THE REGULATORY ADVENTURE OF THE TWO NORWOOD BUILDERS

SHERLOCK HOLMES CROSSES PATHS WITH CONGRESS, THE PRESIDENT, THE COURTS, AND THE ADMINISTRATIVE STATE, IN THE PRESS

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[Editors' note: The images associated with Appendixes A–E of this article are only available in the original 2015 *Almanac & Reader* and at www.availableat.org.]

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It was almost certainly some combination of law on the books and law in the works that inspired the *New York World* to publish its 1911 version of the Sherlock Holmes story, "The Adventure of the Norwood Builder," in not one, but two, formats. (In its Sunday editions from April 9 to July 2, 1911, the *World* republished all thirteen stories from *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* in their original sequence, with "Norwood Builder" appearing on April 16.)

The law on the books was a series of interpretations of the Mail Classification Act of 1879 by the U.S. Post Office Department¹ (in 1901) and the U.S. Supreme Court (in 1904). The law in the works was the ongoing congressional and presidential interest in tinkering with postal service in general and second-class mail rates in particular — an interest that manifested itself in 1911 in the form of hearings conducted in New York City by a special federal Postal Commission headed by Justice Charles Evans Hughes.

[†] Professor of law at George Mason University and editor of the *Green Bag*. Sharper (and in some cases more colorful) versions of images in this article are available at www. availableat.org. Thanks to Cattleya Concepcion and Ira Brad Matetsky.

¹ Now the U.S. Postal Service. Postal Reorganization Act, 84 Stat. 719 (Aug. 12, 1970).

The results were: (a) a colorful, relatively small, booklet version of "Norwood Builder" (and similar booklets of the other stories in the series) for in-town readers of the *World*, and (b) black-and-white, relatively large, tabloid versions of the same stories for out-of-town subscribers to the newspaper. Unfortunately, decisions by several of America's great libraries to discard their hard copies of the *World* have left us (at least for now) with the rather plain tabloid version of "Norwood Builder," but not the colorful booklet version, to share with readers of the *Green Bag Almanac & Reader*.3

I. THE LAW ON THE BOOKS

On July 17, 1901, Postmaster General Charles Emory Smith issued regulations reversing longstanding Post Office practice under the Mail Classification Act of 1879.⁴ Reinterpreting the 1879 Act, Smith determined that publications "having the characteristics of books" would no longer qualify as "periodicals" mailable at the very low, heavily subsidized second-class postal rates intended for newspapers and magazines, but would instead go at the much higher third-class rates intended for other kinds of publications.⁵

Many publishers were in the habit of characterizing books and book-like products as periodicals in order to capitalize on the Post Office's formerly generously broad definition of "periodicals" under the 1879 Act. Thus, the new regulations meant much higher distribution costs for those publishers. For decades, they had been successfully frustrating efforts by Postmasters General to persuade Congress to amend the 1879 Act to achieve what Smith was now doing by (in the eyes of the publishers) overreaching bureaucratic fiat.⁶ Not surprisingly, this sharp reversal

² See Appendix A below.

³ See Cattleya M. Concepcion, Smoking Out the "Norwood Builder," page 496 above; Ira Brad Matetsky, The Adventure of the New York World, page 465 above.

^{4 20} Stat. 355, 358-59 (Mar. 3, 1879).

⁵ See Payne v. National Railway Publishing Co., 20 App. D.C. 581, 585-86 (D.C. Cir. 1902) (describing and quoting the regulation); ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE POST-OFFICE DEPARTMENT FOR THE FISCAL YEAR ENDED June 30, 1901, at 772-83 (1901) (describing the rationale for the regulations and the early and anticipated impacts).

⁶ See Richard B. Kielbowicz, Mere Merchandise, or Vessels of Culture?: Books in the Mail, 1792-1942, 82 PAPERS OF THE BIBLIOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY OF AMERICA 169, 179-86 (June 1988); see also, e.g., William H. Moody, The Work of the Postal Commission, THE INDEPENDENT, Jan. 24,

upset them.

As the new regulations went into effect, several publishers mounted court challenges. They failed. In a series of decisions in 1904, the U.S. Supreme Court sided with the Post Office, engaging in a mix of statutory interpretation and deference to agency judgments that would sound pretty familiar to a modern administrative lawyer.⁷ The Court's admirably forthright descriptions of its own role and of the Postmaster General's authority under the 1879 Act left the publishers with little reason to hope that more resistance would achieve a different result:

The rule upon this subject may be summarized as follows: That where the decision of questions of fact is committed by Congress to the judgment and discretion of the head of a department, his decision thereon is conclusive; and that even upon mixed questions of law and fact, or of law alone, his action will carry with it a strong presumption of its correctness, and the courts will not ordinarily review it, although they may have the power, and will occasionally exercise the right of so doing.

Upon this principle, and because we thought the question involved one of law rather than of fact, and one of great general importance, we have reviewed the action of the Postmaster General in holding serial novels to be books rather than periodicals; but it is not intended to intimate that in every case hereafter arising the question whether a certain publication shall be considered a book or a periodical shall be reviewed by this court. In such case the decision of the Post Office Department, rendered in the exercise of a reasonable discretion, will be treated as conclusive.⁸

So, starting in 1904, it was pretty well settled that publications "having the characteristics of books" in the eyes of the Post Office would be posted at third-class rates, which tended to be seven or eight times higher than the second-class rates at which books had traditionally traveled. That

^{1901,} at 195, 196 (a Member of the U.S. House of Representatives and future U.S. Attorney General and Supreme Court Justice describing an earlier congressional Postal Commission whose members had agreed "that there should be a curtailment of the amount of matter mailable as second class").

⁷ Houghton v. Payne, 194 U.S. 88 (1904); Smith v. Payne, 194 U.S. 104 (1904); Bates & Guild Co. v. Payne, 194 U.S. 106 (1904); see also Houghton v. Cortelyou, 208 U.S. 149 (1908).

