



Canadian Holmes

The Journal of the Bootmakers of Toronto
Volume 39 Number 1
Winter 2015/2016

Canadian Holmes is published by The Bootmakers of Toronto, the Sherlock Holmes Society of Canada.

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Membership and subscription rates
(Full details online at www.torontobootmakers.com)

Canadian Premier - \$40.00 Cnd.

US or International Premier – \$40.00 US

Canadian Regular - \$30.00 Cdn.

US or International Regular - \$30.00 US

Full-time Student - \$25.00 Cnd. or \$25.00 US

Past Issues of Canadian Holmes, including postage - Cdn\$12.00 per copy

Further Subscription information and details are available on the society's website, www.torontobootmakers.com.

Business correspondence should be addressed to The Bootmakers of Toronto, PO Box 1157, TDC Postal Station, 77 King Street West, Toronto, Ontario, M5K 1P2, Canada.

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ISSN 0319-4493.

Printed in Canada.

Cover: London 1903

Canadian Holmes

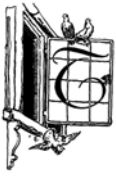
Volume 39 Number 1

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One hundred and forty sixth issue

Contents
Canadian Holmes
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Volume 39 Number 1

Traces of Bootprints <i>By Mark & JoAnn Alberstat</i>	1
From Mrs. Hudson's Kitchen <i>By Wendy Heyman-Marsaw</i>	2
His Last Bow <i>By Karen Gold</i>	4
M'Naghten, Moriarty and the Insanity Defence <i>By Daniel P. Greenfield and Peter H. Jacoby</i>	5
Vamberry the Wine Merchant, Count Dracula and the Zionist Movement (Part 2 of 2) <i>By Hartley R. Nathan & Clifford S. Goldfarb</i>	14
Sherlock Holmes and Leon Sterndale: <i>La Cage aux Folles</i> <i>By John Linsenmeyer</i>	21
A Toast to the Second Mrs. Watson <i>By John C. Sherwood</i>	27
Sherlock Holmes and fandom: A Study in Signs <i>By Dorothy Palmer</i>	28
From the Editors' Bookshelf	32
Letters from Lomax <i>By Peggy Perdue</i>	35
News Notes From Across the Country	37
Bootmakers' Diary <i>By David Sanders and Bruce Aikin</i>	38



GRACES OF BOOTPRINTS

Fun and Games

I was recently asked what kind of people join a Sherlock Holmes society. I think the student journalist was disappointed when I said all types, and didn't point to the stooped academics who are happier spending time researching in a library than cutting out a Sherlock Holmes-themed snowflake or Sherlock Holmesflake that is featured in the latest column by Peggy Perdue. Her column should remind us all that we can have fun and games with our Victorian friend Sherlock and his silhouette that we all know so well.

The societies from Halifax to Vancouver and everywhere in between have members from all walks of life. As an editor, I always wish more people would be inclined to write for this journal, but the breadth of membership mirrors the breadth of fun we can have in the Sherlockian world. For some, spending a year researching an obscure topic thrills them with the adrenaline of the chase, while others are happy to attend an occasional meeting and see old and new friends again. Although Holmes's clientele may not have been a full cross section of the Victorian world, our clubs certainly are representative of our modern world.

The recent surge of interest in all things Sherlockian will only deepen the extent to which we can enjoy this hobby. A quick look through Amazon's online store, for instance, will show more than a dozen Sherlockian games for the PC or gaming station. Although there may be some crossover, I don't believe the Sherlockians spending a year in researching their latest article or presentation are the same ones playing these games, but are both enjoying the Sherlockian world in their own way.

In this issue Peggy Perdue shows off her crafty side with that Sherlock Holmesflake. This year marks Peggy's 10th anniversary of writing a column for *Canadian Holmes*. In those ten years Peggy has barely missing a single issue. Maybe with a record like that we should all be making snowflakes in her honour Peggy.

We also have our regular Mrs. Hudson column by Nova Scotian Wendy Heyman-Marsaw. A song parody by Karen Gold helps lighten the tone before we ask you to decide if Moriarty was insane. The second half of Hartley Nathan and Clifford Goldfarb's article on Vamberry the wine merchant takes us back into his fascinating life, and we have some fun with Holmes and Leon Sterndale. A toast and a look at Sherlock Holmes fandom by Dorothy Palmer rounds out the content.

JoAnn and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Donny Zaldin and Barbara Rusch for being our proof readers for the past five years. They are stepping down from this task after many issues. Their eagle eyes will be missed.

From Mrs. Hudson's Kitchen

This column is by Mrs. Hudson herself and dictated to Wendy Heyman-Marsaw, a Sherlockian living in Halifax. Mrs. Hudson provided this photograph of herself at age 24, taken on the occasion of her betrothal to Mr. Hudson.



The Dining Car

“Science, as illustrated by the printing press, the telegraph, the railway, is a double-edged sword. At the same moment that it puts an enormous power in the hands of the good man, it also offers an equal advantage to the evil disposed.”

— Writer, John Richard Jefferies (1848-1887)

Travel by train was either mentioned or used in 41 of the adventures of Dr. Watson and Mr. Holmes. Although Holmes kept a copy of *Bradshaw's Railway Guide* on his mantle at 221B, he knew the timetables virtually by heart. Charing Cross (which was located in the west end and thus closest to Baker Street) figured in six adventures, while Waterloo, Victoria and Paddington were each mentioned in five. The *train-de-luxe*, mentioned in ‘The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone,’ was a French train composed entirely of first-class or Pullman carriages.

Railway travel permitted the good Doctor and Holmes time to read, talk and eat in comfort as they pursued their cases. In short, it was a practical, speedy conveyance without much inconvenience. As the Jefferies quote above implies, Professor Moriarty also used the trains and employed a “special train” for his trip to Meiringen in ‘The Final Problem.’

In the early days of train travel, the food provided was not always up to par. Just before Britain's first dining car took to the rails, novelist Anthony Trollope (1815-1882) wrote that the “real disgrace of England is the railway sandwich.” Food used to be supplied at stops *en route* and was often cold and unpalatable.

The very first meal to be served on a train was in 1874 on the Midland Rail Service. In 1879, the Great Northern Railway outfitted a fully equipped and beautifully appointed Pullman car, named the Prince of Wales, as a full-service dining car that served meals cooked and prepared *en route*. It is not known if the Prince of Wales himself ever enjoyed a meal while in the carriage named after him, but rumour has it that he did.

Other railway lines followed this example and spared no expense in creating the most luxurious and elegant train dining cars so that passengers could enjoy a fine-dining experience. The foods served on railroads, always accompanied by

champagne, equaled that of the finest restaurants, hotels and steamships. Most of the better railroads served meals on bone china plates embossed with the company's own crest. These pieces often depicted scenes along the particular train's route.

Lunch aboard the train in Victorian times would have been a five-course affair, with dishes such as grilled turbot, roast sirloin, salmon with hollandaise sauce, soufflé, bread-and-butter pudding, treacle tart and crème caramel. The cost in 1898 was half a crown — about £10 in today's money. The early waiters learned their trade by being taught to walk along a white line wearing a blindfold whilst the train moved at speed.

The modern later years, after privatization, were not kind to the restaurant cars. A tradition that lasted almost 150 years of fine dining on the move was mostly ended; replaced by a concession stand or trolleys offering pre-made victuals. One of the only place where the experience has survived is on the London to the West Country, and Swansea trains. These routes have proved so popular that First Great Western has recently started adding more scheduled trains with thoughts of expansion to other routes as well.

Recipes:

Treacle Tart (Makes 9" pie)

Preheat oven to 350F.

Ingredients: 1½ C. English Golden Syrup or ¾ C. light and ¾ C. dark corn syrup, 1½ C. fresh breadcrumbs, 1 Tbs. lemon juice, ½ tsp. ground ginger, 2 large eggs, 9" unbaked pie shell.

Garnish: whipped cream, custard sauce or ice cream.

Mode: Combine syrup, breadcrumbs, lemon juice, ginger and eggs in large bowl. Mix well. Pour into pie shell and bake for 20-25 minutes. The tart should be golden brown when done.

Turbot *en Papillote* (Serves 4)

Substitute cod, halibut, haddock, sole, flounder.

Preheat oven to 450F.

Cut out four 12" squares of parchment paper or aluminum foil.

Ingredients: 2 slivered garlic cloves, four 4-6 oz. pieces of turbot fillet or steaks, salt & pepper to taste, 8 thick slices beefsteak tomato, 8 fresh basil leaves, 2 Tbs. pine nuts, 1 Tbs. olive oil.

Mode: Place a bit of garlic on each square of parchment; top each with a piece of fish, salt and pepper, 2 slices tomato, 2 basil leaves, some pine nuts and the barest drizzle of olive oil. Place sealed packages of fish in a large baking dish about 30 minutes. The fish should be white, opaque and tender. Serve closed packages individually.

His Last Bow

The following song parody, sung to the 1966 Johnny Rivers song Secret Agent Man, was created by Karen Gold, and presented at the December 6, 2014 meeting of the Bootmakers of Toronto.

Verse 1:

Von Bork, you like to lead a life of danger
You hired a secret agent who was a stranger
This Altamont tells all, then throws you a mean curve ball
And that becomes the ultimate game changer.

Chorus:

Secret agent man, secret agent man
He's Holmes, The Great Detective, he'll sabotage your plan.

Verse 2:

Be careful where you get your information
Intelligence can be a fabrication
Your Irish-American source is about to score a *tour de force*
You think he's helping you defeat a nation.

Chorus:

Secret agent man, secret agent man
He's Holmes, The Great Detective, he'll sabotage your plan.

Verse 3:

A book on bees, some chloroform, then Tokay
They set the stage for capture, and now you'll pay
Von Bork, your hands are tied, your agent wasn't on your side
Now England's saved and everyone is okay.

Chorus:

Secret agent man, secret agent man
He's Holmes, The Great Detective, he'll sabotage your plan.

Verse 4:

Von Bork, you like to lead a life of danger
Your carelessness led you to trust a stranger
Well, you've got the glory now, of your case being His Last Bow
His strictly final, ultimate game changer.

Chorus

M’Naghten, Moriarty and the Insanity Defence

By Daniel P. Greenfield, MD, MPH, MS and Peter H. Jacoby

Daniel P. Greenfield, MD, MPH, MS is a physician specializing in forensic and clinical psychiatry, and preventive medicine. An almost lifelong enthusiast of things Sherlockian, he is a member of the scion society of the “Red Headed League of New Jersey,” where he has presented several papers, and is co-founder, with Peter H. Jacoby, A.B., J.D., of The Napoleons of Crime, also a scion society. Dr. Greenfield’s invested name in the Napoleons is Colonel Sebastian Moran.

Peter H. Jacoby, a retired attorney, lives in Philadelphia, and is a long-time follower of the Canon. His articles have been published in the Baker Street Journal, The Watsonian and other Sherlockian journals. He is a member of several scion societies and, with his co-author, founded The Napoleons of Crime, a scion based in Princeton NJ and devoted to the study of Professor James Moriarty.



ou hope to place me in the dock. I tell you that I will never stand in the dock.”

