Man Behind the Rabbi." *Pgh Press Roto* 14 Sep 75:30. Interview with Harry Kemmelman.

Maryles, Daisy. "PW Interviews: Harry Kemmelman." *PW* 28 Apr 75:8-9.

May, Clifford D. "Whatever Happened to Sam Spade? The Private Eye in Fact and Fiction." *Atlantic Monthly* Aug 75:27-35.

Mayne, Richard. "Second Innings." *TLS* 12 Dec 75:1486. Brief review of Graham Greene's play *The Return of A. J. Raffles* in *TLS Commentary*.

*Mediascene.* Formerly *Comixscene.* Published by Supergraphics, Box 445, Wyomissing, PA 19610. Pub/ed. Jim Steranko. Handsomely illustrated (stills, pb covers, comix, pulp art) magazine with coverage of forthcoming films and pbs. Strong emphasis—in recent issues—on pulp characters.

Meyer, Nicholas. Introduction to *The Return of Sherlock Holmes.* New York: Ballantine, 1975.

_____. "Sherlock Holmes's Shortest Case." John A. Watson, M.D., as edited by N. Meyer. *NYT Mag* "Endpaper" 2 Nov 75:103.

Milne, Tom. *Innocents with Dirty Hands* and *Farewell My Lovely. Sight and Sound* Winter 75/76: 55-6. Reviews of two "recreations of the world of the forties thrillers."

Murray, Will. "Dent's Detectives." il *Duente* 1:8-19 (Apr 75).

Miller, Don. "Private Eyes from Sam Spade to J. J. Gittes." *Focus on Film* Aut 75:15-35.

Murphy, Michael. *Vincent Starrett: In Memoriam.* Pontine Press.

*Mystery File.* Published by Steve Lewis, 62 Chestnut Road, Newington, CT 06101. "A combination magazine-sales list for readers of mystery and detective fiction, also incorporating *Mystery Dial.*" Stopped publication with issue 8+ (newsletter), and Lewis is now associated with Don Miller in the publication of *The Mystery Nook.*

*The Mystery Nook.* Edited and published by Don Miller, 12315 Judson Rd., Wheaton, MD 20906. ". . . news, reviews, articles, bibliographies. . . . letters and anything else we can get our hands on." Began publication in July 1975 as a monthly, 8 issues/$2. Announced bimonthly schedule in December but recent information from publisher describes a quarterly schedule. Developed very quickly into an informative, highly readable magazine.

*The Mystery Trader.* Ed./pub. Ethel Lindsay, 6 Langley Ave., Surbiton, Surrey KT6 6QL England. Issue No. 13 published in March 1975.

Nanovic, John L. "I Never Called Him Bill." In *Two Adventures of the Shadow.* New York: Dover, 1975. pp. xxi-xxv.

Narcejac, Thomas. *Une machine à lire: le roman policier.* Paris: Denoël/Gonthier, 1975. 250 pp. Study of sources and development of genre with chapters on Ellery Queen, J. D. Carr, Doyle, et al. and such topics as political, religious, and fantastic elements in detective fiction, its morality and the genre as literature. No index.

Newgate Callendar. "Criminals at Large." Weekly column in the *NYTBR.*

Norris, Luther, ed. *The Non-canonical Sherlock Holmes.* Pontine Press.

O'Connor, John J. "Ellery Queen Is Dumb." *NYT Entertainment* 11 Sep 75:25. The worst of the new TV shows.

O'Faolin, Sean. "Good Night, Sweet Sherlock." *Playboy* Jan 75.

Oran, Malcolm. "Letter from London: Crime Writers Converge on City Amid Echoes of Bomb Blasts." *PW* 10 Nov 75:43. Report on first Crime Writers International Congress.

O'Reilly, Jane. Review of *Behind A Mask. NYTBR* 1 June 75:4+.

Pendleton, Don. Introduction to *The Hound of the Baskervilles.* New York: Ballantine, 1975.

Penzler, Otto and Chris Steinbrunner, eds. *EQ's Mystery Newsletter.* Began in Dec 75 as regular feature in *EQMM.* Film and TV notes, journal descriptions, reviews.

Peters, Catherine. "Campaign Dirt." *TLS* 4 July 75:733. Review of Mary Hocking's psychological thriller *The Bright Day* (Chatto and Windus).

Peters, M. and A. N. Krouse. "Women and Crime: Sexism in Allingham, Sayers, and Christie." *SWR* 59:144-52 (Spr 74).

Pointer, Michael. "Faces of Sherlock Holmes." il *Plays & Players* 21:48-9 (Feb 74).

_____. *The Public Life of Sherlock Holmes.* New York: Drake, 1975. 200 pp. S. H. stage, film, TV, and radio adaptations. Index. Reviewed by Norman Schatell in *TAD* 8:4:303-5 (Aug 75).

*The Pontine Dossier.* $4.00/Annual. Luther Norris, Box 261, Culver City, CA 90230.

*Presenting Moonshine. The John Collier Newsletter.* Quarterly. Ed. by Charles E. Yenter. Distributed by Fox Book Co., 1140 Bdwy, Tacoma, WA 98402.

*Publishers Weekly.* Describes/reviews forthcoming mystery and suspense fiction in their *PW Forecasts* section.

*Pulp Classics.* Published by Robert Weinberg, 10533 S. Kenneth, Oak Lawn, IL 60453. Facsimile reprints of pulp stories.

"Ellery Queen." *Xenophile* 14 (June 75). Articles on *Mystery League* (edited by EQ), selections from *The Queen Canon Bibliophile,* a review of *Royal Bloodline,* and contributions by Michael Murphy and Francis M. Nevins.

Queen, Ellery. Introduction to the *Adventures of Sherlock Holmes.* New York: Ballantine, 1975.

Rauber, D. F. "Sherlock Holmes and Nero Wolfe: The Role of the 'Great Detective' in Intellectual History." *JPC* 6:3:483-95 (Wtr 72). Described in *AES* 18:10:645 (item no. 3196).

Rippon, M. "Another Spring, Another Murder." *Writer* 88:12-4 (May 75).

Riviere, Francois. "Le Retour de Don Paradoxe." *Nouv Litt* 19 May 75:5. Reviews of Chesterton's *Le Poète et les lunatiques* and *Father Brown* (Gallimard).

*The Rohmer Review.* Pub. 2 or 3 times a year by Robert E. Briney, 4 Forest Ave., Salem, MA 01970. $2.25 (3rd Class) for 3 issues.

Rosembaum, Jonathan. "Improvisions and Interactions in Altmanville." *Sight and Sound* Spring 75:90-5.

Robinson, Kenneth. "Cleverer Than What I Am." *Listener* 93:472-3 (10 Apr 75). Dorothy Sayers.

Rosenblatt, Roger. "The Back of the Book: S. S. Van Dine." *New R* 26 July 75:32-4.

Sachs, Sylvia. "Sleuth Classes 'Nabbing' Non-Readers." *Pgh Press* 23 Aug 75:8. Article on teaching of popular literature courses at the University of Pittsburgh, among them a course in detective fiction.

Sage, Lorna. "Kojak and Co." *Sight and Sound* Summer 75:183-5.

Salway, Lance. "Action-Packed Replays." *TLS* 11 July 75:763. Reviews of thrillers for the young which are "alas, a vanishing breed."

Schulz-Buschhaus, Ulrich. *Formen und ideologien des kriminal-romans. Ein battungsgeschichtlicher essays.* Frankfurt: Athenaion, 1975.

Seguin, Louis. "Le dernier 'Polanski .'" *Quinzaine Littéraire* 16:31 Jan 75:28-9. Review of *Chinatown* that is also a concise examination of the "hard-boiled" novel and film genres.

Sissman, L. E. "The Books of Summer." *New Yorker* 4 Aug 75:89-90. Reviews of Michael Crichton's *The Great Train Robbery* and John Hough, Jr.'s *The Guardian.*

Slung, Michele. "Mystery Tour." *MS* Feb 75:45-6; Oct 75:88+. Reviews.

Starr, Kevin. "It's Chinatown: James M. Cain." *New R* 26 July 75:30-2.

Starrett, Vincent. *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes.* New York: Pinnacle, 1975. Expanded version of 1933 biography. Reviewed by Jon L. Lellenberg in *TAD* 9:1:72 (Nov 75).

Stern, Madeleine. *Behind A Mask: The Unknown Thrillers of Louisa May Alcott.* New York: Wm. Morrow, 1975. 278 pp.+xxxiii. Reviewed by Amnon Kabatchnik in *TAD* 9:2:149 (Feb 76).

Stern, R. M. "Suspense, Suspense, Suspense." *Writer* 88:11-13 (Mar 75).

Stewart, Enola. *Cornell Woolrich* (William Irish, George Hopley). *A catalogue of first and variant editions of his work, including anthology and magazine appearances.* Gravesend Books, 1975.

Stratford, Jenny. "Flood-Curdling." *TLS* 15 Aug 75:913. A brief review of Reginald Hill's *An April Shroud.*

Sullivan, Jack. "LeFanu's Chilling Creations." *NYTBR* 21 Sep 75:40+. Reviews of three collections of LeFanu's mysteries and supernatural tales.

Symons, Julian. Review of A. Christie's *Curtain. NYTBR* 12 Oct 75:3.

Talburt, Nancy Ellen and Lyna Lee Montgomery. *A Mystery Reader: Stories of Detection, Adventure, and Horror.* New York: Scribners, 1975. Stories—"The Golden Age" and "The Hardboiled School and After"—and essays. School text with study questions.

Tarantine, Michael. "Movement as Metaphor: *The Long Goodbye.*" *Sight and Sound* Spring 75:98-102.

Taylor, John Russell. "Hitchcock's 53rd." *Sight and Sound* Aut 75:200-4. Essay on filming of Victor Canning's novel *The Rainbird Pattern* (*Family Plot*).

Theroux, Paul. Reviews of Len Deighton's *Yesterday's Spy* and *Harry's Game. NYTBR* 5 Oct 75:7.

Tillotson, Kathleen. "Dickens, Willie Collins and the Suicidal Curates. *Dickensian* 69:3:173 (Sep 75). Described in *AES* 18:5:301 (item no. 1459).

Tyler, R. "Curtains for Poirot." por *Sat R* 4 Oct 75:24+.

*Views and Reviews.* Robert Briney reported in *TMN* 1:3-4 that the magazine has ceased publication.