⁸ Bates & Guild Co. v. Payne, 194 U.S. at 109-110.

⁹ See Jane Kennedy, Development of Postal Rates: 1845-1955, 33 LAND ECONOMICS 93, 100 (May 1957); Richard B. Kielbowicz, Postal Subsidies for the Press and the Business of Mass Cul-

was still the state of the law in 1911.

Of course, the Post Office was free to "exercise . . . a reasonable discretion," which meant that for a publisher there was no harm in trying for second-class postage on a case-by-case basis. But the *New York World* had no good reason to hope for any discretionary administrative beneficence from the Post Office when it came to publishing Sherlock Holmes stories in book (or book-like) form. In *Smith v. Payne*, one of the cases decided against the publishers by the Supreme Court in 1904, the publishers had argued that their publications merited second-class postage in part because:

Each issue contains high-class fiction of great literary merit, such as "The Sherlock Holmes Detective Stories," by A. Conan Doyle, "An Accidental Password," by Nicholas Carter, and "The Clique of Gold," by Emile Gaboriau ¹⁰

Unfortunately for Smith and his co-appellants, Justice Henry Billings Brown's opinion for the Court had no kind words for their literary taste:

The books of these series are apparently of an inferior class of literature

The considerations moving us to affirm the decree of the Court of Appeals in the case of *Houghton v. Payne* [the lead case on the publishers' challenge to the regulation], just decided, apply with much greater persuasiveness to this case, and the decree dismissing the bill is, therefore

Affirmed.11

Arthur Conan Doyle himself might have concurred. He viewed his Sherlock Holmes stories (which he called "police romances") as "on a different and humbler plane" 12 than "my more serious literary work." 13

ture, 1880-1920, 64 BUSINESS HISTORY REV. 451, 458 (Autumn 1990); Kielbowicz, Mere Merchandise, note 6 above, at 179.

¹⁰ Transcript of Record 2 (filed Nov. 14, 1903), Smith v. Payne, 194 U.S. 104 (1904).

¹¹ Id. at 105.

 $^{^{12}}$ A. Conan Doyle, *Preface to the Author's Edition*, THE WHITE COMPANY vi (1891; 1902 D. Appleton edition).

¹³ Arthur Conan Doyle, *Preface*, The Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes xix, xx (1927; Leslie S. Klinger ed., 2007); *see also* Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Memories and Adventures 108 (1924); Daniel Stashower, Teller of Tales: The Life of Arthur Conan Doyle 151 (1999).

II. THE LAW IN THE WORKS

The controversy over books and book-like things as second-class or third-class mail matter was just one phase in a long conflict over public subsidies for book distribution. It was not settled until President Franklin D. Roosevelt established a special book rate in 1938 and Congress followed up in 1942.¹⁴ The books conflict was, in turn, just one front in a larger, long-running policy-and-politics struggle over the proper role of government in the distribution (and thus also the regulation) of information.¹⁵

In 1911, the hot topic was second-class postage generally. The Post Office was running big deficits and the emergent yellow press was offending politicians and other powerful people, providing plenty of inspiration for Congress and the President to take a close look at the wisdom of subsidies for newspapers and magazines. Generally speaking, debates over the second-class postal rates in 1911 revolved (as they had, off and on, for more than a decade) around the interconnected issues of pricing of the service and the efficiency with which it was provided: Should second-class rates be raised somewhat (thus reducing public subsidies to publishers of newspapers and magazines) or should periodicals pay their own way (thus abolishing subsidies) or should rates be left as-is (thus, in an inflating economy, effectively increasing subsidies) or should the Post Office reform its operations (thus becoming more efficient and obviating subsidy concerns)?

¹⁴ 3 F.R. 2588 (Nov. 1, 1938); 3 F.R. 2662 (Nov. 9, 1938); 56 Stat. 462 (June 30, 1942); see also Kielbowicz, Mere Merchandise, note 6 above, at 196-99.

¹⁵ See generally, e.g., Federal Interference With the Freedom of the Press, 23 Yale L.J. 559 (1914); Lindsay Rogers, The Postal Power of Congress: A Study in Constitutional Expansion chs. IV-VII (1916); Gerald Cullinan, The Post Office Department chs. II-VII (1968); Dorothy Ganfield Fowler, Unmailable (1977).

¹⁶ See Kielbowicz, Postal Subsidies for the Press, note 9 above, at 464-71.

¹⁷ See generally Message of the President of the United States Transmitting the Annual Report of the Postmaster General for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 1911 and the Report of the Commission on Second-Class Mail Matter, 62d Cong., 2d Sess., H.R. Doc. No. 559 (Feb. 22, 1912) (hereafter "Report of the Commission"); Hearings of the Commission on Second-Class Mail Matter in New York City Beginning August 1, 1911: Statements on Behalf of the Post Office Department (1911) (hereafter "Hearings of the Commission"); see also Richard B. Kielbowicz, Cost Accounting in the Service of Policy

Among those who were interested in both improving the Post Office's financial condition and making trouble for trouble-making periodicals was President William Howard Taft. After a legislative session in which newspaper and magazine publishers continued their long run of successful resistance to increases in second-class rates, Congress — with the support of Taft — passed a joint resolution in March 1911:

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the President shall appoint three competent and impartial persons, one of whom shall be a judge of the Supreme Court of the United States and the other two of whom shall hold no office, and no one of whom shall be connected with the Postoffice Department or have any interest in any business directly or indirectly affected by the publishing of magazines or newspapers using the mails of the United States, to examine the reports of the Postoffice Department and any of its officers, agents or employees, and the existing evidence taken in respect to the cost to the Government of the transportation and handling of all classes of second class mail matter which may be submitted to them, and such evidence which may be presented to them by persons having an interest in the rates to be fixed for second class mail matter, to make a finding of what the cost of transporting and handling different classes of such second class mail matter is to the Government and what in their judgment should be the rate for the different classes of second class postal matter, in order to meet and reimburse the Government for the expense to which it is put in the transportation and handling of such matter, and on or before December first to make report of their proceedings and findings to the President for transmission to Congress: Provided, That the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars is hereby appropriated to pay the expenses of such commission, including compensation to the members thereof, to the necessary secretaries, stenographers, and other incidental expenses, and such compensation may be awarded to the Federal official member of the commission, anything in the existing law to the contrary notwithstanding.¹⁸

Reform: Postal Rate Making, 1875-1926, 75 SOCIAL SCIENCE Q. 284, 291-93 (June 1994).

