



## **Mysteries: Historical**

Historical mysteries are defined as mystery books that take place before 1950. These mystery books range from the near past to the ancient and classical world and include some of the biggest names in the genre. To order any of these titles, contact the library by email, phone, mail, in person, or order through our [online catalog](#). Select titles can be [downloaded from BARD](#).

### **The Tale of Hill Top Farm the Cottage Tales of Beatrix Potter** By Susan Wittig Albert

Read by Constance Crawford      Reading time 9 hours, 5 minutes

Lake District, England; 1905. Author Beatrix Potter, still mourning her fiancé's death, buys a farm in the country. Villagers in nearby Sawrey are suspicious of the sudden passing of local resident Abigail Tolliver. Beatrix and her pets offer to help solve the mystery. 2004.

[Download from BARD: The Tale of Hill Top Farm the Cottage Tales of...](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB061460

Also available on cassette RC061460

### **Blind Justice** By Bruce Alexander

Read by George Holmes      Reading time 11 hours, 9 minutes

Based on the life of the blind eighteenth-century justice Sir John Fielding, who, with novelist Henry Fielding, founded the Bow Street Runners. Known for his fairness, Sir John enlists the aid of Jeremy Proctor, a young boy unjustly accused whom Sir John has taken into his home. The case involves the double murder (by poison and gunshot) of Lord Goodhope.

[Download from BARD: Blind Justice](#)

Also available on cassette RC042229

**Hangman Blind** By Cassandra Clark

Read by Erin Jones

Reading time 10 hours, 22 minutes

Britain, 1382. Hildegard, a Cistercian nun, seeks a suitable grange for a new priory. She consults her friend, wealthy landowner Lord Roger de Hutton, to help secure a property. But when someone tries to poison Roger, Hildegard instead searches for the would-be killer. Some violence and some strong language. 2008.

[Download from BARD: Hangman Blind](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB069285

**Death in Lacquer Red a Hilda Johansson Mystery** By Jeanne M. Dams

Read by Gabriella Cavallero

Reading time 6 hours, 35 minutes

South Bend, Indiana; 1900. Swedish immigrant Hilda Johansson, a housemaid for the wealthy Studebaker family, discovers the brutally beaten corpse of a female missionary wearing a distinctive red jacket from China. Despite wary coworkers, narrow-minded police, and social prejudices, Hilda tracks the killer. 1999.

[Download from BARD: Death in Lacquer Red a Hilda Johansson Mystery](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB069051

**Silver Pigs** by Lindsey Davis

Read by George Holmes

Reading time 9 hours, 27 minutes

Imperial Rome, A.D. 70. In the first book in the series private investigator Marcus Didius Falco assists Sosia Camillina, a senator's sixteen-year-old niece, whose uncle has hidden in her bank box a stash of valuable lead ingots from Britain. Prequel to Shadows in Bronze (DB 36464). 1989.

[Download from BARD: Silver Pigs](#)

Also available on cassette RC058069

**Napoleon's Pyramids** By William Dietrich

Read by Jack Fox

Reading time 13 hours, 8 minutes

While in Paris, Ethan Gage, a thirty-three-year-old American frontiersman, wins a curiously engraved gold medallion in a card game and soon after is framed for murder. Gage escapes to Egypt with Napoleon Bonaparte's expedition. He encounters mysteries, battles, and treachery; finds love; and solves the mystery of the amulet. 2007.

[Download from BARD: Napoleon's Pyramids](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB073281

**Good Night, Mr. Holmes** By Carole Nelson Douglas

Read by Patricia Kilgarriff

Reading time 13 hours, 26 minutes

Nell Huxleigh, a parson's daughter, relates this tale of Irene Adler, opera singer and detective. Miss Adler, who has the uncanny ability to outsmart even Sherlock Holmes, becomes a detective early in her operatic career. Her sleuthing results in encounters with Victorian personages such as Charles Lewis Tiffany; Oscar Wilde; Antonin Dvorak; and the mysterious Godfrey Norton, who helps her search for a skein of diamonds.

[Download from BARD: Good Night, Mr. Holmes](#)

Also available in digital cartridge DB040584

Also available in cassette RC040584

**The Prague Cemetery** By Umberto Eco

Read by Barry Bernson

Reading time 13 hours, 48 minutes

1897. Captain Simone Simonini and Abbé Dalla Picola leave notes for each other in a diary. Steeped in the many conspiracies of the age--involving Freemasons, Jesuits, Jews, and others--Simonini is spurred on to reflect on his career as secret agent and forger. Translated from Italian. Bestseller. 2010.

