

A Compendium of Canonical Characters



The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes

Canonical Characters



The Bristol Observer
May, 1890

The Sign of Four



"The Sign of Four"

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Canonical Characters



Charles Kerr
1890

The Sign of Four



“The Sign of Four”

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Canonical Characters



Thomas Nicholl
March, 1895

The Sign of Four



“The Sign of Four”

03

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Canonical Characters



The Sign of Four



"The Sign of Four"

04

Stamford, a friend to both Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson bring the two together to consider splitting the costs of rooms.

After much speculation by Watson, Holmes reveals he is a "consulting detective".

Holmes receives a telegram requesting consultation in a fresh murder case.

Surveying the murder scene with Lestrade and Gregson, can Holmes determine the significance of the loose wedding ring and 'Rache' written on the wall in blood?

Are the deaths the act of a madman completely random, or an act of revenge?

Canonical Characters



F. H. Townsend
1903

The Sign of Four



“The Sign of Four”

05

Filmography

<u>Date</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>Holmes</u>	<u>Watson</u>
February, 1913	US	Harry Behnam	Charles Gunn
June, 1923	UK	Eille Norwood	Arthur Cullin
August, 1932	UK	Arthur Wontner	Ian Hunter
December, 1968	UK	Peter Cushing	Nigel Stock
April, 1974	DE/FR	Rolf Becker	Roger Lumont
December, 1983	UK	Ian Richardson	David Healy
January, 1983	AU	Peter O'Toole	Earle Cross
June, 1983	RU	Vasily Livanov	Vitaly Solomin
November, 1987	UK	Jeremy Brett	Edward Hardwicke
March, 2001	US	Matt Frewer	Kenneth Walsh

Radiography

<u>Date</u>	<u>Network</u>	<u>Holmes</u>	<u>Watson</u>
November 09, 1932	Blue (NBC)	Richard Gordon	Leigh Lovell
May 17, 1959		Richard Humdall	Bryan Coleman
March 02, 1963	BBC	Carleton Hobbs	Norman Shelley
March 08, 1977	CBS	Kevin McCarthy	Court Benson
December 10, 1989	BBC	Clive Merrison	Michael Williams
December 09, 2004	BBC	Clive Merrison	Michael Williams
November 25, 2007	Jim French	John Patrick Lowrie	Lawrence Albert

Canonical Characters



Sherlock Holmes



“The Sign of Four”

06

“It is cocaine -- a seven-per-cent solution. Would you care to try it?”

“My mind rebels at stagnation.”

“I am the last and highest court of appeal in detection.”

“Eliminate all other factors, and the one which remains must be the truth.”

*“How often have I said to you that when you have eliminated the impossible whatever remains, **HOWEVER IMPROBABLE**, must be the truth?”*

(Anthony Higgins, 1993, *Sherlock Holmes Returns*)

Canonical Characters



Dr. John Watson



"The Sign of Four"

07

"Which is it to-day? — "morphine or cocaine?"

"An experience of women which extends over many nations and three separate continents."

"To this day she declares that I told her one moving anecdote as to how a musket looked into my tent at the dead of night, and how I fired a double-barrelled tiger cub at it."

"This is the great Agra treasure. With trembling fingers I flung back the lid. We both stood gazing in astonishment. The box was empty!"

"This treasure, these riches, sealed my lips. Now that they are gone I can tell you how I love you."

(Jackie Chan, 1993, *Shanghai Knights*)

Canonical Characters



Francois Villard



"The Sign of Four"

08

French detective who consulted Holmes about a will.

"He has considerable gifts. He possesses two out of the three qualities necessary for the ideal detective. He has the power of observation and that of deduction. He is only wanting in knowledge; and that may come in time. He is now translating my small works into French."

(John Warburton, 1933, *The Sign of Four*)

Canonical Characters



Mary Morstan



"The Sign of Four"

09

Governess for Mrs. Cecil Forrester. Sought out Holmes to find her father, an officer in the Indian regiment who returned to England and disappeared and to solve the mystery of why she received an expensive, rare pearl annually.