18 S.J. Res. 147, 36 Stat. 1458 (Mar. 4, 1911); see Our Political Postoffice, N.Y. SUN, Feb. 14, 1911, at 7 (advertisement); Taft Averts One Defeat, N.Y. TIMES, Mar. 5, 1911, at 2; Justice Hughes to Be Named, N.Y. SUN, Mar. 7, 1911, at 1; Justice Hughes Accepts, N.Y. SUN, Mar. 10, 1911, at 4; Harvard President to Assist in Postal Rate Investigation, WASH. TIMES, Mar. 31, 1911, at 1; President Lowell Will Serve on Postal Commission, N.Y. SUN, Apr. 1, 1911, at 8; Lowell on Inquiry

Charles Evans Hughes — then an Associate Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court (1910-1916), and later a Republican presidential candidate (1916), then Secretary of State (1921-1925), and, finally, Chief Justice (1930-1941)¹⁹ — later recalled in his memoirs the context and consequences of the joint resolution:

I looked forward with eagerness to the long vacation of 1911. But that gave me no relief. For President Taft had a Joint Resolution passed providing for a Commission to determine the cost of second-class mail matter, then a question of much public interest in connection with a proposal to raise the rates. . . . President Taft asked me to serve, saying that he had the Resolution passed with the intention to appoint me and did not wish to name any other Justice. I had not been consulted about this action and strongly resisted. But President Taft was insistent, arguing that it would not be a difficult task, that all of the calculations had been made in the Post Office Department and that I should have able associates — President A. Lawrence Lowell of Harvard and Harry A. Wheeler, a leading businessman of Chicago. So I was persuaded to undertake the task. Of course, it turned out to be a very hard one. We held public hearings during the summer of 1911. The calculations of the Post Office Department were strongly challenged and we had to take a lot of technical evidence and make our own calculations. I caught a severe cold and suffered greatly from lumbago. Through the fall while I was trying to keep up with the work of the Court I was busy over figures until late into the night. It was February 1912, before we got in our report, and it was not until the summer of 1912 that I had any opportunity for rest.20

Basically then, the Postal Commission was a congressionally mandated, presidentially organized, and judicially led investigation into second-class mail service and its adequacy for, or abuse by, publishers. Alas (or fortunately), nothing came of all those inter-branch exertions in 1911-1912.

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Board, N.Y. TIMES, Apr. 1, 1911, at 7; The Postal-Rates Commission Completed, HARPER'S WEEKLY, Apr. 8, 1911, at 5; see also Kielbowicz, Postal Subsidies for the Press, note 9 above, at 469-70.

¹⁹ Burnett Anderson, *Charles Evans Hughes, in* THE SUPREME COURT JUSTICES: ILLUSTRATED BIOGRAPHIES, 1789-1992 at 306-10 (Clare Cushman, ed., 1993).

 $^{^{20}}$ The Autobiographical Notes of Charles Evans Hughes 166 (David J. Danelski and Joseph S. Tulchin, eds., 1973) (footnote omitted); see also Merlo J. Pusey, 1 Charles Evans Hughes 296 (1951).



The members of the 1911 Postal Commission (left to right): Charles Evans Hughes, Harry A. Wheeler, and A. Lawrence Lowell.

No legislation adjusting second-class rates was enacted at that time, or for several years thereafter.²¹

But in the spring and summer of 1911, publishers of newspapers and magazines (and things that might be considered book-like) had, obviously, good reason to be nervous. And the *New York World* had two grounds, at least, to be especially nervous.

²¹ Kennedy, Development of Postal Rates, note 9 above, at 100.

First, there was the danger that the *World* might serve as an example of abuse of second-class postal rates. Hughes and his colleagues on the Postal Commission had chosen to conduct their hearings in New York, where any misbehavior by the *World* — for example, any attempt to send books through the mail at second-class rates — would make it a convenient target.²²

Second, there was the danger that partisan Republican frustration with the Supreme Court's January 1911 decision in U.S. v. Press Publishing Co.²³ might somehow manifest itself via the Postal Commission's proceedings or Congress's use of them. The Court's decision was the culmination of a Justice Department prosecution — under Presidents Theodore Roosevelt and William H. Taft — of the *World's* parent company for libel based on the newspaper's reporting of alleged government complicity in profiteering during development of the Panama Canal. The Court ruled in the World's favor on jurisdictional grounds, and so did not reach the constitutionality of seditious libel prosecutions, but it was still an important victory for Press Publishing and the World, and for owner Joseph Pulitzer.²⁴ The case has been obscured by a lively century of First Amendment jurisprudence, but it was a big deal at the time.²⁵ In victory, the Pulitzer organization does not seem to have exerted itself to improve relations with the government. Instead, it celebrated publicly and energetically. For example, in April 1911 it put out a pamphlet with a title that some observers might have considered a trifle inflammatory: "The Roosevelt Panama Libel Case Against the New York World: A Brief History of the Attempt of President Roosevelt by Executive Usurpation to Destroy the Freedom of the Press in the United States."26

Under those circumstances it should perhaps be unsurprising that the *World* was not so obstreperous when it came to compliance with the more mundane (and Supreme Court-endorsed) government imposition of restraints on the use of second-class mail to distribute book-like publications. Indeed, the *World* was quite docile — at least in a strictly, technically regulatory sense.

