



*Agatha Christie*

**POIROT**

## HERCULE POIROT – THE FICTIONAL CANON

Rules involving "official" details of the "lives" and "works" of fictional characters vary from one fictional universe to the next according to the canon established by critics and/or enthusiasts. Some fans of Agatha Christie's Hercule Poirot have proposed that the novels are set on the date they were published, unless the novel itself gives a different date. It has further been proposed that only works written by her (including short stories, the novels and her play **Black Coffee**) are to be considered canon by most fans and biographers. This would render everything else (plays, movies, television adaptations, etc.) as an adaptation, or secondary material. A contradiction between the novels can be resolved, in most cases, by going with the novel that was published first.

An example of this would be the ongoing controversy over Poirot's age. Taken at face value it appears that Poirot was over 125 years old when he died. Though the majority of the Hercule Poirot novels are set between World War I and World War II, the later novels then set him in the 1960s (which is contemporary with the time Agatha Christie was writing even though it created minor discrepancies). Many people believe, from her later works, that Poirot retired from police work at around 50, but this is untrue,

because as shown in the short story "*The Chocolate Box*", he retired at around 30. By accepting the date given in "*The Chocolate Box*" over later novels, which never gave precise ages anyway, it can be explained why Poirot is around for so long.

Debate over Poirot's family is fueled mainly by the fact that he mentions a sister in the original publication of "*The Chocolate Box*" but for some reason this reference was removed from the later editions.

As of 2017, the Poirot books are still under copyright. **The Mysterious Affair at Styles** is now public domain in the US but will not become public domain in the UK until 2046 (70 years after Christie's death). Christie's grandson, Matthew Prichard, now owns the copyright to his grandmother's works.

In 1998, Charles Osborne adapted Christie's 1930 Poirot play **Black Coffee** into novel form. In 2014, the Christie estate authorized author Sophie Hannah to write a new Poirot book, **The Monogram Murders**, which was followed by **Closed Casket** in 2016.

[ This list is based in part on [an article from Wikipedia](#), with additions/modifications from a variety of other sources. ]

### Publication order

Short story collections listed as **[SS]** (*book titles also in italics*)

[The Mysterious Affair at Styles](#) (1920 UK/1921 US)

[The Murder on the Links](#) (1923)

[Poirot Investigates](#) (1924 UK/1925 US) **[SS]**

[The Murder of Roger Ackroyd](#) (1926)

[The Big Four](#) (1927)

[The Mystery of the Blue Train](#) (1928)

Black Coffee (1930 play - [novel adapted from play](#) published in 1998)

[Peril at End House](#) (1932)

[Lord Edgware Dies](#) (UK) (1933) also published as [Thirteen at Dinner](#) (US)

[Murder on the Orient Express](#) (UK) (1934) also published as [Murder in the Calais Coach](#) (US)

[Three Act Tragedy](#) (UK) (1935 UK/1934 US) also published as [Murder in Three Acts](#) (US)

[Death in the Clouds](#) (UK) (1935) also published as [Death in the Air](#) (US)

[The A.B.C. Murders](#) (1936)

[Murder in Mesopotamia](#) (1936)

[Cards on the Table](#) (1936 UK/1937 US)

[Dumb Witness](#) (UK) (1937) also published as [Poirot Loses a Client](#) (US)

[Death on the Nile](#) (1937 UK/1938 US)

[Murder in the Mews](#) (UK) (1937) [SS] also published as [Dead Man's Mirror](#) (US)

[Appointment with Death](#) (1938)

[Hercule Poirot's Christmas](#) (UK) (1937 UK/1938 US) also published as [Murder for Christmas](#) (US) and as [A Holiday for Murder](#) (US)

[The Regatta Mystery and Other Stories](#) (1939 US only) [SS]

[Sad Cypress](#) (1940)

[One, Two, Buckle My Shoe](#) (UK) (1940 UK/1941 US) also published as [The Patriotic Murders](#) (US) and as [Overdose of Death](#) (US)

[Evil Under the Sun](#) (1941)

[Five Little Pigs](#) (UK) (1942) also published as [Murder in Retrospect](#) (US)

[The Mystery of the Baghdad Chest](#) (1943) [SS]

[Poirot and the Regatta Mystery](#) (1943) [SS]

[Poirot on Holiday](#) (1943 UK only) [SS]

[The Hollow](#) (UK and US) (1946) also reprinted as [Murder after Hours](#) (US)

[The Labours of Hercules](#) (1947) [SS]

[Taken at the Flood](#) (UK) (1948) also published as [There Is a Tide](#) (US)

