

A Compendium of Canonical Characters



The Return of Sherlock Holmes

Canonical Characters



Frederic Dorr Steele,
October, 1903

The Adventure of the Norwood Builder



"The Adventure of the Norwood Builder" *(The Return of Sherlock Holmes)*

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Canonical Characters



Sidney Paget,
November, 1903

The Adventure of the Norwood Builder



“The Adventure of the
Norwood Builder”
(The Return of Sherlock Holmes)

02

- 08 - Jonas Oldacre
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- 13 - Data! Data!

Canonical Characters

THE STRAND MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER, 1903.

THE RETURN OF SHERLOCK HOLMES.

By A. CONAN DOYLE.

II.—*The Adventure of the Norwood Builder.*

FROM the point of view of the criminal expert," said Mr. Sherlock Holmes, "London has become a singularly uninteresting city since the death of the late lamented Professor Moriarty."

"I can hardly think that you would find many decent citizens to agree with you," I answered.

"Well, well, I must not be selfish," said he, with a smile, as he pushed back his chair from the breakfast-table. "The community is certainly the gainer, and no one the loser, save the poor out-of-work specialist, whose occupation has gone. With that man in the field one's morning paper presented infinite possibilities. Often it was only the smallest trace, Watson, the faintest indication, and yet it was enough to tell me that the great malignant brain was there, as the gentlest tremors of the edges of the web remind one of the foul spider which lurks in the centre. Petty thefts, wanton assaults, purposeless outrage—to the man who held the clue all could be worked into one connected whole. To the scientific student of the higher criminal world no capital in Europe offered the advantages which London then possessed. But now—" He shrugged his shoulders in humorous deprecation of the things which he had himself done to produce.

"The time of which I speak Holmes has passed back for some months, and I, who had sold my practice and taken the old quarters in Baker Street, had seen a doctor, named Verner, had

purchased my small Kensington practice, and given with astonishingly little demur the highest price that I ventured to ask—an incident which only explained itself some years later when I found that Verner was a distant relation of Holmes's, and that it was my friend who had really found the money.

Our months of partnership had not been so uneventful as he had stated, for I find, on looking over my notes, that this period includes the case of the papers of Ex-President Murillo, and also the shocking affair of the Dutch steamship *Friesland*, which so nearly cost us both our lives. His cold and proud nature was always averse, however, to anything in the shape of public applause, and he bound me in the most stringent terms to say no further word of himself, his methods, or his successes—a prohibition which, as I have explained, has only now been removed.

Mr. Sherlock Holmes was leaning back in his chair after his whimsical protest, and was unfolding his morning paper in a leisurely fashion, when our attention was arrested by a tremendous ring at the bell, followed immediately by a hollow drumming sound as if someone were beating on the door with his fist. As it opened there came a tumultuous rush into the hall, rattling and clattered up the stair, and an instant later a wild-eyed and frantic young man, dishevelled, and palpitating, burst into the room. He looked from one to the other of us, and under our gaze of inquiry he was conscious that some apologetic explanation of this unceremonious entrance

The Adventure of the Norwood Builder



"The Adventure of the Norwood Builder"

03

(*The Return of Sherlock Holmes*)

One morning, Holmes complains to Watson about the lack of an interesting criminal case, when a panic-stricken young solicitor, John McFarlane, bursts in the room, certain he is about to be arrested for the murder of Jonas Oldacre, a builder in Lower Norwood.

Oldacre had appeared in McFarlane's office the day before and requested the solicitor draw up a will for him. Strangely, Oldacre had made McFarlane his sole heir, though the two are complete strangers. McFarlane delivered the will to Oldacre at his residence yesterday evening.

The next day, Oldacre was missing and burnt remains were found after a fire in a wood pile behind his house. Signs of a struggle, scattered papers, and McFarlane's walking stick at the house all point to his involvement in Oldacre's apparent murder. Can Holmes possibly assist MacFarlane in his urgent plea for help?