²² See REPORT OF THE COMMISSION, note 17 above, at 53.

^{23 219} U.S. 1 (1911).

²⁴ See Denis Brian, Pulitzer: A Life chs. 31-34 (2001).

²⁵ See Michael T. Gibson, The Supreme Court and Freedom of Expression from 1791 to 1917, 55 FORDHAM L. REV. 263, 290-93 (1986).

²⁶ THE ROOSEVELT PANAMA LIBEL CASE AGAINST THE NEW YORK WORLD 3 (1911).

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THE NEW YORK WORLD UNDER THE LAW

By 1911, the *World* was an accomplished operator under the Supreme Court's 1904 second-class mail decisions and the Post Office policy the Court upheld. The *World* continued to promote and publish book-like things. But it also complied with the new postal regulatory regime.

For example, while Congress was debating second-class rate reform and passing the Postal Commission joint resolution in early 1911, the World was including a "complete novel in book form" in its Sunday edition each week. Those books — *The Red Triangle Stories*, which the *World* promoted as "A Second Sherlock Holmes" - were just the sorts of things that the Post Office and the Supreme Court had said were not mailable at second-class rates.²⁷ But each book was "given in Greater New York" — that is, to the *World*'s local customers, who were accessible via non-postal channels, such as newsstands and local delivery. Indeed, advertisements for the book series admonished readers, "You really must order from [a] newsdealer in advance if you expect to have a Sunday World containing one of these booklets saved for you."28 Apparently, out-of-town subscribers were out of luck. Not every advertisement for the book series included a reference to "Greater New York" availability, but plenty did.²⁹ And I have found no evidence that the Post Office objected to the World's distribution of the Red Triangle books.

The *World* must have been pleased with reader response to the "Second Sherlock Holmes," because it announced on April 2, 1911, that it was bringing back the real thing — republishing the thirteen stories in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*.³⁰ (The stories had first been serialized in 1903-04

²⁷ A Second Sherlock Holmes, N.Y. WORLD, Feb. 18, 1911, at 6 (advertisement); see also ARTHUR MORRISON, THE RED TRIANGLE: BEING SOME FURTHER CHRONICLES OF MARTIN HEWETT, INVESTIGATOR (1903).

²⁸ See, e.g., The Cleverest Idea Yet Offered, and FREE, N.Y. WORLD, Jan. 27, 1911, at 12 & Jan. 26, 1911, at 15 (advertisements).

²⁹ Compare, e.g., id., with The Great Detective Begins to Unravel the Mystery of the Red Triangle, N.Y. WORLD, Feb. 13, 1911, at 14 (advertisement).

³⁰ Interest in republication may have been amplified by other Holmes-related developments in 1911. It was the busiest year for new Holmes stories in nearly a decade, including the first printings of "The Adventure of the Red Circle" and "The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax" in England and in the U.S. and the first printing of "The Adventure of the Devil's Foot" in the U.S. See RICHARD LANCELYN GREEN & JOHN MICHAEL GIBSON, A BIBLI-

and collected in 1905.³¹) Again, the *World's* advertising said, the stories would be published "in book form."³² The *World* did not, however, mention distribution limited to "Greater New York" or orders to be placed with news-dealers, as it had with *The Red Triangle Stories*. But a few days later, on April 8, another advertisement cleared things up: the *World* would honor the letter of the postal law while at the same time honoring the wishes of both its local readers and its out-of-town subscribers for Sherlock Holmes stories: locals and out-of-towners were to receive the same stories, in different formats. It was a vivid — both colorful and black-and-white — example of regulatory line-drawing and regulated line-toeing.

OGRAPHY OF A. CONAN DOYLE 182 (first rev. ed. 2000) (hereafter "GREEN & GIBSON"); N.Y. WORLD, Mar. 21, 1911, at 2 (advertisement). Other interesting Holmes-related activity included: (1) a rather nice, eclectic serial reissue by the Boston Post, under the general title Masterpieces of Sherlock Holmes, of Holmes stories of various vintages (see, e.g., Appendix E below); (2) performances in New York by William Gillette of his famous "Sherlock Holmes" play (see, e.g., N.Y. WORLD, Mar. 27, 1911, at 10 & Apr. 3, 1911, at 10 & Apr. 10, 1911, at 10 (advertisements)); and (3) the first readings of Ronald Knox's "The Mind and Art of Sherlock Holmes" which would be printed the next year as "Studies in the Literature of Sherlock Holmes." See Nicholas Utechin, The Case of the First Reading, 61 BAKER St. J. 34 (Spring 2011); Studies in the Literature of Sherlock Holmes, BAKER ST. J. 2010 CHRISTMAS ANNUAL 28-43 (reprinting the Knox paper, and describing its first publication in The Blue Book: Conducted by Oxford Undergraduates in September 1912); 1 BLACKFRIARS 154 (June 1920); Steven Rothman, Christopher Morley and the Baker Street Irregulars: The Gospel According to Kit, 40 BAKER ST. J. (n.s.) 9, 10 (Mar. 1990); ANDREW LYCETT, THE MAN WHO CREATED SHERLOCK HOLMES: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF SIR ARTHUR CONAN DOYLE 356-57 (2007). Arthur Conan Doyle was very much in the public eye as well, with his public endorsements of Irish Home Rule (see Jon Lellenberg, Daniel Stashower, and Charles Foley, Arthur Conan DOYLE: A LIFE IN LETTERS 578-79 (2007)) and liberalized divorce laws (see Albert M. Rosenblatt, Divorce, Canonical Style: Checkmate, 35 BAKER St. J. (n.s.) 15 (Mar. 1985)), as well as the death of Joseph Bell, his teacher in medical school who became the main real-life model for Holmes. See Dr. Douglas Guthrie, Dr. Bell of Edinburgh, 13 BAKER ST. J. (n.s.) 202 (Dec. 1963). 31 See Green & Gibson, note 30 above, at 135-39.

