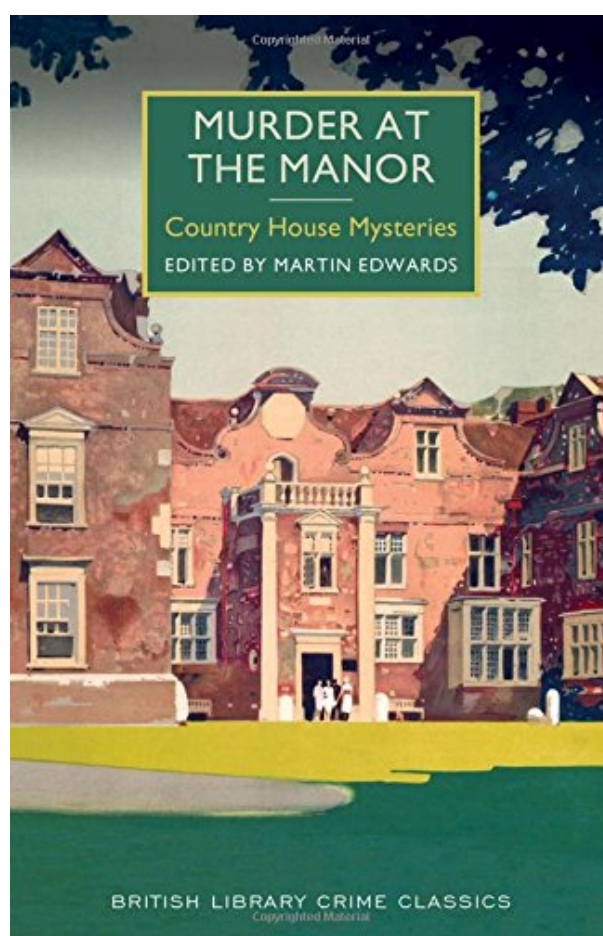
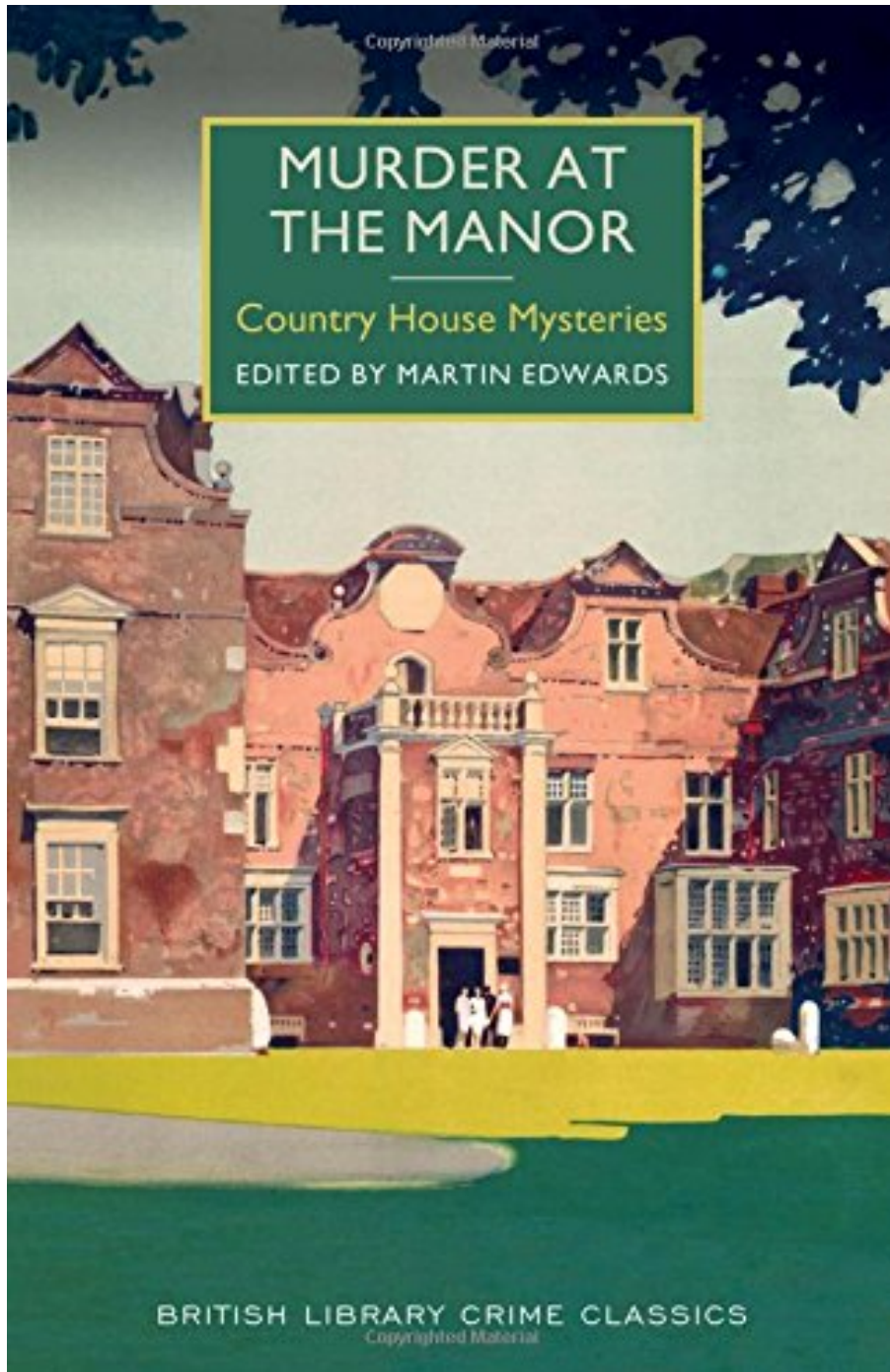