"A blonde young lady, small, dainty, well gloved, and dressed in the most perfect taste."

"The treasure is lost."

"Then I say, 'Thank God,' too."

(Sophie Lorain, 2001, *The Sign of Four*)

Canonical Characters



Major John Sholto



"The Sign of Four"

10

34th Bombay Infantry lived in Upper Norwood. Died April 28, 1882. Commanded troops with Morstan in Andaman Islands.

Oversaw convict prison in India with Captain Morstan. Suffered heavy gambling losses.

Found dead with a torn piece of paper, with the words 'The sign of the four' scrawled across it. Told his sons to share the Agra Treasure with Morstan's daughter after his death.

"I have only one thing which weighs upon my mind at this supreme moment. It is my treatment of poor Morstan's orphan.

(Johni Keyworth, 2001, *The Sign of Four*)

Canonical Characters



Captain Arthur Morstan



"The Sign of Four"

11

Served with Major Sholto in 34th
Bombay Infantry in India.
Conspired to steal Agra Treasure, with
Sholto, Jonathan Small and three
others.

Suffered heart attack and died after
returning to England and arguing with
Sholto about his share.

(Edgar Norfolk, 1932, *The Sign of Four*)

Canonical Characters



Jacky Smith



"The Sign of Four"

12

Son of Mordecai Smith, owner
of the Aurora.

Little curly-headed lad of six.
With rosy cheeks and
considered a rascal.

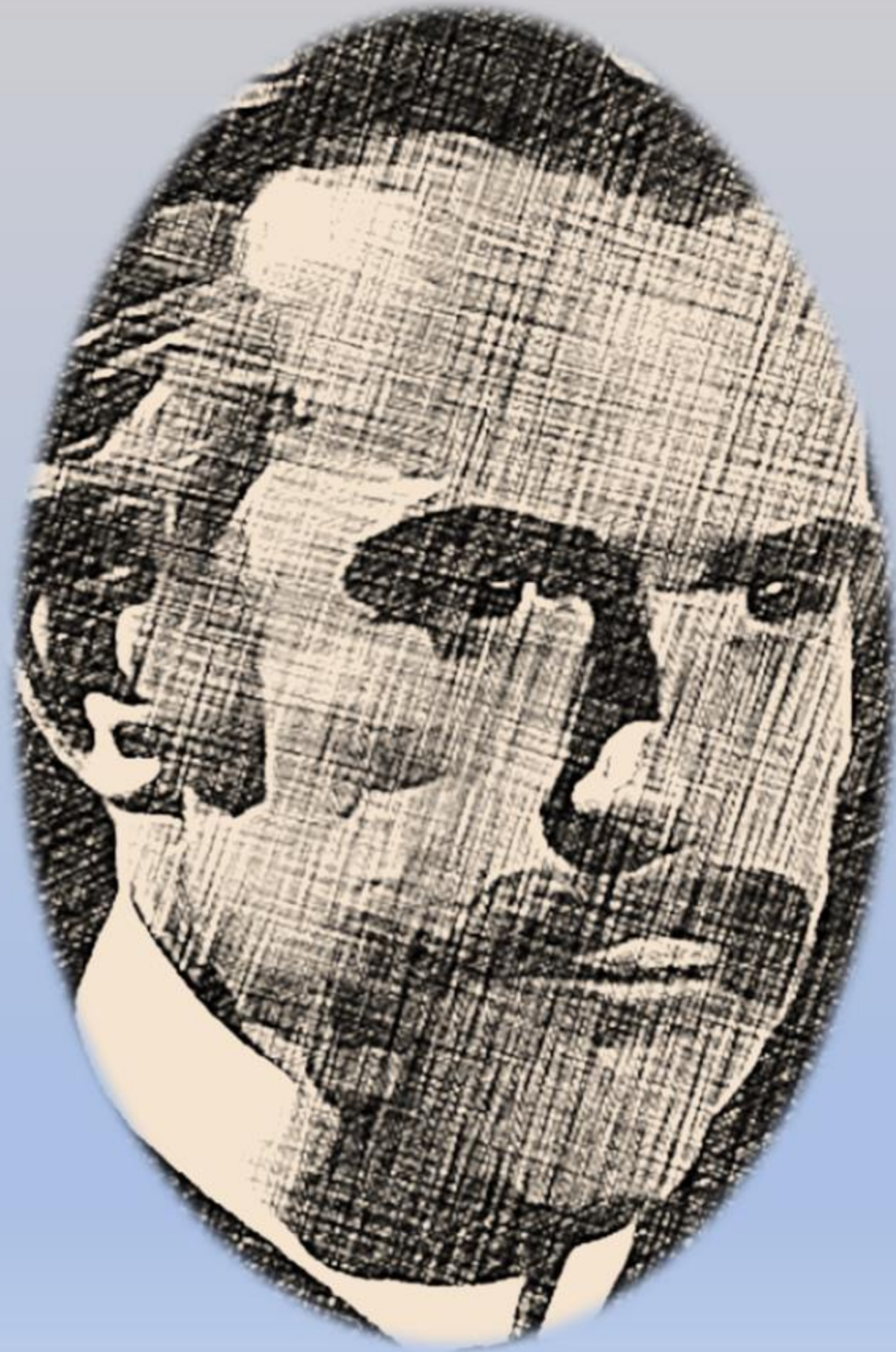
*Now, Jack, is there anything you
would like?'*

