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### Details of SH references, allusions, evocations in Michael Innes

(Unless otherwise stated, books are Penguin paperbacks. Title given first is one read with alternate titles below.)

#### **INSPECTOR APPLEBY NOVELS**

##### *Death at the President's Lodging* (1936)

##### *Seven Suspects*

First appearance of Appleby. Book replete with subtle, often coy, allusions. Gott, a don at St. Anthony's (thinly disguised Oxford College) writes murder mysteries under a pen name.

p. 23 — Appleby musing about the bizarre circumstances of the murder notes that "there was a contrivance in a literary tradition deriving from all the progeny of Sherlock Holmes." (Poe also listed as possible influence)

p. 184 — Gott, after explaining to Appleby how he figured out the combination to the hidden safe in the President's Lodging "Elementary, my dear—"

"Watson," concluded Appleby.

##### *Hamlet, Revenge!* (1937)

##### (Gollancz)

Perhaps Innes's best crime story. Tremendous display of scholarship but always with wit. Setting of great house of Scamnun not equaled in subsequent "manor" settings. The plot with an epilogue twist which Innes used again (one solution announced but then shown to be wrong).

p. 78 — Prime Minister refers to Appleby as "our own irregular" when dispatching him to solve murder of Lord Chancellor during amateur performance of *Hamlet* at Scamnun.

p. 99 — reference to "an old and shabby deer-stalking hat"

p. 114 — observation by author that "Gott had no flair for being a Dr. Watson." after Giles Gott, Elizabethan school and former Oxbridge tutor to a scion of Scamnun, refused to feed lines to Appleby so he can expound his Sherlockian deductions. Instead Gott supplied the answers himself.

p. 166 — veiled reference to Poirot when someone wants to get in a "real" detective but cannot come up with the name. Says "a foreigner and very conceited."

p. 176 — second citation of "footprints and unique Loamshire clay" as the kind of clues on which a detective relies.

*Lament for a Maker* (1938)

No direct SH references or allusions.

But echoes. The plot revolves around switched identity of two brothers from Scotland who were sent off to Australia, although far more convoluted than any SH story and over-endowed with red herrings. The story also features giant rats over-running a derelict castle, including “learned rats”, with messages on scraps of paper tied to their legs.

When one of the Australian brothers is trying to get attention he uses “cooee” as a cry because it carries so well.

p. 142 — the narrator says he “possessed my soul in patience,” a Biblical allusion also used more than once by SH.

*Stop Press* (1939)

*The Spider Strikes*

(House of Stratus)

Tediously long and self-indulgent, sprawling country home crammed with more than a dozen characters. Numerous side stories, including budding marriage, revenge, evil doing buried in Egyptian adventures, arms dealing, rare manuscripts. One character, an actor, is called Holme.

prologue p. v — “For a time there were even three young women in Chelsea who proposed to paint the Spider, together with Sherlock Holmes and kindred notabilities, on crockery designed for the modern home. . . .”

p. vii — “And it may be supposed that when a writer makes of a single character a companion for life and experiences in his company a series of adventures terminable only by death he may come to be haunted by this single dominating creation in an extraordinary way.”

p. 69 — when Holme, an actor who plays the Spider on the stage, says he wishes the author, Eliot, would kill off his creation, an Oxford don responds: “No good. Conan Doyle almost certainly killed his Sherlock. But he bobbed up again—if I remember aright—out of the crevasse.”

p. 179 — one secondary character refers to another as “My dear old superannuated Watson”

p. 316 — “Sherlock Holmes had declined to burden his memory with elementary astronomy.” When Appleby gets his first ray of positive light on the case from some odd factoid absorbed during studies 20 years previously he “thanked his stars for a memory which refused to shed the traditional lumber of a liberal education.”

As well, images in the Canon of both Moriarty (“The Final Problem”) and Holmes (“The Cardboard Box,” “The Resident Patient”) as spiders at the center of a web.

*The Secret Vanguard* (1940)

No direct SH references or allusions. Likely written as a pastiche of *The 39 Steps*, with improbable encounters and boy-meets-girl, boy-loses-girl. Scottish highlands and dialect admirably evoked.

p. 13 — Innes mocks own plot device in “Comedy of Discomfort” short story of helium balloon used by suicide to remove gun and suggest foul play.