[Download from BARD: The Prague Cemetery](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB074041

**Deadlier than the Pen a Diana Spaulding mystery** Kathy Lynn Emerson

Read by Jill Fox

Reading time 9 hours, 6 minutes

New York City, 1888. Editor Horatio Foxe asks widowed reporter Diana Spaulding to interview Damon Bathory, a gothic author whose book tour has met with two murders. Diana pursues Damon, becomes stranded on a train during a blizzard, and falls in love with Dr. Ben Northcote of Maine. 2004.

[Download from BARD: Deadlier than the Pen](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB068523

**The Gods of Gotham** by Lyndsay Faye

Read by Alec Volz

Reading time 15 hours, 12 minutes

Manhattan, 1845. After bartender Tim Wilde loses his livelihood, home, and savings in a fire, he reluctantly joins the newly formed NYPD. A complex crime involving one runaway Irish child prostitute and the suspicious death of another brings out Wilde's investigative skills. Violence and strong language. 2012.

[Download from BARD: The Gods of Gotham](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB076459

**The Pillars of the Earth** By Ken Follett

Read by Merwin Smith

Reading time 40 hours, 34 minutes

Historical novel set in twelfth century England. Philip, prior of the monastery at Kingsbridge, and Tom, a master mason, would like to build a new cathedral. They are helped along when Tom's stepson torches the current cathedral. They are hindered, however, by a powerful and jealous bishop, and Ellen--who witnessed an ancient treachery. Some violence, some strong language, and some descriptions of sex.

[Download from BARD: the Pillars of the Earth](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB030999

Also available on cassette RC030999

**Mistress of the Art of Death** By Ariana Franklin

Read by Gabriella Cavallero

Reading time 12 hours, 16 minutes

Cambridge, England; 1171. King Henry II sends a plea to the king of Sicily for a crime investigator after four Christian children are murdered--supposedly by Jews. Adelia Aguilar, a medical student with forensic knowledge, arrives with Muslim bodyguard Mansur and Jewish colleague Simon. Violence and some strong language. 2007.

[Download from BARD: Mistress of the Art of Death](#)

Also available on cassette RC066765

**The Spies of Warsaw a Novel** By Alan Furst

Read by Lewis Grenville

Reading time 9 hours, 57 minutes

Warsaw, 1937. Colonel Jean-Fran ois Mercier, French military attach  to Poland, spends his time socializing and recruiting spies. Mercier alerts his superiors to the threat of Nazi invasion but is ignored. Meanwhile he falls in love and rescues an agent. Some explicit descriptions of sex and some strong language. Bestseller. 2008.

[Download from BARD: The Spies of Warsaw a Novel](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB067031

**Lord John and the Brotherhood of the Blade** By Diana Gabaldon  
Read by Annie Wauters. Reading time 14 hours, 28 minutes  
England, 1758. Lord John Grey's father, the duke of Pardloe, died an accused Jacobite spy. Now a page from the duke's missing journal mysteriously appears. Scotsman James Fraser--for whom Grey has feelings--helps Grey clear his family name. Strong language, some violence, and some explicit descriptions of sex. 2007.

[Download from BARD: Lord John and the Brotherhood of the Blade](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB065487

**The Janissary Tree a Novel** By Jason Goodwin  
Read by Anne Flosnik Reading time 10 hours, 58 minutes  
Istanbul, 1836. Court eunuch Yashim Togalu has orders from Sultan Mahmut II to find out who is killing military cadets. He scours the city, suspicious that the outcast Janissary corps soldiers are planning an insurrection. Violence and strong language. Edgar Allan Poe Award. 2006.

[Download from BARD: The Janissary Tree a Novel](#)

Also available on cassette RC064325

[Download from BARD as Electronic Braille BR17160](#)

Also available in braille BR017160

**A Free Man of Color** By Barbara Hambly  
Read by Ed Blake Reading time 11 hours  
1833 New Orleans. In a complex world where Creoles, Americans, French, and blacks live and love, a Creole's beautiful black mistress is murdered during Mardi Gras. Paris-educated Benjamin January, who is trying to adjust to being a free black man in an unforgiving world, feels obligated to find the murderer. Strong language, violence, and some descriptions of sex.