"I'd like a shillin."

*"Nothing you would like
better?"*

"I'd like two shillin' better."

Canonical Characters



MacMurdo



“The Sign of Four”

13

Batholomew Sholto’s porter. Former prize-fighter, had boxed three rounds with Holmes at a benefit match four years before.

Was suspected of murdering Bartholomew with Thaddeus.

“You know very well that I must stick to regulations. I can let you in, but your friends must just stop where they are.”

(Sydney Conabere, 1968, *Sherlock Holmes*, “The Sign of Four”)

Canonical Characters



Lal Chowdar



“The Sign of Four”

14

Servant to Major Sholto who helped dispose of Capt. Morstan’s body.

“Do not fear, Sahib, no one need know that you have killed him. Let us hide him away, and who is the wiser?”

“I heard it all, Sahib, I heard you quarrel, and I heard the blow. But my lips are sealed. All are asleep in the house. Let us put him away together.”

(Nikolai Kuzmin, 1983, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson: The Treasures of Agra*)

Canonical Characters



Thaddeus Sholto



“The Sign of Four”

15

Twin brother of Bartholomew. “A small man with a very high head, a bristle of red hair all round the fringe of it, and a bald, shining scalp.”

Had sent Mary Morstan a pearl every year for six years. Contacted Mary Morstan after Agra Treasure was found.

“There is something amiss with Bartholomew! I am frightened! My nerves cannot stand it.”

(Viktor Proskurin, 1983, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson: The Treasures of Agra*)

Canonical Characters



Mrs. Bernstone



“The Sign of Four”

16

Housekeeper for Bartholomew Sholto, arrested with others for his murder.

“God bless your sweet calm face! It does me good to see you. Oh, but I have been sorely tried this day!”

“I have seen Mr. Bartholomew Sholto in joy and in sorrow for ten long years, but I never saw him with such a face on him as that.”

(Una Kay, 2001, *The Sign of Four*)

Canonical Characters



Bartholomew Sholto



"The Sign of Four"

17

Twin brother of Thaddeus. Found the Agra treasure chest with jewels value at "half a million sterling," buried on his property. Found dead in an upper room of his house with a torn note with the words, "The sign of the four."

"[His] features were set in a horrible smile, a fixed and unnatural grin, which in that still and moonlit room was more jarring to the nerves than any scowl or contortion."

(Marcel Jeannin, 2001, *The Sign of Four*)

Canonical Characters



Jonathan Small



“The Sign of Four”

18

Imprisoned for murder and theft of Agra treasure while in British Army. Agreed with Major Sholto to share treasure in exchange for his freedom. Escaped from prison with help from Tonga and sought revenge on Sholto.