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From Publishers Weekly

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Review

Another delightful volume in the series of Classic British mysteries, concentrating on the Golden Age of Detective Fiction.~~~Presented in chronological order, this set of short stories has some real gems. Although each of these volumes has a unifying theme, the country house in this case, I find that the books also uncover some ideas about what makes up a mystery.~~~In this volume the theme is less detection and more presentation. In some stories the main character is the criminal, in others the murder is named in an unconventional way. One is even more of a thriller than a mystery and two have no murders at all.~~~Each story is introduced with a short description of the author, his typical writings, and something about the story. I love how these put the stories in context.~~~It's another charming volume in a series I just love. (Blogspot)

Absolutely loved this collection! (Blogspot)

Murder at the Manor is another high-quality collection of classic British mystery stories, many of which have seldom, if ever, been collected before. The book provides a spread of carefully constructed puzzles, full of crazed killers, cunning planners, rogues, and wit. There are locked room murders, hidden passages, and strange poisons in play. As the title implies, all of the mysteries take place in that familiar setting: the manor

house. Set in a world of its own and large enough to hold a number of family members, servants, and guests, the house and grounds provide plenty of room for murder and suspicion.~~~In tone, the tales range from the serious work of Anthony Berkeley in "The Mystery of Hornes Copse" and to the light-hearted parody of "The Murder at the Towers" where E. V. Knox gleefully trots out every possibly mystery trope while still constructing a solid puzzle. G. K. Chesterton is present as well, though not with his familiar detective, Father Brown. Instead, Dr. Adrian Hyde takes the role of sleuth in the wholly unexpected "The White Pillars Murder." The sleuths themselves range from the respectable to the raffish, each clever and generally accompanied by a sidekick who is slightly less so. The collection is good for the detective fan to keep on hand for when reading time is scarce and there is only time for a short story—or for gobbling down at once because it is too good to wait.~~~Fans of Agatha Christie, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and G. K. Chesterton will enjoy this selection of mysteries from their peers and will find new authors to treasure. (NetGalley)

The British stately home takes up a lot of territory in the popular imagination, encompassing novels, movies, and TV serials. The isolation of the countryside surrounding these splendid homes made Sherlock Holmes think of "the impunity with which crime may be committed there." This addition to the British Library Crime Classics series brings together 16 country-house murder and crime stories, spanning roughly 65 years from pre-WWI to post-WWII, from Arthur Conan Doyle, E. F. W. Hornung, and G. K. Chesterton to Margery Allingham, Nicholas Blake, and Michael Gilbert. Perhaps the most exciting story is "The Adventure of the Copper Beeches," in which Holmes uncovers a cunning deception and barely escapes with his life. But the entire book is filled with country-house-mystery wonders: the closed-circle puzzle, the dying-message clue, and the sociopathic guest who invades the weekend house party. Edwards, author of the Lake District mystery series, is series consultant for the Crime Classics, and here he provides an absolutely fascinating account of the country-house subgenre in his introduction, as well as enlightening notes at the top of each story. (Connie Fletcher Booklist)

I do enjoy these collections of Golden Age mystery stories, in this instance centered on incidents at British Manor Houses, subject of innumerable novels and films for years. Martin Edwards discusses the setting in his introduction and Arthur Conan Doyle addresses the phenomenon in a story included in this collection, as Watson and Holmes discuss a possible case in *The Copper Beeches*.~~~'Good heaven's!' I cried. 'Who would associate crime with these dear old homesteads?~~~'They always fill me with a certain horror. It is my belief, Watson, founded upon my experience, that the lowest and vilest alleys in London do not present a more dreadful record of sin than does the smiling and beautiful countryside?~~~'You horrify me!'~~~'But the reason is very obvious. The pressure of public opinion can do in the town what the law cannot accomplish. There is no lane so vile that the scream of a tortured child, or the thud of a drunkard's blow does not beget sympathy...~~~and then the whole machinery of justice is ever so close ... and there is but a step between the crime and the dock. But look at these lonely houses, each in its own fields, filled for the most part with poor ignorant folk who know little of the law. (loc 215)~~~I enjoyed virtually all of these stories, with my lowest personal rating being a 3* for three of the fifteen. My favorites are *The Secret of Dunstan's Tower* by Ernest Bramah featuring his blind detective Max Carrados; *A Horror at Stavely Grange* by J.S.Fletcher, a "who and how" done it; *The Mystery of Horne's Copse* by Anthony Berkeley Cox; *The Murder at the Towers* By E.V.Knox which I found very witty; and *The Unlocked Window* by Ethel Lina White, an effective suspense story even if I did guess a bit before the ending.~~~I heartily recommend this collection for those who enjoy traditional British mysteries or want to give them a try. If you require hard action and lots of gore, this may not be for you. If you've enjoyed some Christie or Sayers or Doyle, etc., I suggest you give this and/or other of Martin Edwards edited collections a try. Lots of fun and good leads for future reading. (GoodReads)