Walker, John. "Dial a Best-Seller." *Observer* Mag 12 Jan 75:9. John Bingham.

*Edgar Wallace Newsletter.* A periodic publication of the Edgar Wallace Society, organized by Penelope Wallace. 4 Bradmore Rd., Oxford OX2 6 QW, England.

Washer, Robert E. "A Clergyman's Irregular Crime File." *Xenophile* 17:60 (Sep 75). Reviews.

Whitehead, J. "Whodunit and Somerset Maugham." *Notes & Quer* 21:370 (Oct 74).

Whitman, Alden. "Rex Stout, the Creator of Nero Wolfe, Is Dead at 88." *NYT* 28 Oct 75:1+.

*Whizzard.* Ed. Marty Klug, 125 Florwood Court, St. Louis, MO 62155. Irregularly published fanzine with material on pulps in recent issues.

Wilson, David. "Agents as Patients." *TLS* 26 Sep 75:1078. Review of Joseph Hone's *The Sixth Directorate.*

Winks, Robin W. "The Sordid Truth: Donald Hamilton." *New R* 26 July 75:21-4.

Wodehouse, P. G. Introduction to *The Sign of the Four.* New York: Ballantine, 1975.

Wolf, Leonard. *The Annotated Dracula.* New York: Clarkson Potter, 1975. 362 pp. Reviewed by Jon L. Lellenberg in *TAD* 8:4:307 (Aug 75).

Wolfe, Peter. Review of Ruehlmann's *Saint with a Gun. JPC* VIII 1:4:929-30 (Spr 75).

Wood, Michael. *America in the Movies.* New York: Basic Books, 1975. XI+206 pp. Social history of the Hollywood movie in the 40s and 50s, with comments on the *film noir.* Index.

Wooley, John. "The Case of the Mysterious Column." *The Nostalgia Journal* Aug 75. As reported in *TMN* 3:2. Raymond Chandler.

Wyndham, Francis. "Animated Algebra." *TLS* 26 Sep 75:1078. Review of A. Christie's *Curtain.*

*Xenophile.* Edited and published by Nils Hardin, Box 9600, St. Louis, MO 63122. $6.00 yearly. A monthly advertiser of pulps and related material with articles and bibliographies.

Young, Marguerite. "The Great Detective." *NYTBR* 2 Feb 75:21+. Reviews of Sherlock Holmes-related material.


From Marv Lachman:

I'm belatedly commenting on J. M. Purcell's review of *Hammett* (TAD 11/75). I, too, enjoyed it but was troubled by it for reasons other than Mr. Purcell's. Firstly, it is a trifle difficult to be entirely serious about a book which unnecessarily drags in Harry Stephen Keeler, Al Capone, and a bootlegger named Pronzini, a great uncle of Bill Pronzini, with whom Mr. Gores recently edited an anthology. Yet, Gores is otherwise serious and successful in depicting San Francisco. I will refer to his use of this city in my Regional Series article on Northern California.

There is a great deal of graphic violence in *Hammett*, and the sex, while not always explicit, is consistently abnormal. I believe this would have been a stronger book if Gores had stuck to Hammett's style and not so freely utilized the greater license available to writers of the 1970's. Hammett may have written under greater restraints, but the violence he wrote of in "The Gutting of Couffignal" was more effective because it was understated. The scene in *The Maltese Falcon* in which Spade forces Brigid O'Shaughnessy to strip is extremely erotic because so much must be supplied by the reader's imagination.

The most serious fault with *Hammett* is Gores' difficulty in bringing his protagonist to life. The moral code which causes Hammett to turn detective to avenge his old friend seems to stem from the need for a plot device, not from character. Gores offers no explanation for Hammett's alcoholism and failed marriage, certainly two key aspects of his subject's life worth illuminating. Ironically, I found that reading about Gores' Hammett is like reading about Hammett's Spade, Beaumont et al. Though I enjoy the action, plotting, and dialogue, ultimately these are characters without real appeal to heart or mind.

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From Bob Randisi:

First of all I would like to correct an error that was made in TAD 9/2, p. 150. The review of Percy Parker's *Good Girls Don't Get Murdered* was written by myself, not by Douglas Armato. Lord knows, Douglas reviews enough books in TAD without getting credit for my maiden effort. [Yoicks! Apologies! – AJH]

Other than that, TAD was its usual excellent self. I especially enjoyed the Ed Hoch and Mike Avallone checklists, certainly two of the most prolific writers in our genre. Etta Abraham's "Where Have All the Values Gone?" also was excellent, especially since it dealt with two of my favorite writers and their private detective characters, Archer and Marlowe.

As for John Vining's "Series Synopses" idea: Marvelous idea, John!

This is for Bill Crider and anyone else who enjoyed Ralph Dennis' *Hardman* series. I recently picked up a book called *Deadman's Game* by Ralph Dennis (Berkely Medallion, 1975, $1.25). It's about an ex-agent turned assassin named Kane (it used to be "Cain" but the agency changed it) and it is somewhat more ambitious than Hardman–although I'll admit I did not enjoy it as much as Hardman. I will, however, take my Dennis where I can get it.

I recently read a book called *The Khufra Run* (Fawcett, 1972, $1.25) written by James Graham and if Graham isn't another pseudonym for Jack Higgins (who has become one of my favorites thanks to Fawcett Books), I'll eat the book. Pick it up.

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From Evelyn Herzog:

I am looking forward to the S-Z section of the *Bibliography of Crime Fiction*. This handlist has been invaluable for the little bibliographic questions that arise from day to day, and I wouldn't trade it for the grander hardcover volumes. The listing of series characters is particularly helpful.

I hope that in the next generation of the *Bibliography* all books composed in a foreign language will show the original as well as the English titles. I see that this has been done in many cases and that it adds considerably to the compiler's task (witness the Simenon entry in this quarter's installment), but it is certainly worth it. I missed having such a listing for Gaston Leroux recently to confirm me in my belief that *Rouletabille Chez le Tsar* and *The Secret of the Night* are the same book, dissimilar though the titles seem.

The series on Albert Campion is terrific; the discussions of the stories are both engaging and sensible. Having originally read the books out of order, I had for some time mistaken the changes in Campion's personality for variations in Allingham's writing ability; only gradually did I catch on that as Campion grew older his character, and that of his adventures, was changing. The set of articles has offered an occasion for reading all the books in sequence, a most enjoyable pursuit. I look forward to B. A. Pike's comments on the (sometimes more opaque) later stories.

By coincidence, an answer to Cynthia Adkins' query in the Letters section of the February issue seems to lie in Chesterton's *The Paradoxes of Mr. Pond* (1937) reviewed in the same issue by R. W. Hays. In the course of "A Tall Story," the irrepressible Captain Gahagan begins to spin a tale about a living Titan found buried in an English lawn. The appearance of his reddish-brown hair growing among the grass gives away his presence and he is duly excavated. He is last seen headed for America which, as Chesterton well knew, provided lecture circuits for such oddities. I assume this is the story Ms. Adkins has in mind–could there be another such? At that, I suppose there could be. We are told that Elizabeth (Mrs. Dante Gabriel) Rosetti's golden-red hair also grew after her burial, as was discovered when her coffin was opened to retrieve a manuscript of her husband's poems; but this without unseemly eruptions through the grass.