[Download from BARD: A Free Man of Color](#)

Also available on cassette RC046286

**March Violets** By Philip Kerr

Read by Ken Kliban

Reading time 10 hours, 25 minutes

Berlin, Germany; 1936. A wealthy industrialist hires PI Gunther, a former police detective, to find out who murdered his daughter and son-in-law during a robbery. Gunther enters a decadent underworld and uncovers political corruption and a Nazi concentration camp. Violence, strong language, and some explicit descriptions of sex. 1989.

[Download from BARD: March Violets](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB066544

**The Given Day** By Dennis Lehane

Read by Nick Sullivan

Reading time 25 hours, 28 minutes

Boston, early twentieth century. Policeman Danny Coughlin goes undercover to infiltrate Bolsheviks and anarchists who are recruiting immigrants and workers to cause civil strife. Soon Danny sympathizes with their plight, befriending his family's Irish maid and an African American fugitive. Violence and strong language. Bestseller. 2008.

[Download from BARD: The Given Day](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB068066

Also available on cassette RC068066

**The Whiskey Rebels** By David Liss

Read by Christopher Lane

Reading time 18 hours, 31 minutes

1790s. Disgraced ex-spy Ethan Saunders agrees to help his former fiancée Cynthia Pearson locate her husband Jacob, a successful Philadelphia entrepreneur. Ethan uncovers a conspiracy on the western Pennsylvania frontier centered on bringing down treasury secretary Alexander Hamilton. Commercial audiobook. Strong language and some violence. 2008.

[Download from BARD: The Whiskey Rebels](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB067427

**The Dante Club** by Matthew Pearl

Read by Fred Major

Reading time 15 hours, 44 minutes

Boston, 1865. Famous poets and scholars, including Harvard professors Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Oliver Wendell Holmes, and James Russell Lowell, are preparing the first American translation of Dante when a serial killer strikes with gruesomeness reminiscent of the Inferno. They help African American policeman Nicholas Rey investigate the murders. Some violence and some strong language. Bestseller. 2003.

[Download from BARD: The Dante Club](#)

Also available on cassette RC055723

**Callander Square** By Anne Perry

Read by Terry Hayes Sales

Reading time 9 hours, 35 minutes

When gardeners discover the bodies of two babies buried in Callander Square, the well-to-do Victorian residents are shocked but assume the infants were born to a parlor maid. As Inspector Thomas Pitt begins interviewing the staff, his wife, Charlotte, and her wealthy sister, Emily, begin an investigation of their own. Before any of them can determine the identity of the babies, a blackmail scheme is uncovered and two adults are murdered. 1980.

[Download from BARD: Callander Square](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB042282

Also available on cassette RC042282

**Death of a Stranger** By Anne Perry

Read by Mitzi Friedlander

Reading time 13 hours, 31 minutes

The night Victorian railroad magnate Nolan Baltimore is murdered, three prostitutes are brought to Hester Monk's clinic for emergency treatment. Later, Hester's detective husband, William, is hired by Katrina Harcus to investigate her fiancé, another railway executive. As the two cases gradually come together, Monk's long-term amnesia begins to fade. 2002.

[Download from BARD: Death of a Stranger](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB054947

Also available on cassette RC054947

**A Morbid Taste for Bones** By Ellis Peters

Read by Tom Martin

Reading time 7 hours, 36 minutes

Detective Brother Cadfael, in charge of the herb gardens in the Benedictine monastery of Shrewsbury, has to deal with his superiors when they become obsessed with the notion of acquiring the bones of an obscure saint from a Welsh village.

[Download from BARD: A Morbid Taste for Bones](#)

Also available on cassette RC028174

Also available in braille BR003876

**Crocodile on the Sandbank** by Elizabeth Peters

Read by Flo Gibson

Reading time 8 hours, 38 minutes

In 1880 spinster Amelia Peabody is in Rome en route to Egypt when she befriends a young noblewoman, Evelyn Barton-Forbes, who has been seduced and abandoned by her drawing master. Evelyn agrees to accompany Amelia and soon unaccountable things begin to happen, climaxing when a tomb is discovered and its inhabitant disappears in the night.

[Download from BARD: Crocodile on the Sandbank](#)

Also available on cassette RC028834

Also available in braille BR004728

**In the Shadow of Gotham** by Stefanie Pintoff

Read by Peter Johnson

Reading time 10 hours, 25 minutes

Dobson, New York. Unable to deal with the loss of his fiancée in the 1904 General Slocum ferry disaster, detective Simon Ziele transfers to a quiet country town. But a horrifying homicide sets Simon and a noted Columbia University criminologist on the trail of a killer. Some violence. 2009.