*There Came Both Mist and Snow* (1940)

*A Comedy of Terrors*

(House of Stratus)

Appleby very early in career, family reunion at country manor house with lots of brilliant talk and eccentric egos. Ingenious plot twist with cold contracting metal to cause an automatic pistol to discharge. Murderous attack initially suspected and many accusations.

p. 49 — pretentious lady novelist says she has been thinking of *The Golden Bowl*. The narrator, Arthur Ferryman, writes:

“If Lucy had announced that she had been thinking about *The Hound of the Baskervilles* or *The Woman in White* I might have stayed.”

p. 82 — “From this point—and for the remainder of this brief narrative—the reader will have to accept me as a sort of Watson.”

*Appleby on Ararat* (1941)

(Gollancz)

A wholly unbelievable story of intrigue set in the south Pacific during the Second World War in which Appleby’s cruise liner is torpedoed, he and a half dozen companions pitch up near death on a seemingly deserted island, one is murdered. In pursuit of that murderer Appleby and Co. discover a German fuel dump on the island, destroy the dump during a hurricane, hitch a tow from a German U-boat and then destroy two German U-boats. Appleby also sees the murderer perish. Marginal SH references.

p. 115 — Hailstone, one of two disguised Nazis is toying with Appleby:

Mr. Appleby, you are a detective. And I challenge you . . . Do you see?”

(maybe meant as evocative of “You see, but you do not observe.”)

pp. 135, 144 — Two mocking references to a lugubrious Sealyham dog named George which belonged to Hailstone as “the hound of the Hailstones.”

*The Daffodil Affair* (1942)

More an exercise in character study than a true mystery. Even contains a self-mocking reference to mysteries written by Michael Innes. Two direct SH references.

p. 14 — Assistant commissioner refers to remarkable aspect of Daffodil affair that a more valuable horse was stolen at first from the same stable, but subsequently returned.

“Like those tiny but disconcerting problems they used to take to Sherlock Holmes.”

p. 49 — When Appleby’s aunt displays remarkable deductive powers:

“Appleby was looking round-eyed at his aunt—much as Sherlock Holmes must have looked at his brother, the remote and quintessential detective.”

*The Weight of the Evidence* (1943)

Setting at provincial university with standard cast of punning and classics-quoting scholars. Bizarre murder by dropping a meteorite from a tower. Red herrings abound and plot corkscrews. Appleby patronizing to local DI.

p. 67 — “Crime, Sherlock Holmes had believed, was much more horrible in rural areas than in the town.”

p. 162 — Appleby had produced a magnifying glass.

*Appleby's End* (1945)

p. 155 — Judith Raven (future Mrs. Appleby) refers obliquely to “Shoscombe Old Place”: “But in Sherlock Holmes there’s a man who conceals the body of his wife after she dies in a vault or something until he can meet his creditors by winning a horse-race.”

Appleby isn’t impressed. “Bother Sherlock Holmes.”

p. 160 — Appleby to Judith: “Weren’t you citing Sherlock Holmes? Well, he had nothing on this.”

*A Night of Errors* (1947)

(House of Stratus)

p. 175 — after working out a puzzle on the side of a fountain in the garden, Appleby nods to the statue of Apollo: “‘Obvious, my dear Watson,’ he murmured, and walked on.”

*Operation Pax* (1951)

*The Paper Thunderbolt*

(Gollancz)

Excellent thriller featuring Appleby and his younger sister, Jane (is this her only appearance?) set at a shady Milton Manor Clinic and in the underground stacks of the Bodleian. No obvious Sherlockian references on second reading.

*A Private View* (1952)

*One-Man Show, Murder Is an Art*

(Gollancz)

Judith Appleby plays a major role along with DI Cardover in plot revolving around art  
p. 129 — several references to “a man with a twisted lip” who turns out to be a spy.

*Appleby Talking* (1954)

*Dead Man's Shoes*

(Gollancz)

Collection of 23 short stories, all featuring Appleby from the earliest to the latest stages of his career (and even as a school boy.) Limited SH references and two direct, but banal, allusions.

“The X-Plan” (p. 112) A. uses the density of impressions from a typewriter ribbon to determine that extra pages have been typed between two chapters of a book. The extra pages are copies of secret plans for a warplane, for which a scientist was murdered.

