

# The Mary Russell Companion

*Laurie R. King*

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## **The Mary Russell Companion** Laurie R. King

The world of Mary Russell, apprentice-turned-partner of the great detective Sherlock Holmes, has long fascinated her followers. Over the course of ten Memoirs and a number of short stories, Russell has revealed much about her life—but far more has gone unexplored.

Filled with new and original material, *The Mary Russell Companion* helps to close that gaping chasm of ignorance. With lavish illustrations and a firm commitment to academic formalities, the Companion serves as a guide to all things Russell.

First and foremost, it is an Entertainment. Fun and informative essays alternate with the words of Miss Russell herself, with supplemental material that appears here in print for the first time.

Second, it is an aid to scholarship. Key elements of the Memoirs are brought together in one place: maps of Russell's travels, a detailed chronology of the books, biographies of the central players (those known to Arthur Conan Doyle, those known to the world at large, and those seen exclusively in the Russell Memoirs), and reviews of this remarkable woman's extraordinary set of skills: all that is known about Russell's history through the first ten of her Memoirs.

In the interest of scrupulous scholarship, the first two chapters of *The Beekeeper's Apprentice* are given a close and detailed series of annotations with the assistance of the Crime world's preeminent Annotator, Leslie S. Klinger, focusing on everything from a description of gorse to an analysis of the number of times Sherlock Holmes laughs, chuckles, and expresses amusement in the Conan Doyle stories.

Beyond a compilation of facts, however, the Companion aims at context and analysis, with commentaries on many aspects of Mary Russell's life. Is Russell a feminist? What are her thoughts about God? Why did she choose Laurie R. King as an agent to publish the Memoirs—and what does she think about their being called "novels" "by" Laurie R. King? How do Russell's thoughts and experiences intersect with those of her literary agent, and how much did King borrow from Miss Russell's academic work when it came to writing her Master's Thesis?

Yes, there's even a discreet chapter on the Russell-Holmes love life.

A floor plan of the Sussex house Russell shares with Sherlock Holmes and Mrs Hudson is joined by a review of what generations of Holmes scholars have said about its location. There are three interviews between Miss Russell and her literary agent, one of which, new for the Companion, celebrates the twentieth anniversary of the first Russell/King collaboration, *The Beekeeper's Apprentice*. There are even recipes contributed by Mrs Hudson, and her musings on the comparative stimulants of tea and coffee in the Holmes household.

Until Miss Russell chooses to pen her own Companion, *The Mary Russell Companion* is the definitive guide to the world of Mary Russell and Sherlock Holmes.

## **The Mary Russell Companion Details**

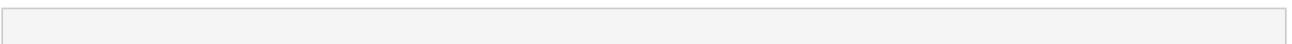
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# From Reader Review The Mary Russell Companion for online ebook

## Elizabeth Dodd says

I like all things Mary Russell.

Whether you wish to consider Mary Russell a live person or a lively construct of Laurie R. King's mind is not important.

In my opinion, she is a wonderful addition to the Sherlock Homes canon.

That being said, I enjoyed this further delving into the person of Mary Russell. It was good to revisit several of the novels via excerpts.

I look forward to many more Russell and Homes adventures.

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## Jennifer says

Am I as disappointed with this book as a two star rating might indicate? No. But it wasn't worth three stars, so two it is. The problems?

1- Ebook formats do not play well with pictures and footnotes if you are using a ebook reader \*other\* than a tablet. Choosing to only release this companion in this format made it very difficult to actually read and enjoy the little tidbits of info contained.

2- Those tidbit of new info? Few and far between. It's my fault for not realizing the bulk of the Companion is actually an annotated copy of THE BEEKEEPER'S APPRENTICE. I'd be more excited about that if it was easier to read (see complaint #1)

3- I purchased the Companion through Amazon for \$9.95- a steep price for a) an ebook in general and b) an ebook that contains very little new information. I'm not one to complain about the cost of books; authors need to get paid, and I have no problem with doing so. But ten bucks for (basically) a book I already own in two other formats? Yikes.

4- The "Mary Russell is real and I'm just here memoirist" schtick doesn't work \*at all\* for this book. Because "Ms. Russell" wants to keep her "privacy", there is very little new information regarding the series revealed. I was just so disappointed all the way around.

I'm a HUGE fan of this series (as evidenced by the fact that I purchased and read a companion book), but I can't make a good argument as to why a fan should read the book in the first place.

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## Beth says

The Mary Russell Companion is a compilation of excerpts and short stories from and regarding the Mary Russell/Sherlock Holmes stories that King has been writing for 20 years. Included are "interviews" with Ms. Russell, then in her nineties, as well as poems, recipes, post cards and newspaper clippings about the various characters in the novels. It is moderately interesting for those of us who have read all of the stories, but you

have to wade through a lot to get to any delightful nuggets, such as "A Venomous Death," a short story King wrote for a printmaker who requested a story that he could print on one page.

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### **Jackie says**

Very fun! A touch repetitive and kind of gimmick-y, I ultimately enjoyed it very much. As always I adore Miss Russell, however she felt a bit prickly and pedantic in this. I did get a little confused about Holmes' age though... 45ish when he met Russell, would make him 122 wouldn't it? I think Mary is strong enough on her own, it does a disservice to her to drag Holmes along, through age to immortality.

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### **Roxane says**

This will put you in the mood for a little Russell & Holmes!!!

Lots of info - I found it easiest to read on my PC (Kindle version) rather than the Kindle itself - lots of pictures, footnotes, etc...

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### **Kaye Dewar says**

More to quench our thirst of Mary Russell's adventures.

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### **Laura Battle says**

Many wonderful details and additional explanations about my favorite sleuth.

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### **Patty says**

This is not available in anything but Kindle. Unfortunately, since my Kindle is old and black and white the pictures were lost on me. In addition, I couldn't access the footnotes, which are very helpful, without losing my place in the book. This should not be a Kindle book!

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### **farmwifetwo says**

I think, it needs to be in print. I have read that complaint before, and having read the companion I agree. Also, the essays etc should all be in the "companion" so that a reader can flip the pages, high light, review at will.

Mercedes Lackey did such a "companion" for Valdemar.

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### **Julie says**

I am a big fan of the Mary Russell series, but the Companion was very disappointing for several reasons.

There is very little new material for the reader. Most of the material is comprised of an annotated Beekeeper's Apprentice. These footnotes would be interesting and make rereading the text worth the effort if the footnotes were accessible in an e-text format. Unfortunately, one can not flip back and forth between main text and end of book footnotes without losing one's place. This the whole idea becomes an exercise in futility.

Over half the book consists of excerpts from each of the books.

Many of the original materials include interviews or correspondence with Mary Russell. The artifacts that King was Russell's literary agent works. But the idea that both Russell AND Holmes are still alive and active is stretching disbelief just a bit too far.

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### **Karen says**

Basically an ad for all of the other books, which I have read! So, disappointing.

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### **Sonia says**

Nothing really new here and the ebook format (all I could find) makes the maps almost unreadable even on a tablet and the photos are not much better. And, trying to pretend that Russell and Holmes are still alive today is a bit much.

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### **GraceAnne says**

A delicious compendium of excerpts, backgrounds, interviews, sly asides, and even a recipe or two of Mrs. Hudson's. Any devotee of Mary Russell Holmes' memoirs as presented by Laurie R. King will be delighted, and if perchance picked up by someone who has not read them will certainly draw them in at once.

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