Murder at the Manor is a collection of mystery stories. I am not the short story type person, the only exceptions being Jeffrey Archer's collections like *Twelve Red Herrings* or *Twist in the Tale*. But after

reading and enjoying a bunch of reprinted old mysteries by Posined Pen press this year, I decided to give it a try.~~~I think *Witness for the Prosecution* may be the only 'short' I have read belonging to the mystery genre, that too long ago. As the name suggests here, the setting is a British classic mystery setting. And at least some mysteries must be in a manor house type situation.~~~According to me, the problem with mysteries in a short story format is that there is not enough time or not enough words to actually establish a background. What I enjoy about classic mysteries is that the story begins slowly, we get to know the cast of characters, form our own opinions about them. then the crime is committed. Red herrings are strewn. Some investigator appears, and our preconceived ideas are either trashed or proved right. either way, we turn the pages frantically while chewing our nails. The short story does not give much opportunity for all this.~~~One of the stories I liked was about the Druid Circle and the blood on the steps. Then there is the one where a couple of apprentices come to a shattering inference about the case they are investigating.~~~Overall, I think this is a good book to read when you are on the go or in a hurry, when you want a slice of the mystery story but cannot be immersed in a big book. (NetGalley)

There is something about these dark, late autumn evenings that are perfect for a bit of old fashioned mystery and suspense. *Murder at the Manor* edited by Martin Edwards brings together a fabulous collection of short stories, mysteries that are set in that favourite golden age setting of the country house. As Edwards explains in his introduction, country house crime stories remain as popular as ever. Their appeal is driven particularly by nostalgia for a bygone era. The stories in this collection were written over a period of approximately sixty-five years, and cover a period in which society in Britain and life in those country houses was changing. These stories therefore cover a period before, after and naturally during that period typically referred to as the Golden Age of crime fiction. There are some real gems in this collection, with several well-known authors of these kinds of tales, including Arthur Conan Doyle, E W Hornung, G K Chesterton, Margery Allingham, Ethel Lina White and Nicholas Blake.~~~It is always hard to review an entire collection of stories, so rather than trying to talk about each story I will endeavour to give just a flavour of this superb collection, which I just loved. Each story is prefaced with a short bio of the author, setting the story which follows in the context of the author's body of work. Several of the authors were new to me, some old friends.~~~In this collection we are treated to a glorious mixture of mystery story ingredients, country house parties, poison, jealousy, strange inscriptions, bizarre and unexplained phenomenon, wills, suspense, jewel theft, amateur sleuths and ingenious policemen.~~~conandoyleThere was only one story in the collection that I had read before, *The Copper Beeches* by Arthur Conan Doyle, which is the opening story. As a Sherlock Holmes fan, I was happy to read it again. A young woman named Violet Hunter consults Sherlock Holmes as to the wisdom in accepting a position of governess which she desperately needs, the job specifications are very odd her prospective employers requiring her dress in a certain way when asked, and to cut off her hair. Miss Hunter decides to take the position in Hampshire at a house called *The Copper Beeches*, but it is agreed that Holmes and Watson should be on standby in case needed. It is not long before Holmes and Watson are travelling to Hampshire to meet with Miss Hunter again, and hear the story of her peculiarly sinister employment.~~~The *Mystery of Horne's Copse* by Anthony Berkeley was among my favourites (although that could be a fairly long list). As anthony berkeleyMartin Edwards explains:~~~"The story features both Sheringham and another regular Berkeley character, Chief Inspector Moresby, and its twists and turns illustrate why Agatha Christie, among others heaped praise on the ingenuity of Berkeley mysteries."~~~Anthony Berkeley is a writer I hadn't read before and this mystery is absolutely brilliant true I had mostly worked out what was going on, but I was desperate to know how it would all be solved. The story revolves a young man, Hugh, who had suffered from shell shock in the First World War. He is the owner of *Ravendean*, and his cousin Frank who is abroad with his wife, is Hugh's heir. Happily engaged to Sylvia, his future seems an assured one. Until one night, following dinner with his fianc?and friends, Hugh finds his car won't start and decides to walk through *Horne's Copse*. Half way through the wood, Hugh stumbles upon the body of his cousin Frank, with a bullet hole through his head. Shocked, supposing his cousin to be in Italy Hugh races off for help, the doctor and the police. On his return