“A Derby Horse” (pp. 159–163) echoes of “Silver Blaze” in that bad guys abscond with a favored racehorse. But involves substitution of a balloon version of horse.

“Dead Man’s Shoes” (p. 194) “This tobacco—my dear Watson—is manufactured only in Omsk. Or is it Tomsk?” Appleby being arch to a young man as he inspects a railway carriage (using tweezers and magnifying glass) and identifies butts of Russian-made cigarettes.

“The Lion and the Unicorn” (p. 218) A supernumerary, is given this line:

“Mrs. Harbot smiled brilliantly. ‘If this isn’t just like Sherlock Holmes!’

[Appleby responds] ‘I hope you will continue to think so.’”

*Appleby Talks Again* (1956)

(Four Square paperback)

18 short stories, some quite clever, but no Sherlockian references or allusions, even distant ones.

*Appleby Plays Chicken* (1957)

*Death On a Quiet Day*

No overt SH references but plot is set on Dartmoor, includes signals from Knack Tor where two murdered bodies are deposited, one of which is disposed of by being buried in the bog (p. 204) shades of Grimpen Mire)

p. 186 — Appleby whips out a “pocket magnifying glass” to examine a scrap of transcript.

*The Long Farewell* (1958)

no direct SH reference but . . .

p. 187 — Appleby notes in The Crossed Hands pub a Victorian steel engraving of the Death of General Gordon.

*Hare Sitting Up* (1959)

(Gollancz)

Red herrings abound in tale of twin brothers who switched identities once too often bringing Appleby on the case (in Sherlockian realistic disguise) since one brother had access to Britain’s biological warfare agents. Real villains are a bird-besotted aristocrat and a cardboard-thin bad ‘un, both of whom perish in a convenient fire.

Sherlockian allusions are quite stretched, starting with the disguise as Mr. Clywd, a supposed parent scouting out the private school where one of the brothers is the head. Small white beard which Innes telegraphs is probably a fake.

p. 107 — “There can’t be any deep water to drown in of the sort of mud in which one can sink and leave nothing but bubbles.” Could be Grimpen Mire reference.

*Silence Observed* (1961)

No direct SH references or allusions.

But Appleby demonstrates (p. 44) that, like SH, he can speak with authority on a wide range of subjects, in this case the use of embalmed flesh for as a base for the finest pigments.

*A Connoisseur’s Case* (1962)

*The Crabtree Affair*

p. 10 — Judith says the countryside, although depressingly depopulated, is at least peaceful. Appleby responds:

“Do you remember Dr. Watson saying something about the country being peaceful and secure, and Sherlock Holmes coming back at him with talk of the horrors that the privacy of the rural life can conceal. I expect there’s something in it.”

Moments later engage in conversation with Seth Crabtree, returned to home area from overseas, and only shortly afterwards later discover his downed body, which is the murder on which the story hangs.

p. 14 — when Judith deduces the character of the publican from his name on the licensing board outside, Appleby comments ‘I always said you ought to be a detective.’ ‘Elementary, my dear—’ Judith broke off and lowered her voice. . . .”

p. 22 — “And Appleby told himself that it was only his own long career as an inglorious Sherlock Holmes, a professional sifter of every sort of knavery, that disposed him to the feeling that the old man was playing some sort of part.”

### *The Bloody Wood* (1966)

no overt SH allusions but . . .

p. 62 — [self-mocking internal reference] Appleby: “What if we’re slipping sedately into one of those well-bred English detective novels of the classical sort? *Death at Carne House*.”

p. 85 — in SH vein, refers to previous cases i.e. the calculating horse and the dissociated girl in the Parma.

### *Appleby at Allington* (1968)

*Death by Water*

(Gollancz)

p. 20 — A. refers to compounding a felony

p. 34 — Judith suggests Appleby keep bees and write a monograph on the subject

p. 151 — reviewing the clues to date, Appleby says: “It needs thinking out. What that chap in Baker Street called a two-pipe mystery.”

### *A Family Affair* (1969)

*Pictures of Guilt*

pp. 19–20 — An Oxford undergrad recounts to Sir John Appleby (retired) the tale of SH’s gift of diamond cuff-links from a Very Gracious Lady. Sir John has said that “I think I know my Holmes pretty well” and now remarks:

“I doubt whether your account quite measures up to the scholarship of the subject.”

p. 27 — “And I’m rather *like* Holmes, after all . . . .Accustomed to conducting myself respectfully but firmly among my betters.”