— Professor James Moriarty to Sherlock Holmes in “The Final Problem.”

As devotees of the Canon know, in making the above vow the Professor was every bit as good as his word. Virtually alone among his criminal gang, he gave the regular police the slip and proceeded relentlessly to dog Holmes’s and Watson’s steps across Europe, leading to his final confrontation at the Reichenbach Falls with the world’s first and greatest consulting detective. Owing to the events there, the Professor was never to be held to account before any earthly tribunal, although perhaps the same was not to be said of his judgment before a Higher Court.

But suspend your disbelief and assume for a moment that you are now living in 1891 and that, contrary to the known facts, the Professor has in fact been apprehended by “the Yard” before he could flee England and is being brought to trial under British justice. Assume further that you are an eminent and highly accomplished barrister — indeed, a Queen’s Counsel (QC) — who has been appointed to act as Moriarty’s counsel under the prevailing practice across “the

Pond.” How then can you present a defence for your client with any prospect of his escaping the hangman’s noose?

One typical trial strategy, that of maintaining that one’s client is innocent, and suggesting the guilt of another culprit (whether or not with identification of that malefactor), clearly must fail at the first hurdle. Even if your client has somehow successfully arranged the assassination of Holmes prior to the trial, any attempt on your part to dispute the Professor’s factual guilt for his many crimes is obviously fated to be futile in light of the irrefutable evidence that Holmes had collected and left for Inspector Patterson in that pigeonholed blue envelope marked ‘Moriarty.’

Considering several other traditional complete or partial defences to a criminal charge, and using Moriarty’s role in the killing of “Jack Douglas” (aka Jack McMurdo, true name Birdy Edwards) as an example, quickly convinces you that they will likewise be unavailing. Clearly, self-defence is inapplicable; Douglas/McMurdo/Edwards was not even aware of the Professor’s existence, much less did he pose any threat to his life or limb. Nor, for the same reason, could Moriarty assert successfully that he had in some manner been provoked to violence by his victim, which could serve to reduce a charge of murder to manslaughter.

No, it is crystal clear to you that no British jury ever impanelled would bring in a verdict of “not guilty” (nor would a Scottish jury render an exonerating verdict of “not proven”) in response to such arguments. Something else is called for and, while there are long odds of success given the largely unsuccessful history of that defence, you are forced to the conclusion that it must be essayed. Specifically, you will contend that under applicable standards of British law, Professor James Moriarty is insane and cannot be held criminally accountable for his misdeeds!



Drawing of Holmes and Professor Moriarty by Sydney Paget for ‘The Final Problem,’ published in The Strand Magazine, December 1893.

In the balance of this article, we describe the development of the British law of insanity and analyze its application to the case of Professor James Moriarty.

The Development of the British Law of Insanity

Fast forwarding to the 1970s, the phrase “Don’t do the crime if you can’t do the time” became a popular saying due to the crime television show *Baretta*, and has also been heard decades later by the first author of this article in jails and prisons in various interchanges with inmates and prisoners. Strict liability and criminal responsibility for one’s actions were the rule in Victorian England and in the contemporary United States.

However, there are exceptions to almost every rule. In the case of criminal responsibility, such exceptions date back to ancient times, even in the rule of law. As Nigel Walker wrote in his article ‘The Insanity Defense before 1800:’

The earliest context in which madness is treated as an excuse for crime is *Justinian’s Digest*. The Christian church brought this feature of Roman law to pre-Norman England. Madmen were probably not regarded as triable by ordeal, but were simply left to be guarded by their kinsfolk. When trial by ordeal was abandoned, and juries had to determine guilt, juries were at first expected to find madmen guilty but refer their cases to the king for pardon.

One of the earliest recorded British cases of insanity being used as a defence was *Rex v. Arnold*, (16 How St. Tr. 765) in 1724. Edward Arnold was tried for shooting at Lord Onslow, and claimed in court that the reason he had done so was because Onslow had bewitched him and had sent into his bed chamber “devils and imps” that had “invaded his bosom such that he could not sleep.” Not unnaturally, given this claim, Arnold’s relatives testified that he suffered from delusions. The trial judge instructed the jury that to acquit they had to decide whether the accused is totally deprived of his understanding and memory and knew what he was doing “no more than a Wild Beast [sic] or a brute, or an infant.” This instruction became known as “the wild-beast test.”

Arnold was convicted and sentenced to death but was reprieved at the urging of his victim, Lord Onslow. Although Arnold’s defence failed, juries could now deliver a “special verdict” of not guilty by reason of insanity, even if the defendant knew what he had actually done (the *actus reus* or guilty act) but did not know that it was wrong and therefore lacked the necessary *mens rea* (or guilty mind) due to his insanity.

Rex v. Hadfield (27 How St. Tr. 765) in 1800 marked a further advance in the legal articulation of insanity over the simplistic “wild beast” standard. James Hadfield was tried for treason for having shot at King George III while the monarch was attending the theatre. Hadfield believed that God had told him that the world was about to end; by shooting at the king, Hadfield thought he would be executed and thus spared from committing suicide, which was considered both a crime and a sin.

Hadfield’s defence counsel, Thomas Erskine, challenged the prevailing legal definition of insanity, telling the court that a person could “know what he was

about,” but yet be unable to resist a delusion even if “unaccompanied by frenzy or raving madness.” Medical witnesses testified that Hadfield suffered from such delusions, most probably brought on by serious head injuries he had received in 1794 during the war with France. As Erskine told the jurors, “I must convince you, not only that the unhappy prisoner was a lunatic, within my own definition of lunacy, but that the act in question was the immediate unqualified offspring of the disease.” The judge, Lord Kenyon, was convinced by Erskine’s evidence and argument, and stopped the trial, acquitted Hadfield and ordered him to be detained.

But it was the landmark *Rex v. M’Naghten* case in 1843 that established the current basis for the psychiatric “legal insanity” defence in Great Britain — as well as in most jurisdictions in the United States and many other English-based legal systems to this day. Daniel M’Naghten (also sometimes spelled McNaughten), while in a delusional mental state, shot and killed Edward Drummond, the private secretary to Sir Robert Peel, then the prime minister, mistakenly believing that Drummond was Peel. Nine psychiatrists testified as expert witnesses to M’Naghten’s mental state at the time of the shooting. He was found legally insane, even though testimony indicated that he might have generally been able to understand the difference between right and wrong.

The amorphous quality of M’Naghten’s mental condition described by the experts created a successful insanity defence and left the Victorian crown, government and public uncertain. This uncertainty resulted in a subsequent convening of a commission of 15 Queen’s Bench judges, whose ruling is embodied in the following well-known language for the insanity defence as articulated by the House of Lords:

“[T]he jurors ought to be told in all cases that every man is to be presumed to be sane, and to possess a sufficient degree of reason to be responsible for his crimes, until the contrary be proved to their satisfaction; and that to establish a defence on the ground of insanity, it must be clearly proved that, at the time of the committing of the act, the party accused was labouring under such a defect of reason, from disease of the mind, as not to know the nature and quality of the act he was doing; or, if he did know it, that he did not know he was doing what was wrong.”

Further changes in the manner of addressing issues raised by insane defendants were implemented by statute in succeeding years. Of particular note, in 1883 Parliament passed the *Trial of Lunatics Act*, which permitted juries to find a special verdict absolving insane defendants of criminal responsibility. At the instance of Queen Victoria, who had been the victim of no less than eight attacks by insane persons and therefore had a personal interest in the outcome of such cases, the special verdict was framed as “guilty of the act or omission charged, but insane so as not to be responsible, according to law, for his actions.”

Meanwhile, many miles away in America, only one year after the M’Naghten decision, the Association of Medical Superintendents of American Institutions for the Insane (AMSAAI) — the precursor of the current American Psychiatric Association (APA) — was founded as the first and only established organization of American medical experts in what came to be known as psychiatry. Initially, AMSAAI and its members found little professional respect; the new specialty was characterized as having a “narrow intellectual and institutional posture” by the then up-and-coming medical specialization called neurology. But by the late Victorian era the forensic application of the new specialty had already come to play a significant role in the law, on both sides of the pond.

Application to Moriarty of the M’Naghten Rules

As Moriarty’s defence counsel, you are immediately faced with this dilemma: you somehow have to explain the Professor’s recurring thoughtful, carefully planned and executed nefarious acts over a long period of time, rather than having to explain the conceptually much easier situation in which a defendant commits an isolated inexplicable act quickly and impulsively, without thinking, and may therefore be considered either not fully criminally responsible for what he allegedly did, or not responsible at all. Some notorious then-recent cases in the United States have given you some insight into your prospects for successfully carrying off this feat.

The new class of medical professionals known as psychiatrists had opined for both sides as experts at the first application of the ‘M’Naghten defence’ in the United States at the 1859 trial of New York politician Daniel Sickles, for shooting his wife’s lover, in which Sickles was acquitted as temporarily insane. But as Moriarty’s counsel, you recognize all too well that the Sickles verdict, rendered by an all-male jury that obviously sympathized with the cuckolded husband, scarcely represented a rigorous application of M’Naghten, and your client can expect no similar sympathy.

Psychiatric experts had also testified in the 1881 trial of President Garfield’s assassin, Charles Guiteau, who was convicted and hanged for that crime. Guiteau was certainly an extremely troubled soul; as one expert testified, he was a “morbid egotist” who “misinterpreted and overly personalized the real events of life.” He opined the condition to be the result of “a congenital malformation of the brain.” But public ire at the assassination of the President carried all before it, and a guilty verdict was returned in just over an hour, thus reinforcing your view as counsel about the immense challenge of making out a successful insanity defence for an unpopular defendant.

Having nonetheless decided to proceed with the M’Naghten insanity defence, and applying the three M’Naghten criteria to the “the Napoleon of Crime” and his many, varied, creative, bedeviling and larcenous crimes committed over so many years, you reason as follows: anybody who could commit the range and types of offences of my client simply cannot be sane. As his barrister you are then faced with how to marshal and maneuver the facts to fit this client’s

defence — or to paraphrase a popular Victorian oeuvre, “...to let the defence fit the crime, the defence fit the crime...”

1. Does Moriarty suffer from “a disease of the mind”?

Your observation of Moriarty’s appearance during your visits to him in jail, and your investigation into his background, have convinced you that there is something terribly wrong with your client. Just as Holmes had described him to Watson in ‘The Final Problem,’ the Professor is a physical wreck, with pale skin, eyes deeply sunken and puckered, round-shouldered (in a manner that to some suggests bookishness but that may equally well be due to another cause), and with a face that protrudes forward and continually oscillates slowly from side.

Taken together, these are not the hallmarks of a healthy individual. You also know, from the thorough brief prepared by Moriarty’s solicitor, that Moriarty came from a good family and, until his middle years, had an excellent reputation as an academic before “dark rumours” began to circulate about him, his personality underwent a sea change and he turned his intellectual powers to crime.