with the police and his friend the doctor, Frank's body is gone, and all sign that Hugh was ever there obliterated.~~~J J Bell J Bell is another author who was new to me and his story *The message on the Sun Dial* is superbly executed in which he uses the plot device of the 'dying message'. Philip Bolsover Wingard (generally known by his middle name) is a man with debts. Bolsover is heir to his more sensible and reliable cousin Philip Merivale Wingard. When Bolsover's latest forgery of his cousin's name is discovered by his furious cousin, Bolsover is driven to take extreme action. Later that night, in the grounds of his cousin's estate a knife is drawn, and a man is murdered. Behind him is left a strange and inexplicable message on the edge of the sun dial. Can anyone fathom what it means, and solve the mystery of the attacker?~~~ethel lina whiteI recently read *Fear Stalks the Village* by Ethel Lina White, so I was looking forward to reading *The Unlocked window* which comes toward the end of this collection. I wasn't disappointed; it's a fantastic story of suspense, set in a country house where two nurses have care of a very sick patient. The neighbourhood have been terrified by a series of recent murders; nurses have been targeted by a medical student with a grudge.~~~"Nurse Cherry hurried through her round of fastening the windows. As she carried her candle from room to room of the upper floors, she had the uneasy feeling that she was visible to any watcher.~~~Her mind kept wandering back to the bad business of the forgotten oxygen cylinder. It had plunged her in depths of self-distrust and shame. She was overtired, having nursed the patient single-handed, until the arrival, three days ago, of the second nurse. But that fact did not absolve her from blame. "I'm not fit to be a nurse," she told herself in bitter self-reproach."~~~Will the unprotected women in the house fall victim to the murderer on the loose, are they really as vulnerable as Nurse Charry starts to fear? I read that whole story with my heart in my mouth. Brilliant, spine tingling stuff! I really must read more Ethel Lina White.~~~*Murder at the Manor* is a superb collection most especially for fans of the Golden Age. (NetGalley)

It has to be my colonial history that makes me nostalgic for manors, country lanes, country scenes and of course murders most prolific. This was a joy to read as it dealt with all of them and country characters as well. Lady and Lords abound, vicars and curates, butlers, maids, parlour maids, groomsmen, stable hands the lot. *Downton Abbey* in all its aspects combined with a hint of mystery and murder. Fabulous collection of crime. (NetGalley)

The 16 entries in this British Library crime classics anthology, most dating to the golden age of detective fiction, between the two world wars, will appeal to all lovers of English country house mysteries. Edwards opens with an unsettling Sherlock Holmes story, Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Copper Beeches," about a governess whose employers require her to perform some rather odd duties, such as cutting off her long hair. Other notable authors of the last century include E.W. Hornung, whose famed "amateur cracksman" Raffles appears in "Gentlemen and Players," and Anthony Berkeley, who shows his ingenuity in "The Mystery of Horne's Copse." Margery Allingham surprises us with "Same to Us," a short take on the country house party, and Michael Gilbert unravels a past mystery to solve a modern puzzle in "Weekend at Wapentake." Those looking for comfort on a dark and stormy night will be rewarded. (Feb.) (PW)

Here's another volume in the British Library Crime Classics series. This time the stories have been chosen because they're set in country houses, a classic mystery genre. The authors are not forgotten or neglected; the very first story in the book is Conan Doyle's *The Copper Beeches*, which must be very well known indeed.~~~I particularly liked *The Mystery of Horne's Copse* by Anthony Berkeley, which was truly baffling. Then there's a very amusing, tongue in cheek story by E V Knox, *The Murder at the Towers*. Here's a flavour of it:~~~The gathering consisted, as the inspector had foreseen, of the usual types involved in a country house murder, namely, a frightened stepsister of the deceased, a young and beautiful niece, a major, a doctor, a chaperon, a friend, Mr. Porlock himself, an old butler with a beard, a middle-aged gardener with whiskers, an Irish cook, and two servants who had only come to the place the week before.~~~But whenever Scotland Yard was unable to deal with a murder case—that is to say, whenever a murder case

happened at a country house—Bletherby Marge was called in.~~~Bletherby Marge, indeed!~~~For me, the most frightening story is An Unlocked Window. It's by that interesting writer Ethel Lina White, author of The Wheel Spins, which Alfred Hitchcock filmed as The Lady Vanishes. Two nurses alone with their patient in an isolated house, with a murderer on the loose, an atmosphere of fear and terror and a great twist.~~~I read this courtesy of NetGalley and enjoyed it very much. (NetGalley)

I really enjoy anthologies when they contain grouping of murder mysteries covering a single topic. Martin Edwards is a very good editor of books of this type as he always writes a little history and biography of the authors of the short stories. as with all books of this type some are good whilst others not so much. I had read quite a few stories before , but as a fan of mysteries from the golden ages, how could I not. I really enjoyed revisiting with old friends. A great book if your are pressed for time as most of the stories are short but pack a punch nevertheless. (Goodreads)

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MURDER AT THE MANOR: A BRITISH LIBRARY CRIME CLASSIC (BRITISH LIBRARY CRIME CLASSICS) FROM POISONED PEN PRESS PDF

The English country house is an iconic setting for some of the greatest British crime fiction. This new collection gathers together stories written over a span of about 65 years, during which British society, and life in country houses, was transformed out of all recognition. It includes fascinating and unfamiliar twists on the classic 'closed circle' plot, in which the assorted guests at a country house party become suspects when a crime is committed. In the more sinister tales featured here, a gloomy mansion set in lonely grounds offers an eerie backdrop for dark deeds.