Judith: “How bored you are, John, with country life. Like your wretched Holmes with his bees.”

p. 185 — closing lines, Sir John to his son Bobby:

“Your mother is likely to feel that the supervision of Hoobin, and the apple trees, and my mythical apiculture—”

“What’s that? Oh, bee-keeping. of course.”

“She is likely to think that these should be my principal occupation for some time.”

“Yes,” Bobby said. “I’m afraid that’s true.”

### *Death at the Chase* (1970)

No SH references

### *An Awkward Lie* (1971)

No SH references

most of story told through actions of son Robert Appleby

### *The Open House* (1972)

Quirky variation on customary country manor house setting. Forced on foot at night by a car breakdown, retired Appleby stumbles on a manor house arranged for the return of prodigal nephew, as it had been on the same night for past decade. The nephew does return this time but is murdered before talking to anyone (except his murderer, unknown to reader and Sir John.) Two direct SH references and one tangential allusion.

p. 58 — The local vicar, Dr. Absolon, is delivering his initial perceptive observations of the murder scene to Appleby, with a corpse and general upheaval.

“But let me make one more observation in the character of Dr. Watson. I am convinced, my dear Holmes, that there may have been thieves in this room.”

p. 91— Appleby is chasing a swarthy bad guy whom he surprised along with two colleagues in the nephew’s bedroom and has just had tussled with him in an octagonal mirrored room. The villain takes off again.

“With all the pertinacity of a Hound of the Baskervilles (or of Heaven, although the comparison is a profane one), Appleby took one deep breath, and followed.”

p. 140 — “He had been on plenty of such trails before, and must be accounted an old hound and a sagacious one, with a developed sense of smell.” [Appleby of self]

### *Appleby’s Answer*

p. 10 — “his droopy moustache held the particular tinge of brown which Sherlock Holmes would undoubtedly have known to proceed from the smoking of *Ramon Allones* (or would it be *Romeo y Julieta* ?)”

Unclear whether the words of narrator or the thoughts of other occupant of the train compartment, Priscilla Pringle, writer of ecclesiastical detective yarns.

p. 18 — villain of the piece, a Captain Bulkington, is a down-at-the-heels army coach who runs a crammer — a la Prof Moriarty.

p. 80 — reference to Vidocq insisting that Sûreté detectives be trained to never forget a face.

p. 114 — signs pinned to three straw-filled manikins dressed in Sir Ambrose Pinkerton’s clothes and left on his estate in surroundings chosen to represent Air, Water, and Ground, three of the four elements. Intended as a warning in non-existent murder plot.

### *Appleby’s Other Story* (1974)

Very convoluted plot in a country manor house involving art treasures, murder and inheritance. Sprinkled with SH references

p. 12 — Appleby protesting to Chief Constable Tommy Pride, who has lured him to a country mansion in hopes he’ll look into a past art theft:

“I haven’t retired from the Yard, you know, to play Sherlock Holmes.”

p. 50 — Appleby cites “Thor Bridge” to Pride as example of feats people will perform to conceal suicide. An Inspector Henderson starts to fill in the plot twist which Appleby then completes.

p. 51 — “Or there was the episode I think of as *The Case of X, Y and Z*. It sounds like one of Holmes’s but I assure you it was one of my own.”

p. 73 — The vicar asks Appleby if he goes in for apples.

“Yes indeed. They take the place with me of poor Sherlock Holmes’s bees.”

p. 91 — One of the potential suspects, Mrs. Graves, comments that Appleby's position in the investigation "seems quite irregular"

"So it is, madam. I may be called a Baker Street Irregular."

### *The Appleby File* (1975)

collection of short stories

"The Body in the Glen"

p. 163 — Appleby begins tale by referring to Watson's account of SH unconcern about workings of the solar system. "But the truth is that some scrap of quite out-of-the way knowledge may turn out uncommonly useful to a detective."

p. 167 — "Ah—but remember the Solar System. Holmes *might* conceivably have been caught out by his ignorance of it. And I was being caught out by—well, by my ignorance of those popular superstitions of the Highlands."

[averting the Evil Eye by wearing garments inside out. led Appleby to conclude erroneously that a dead man had been redressed after being murdered.