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Continued on page 323

# A CHECKLIST OF MYSTERY, DETECTIVE AND SUSPENSE FICTION PUBLISHED IN THE U.S., APRIL-JUNE 1976

By M. S. Cappadonna

Archer, Jeffrey: *Not a Penny More, Not a Penny Less,* Doubleday, 6.95
Asimov, Isaac: *Murder at the ABA,* Doubleday, 7.95
Baker, Ivor: *Peak Performance,* St. Martin's, 7.95
Bennett, Dorothea: *The Jigsaw Man,* Coward, 8.95
Black, Jonathan: *Ride the Golden Tiger,* Morrow, 8.95
Bleeck, Oliver: *No Questions Asked,* Morrow, 6.95
Bova, Ben: *The Multiple Man,* Bobbs, 6.95
Brandel, Marc: *Survivor,* Simon, 7.95
Burton, Anthony: *The Coventry Option,* Putnam, 7.95
Carmichael, Harry: *Candles for the Dead,* Dutton, 6.95
Carroll, James: *Madonna Red,* Little, 7.95
Chandler, Raymond: *The Blue Dahlia,* Southern Illinois University Press, 10.00, paper 3.95 (first publication of screenplay)
Charyn, Jerome: *Marilyn the Wild,* Arbor House, 8.95
Dennis, Charles: *Somebody Just Grabbed Annie!,* St. Martin's, 7.95
Dickinson, Peter: *King and Joker,* Pantheon, 6.95
Drummond, Ivor: *The Tank of Sacred Eels,* St. Martin's, 7.95
Egan, Leslie: *Scenes of Crime,* Doubleday, 5.95
Einstein, Charles: *The Blackjack Hijack,* Random House, 6.95
Ellerbeck, Rosemary: *Hammersleigh,* McKay, 8.95
Ferrars, E. X.: *The Cup and the Lip,* Doubleday, 5.95
Foley, Rae: *Where Helen Lies,* Dodd, 6.95
Foote-Smith, Elizabeth: *Gentle Albatross,* Putnam, 6.95
Forbes, Colin: *The Stone Leopard,* Dutton, 7.95
Fowlkes, Frank: *The Peruvian Contracts,* Putnam, 8.95
Francis, Dick: *High Stakes,* Harper, 7.95
Fraser, Anthea: *Home Through the Dark,* Dodd, 6.95
Gardner, Richard: *The Dragon Breath Papers,* Viking, 8.95
Garrison, Jim: *The Star Spangled Contract,* McGraw, 8.95
Gatenby, Rosemary: *The Fugitive Affair,* Dodd, 5.95
Gerson, Noel: *Neptune,* Dodd, 7.95
Gifford, Thomas: *The Cavanaugh Quest,* Putnam, 8.95
Graves, Richard L.: *Quicksilver,* Stein and Day, 8.95
Green, Gerald: *The Hostage Heart,* Playboy, 8.95
Head, Lee: *The Terrarium,* Putnam, 7.95
Hildick, Wallace: *The Weirdown Experiment,* Harper, 6.95
Hunter, Alan: *Gently with the Painters,* Macmillan, 6.95
James, Rebecca: *The House Is Dark,* Doubleday, 7.95
Jobson, Hamilton: *The Shadow That Caught Fire,* Scribners, 6.95
Johnston, Velda: *The Frenchman,* Dodd, 6.95
Judson, William: *Kilman's Landing,* Mason/Charter, 7.95
Kaye, Marvin: *Bullets for MacBeth,* Saturday Review/Dutton, 6.95
Kempley, Walter: *The Invaders,* Saturday Review/Dutton, 8.95
Kenrick, Tony: *The Seven Day Soldiers,* Regnery, 7.95
Kiefer, Warren: *The Pontius Pilate Papers,* Harper, 10.00
King, Harold: *Four Days,* Bobbs, 8.95
Kirst, Hans Hellmut: *Everything Has Its Price,* Coward, 8.95
Knickmeyer, Steve: *Straight,* Random House, 6.95
La Fontaine, George: *Flashpoint,* Coward, 6.95
Lamb, Hugh, ed.: *Terror by Gaslight,* Taplinger, 8.95
Larteguy, Jean: *Presumed Dead,* Little, 9.95
Leonard, Constance: *Hostage in Illyria,* Dodd, 5.95
Lieberman, Herbert: *City of the Dead,* Simon, 8.95
Lockridge, Richard: *Dead Run,* Lippincott, 7.95
Lovell, Marc: *The Blind Hypnotist,* Doubleday, 5.95
McBain, Ed: *So Long as You Both Shall Live,* Random House, 6.95
McClure, James: *Snake,* Harper, 7.95
Macdonald, Ross: *The Blue Hammer,* Knopf, 7.95
MacInnes, Helen: *Agent in Place,* Harcourt, 8.95
MacLeish, Roderick: *The Man Who Wasn't There,* Random House, 7.95
Martin, Ian Kennedy: *The Manhattan File,* Holt, 6.95
Martin, George and Michael Burrer: *The Obelisk Conspiracy,* Lyle Stuart, 7.95
Mather, Berkely: *With Extreme Prejudice,* Scribners, 8.95
Meyer, Nicholas: *The West End Horror,* Dutton, 7.95
Millhiser, Marlys: *Willing Hostage,* Putnam, 7.95
Morris, John: *The Checkerboard Caper,* Citadel, 7.95
O'Donnell, Lillian: *Leisure Dying,* Putnam, 6.95
Olson, Donald: *If I Don't Tell,* Putnam, 6.95
Osmond, Andrew: *Saladin!,* Doubleday, 7.95
Pentecost, Hugh: *The Fourteen Dilemma;* A Pierre Chambrun Mystery Novel, Dodd, 5.95
Perry, Ritchie: *Your Money and Your Wife,* Houghton, 6.95
Peters, Elizabeth: *Legend in Green Velvet,* Dodd, 7.95
Puig, Manuel: *The Buenos Aires Affair,* Dutton, 8.95
Queen, Ellery, ed.: *Ellery Queen's Crime Wave;* 30th Mystery Annual, Putnam, 8.95
Raphael, Frederic: *California Time,* Holt, 7.95
Rennert, Maggie: *Operation Calpurnia,* Prentice, 7.95
Ryck, Francis: *The Sern Charter,* Coward, 7.95
Rye, Bjorn Robinson: *A Feast of Pikes,* Bobbs, 7.95
Shelby, Brit: *The Great Pebble Affair,* Putnam, 7.95
Smith, Wilbur: *The Eye of the Tiger,* Doubleday, 7.95
Stein, Aaron Marc: *Coffin Country,* Doubleday, 5.95
Strange, John Stephen: *The House on 9th Street,* Doubleday, 6.95
Underwood, Michael: *Menaces, Menaces,* St. Martin's, 7.95
Van der Zee, John: *Stateline,* Harcourt, 7.95
Walker, David: *Ash,* Houghton, 8.95
Wetering, Janwillen van de: *Tumbleweed,* Houghton, 6.95
Williamson, Tony: *The Connector,* Stein and Day, 7.95

PAPERBOUND

Albert, Marvin: *The Gargoyle Conspiracy,* Dell, 1.95
Ardies, Tom: *This Suitcase Is Going to Explode,* Fawcett, 1.50
Atkins, Meg Elizabeth: *By the North Door,* Ballantine, 1.50
Christie, Agatha: *Murder at the Vicarage,* Dell, 1.50
Clark, Mary Higgins: *Where Are the Children?,* Dell, 1.95
Dolinsky, Mike: *Golden Gate Heist,* Dell, 1.50
Duncan, Robert L.: *Dragons at the Gate,* New American Library, 1.95
Egleton, Clive: *Skirmish,* Fawcett, 1.50
Flynn, J. M.: *Warlock,* Pocket Books, 1.50
Foxall, Raymond: *The Little Ferret,* Pocket Books, 1.75
Francis, Dick: *Knockdown,* Pocket Books, 1.50
Gardner, Erle Stanley: *The Case of the Borrowed Brunette and The Case of the Careless Cupid,* Pocket Books, 1.95
Harris, Alfred: *The Joseph File,* Berkley, 1.25
Hawthorne, Violet: *Sweet Deadly Passions,* Ballantine, 1.25
Heatter, Basil: *The Golden Stag,* Pinnacle, 1.50
Higgins, Jack: *Toll for the Brave,* Fawcett, 1.25
Innes, Michael: *Hamlet, Revenge!,* Penguin, 1.95
James, P. D.: *Shroud for a Nightingale,* Popular Library, 1.25
Kennedy, Adam: *The Domino Principle,* Signet, 1.95
Lecomber, Brian: *Turn Killer,* Pocket Books, 1.95
Liebman, Arthur, ed.: *Ms. Mysteries,* Pocket Books, 1.95
Lovesey, Peter: *The Tick of Death,* Penguin, 1.95
Lyall, Gavin: *Judas Country,* Ballantine, 1.50
MacBeth, George: *The Samurai,* Signet, 1.95
Olden, Marc: *The Harker File No. 1,* Signet, 1.50
Rohmer, Sax: *President Fu Manchu,* Pyramid, 1.25
Rosenblum, Robert: *The Mushroom Cave,* Penguin, 1.95
Simmel, Johannes Mario: *The Caesar Code,* Popular Library, 1.95
Stout, Rex: *The Black Mountain,* Bantam, 1.50
Stout, Rex: *Curtains for Three,* Bantam, 1.50
Stout, Rex: *Homicide Trinity,* Bantam, 1.25
Stout, Rex: *The Rubber Band,* Pyramid, 1.25
Stout, Rex: *Too Many Cooks,* Pyramid, 1.25
Trevor, Elleston: *Night Stop,* Ballantine, 1.50
Westheimer, David: *The Avila Gold,* Ballantine, 1.75
Willis, Ted: *Westminster One,* Berkley, 1.50


From David C. Ralph:

Two o'clock in the morning, and I've just finished reading the new issue through for the second time—no final exams read, no thesis chapters criticized, no dinner eaten.

To me, as before, M. S. Cappadonna's "Checklist" is the greatest of the many assets in TAD. I suppose more sophisticated readers have other ways of finding out what has been published, but I spend frustrating hours with the *NY Times Book Review,* gleaning a tidbit here, a tidbit there, reading the ads—and then a backbreaking tour of the local bookstore, with books in the mystery genre always at floor level—and still I miss things. But with Cappadonna I get the truth.

Then comes the letters—such delightful items between them and Cappadonna as a new Maigret (and I can't find my French language text to look up "sheep" in French, so I can't locate the book in *The Encyclopedia of Mystery & Detection*), a heretofore unknown to me Dominic published by somebody I never heard of in 1968, a new Freeling, a new Innes (I didn't know Stewart was still living), etc., etc.

"Paper Crime" is useful, too, and so is "Retrospective Reviews," and, oh, everything.

The price of TAD is up, but I'll pay it, and gladly.

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From Bill Crider:

The new format and appearance of TAD are indeed most impressive. I would guess that most subscribers are as pleased as I am, and I was especially to see the article on cover artists, along with the samples of their work. I hope that now that such articles are practical, there will be more of them.

If Jeff Banks is really going to teach a course on Spillane, I don't see how he can pass up *I, The Jury*. Then I'd go with *The Girl Hunters* and show the movie starring Spillane himself. Where do I sign up for the class?

* * * * * * * * *

From Connie Jessen:

In the June issue, it was great to see Ms. Vicarel's annotated checklist of Ruth Rendell's novels, of which I have already read eight and will read the rest as soon as I can get them. Ballantine has recently issued some of her works in paperback.

Now, I'm hoping that some future TAD will have a comprehensive article on Victor Canning, another excellent British writer. I can highly recommend his *Queen's Pawn, Firecrest,* and *The Rainbird Pattern* (not "Rainbow" as stated in "Paper Crimes"). It's too bad that Alfred Hitchcock didn't film *The Rainbird Pattern* as Canning wrote it instead of just "adapting" the basic idea to produce *Family Plot.*

The latest issue of TAD was thoroughly enjoyable, and I trust that its top-drawer quality will continue under the new organization and format.

Continued on page 337

Continued from page 295

has been revealed that DH wrote many such pieces for Albert Samuels (under Mr. Samuels's name) when he was employed for the jeweler in the 1920s.

I have also learned that Hammett wrote several pieces for *The Western Advertiser* from 1921 through 1927—but no listing of titles is yet available. These articles deal with "the theory and practice of advertising."

Beginning with "The Great Lovers" (in November of 1922), Hammett had three nonfiction pieces in *Smart Set* (through March of 1923). It is probable, however, that other items in this magazine remain to be uncovered.

Introductions:

A booklet of wartime cartoons by Hammett's staff (from his Aleutian newspaper in Adak, Alaska) was printed sometime after the war (1945?) with a foreword by Hammett. The publisher may have been Viking Press—since, in a letter written while Hammett was in the Aleutians, he comments: "It would be swell to have Viking do a book of cartoons . . . and I'd gladly do an introduction."

Letters:

The February 26, 1927 issue of *Judge* carried a gag letter from Hammett, which was a parody of the ads he wrote for Samuels. It was titled: "The Advertising Man Writes a Love Letter."

The August 1974 issue of *Black Mask* (the special one-shot) reprinted a Hammett letter, abridged, "From the Author of Women, Politics and Murder," which originally appeared in *BM* for August 1924.

I've been informed that the Hammett letter in *New Masses*, "Communication to All American Writers," was *not* in the December 16, 1941 issue. The exact date, therefore, is unknown.