³² The Return of Sherlock Holmes, N.Y. WORLD, Apr. 2, 1911, at 11 (advertisement).



The Return of Sherlock Holmes

In its ever-willingness to respond to the wishes of its readers, The World takes great pleasure in making the following announcement:

The series of detective stories in book form that have been given away from week to week with copies of the Sunday World have struck such a popular chord that The World has received many requests to republish the famous series of stories in which Conan Doyle brought to life again his famous character, Sherlock Holmes.

The World has arranged to comply with these numerous requests and makes announcement that the first of the series of Sherlock Holmes stories, "The Adventure of the Empty House," will be given free with copies of next Sunday's World. It is needless to say that this adventure of the world's most famous detective is highly exciting. It will be presented in book form, trimmed and pasted, with attractive cover printed in colors.

On following Sundays will be given "The Adventure of the Norwood Builder,"
"The Adventure of the Dancing Men," etc., etc.

Sherlock Holmes needs no introduction to the public. His name stands for all that is wonderful as a detector of crime, a reasoner and conclusionist of almost supernatural powers. Every one of his remarkable adventures is a marvellous lesson in the study of human conduct and in the baffling methods and cunning resources of wrongdoers. The reader is guided, step by step, through a maze of conflicting incidents and emotions until, at length, he bursts out into the broad daylight of perfect understanding. The sensation is delightful and exalting. The morals taught are educational and inspiring. The stories, as a whole, stand unapproached as masterpieces of analytical fiction.

This fascinating series consists of thirteen Sherlock Holmes stories. A different story will be given with copies of the Sunday World every Sunday for twelve consecutive Sundays. The set will make a valuable addition to any library.

Be sure and get story No. 1, "The Adventure of the Empty House," with next Sunday's World. Read it and you will surely want them all.

Advertisement, N.Y. World, Apr. 2, 1911, at 11.

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"The Adventures of Sherbook Holmos" as related by Comm Docks using the literary creating of "Dr. Whereas" inclonedlying Comm Docks was a detected when below withing—under more than a strict when they were first published. They set a new pace for mysteries, 3ch popular were they published. They set a new pace for mysteries, 3ch popular ware they published. They set a new pace for mysteries. So popular were they published they have shown as stricted. Great Detective

• So insistent was this public demand for "more of Shericek Holmes". that Conan Doyle, in the entertaining story in the bookly. "The Adventure of the Empir House." marcelonally brought the master defective back to life and put him to work again.
• First published in England, there now Shericek Holmes stories proved even better than the first. are the best, the most theiling, the most mysterious, the most interesting detective published anywhere. In response to the request of many readers, the Sunday World to republish them. Holmes Returns

T. Berick, "The Alventure of the Engly Hone" there are twelve more stories in the "Beturn of Stretch Holmes, "seein, Each of these will be published in a higher blookful this write is sever in four colors, and this Husteried. One of these booklets will be given free with The Standay Twelve More Stories

The twelve more Sherlock Holmes stories to be given free with the Sunday World most thrilling, most mystifying detective stories ever written. The titles are as follows The Adventure of
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black clay befrays the guilty one ive's ruse and Suppose you were married to a beautiful young wrife and every moming you found title figures of dancing men seawhed in place, where she could see them and it was driving her insure. Wouldn't you comult Sheriock Holmes? Of curue you would The Adventure of the Share Share Share Code Barry Cyclist:

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It's a gruenome setting—a louely pavilion—a black bearded old Yrnat—a sight that sent curious spec-tators fixing with white faces—a bottle of rum and two dirty glasses. The Adventure of Black Peter:

The Adventure of Charles Adventure of Sharles Augustus Milverton: Sharles Roline plus as gooder and a serieman' op and rether and B. takes with him a fart, an up-locate harge at Excitence—There we to consider the Parkers You ought not St. NDAY WG

miss a single one of these twelve stories. Teil your newsdealers to delive Separate Booklet Free with the SUNDAY WORLD not to miss a single one of these twelve stories. Tent WORLD to your house for the next there nordles. Each Story in a Sout-of-town Readers

Advertisement, N.Y. World, Apr. 8, 1911, at 12 (above) and detail (below).

You ought not to miss a single one of these twelve stories. Teil your newsdealers to deliver THE SUNDAY WORLD to your house for the next three months. Each Story in a Separate Booklet Free with the SUNDAY WORLD Out-of-town Readers Will Be Furnished With These Stories as a Special Supplement in Pamphlet Form.

IV. Sherlock Holmes Under the Law

In 1904, the Supreme Court had gone on at great length about the difference between books and periodicals, and then concluded that,

While it may be difficult to draw an exact line of demarkation between periodicals and books [for purposes of the Post Office's second-class mail regulations], . . . it is usually, though not always, easy to determine within which category it falls, if the character of a particular publication be put in issue.³³

In all three of its second-class-mail cases, the Court found it "easy to determine" that the kinds of publications in question — popular novels, pieces of sheet music, volumes of highbrow literature — were not periodicals. From then on, law-abiding publishers merely had to correctly guess which side of the difficult-to-draw line a court (or, more likely, an official in the Post Office) would easily place each of their publications on. Was just another chapter in the ages-old story of blurry and invisible lines of legality and their chilling effects on those subject to the laws.

By 1911, with a few years of practice, the *World* seems to have developed an intuition about where at least one segment of the postal line between books and periodicals lay. The *World's* April 8 advertisement of its *Return of Sherlock Holmes* series was headlined "13 Conan Doyle Sherlock Holmes Stories in Book Form Free," and it said:

³³ Houghton v. Payne, 194 U.S. at 97 (distinctive spelling in the original).

³⁴ Id.; Smith v. Payne, 194 U.S. 104; Bates & Guild Co. v. Payne, 194 U.S. 106.