"Cold Blood"

Plot is a variation on "Shoscombe Old Place" where a son keeps father's body in the walk-in food freezer at his hotel because he died (an accident) a week before his property settlement on his son became valid. Appleby used Sherlockian deduction (Why were hotel guests being served huge meals? Because no room in the freezer for the food.)

### *The Gay Phoenix* (1976)

(Gollancz)

Appleby and Judith play peripheral roles. Plot has mysterious tycoon returning to Appleby's retirement area, buying ancestral home and fixing up. Flashback to Australia where A. was told how same man found on a boat suffering from amnesia.

p. 102 — "I'm not interested in surprises. I cultivate roses. I'm not sure I don't keep bees and play the fiddle." Appleby to Judith when he claims to be taking no interest in the strange goings-on, but blatantly is.

Similar bee-keeping allusion before in *Carson's Conspiracy, A Family Affair, Appleby at Allington*

p. 164 — again inventing titles for the mystery story — "The Case of the Elusive Tycoon"

### *The Ampersand Papers* (1978)

p. 90 — Appleby is analyzing unsatisfying elements of the death from a fall of an antiquarian scholar named Sutch with Inspector Craig over a half-pint of cider in the Cornish Elephant pub. He points out that Sutch wasn't pushed to his death from a rickety external castle tower staircase (which collapsed) because any murderer would have then been stranded at the top of the tower.

"And as you found no cowering miscreant, I assume, when you got someone up there, it follows that there *was* no murder. It's a point that Sherlock Holmes would have established at once."

p. 155 — on a drive Appleby passes a point which provides a view of Princetown Prison [from which Selby escaped in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*]



*Sheiks & Adders* (1982)

(Gollancz)

A late Appleby with the requisite country manor near his retirement of Long Dream Manor, and with the setting of a charity fete on the grounds of the manor owned by a City entrepreneur.

The title is a dreadful pun and a real plot stretch as far as the adders are concerned. Only one overt Sherlockian reference, coming after Appleby outlines to Col. Tommy Pride his deductions about what trouble in brewing at the tycoon's fete:

p. 98 — “The Chief Constable was staring at Appleby much as Dr. Watson had been habituated to stare at a Sherlock Holmes in full deductive spate.”

*Appleby and Honeybath* (1983)

(Gollancz)

p. 15 — Honeybath remonstrates: “For heaven's sake, John, don't start talking to me in Sherlock Holmes riddles.” [Appleby has pronounced upon the possible importance of a plate with abandoned toasted cheese in a room.]

p. 17 — Honeybath complains that Appleby is being “devilish learned.” Appleby responds:

“It happens with detectives, in a sporadic way. Your pal Sherlock Holmes, for instance. On one page his knowledge of literature is pronounced to be *nil*. On another you find him quoting Goethe or Flaubert in the original.”

“Bother Sherlock Holmes! And he's *not* my pal. It's years since. . . .”

p. 18 — Appleby sequentially perverts Keats and Conan Doyle by pronouncing: “The sedge is withered from the lake, and no dogs woof.”

p. 80 — Appleby announces that he has a clue in the pocket of his dinner jacket. Honeybath's response is to decline upon a piece of ancient facetiousness:

“My dear Holmes, you amaze me!”

*Carson's Conspiracy* (1984)

(Gollancz)

p. 94 — Explaining that in retirement Sir John Appleby had begun working on local histories. “When questioned about it, he would say that it served as well as the bees. This was understood to be an allusion to the final phase in the career of Sherlock Holmes.”

Three lines later, listing the equipment necessary for such local history investigations, “A typewriter, a filing cabinet, a magnifying glass (Sherlockian in suggestion). . . .”

p. 159 — Explained to the Chief Constable his refusal to rush off to the crime scene:

“Remember Mycroft Holmes, Tommy? He's Sherlock's lethargic brother. He sits at home and thinks things out, while young Sherlock scurries round in hansom cabs, or crawls about on carpets, brandishing a magnifying glass. In old age I'm going to be Mycroft. I've only just thought of it but the decision is irrevocable.”

p. 169 — When Appleby likens a development to something out of Dorothy Sayers his wife, Judith, is momentarily reduced to silence. “It was the first intimation she had ever received of her husband's having read a detective story.” (But see earlier references to detective stories in *The Bloody Wood* [1966].)

