



In a Steamer Chair and Other Stories

Robert Barr

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This early work by Robert Barr was originally published in 1892 and we are now republishing it with a brand new introductory biography. "In a Steamer Chair and Other Stories" is a nautical collection of thirteen short stories by one of the most famous writers in his day. Robert Barr was born on 16th September 1849 in Glasgow, Scotland, but he and his parents emigrated to Upper Canada when he was just four years old. He attended Toronto Normal School to train as a teacher and this career path led him to become headmaster of the Central School of Windsor, Ontario. During his time as a headteacher he began to contribute short stories to the Detroit Free Press, a publication for whom he left the teaching profession to become a staff member in 1876. He wrote for them under the pseudonym "Luke Sharp", a name he found amusing on a sign reading "Luke Sharpe, Undertaker" that he used to pass on his daily commute to work. He eventually rose to the position of news editor at the publication. In 1881 he left Canada for London to establish a weekly English edition of the Detroit Free Press. He remained in England to found The Idler, a monthly magazine he collaborated on with the popular humourist Jerome K. Jerome. During the 1890's he began to increase his literary production, writing mainly in the popular crime genre of the day. The success of his contemporary, Arthur Conan Doyle, and his super sleuth, Sherlock Holmes, inspired him to write the first Holmes parody "The Adventures of Sherlaw Kombs". Despite this jibe Barr and Doyle remained on very good terms. Robert Barr died from heart disease on October 21, 1912, at his home in Woldingham, a small village to the south-east of London.

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