A suspicion begins to grow in your mind, and you arrange to have Moriarty examined by a pair of medical specialists trained in the diagnosis of nervous diseases. Their reports confirm your suspicion that something is seriously amiss with Moriarty although, as might have been predicted when employing a brace of specialists, they differ on the correct identification of Moriarty’s condition.

According to one of the specialists, your client is exhibiting the onset of “general paresis” the 19th-century euphemistic term for neurosyphilis, the tertiary stage of syphilitic infection. This accounts for the variety of physical symptoms Moriarty displays, including but not limited to muscular weakness in his



Drawing of Professor James Moriarty by Sydney Paget for ‘The Final Problem,’ Published in The Strand Magazine, December 1893

back — leading to his stoop-shouldered appearance — due to degeneration of the nerves abutting the spinal cord, a condition known to physicians as *tabes dorsalis*. The other specialist is equally certain that Moriarty is suffering from the effects of Parkinson’s disease. Moriarty also manifests all the classic symptoms of that malady: tremor of the extremities and, in particular, impairment of the muscles supporting the head (accounting for the “oscillating” movement described by Holmes).

While these diagnoses of Moriarty’s condition mean he is fated to suffer



Eric Porter (8 April 1928 – 15 May 1995) as Moriarty in the Granada series.

an unpleasant death from one of these diseases, they open up for you as his legal counsel the possibility of presenting a defence of insanity that will at least spare him the ignominy of the gallows. Both “general paresis” and Parkinson’s disease are well known in 19th-century medicine to manifest themselves not only in physical debilitation, but also through a number of neuropsychiatric symptoms, ranging from

depression to severe paranoid delusions. Under British law, as discussed above, this is indispensable foundational material for an insanity defence.

A less-experienced defence counsel might present both diagnoses of Moriarty’s underlying condition in evidence; after all, if having one “arrow in one’s quiver” is good, then surely two must be all the better? But, like the Professor’s chief of staff, Colonel Sebastian Moran, you are too much an “old shikari” to make such a tyro’s error. You well know that were you to pursue that strategy, the counsel for the Crown, another eminent QC, will play both of your experts off against the other, and argue that neither diagnosis is valid.

You also recognize that unlike Parkinson’s disease, which is an affliction that occurs unbidden to those who suffer from it, venereal disease is acquired, however unintentionally, through a volitional action, and in the mores of the Victorian era, the unchastity that would account for Moriarty’s having that condition is not likely to be viewed neutrally by a judge or jury. While it is well-nigh impossible to present Moriarty as a sympathetic figure, given his status as a career criminal (albeit hopefully not in the technical legal sense of that term), at least you will avoid placing him in a light where those in whose hands his fate rests will feel that his medical plight “serves him right.”

2. *Did Moriarty know “the nature and quality of his acts”?*

Even if as a threshold matter, Moriarty’s medical background and history — here, Parkinson’s disease — supports the first rule of the M’Naghten tripartite test, the “mental disease or defect” part, as his barrister you must ask whether you can satisfy the second rule, “didn’t know the nature and quality of his acts.” No, you can’t go anywhere with that. Moriarty definitely knew what he was doing — unlike, for example, a delusional defendant who might think he was decapitating a Christmas goose rather than another human being.

An inexperienced legal counsel might think it helpful to the client’s cause to attempt to “touch every base” of the M’Naghten criteria, out of a benighted sense of “thoroughness” or to provide the jury with the ability to bring in a verdict of insanity even if they are unconvinced that the Professor lacked an understanding of the wrongfulness of his conduct. But this approach is more likely to undermine than to buttress your defence; a jury that recognizes that you have failed — and likely failed abysmally — to satisfy this branch of M’Naghten may well also come to the conclusion that your client also knew full well the wrongfulness of his actions, in which case a verdict of guilty will be speedily forthcoming.

At the same time, it is neither incumbent upon you to expressly concede that Moriarty knew the nature and quality of his acts nor even to explain to the jurors that this is one of the alternative criteria for insanity under M’Naghten. (Undoubtedly that will be covered in His Lordship the trial judge’s charge to the jury, quite possibly with an acerbic observation by him that you failed to adduce any such evidence.) It will suffice for you to inform the jurors that because Moriarty suffers from a disease of the mind, inability to appreciate the wrongfulness of his conduct is legally sufficient to exonerate him of criminal liability based upon insanity.

3. *Did Moriarty “not know that what he did was wrong?”*

At first blush, it might appear to laymen that Moriarty must have known that the criminal acts he committed were both morally and legally wrong. And indeed that would be true for any sane individual. But Moriarty was, as you will develop in your case, a seriously disturbed individual — indeed, what in a later era will be described as psychotic.

Recall that despite the brilliance of his treatise on the binomial theorem, in ‘The Final Problem’ we are told that Moriarty had only been able to secure a chair “at one of our smaller universities,” rather than at the most prestigious level of an Oxford or a Cambridge. This may have reflected the then-widespread discrimination against persons of Irish descent (and canonical scholarship, as well his family name, confirms that this was the Professor’s background). Thus, Moriarty may already have had every reason to feel deep resentment about the shabby manner in which he had been treated by English society of his day.

Further, Moriarty’s career as university don, so initially promising at a precocious age, was cut short by “dark rumours” of misdeeds on his part that in no short time forced him off the academic pedestal he had occupied. That fall

from grace may have sent him into eclipse to London to the relatively unprestigious role of an “Army coach,” helping his pupils (many of whom were dunderheads but well to do and socially well connected) to “cram” for the examinations in mathematics that were part of the process for entry into, and advancement within, the British officer corps.

Never again could he aspire to return to the respect and stature he had held as a young man, or to achieve the even greater heights that his early mathematical endeavours had seemed to presage. Even when he penned his treatise ‘The Dynamics of an Asteroid’ — “which ascends to such rarefied heights of pure mathematics that it is said that there was no man in the scientific press capable of criticizing it,” as Holmes noted in *The Valley of Fear* — Moriarty was apparently unable to lift himself from the relative obscurity of his position as a cramming instructor.

Such a sudden professional reverse would be sure to stir some sense of resentment in even the most well-balanced individual. In Moriarty’s case, however, the paranoia that seized him as he slipped more and more deeply into the grip of his Parkinson’s disease may have resulted in virulent feelings that he was being unfairly persecuted by the entirety of English society. For purposes of your defence of your client, it hardly matters whether the basis for his dismissal from his university chair was objectively fair or not; all that is of importance is that Moriarty held fast to a belief that the decision was completely unwarranted.

In his paranoid state, Moriarty may have believed that it was entirely justified for him to engage in all manner of acts that would take revenge on the entire British realm — indeed, on any part of the then vast Empire — and its peoples. Considerations of morality or law were entirely alien to his thought process as he formed his criminal organization and used it to carry out whatever schemes would enrich him, even if it meant doing grievous harm to others.

Conclusion

And so, armed with your facts and theories about your client’s defence, you gather your notes and proceed from your chambers in the Middle Temple to the Old Bailey to don your horsehair wig and gown, and present your opening argument on Moriarty’s behalf at the Royal Courts of Justice. The trial progresses quickly. After about one week of testimony, the charge from His Lordship the trial judge, and its own bickering, the jury renders a verdict about the tenability of your M’Naghten defence and about Moriarty’s legal guilt for his lifetime of crime.

How would you, the reader, vote as a juror?

Vamberry the Wine Merchant, Count Dracula and the Zionist Movement (Part 2 of 2)

By Hartley R. Nathan and Clifford S. Goldfarb

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Editor’s Note: This is the latest in the authors’ ongoing look at Sherlock Holmes and the Jewish Connection, and appears in their book.



vamberry and the Zionist Movement

Efraim Halevy, in his paper (37) states:

When Theodor Herzl embarked upon the treacherous path leading his people to independence in the Holy Land he quickly reached the conclusion that he would have to ... make contact with the powers that be who were in possession of the Holy Land – the rulers of the Ottoman Empire. ... Very soon, he realised that he had to reach the Sultan himself; Enter Arminius Vámbéry, ... [S]imultaneous with his academic duties was recruited and acted as an agent both for the Ottomans and for British Intelligence. He was not a double agent; he acted separately on different issues for different masters. But he was a double dealer and when Herzl approached him and recruited him to obtain an audience with Sultan Abdul Hamid the second, he asked for and received a hefty sum for the service performed. By the time he was working for Great Britain, he was not only collecting and passing information, he was also involved

in combating Russian attempts to gain ground in Central Asia, where they posed a potential threat to the British position on the Indian sub-continent.

Herzl did see the Sultan ultimately in May 1901 but ...Vámbery had not been properly briefed and had not adequately prepared either Herzl or the Sultan for the fateful meeting. From a professional point of view, Herzl was no match for double dealing Vámbery. ...

In many respects, Vámbery was a model for generations to come. He often assumed the ways and religion of his targets; he earned their trust and respect.

Vámbery did have a genuine interest in the Zionist cause. When Israel Zangwill sought support in 1906 for the establishment of a Jewish home in unoccupied territories, he received and reprinted a number of letters:

What is most notable about the letters reprinted ...is that they are by no means all favorable. Arminius Vambéry, Professor of Oriental Languages at the University of Budapest, and a Jew, contributed the longest and most detailed letter of support... Yet Arthurs [sic] Conan Doyle ... had difficulty imagining Jews as farmers...(38)

Why Wine?

If we accept, for the sake of argument, that Vámbery had a wine connection, then it is logical that the wine would be Tokaji.

Tracy in *The Encyclopedia Sherlockiana* (39) defines “Tokay” this way:

Tokay, a rich, heavy wine, somewhat sweet in taste and very aromatic, produced in northern Hungary. Thaddeus Sholto offered Mary Morstan a glass (*Sign of Four*). Holmes and Watson enjoyed Tokay at Von Bork’s house, which was said to be Imperial Tokay from Franz Joseph’s special cellar at the Schoenbrunn Palace (‘His Last Bow’).

Tokaji wines (generally spelled Tokay in English), are produced in the Tokaj wine region (also Tokaj-Hegyalja wine region) of Hungary. There is a strong Jewish connection here, as many of the vineyards were leased by Jews from the beginning of the 18th century. (40)

Catherine the Great, who ruled Russia during the 18th century, so prized her Tokay that she detailed a special troop of Cossacks to guard her private stock. (41) In addition to Tokay, various other wines are referred to in the Canon. (42) There is a reference to James Windibank, a “traveller in wines” in ‘A Case of Identity,’ but no one seems to have taken the trouble to identify him with any type of wine. On the other hand, Vámbery and Tokay are a natural fit, especially given the dates of publication of the two stories in which Tokay is mentioned: 1890, when Vámbery was in his heyday in London, and 1917, shortly after he died.

In addition, given the extent to which Tokay was revered and the fact Holmes and Watson drank Tokay said to be from the special cellars of Emperor Franz

Joseph (1830-1916), one would expect only a high-class merchant, especially a Hungarian like the well-known Vámbéry, would be given the privilege of distributing Tokay.