“The scoundrel had stolen it all, without carrying out one of the conditions on which we had sold him the secret. From that day I lived only for vengeance. I thought of it by day and I nursed it by night.”

“You'll find the treasure where the key is, and where little Tonga is.”

(Edward Yankie, 2001, *The Sign of Four*)

Canonical Characters



Tonga



“The Sign of Four”

19

Andaman Islander whose life was saved by Jonathan Small. Helped Small escape from prison and killed Bartholomew Sholto.

Exhibited by Small at fairs as a black cannibal.

“He plucked out from under his covering a short, round piece of wood, like a school-ruler, and clapped it to his lips. Our pistols rang out together. He whirled round, threw up his arms, and with a kind of choking cough fell sideways into the stream.”

(Fernando Chien, 2001, *The Sign of Four*)

Canonical Characters



Mrs. Mordecai Smith



“The Sign of Four”

20

Wife of Mordecai Smith, and mother of six-year old Jack. Informed Holmes that Jonathan Small had hired Smith’s boat, a steam launch, the Aurora.

“She’s as trim a little thing as any on the river. She’s been fresh painted, black with two red streaks.”

“He’s been away since yesterday mornin’, sir, and, truth to tell, I am beginning to feel frightened about him. But if it was about a boat, sir, maybe I could serve as well.”

(Lila Kaye, 1987, *The Sign of Four*)

Canonical Characters



Mr. Abelwhite



“The Sign of Four”

21

Indigo-planter in India who hired Jonathan Small as an overseer to watch over his plantation workers in Muttra near the border of the Northwestern Provinces.

“There he sat on his veranda, drinking whiskey-pegs and smoking cheroots, while the country was in a blaze about him.”

Canonical Characters



Mordecai Smith



"The Sign of Four"

22

Close to the rude landing-stage was a small brick house, with a wooden placard slung out through the second window. 'Mordecai Smith' was printed across it in large letters, and underneath, 'Boats to hire by the hour or day.'

"Lost. Whereas Mordecai Smith, boatman, and his son Jim, left Smith's Wharf at or about three o'clock last Tuesday morning in the steam launch Aurora, black with two red stripes, funnel black with a white band."

"Beside him lay a dark mass, which looked like a Newfoundland dog. The boy held the tiller, while against the red glare of the furnace I could see old Smith, stripped to the waist, and shovelling coals for dear life."

(Dave Atkins, 1987, *The Sign of Four*)

Canonical Characters



Abdullah Khan



"The Sign of Four"

23

An Indian man and one of the signatories of "the sign of the four." Invited Small to join plan to rob and kill merchant, Achmet, who was carrying a box of jewelry.

Was imprisoned with Small before he could enjoy his riches.

"But the most precious stones and the choicest pearls that he had he put in an iron box, and sent it by a trusty servant who, under the guise of a merchant."

(Michael Segal, 1968, Sherlock Holmes, "The Sign of Four")

Canonical Characters



Toby



“The Sign of Four”

24

“An ugly, long-haired, lop-eared creature, half spaniel and half lurcher, brown-and-white in color, with a very clumsy waddling gait.

“Here you are, doggy! Good old Toby! Smell it, Toby, smell it!”

“He pushed the creosote handkerchief under the dog's nose, while the creature stood with its fluffy legs separated, and with a most comical cock to its head, like a connoisseur sniffing the bouquet of a famous vintage.”

(Edina Ronay, 1968, Sherlock Holmes,
“The Sign of Four”)

Canonical Characters



Mrs. Cecil Forester



“The Sign of Four”

25

Employed Mary Marston as governess. Had hired Holmes in past “to unravel a little domestic complication.”

“It is a romance! An injured lady, half a million in treasure, a black cannibal, and a wooden-legged ruffian. They take the place of the conventional dragon or wicked earl.”