³⁵ *Cf.* Statement of Hon. James J. Britt, Third Assistant Postmaster General at 13, *in* HEARINGS OF THE COMMISSION, note 17 above.

³⁶ See, e.g., David S. Han, Rethinking Speech-Tort Remedies, 2014 WIS. L. REV. 1135, 1182; Monica Youn, The Chilling Effect and the Problem of Private Action, 66 VAND. L. REV. 1473 (2013); Francesca M. Pisano, The Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and Corporate Charity, 62 EMORY L.J. 607, 633-35 (2013); Kevin Werbach, The Network Utility, 60 DUKE L.J. 1761, 1786-87 (2011); William N. Eskridge, Jr. & Lauren E. Baer, The Continuum of Deference, 96 GEO. L.J. 1083, 1156-59 (2008); Pierre Schlag, Rules and Standards, 33 UCLA L. REV. 379, 385 (1985); Frederick Schauer, Fear, Risk and the First Amendment: Unraveling the Chilling Effect, 58 B.U. L. REV. 685 (1978); see also, e.g., Jacobellis v. Ohio, 378 U.S. 184, 197 (1964) (Stewart, J. concurring) ("I shall not today attempt further to define the kinds of material I understand to be embraced within that shorthand description; and perhaps I could never succeed in intelligibly doing so. But I know it when I see it, and the motion picture involved in this case is not that.").

You ought not to miss a single one of these Tell your newsdealers to deliver THE SUNDAY WORLD to your house for the next three months.

Each Story in a Separate Booklet Free with the SUNDAY WORLD[.]
Out-of-town Readers Will Be Furnished With These Stories as a Special Supplement in Pamphlet Form.³⁷

It would seem that in the publishing-and-distributing world according to the *World*, "books" or "booklets" were not second-class mailable and "pamphlets" were.

And the *World* had a fairly precise sense of what counted as a "book" and what counted as a "pamphlet." As it said in the April 2 advertisement announcing the Holmes series, "book form" meant "trimmed and pasted, with attractive cover printed in colors." In addition, an April 11 advertisement for "The Adventure of the Norwood Builder" expanded on the distinguishing features of a book (or booklet):

This is not a "cut out" or a part of the regular edition of the Sunday World, but is a pocket edition booklet printed in large readable type within covers illuminated in colors — just like one would buy at the stores at ten cents per copy. ³⁹

So, a book, unlike a pamphlet, was to be small, with its own cover and binding, and distinctly separate from the regular newspaper it accompanied. These characteristics — size, binding, covers, separateness — were all important to the Supreme Court (though each characteristic standing alone was "by no means essential"⁴⁰) in its 1904 decisions upholding the Post Office's regulations excluding "books" from second-class mail.⁴¹

Questions remained, of course: How small was small enough to be a book that was not a mere part of the *World*, and how large was large enough to be a pamphlet that was part of the regular newspaper? How

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³⁷ 13 Conan Doyle Sherlock Holmes Stories in Book Form Free, N.Y. WORLD, Apr. 8, 1911, at 12 (advertisement).

³⁸ The Return of Sherlock Holmes, N.Y. WORLD, Apr. 2, 1911, at 11 (advertisement).

³⁹ The Return of Sherlock Holmes: Story No. 2, N.Y. WORLD, Apr. 11, 1911, at 16 (advertisement); but compare, e.g., pamphlet, n., 1.b., OED ONLINE (Sept. 2014; vis. Nov. 29, 2014) ("A short printed work of several pages fastened together without a hard cover; a booklet; a leaflet."), with booklet, n., OED ONLINE (Sept. 2014; vis. Nov. 29, 2014) (no mention of "pamphlet").

⁴⁰ Houghton v. Payne, 194 U.S. at 97.

⁴¹ *Id.* at 95 (size); *id.* at 97, 98 (binding); *id.* at 95 (covers); *id.* at 95, 97 (separateness); *see also Smith v. Payne*, 194 U.S. 104; *Bates & Guild Co. v. Payne*, 194 U.S. 106.

bound was bound enough to be a book, and how unbound was unbound enough to be a pamphlet? How covered to be a book or uncovered to be a pamphlet? How separate or not?⁴²

The limited available evidence suggests that the World did in fact publish distinctively small, bound, covered, and separate booklets of The Return of Sherlock Holmes stories for its New York readers and distinctively large, unbound, uncovered, and unseparate pamphlets for its out-of-town subscribers. By "limited" I mean severely limited. As my colleague Ira Brad Matetsky explains elsewhere in this *Almanac*, all the great libraries save one discarded their hard copies of the New York World many years ago when microfilm — the great 20th-century solution to limited library shelf space — came into vogue.⁴³ And as my colleague Cattleya M. Concepcion explains elsewhere in this Almanac, the great microfilm solution was, unfortunately, not so great.44 Microfilmers did not consistently film complete sets of documents, and what they did film they did not film with sufficient care to ensure that everything they were attempting to film actually got filmed. As a result, microfilms of 1911 issues of the World do not include the newspaper's Holmes stories in book or pamphlet form, and related material — advertisements for the stories, for example — that is included is sometimes fragmentary or unreadable. (Should this be a caution to devotees of the great 21st-century in-vogue solution to limited library shelf space? I think so.)

A. Surviving Pamphlets

In a bibliographical cliffhanger, with novelist Nicholson Baker as the truly brave and noble hero, Matetsky reports that only the British Library in London preserved its ink-on-paper *Worlds* during the microfilm revolution. But even it eventually decided to dispose of that massive, shelf-space-hogging collection. Fortunately, it put the newspapers up for sale, rather than simply tossing them. Baker bought the *Worlds*, and then the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Duke Uni-

⁴² The definition of "book" is a question (though perhaps not a great question) of administrative law with which the courts, including the Supreme Court, have long struggled. *Compare, e.g., Houghton v. Payne,* 194 U.S. at 95-100, and *id.* at 100-04 (Harlan, J., dissenting), *with U.S. v. Mead Corp.,* 533 U.S. 218, 224-25, 235 (2001).