In Dracula:

The Count himself came forward and took off the cover of a dish, and I fell to at once on an excellent roast chicken. This, with some cheese and a salad and a bottle of old Tokay of which I had two glasses, was my supper.

These wines (and our man Vamberry) are not to be confused with the modern wines produced in California by 221B Cellars and sold through Vamberry the Wine Merchant in High Holborn Street, London. (43)

In the final analysis, while it is tempting to say that, because Vámbéry came from Hungary, the land of Tokay, and, as noted, Les Klinger calls him a “wine collector,” (44) we have no direct evidence to show he was a “wine merchant.” Why would Holmes refer to a well-known public figure, deliberately misdescribing him as a “wine merchant,” and imply that he had consulted Holmes on a case of importance? Perhaps the answer is that Mycroft Holmes knew Watson’s avid readers included many of the titled heads of Europe, who might be put off the scent of Vámbéry as secret agent by such a reference. They might believe that his connections to the Sultan Abdul Hamid II (ruled 1876–1909) were simply to assist him in choosing the best wines to purchase for entertaining his non-Muslim visitors. (45) It would not have been difficult for Mycroft to convince Watson to do him this patriotic service.

Incidentally, the Sultan of Turkey is no stranger to Sherlock Holmes. In ‘The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier’ Holmes states:

I also had a commission from the Sultan of Turkey which called for immediate action, as



Arminius Vámbéry

political consequences of the gravest kind might arise from its neglect.

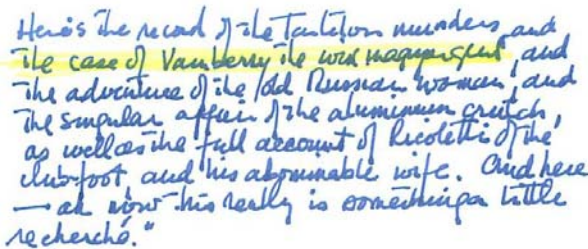
This is, of course, the same Sultan that Vámbéry knew so well.

Why “Vamberry” and not “Vámbéry” and Why Wine Merchant?

If Conan Doyle, through Stoker or on his own, had actually met Vámbéry in London sometime between 1890 and 1892, it is not unlikely that they might have enjoyed a glass of this wine and a pleasant chat at The Athenaeum. Conan Doyle often used the names of his friends or acquaintances in his work. (46) One of the senses of merchant in the *Oxford English Dictionary* is a “paid agent,” which would describe Vámbéry’s role for the Foreign Office. So the reference to someone well known to the public for his travel lectures and biography as a “wine merchant” would be a subtle and private acknowledgment of a pleasant meeting.

The whereabouts of the manuscript of ‘The Musgrave Ritual’ is unknown even to Randall Stock, the expert on Conan Doyle’s manuscripts. (47) A glance at it might show that Conan Doyle used the proper spelling of Vámbéry but the same typesetter who set the text for *The Strand* chose the phonetic English version, rather than the proper Hungarian one. Occam’s razor tells us the simplest explanation is the most likely. The accents over the á and é may have confused the typesetter. In addition, the reference may not have been to “wine merchant” at all. Conan Doyle, after all, was relying on Watson’s notes here, and Watson was a medical doctor, a profession notorious for the illegibility of its penmanship (Conan Doyle himself being a notable exception).

We have been allowed by the owner, a distant relative of one of us, who wishes to retain her anonymity, to copy a portion of the first page of the notebook in which Watson wrote up the tale. Here, for the first time, is what he



Here's the record of the Tenton murders and the case of Vamberry, the wine merchant, and the adventure of the old Russian woman, and the singular affair of the alumnus greitch, as well as the full account of Nicoletti of the club-foot and his abominable wife. And here - at about his really is something a little recherché."

actually wrote – “Vamberry, the wise Magyar gent.” While Watson would know that a Magyar was a Hungarian, you wouldn’t expect a working typesetter

to be aware of that. So, doing his best to unravel Watson’s untidy script, “wine merchant” seemed to fit, especially since the name included the word berry.

Where is the Sherlock Holmes/Vámbéry Connection?

Holmes returns from the Reichenbach Falls in 1894. In ‘The Empty House,’ Holmes explains to Watson where he has been for the last three years in these well-known words:

I travelled for two years in Tibet, therefore, and amused myself by visiting Lhasa and spending some days with the head Llama. You may have read of the remarkable explorations of a Norwegian named Sigerson, but I am sure that it never occurred to you that you were receiving news of your friend. I then passed through Persia, looked in at Mecca, and paid a short but interesting visit to the Khalifa at Khartoum, the results of which I have communicated to the Foreign Office. Returning to France, I spent some months in a research into the coal-tar derivatives, which I conducted in a laboratory at Montpellier, in the south of France.

Let us compare Holmes with Vámbéry:

2. 'The Musgrave Ritual' is published May 1893. Relevant contemporary cases are 'The Greek Interpreter' (September 1893), 'The Naval Treaty' (October – November 1893) and 'The Final Problem' (December 1893), all of which can be connected. For example, 'The Final Problem' leads to Holmes wandering in Asia, maybe relying on information from Vámbéry as to conditions he would encounter.

3. The first mention of Mycroft in his connection to the British secret service is in 'The Greek Interpreter' (September 1893).

4. Both Holmes and Vámbéry travelled through Persia and either visited Mecca in the case of Holmes, or met pilgrims returning from Mecca in the case of Vámbéry. (48)

5. Both travelled through the Middle East in disguise. Vámbéry travelled as a Sunni dervish, and we can assume Holmes was in disguise. Travelling in that part of the world as an Englishman would have been instant death unless Holmes was in a disguise to blend in with the locals. Holmes was a master of disguise.

6. Both needed to speak the local dialect, which was easy for Vámbéry and conceivable for Holmes, given his linguistic skills: Holmes studied Cornish in 'The Adventure of the Devil's Foot' (December 1910). There is reference to his "receiving a consignment of books upon philology." He could have received these years before. Chaldean (better known as Aramaic) is a Semitic language spoken in the Middle East.

7. Vámbéry was a British agent. Holmes, in his Sigerson persona, and elsewhere during the Great Hiatus years, was undoubtedly a British agent, as well. (49)

8. Holmes in 'The Naval Treaty' was dealing with a secret treaty, the exposure of which could have significant consequences. Vámbéry also engaged in high-level diplomatic intrigues.

9. Vámbéry and Holmes, as previously mentioned, both knew and had business to conduct with the Sultan of Turkey.

Conclusion

It is not by accident that Conan Doyle inserted the name Vamberry/Vámbéry in 'The Musgrave Ritual.' Vámbéry was a role model for Holmes. We are

convinced that Conan Doyle had met Vámbéry. The reference to Vamberry in ‘The Musgrave Ritual’ could only be a subtle greeting to a new friend from the Athenaeum Club, Arminius Vámbéry, with whom he had enjoyed a glass of fine Tokay.

To further demonstrate that this was no accident, we refer once again to the words of Donald Redmond (50):

It seems highly probable that the mention of ‘Vamberry’ the ‘club foot’ of Ricoletti, and even the ‘old Russian woman; in “The Musgrave Ritual” and the facile but slightly improbable tale recited by Sherlock Holmes in ‘The Empty House,’ of three years’ wanderings in Tibet, Egypt and points between, were all inspired by familiarity with — not to say resentment of — the bombast of Professor Arminius Vámbéry.

London has not forgotten Arminius Vámbéry. In south east London, in the area of Woolwich, is Vamberry Road.

To conclude, we would like to toast Vamberry the wine merchant with a glass of Tokay. Egészségetekre!! (51)



References

(37) The Seventh Isaiah Berlin Annual Lecture, “Diplomacy and Intelligence in the Middle East: How and Why Are The Two Inexorably Intertwined?” delivered in London on November 8, 2009.

(38) Rochelson, Meri-Jane, *A Jew in the Public Arena: The Career of Israel Zangwill* (Wayne State University Press, 2008) 160. The letters were published in *Fortnightly Review*, New Series. Vol. 79 (Old Series: Volume 85) (1906), 633.

(39) Doubleday & Company Inc, Garden City, New York, 1977, 362.

(40) Only in the first half of the 18th century did Jews who had emigrated from Poland arrive in Tokaj. They leased vineyards, whose products and exports made them very rich. Their neighbour’s jealousy was the reason that in 1798 the

Jews were forbidden to produce high-quality wine, including high-quality kosher wine, which only Christians were permitted to produce. In 1800 the Jews also were forbidden to lease or buy vineyards in the Tokaj area. Only in one area, in the district of Zemplén, were the Jews permitted to hold poor-quality vineyards. Nevertheless, the district representatives in Parliament claimed that the Jews concentrated all wine exports in their own hands. On the contrary, the municipality supported the Jews. A few local landowners who were interested in the development of Tokaj also supported them. And really, the Jews of Tokaj didn't disappoint them. The reputation of Tokaj wine is a credit to the Jews. Translation of the "Tokaj" chapter from *Pinkas Hakehillot Hungary*, Edited by: Theodore Lavi. Published by Yad Vashem, Jerusalem, 1975.

http://www.jewishgen.org/yizkor/pinkas_hungary/hun310.html

(41) Waugh, Alec, *Wines and Spirits* (New York, Time-Life Books, 1968)

(42) op. cit., no. 39.

(43) <http://www.221bcellars.com/>

(44) Klinger, who 'plays the game' in this publication, does not tell us where he found the otherwise new and convenient information that Vámbéry was a wine collector.

(45) Vámbéry would not have been the first Jew to sell wines to a Turkish Sultan. In 1566, Sultan Selim granted Joseph Naxos a monopoly on the importation of wine through the Bosphorus. Roth, Cecil, *House of Nasi: The Duke of Naxos* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1992)

(46) Redmond, Donald, *A Study in Sources*, (Kingston and Montreal, McGill, Queens University Press, 1983).

(47) <http://www.bestofsherlock.com/sherlock-manuscripts.htm>

(48) We have to mention the possibility Conan Doyle was using Sir Richard Burton's travels in 1853 as his background for Holmes's trek back to London but Vámbéry had to be more visible to Conan Doyle than Burton. See our paper 'Sherlock in Jerusalem,' *Canadian Holmes* (Vol. 34 Number 1, 2011), 5.

(49) 'Sherlock in Jerusalem,' *Canadian Holmes* (Vol. 34 Number 1, 2011) 5.

(50) Op. cit no. 46.

(51) Pronounced "eg' -ggee -she' -gge -teck' -re" It means "to your good health."

Sherlock Holmes and Leon Sterndale: La Cage aux Folles

By John Linsenmeyer, BSI

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he Devil's Foot' could as well be called "A tale of Two Doctors." It begins in the spring of 1897 with the Harley Street specialist Dr. Moore Agar (1) ordering Holmes to rest or die. So Holmes, who had already conceived the fairly silly idea that "the ancient Cornish language ... was akin to the Chaldean and had been largely derived from the Phoenician traders in tin," (2) happily headed for England's one Celtic county in a cottage on Poldhu Bay in *Pirates of Penzance* territory.