(Ailsa Grahme, 1968, *Sherlock Holmes*,
“The Sign of Four”)

Canonical Characters



Athelney Jones



“The Sign of Four”

26

Scotland Yard inspector who investigated death of Bartholomew Sholto.

“It's Mr. Sherlock Holmes, the theorist.”

“This Thaddeus Sholto WAS with his brother; there WAS a quarrel; so much we know. The brother is dead and the jewels are gone. So much also we know. No one saw the brother from the time Thaddeus left him. You see that I am weaving my web round Thaddeus. The net begins to close upon him.”

(Emrys James, 1987, *The Sign of Four*)

Canonical Characters



Dost Akbar



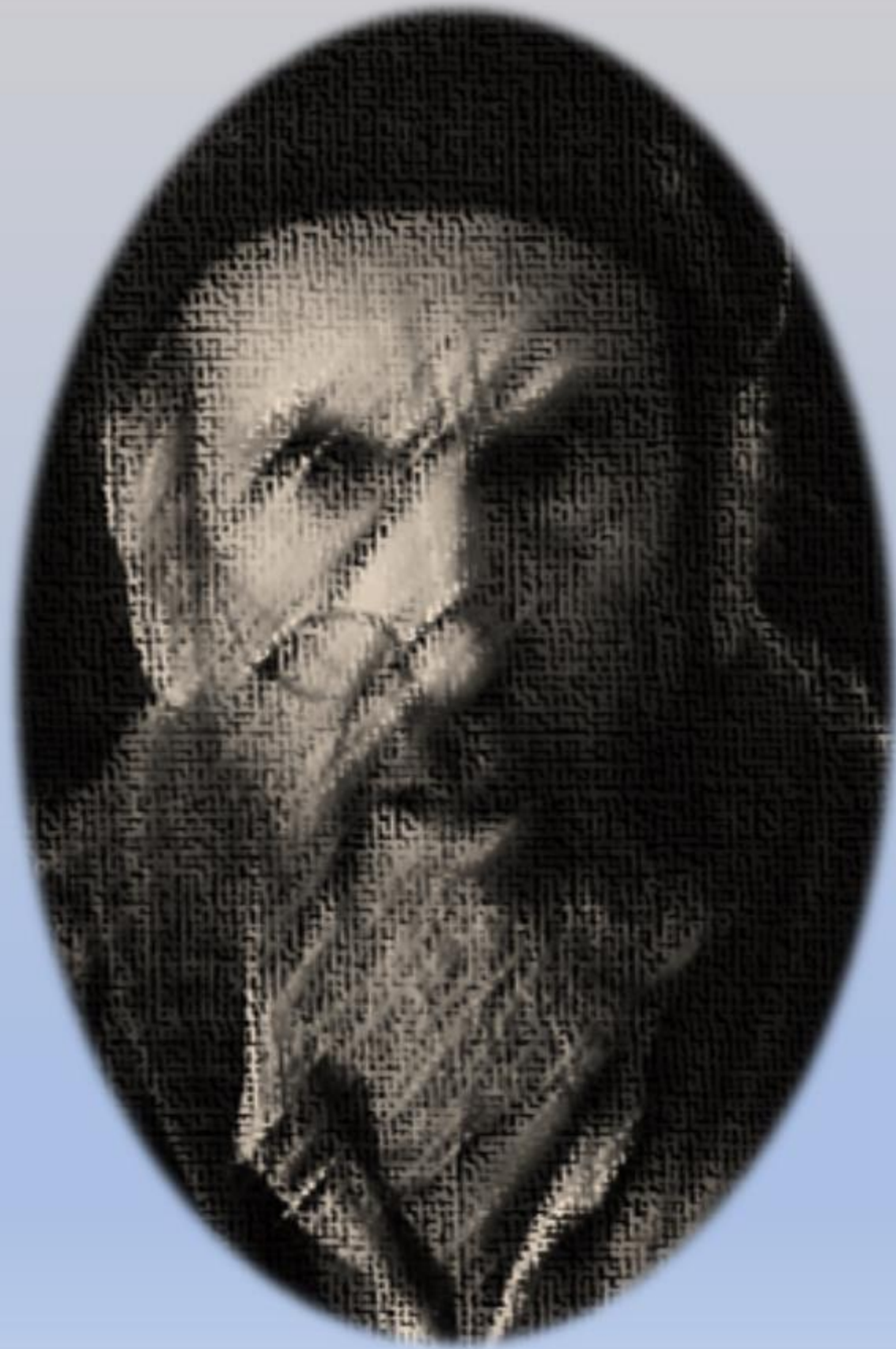
"The Sign of Four"