⁴³ Matetsky, *The Adventure of the New York World*, note 3 above.

⁴⁴ Concepcion, Smoking Out the "Norwood Builder," note 3 above.

versity agreed to take them off Baker's hands.45

London being outside Greater New York, the British Library was an out-of-town subscriber to the *World*. So, we should expect to find "pamphlet" versions, not "book" versions, of the Holmes stories in the Rubenstein collection. And we do (in fact it was Concepcion who found them there⁴⁶). Not all of the stories are in the collection, but the few that are are quite obviously pamphlets.⁴⁷ They are not small (they are tabloids — roughly 11 inches wide by 18 inches tall), they are not bound (the pages are simply broadsheets, folded once, to tabloid size), they have no covers (at the top of the first page there is a heading with a headline beneath it and the story itself below that, all in black-and-white, like the rest of the pamphlet⁴⁸), and they are not very separate (again, they are broadsheets, folded once, and so for mailing they would have fit neatly as just another section in the *World*, which was itself a broadsheet publication).

B. Surviving Booklet

I know of only one existing copy of a "book" version of one of these stories — "The Adventure of the Six Napoleons," which is in my collection.⁴⁹ (I hope this article will prompt Sherlockians to keep their eyes peeled for others.⁵⁰) It is as obviously a booklet as the ones in the Rubenstein collec-

⁴⁵ Matetsky, *The Adventure of the New York World*, note 3 above.

⁴⁶ Concepcion, Smoking Out the "Norwood Builder," note 3 above.

⁴⁷ The Rubenstein collection contains five pamphlets: "The Adventure of the Norwood Builder" (reprinted in Appendix A below), "The Adventure of Black Peter" (reprinted soon in a Green Bag book or periodical), "The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton" (reprinted in 18 GREEN BAG 2D 98 (2014)), "The Adventure of the Six Napoleons" (reprinted in Appendix B below), and "The Adventure of the Golden Pince-Nez" (reprinted in 4 JOURNAL OF LAW 259 (2014)).

⁴⁸ All of the pamphlets in the Rubenstein collection are illustrated with black-and-white drawings, but only one pamphlet — "The Adventure of the Norwood Builder" — has a drawing on its first page. *See* note 47 above; Appendixes A and B below.

⁴⁹ Two stories — "The Adventure of the Priory School" and "The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton" — are listed with 1911 *New York World* citations under the heading "'Tabloid' Versions of Sherlockian Stories" in an inventory of the University of Minnesota Library's Sherlock Holmes Collections. *See The "Lumber-Room" Collection/Miscellaneous and Single Issue periodicals from the John Bennett Shaw Collection* box 30 (in process, preliminary inventory, SCRB Collection 150), www.lib.umn.edu/pdf/holmes/150lumberroom.pdf (vis. Dec. 2, 2014). I have been unable to learn whether they are in fact tabloid pamphlets or half-tabloid booklets.

 $^{^{50}}$ Intriguingly, another major newspaper, the $Boston\ Post$ — operating at a relatively safe distance from the Postal Commission's hearings in New York City — was publishing versions of Holmes stories in the spring and summer of 1911 in a booklet format very much like the



The Adventure of the Norwood Builder — the black-and-white pamphlet version — bound with the New York World, April 16, 1911, in the David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library at Duke University.





The Adventure of the Six Napoleons — the booklet version, with colorful front and back covers — from the New York World, May 28, 1911.

tion are obviously pamphlets. It is much smaller (roughly 9 inches wide by 11 inches tall — not quite a half-tabloid), it is bound (saddle-stitched), it has covers (colorful ones, front and back), and it is quite separate (its small and odd size, and stapled binding, mean it would not have folded neatly into the *World*, and its distinctive covers mean it would not have blended in visually either).

World's. See, e.g., A. Conan Doyle, Masterpieces of Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure of the Second Stain, BOSTON POST, July 2, 1911 (reprinted in Appendix E below). There may be Boston Post pamphlet versions of Holmes stories out there somewhere — and perhaps even other pamphlet and book versions produced by other newspapers in 1911 — but I have not yet run across any.

The Return of Sherlock Holmes

STORY NO. 2.

"The Adventure of the Norwood Builder"

A Complete Detective Story in Book Form.

Free With Every Copy of Next Sunday's World.

Advertisement, N.Y. World, Apr. 10, 1911, at 6.

Both versions of "The Adventure of the Six Napoleons" — pamphlet and book — are reprinted below, in Appendixes B and C respectively. Direct comparisons of the sizes and colors of the originals are impossible because both versions are printed on pages of the same size as the one you are looking at now, in the low-budget, black-and-white print format of this *Almanac*. But it is possible to get a sense of the very different looks, and the very similar contents, of the two versions. (The color versus black-and-white comparison is possible in the online version of this article, and in the high-resolution images at www.availableat.org.)

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There are, obviously, more pieces of the puzzle missing than present.⁵¹ But there are enough to know the *World* did act on both halves (books and pamphlets) of its advertised plan for publishing and distributing the stories in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*. Moreover, most of the *World*'s advertisements for the stories — including ads for each of the stories preserved

⁵¹ Perhaps this shortage explains the limited attention paid to the series by bibliographers. One leading work has sketchy entries for most of it. RONALD BURT DE WAAL, THE WORLD BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SHERLOCK HOLMES AND DR. WATSON 1, 3-5, 9, 10, 13, 17, 22 (1974) (all except "The Adventure of the Empty House" and "The Adventure of the Missing Three-Quarter"). But several others make no mention of it. *See*, *e.g.*, GREEN & GIBSON, note 30 above; RONALD B. DE WAAL, THE UNIVERSAL SHERLOCK HOLMES (1994), www.lib.umn.edu/scrbm/ush/intro (vis. Nov. 30, 2014); A HOLMES AND DOYLE BIBLIOGRAPHY (AKA HDB): BEING A SUPPLEMENT TO THE UNIVERSAL SHERLOCK HOLMES, www.lib.umn.edu/scrbm/holmes/useful-bibliographies (vis. Nov. 30, 2014).

in pamphlet form in the Rubenstein Collection — highlight their bookish features, suggesting that both the booklets and the pamphlets were produced throughout the series. ⁵² And apparently the *World's* plan worked. The dog that did not bark when the *World* put out its *Red Triangle* books in early 1911 — the Post Office — was, as best I can tell, silent again as the *World* followed up with its Holmes books and pamphlets.

