

S E X T O N B L A K E

D O S S I E R

The Principal Characters in the

SEXTON BLAKE STORIES

1 - Sexton BLAKE -

Age indeterminate, but somewhere in between 39 and 42. Height 6' 1". Slim, but muscular and broad-shouldered. Hair, dark. Eyes, blue-grey and expressive. Mouth, mobile and broad. His hair comes down to his forehead in a deep V.

He is well-educated; cultured, with a medical degree, though has never practiced. He can, and does, meet any man on his own level. He never talks down to anybody. He is an excellent driver; a good shot (though he can, and does, miss); and has held a Pilot's 'A' Licence for a number of years.

Though his relations with the police are generally excellent, and though he numbers many of his friends in the Metropolitan Force, he is not the Holmes type of detective. His friends at the Yard do not bring him their troubles. In most cases, he becomes involved in a straightforward way by accepting a commission to do work on behalf of a client. It is very rarely that he is asked to do work for nothing. Generally, he is very well paid for his trouble.

Blake lives in a flat above Baker Street, practically opposite the station. It is a pent-house flat, with a commanding view. His 'daily woman' is Mrs. Bardell. Until a few years ago, he worked there too, but now he has opened first floor offices in Berkeley Square. These offices are described in FRIGHTENED LADY. S.B.L. No. 359.

Blake owns several hand-guns, but his favourite is a Luger, which is used - when it is used - as a defensive weapon. In tough spots he is just as likely to fight back with his fists as with a gun, tho' of course, this is never carried through to the point of idiocy.

His interests include: all aspects of criminology, flying, judo, fencing, art, writing (list of his monographs given in Appendix B of German crime classic, "Der Verbrecherkrieg"), small-bore target practice.

Blake smokes cigarettes - no named brand. He drinks brandy and whisky. He drives a grey Bentley, or a Jaguar, and complains -

like every other notorist, -- about the crowded roads, the cost of petrol, and the punitive nature of taxation.

Blake is attractive to women, and is well-liked by men.

2 - Paula DANE -

Paula Dane is tall, blonde, and twenty-eight. She has a fine, well-moulded figure, high cheek-bones, and dark blue eyes. She is Blake's private secretary.

She would do anything for Blake -- literally anything. He, for his part, makes no great demands upon her. She is his secretary, his confidant, and his 'girl-Friday'; she has brains, and she can use them. For the moment, at least, Blake is content with the situation, and Paula Dane makes no attempt to enlarge her sphere of influence.

Paula Dane can drive a car. She is not terrified by the sight of blood. She can use a hand-gun. She dresses well; tastefully; and she gets along very well indeed with all the other members of Blake's organisation and with his particular friends.

One of these friends 'Splash' Kirby continually makes half-humorous 'passes' at her. These, Paula fends off expertly. We are at all times left with the impression that Blake is the only man who really interests her, and that she -- herself -- is more than attractive enough to interest lots of men.

She is obviously a woman of experience and of discrimination. She is a mature character. Home address: Lowndes Square, Knightsbridge, London, S.W.1.

3 - Edward CARTER ('Tinker') -

Age 26. 5' 10". Blond-haired. For a number of years has been under the patronage of Blake, but has now grown up, and taken his place as an operative in the Blake Organisation. He is usually called 'Tinker' in the stories, generally by Blake. Otherwise he is referred to as Edward Carter. He lives in same flat-block as Blake, on floor below. He is tough, forceful, and can look after himself in tight-spots. He has a weakness for red-heads, but, so far, has had no serious attachments. He used to refer to Blake as 'Guv'nor' but does so no longer. Blake is now 'Chief' to Carter, and Carter is of the opinion that his 'chief' is very nearly infallible.

4 - MILLIE -

An aristocratic seal-point Siamese cat. Originally belonged to one Herbert Asbury, a character involved in one of Blake's cases: (WALK IN FEAR. S.B.L. No. 396). Now a member of the Blake ménage. Spends its time between the Berkeley Square offices and the flat at Baker Street. Strongly addicted to sweet sherry.

Subsidiary Characters in the

SEXTON BLAKE STORIES

1 - Marion LANG -

Dark haired, twenty-year old, slim, slit-skirted, breathless brunette. She is employed as Blake's telephonist-receptionist at his Berkeley Square offices. She is 5' 5" in height, grey-green-eyed, and finds her work 'exciting'.

Apart from her work, her main interest in life is at present in music, films, modern ballet, and men. Pictured and described in BATTLE SONG. S.B.L. No. 371. Home address: Earls Court Square, London, S.W.5.

2 - Louise PRINGLE -

Brown haired, middle-aged. A woman who has been officially in the back-ground for so long that she blends with it perfectly. Normally unnoticed, and taken for granted, it comes as a surprise to see her and to realise that she is maturely attractive. Her employment in his offices is as a Book-keeper, company secretary and occasional typist. Home address: Notting Hill Gate, London, W.11. Physique: Height 5' 6". Slim figure, light brown hair, grey eyes. Age, about 43. Interests: Reading, sculpture, painting (water colour). Her work in the office keeps her busy, but she still tries to find time to look after the welfare of the others. She is very attached to Blake, with whom she was involved in espionage work during the last war.