[The Under Dog and Other Stories](#) (1951) [SS]

[Mrs McGinty's Dead](#) (UK and US) (1952) also reprinted as [Blood Will Tell](#) (US)

[After the Funeral](#) (UK) (1953) also published as [Funerals are Fatal](#) (US)

[Hickory Dickory Dock](#) (UK) (1955) also published as [Hickory Dickory Death](#) (US)

[Dead Man's Folly](#) (1956)

[Cat Among the Pigeons](#) (1959 UK/1960 US)

[The Adventure of the Christmas Pudding](#) (1960) [SS]

[Double Sin and Other Stories](#) (1961) [SS]

[The Clocks](#) (1963 UK/1964 US)

[Third Girl](#) (1966 UK/1967 US)

[Hallowe'en Party](#) (1969)

[Elephants Can Remember](#) (1972)

[Poirot's Early Cases](#) (UK) (1974) [SS] also published as [Hercule Poirot's Early Cases](#) (US)

[Curtain](#) (1975) (actually written about 1940 then locked up until Christie's death)

[Hercule Poirot: The Complete Short Stories](#) (1991 UK/1999 US) [SS]

[Problem at Pollensa Bay and Other Stories](#) (1991) [SS]

[The Harlequin Tea Set](#) (1997) [SS]

[While the Light Lasts and Other Stories](#) (1998) [SS]

## Poirot stories in the Short Story Collections:

This list includes only the Poirot stories in each of these collections.

### [Poirot Investigates](#) (1924) (10)

"The Jewel Robbery at the Grand Metropolitan"  
"The Disappearance of Mr. Davenheim"  
"The Adventure of the Western Star"  
"The Tragedy of Marsdon Manor"  
"The Kidnapped Prime Minister"  
"The Million Dollar Bond Robbery"  
"The Adventure of the Cheap Flat"  
"The Mystery of Hunter's Lodge"  
"The Adventure of the Italian Nobleman"  
"The Case of the Missing Will"

### [Murder in the Mews](#) (1937) (4)

"The Incredible Theft"  
"Dead Man's Mirror"  
"Triangle at Rhodes"  
"Murder in the Mews"

### [The Regatta Mystery and Other Stories](#) (1939) (5)

"The Mystery of the Baghdad Chest"  
"How Does Your Garden Grow?"  
"Yellow Iris"  
"The Dream"  
"Problem at Sea"  
(*"The Regatta Mystery"* & *"Problem at Pollensa Bay"* have been rewritten to feature Parker Pyne instead of Poirot)

### [The Labours of Hercules](#) (1947) (12)

"The Nemean Lion"  
"The Lernean Hydra"  
"The Arcadian Deer"  
"The Erymanthian Boar"  
"The Augean Stables"  
"The Stymphalean Birds"  
"The Cretan Bull"  
"The Horses of Diomedes"  
"The Girdle of Hyppolita"  
"The Flock of Geryon"  
"The Apples of the Hesperides"  
"The Capture of Cerberus"

### [The Adventure of the Christmas Pudding](#) (1960) (5)

"The Adventure of the Christmas Pudding"  
"The Under Dog"  
"The Mystery of the Spanish Chest"  
"The Dream"  
"Four-and-Twenty Blackbirds"

### [Poirot's Early Cases](#) (1974) (18)

"The Affair at the Victory Ball"  
"The King of Clubs"  
"The Victory Express"  
"The Chocolate Box"  
"The Veiled Lady"  
"The Adventure of Johnny Waverley"  
"The Market Basing Mystery"  
"The Adventure of the Clapham Cook"  
"The Lost Mine"  
"The Cornish Mystery"  
"The Double Clue"  
"The Lemesurier Inheritance"  
"Double Sin"  
"Wasp's Nest"  
"The Third-Floor Flat"  
"How Does Your Garden Grow?"  
"Problem at Sea"  
"The Submarine Plans"

### [Problem at Pollensa Bay](#) (1991) (2)

"Yellow Iris"  
"The Second Gong"

### [The Harlequin Tea Set and Other Stories](#) (1997) (1)

"The Mystery of the Spanish Chest"

### [While the Light Lasts](#) (1998) (2)

"Christmas Adventure"  
"The Mystery of the Baghdad Chest"

## Books in chronological order

### Poirot's police years

"The Chocolate Box" (short story from *Poirot's Early Cases*)

### Career as a private detective and retirement

#### Shortly after Poirot flees to England during WWI (1916–1918)

##### The Mysterious Affair at Styles

"The Kidnapped Prime Minister" (short story from *Poirot Investigates*)

"The LeMesurier Inheritance" (short story from *Poirot's Early Cases*)

"The Affair at the Victory Ball" (short story from *Poirot's Early Cases*)

#### The Twenties (1920–1929)

Poirot settles down in London and opens a private detective agency. These are the short story years (25 short stories and only 4 novels).