Many distinguished writers are represented in this collection, including such great names of the genre as Anthony Berkeley, Nicholas Blake and G.K. Chesterton. Martin Edwards has also unearthed hidden gems and forgotten masterpieces: among them are a fine send-up of the country house murder; a suspenseful tale by the unaccountably neglected Ethel Lina White; and a story by the little-known Scottish writer J.J. Bell.

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Murder at the Manor is another high-quality collection of classic British mystery stories, many of which have seldom, if ever, been collected before. The book provides a spread of carefully constructed puzzles, full of crazed killers, cunning planners, rogues, and wit. There are locked room murders, hidden passages, and strange poisons in play. As the title implies, all of the mysteries take place in that familiar setting: the manor house. Set in a world of its own and large enough to hold a number of family members, servants, and guests, the house and grounds provide plenty of room for murder and suspicion.~~~In tone, the tales range from the serious work of Anthony Berkely in "The Mystery of Hornes Copse" and to the light-hearted parody of "The Murder at the Towers" where E. V. Knox gleefully trots out every possibly mystery trope while still constructing a solid puzzle. G. K. Chesterton is present as well, though not with his familiar detective, Father Brown. Instead, Dr. Adrian Hyde takes the role of sleuth in the wholly unexpected "The White Pillars Murder." The sleuths themselves range from the respectable to the raffish, each clever and generally accompanied by a sidekick who is slightly less so. The collection is good for the detective fan to keep on hand for when reading time is scarce and there is only time for a short story—or for gobbling down at once because it is too good to wait.~~~Fans of Agatha Christie, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and G. K. Chesterton will enjoy this selection of mysteries from their peers and will find new authors to treasure. (NetGalley)

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I do enjoy these collections of Golden Age mystery stories, in this instance centered on incidents at British Manor Houses, subject of innumerable novels and films for years. Martin Edwards discusses the setting in his introduction and Arthur Conan Doyle addresses the phenomenon in a story included in this collection, as Watson and Holmes discuss a possible case in The Copper Beeches.~~~'Good heaven's!' I cried. 'Who would associate crime with these dear old homesteads?~~~'They always fill me with a certain horror. It is my belief, Watson, founded upon my experience, that the lowest and vilest alleys in London do not present a more dreadful record of sin than does the smiling and beautiful countryside?~~~'You horrify me!'~~~'But the reason is very obvious. The pressure of public opinion can do in the town what the law cannot accomplish. There is no lane so vile that the scream of a tortured child, or the thud of a drunkard's blow does not beget sympathy...~~~and then the whole machinery of justice is ever so close ... and there is but a step between the crime and the dock. But look at these lonely houses, each in its own fields, filled for the most part with poor ignorant folk who know little of the law. (loc 215)~~~I enjoyed virtually all of these stories, with my lowest personal rating being a 3* for three of the fifteen. My favorites are The Secret of Dunstan's Tower by Ernest Bramah featuring his blind detective Max Carrados; A Horror at Stavely Grange by J.S.Fletcher, a "who and how" done it; The Mystery of Horne's Copse by Anthony Berkeley Cox; The Murder at the Towers By E.V.Knox which I found very witty; and The Unlocked Window by Ethel Lina White, an effective suspense story even if I did guess a bit before the ending.~~~I heartily recommend this collection for those who enjoy traditional British mysteries or want to give them a try. If you require hard

action and lots of gore, this may not be for you. If you've enjoyed some Christie or Sayers or Doyle, etc., I suggest you give this and/or other of Martin Edwards edited collections a try. Lots of fun and good leads for future reading. (GoodReads)

Murder at the Manor is a collection of mystery stories. I am not the short story type person, the only exceptions being Jeffrey Archer's collections like *Twelve Red Herrings* or *Twist in the Tale*. But after reading and enjoying a bunch of reprinted old mysteries by Posined Pen press this year, I decided to give it a try.~~~I think *Witness for the Prosecution* may be the only 'short' I have read belonging to the mystery genre, that too long ago. As the name suggests here, the setting is a British classic mystery setting. And at least some mysteries must be in a manor house type situation.~~~According to me, the problem with mysteries in a short story format is that there is not enough time or not enough words to actually establish a background. What I enjoy about classic mysteries is that the story begins slowly, we get to know the cast of characters, form our own opinions about them. then the crime is committed. Red herrings are strewn. Some investigator appears, and our preconceived ideas are either trashed or proved right. either way, we turn the pages frantically while chewing our nails. The short story does not give much opportunity for all this.~~~One of the stories I liked was about the Druid Circle and the blood on the steps. Then there is the one where a couple of apprentices come to a shattering inference about the case they are investigating.~~~Overall, I think this is a good book to read when you are on the go or in a hurry, when you want a slice of the mystery story but cannot be immersed in a big book. (NetGalley)