Writing in *City*, Steven Marcus indicates that a sizable number of Hammett letters have been turned over to him (including many from DH to Lillian Hellman, his publishers, and his daughters), and it is hoped that some of these may surface in the Marcus biography.

Newspaper Work:

The name of Hammett's newspaper in Alaska was *The Adakian*, and he wrote a great deal of copy for it in his role as editor. To date, however, this material has not been cataloged.

More data has surfaced on Hammett's involvement with *Secret Agent X-9*—and facts now indicate that he worked on the syndicated strip for less than a year. The Hearst people, in the person of Joe Connolly, contacted him late in 1933, when he was still active as a prose writer, and offered him a substantial sum to create the plots and dialogue for *four* X-9 stories. Young Alex Raymond was brought in to do the artwork.

The records at King Features list the Hammett/Raymond collab as lasting seventy weeks, into November of 1935—but Hammett had apparently ceased work on X-9 before the end of 1934. The four Hammett-plotted stories ran in syndicated papers during the following months:

Story one: from January 22 through September 11, 1934.

Story two: from September 12 through December 15, 1934.

Story three: from December 17, 1934 through March 9, 1935.

Story four: (exact dates unavailable) March into June 1935.

According to comics authority Bill Blackbeard, Hammett's third and fourth X-9 adventures were "diluted and rewritten by staff hacks." One report of that period had Hammett fired by Connolly "when he lagged behind schedule with ideas that lacked the power of his printed work."

Raymond, in addition to his illustrative chores, took over the writing from June into November of 1935. Leslie Charteris then became X-9's writer.

Radio Work:

I am indebted to that tireless radio researcher, Ray Stanich, for the new information in this section. First, I wish to correct some *mis*information in my revised checklist: Hammett did *not* write the radio scripts on the twenty-one titles I listed for *The Thin Man*. In fact, there is no direct proof that Hammett wrote *any* on-the-air scripts. He did, it seems, supervise other writers' work as a story editor—but this may well have been the extent of his creative involvement in dramatic radio.

Hammett was connected with two separate series of *Thin Man* radio shows, beginning July 21, 1941 with *Adventures of the Thin Man*. He functioned as script supervisor in late June of 1948 for *The New Adventures of the Thin Man*.

I had been told that some of the early *Sam Spade* scripts were based directly on Hammett's Continental Op magazine stories—and Ray Stanich verified this by turning up three Op-into-Spade radio shows (all thirty-minute versions):

"The Farewell Murders" – broadcast July 19, 1946

"Death and Company" – broadcast August 9, 1946

"Zig Zags of Treachery" – broadcast August 23, 1946

(It is possible that Hammett himself may have adapted the first of these, but no actual Hammett script has been uncovered.)

There were three Hammett short stories printed featuring Sam Spade in 1932, and one of these, "Too Many Have Lived," was broadcast on the *Spade* show July 26, 1946. It is not known if the other two were also adapted.

Several of Hammett's stories were adapted more than once for a variety of shows. Examples include:

"Two Sharp Knives" – dramatized three times on *Suspense*, beginning with a December 22, 1942 broadcast. This same story was dramatized on *Molle Mystery Theatre*, on February 13, 1945, and on *The Adventures*

*of Sam Spade,* August 16, 1946.

"The Kandy Tooth Kaper" (which marked the return of Casper Gutman) was broadcast on *The Adventures of Sam Spade* on November 17, 1946–and on *Suspense* (with Howard Duff as Spade) on January 10, 1948 (in a sixty-minute version).

Hammett's novels were also repeated on radio: There were two thirty-minute versions of *The Maltese Falcon* broadcast on *Screen Guild*–on September 20, 1943 and on May 18, 1950. Both starred Bogart as Spade. (Mary Astor costarred in the first of these; Lauren Bacall portrayed Brigid in the 1950 version).

Only one version of *The Dain Curse* has surfaced (broadcast on *Molle Mystery Theatre* on May 16, 1944)–but no less than *five* separate versions of *The Glass Key* have been aired, beginning in 1939 when Orson Welles adapted it for *Campbell's Playhouse* (see my *Casebook*). The other four, in order of broadcast:

On *Author's Playhouse*, starring George Raft, January 29, 1943. Thirty minutes.

On *Hour of Mystery*, starring Ralph Bellamy, July 7, 1946. Sixty minutes.

On *Screen Guild*, starring Alan Ladd, July 22, 1946. Thirty minutes.

On *Hollywood Players*, starring Gene Kelly, November 26, 1946. Thirty minutes.

Note: At least one radio dramatization of *The Maltese Falcon* has been preserved in a recorded LP version, released by The Captain Co. in New York. (Although the origin of this Bogart-Astor *Falcon* is not listed, it is most likely the version presented on *Academy Award Theatre* in July of 1946.)

Motion Pictures (and Television):

Apparently Hammett did a complete film treatment on his novel *The Thin Man* in 1934, which may have been utilized by the writers of the screenplay.

Joe Gores has sold his novel, *Hammett,* to Francis Ford Coppola but even Joe isn't sure when or if the film will be produced. (He's skedded to write the screenplay.)

Producer Alberto Grimaldi has paid, it is reported, a cool million dollars to director/writer James Bridges to adapt and direct screen versions of *Red Harvest* and *The Big Knockover.*

Richard Roth has Roger and Dyanne Simon working on a screenplay of "Dead Yellow Women" for the big screen–and Hannah Weinstein, at Paramount, hired James Brooks to script Hammett's "This King Business"–but no recent word has come through on either project.

Producer Martin Poll is also very quiet regarding his proposed screen version of *The Dain Curse*–and he is also rumored to own four other Hammett properties.

On the television front, producer Alan Kalmus's series based on *The Continental Op* (via Bob Hope Productions) has yet to surface. Let's hope it does better than the one-shot Movie-of-the-Week telecast in 1975, based on Hammett's *Thin Man,* out of Universal Studios. That one bombed.

## II. MATERIAL ABOUT HAMMETT

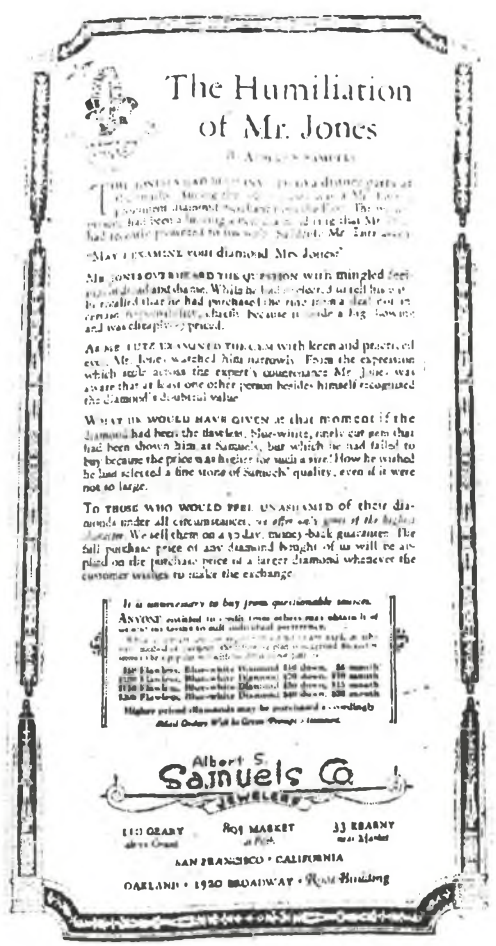
Book Items Relating to Hammett:

Several of the following titles were overlooked in my previous listings. There is a growing body of books being published which examine "the literature of crime"–and most of these naturally deal in part with Hammett.

*Everybody's Autobiography* by Gertrude Stein. New York: Random House, 1937. (Available in a Vintage paperback edition, 1973.) Miss Stein discusses DH several times in this book. (She also utilized him as a character in her stage drama *A Play Called Not and Now.*)

*Blood in Their Ink* by Sutherland Scott. London: Stanley Paul, Ltd., 1953. Republished in the United States by Folcroft Library Editions, 1973. DH is discussed in "The Years of Plenty" chapter and in other sections of this crime history.

*Goodbye, Union Square* by Albert Halper. Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970. There is one interesting Hammett anecdote here, wherein Halper relates how DH talked MGM into buying his (Halper's) novel, *The Foundry*, because he (Hammett) wanted to work on the screen version of the book. (Whether or not Hammett did, indeed, write a screenplay based on *The Foundry* is not revealed.)


The Humiliation of Mr. Jones

Albert S. Samuels Co

JEWELERS

*The Pulps*, compiled with commentary by Tony Goldstone. New York: Chelsea House, 1970. DH is briefly discussed in the book's "Detective and Mystery" section (which reprints a Hammett story).

*James M. Cain* by David Madden. New York: Twayne, 1970. This critical biography (part of Twayne's United States Authors Series) contains many references to DH.

*The Unembarrassed Muse* by Russell B. Nye. New York: Dial Press, 1970. DH and his work are discussed in the "Murderers and Detectives" section of this comprehensive but factually flawed study of "The Popular Arts in America."

*Snobbery With Violence* by Colin Watson. London: Eyre, 1971. Published in the United States in 1972. DH and his work are discussed in this study of the crime story.

*Detectionary* compiled by Chris Steinbrunner, Charles Shibuk, Otto Penzler, Marvin Lachman, and Francis M. Nevins, Jr. Pennsylvania: Hammermill Paper Co., 1972. Several of DH's plots and characters are listed in this limited-edition "dictionary of crime fiction."

*Cheap Thrills* by Ron Goulart. New York: Arlington House, 1972. DH is discussed in the chapter "Dime Detectives" in this informal history of pulp fiction.

*Mortal Consequences* by Julian Symons. U. S. edition from Harper & Row, 1972. References to DH in this history "From the Detective Story to the Crime Novel."

*On Crime Writing* by Ross Macdonald. Santa Barbara: Capra Press, 1973. DH is discussed in the reprinted essay, "The Writer as Detective Hero."

*The Detective Short Story: A Bibliography and Index* by E. H. Mundell, Jr. and Jay Rausch. Manhattan, Kansas: Kansas State University Library, 1974. Lists works by DH.

*Saint With a Gun* by William Ruehlmann. New York: New York University Press, 1974. DH's Continental Op and Sam Spade are extensively discussed in this critical examination of "The Unlawful American Private Eye." See chapter titled "The Kid from Cyanide Gulch."