Of course, Holmes could no more have a rest cure away from murderous plots than he could refrain from standing for *God Save the Queen*. Involvement with the deeply odd Tregennis family and the famous but reclusive Dr. Leon Sterndale followed in a matter of days. After all, how could Holmes resist dead bodies with expressions of unspeakable horror on their faces, and siblings driven stark mad by some mysterious agency. Quickly, Holmes focused on strange powder and pebbles transported in someone's pocket, and brought about a confrontation with the "tremendous personality" of the lion-hunter, explorer and scientist Sterndale, who was also sojourning in the neighbourhood. But first, a word or two on the limitations of science as of 1897 are in order.

Holmes was at first mystified by the effect of some person or thing on the members of the Tregennis family. We must recall, though, that the science of toxicology (3) was still in an early stage of development. While Paracelsus (4) in the early 15th century began the process of serious inquiry with his dictum "The dose makes the poison," Sir Robert Christison, (1797-1882),



Dr. Leon Sterndale confronts Sherlock Holmes.

the giant of Holmes's and Watson's day, was like Conan Doyle himself, a native of Edinburgh and both a graduate and professor at its famous medical school. His treatise on poisons, his Chair of Medical Jurisprudence at Edinburgh from 1822-32, his appointment as Medical Officer to the Crown in Scotland (1829-66), his regular appearances in important court cases, and perhaps most importantly his Chair of Medical Therapeutics, also at Edinburgh (1832-77), made him *nonpareil* in toxicological expertise.

Christison also shared with Holmes a willingness to experiment on himself through consuming toxins (5) (though so far as I know Sir Robert never exposed his best friend, as Holmes did Watson). Conan Doyle was at Edinburgh Medical from 1876 to 1881 so he must have known Sir Robert, who retired from his Chair of Medical Therapeutics in 1877. Conan Doyle even appropriated Sir Robert's experiment when investigating the famous Burke and Hare murders in Edinburgh by beating a corpse to determine if bruises can be inflicted post mortem, and assigned the experiment to Holmes (6). But enough of the great Sir Robert and of toxicology for now; I suggest that Holmes and Sterndale were indeed *la cage aux folles*.

First, Sterndale: having been confronted by Holmes with the evidence — significantly, evidence neither concealed from nor shared then or ever with the Cornwall County Constabulary (7) — that he had murdered Mortimer Tregennis, confessed. He said that he had used the Ubanghi powder of *radix pedis diaboli* to kill the evil Mortimer. It is my belief that *radix pedis diaboli* is a canard. Clearly Sterndale murdered Mortimer for the reasons stated. By what means I cannot say.

There are abundant ways to kill someone, and it is beyond belief that such a dramatic toxin both escaped the notice of the great Christison and has remained undetected since, even though the neighbourhood of the Ubanghi River is well-explored. Father Knox's well-known Ten Commandments for the Detection Club wouldn't be written for another 31 years but I wish Sterndale had pondered at least the substance of no. IV: "No hitherto undiscovered poisons may be used...."

However it was done, the motive for the murder could be classified as either Celtic revenge or as simple justice otherwise unobtainable. Sterndale explained, and Holmes accepted, that Mortimer had confined Sterndale's inamorata Brenda for years and finally used a toxin filched from Sterndale — whose rationale for keeping such material lying around was neither proffered nor sought by Holmes — to drive his brothers insane and murder the angelic Brenda. So how does this make Sterndale spiritual kin to our own Holmes?

First, both were highly intelligent, Holmes in his sphere of detection and Sterndale in his, of exploration, lion-hunting and researches in Central Africa (8).

Second, is it not too much to say that both were hunters, Holmes of miscreants and Sterndale of dangerous big game (9).

Third, both tended to collect odd bits of information against the chance they might come in handy, Holmes on tobacco, soil, chemistry and criminal

populations, Sterndale on tools for homicide one might think of scant use both in exploration and in lion-hunting.

Next, and more important, both used their brains and skills to benefit others, generally without a view to pecuniary reward.

But finally, and most to my point that they were birds of a feather, neither refrained from murder when no practical redress for terrible criminality was available. Sterndale's case is familiar, as is Holmes's acceptance that killing the despicable Mortimer Tregennis was justified. But I suggest that Holmes too committed a murder culpable at law but justified in the eyes of God and any reasonable man.

'The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton' is surely familiar. As told by Watson "years after the incidents...took place," the smirking, unctuous blackmailer (10) Milverton called for venom in Holmes's vocabulary not elsewhere equaled: a "slithery, gliding, venomous creature....I've had to do with fifty murderers in my career, but the worst of them never gave me the repulsion which I have for this fellow." And so, on a cold winter evening (11) (the point is relevant) 221B Baker Street entertained this dreadful man, with whom Holmes had been engaged to deal on behalf of a client unable to raise the extortionate sum demanded for some "sprightly" but innocent letters written by her before her engagement to an apparently insufferable earl. In a rare show of crudity — or was it? — Holmes seemingly intended to overpower the armed blackmailer, who in any event hardly carried his wares around until cash was in hand. Milverton of course mocked him for being so crude and obvious, though perhaps this was merely a ploy to comfort him that Holmes was at a dead end.

A few days later, Holmes having gained the confidence of a Milverton maid, "on a wild, tempestuous evening when the wind screamed and rattled against the windows," weather which Holmes found suitable for the purpose, Holmes and Watson burgled Appledore Towers in Hampstead. Once inside, I suggest, Watson's tale and the facts diverge. Watson claimed that while the two friends were hiding, Milverton had a caller, an aristocratic woman portrayed in the voluminous garments worn by such ladies pre-central heating in a northern winter. After some dialogue between her and the blackmailer, Watson says, she shot him dead and left. Holmes chucked the contents of Milverton's safe, his stash of blackmail materials, into the fire and then Holmes and Watson narrowly made their escape.

Nonsense. There was no tall aristocratic woman, or a short plebian woman either. Holmes killed Milverton. Consider this: the agile, athletic Holmes and his stolid accomplice barely made their escape — indeed one of Milverton's employees actually grabbed Watson's ankle but he broke away and escaped. How, then, was an older widow in the long, bulky attire of the times to have hopped the wall too? Why tell this tall tale so many years later? Who knows? Perhaps Lestrade suspected the truth and was razzing Holmes about it.

But this is the crucial point, that a criminal monster practically beyond the reach of the law (12) who cannot otherwise be stopped, can with decency and honour be put to death 'privately.' Sterndale did so. Did Holmes kill Milverton

before or after his Cornish vacation in 1898? I rather suspect it was before but decrypting Watsonian chronology interests me as little as do Chaldean irregular verbs. So I will conclude with the observation that Holmes and Sterndale both justified their lethal actions by a law even higher than England's and are thereby truly 'birds of a feather.'

End Notes

1. Holmes's physician had an unusual name, so unusual that a hero of the Royal Navy, Captain Augustus Agar, V.C., R.N. must have been at least a relation, if not a child. As a young Lieutenant in 1919 Agar won the Victoria Cross for a daring attack on some Bolshevik warships in Kronstadt Harbour, and was also a good friend of the legendary 'secret agent' Sir Paul Dukes. Agar's 1919 adventures are told in his excellent book, *Baltic Episode*.

2. While the subject is a complex one, the term Chaldean refers to a Semitic language, now spoken only by some Middle Eastern Christians of Iraq. But it is closely akin to the Aramaic of late Biblical times and is not an Indo-European language. The Cornish language, which became extinct as a living vehicle of communication in the 18th century, is a Celtic language of the Indo-European family, closest in structure and vocabulary to Welsh and Breton, but closely related to Irish and Gaelic. In short, there is as close to zero connection between Cornish and Chaldean as is possible on this Earth. In fact, Holmes may have been the victim of a historical-linguistic prank that originated in Edinburgh (again) with a Biblical parody by James Hogg (1770-1835) and which was still going on in Edinburgh in the 1870s; the essence of the gag was to pretend to confuse "Chaldean" with "Caledonian" and then laugh at readers who fell for it (perhaps on the order of H.L. Mencken's famous 1917 *Baltimore Sun* prank on the bathtub being invented in Cincinnati in 1842 — it vastly amused him over the years to see this reported as fact by the gullible).

3. In those strange byways of a commercial barrister's life, I had a great deal to do with toxicology and toxicologists over a period of 30 years, defending generally concocted claims against a leading agricultural chemical manufacturer. This company had a world-class toxicology lab (vocally envied by medical school professors and others) staffed by genuine scientists. In addition, I became very friendly with Dr. James Winchester, a Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians in his native Scotland and then Professor of Nephrology at Georgetown. Winchester is the co-author of *Clinical Management of Poisoning and Drug Overdose*, which according to a signed review in *The New England Journal of Medicine* (1998), is "good enough to carry the moniker of a 'standard'." I mention all this to provide for my view infra that *radix pedis diaboli* is a canard, what Pooh Bah, in *The Mikado*, called "corroborative detail, intended to give artistic verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and unconvincing narrative."

4. Philippus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus von Hohenheim (1493-1541), commonly ‘Paracelsus,’ was a Swiss Renaissance scientist and pioneer in relating chemistry and medicine. His most famous quote, in the original Schweizerdeutsch, is “*Alle Ding’ sind Gift, und nichts ohn’ Gift; allein die Dosis macht, dass ein Ding kein Gift ist.*” (All things are poison and nothing is without poison; only the dose permits something not to be poisonous — e.g. even ordinarily harmless things can kill you if over-consumed: junk food, gin, etc.).

5. For one example see National Poison Information Service, City Hospital, Birmingham, U.K. under the heading The Early Toxicology of Physostigmine: “Robert Christison, a toxicologist of repute, investigated the effects of the [Old Calabar legume which provided the compound by ingesting some] and documenting the moderate, if not severe, consequences.” It is noteworthy that at least one scholar, Owen Dudley Edwards, opined that the calabar legume and Sir Robert’s study of it were the model for the toxin in ‘The Adventure of the Devil’s Foot’ (Edwards [ed.] *The Oxford Sherlock Holmes: His Last Bow*, [Oxford 1993] at p. xxiii.) Sir Robert’s deliberate self-experimenting does not seem to have harmed his health; he lived to 85. Of course, he appears to have had good DNA. He was made first Baronet in 1871; the fourth Baronet, General Sir Philip Christison, GBE, CB, DSO, MC (1893-1993) was a hero of two world wars who lived to be 100.

6. Edinburgh’s medical school must have been an exciting place during Conan Doyle’s time there. Not only was the legendary toxicologist Sir Robert still teaching during Conan Doyle’s first two years, but Dr. Joseph (later Lord) Lister was Professor of Surgery during his whole four years in those handsome old buildings on Teviot Place (happily, still standing). Strong evidence for his reverence for Sir Robert is Conan Doyle’s appropriating his experiment in beating a corpse to determine whether bruising could be caused after death, and assigning it to Holmes (Edwards, *op. cit.*).