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would all be solved. The story revolves a young man, Hugh, who had suffered from shell shock in the First World War. He is the owner of Ravendean, and his cousin Frank who is abroad with his wife, is Hugh's heir. Happily engaged to Sylvia, his future seems an assured one. Until one night, following dinner with his fiancée and friends, Hugh finds his car won't start and decides to walk through Horne's Copse. Half way through the wood, Hugh stumbles upon the body of his cousin Frank, with a bullet hole through his head. Shocked, supposing his cousin to be in Italy Hugh races off for help, the doctor and the police. On his return with the police and his friend the doctor, Frank's body is gone, and all sign that Hugh was ever there obliterated.~~~J J Bell J Bell is another author who was new to me and his story The message on the Sun Dial is superbly executed in which he uses the plot device of the 'dying message'. Philip Bolsover Wingard (generally known by his middle name) is a man with debts. Bolsover is heir to his more sensible and reliable cousin Philip Merivale Wingard. When Bolsover's latest forgery of his cousin's name is discovered by his furious cousin, Bolsover is driven to take extreme action. Later that night, in the grounds of his cousin's estate a knife is drawn, and a man is murdered. Behind him is left a strange and inexplicable message on the edge of the sun dial. Can anyone fathom what it means, and solve the mystery of the attacker?~~~Ethel Lina White I recently read Fear Stalks the Village by Ethel Lina White, so I was looking forward to reading The Unlocked window which comes toward the end of this collection. I wasn't disappointed; it's a fantastic story of suspense, set in a country house where two nurses have care of a very sick patient. The neighbourhood have been terrified by a series of recent murders; nurses have been targeted by a medical student with a grudge.~~~"Nurse Cherry hurried through her round of fastening the windows. As she carried her candle from room to room of the upper floors, she had the uneasy feeling that she was visible to any watcher.~~~Her mind kept wandering back to the bad business of the forgotten oxygen cylinder. It had plunged her in depths of self-distrust and shame. She was overtired, having nursed the patient single-handed, until the arrival, three days ago, of the second nurse. But that fact did not absolve her from blame. "I'm not fit to be a nurse," she told herself in bitter self-reproach."~~~Will the unprotected women in the house fall victim to the murderer on the loose, are they really as vulnerable as Nurse Charry starts to fear? I read that whole story with my heart in my mouth. Brilliant, spine tingling stuff! I really must read more Ethel Lina White.~~~Murder at the Manor is a superb collection most especially for fans of the Golden Age. (NetGalley)

It has to be my colonial history that makes me nostalgic for manors, country lanes, country scenes and of course murders most prolific. This was a joy to read as it dealt with all of them and country characters as well. Lady and Lords abound, vicars and curates, butlers, maids, parlour maids, groomsmen, stable hands the lot. Downton Abbey in all its aspects combined with a hint of mystery and murder. Fabulous collection of crime. (NetGalley)

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Here's another volume in the British Library Crime Classics series. This time the stories have been chosen because they're set in country houses, a classic mystery genre. The authors are not forgotten or neglected; the very first story in the book is Conan Doyle's The Copper Beeches, which must be very well known indeed.~~~I particularly liked The Mystery of Horne's Copse by Anthony Berkeley, which was truly

baffling. Then there's a very amusing, tongue in cheek story by E V Knox, *The Murder at the Towers*. Here's a flavour of it:~~~The gathering consisted, as the inspector had foreseen, of the usual types involved in a country house murder, namely, a frightened stepsister of the deceased, a young and beautiful niece, a major, a doctor, a chaperon, a friend, Mr. Porlock himself, an old butler with a beard, a middle-aged gardener with whiskers, an Irish cook, and two servants who had only come to the place the week before.~~~But whenever Scotland Yard was unable to deal with a murder case—that is to say, whenever a murder case happened at a country house—Bletherby Marge was called in.~~~Bletherby Marge, indeed!~~~For me, the most frightening story is *An Unlocked Window*. It's by that interesting writer Ethel Lina White, author of *The Wheel Spins*, which Alfred Hitchcock filmed as *The Lady Vanishes*. Two nurses alone with their patient in an isolated house, with a murderer on the loose, an atmosphere of fear and terror and a great twist.~~~I read this courtesy of NetGalley and enjoyed it very much. (NetGalley)

I really enjoy anthologies when they contain grouping of murder mysteries covering a single topic. Martin Edwards is a very good editor of books of this type as he always writes a little history and biography of the authors of the short stories. as with all books of this type some are good whilst others not so much. I had read quite a few stories before , but as a fan of mysteries from the golden ages, how could I not. I really enjoyed revisiting with old friends. A great book if your are pressed for time as most of the stories are short but pack a punch nevertheless. (Goodreads)

Most helpful customer reviews

4 of 4 people found the following review helpful.

Another great collection of Golden Age mysteries

By Susan Drees

I do enjoy these collections of Golden Age mystery stories, in this instance centered on incidents at British Manor Houses, subject of innumerable novels and films for years. Martin Edwards discusses the setting in his introduction and Arthur Conan Doyle addresses the phenomenon in a story included in this collection, as Watson and Holmes discuss a possible case in *The Copper Beeches*.

'Good heaven's!' I cried. 'Who would associate crime with these dear old homesteads?

'They always fill me with a certain horror. It is my belief, Watson, founded upon my experience, that the lowest and vilest alleys in London do not present a more dreadful record of sin than does the smiling and beautiful countryside?

'You horrify me!'