*Detective Fiction: Crime and Compromise* edited by Dick Allen and David Chacko. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1974. Not only reprints two DH pieces of fiction, but contains the George Grella essay, "Murder and the Mean Streets: The Hard-Boiled Detective Novel," in which Hammett is discussed.

*Faulkner: A Biography* by Joseph Blotner. New York: Random House, 1974. There are several valuable references relating to the personal friendship between Hammett and Faulkner in this massive two-volume biography.

*Contemporary Literary Criticism: Vol. 3* edited by Carolyn Riley. Detroit: Gale Research, 1975. Reprints extensive critical quotes on DH from A. Alvarez, Philip Durham, Robert Edenbaum, and Julian Symons. A "critical roundup."

*The Adventurous Decade* by Ron Goulart. New York: Arlington House, 1975. DH and his syndicated *Secret Agent X-9* are discussed in the chapter "Gangbusters," covering the origin and history of the strip.

*Hammett* (a novel) by Joe Gores. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1975. This book contains many factual references to DH woven into the narrative. Gores's working methods and Hammett research are fully discussed in his "Author's Note" following the main text.

*Adventure, Mystery and Romance* by John G. Cawelti. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976. DH is extensively discussed in the chapter "Hammett, Chandler and Spillane" in this critical coverage of popular-genre writing.

*Encyclopedia of Mystery and Detection* by Chris Steinbrunner and Otto Penzler. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1976. DH is included in the extensive entries.

*The Life of Raymond Chandler* by Frank MacShane. New York: Dutton, 1976. DH is discussed in this first full-length biography of Chandler.

*Scoundrel Time* by Lillian Hellman. Boston: Little-Brown, 1976. Hellman's third volume of memoirs covers the "witch hunting" years of her life, and Hammett is once again part of her personal history. She details the events surrounding his term in prison and its aftermath. (See Commentary.)

*Literary New York* by Susan Edmiston and Linda Cirino. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1976. Hammett is discussed in a section devoted to "Pep" West's hotel.

NOTE: At this writing (early April 1976) there are at least five books in progress which deal with Hammett in whole or part:

The most important forthcoming Hammett book is, of course, the full-scale biography now being written by Steven Marcus. He has hired a San Francisco detective, David Fechheimer (who put together the all-Hammett issue of *City*) to track down facts on DH—and he has the full cooperation of Lillian Hellman, who controls the Hammett papers.

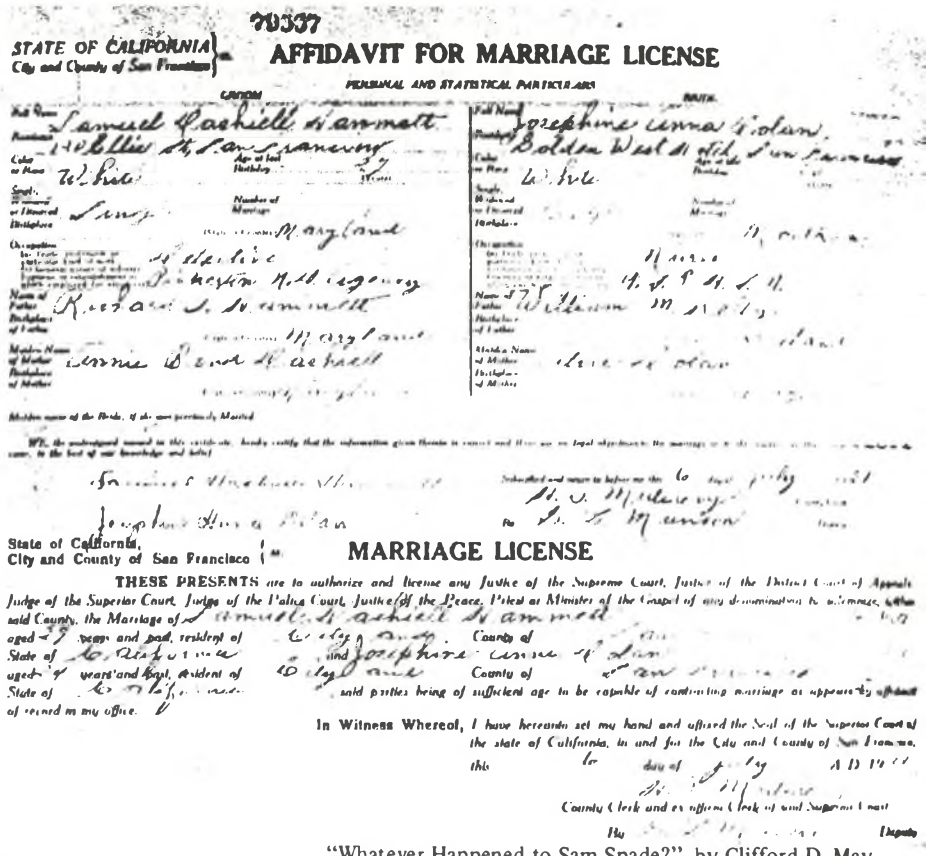
In the area of extended critical coverage of DH and his work we have the book-in-progress of William Godshalk as part of Twayne's United States Authors Series. He has sifted through the Hellman/Hammett collection in Texas, and his careful, unhurried research promises a valuable work.

Another major contribution to Hammett scholarship: *Dashiell Hammett: A Descriptive Bibliography*, now being compiled by Richard Layman. To be issued by the University of Pittsburgh Press, with full details on DH's printed work in all areas.

(Marcus, Goldshalk, and Layman are all English professors and should be thorough and accurate with their final manuscripts. Hopefully, the "juice" connected with the robust life of DH will not be squeezed out in the academic process.)

DH will no doubt be discussed by editor Herbert Ruhm in his "Best from Black Mask" anthology due in late 1976 from Random House (which includes DH's first *Black Mask* tale, "The Road Home").

Finally, Ray Stanich tells me he's coauthoring a book "on the great radio detectives" which will, naturally, feature Hammett's Thin Man, Sam Spade, and The Fat Man (the radio version of his Op).



70337

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
City and County of San Francisco

**AFFIDAVIT FOR MARRIAGE LICENSE**

PERSONAL AND STATISTICAL PARTICULARS

GROOM

Full Name: Samuel Dashiell Hammett
Residence: 1418 Ellis St. San Francisco
Color or Race: White
Age at last Birthday: 27
Single, Widower or Divorced: Single
Occupation: Salesman
Birthplace: St. Mary's County Maryland
Name of Father: Richard D. Hammett
Birthplace of Father: St. Mary's County Maryland
Maiden Name of Mother: Annie Bond Dashiell
Birthplace of Mother: Maryland

BRIDE

Full Name: Josephine Anna Dolan
Residence: Golden West Hotel San Francisco
Color or Race: White
Age at last Birthday: 24
Single, Widower or Divorced: Single
Occupation: Nurse
Birthplace: San Francisco
Name of Father: William Dolan
Birthplace of Father: Ireland
Maiden Name of Mother: Anna Regan
Birthplace of Mother: San Francisco

Maiden name of the Bride, if she was previously Married

We, the undersigned named in this certificate, hereby certify that the information given therein is correct and that we are not related objectionably for marriage to each other, to the best of our knowledge and belief.

Samuel Dashiell Hammett
Josephine Anna Dolan

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 6th day of May 1921
H. J. Mahoney
Deputy

State of California,
City and County of San Francisco } ss.

**MARRIAGE LICENSE**

**THESE PRESENTS** are to authorize and license any Justice of the Supreme Court, Justice of the District Court of Appeals, Judge of the Superior Court, Judge of the Police Court, Justice of the Peace, Priest or Minister of the Gospel of any denomination in said County, the Marriage of Samuel Dashiell Hammett aged 27 years and past, resident of San Francisco County of San Francisco State of California and Josephine Anna Dolan aged 24 years and past, resident of San Francisco County of San Francisco State of California, said parties being of sufficient age to be capable of contracting marriage as appears by affidavit of record in my office.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the Seal of the Superior Court of the State of California, in and for the City and County of San Francisco, this 6th day of May A.D. 1921

H. J. Mahoney
County Clerk and ex officio Clerk of said Superior Court
By Deputy

Magazine and Newspaper Items Relating to Hammett: This section is broken into two parts: the first deals with general material on DH, the second with material on DH printed in *The Armchair Detective.* Arranged in chronological order.

*Part One:*

"Chandler and Hammett" by J. Ross McLaren. *The London Magazine,* March 1964.

"The American Detective Hero," by Harold Orel. *Journal of Popular Culture,* Vol. 2, No. 3, 1968.

"Mystery Writer Was Enigmatic Throughout Life," by Richard T. Hammett (DH was his uncle). *Baltimore News-American,* August 19, 1973. A career profile with some revealing information (such as the fact that Dashiell Hammett's father was a "farmer-politician" who ran for Congress as a Republican, lost, and was forced to sell his farm and move, eventually, to Baltimore "where Dashiell grew up in the family home at 212 No. Stricker Street.")

"Dashiell Hammett and the Continental Op," by Steven Marcus. *Partisan Review,* No. 3, 1974. This essay on DH is the same as the introduction to *The Continental Op.*

"Winter of Our Discontent," by Alan Forrest. *Books and Bookmen,* January 1974.

"With Corporal Hammett on Adak," by E. E. Spitzer. *The Nation,* January 5, 1974. Spitzer served with Hammett in Alaska, and his memoir is valuable and enlightening.

"Stalking Sam Spade," by Fritz Leiber. *California Living,* January 13, 1974. Leiber's piece, tying in real San Francisco streets with DH's prose, has been reprinted on the menu of John's Grill in SF—and a section of the historic eatery has been converted into a "Maltese Falcon Room."

"Down Deadpan Alley," (unsigned). *Times Literary Supplement,* March 29, 1974. This essay/review deals with new British reprint editions of four of DH's novels.

"Natural-Born Gumshoe," by Walter Clemons. *Newsweek,* November 25, 1974. A review of *The Continental Op.*

"Master Chef of Hardboiled Prose," by Digby Diehl. *Los Angeles Times Calendar,* December 1, 1974. Reviews *The Continental Op.*

"The Continental Op," by Leonard Michaels. *New York Times Book Review,* December 8, 1974. A review/essay.

"Toward a Hammett Festival," by Christopher Lehmann-Haupt. *New York Times,* December 15, 1974. Reviews *The Continental Op.*

"The Hammett Case," by Roger Sale. *New York Review of Books,* February 6, 1975. Review/essay of *The Continental Op.*

"Whatever Happened to Sam Spade?" by Clifford D. May. *Atlantic,* August 1975. Subtitled "The Private Eye in Fact and Fiction," this article traces the work of several crime writers, Hammett among them.