3 - Arthur ('Splash') KIRBY -

Tall, broad, deep-chested. Big 'lumpy' figure. Square-faced, square jaw. Large hunk of 'he-man'. Dark hair, blue eyes. Columnist for the Daily Post. Writes column: "Around and About".

Weakness for the ladies. An unfailing trier. Has access to sources of information which Blake has found very useful in the past. Kirby generally supplies light relief to all stories he graces. (See FIND ME A KILLER; WALK IN FEAR; FINAL CURTAIN, etc.). Blake and Kirby work well in harness. Home address: Chelsea, London, S.W.3.

4 - Arthur GRIMWALD -

50-ish. Grizzled grey hair. Slate coloured eyes. Superintendent, New Scotland Yard. Touchy about his record at Hendon Police College. On very friendly terms with the Blake Organisation.

5 - Detective-Superintendent Theodore DUKELOW

Dukelow is a showman from the crown of his distinctive silver-grey homburg to the tips of his mirror-polished calf shoes. He is the Name-In-The-Papers, The-Picture-On-The-Front-Page. He is the Tailor and Cutter's Second-Best-Dressed-Man-of-the-Year and is jockeying hard for first place.

But the man who is responsible for most of the hard work is his assistant - Detective-Sergeant Jim Hammett, who gets none of the glory for the work Dukelow is credited for.

'The Duke' owes his success, it is rumoured, to marrying an Assistant Commissioner's daughter.

He is a man who has devoted a good mind to a rather wasted purpose - that of becoming in a short space of time a 'Personality'.

There is little love lost between Blake and Dukelow - 'The Duke' knows that Blake knows his shortcomings only too well - and doesn't like it. Described in detail in THE NAKED BLADE, S.B.L. No. 409

6 - Chief Detective-Inspector COUTTS -

'Solid, dependable Coutts'. An old friend of Blake's, Coutts is the personification of the popular idea of what an English plain-clothes detective looks like (or used to look like!). He wears a bowler, a light-coloured rain-coat, large black boots, smokes a smelly pipe, has the ruddy complexion usually associated with the countryman, is stocky, almost inclined to fatness and goes about things methodically and according to the Book. He is an extremely conscientious police officer. People have said that

Coutts is unimaginative, but they cannot deny that he nearly always gets his man.

There is a very deep understanding between Blake and Coutts, born of long years of working together - they admire each other and every so often work hand-in-glove to solve a case.

7 - - CRAILIE -

Very old. Actual age not known, but possibly in seventies; Christian name never used; head of Intelligence Organisation which works on behalf of British Government. Has a dry sense of humour. Was Blake's wartime boss. Lives in flat in Belgrave Square. Skin, brittle and parchment-like; hands, skeletal. Smokes aromatic Egyptian cigarettes, and is a completely ruthless person. (See - DARK FRONTIER; ACT OF VIOLENCE; LAST DAYS OF BERLIN; SEA TIGERS; NO TIME TO LIVE; THE HOUSE ON THE BAY; THE VIOLENT ONES).

FOREIGN AGENCIES AND AGENTS from time to time employed by Sexton Blake

NEW YORK

Trans-World Investigations Inc.,
East 40th Street, New York.

(President and chief operative -
BILL MACKENZIE).

TORONTO

C.P.I. Agency,
Queen and Yonge Street, Toronto.

(Proprietor - PETE ALLARDYCE).

SYDNEY

Australasian Enquiry Agency,
Elizabeth Street, Sydney.

(Founder-proprietor - PHILIP SIMEON BURNS).

CAPE TOWN

Untermyer and Fritsch Ltd.,
Pretoria Buildings, Cape Town.

(Managing Director - JAN FRITSGH).

BUENOS AIRES

WESLEY MORGAN -- Avenida San Martin.

SINGAPORE

PERCY SHOLES -- Raffles Place.

HAMBURG

ULRICH LINGE -- Prinz Ruprechtstrasse.

DESCRIPTION OF SEXTON BLAKE'S OFFICES IN BERKELEY SQUARE -- APPROACH.

The offices are situated in an imposing modern building in Berkeley Square, W.1. The offices overlook the square; the entrance to them is in the street.

One enters through twin, heavily-chromed, plate-glass swing doors. Directly ahead there is a short flight of low stairs leading up to an 'in-between' floor. That is to say, this floor (which is the first from the square) is lower than normal, and is not touched by the main lift. It has a private lift, passenger operated, and a private access stair (which has been described above) and it is entirely occupied by Sexton Blake and his staff. He chose this place for his offices because of the obvious privacy afforded him by the peculiarity of the building's architecture.

At the head of the stairs, directly facing one, there is a door painted in flat grey. Lettered upon it in red, are the words SEXTON BLAKE, and, below, the word Investigations. The landing is decorated in a discreetly modern way. The door and the lettering it carries is discreetly modern too. The colour motifs of grey and crimson are carried throughout the landing and the offices beyond.

Open the grey painted door, and one enters a reception room or outer office from which all the other offices and departments open off. On the right, on entering, one sees MARION LANG, Blake's receptionist, behind her long, low, light-oak desk. The P.B.X. is positioned near her.

The plan which accompanies this brief description shows the relative positions of the offices occupied by Blake and his Staff.