"The Disappearance of Mr Davenheim" (short story from *Poirot Investigates*)

"The Plymouth Express" (short story from *Poirot's Early Cases*)

"The Adventure of the Cheap Flat" (short story from *Poirot Investigates*)

"The Submarine Plans" (short story from *Poirot's Early Cases*)

"The Adventure of the Clapham Cook" (short story from *Poirot's Early Cases*)

"The Cornish Mystery" (short story from *Poirot's Early Cases*)

"The Tragedy at Marsdon Manor" (short story from *Poirot Investigates*)

"The Mystery of the Hunters Lodge" (short story from *Poirot Investigates*)

"The Adventure of the Egyptian Tomb" (short story from *Poirot Investigates*)

"The Jewel Robbery at the Grand Metropolitan" (short story from *Poirot Investigates*)

"The Market Basing Mystery" (short story from *Poirot's Early Cases*)

"The King of Clubs" (short story from *Poirot's Early Cases*)

"The Adventure of the Italian Nobleman" (short story from *Poirot Investigates*)

"The Double Clue" (short story from *Poirot's Early Cases*)

"The Adventure of Johnny Waverly" (short story from *Poirot's Early Cases*)

"The Case of the Missing Will" (short story from *Poirot Investigates*)

"The Lost Mine" (short story from *Poirot's Early Cases*)

"The Million Dollar Bond Robbery" (short story from *Poirot Investigates*)

"The Veiled Lady" (short story from *Poirot's Early Cases*)

"The Adventure of the Western Star" (short story from *Poirot Investigates*)

##### Murder on the Links

"Double Sin" (short story from *Poirot's Early Cases*)

"The Adventure of the Christmas Pudding" also published as *The Theft Of The Royal Ruby* (short story from *The Adventure of the Christmas Pudding*) is an expanded version of "The Christmas Adventure"

##### The Murder of Roger Ackroyd

## **The Big Four**

**The Mystery of the Blue Train** is an expanded version of "The Plymouth Express"

"The Third Floor Flat" (short story from *Poirot's Early Cases*)

"The Under Dog" (short story from *The Adventure of the Christmas Pudding*)

"Wasp's Nest" (short story from *Poirot's Early Cases*) (adapted into a TV play then a one-act stage play)

## **The Thirties (1930–1939)**

Christie increased her novel production during this time (14 novels, 21 total short stories and one theatre play). Twelve short stories form *The Labours of Hercules*. The other short stories listed here take place in this period but were published before and after the publication of *The Labours of Hercules*. The theatre play is named **Black Coffee** and was written by Agatha Christie, who stated a frustration with other stage adaptations of her Poirot mysteries. However, she also insisted Poirot would not appear on stage again. In 1998, author Charles Osborne adapted the play into a novel.

"The Mystery of the Spanish Chest" (short story from *The Adventure of the Christmas Pudding* and *The Regatta Mystery*) is an expanded version of "The Mystery of the Baghdad Chest"

**Peril at End House**

**Lord Edgware Dies**, also published as *Thirteen at Dinner*

**Black Coffee**

**Murder in Mesopotamia**

**Murder on the Orient Express** also published as *Murder in the Calais Coach*

**Three Act Tragedy**, also published as *Murder in Three Acts*

**Death in the Clouds**

"How Does Your Garden Grow?" (short story from *Poirot's Early Cases* and *The Regatta Mystery*)

"Dead Man's Mirror" (short story from *Murder in the Mews*) is an expanded version of *The Second Gong* in *Problem at Pollensa Bay*

**The A.B.C. Murders**

**Dumb Witness** also published as *Poirot Loses a Client*

"Problem at Sea" (short story from *Poirot's Early Cases* and *The Regatta Mystery*)

"Triangle at Rhodes" (short story from *Murder in the Mews*)

"The Incredible Theft" (short story from *Murder in the Mews*) is an expanded version of "The Submarine Plans"

"Murder in the Mews" (short story from *Murder in the Mews*) is an expanded version of *The Market Basing Mystery*"

**Cards on the Table**

**Death on the Nile**

**Appointment with Death**

**Murder for Christmas** also published as *Hercule Poirot's Christmas* and *Holiday for Murder*

"Yellow Iris" (short story from *The Regatta Mystery*) (adapted into a radio play, then a one-act stage play)