'But the reason is very obvious. The pressure of public opinion can do in the town what the law cannot accomplish. There is no lane so vile that the scream of a tortured child, or the thud of a drunkard's blow does not beget sympathy... and then the whole machinery of justice is ever so close ... and there is but a step between the crime and the dock. But look at these lonely houses, each in its own fields, filled for the most part with poor ignorant folk who know little of the law. (loc 215)

I enjoyed virtually all of these stories, with my lowest personal rating being a 3* for three of the fifteen. My favorites are *The Secret of Dunstan's Tower* by Ernest Bramah featuring his blind detective Max Carrados; *A Horror at Stavely Grange* by J.S.Fletcher, a "who and how" done it; *The Mystery of Horne's Copse* by Anthony Berkeley Cox; *The Murder at the Towers* By E.V.Knox which I found very witty; and *The Unlocked Window* by Ethel Lina White, an effective suspense story even if I did guess a bit before the ending.

I heartily recommend this collection for those who enjoy traditional British mysteries or want to give them a try. If you require hard action and lots of gore, this may not be for you. If you've enjoyed some Christie or Sayers or Doyle, etc., I suggest you give this and/or other of Martin Edwards edited collections a try. Lots of fun and good leads for future reading.

A copy of this book was provided by the publisher through NetGalley in return for an honest review.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Murderers, maniacs and things that go bump in the night...

By FictionFan

Another in the British Library Crime Classics series, this is the third anthology of short stories edited by Martin Edwards, following *Capital Crimes*, stories set in London, and *Resorting to Murder*, stories with a holiday theme. This one, as the title makes obvious, is full of stories set in the traditional country house, so beloved of murderers that one can't help but wonder why all the owners didn't sell up and move into a nice little cottage somewhere. Though no doubt the twisted crime writers of the time would have tracked them down even there...

As Edwards says in his introduction, the country house is an ideal setting for the 'closed circle' type of mystery, where the suspects are defined by their presence in the house. It's from this that the old cliché of "the butler did it" arises, though in fact this rarely was the solution. (In one of these stories, though, the butler did indeed do it, but I'm not telling which one...)

Several of the stories come from the Golden Age between the two wars, but there are also earlier and later ones. Many of the authors who appeared in the previous collections turn up again here and, as usual, they range from household names to the pretty much forgotten. One thing I've found, as I've read more of these short stories and some of the novels the British Library has revived, is that there's a good reason for why some authors have remained popular while others have faded from the public consciousness. While the anthologies are interesting for seeing how the genre developed over time, there's no doubt that the quality of the stories is variable, and with a few exceptions the better ones are from the authors whose names are still more familiar.

Although all of the stories contain a crime, some of them are really more horror than detective and, in fact, I tended to enjoy these more. Overall, I found this collection a little less enjoyable than the other two, though whether that's because the average quality is lower or just that I've surfeited on vintage crime for the moment, I'm not sure. However, as always, there are enough good stories to make the collection well worth reading. I'm not sure reading all of these anthologies so close together does them proper justice, but I do recommend them individually, depending on what setting you prefer to satisfy your murderous impulses... 3½ stars for me, so rounded up.

NB This book was provided for review by the publisher, Poisoned Pen Press.

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful.

Short stories that will keep you thinking.

By Anam Cara

Actually, the stories were quite entertaining. The stories were written by a variety of authors and the compiler of the stories thoughtfully provided information about each author which certainly added to the enjoyment. I did find one story down right scary, but perhaps because that was partly because I was reading that one late at night. Most of the stories would fit into the "cozy" category.

My favorite was *Murder at the Towers* which I found delightfully written and with a twist that I could

NEVER have imagined. E. V. Knox had amusing names for the characters like "Police-Inspector Blowhard." The writing for this one had me longing for more. It is set in a house party in a grand home in England (of course - the book is titled "Murder at the Manor") The first sentence is one of the best opening lines I have ever read.

Mr. Ponderby-Wilkins was a man so rich, so ugly, so cross, and so old, that even the stupidest reader could not expect him to survive any longer than Chapter 1." Our detective is introduced and was welcomed by all the guests. "Many of them had already begun to feel that a house-party without a detective in it must be regarded as a literary failure."

My problem was not with the stories or the writing, but with the format. I read this on my kindle; it was the first time I had ever read short stories in e-format. I found this disconcerting. I couldn't be certain while reading how much longer a story was; I couldn't just flip a few pages easily and see how much more 'til the end. The stories were of varying length so I had no idea. My kindle only would show the % until the end of the book. I wasn't even certain just how many stories were included in this anthology.

While I highly recommend the book, I would advise anyone who wants to read it, to buy the traditional bound copy.

I received an advance copy of this book for my honest review.