7. The Cornwall County Constabulary was formed in 1857 and was amalgamated in 1967 with the Devon Constabulary and the Plymouth and Exeter city forces to form the present Devon and Cornwall force.

8. The Ubanghi or Oubangui (now Ubangi) River is the main tributary of the Congo River; the Ubangi flows about 660 miles through what are now the Central African Republic and the two Congo republics, and forms bits of the borders among all three. In 1897 the term Ubangi was incorrectly used to refer to women of various tribes, some of them brought to Europe or North America as circus exhibits, who wore large plates distending the lower lip. Years later a circus press agent admitted that he made up the name of the non-existent Ubangi Tribe because he saw the word on a map and liked the sound of it. Equally bogus in my view is the whole *radix pedis diaboli* tale. I don’t know what toxic agent the evil Mortimer or the avenger Sterndale used, but a toxin unknown to

both great Scottish toxicologist/physician, the late Sir Robert Christianson and to modern science, including the still happily living Dr. Jim Winchester (now at Beth Israel in New York and Professor of Clinical Medicine at Albert Einstein), seems entirely chimerical.

9. Lion hunting was in the 1880s-90s, and to some extent still is, a powerful macho activity, which also attracted serious naturalists and hunters like Sir Alfred Pease (*The Book of the Lion*, 1909) and most spectacularly former President Theodore Roosevelt, whose long safari produced a huge collection of specimens for The Smithsonian, and also his splendid book *African Game Trails*, 1910 and still in print. The dangers of the large cats were not concocted for gee-whiz books and films. In a famous case the year after ‘The Adventure of the Devil’s Foot’ (1898), what turned out to be a pair of maneless male lions, unusually working together, ate well over a hundred railway workers building a bridge over the Tsavo River in what is now Kenya. They were eventually killed by Lieutenant Colonel John Patterson of the Royal Engineers, who was in charge of the work, after enormous difficulties chronicled in his also splendid book *The Man-Eaters of Tsavo* (1907, a book much admired by Roosevelt) and in the movie *The Ghost and the Darkness*, with the usual layer of Hollywood sludge added.

10. In these days of e-mails of Congressmen in their skivvies, Italian prime minister’s adolescent inamorata and routine political, amorous and economic indiscretions, it is hardly necessary to add that writing an indiscreet letter was hardly extraordinary folly. There were no telephones so lovers (innocent or otherwise) must of necessity have trusted their *billets-doux* to poorly paid servants or maids for whom even the trivial sums offered by snakes like Milverton (a farthing on the pound would have been more than he would have been likely to pay against his anticipated return) would have been a serious, often irresistible temptation. And paying as little as he did, they could have been saved until the moment of greatest return (upcoming wedding, pending high office, etc.).

11. It was patently mid-winter and not just windy; Milverton arrived in early evening bundled up in an astrakhan overcoat, and all the illustrations of outdoor events show cold-weather attire.

12. As Holmes told Watson in ‘The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton,’ prosecution of Milverton was theoretically possible but the innocent victim’s “ruin must immediately follow.”

A Toast to the Second Mrs. Watson

By John C. Sherwood, given at the Amateur Mendicants Society of Detroit, October 2015.



As I was going to St. Ives, I met John Watson and his wives.
“How many wives?” you doubtless ask. I’d rather not attempt that task
But focus on just one or two (rather than a full review).

The one named Morstan most accept — she whom those pearls did intercept
But, when the Agra treasure drowned, in John far greater riches found.

I watched her pass. And Number Two appeared (as wives are wont to do).

And there she stood among the wives on that quaint pathway to St. Ives!

“Mary, I knew,” quipped I, “But you! What is your name, Wife Number Two?”

John Watson whispered in her ear. To me she bowed and said, “I fear,

Good sir, my name cannot be said, nor may I write it to be read.

John chose to keep it confidential for some reason existential.

Let it be Daisy, Kate or Flo, Betsy, Gertie, Xena or Jo.

It matters not at all to me. View it imaginatively!”

With that, she bowed again, and left. “Good doctor, I feel so bereft,”

I shouted. “Can you not reveal at last that which you’ve long concealed?

And, should you let your silence falter, tell your frequency at the altar!”

John Watson glared at me, then said, “Good fellow, you are most ill-bred.

The puzzle’s not to say how many filled my marital spinning-jenny.

Some do declare six wives my fate. Sir, how they underestimate!

My friend Holmes’s bee-elixir extends life — and turns the trick, sir.

Now I’m one-hundred-sixty-three’d — have all the wives that I might need!

Ask not how often I did marry or what names since birth they carry,

But ask how many of them tarry! Or whether bigamy is scary!

No sailor I, nor a longshoreman. For this did I become a Mormon!

Think me lucky? You are dense, sir. Weigh the heft of the expense, sir!

And end this needless speculation of such Sherlockian duration!

Now we in a row to St. Ives go to have our dinners and a show.

So, please do get out of our way. Wife Number Two is right, I say:

It matters not a jot to me. View it imaginatively!”

They streamed away, and I did muse on how Wife Number Two refused

My question and left me muzzled, seeking a somewhat better puzzle.

So now, in view of her riposte, I ask you now to join my toast

To leave forever counting wives, and seek a new road to St. Ives!

Sherlock Holmes and fandom: A Study in Signs

By Dorothy Palmer

Dorothy Ellen Palmer is a lifelong Sherlock Holmes fan, a Bootmaker, former Writer in Residence for Open Book and the author of When Fenelon Falls.



Why is a reclusive 19th-century fictional character – a misogynist, social misfit and dope fiend — enjoying blockbuster popularity today? Can his resurgent longevity be analyzed and reproduced? If Sherlock Holmes has become a sign, what does he signify?

Over a century since his 1887 ‘birth’ by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in *A Study in Scarlet*, Holmes remains the most enduring and resilient of literary icons. Beyond the Canon — four novels and 56 short stories — he has been re-mythologized in video games, documentaries, plays, comics, song, blogs, fanzines, poetry, advertising, novels, TV and movies. There are more literary and cinematic representations of Holmes than of any other person on the planet. *Guinness World Records* lists him as “the most portrayed movie character”—over 70 actors in over 200 films. Current revivals include two hit TV shows on two continents, *Sherlock* and *Elementary*, and two mega-hit movies by Guy Ritchie. Notwithstanding the incontestable charms and thespian expertise of Downey, Miller and Cumberbatch, Holmes exceeds celebrity and sex appeal. Mail arrives daily at 221b Baker Street requesting his aid. Holmes is quite simply the most famous man who was never born.

His fans are legion. Beyond websites, Facebook, Tumblr and Twitter, since the founding of the Baker Street Irregulars and the London Sherlock Holmes Society in 1934, there are 1000 official ‘scion societies’ world-wide, including India, Denmark and Japan. The Bootmakers of Toronto, has been thriving for more than 40 years. The Toronto Reference Library houses an extensive Sir Arthur Conan Doyle Collection, established 1969. According to Peggy Perdue, Collection Curator, the 2013 *Adventures with Sherlock Holmes* exhibit saw 4,400 visitors in a short winter run. A hundred Torontonians risked a February snowstorm to hear Bootmaker Doug Wrigglesworth on *Arthur Conan Doyle: Author, Patriot and Historian*.

All of which asks: ‘Why now?’ If literary longevity is the product of capturing public imagination recurrently over time, what does Sherlock Holmes represent today? Here follow 11 interwoven possibilities:

Nostalgia: ‘It is always 1895’

With built-in audience recognition, nostalgia is familiar in estranging times and its own bankable commodity, a safe, penny-pinching bet for both producers and consumers. But there is something beyond a longing for hansom cabs at work. Holmes lives in an England lost to the mists of time. If Holmes nostalgia is tinged with a questionable longing for a lost Camelot of quaint, ordered, class-abiding WASP England, its Victorian setting also permits us to cheer for corny things without looking like total nerds. Old-fashioned virtues — manners, devotion, dedication, honour, self-sufficiency, integrity — form the heart of all things Sherlock.

In troubled times, we love to revive superheroes

Neither alien like Superman, nor scientifically enhanced like Spiderman, Holmes is the prototype Batman, a flawed but gifted human, self-trained in the cause of justice, with zeal that obliterates personal life and threatens sanity. Outsmarting the police, this vigilante captures criminals unharmed. He embodies Churchill: he never, ever, gives up. He goes without home and hearth, without food, without sleep, often without bathing, until wrong is righted. Holmes would have caught Osama bin Laden in a fortnight and apologized for taking so long.

We like our superheroes troubled

To remain accessible — or to give us means to feel superior — superheroes need flaws. Critics diagnose Holmes with everything from Asperger’s and autism, to full-blown bipolar disorder. Let’s just agree he’s odd, entirely eccentric, not to mention drug dependent and coldly misanthropic. If his difficulty in playing well with others feeds a negative gifted stereotype, if it suggests that in some kind of karmic democratic levelling very intelligent people pay for their gift by being emotionally stunted, such prejudice reflects today’s anti-intellectualism. Nobody wants a hero who’s too good to be true.

Asexuals of the world unite!

Like *Stars Trek*’s masters of logic, Spock and Data — who is himself a huge Holmes fan — Holmes disdains emotion and attachment. Like Spock and Data, he is also asexual. How can this possibly be attractive in today’s panting soft-porn sexpool? Perhaps we enjoy a break from the constant worries of desiring and being desirable. Perhaps disinterested chivalry is a romanticized, if temporary, escape from rape culture. Perhaps Holmes’s utter lack of concern with sex is refreshing; it frees us to focus on life, not libido.

Dare we say that modern masculinity is in crisis?

If the masculine in popular culture is too often equated with vulgarity, promiscuity, brute force and gun-toting brawn, Homes offers a throw-back romantic alternative: the Victorian gentleman. If masculinity also includes patriotism, adventure, combat prowess, protecting hearth and home, and making

the world ‘safe for democracy,’ then he is also traditionally masculine. Holmes may be blind to global wrongs of the British Empire, but he believes no real man can see individual wrong without opposing it. He doesn’t just say, ‘The buck stops here,’ he says, ‘Pay it now.’ He re-enshrines responsibility and accountability in the masculine repertoire.

Manly Love meets Gaydar

Holmes and Watson offer rich speculative opportunities for the homoeroticization of their relationship. Holmes indisputably resented his best friend’s abandonment of their flat for a mere wife. The BBC *Sherlock* intimates they are more than the Buddies of Baker Street. Whether or not it’s sexual, Holmes and Watson embody manly love. In a Venn diagram of muscle meets muse, their friendship lasts decades. If modern male friendship lacks role models, no wonder the devoted, ‘I’ve got your back,’ solidarity of Holmes and Watson retains appeal.