"Hammett vs. Hollywood—Days of Wine and Poses," by Dick Lochte. *Los Angeles Times Book Review,* August 17, 1975. Essay on DH in Hollywood.

"Private Eyes—From Sam Spade to J. J. Gittes," by Don Miller. *Focus on Film,* Autumn 1975. This British magazine study is quite extensive, with much on DH and his film work.

Late in 1975, San Francisco's *City* magazine devoted some forty-five pages of its November 5 issue to Dashiell Hammett, creating a collector's edition, featuring special artwork, rare photos, news clips relating to cases he worked on with Pinkerton—and the first printing of his original, unfinished *Thin Man* novel. This issue, compiled and supervised by private detective David Fechheimer, stands as a major contribution to Hammett scholarship. The contents (of the section dubbed "Dashiell Hammett's San Francisco") include:

Editorial by Warren Hinckle
"Dashing After Hammett" by Steven Marcus
"Secret Agent X-9" by Bill Blackbeard
"The Samuels Story" by Larry Levinger
"Sam Spade's Frisco" by Edmund Shea
"A Foggy Night" by Joe Gores. This piece is remarkable for its detective work in tracing Hammett's use of San Francisco locales.
"Preface to *The Thin Man* " (unsigned)
"We Never Sleep," an interview with ex-Pinkerton agent

Phil Haultain by David Fechheimer. Haultain, now eighty, worked with Hammett as a fellow-detective in SF, and recalls their salary: six dollars a day . . . and reveals what may have been the original model of The Maltese Falcon: the jewel-encrusted skull of a holy man, taken as "loot by a member of the British Expedition to Lhasa, Tibet." (There's a photo of the skull still owned by Haultain.)

"I Slept With Man O' War," an interview with a second ex-Pinkerton agent, Jack Knight, also conducted by Fechheimer. Knight didn't know DH personally, but worked during the same period for Pinkerton and recalls that he had heard of DH, and that Hammett was rated by the agency as "a star performer."

"Mrs. Hammett is Alive and Well in L.A.," an interview with Josephine Dolan Hammett and her daughter (by Hammett) Mrs. Mary Jane Miller—conducted by Fechheimer (accompanied by a photo of Hammett's marriage license, dated July 6, 1921 in San Francisco). Mrs. H, at eighty, had never been interviewed regarding her late husband. Recollecting some of his cases for Pinkerton, she recalls that he once "fell off a taxi-cab" and, on another occasion, was felled by a brick to the head, which dented his skull. A man he'd been shadowing wielded the brick. Mrs. H described DH as "a very good shadow man."

"The Old Hall" by James M. Macinnis

"Dashiell Hammett: Notes From a Casebook" by William F. Nolan

"An Unfinished Man" by Fred Gardner

"A Hammett Bibliography " (unsigned)

The amateur publication (or fanzine) *Xenophile* devoted its February 1976 issue to "the hard-boiled detective school," and among the dozen pieces are the following which deal, in whole or in part, with DH:

Introduction by the editor, Nils Hardin

"Hammett in Hollywood" by William F. Nolan (reprinted from the *Los Angeles Times*)

"Spenser: Hardboiled Roots" by Bernard Drew

"Vincent Starrett on the Hard-Boiled School" by Michael Murphy

"Raymond Chandler, Novelist" by James W. Thompson

*Part Two:*

The following pieces appeared in *The Armchair Detective*, 1969 through 1975. (I have included only the main DH material, excluding reader letters and minor review items dealing with DH.)

"Of Hammett, Chandler, Brand and Bradbury . . ." by William F. Nolan, January 1969.

"Best-Selling American Detective Fiction" by Joan M. Mooney. This ran for 8 chapters in five issues of *TAD*:

Chapters 1, 2 and 3, January 1970
Chapters 4 and 5, April 1970
Chapter 6, July 1970
Chapter 7, October 1970
Chapter 8, January 1971

"The Private Eye: Enduring as a $1.29 Steak" by Richard Lochte, January 1970.

"About Dashiell Hammett" by William White, April 1970.

"From Spade to Marlowe to Archer" by G. A. Finch, January 1971.

"Murder and the Mean Streets . . ." by George Grella, October 1971 (see Book Items for book publication).

"Social and Political Images in American Crime Fiction," January 1972. A panel discussion involving: Francis M. Nevins, Jr., Donald A. Yates, Robert E. Washer, Norman Donaldson, and Allen J. Hubin.

"Pulp Tradition in Mystery Fiction," May 1973. A panel discussion involving: Francis M. Nevins, Jr., Donald A. Yates, George Grella, and John Cawelti.

"The Problem of Moral Vision in Dashiell Hammett's Detective Novels" by George J. Thompson (in 7 issues):

Introduction, May 1973
*Red Harvest*, August 1973
*The Dain Curse*, November 1973
*The Maltese Falcon*, May 1974
*The Glass Key*, August 1974
*The Thin Man*, November 1974
Conclusion, February 1975

(Also see Student Work on Hammett for details.)

"Movie Note: *The Glass Key*" by William K. Everson, August 1973.

"The Hammett Checklist Revisited" by William F. Nolan, August 1973.

"Movie Note: *The Maltese Falcon*" by William K. Everson, May 1974.

"Shadowing the Continental Op" by William F. Nolan, February 1975.

Student Work on Hammett:

In my first checklist update I listed the dissertation on Hammet by William P. Kenney from the University of Michigan in 1964. A least four others have been written since 1964, as follows:

"The Literature of the Thriller: A Critical Study," by George J. Grella. University of Kansas, 1967.

"The Problem of Moral Vision in Dashiell Hammett's Detective Novels," by George J. Thompson. University of Connecticut, 1971. (Reprinted in *TAD*.)

"The Violent Hero, Wilderness Heritage and Urban Reality: A Study of the Private Eye in the Novels of Dashiell Hammett, Raymond Chandler and Ross Macdonald," by Robert B. Parker. Boston University, 1971.

Thomas B. Ketchum also wrote a dissertation on Hammett, for Yale University, but the title is unknown to me as is the exact year (1972 to 1974?).

Hammett in Catalogs:

Dealer prices continue to skyrocket on Hammett. In a recent catalog I encountered such mind-blowing items as a first edition of *Red Harvest*, inscribed by DH, for $600.00!—and a first of the paperback *SecretAgent X-9:* Book One for an asking price of $725.00!! Where will it end?

Commentary:

Regarding Hellman's *Scoundrel Time*: There has been much speculation regarding Hammett's exact political stance—as to

when, or if, he actually joined the Communist Party. In this candid memoir Lillian Hellman adds to the record: "The middle and late Thirties were a time when many people were turning toward radical political solutions, and he was one of them. . . . I am fairly sure that Hammett joined the Communist Party in 1937 or 1938. . . . It was true that he became a committed radical."

She relates an incident in which Hammett admitted to her that during a period when he was strikebreaking for Pinkerton, an officer of Anaconda Copper had offered him $5,000 to kill labor-union organizer Frank Little. "The fact that Frank Little was lynched," says Hellman, ". . . in what was known as the Everett Massacre must have been, for Hammett, an abiding horror. I think I can date Hammett's belief that he was living a corrupt society from Little's murder. In time, he came to the conclusion that nothing less than a revolution would wipe out the corruption."

Discussing Hammett's brand of radicalism in the book's introduction, Garry Wills makes some telling points: "The [Hammett] radical thinks of virtuous people . . . hates vicious and harmful people . . . tries to uphold a private kind of honor in a rotten world." He goes on to comment that Hammett's private eyes were "serving society without respecting it, seeing men and not just abstract Crime in the victims of their hunt. Hammett wielded that most self-wounding of human instruments, irony; and ironists make terrible crusaders. The worst thing one could have wished on the mousy world of Communist ideologues in America was a dozen more Hammetts."

Hammett paid a high price for his beliefs. Not only was he "totally banned in Hollywood . . ." but (according to Hellman) "two days after he went to jail [in 1951] they attached all income from books, radio and television. He was, therefore, to have no income for the remaining ten years of his life."

There are three revealing photos of Hammett in *Scoundrel Time*, one of which shows him in handcuffs, being led off to jail. In this shot his false teeth have been removed, and he seems a white-haired, sunked-cheeked old man at fifty-seven.

* * * * * * * * *

Steven Marcus, in his Introduction to *The Continental Op*, dated Hammett's marriage "toward the end of 1920." This is incorrect and was probably obtained from the same source I used for my *Casebook* date of December 27, 1920: the 1948 edition of *Who's Who in America*. It is obvious that, for reasons of his own, Hammett falsified the date of his marriage to Josephine Dolan—since the *real* wedding date was July 6, 1921 (as the actual license, reproduced in *City*, proves).

The byline of "Mary Jane Hammett" was used for "The Crusader," a piece in *Smart Set* (for the August 1923 issue). It *may* have been Hammett's first sale—although at least seven short stories plus some nonfiction were printed prior to this item. Magazines sometimes hold material, printing later contributions first. In the Hammett issue of *City*, during the interview with Mrs. Hammett, the question was asked, "Do you remember when he sold his first piece?" and Mrs. H. answers: (speaking to her daughter) "It was a little sketch he wrote about you as a baby. He was so happy about that. . ." A reference is then made to the *Smart Set* piece "which Hammett signed 'Mary Jane Hammett.'"

Mrs. Hammett also revealed that her husband got upset when the editors kept insisting that he put in "more action, more action." Cap Shaw, according to Mrs. H., thought his stories were "too good."

* * * * * * * * *

By the time this checklist update appears I will have lectured on the subject of "Hammett's Influence on Crime Films" for the University of California at the U.C. Extension Center in San Francisco—and will have served on a panel discussing "Private Eyes" at the Bouchercon. (The former in July, for a "Hammett Day" with Ross Macdonald, Joe Gores, David Fechheimer, and Bill Godshalf—and the latter in October, in Culver City, California.)

# NEWS NOTES

A new journal of popular culture, as yet untitled, has been announced under the general editorship of Dr. Pearl G. Aldrich (Department of English, Frostburg State College, Frostburg, MD 21532). Its editorial policy will be to further the search for a philosophical and aesthetic structure for the study and analysis of popular culture. Articles submitted should explore the connections, influences, and relationships among elements of such cultures as popular, elite, and academic in literature, history, communications, arts, and sciences. The Winter 1977 issue will concentrate on mystery and suspense fiction in all media; the Spring 1977 issue on women in popular culture in all media; and Fall 1977 on mass media.