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MURDER AT THE MANOR: A BRITISH LIBRARY CRIME CLASSIC (BRITISH LIBRARY CRIME CLASSICS) FROM POISONED PEN PRESS PDF

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From Publishers Weekly

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Review

Another delightful volume in the series of Classic British mysteries, concentrating on the Golden Age of Detective Fiction.~~~Presented in chronological order, this set of short stories has some real gems. Although each of these volumes has a unifying theme, the country house in this case, I find that the books also uncover some ideas about what makes up a mystery.~~~In this volume the theme is less detection and more presentation. In some stories the main character is the criminal, in others the murder is named in an unconventional way. One is even more of a thriller than a mystery and two have no murders at all.~~~Each story is introduced with a short description of the author, his typical writings, and something about the story. I love how these put the stories in context.~~~It's another charming volume in a series I just love. (Blogspot)

Absolutely loved this collection! (Blogspot)

Murder at the Manor is another high-quality collection of classic British mystery stories, many of which have seldom, if ever, been collected before. The book provides a spread of carefully constructed puzzles, full of crazed killers, cunning planners, rogues, and wit. There are locked room murders, hidden passages, and strange poisons in play. As the title implies, all of the mysteries take place in that familiar setting: the manor house. Set in a world of its own and large enough to hold a number of family members, servants, and guests, the house and grounds provide plenty of room for murder and suspicion.~~~In tone, the tales range from the serious work of Anthony Berkely in "The Mystery of Hornes Copse" and to the light-hearted parody of "The Murder at the Towers" where E. V. Knox gleefully trots out every possibly mystery trope while still constructing a solid puzzle. G. K. Chesterton is present as well, though not with his familiar detective, Father

Brown. Instead, Dr. Adrian Hyde takes the role of sleuth in the wholly unexpected "The White Pillars Murder." The sleuths themselves range from the respectable to the raffish, each clever and generally accompanied by a sidekick who is slightly less so. The collection is good for the detective fan to keep on hand for when reading time is scarce and there is only time for a short story—or for gobbling down at once because it is too good to wait.~~~Fans of Agatha Christie, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and G. K. Chesterton will enjoy this selection of mysteries from their peers and will find new authors to treasure. (NetGalley)

The British stately home takes up a lot of territory in the popular imagination, encompassing novels, movies, and TV serials. The isolation of the countryside surrounding these splendid homes made Sherlock Holmes think of "the impunity with which crime may be committed there." This addition to the British Library Crime Classics series brings together 16 country-house murder and crime stories, spanning roughly 65 years from pre-WWI to post-WWII, from Arthur Conan Doyle, E. F. W. Hornung, and G. K. Chesterton to Margery Allingham, Nicholas Blake, and Michael Gilbert. Perhaps the most exciting story is "The Adventure of the Copper Beeches," in which Holmes uncovers a cunning deception and barely escapes with his life. But the entire book is filled with country-house-mystery wonders: the closed-circle puzzle, the dying-message clue, and the sociopathic guest who invades the weekend house party. Edwards, author of the Lake District mystery series, is series consultant for the Crime Classics, and here he provides an absolutely fascinating account of the country-house subgenre in his introduction, as well as enlightening notes at the top of each story. (Connie Fletcher Booklist)

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The 16 entries in this British Library crime classics anthology, most dating to the golden age of detective fiction, between the two world wars, will appeal to all lovers of English country house mysteries. Edwards opens with an unsettling Sherlock Holmes story, Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Copper Beeches," about a governess whose employers require her to perform some rather odd duties, such as cutting off her long hair. Other notable authors of the last century include E.W. Hornung, whose famed "amateur cracksman" Raffles appears in "Gentlemen and Players," and Anthony Berkeley, who shows his ingenuity in "The Mystery of Horne's Copse." Margery Allingham surprises us with "Same to Us," a short take on the country house party, and Michael Gilbert unravels a past mystery to solve a modern puzzle in "Weekend at Wapentake." Those looking for comfort on a dark and stormy night will be rewarded. (Feb.) (PW)

Here's another volume in the British Library Crime Classics series. This time the stories have been chosen because they're set in country houses, a classic mystery genre. The authors are not forgotten or neglected; the very first story in the book is Conan Doyle's *The Copper Beeches*, which must be very well known indeed.~~~I particularly liked *The Mystery of Horne's Copse* by Anthony Berkeley, which was truly baffling. Then there's a very amusing, tongue in cheek story by E V Knox, *The Murder at the Towers*. Here's a flavour of it:~~~The gathering consisted, as the inspector had foreseen, of the usual types involved in a country house murder, namely, a frightened stepsister of the deceased, a young and beautiful niece, a major, a doctor, a chaperon, a friend, Mr. Porlock himself, an old butler with a beard, a middle-aged gardener with whiskers, an Irish cook, and two servants who had only come to the place the week before.~~~But whenever Scotland Yard was unable to deal with a murder case—that is to say, whenever a murder case happened at a country house—Bletherby Marge was called in.~~~Bletherby Marge, indeed!~~~For me, the most frightening story is *An Unlocked Window*. It's by that interesting writer Ethel Lina White, author of *The Wheel Spins*, which Alfred Hitchcock filmed as *The Lady Vanishes*. Two nurses alone with their patient in an isolated house, with a murderer on the loose, an atmosphere of fear and terror and a great twist.~~~I read this courtesy of NetGalley and enjoyed it very much. (NetGalley)

I really enjoy anthologies when they contain grouping of murder mysteries covering a single topic. Martin Edwards is a very good editor of books of this type as he always writes a little history and biography of the authors of the short stories. as with all books of this type some are good whilst others not so much. I had read quite a few stories before , but as a fan of mysteries from the golden ages, how could I not. I really enjoyed revisiting with old friends. A great book if your are pressed for time as most of the stories are short but pack a punch nevertheless. (Goodreads)

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