[Download from BARD: In the Shadow of Gotham](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB072917

**The Secret Adventures of Charlotte Brontë** By Laura Joh Rowland  
Read by Erin Jones                      Reading time 12 hours, 27 minutes  
Charlotte Brontë and her sister Anne travel to London in 1848 to meet with Charlotte's publisher. On the train they meet Isabel White, a mysterious young woman who is later murdered. Drawn into the intrigue, Charlotte attempts to solve the crime. Some violence and some descriptions of sex. 2008.

[Download from BARD: The Secret Adventures of Charlotte Brontë](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB067111

**Shinju** By Laura Joh Rowland

Read by Robert Sams                      Reading time 12 hours, 46 minutes  
In 1689 Tokyo, detective Sano Ichiro discovers the bodies of a man and a woman bound together in an apparent shinju or "double love suicide." But Sano suspects otherwise and risks personal ruin as he follows a trail of clues that lead to a treasonous plot against the shogun. Violence.

[Download from BARD: Shinju](#)

Also available on cassette RC043369

**The Angel's Game** By Carlos Ruiz Zafon

Read by Mark Ashby                      Reading time 16 hours, 2 minutes  
Barcelona, 1917. David Martín crafts crime stories and "penny dreadfuls." Martín discovers the Cemetery of Forgotten Books, from *The Shadow of the Wind* (RC 58940), and accepts a sinister commission to write a book creating a new religion. Originally published in Spain. Some strong language and some descriptions of sex. Bestseller. 2009.

[Download from BARD: The Angel's Game](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB069158

**Dissolution** By C.J. Sansom

Read by Gary Telles                      Reading time 16 hours, 8 minutes  
England, 1537. Matthew Shardlake, whose hunchback caused him to go into law rather than farming, works for Lord Cromwell, Henry VIII's powerful reformist vicar general. When a royal commissioner is murdered while trying to convince Catholic monasteries to voluntarily close, Shardlake investigates. Some violence and some strong language. 2003.

[Download from BARD: Dissolution](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB074528

**The Triumph of Caesar a Novel of Ancient Rome** By Steven Saylor

Read by Richard Davidson      Reading time 11 hours, 2 minutes

The civil war has ended and Gordianus "the Finder," now sixty-four, is retired. But Caesar's second wife Calpurnia summons him to investigate a plot to assassinate her husband. Gordianus's friend Hieronymus, from Last Seen in Massilia (DB 53710), was murdered while trying to unmask the conspirators. 2008.

[Download from BARD: The Triumph of Caesar a Novel of Ancient Rome](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB073061

**A Duty to the Dead** By Charles Todd

Read by Martha Harmon Pardee      Reading time 10 hours, 51 minutes

1916. British nurse Bess Crawford returns to England to convalesce and travels to Kent to convey a message from dying patient Arthur Graham to his brother. There Bess helps nurse a shell-shocked soldier back to health--and becomes uncomfortably enmeshed in Graham's family secrets. 2009.

[Download from BARD: Duty to the Dead](#)

Also available on digital cartridge DB072025

**Whispers of the Dead Fifteen Sister Fidelma Mysteries** By Peter Tremayne

Read by Martha Harmon Pardee      Reading time 10 hours, 43 minutes

Fifteen short stories featuring a seventh-century nun and trained lawyer, Sister Fidelma of Ireland. In the title tale an unknown peasant woman is discovered dead and Fidelma is challenged to identify her and the cause of death. In "The Banshee" she investigates a death wail. 2004.

[Download from BARD: Whispers of the Dead Fifteen Sister Fidelma...](#)

Also available on cassette RC061547

**Fingersmith** By Sarah Waters

Read by Jill Fox      Reading time 22 hours, 26 minutes

Victorian London. Orphaned Sue Trinder was raised by a caring family of petty thieves. To repay them, she helps an elegant con man swindle a wealthy heiress. But the plan is compromised when Sue begins to have feelings for the victim. Some explicit descriptions of sex and some strong language. 2002.

[Download from BARD: Fingersmith](#)

Also available on cassette RC056184

**Maisie Dobbs, a Novel** By Jacqueline Winspear

Read by Jill Fox

Reading time 9 hours, 28 minutes

Thirteen-year-old Maisie is lucky to be a maid in the home of a wealthy London suffragette who sees to her education. Maisie becomes a private investigator in 1929 after serving as a nurse during the Great War. Her first case involves a shelter for wounded veterans. 2003.

[Download from BARD: Maisie Dobbs a novel](#)

Also available in digital cartridge DB067808