A second allusion to self as Mycroft, sitting at home.

p. 183 — After learning that he has missed several key aspects of the case Appleby asked detective-Inspector Davidson to give the Chief Constable a message. “Tell him that Mycroft has retired.”

{Once again, case wound up in very rapid order with discovery of a body down a well and capture of murderer as he fled London flat with bags loaded with cash.]

### *Appleby and the Ospreys* (1986)

(Gollancz)

p. 16 — an angler appears wearing a deerstalker in which he has stuck numerous flies, which turn out to be his death warrant when bats attack in the mystery’s closing page.

p. 30 — Appleby reflects that he was usually dispatched to case of “recherché crime.”

p. 31 — Appleby comments that Lady Osprey supposed him to be the “Dupin or Mycroft Holmes” or the area, where they both live.

p. 36 — Appleby wary of Lady Osprey “It seemed not improbable that she would expect him to whip out a magnifying glass and fall at once to scrutinizing the carpet with it, or something like that.”

p. 49 — Another of the internal references comes when Appleby is explaining to the new Lord Osprey that he is retired “so now I have to rely simply on the little grey cells.” Like his ancestors, Lord Osprey is not much of a reader and doesn’t get the allusion to Hercule Poirot.

p. 125 — When a detective inspector says that he knows someone his died because he makes a habit of strolling through any country churchyard that comes his way, Appleby exclaims “God bless my soul, Ringwood!’ It’s the sort of habit that Conan Doyle might have planted on Sherlock Holmes.”

p. 127 — “Appleby, who had read singularly few detective stories. . . .” Disingenuous at best, deceitful at worse.

p. 147 — Innes (or narrator) says Appleby had been barking up the wrong tree so the Osprey affair deserved to be called “the Case of the Barking Dog.”

### **OTHER MYSTERIES, THRILLERS**

#### *What happened at Hazelwood* (1946)

(House of Stratus)

Another experiment in story-telling, with book divided into three sections. The widow of the murder victim narrates the opening and closing with the middle told by the young Sergeant (“Harold”) who is assisting Det.-Insp. Cadover but in the form of a letter home.

p. 3 — mocks what he calls an enduring convention of Victorian fiction, writing of the fate of a baronet who went to Australia as a young man:

“Very likely he would be hunted down one day by the vengeance of a gang of bush-ranging associates whom he had betrayed.” Turns out to have a substantial relationship to book’s plot.

p. 97 — an internal reference to Appleby with Harold driving at speed in the Bentley — “the yellow one that poor Inspector Appleby had before his marriage.”

p. 116 — “Dr. Watson himself could have read the signs unmistakably” — Harold commenting on evidence that someone had climbed trellis into the room where the baronet was murdered.

p. 129 — Harold's observation about Cadover's reasoning process: "Mere miscellaneous information can be uncommonly useful." [nothing so important as trifles]

p. 134 — Harold writing, "I don't often play Dr. Watson quite so all-out as this."

p. 136 — Cadover mocks SH's parlor trick of predicting the character of some from an article like the black boots found in the victim's safe ("You may find that they were worn by a swarthy man, fond of music and with a slight cast in the left eye, who had recently made a proposal of marriage." But Harold then correctly deduces several aspects of the owner's character, which allows him latter to identify the local parson as the owner.

p. 156 — Cadover speaks "Sherlock Holmes was among other things distinguished for this—that he guarded his memory against being burdened by useless information."

p. 182 — Another Appleby reference

p. 203 — two SH allusions on same page. "Is it a variant of Sherlock Holmes' violin?" Harold to Cadover. Reference to "The Mazarin Stone" where Holmes uses a gramophone recording to trick villain into thinking he is in an adjacent room.

Later someone described as having a face as long as a fiddle "—Sherlock Holmes' or another."

### *From London Far* (1946)

#### *The Unsuspected Chasm*

(Gollancz)

A thriller, not crime mystery. protagonist is scholar Meredith

p. 37 — "Both beasts were now abjectly whimpering, and reason would have told Meredith that as Hounds of the Baskervilles they had fallen altogether short."

p. 199 — Meredith asks psychiatrist Dr. Higbed, "Did you ever read the tale of the kidnapped expert?" When Higbed says he's never heard if it, Meredith continues:

"There are a great many versions. I believe you will find one or two in the Sherlock Holmes stories. Something goes wrong with a hydraulic press used by a gang of coiners and a skilled engineer has to be called in. But of course, he must never be let go again. You follow me?"