Canonical Characters



R. Thomson,
March, 1905

The Adventure of the Norwood Builder



"The Adventure of the Norwood Builder" (*The Return of Sherlock Holmes*)

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Filmography

<u>Date</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>Holmes</u>	<u>Watson</u>
1922	UK	Eille Norwood	Hubert Willis
1985	UK	Jeremy Brett	David Burke

Radiography

<u>Date</u>	<u>Network</u>	<u>Holmes</u>	<u>Watson</u>
April 13, 1931	NBC	Richard Gordon	Leigh Lovell
August 08, 1936	Mutual/ NBC	Louis Hector	Harry West
November 17, 1940	Blue (NBC)	Basil Rathbone	Nigel Bruce
1954	NBC	John Gielgud	Ralph Richardson
February 20, 1955	NBC	John Gielgud	Ralph Richardson
1954	BBC	Carleton Hobbs	Norman Shelley
September 11, 1964	BBC	Carleton Hobbs	Norman Shelley
1958		Maurice Teynac	Pierre Mondy
1970		Robert Hardy	Nigel Stock
1987	BBC	Roy Marsden	John Moffatt
March 03, 1993	BBC	Clive Merrison	Michael Williams
October 21, 2007		John Patrick Lowrie	Lawrence Albert

Canonical Characters



Sherlock Holmes



“The Adventure of the
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(The Return of Sherlock Holmes)

05

*“From the point of view of the
criminal expert, London has
become a singularly uninteresting
city since the death of the late
lamented Professor Moriarty.”*

*“There is something that has not
come out, and that housekeeper
knows it.”*

*“Might I ask you all to join in the
cry of 'Fire!?'”*

*(John Cleese, 1977, The Strange Case of the End of Civilization as
We Know It)*

Canonical Characters



John Watson



“The Adventure of the Norwood Builder”

06

(The Return of Sherlock Holmes)

“A young doctor, named Verner, had purchased my small Kensington practice. Some years later, I found ... that it was my friend who had really found the money.”

“A door suddenly flew open out of what appeared to be solid wall at the end of the corridor, and a little, wizened man darted out of it, like a rabbit out of its burrow.”

“I can hardly think that you would find many decent citizens to agree with you.”

(Arthur Lowe, 1977, The Strange Case of the End of Civilization as We Know It)

Canonical Characters



John Hector McFarlane



“The Adventure of the
Norwood Builder”

07

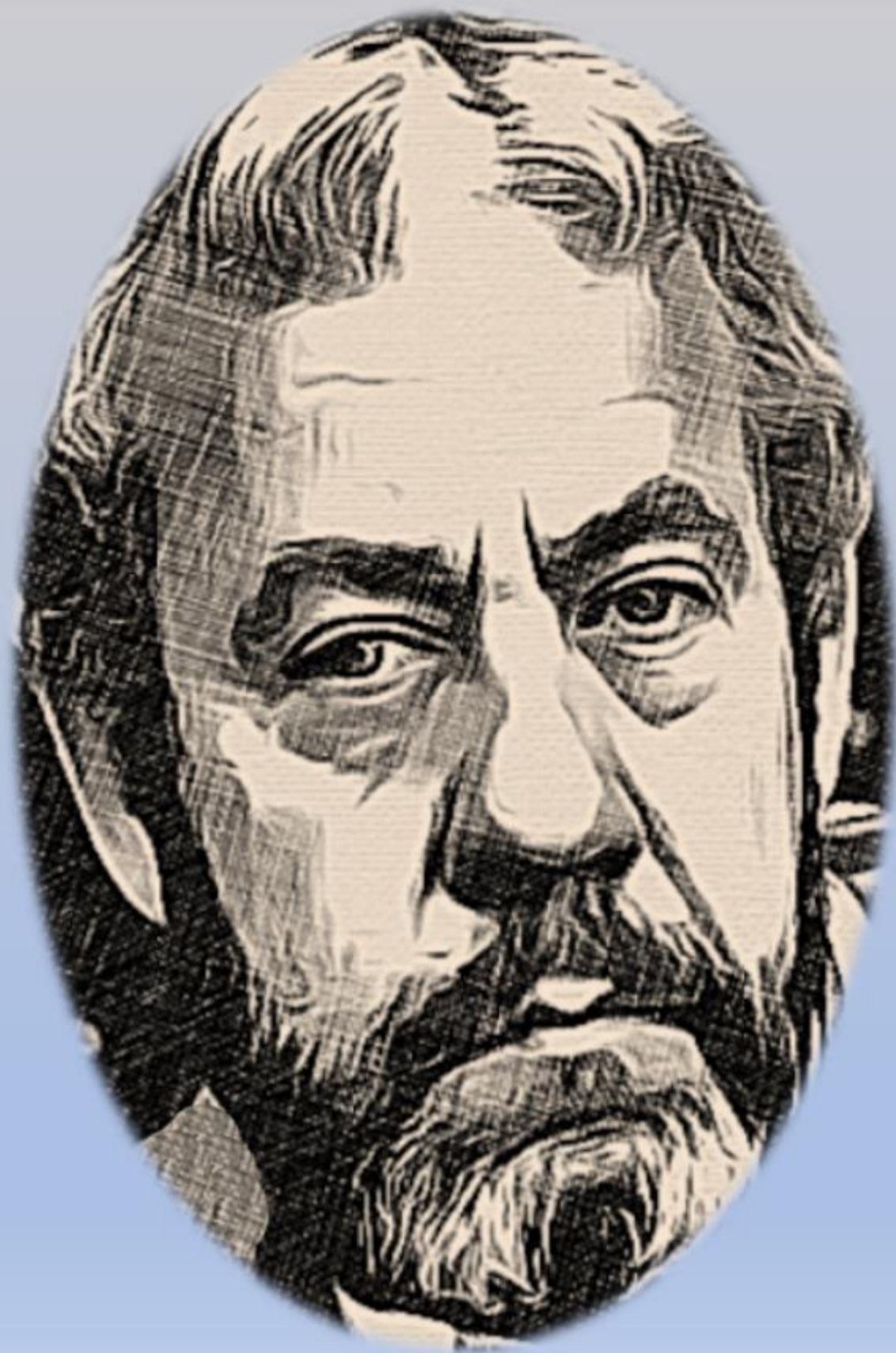
(The Return of Sherlock Holmes)