Misogyny and gynophobia

A cynic might say that Holmes gives modern men the vicarious opportunity to revel in and snicker at misogyny, all guilt free in the name of nostalgia. But why is Holmes beloved by modern women? No other misogynist is so forgiven. At best he is shy, woman adverse; at worst he is a gleeful chauvinist pig. And we love him for it. It’s part of his flaw, his inability to become a rounded human being. Perhaps we forgive him because even his misogyny has gentlemanly grace. Holmes would never cheat, never abandon and never abuse. His spousal support would never be a day late or a penny short. We find it charming: the man who is not afraid of Moriarity is cautious of women.

Master of Disguise

For all his intellect, Holmes loves to play and does so with sardonic wit and boyish exuberance. Beyond the violin and blowing up Baker Street with chemical experiments, Watson is entirely correct that the world lost a fine actor. Holmes is the penultimate improviser with an impressive repertoire of roles: from randy plumber, to Italian priest, from crone to Norwegian explorer. He raises the improviser’s craft of observation and reaction to a fine performance art.

Leadership and Courage in the post-911 world

Holmes’s success as truth’s knight-errant reaffirms that battle is possible. World leaders struggle ineffectually with recession, debt and corporate crime. Mayors obsess over pigskin and prime ministers prioritize pandas. The brilliant beekeeper reminds us there are leaders who care deeply about right and wrong, who can, and will, take charge. In an increasingly uncaring world, Holmes saves people for a living. In a secular world, he is an utterly dependable savior.

Certainty in an uncertain world

The first Sherlock Holmes societies were founded during the Depression. As Peggy Perdue, the Curator of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection, suggests: “Interest in Sherlock Holmes also boomed in WWII with Basil Rathbone movies and serialized radio shows. Perhaps today we are seeing the combination of powerful cultural and historical appeal with a search for a problem solver, someone who will fix things. For Holmes, things were either the truth or not the truth. Problem Solved. Period.” If certainty is romantic and simplistic, we still long for it.

The Triumph of Moral Intelligence

As Philip Elliott, the former Meyers (Chair) of The Bootmakers, suggests, “Sherlock Homes stands for two things: a great intellect and a belief in the essential goodness of people. This makes him endearing and enduring.” Each victory of Sherlock Holmes is the triumph of moral intelligence, something desperately missing from our world. In the complicated, Holmes proves that evil can be pursued, caught and punished. Victims are avenged; justice prevails. Goodness wins.

So what is the Holmes recipe for longevity? Contradictions. Strength and vulnerability. Flaw and gift. Play and expertise. Romantic and asexual. Misogynist and savior. A longing for a simpler time and solutions to our own. Someone with rare courage; someone who simply takes a stand. The kind of character who returns to champion justice even after pitching face first into Reichenbach Falls. That is the kind of role model the world will always need.

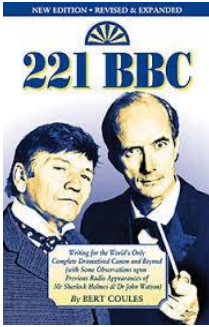


Write for Canadian Holmes

Whether you write with an old-fashioned pen like this fellow or the latest laptop, we are looking for you. All types of articles, toasts, thoughts, pastiches or reviews are welcome. It is up to you to make *Canadian Holmes* the stand-out journal it can be. Contact the Bootprint, Mark Alberstat, today with your thoughts.

markalberstat@ns.sympatico.ca

From the Editors' Bookshelf



221 BBC by Bert Coules (New York: Gasogene Books, 2014, \$22.95 [US])

If you like your Holmes and Watson on radio than you are probably well aware of Bert Coules and the BBC Sherlock Holmes radio series. During its 22-year run (May 1988 to April 2010), this production adapted every Holmes story in the Canon and is still the only professional production to have done so. This feat is made all the more remarkable when you realize that Clive Merrison played Holmes in every episode. Merrison also wrote the foreword for this book, which can be seen as a companion

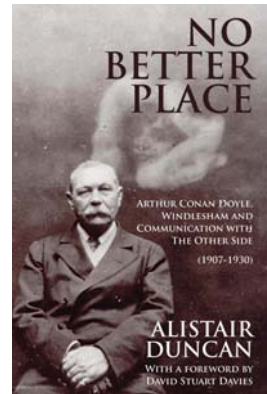
to the series. Coules is credited as the originator and head writer for the series.

This book is an expanded and revised second edition of the 76-page booklet published by the Northern Musgraves in 1998. Part of the expansion is Coules's 15 apocryphal stories.

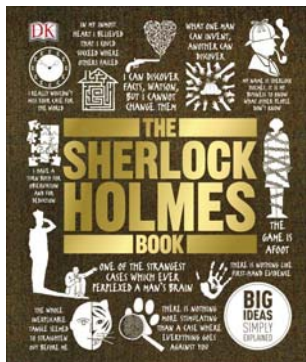
Coules explains how the series was made, a history of Holmes and Watson on radio in a chapter titled *Holmes Speaks!* and tells us how he became involved in the BBC production. After the original Sherlockian Canon was completed, Coules wrote/dramatized *The Further Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, which also star Merrison. The book also contains the complete script for one of these apocryphal stories, 'The Abergavenny Murder.' If this review has peaked your listening curiosity for the BBC series, you are able to order it on CD through Amazon or download on iTunes.

— Mark Alberstat

No Better Place by Alistair Duncan (London: MX Publishing, 2015, \$26.61 [Cnd.]) After his second marriage in 1907, Conan Doyle's future looked bright. Duncan's latest biography begins in 1907 and finishes with Doyle's death in 1930. A lot happened in those intervening years and this book takes you there. The almost daily detail of Doyle's life is chronicled, showing today's readers just how busy he was and the wide variety of interests and causes towards which he put his considerable energies. This is during the time of Doyle's life where Spiritualism grew to be an important part. Duncan handles this often derided aspect of the author's life with an even and unbiased hand. For those who have not yet read a detailed account of Doyle's later years this book can easily and concisely fill that gap. Duncan has clearly hit his stride as a biographer with this book.



— Mark Alberstat



The Sherlock Holmes Book Editors David Stuart Davies and Barry Forshaw (DK Publishing 2015, \$28.00).

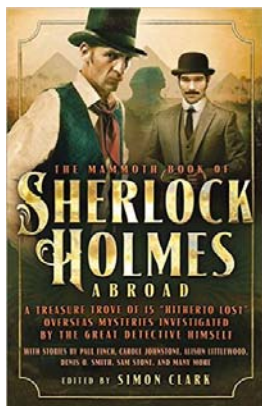
The Sherlockian bookshelf is practically chock-a-block with Guides, Scrapbooks, Companions, Compendiums, Encyclopaedias, Handbooks and other sundry titled general survey-style overviews of Sherlock Holmes, the Canon, Doyle's life and times, and the world he inhabited. Some books such as Chris Redmond's *Handbook*, Hardwick's *Companion*, Haining's *Compendium* and Jack Tracy's *Encyclopaedia*, can be rewarding

reference tools to the Sherlockian researcher, while others, typically laced with lots of colourful pictures and minimal, largely superficial text, are designed more for general consumption by the casual mainstream reader.

The latest entry in the field, *The Sherlock Holmes Book*, from non-fiction educational publisher Dorling Kindersley, is a curious combination of both types. This non-fiction range (*The Science Book*, *The Philosophy Book*, *The Sociology Book*, etc...) from DK is subtitled 'Big Ideas Simply Explained,' so no surprise that the format, which includes charts, timelines, infographics and the like, almost comes off as an upscale (hardcover, colour plates, quality paper) and more linear take on *Sherlock Holmes for Dummies* (Wiley 2010). Essentially, the book provides some general introductory matter on Conan Doyle and key canonical characters, and a foreword by Les Klinger, before launching into a complete story-by-story breakdown, with two to eight pages per case, listing publication dates, synopsis, thematic highpoints, deductions explained, relevant historical context, and various oddball and interesting sidebars and diversions. The final section (The World of Sherlock Holmes) looks at the Victorian world, impact on detective fiction, Sherlockian fandom, and provides some cursory information on stage and screen adaptations, as well as pastiche.

While there is little new here for a well-read Sherlockian, it is fairly up to date (note the so-called 'newly discovered' Sherlock Holmes story last year is included, although not refuted). And at 352 pages it does collect a huge amount of solid information (with some unfortunately occasional errors) that is beautifully presented in a handsome volume. This book is recommended, particularly for the new or casual student of the Canon.

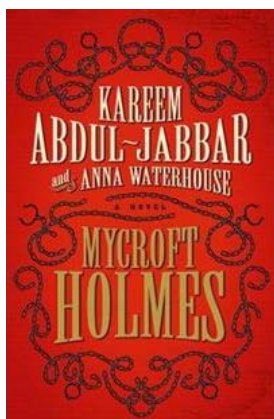
— Charles Prepolec



The Mammoth Book of Sherlock Holmes Abroad
 Edited by Simon Clark (Running Press 2015, \$18.95 PB.).

All readers of the Canon know that Holmes travelled, but setting an entire set of pastiches outside of England could turn off some readers. Like all collections, and there seem to be many of them available now, the stories are not all of the same quality, but most of the 15 stories are enjoyable. This anthology of 15 new Holmes tales manages to deliver a number that most readers will enjoy. Some of the authors hit Doyle's, or rather Watson's, writing style on the head while others miss the mark. The book opens with "The Monster of Hell's Gate," by Paul

Finch. Set in South Africa, the story is a fine one to open with as it is action-driven featuring a Holmes and Watson we can all identify. "The Doll Who Talked to the Dead," by Nev Fountain takes the duo to America and brings in that often-used late Victorian, Harry Houdini. Overall the book is a good value, although many stories are not conventional Holmes tales and one suspects readers will skim over a few that are simply not to their taste. — Mark Alberstat



Mycroft Holmes by Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Anna Waterhouse (Titan Books, 2015, \$19.50 Cnd. PB.)

This mystery novel can be read in a variety of different veins. It is as much an origin story of Mycroft Holmes as it is a pastiche of the Sherlock Holmes Canon. It is also so well researched it could be seen as a history book about the Caribbean and civil rights.

The story begins in 1870 London as Mycroft is making his way in the British government, he is far from the omnipotent Mycroft we later meet in 'The Greek Interpreter.' The action quickly moves on board a ship to Trinidad and then on the island itself.

With hints and overtones of the supernatural, the story keeps the reader guessing as to the true solution of the mystery introduced at the beginning of the novel, although most readers should be able to see through the supernatural elements to find the true cause of a series of grisly events in Trinidad.

For the Canadian reader there is a short appearance of Arthur Hamilton-Gorden who became the 1st Baron Stanmore. In the novel we meet him when he is the Governor of Trinidad, although it is mentioned that he was previously the Lieutenant Governor of New Brunswick.