### *The Journeying Boy* (1949)

#### The Case of the Journeying Boy

Innes classed as his favorite

p. 216 — SH allusion is a long time appearing (the book is 336 pages long) and almost has the air of being deliberately introduced then because the writer realizes he has nor fulfilled some compact he has made with himself.

"The old agony advertisements, he reflected, were not quite what they had been when they delighted Sherlock Holmes; nevertheless, there must be a little drama, and a great deal of oddity, hidden behind some of them still. . . ." Det.-Insp. Cadover is musing and making notes from the "Articles for Sale" in the personal column of back issues of *The Times*.

This Sherlockian recourse produces an important breakthrough in his quest to identify a man shot to death in a cinema during a showing of *Plutonium Blonde*, a screening upon which the entire phantasmagorical plots revolves.

Not really successful as a thriller. Far too much introspection by the customary Innes don character, a plot connection that strains credulity (bad deeds in Montevideo) and a *deus ex machina* ending.

Twice Cadover's colleagues suggest he may be inheriting the mantle of the (retired) Appleby, which is surely Innes having a quiet chuckle.

Lots of obscure words, Irish foodstuffs, and the customary classical allusions.

*Christmas at Candleshoe* (1954)

*Candleshoe*

(Gollancz)

Hidden art treasure. two passing SH allusions

p. 129 — a librarian who has taken on the role of a detective to trace lost Titians  
“enveloped himself in an ancient Inverness cape”

p. 165 — Lord Scattergood wears a deerstalker hat

*The Man from the Sea* (1955)

*Death by Moonlight*

(House of Stratus)

p. 30 — 22-year-old protagonist tells companion that the only way he can tell with a pursuer trying to kill them is to emulate SH with Prof. Moriarty at Reichenbach Falls, grabbing him so they both topple off narrow ledge far above the rocky shore below.

As well, an eye doctor plays a central role. Would make a top thriller movie.

*Old Hall, New Hall* (1956)

*A Question of Queens*

(Gollancz)

Hidden art treasure. one passing SH allusion

p. 210 — wearing . . . a highly affected deerstalker hat (narrator's observation on scion of the Jory family who are occupants of the Hall) as he passes in an estate car during madcap excavations and search for buried statute, the Aphrodite Epitumbia.

*The New Sonja Woodward* (1960)

*The Case of Sonja Woodward*

No direct SH references and only one indirect evocation.

p. 73 — Tantalus and glasses mentioned

*Money From Holme* (1964)

(Chivers Large Type)

An exceptionally silly art world fantasy with a touch of African ridicule. Only substantial allusion is the name of the title figure, Sebastian Holme (SH) who has an older, smarter brother names Gregory. But also this possibility:

p. 103 — A man appears precipitously at the door of the cold-water flat occupied by down-at-the-heels art critic and pointillist artist, Mervyn Cheel, Described as over six feet tall, wearing a flowing grey cloak and with a mane of silver hair and “a long cane flexed between two powerful hands.” Shades of Von Ormstein in “A Scandal in Bohemia.”

*A Change of Heir* (1966)

(Gollancz)

No direct SH allusions in this non-Appleby, non-Honeybath yarn  
two references to wearing of a “deerstalker hat” (p. 144 is one)

*The Mysterious Commission* (1974)

A Charles Honeybath mystery, replete with SH references, including the opening paragraph of Chapter 2, after CH has been propositioned to undertake a portrait of a madman.

p18 — “At this point, Charles Honeybath glanced rather desperately round his studio. He might have been Mr. Sherlock Holmes (to whom he was addicted) hoping to secure the commonsensical if not wholly percipient counsel of his friend Dr. Watson. It was upon just such unlikely missions as Mr. Peach’s, indeed, that enigmatical plenipotentiaries had been prone to present themselves at Baker Street. Perhaps Mr. X wasn’t a mere President or Prime Minister. Perhaps he was a Crowned Head, and Honeybath would end up with a pair of diamond cuff-links, the gift of Mr. X’s second cousin once removed, a Very Gracious Lady. It would be *The Case of the Mysterious Commission*.”

p. 53 — moves a writing table back to original spot (judging by indentations in the carpet) and discovers a drawer containing high powered binoculars.