So, I am fairly sure that there were two Norwood Builders — that the *World* distributed "The Adventure of the Norwood Builder" to its readers as both a booklet (locally) and a pamphlet (elsewhere) on April 16, 1911. But I can show you only one of them. For now.

Is there a moral to this story? For librarians and collectors, yes: We should hesitate before discarding or destroying our ink-on-paper collections in reliance on high-tech or low-cost substitutes. And while we are hesitating we should check the completeness, the accuracy, and the overall quality of those substitutes. And for lawyers, another yes: When it comes to administrative law, the more things change the more they stay the same — from persistently spasmodic congressional oversight to impatient yet inefficient presidential management to deferential yet intrusive judicial supervision to resourceful and flexible regulated entities.

EXISTING COPIES OF THE NEW YORK WORLD'S

1911 EDITIONS OF THE "RETURN OF SHERLOCK HOLMES" STORIES:

CAN YOU FILL-IN A BLANK?

story title	pub. date	booklet	pamphlet
The Adventure of the Empty House	Apr. 9, 1911		
The Adventure of the Norwood Builder	Apr. 16, 1911		Duke
The Adventure of the Dancing Men	Apr. 23, 1911		
The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist	Apr. 30, 1911		
The Adventure of the Priory School	May 7, 1911		Minnesota?
The Adventure of Black Peter	May 14, 1911		Duke
The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton	May 21, 1911		Duke
			Minnesota?
The Adventure of the Six Napoleons	May 28, 1911	Davies	Duke
The Adventure of the Three Students	June 4, 1911		
The Adventure of the Golden Pince-Nez	June 11, 1911		Duke
The Adventure of the Missing Three-Quarter	June 18, 1911		
The Adventure of the Abbey Grange	June 25, 1911		
The Adventure of the Second Stain	July 2, 1911		

Please send news of fill-ins to rdavies@greenbag.org.

⁵² For samples of the advertising for each story, see Appendix D below.

APPENDIX A

The Return of Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure of the Norwood Builder, New York World, April 16, 1911

actual size: approximately 11 inches wide by 18 inches tall source: David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University

APPENDIX B

The Return of Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure of the Six Napoleons, New York World, May 28, 1911

actual size: approximately 11 inches wide by 18 inches tall source: David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University

APPENDIX C

The Return of Sherlock Holmes: The Adventure of the Six Napoleons, New York World, May 28, 1911

actual size: approximately 9 inches wide by 11 inches tall source: Ross E. Davies

APPENDIX D

Advertisements for The Return of Sherlock Holmes, New York World, Apr. 3 – July 1, 1911

actual sizes: various

sources: Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers, Library of Congress, chroniclingamerica.loc.gov; David M. Rubenstein Rare Book & Manuscript Library, Duke University

APPENDIX E

"Masterpieces of Sherlock Holmes" in the *Boston Post* May 14 to July 16, 1911

actual size: approximately 9 inches wide by 11 inches tall source: Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

This 10-episode series is preserved in its entirety in the Louis Round Wilson Special Collections Library at the University of North Carolina at

Chapel Hill.⁵³ The series began with three of the earliest Holmes stories, originally published in 1891 and then included in *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* in 1892:

- "A Scandal in Bohemia" (May 14, 1911),
- "A Case of Identity" (May 21, 1911), and
- "The Red-Headed League" (May 28, 1911).

Next came two still-new stories that had appeared in *The Strand Magazine* earlier in 1911:

- "The Adventure of the Devil's Foot" (June 3, 1911) and
- "The Adventure of the Red Circle" (June 11, 1911).

The balance of the series consisted of stories originally published in 1904 and then included in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* in 1905:

- "The Adventure of the Missing Three-Quarter" (June 18, 1911),
- "The Adventure of the Abbey Grange" (June 25, 1911),
- "The Adventure of the Second Stain" (July 2, 1911),
- "The Adventure of the Golden Pince-Nez" (July 9, 1911), and
- "The Adventure of the Three Students" (July 16, 1911).

The "Masterpieces" were printed as half-tabloids (roughly 9 inches wide by 11 inches tall), with colorful pictorial covers. An example from the UNC–Chapel Hill collection — "The Adventure of the Second Stain" — is reproduced on the next few pages. This half-tabloid format is much like the one in which the *New York World* produced its own complete *Return of Sherlock Holmes* series for local New York consumption (in tandem with full-tabloid pamphlet versions of the same stories for out-of-town subscribers).

⁵³ See Christy Edina Richards, An Assessment of the Mary Shore Cameron Sherlock Holmes Collection at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill 89, 217 (Nov. 2003), ils.unc.edu/MS papers/2907.pdf (vis. Dec. 2, 2014). The University of Minnesota Library lists several of the "Masterpieces" in its Sherlock Holmes Collections. See The "Lumber-Room" Collection/ Miscellaneous and Single Issue periodicals from the John Bennett Shaw Collection box 30 (in process, preliminary inventory, SCRB Collection 150), www.lib.umn.edu/pdf/holmes/150lumberroom .pdf (vis. Dec. 2, 2014); see also Green & Gibson, note 30 above, at 55, 139, 182; Christopher Redmond, Sherlock Holmes Handbook 78 (2d ed. 2009).