Solicitor and junior partner of
Graham and McFarlane. Was
arrested and charged with
Oldacre’s murder after drafting
and being named the
beneficiary of his will.

*“I’m sorry, Mr. Holmes, you
mustn’t blame me. I am nearly
mad. Mr. Holmes, I am the
unhappy John Hector
McFarlane.”*

(Cyril Raymond, 1922, The Norwood Builder)

Canonical Characters



Jonas Oldacre



“The Adventure of the Norwood Builder”

08

(The Return of Sherlock Holmes)

Builder and bachelor living in
Deep Dene House in Lower
Norwood who hired McFarlane
to draft his will.

*“Remember, my boy, not one
word to your parents about the
affair until everything is settled.
We will keep it as a little surprise
for them.”*

*“I am sure, sir, it was only my
practical joke.”*

(Jonathan Adams, 1985, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, “The
Norwood Builder”)

Canonical Characters



Inspector Lestrade



“The Adventure of the
Norwood Builder”
(The Return of Sherlock Holmes)

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Scotland Yard inspector who investigated disappearance of Jonas Oldacre.

“Here is a young man who learns suddenly that, if a certain older man dies, he will succeed to a fortune. He waits until the only other person in the house is in bed, and then in the solitude of a man's room he murders him, burns his body.”

(Colin Jeavons, 1985, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, “The Norwood Builder”)

Canonical Characters



Mrs. Lexington



“The Adventure of the Norwood Builder”

10

(The Return of Sherlock Holmes)

Middle-aged housekeeper. “A little, dark, silent person, with suspicious and sidelong eyes.”

“Mr. McFarlane had left his hat, and to the best of her belief his stick, in the hall. She had been awakened by the alarm of fire. Her poor, dear master had certainly been murdered.”

(Rosalie Crutchley, 1985, The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, “The Norwood Builder”)

Canonical Characters



Mrs. McFarlane



“The Adventure of the
Norwood Builder”
(The Return of Sherlock Holmes)

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John’s mother who was engaged to
Jonas Oldacre when she was
younger.

*“He was more like a malignant and
cunning ape than a human being.
Thank heaven that I had the sense
to turn away from him and to
marry a better, if poorer, man.”*

*“Neither my son nor I want
anything from Jonas Oldacre, dead
or alive!”*

(Helen Ryan, 1985, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, “The
Norwood Builder”)

Canonical Characters



The Thumbprint



“The Adventure of the
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12

“With dramatic suddenness he struck a match, and by its light exposed a stain of blood upon the whitewashed wall. As he held the match nearer, I saw that it was more than a stain. It was the well-marked print of a thumb.”

“It was evident to me that our unfortunate client was lost.”

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Sidney Paget,
November, 1903

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First
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U.K. -- *The Strand Magazine*,
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U.K. - *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*,
March 07, 1905 George Newnes Ltd.
U.S. - *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*,
February, 1905, McClure, Phillips & Co.

Chronological
Date:

Tuesday, August 20, 1895
(Baring-Gould)

Ranking:

26 of 56 short stories
(Sherlockian poll, 1999, Stock)

Christ
Abbreviation:

NORW

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