“It was positively what you might expect a professional detective to do.”

p. 155 — “The commission hadn’t been an arbitrarily chosen means of getting and keeping him out of the way, as in some Sherlock Holmes story he’d once read.”

p. 158 — imagining ways he might be killed in bed: “What about a deadly snake crawling down a bell-rope?”

p. 188 — tells Scotland Yard Detective Inspector [no first name] Keybird that his penetration of the case began, not with the portrait, but with *The Red-Headed League*. Then describes the story accurately from memory “I believe those are dear Old Conan Doyle’s *ipsissima verba*.” Then explains how the commission differed. The portrait was not a hand-copied encyclopedia; it was actually needed.

*Honeybath’s Haven* (1977)

(Gollancz)

Correctly described in the subtitle as “A novel concerning the dottier aspects of the art world.”

Upper-crust retirement home substitutes for Innes’ usual country mansion/castle. Surprise plot device is hypnotism used to revive the earlier creativity in a burnt-out painter. Only one SH reference or allusion. Lots of classical reference and obscure vocabulary i.e., ceremonies, veridical, *festina lente*, Nereid.

p. 20 — Failing painter Edwin Lightfoot greets his old (but fallen-away) friend Charles Honeybath who has come to call at urging of Lightfoot’s brother-in-law, an art dealer who has seen a source of income dry up. Lightfoot has his feet wrapped in flannel and is imaging himself to be a notorious burglar Flannel Foot who is being hunted in 1937 by Chief Inspector Thomas Thompson of Scotland Yard.

“He’s my grand adversary, you know. We’re like Moriarty and Sherlock Holmes.”

Going It Alone (1980)

(Gollancz)

Only SH aspect for first 164 pages is the fact that a bank was robbed by tunneling from the basement of a London building where a squat was taking place, leading to the arrest of some of the squatters as robbers. But then Tim, the precocious 20-something Oxford undergrad, spots kennels as he and his uncle—a typical Innes anti-hero, 50ish, bookish and non-athletic—try to creep up undetected on a remote rural house sheltering the robbers. But the dogs remain quiet:

p. 164 — “There’s something like that somewhere in Sherlock Holmes. “Precisely, Watson, the significant point in that the hound *didn’t* howl.” It’s something like that. The Hound of the Baskervilles had taken time off, and was simply basking in the sun.’ As usual the account is replete with classical allusions and intellectual repartee.

*Lord Mullion’s Secret* (1981)

House of Stratus edition (OPL) proclaims “An Inspector Appleby Mystery” but entirely Charles Honeybath and very little mystery. Involves story of an illegitimate child in an extended family of minor aristocracy played out in a castle that is opened two days a week for public tours. No direct Sherlockian references *but* Innes lifts crucial plot device from *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.

p. 156 — the core revelation of concealed aristocratic lineage of an undergardener is revealed by fact that “he was by a strange freak of heredity the split image of [a Wyndow] commemorated by [the painter] Nicholas Hilliard some centuries ago.” So another miniature portrait by the same painter is substituted to conceal this circumstance.

In the same fashion does SH spot that Jack Stapleton in *the Hound of the Baskervilles* is in fact a Baskerville.

**INDIVIDUAL SHORT STORIES**

**“Pelly and Cullis”**

Julian Symons, ed., *Verdict of Thirteen: A Detection Club Anthology*

Retired Appleby story. No direct SH references but some allusions to the great mystery genre.

p. 122 — Appleby jests with High Sheriff that possibilities of culprit in the death of a juror “sounds like the title of a detective story, *The Case with Eleven Solutions*.”

High Sheriff says he never reads the things.

Appleby visits pubs near hospital where victim worked as a porter, disguised as a commercial gentleman.

p. 125 — “One of the great detectives of fiction, disguised as a flower-girl or a leering Chinaman, might have felt himself first cousin to this commercial gentleman not doing too well in the world.”

**“Comedy of discomfiture”**

*Ellery Queen’s Mystery Bag*, 1973.

Appleby but no SH aspects.

**“The Heritage Portrait”**

*Ellery Queen’s Mystery Magazine*, Nov. 1958

Appleby but no SH aspects.

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