Congratulations are in order to Ronald B. DeWaal, whose *The World Bibliography of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson* has won the John H. Jenkins Award for the best work of bibliography published in 1974, given annually by Union College of Schenectady, New York. The amount of this award is $500. It should be noted that, ironically, DeWaal's *Bibliography* is now available from Publishers Central Bureau, 1 Champion Avenue, Avenel, N. J. 07131, for $24.95.

The Dorothy L. Sayers Historical and Literary Society has been formed in England. The Secretary is R. L. Clarke (Roslyn House, Witham, Essex CM8 2AQ, England), and it is open to all. Her house at 24 Newland Street in Witham has been restored by the Essex County Council and a plaque to her memory was unveiled there by Ian Carmichael. The Society aims to collect and preserve relics and reminiscences about her, and to make them available to students and biographers.

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Continued from page 270

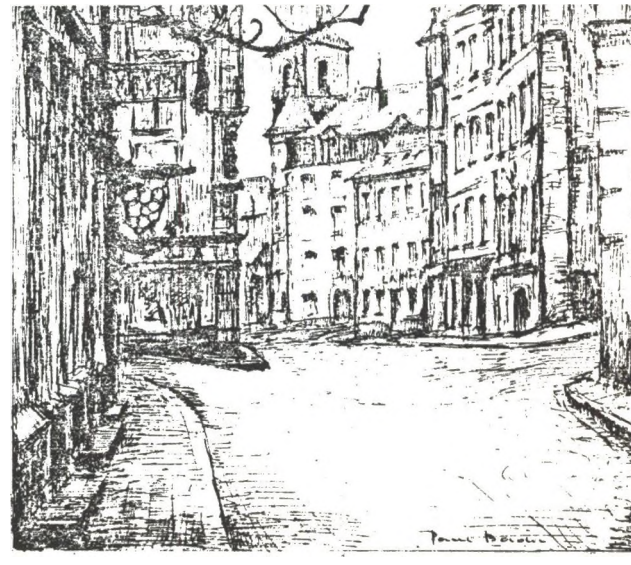
**MARIE CORELLI AND *VENDETTA!***

for anything similar in classic literature. You will follow the trappings and details of an incredible impersonation that is the *crème de la crème* in deception; you will study a stunning portrait of a fickle heroine so indelibly etched she makes Scarlett O'Hara seem like a parvenu in coquetry. There is the tomb, the plague, the knife, the cloak, and the dagger, each of them treated with a relative importance that is utterly perfect. Above all, we meet Count Fabio Romani, more sinned against than sinning, but surely a protagonist to rank with Edmond Dantes, Sidney Carton, Jean Valjean, Captain Ahab, and Sam Spade.

*Vendetta!* is so many things. It is a Gothic tale, a horror story, a romance, a study in vengeance, a murder mystery, a weird and supernatural ghost story. It almost seems as if *The Count of Monte Cristo* has somehow been star-crossed with "The Cask of Amontillado" and "The Pit and the Pendulum" with *Vanity Fair*, yet with *Les Miserables*, *Moby Dick*, and *Heart of Darkness* thrown in. If such a claim seems to indicate a mad medley of plot-counterplot and a dizzying stew of pot boiling and potpourri, it is not.

These are simply basic ingredients of greatness for a story of epic purposefulness and intent. Nowhere in literature have I ever found a story so incomparably thematic and dedicated to its main leitmotif: "Do men ever truly forgive the women who ruin their lives?" The tormented hero of this account, Fabio Romani, asks himself that question and sets about in his own weirdly retributive way to answer it.

Marie Corelli was a great craftsman. She should have enjoyed the same sort of homage paid the Brontes. But she rises like a comet even above their shades, shooting off sparks in a dazzling display of variety, versatility, and sheer talent.



Continued from page 272

## DETECTIVE FICTION IN SWEDEN

In the last three books Sjöwall and Wahlöö became really independent of other writers of police procedurals. Their criticism of Swedish society and the Swedish way of life became sharper and in many ways exaggerated. However, as a whole, the ten books about Martin Beck and his colleagues are beyond doubt the most ambitious, the best planned, and the most important series of crime novels that has ever been written in Sweden.

Sjöwall and Wahlöö had great influence on fellow Swedish crime writers in their successful attempts to combine the crime novel à la Julian Symons with the police procedural à la Ed McBain and Hillary Waugh, and their books spurred many Swedish crime writers to use the crime novel as a tool for purposes other than pure entertainment. Whether Sjöwall and Wahlöö have influenced the development of the crime novel in the international arena remains to be seen.

But their books certainly had an important effect in increasing the popularity of the Swedish crime novel. Interest grew in Sweden, and international interest in the Swedish crime novel also began to flourish.

Jean Bolinder's first book, *Skulle Jag Sörja Då,* was published in 1967 and was very well received. His *Livet Är Långt. . .* (1973), regarded as his best novel to date, uses as a psychological basis a play by the famous author August Strindberg. Bolinder is viewed as something of a "Swedish Julian Symons." His first books were rather traditional whodunits, but his latest have been very intriguing psychological tales.

Jan Olof Ekholm writes crime novels in a humorous vein. His protagonist is an anti-hero who always trips over the truth and doesn't recognize it—until it is too late! Ekholm sets his novels in small Swedish towns and is masterful in showing attitudes of ordinary people and their way of living and thinking. His best books are *Pang, Du Är Dö* (1969), which might be called a military farce; *Död I Skönhet* (1970), which tells many a painful truth about being a foreigner in Sweden; and *Förledande Lik* (1974), which is about a lady who wants to lay her hands on much money and does not hesitate to use any means to reach her goals.

K. Arne Blom writes police procedurals which present a police force in a medium-sized Swedish city, Lund. His first books deal with problems facing the students at a modern university. The best among those is *Någon Slog Tillbaka* (1973). *Sanningens Ögonblick* (1974), which has been translated into many languages, shows how violence creates violence in an evil circle. His books explore both the mind of the criminal as well as the lot of the policeman. His latest book, *Nödhamn* (1976), is a pure psychological thriller.

Olle Högstrand has written two very interesting political thrillers: *Maskerat Brott* (1971), about the kidnapping of the Prime Minister's daughter, and *Skulden* (1973), in the le Carre style. Högstrand is a very talented and skillful writer of thrillers.

The increasing interest in the crime novel in Sweden has persuaded many new writers to try their hands. In the 1970s more writers than ever before have written more crime fiction than ever before. Two of the most promising are Ulf Durling and Olov Svedelid.

Interest in the genre in Sweden is also manifested in the forming of The Swedish Academy of Detection in 1971 and in the publication of the magazine *Jury* and the fanzine *Dast.*

*About the authors:*

Jan Broberg (b. 1932) is a very well-informed expert on the detective fiction field. He has written two highly praised books on the genre, *Mord För Ro Skull* (1964) and *Mordisk Familjebok* (1972), and has edited more than ten collections of short stories and essays. He is one of the founders of The Swedish Academy of Detection, and was its first president. He has been an active reviewer for more than twenty years, and it is said in Sweden that "what Jan Broberg does not know about crime novels is not worth knowing."

K. Arne Blom (b. 1946) is one of the most promising detective fiction writers of the new generation—see the titles mentioned in this article. But he is also a connoisseur of the genre, a member of The Swedish Academy of Detection, and the editor of two anthologies. During the last year he has also started writing straight fiction: surrealistic stories with influences from Ray Bradbury and Roald Dahl.

Continued from page 281

## THE PAPERBACK REVOLUTION

### THE SHERLOCKIAN REVOLUTION

ADRIAN CONAN DOYLE AND JOHN DICKSON CARR

Everyone has tried his (or her) hand at writing parody/pastiche material about the Master. How could the results be less than gratifying when the son of the famous literary agent combines forces with the celebrated advocate of the locked room mystery? *The Exploits of Sherlock Holmes* (Pocket Books, 1954) contains twelve chronicles referred to in the Sacred Writings by Sir Arthur who, somehow, never found the time to provide full details.

JOHN GARDNER

*The Return of Moriarty* (Berkley, 1974) is an epic crime novel of nineteenth-century London's underworld. This is a ruthlessly gripping work–always fascinating and absolutely fantastic. I don't pretend to keep up with all the current mystery novels, but *Return* (the first part of a trilogy) is the best new work that I've read in a great many years. This is a novel that is not to be missed under any condition and a very strong contender for all-time honors.

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Continued from page 291

## CLASSIC AND HARD-BOILED DETECTIVE FICTION

In sum, the terms Hard-Boiled and Golden Age are examples of synecdoche, part of the detective narrative, subject to alteration, providing a classification of the whole. Synecdoche has some value in criticism, but it cannot overshadow the full dialectic at work in detective fiction. Dispositions of individual authors and their perception of social environment affect the image of milieu and modify characterization. The framework, however, is a genre historical in origin but now autonomous to the point that it can be bent and adapted but not fundamentally altered unless the author ceases to write detective stories altogether.

FOOTNOTES:

1. See the introduction to *Great Short Stories of Detection, Mystery and Horror* (London: Gollanez, 1928).

2. Raymond Chandler, "The Simple Art of Murder," *The Atlantic Monthly* (Dec. 1944). Reprinted in *The Second Chandler Omnibus* (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1962), pp. 3-15.

3. See, for example, *Another's Crime, From the Diary of Inspector Byrnes* (New York: Cassell, 1888). Among Pinkerton's many volumes, *Criminal Reminiscences and Detective Sketches* (New York: Carleton, 1879) is a convenient illustration.

4. The most influential essay in my consideration of literary imperatives is by John G. Cawelti, "Myth, Symbol, and Formula," *Journal of Popular Culture*, 8 (Summer 1974), pp. 1-9.

5. For development of this point see John M. Reilly, "The Politics of Tough Guy Mysteries," *The University of Dayton Review*, 10 (Summer 1973), pp. 25-31.

Continued from page 277

## PAPER CRIMES

Borst newspaper organization, and German spies in World War II. Maybe it is all heavy-handed, but it's an entertaining spoof of the overworn, hard-boiled detective.