— Mark Alberstat

Letters From Lomax

Musing and comments from Peggy Perdue, Curator of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection of the Toronto Reference Library

How to make the Sherlock Holmesflake

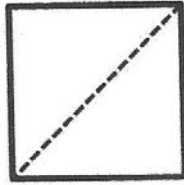
1. You need a square piece of paper. To get a size that's easy to work with, fold one corner down on a piece of 11 x 17" copy paper, then cut off the excess paper to get a square.
2. Fold the square in half to form a triangle — figure 3.
3. Fold this triangle into thirds, one third on each side of the main triangle.
4. Cut across the top of the paper to get a neat 6-layer base — figure 5.
5. Now for the tricky part: use scissors and/or a craft knife to cut the folded paper into the general shape of Sherlock Holmes (see silhouette below for a template). Be sure that parts of the edges are kept intact to connect the design when unfolded (these parts are marked F on the template.) The more intricate and lacy your cuts, the more the end result will look like a snowflake, but of course, this can be difficult to achieve without tearing the paper. A template for a fairly simple, but effective Holmesflake below.
6. When all the cuts are done, unfold and see your snowflake.



1



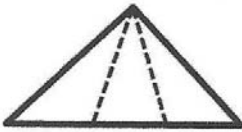
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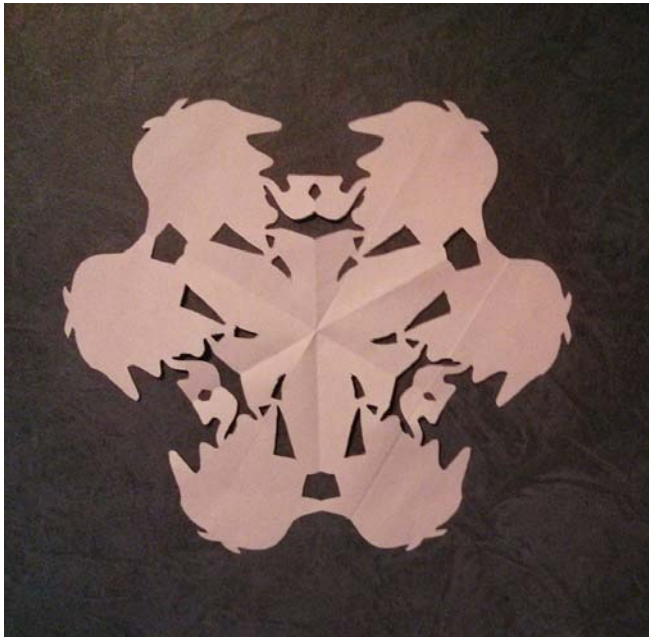
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News Notes From Across the Country

Halifax — The Spence Munros have had a busy fall. The group met on November 1st to watch the William Gillette silent film. That was followed by a potluck dinner.

The next event was a story meeting on December 6th. Grant Bradbury prepared a quiz on ‘The Man with the Twisted Lip.’ Suzanne Durkacz MacNeil took first place honours. This was a tea and dessert type of meeting and new members Denis and Marion Penton brought a Sherlock Holmes frosted cake which their daughter made.

Montreal — Appropriately enough for Halloween month, our October 1st Bimetallic Question meeting featured a quiz on ‘The Adventure of the Devil’s Foot,’ prepared by Quiz Master Raf Jans. Sovereign Carol Abramson captured first place in the results.

Subsequent conversation on the story reflected our appreciation of the splendid Cornish landscape and atmosphere as described by Watson, and we enjoyed Holmes’s self-deprecation regarding his experiment with the Devil’s Foot powder. We found it understandable that this story is recorded as one of Conan Doyle’s own favourite stories.

The meeting’s toasts were presented by Wilfrid de Freitas, Chris Herten-Greaven, Miyako-Matsuda Pelletier, Kristin Franseen, and Maureen Anderson.

Our December 3rd meeting opened with a hearty Sherlockian thank you to long-time Bimetallic Question member Lars Lovkvist for his generous donation to the Society of his extensive collection of detective fiction books.

A quiz of particularly challenging construction, based on ‘The Adventure of the Norwood Builder,’ was presented by Quiz Master Wilfrid de Freitas, and our Mr. Hudson Raf Jans was the victorious first place winner.


David Dowse, Paul Bilette, Ronnie Zilman, Elliott Newman, and Kristin Franseen brought us a clink of highly creative December toasts.

The Bimetallic Question will be gifting two new library memberships for the coming year to The Westmount Public Library as a thank you to them for our much appreciated meeting room in this beautiful Victorian city landmark.

In celebration of the Holiday Season we are also launching a new Society project, a regular digitized sharing via email of selected items from our paper archive, which spans 36 years of Sherlockian community history since our founding in 1979.

— Susan Fitch

BOOTMAKERS' DIARY



... it is a page from some private diary.

— *The Five Orange Pips*

Saturday October 24, 2015

With Jabez Wilson being a Mason, among other things, 61 Bootmakers and guests gathered at the Masonic Temple at noon to look into the machinations behind 'The Red-Headed League.'

Meyers Thelma Beam, welcomed us to the meeting and several guests, Maureen Jennings, Kay Horizny, Rob Smith, Frank and Janice Bennett, Roman and Nia Sawa and Robert Sanderson.

A contest had been included in the meeting announcement in which the person who correctly answered the question: To which country do all the following stories make reference, 'The Devil's Foot,' 'The Greek Interpreter,' 'The Sussex Vampire,' and 'His Last Bow?' The prize was two tickets to the play *Sherlock Holmes*, which was having a limited run in Toronto. The winner was Karen Gold. There were two door prizes for this meeting, each being a pair of tickets to this play. Bruce Aikin and Jean Paton won the tickets. James Reese, who had obtained the tickets, also arranged for Bootmakers to receive a discount.

The attendees then enjoyed a delicious and filling buffet brunch of scrambled eggs, sausages, bacon, fried potatoes and toast during which they could work on the quiz, handed out by James and Edith Reese.

Our appetites being sated, Doug Wrigglesworth gave us an introduction to the story pointing out that Mary Sutherland is mentioned but actually does not appear till a later story, the age of Jabez Wilson and the fact that he could never have gotten as far as he did in copying in the time he spent doing so.

Thelma then introduced guest speaker Nikki Stafford. Nikki has recently published *Investigating Sherlock*, a behind-the-scene account of the BBC *Sherlock* series, and recounted some to us. She also had copies for sale that were quickly snapped up and autographed at the end of the meeting.

Maureen Jennings, author of *Murdoch Mysteries*, was presented by Cliff Goldfarb with a certificate and a deerstalker, naming her as an honorary lifetime member of the Bootmakers.

Our Lassus, Karen Gold, led us in a singalong of, *The Man With Red Hair*, sung to the tune of, *I'm Going to Wash that Man Right out of my Hair*, from *South Pacific*.

Jean Paton, in a paper titled ‘MC1R, Jabez Wilson and Me,’ explained that MC1R is the scientific name for the red hair gene which is recessive and slowly becoming extinct. She also told us that redheads are known to be bad tempered, and brave, but not Jabez Wilson. There is also now a saliva test a prospective mother can take which will indicate if the redhead gene is present in the fetus. Paton also said the name Jabez means sorrow or trouble, which was certainly true in Wilson’s case.

Cliff Goldfarb and Hartley Nathan presented ‘When a Doctor Goes Wrong: Medical Malpractice in the Canon.’ They said that much of the medical techniques used in the Canon could have been grounds for malpractice if today’s laws had been in force then. Cliff and Hartley used the example from ‘The Engineer’s Thumb,’ in which Watson instead of disinfecting, and stitching the wound, he just bandaged it and took Hatherly off to Holmes. However, our speakers added that as lawyers there was not enough evidence to find the good doctor guilty of malpractice and acquitted him.

Jim Reese took up the quiz, the winners being: Angela Misri, Nikki Stafford, Steven Wintle, Bruce Aikin and Sylvia Anstey.

The business of the day being over, Meyers declared the meeting concluded.

— David Sanders

December 5, 2015

Sixty members of The Bootmakers of Toronto and the Toronto Dickens Society gathered in the 360 Lounge at 360 Bloor Street East for the last meeting of the year, held on December 5th of 2015. They were greeted by Dave Sanders and Philip Elliott at the registration desk who handed out the quiz on the story of the evening, ‘The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle.’

Thelma Beam in her role of Meyers 2015 called the meeting to order promptly at 7:00 p.m. She informed those present that Donny Zaldin would be in charge of the regular meeting but she would return to preside over the Annual General Meeting which would begin at 9:30 p.m.

Don Roebuck gave a brief demonstration of what carbuncles really look like, pointing out that they do not exist in blue.

Philip Elliott gave an introduction to this evening’s story.

Pat Perdue gave a demonstration of his amateur thespian skills by dramatizing the portion of the story dealing with Henry Baker’s hat. He had some audience participation by having everyone join him in, “*My dear Holmes!*”

Donny then introduced former Bootmaker and professional actor John D. Huston, who gave his one-man performance of Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*. The appreciative audience gave John a standing ovation.

As the time was getting late, it was announced that Barbara Rusch would give her presentation on Victorian Christmas cards at a later date. Jim and Edith Reese would score the quizzes for those who wished to turn them in and the prizes would also be awarded at a later date. Thelma thanked Dayna Nuhn and Mike Lozinski for being Mrs. Hudsons and providing the food.

Karen Gold brought the meeting to a rousing finish by leading us in her original lyrics *The Wild Goose Chase of Christmas*, sung to the tune of *The Twelve Days of Christmas*.

As promised, Thelma Beam called the Annual General Meeting of the Bootmakers of Toronto to order at 9:30 p.m. Kathy Burns acted as the Secretary for the meeting. The reading of the Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting was dispensed with.

James Reese was elected President (Meyers 2016). Michael Ranieri was elected First Vice-President (Right Shoehorn and Meyers 2017). The following ten members were elected as Directors-at-Large: Mark Alberstat, Kathy Burns, Peter Calamai, Elizabeth Carbone, Karen Gold, Angela Misri, Chris Redmond, Edith Reese, Dave Sanders, Philip Elliott. Thelma noted that the society has thirteen directors. The three besides the at-large members just elected are James Reese as Meyers 2016, Thelma as Past Meyers and the Library representative and Second Vice-President (Left Shoehorn), Peggy Perdue.

In her President's Report, Thelma noted that the society had a good year. There were 41 people at Silver Blaze in July, and the meetings are averaged an attendance of around 56. The membership is now at 148, an increase of 45 in the last two years. Membership from the U.S. has increased from 25 to 33. It was noted that the main reason people join from other counties is to receive our journal, *Canadian Holmes*. Mark and JoAnn Alberstat are doing an excellent job at producing it and we thank them for their effort.

A digital presentation was given showing the society's financial situation. At present, the situation is good but there are still some challenges. There is a need to lower the cost of producing the print copies of our quarterly publication. This could be done by encouraging more members to opt for the online version.

In the year ahead, we will need to find a new meeting room as the main library will be undergoing a renovation in early 2016 and will then be rented for \$150.00 per hour. We need to maintain our membership and the quality of the meetings.

The meeting was adjourned and Thelma wished everyone a safe journey home.

— Bruce Aikin



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