27

Foster brother of Abdullah Khan, traveling companion of merchant Achmet who was transporting rajah's jewels to British for safety.

Planned along with Abdullah Khan, Mahomet Singh and Jonathan Small to rob and lead Achmet to his death.

Canonical Characters



Sherman



"The Sign of Four"

28

The bird-stuffer at 3 Pinchin Lane, lanky, lean, old with stooping shoulders, a stringy neck, and blue-tinted glasses.

Owned a dog named Toby, "a queer mongrel with an amazing power of scent."

"Go on, you drunken vagabone. If you kick up any more row I'll open the kennels and let out forty-three dogs upon you."

"A friend of Mr. Sherlock is always welcome."

(Dennis St. John, 2001, *The Sign of Four*)

Canonical Characters



Mrs. Hudson



“The Sign of Four”

29

“At this moment there was a loud ring at the bell, and I could hear Mrs. Hudson, our landlady, raising her voice in a wail of expostulation and dismay.”

“Do you know, sir, I am fraid for his health? Well, he's that strange, sir. After you was gone he walked and he walked, up and down, and up and down, until I was weary of the sound of his footstep... And now he has slammed off to his room, but I can hear him walking away the same as ever. I hope he's not going to be ill, sir. I ventured to say something to him about cooling medicine, but he turned on me, sir, with such a look that I don't know however I got out of the room.”

(Kathleen McAuliffe, 2001, *The Sign of Four*)

Canonical Characters



Wiggins



“The Sign of Four”

30

Leader of the Baker Street
Irregulars.

Led the search for *The Aurora*
along the banks of the Thames.

“That wire was to my dirty little
lieutenant, Wiggins, and I expect
that he and his gang will be with
us before we have finished our
breakfast.”

“Yes, gov’nor.”

(Courtney Roper-Knight, 1987, *The Sign of Four*)

Canonical Characters



Baker Street Irregulars



“The Sign of Four”

31

“No, it's not quite so bad as that. It is the unofficial force - the Baker Street irregulars.”

“As he spoke, there came a swift pattering of naked feet upon the stairs, a clatter of high voices, and in rushed a dozen dirty and ragged little street Arabs.”

“There was some show of discipline among them, despite their tumultuous entry, for they instantly drew up in line and stood facing us with expectant faces.”

Canonical Characters



The Agra Treasure



“The Sign of Four”

32

The Great Agra Treasure was a collection of fine gems that were at the center of the events of *The Sign of the Four*.

Originating in India, the treasure was sent to Agra for safekeeping during the Indian Rebellion of 1857.

Was stolen by the Four, ultimately ending up in the hands of Major Sholto, before being reclaimed by Jonathan Small and Tonga.

Canonical Characters



The Aurora



“The Sign of Four”

33

Launch owned by Mordecai Smith, and rented by Jonathan Small to take Small and Tonga out of London on the Thames.

“And there is the Aurora, and going like the devil! Full speed ahead, engineer. Make after that launch with the yellow light. By Heaven, I shall never forgive myself if she proves to have the heels of us!”

Canonical Characters



F. H. Townsend
1903

The Sign of Four



"The Sign of Four"

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First
Publication:

U.K. - *Lippincott's
Monthly Magazine*
February 1890

U.S. - *Lippincott's Monthly
Magazine*
February, 1890

Chronological
Date:

1888
(Watson)
September 18, 1888
(Baring-Gould)

Christ
Abbreviation:

SIGN