John R. Feegel's *Autopsy* (Avon, 1975) won a well-deserved Edgar for best paperback original of the year. The autopsy in question is on Myrl Caton, a Florida tomato grower who committed suicide in a small Connecticut town while on a selling trip. But was it suicide? The nongrieving Mrs. Caton and attorney Paul Erickson want to prove it wasn't, to collect $300,000 in life insurance. Approaching the court and legal proceedings from the aspect of a civil suit rather as a criminal case gives an interesting twist. *Autopsy* is fast, sharp, and tense; its characters are lifelike and able to produce vivid emotions in each other and the reader. Feegel doesn't miss a trick worth using and plays a final trump that will both surprise you and leave you thinking about the patterns of life.

Roy Winsor's first Ira Cobb story (*The Corpse That Walked*) won an Edgar as best paperback original of 1974. The second, *Three Motives for Murder* (Fawcett Gold Medal, 1976), shows it was not by chance. Cobb is a return to the Golden Age detective, a college English professor who solves crimes as a hobby. He is a blend of Asey Mayo's style, Nero Wolfe/Archie Goodwin's repartee, and Lew Archer's history-centered plots–all on a modest, less eccentric scale. This time Cobb is trying to unravel the murder of Ned Penrose, son of wealthy friends. Ned owed extensive gambling debts, got girls into several kinds of trouble, possibly tried to kill his mother–generally made himself a likely victim. *Three Motives for Murder* is strongest on plot and puzzle and is a must for the traditionalist.

A command book that stands far above the average is *Yesterday Is Dead* by Dallas Barnes (Signet, 1976). It provides a savage indictment of the American system of justice while tracing the brutal grind, boredom and frustration of two cops trying to solve a series of rape/murders. Detectives Lee Hollister and Virgil Fox are fully realized characters that evoke sympathy and interest. The action starts at once with an overly graphic rape scene and proceeds with Hollister and Fox's slow following of clues. This is not a prettily clued and diagramed "mystery" but a "crime" novel, pure and simple. It is not always pleasant, but it is unforgettable and very good.

The fearful facets and styles of a specialized form of mystery tale are presented in *The Undead*, edited by James Dickie (Pocket Books, 1976). Thirteen gems of horror and vampires by such authors as Bram Stoker, E. F. Benson, Ambrose Bierce, and H. P. Lovecraft await the reader. The tales are all ghoulishly (predictably) pleasant and tend to fall into classical, outmoded styles. My own favorite is Lovecraft's "The Hound."

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From P. K. Smith:

Does anyone know the real name of the author who, under the nom de plume SARBAN, published three novels under the Ballantine imprint, "The Sound of His Horn," "The Doll Maker," and "Ringstones"? They were originally published in England by Peter Daves in the early 1950s. P. K. Smith, Loch Road, Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417.

From Robert J. Randisi:

I guess there's no reason why I shouldn't plug my own story, right? The August issue of the new magazine *Mystery Monthly* is on the stands and in it is a story by a fellow named Robert J. Randisi. The story is called "Cop Without a Shield" and it is only my second published story. There will be, however, more to come. I have a story called "The Assassin" (a collaboration with my cousin, John J. Mullin) coming in the November of *Alfred Hitchcock*, another story called "The Disappearance of Penny" in the December AHMM and another called "The Steinway Collection" tentatively scheduled for the December *Mystery Monthly*. There is also one called "Nightwalker," as yet unscheduled, but it will appear in AHMM. It seems as if 1976 has so far been my year (in more ways than one: I also became a father for the first time), and it is certainly not over yet. I hope no one minds these personal notes, but this is the beginning of a career for me and the feeling inside of me is such that I had to share it. I'm a TADer and I'm sure the other TADers are happy for me just as I would be happy for them. I think being a TADer (and a member of MWA) had a lot to do with my perseverance during the two *long* years between my first sale and my second.

I mentioned *Mystery Monthly*, which is a new magazine in our genre, but it is not the only one. Ernie Hutter is starting a new mystery magazine in the fall called *American Mystery Magazine*. The two new magazines seem to be quite different, in the sense th at MM does not feature just fiction, but reviews, interviews, games, puzzles and others. AmMM (Ernie's abbreviation) will deal with fiction and nothing else. I wish both magazines the best of luck and hope they will both be with us for years to come.

Speaking of new magazines, Davis Publications, which also puts out *Ellery Queen* and *Alfred Hitchcock* is starting a new science fiction magazine called *Isaac Asimov's Science Fiction Magazine*. George Scithers will be the editor (Box 13116, Philadelphia, Pa. 19101) and Asimov will direct editorial policy, contribute fiction and write editorials. The magazine will begin as a quarterly, become bi-monthly and eventually go monthly. Much luck to them, also.

Max Collins is a buddy of mine. We met at Bouchercon 6 in Chicago and sat up until three o'clock in the morning, in my hotel room talking and drinking soda from the machine outside. After that we became PenPals as Allan (his middle name and the one he prefers) lives in Muscatine, Iowa and I live in Staten Island, N.Y. I recently received a three-page letter from Allan, which he ends by saying, "Nobody knows who the hell I am . . ." and ". . . I'd like to do something about that, before I am overcome by the obscurity I crawled out of." I hope he's wrong, but in case he isn't and there are some people who don't know "who the hell" he is, I want to tell them.

Max Allan Collins is a damned fine writer! Before I even met Allan I had read his *Bait Money* and *Blood Money*, which were published in 1972 by Curtis Books, a now defunct paperback house. Unfortunately for Allan, they defuncted with his next three books contracted to them. All five books, *Bait* and *Blood* and the next three *Fly Paper*, *Hush Money* and *Hard Cash* featured a professional thief named Nolan who, in my opinion, is as good a character as Westlake's Parker *without* being anything *like* Parker. Recently the Curtis contract ran out and the rights to the last three books reverted to Allan, so we may be seeing them in the near future. I urge you to pick them up.

Right now there is a Berkely paperback out called *The Broker* by Max Collins. It is the first in a series about Quarry, a professional hit man, and it is an excellent debut. To follow in the series are *The Broker's Wife*, *The Dealer* and, now in the works a book called *The Slasher* (so far).

With the Curtis contracts out of the way, we will be seeing more and more of Max Collins. I urge anyone who has not done so to meet Max Collins!

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Continued from page

Capsule reviews of little-known titles whose authors have at least one classic (or near-classic) to their credit:

*Shooting Star* by Robert Bloch. Ace, 1958.

Bloch tries a hard-boiled Hollywood novel in the Chandler style—and fails. But a non-Blochbuster (Bloch that pun!) is better than most lesser writers' successes.

*The Stopped Clock* by Joel Townsley Rogers. Simon & Schuster, 1958.

A savagely beaten ex-actress lies dying remembering the men in her life. Not as good as *The Red Right Hand*, but structured similarly, i.e., the first three-fourths whodunit and all suspense.

*The Crooked Lane* by Francis Noyes Hart. Doubleday, Doran, 1934.

Was it suicide or murder—or something more diabolical? The hero's future depends on learning the truth. The tension builds and accelerates to a not unexpected climax.

*Murdered: One By One* (British title: *No Fury*) by Francis Beeding. Harper, 1937.

A much disliked novelist is murdered. Her will divides her estate among members of the local literary society who had humiliated her shortly before her death. A good premise, but rather inept police work in failing to see the obvious makes for a disappointing book.

— Angelo Panagos

# Book Exchange

Phoebe A. Taylor's *The Tinkling Symbol*; David Frome's *In at the Death* and *Murder of an Old Man*; Brett Halliday's *Dividend on Death* and *Mike Shayne Investigates*; F. and R. Lockridge's *Spin Your Web, Lady*; Kelly Roos' *If the Shroud Fits, The Frightened Stiff, Grave Danger;* Leslie Charteris' *Meet the Tiger*; and George H. Coxe's *Mrs. Murdock Takes a Case*. Fred Dueren (5324 Ville Angela, Hazelwood, MO 63042).

Mrs. Christine Mitchell (1333 Garden St., Redlands, CA 92373) is looking for Shannon, *Root of All Evil* and Holton, *Pact with Satan, Flowers by Request, Problems in Angels,* and *Mirror of Hell* (pb or hc).

David C. Ralph (1420 Gay Lane, Lansing, MI 48912) wants a hardcover or paperback copy of Shannon's *Case Pending*.

Susie Thompson (7110 Westway Circle, Knoxville, Tenn. 37919) offers $6 each for back issues of TAD.

Howard Rapp (22070 Kelly Ct., Timber Cove, Jenner, CA 95450) has a new list of detective fiction for sale; SASE please.

A. F. Panagos (3145 Mt. Pleasant St. N.W., Washington, D. C. 20010) has for trade only *Casino Murder Case,* 1st ed., lettering on spine faded, otherwise vg, for any ten or more different undamaged hardboiled pulps from 1935-50 (*Black Mask, Dime Detective,* etc.). He also has a free list of 100 hardbound mysteries for sale.

Richard Parker (93 Congdon Street, Providence, R. I. 02906) has for sale 27 issues of EQMM from May 1942 to August 1947, and a complete set from October 1947 on. Offers welcome.

A. Kreuchunas (22482 Ray Avenue, Detroit, Mich. 48223) has Vol. 3 through Vol. 8 of TAD, complete, for sale as a set: $50, postpaid.

Bruce R. Beaman (1417 Main Street, Stevens Point, Wis. 54481) has for sale a complete set (only Winter, 1942, missing) of EQMM from Number 1 through the present. Offers are invited.

Allen J. Hubin (3656 Midland Ave., White Bear Lake, MN 55110) still has a few copies of *EQMM 350* by John Nieminski for sale at $4 postpaid. *EQMM 350* is an author/title index to the first 350 issues of EQMM.

Henry R. Wenden (52 East South St., Worthington, Ohio 43085) wants to swap *Mr. Fortune Wonders*, Doubleday, 1933, 1st U.S., vg-f for *Clue for Mr. Fortune* in similar condition. Also wishes to swap *The Life Sentence*, Doubleday, 1946, 1st U.S., f-vf for *The Cat's Whisker* or *Mr. Fortune Finds a Pig*.

FOR SALE: *Elizabeth Is Missing* by Lillian De La Torre (1945), $2.; Ellery Queen's Awards 12th Series (1957), $1.; World's Best 100 Detective Stories (8 vol.), Eugene Thwing, ed. (1929), $3.50. Add 20c for postage for each item ordered. B. A. Buhrer, 10 Arrow Drive, Livingston, N. J. 07039.

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