"The Dream" (short story from *The Adventure of the Christmas Pudding* and *The Regatta Mystery*)

**One, Two, Buckle My Shoe** also published as *Patriotic Murders* and *Overdose of Death*

**Sad Cypress**

"The Nemean Lion" (short story from *The Labours of Hercules*)

"The Lernaean Hydra" (short story from *The Labours of Hercules*)

"The Arcadian Deer" (short story from *The Labours of Hercules*)

"The Erymanthian Boar" (short story from *The Labours of Hercules*)

"The Augean Stables" (short story from *The Labours of Hercules*)

"The Stymphalean Birds" (short story from *The Labours of Hercules*)

"The Cretan Bull" (short story from *The Labours of Hercules*)  
"The Horses of Diomedes" (short story from *The Labours of Hercules*)  
"The Girdle of Hyppolita" (short story from *The Labours of Hercules*)  
"The Flock of Geryon" (short story from *The Labours of Hercules*)  
"The Apples of Hesperides" (short story from *The Labours of Hercules*)  
"The Capture of Cerberus" (short story from *The Labours of Hercules*)

## Post World War II

Christie introduces a new detective, Miss Marple, who takes most of the author's focus, and Hercule Poirot mysteries become rare. In 36 years Agatha Christie writes only 13 more Poirot novels and one short story.

### Evil Under the Sun

"Four and Twenty Blackbirds" (short story from *The Adventure of the Christmas Pudding*)

**Five Little Pigs** also published as Murder in Retrospect

**The Hollow** also published as Murder after Hours

**Taken at the Flood** also published as There Is a Tide

**Mrs McGinty's Dead** also published as Blood Will Tell

**After the Funeral** also published as Funerals are Fatal

**Hickory Dickory Dock** also published as Hickory Dickory Death

**Dead Man's Folly**

**Cat Among the Pigeons**

**The Clocks**

**Third Girl**

**Hallowe'en Party**

**Elephants Can Remember**

**Curtain**, Hercule Poirot's last case (published in 1975)

### Continuations not by Christie

**Black Coffee**, adapted to novel form from Christie's play by Charles Osborne (published in 1998)

**The Monogram Murders**, written by Sophie Hannah (published in 2014)

**Closed Casket**, written by Sophie Hannah (published 2016)

### Expanded/Adapted stories

Some Poirot adventures were later expanded into other stories or re-written. They are:

"The Plymouth Express" (1923 short story) was expanded into the 1928 novel **The Mystery of the Blue Train**

"The Market Basing Mystery" (1923 short story) was expanded into the 1936 novella Murder In The Mews

"The Submarine Plans" (1923 short story) was expanded into the 1937 novella The Incredible Theft

"Christmas Adventure" (1923 short story) was expanded into the 1960 novella The Adventure Of The Christmas Pudding

"The Mystery Of The Baghdad Chest" (1932 short story) was expanded into the 1960 novella The Mystery Of The Spanish Chest

"The Second Gong" (1932 short story) was expanded into the 1937 novella Dead Man's Mirror

"The Regatta Mystery" (1936 short story) was re-written in 1939 featuring Parker Pyne instead of Poirot

“Yellow Iris” (1937 short story) was expanded into the 1945 novel **Sparkling Cyanide** featuring Col. John Race instead of Poirot

“Hercule Poirot and the Greenshore Folly” (posthumous novella) expanded into the 1956 novel **Dead Man's Folly**

“The Incident of the Dog's Ball” (posthumous short story) expanded into the 1937 novel **Dumb Witness**

“The Capture of Cerberus” (posthumous short story), originally intended to be the last of The Labours of Hercules but re-written due to its political content

## Drama

Other stories were adapted by Christie into plays, sometimes removing Poirot:

**Alibi** (1928 play) written together with Michael Morton

**Black Coffee** (1930 play) – the *only* full-length play to featured Poirot written by Agatha Christie herself

**Wasp's Nest** (1937 TV play – also done as one-act play for the stage) – adapted by Agatha Christie herself

**The Yellow Iris** (1937 radio play – also done as one-act play for the stage) – adapted by Agatha Christie herself

**Appointment with Death** (1945 play) in which Poirot doesn't appear

**Hidden Horizon** (1944 play) in which Poirot doesn't appear

**The Hollow** (1951 play) in which Poirot doesn't appear

Christie herself wrote over 20 plays, 8 of which are collected in the following book. Although none of the included plays specifically feature Hercule Poirot, several are adaptations for the stage of Poirot novels, which Christie re-wrote to remove Poirot and substitute other sleuths:

[The Mousetrap: and Other Plays](#) (1978)

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