



# Canadian Holmes

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*Bootprints (editors) are Mark and JoAnn Alberstat, 46 Kingston Crescent, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, B3A 2M2, Canada, to whom letters and editorial submissions should be addressed. E-mail: [markalberstat@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:markalberstat@ns.sympatico.ca) and on Twitter at @CanadianHolmes*

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Canadian Holmes

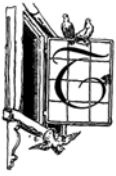
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One-hundred forty-seventh issue

***Contents***  
**Canadian Holmes**  
**Spring 2016**  
***Volume 39 Number 2***

Traces of Bootprints <i>By Mark &amp; JoAnn Alberstat</i>	1
From Mrs. Hudson's Kitchen <i>By Wendy Heyman-Marsaw</i>	2
A Priori: Canis Familiaris <i>By Warren Randall</i>	4
The Perils of a Foreign Language Collector <i>By Don Hobbs</i>	8
From the Notebooks of Inspector Lestrade <i>By Nick Dunn-Meynell</i>	12
A Toast to Sir Henry Baskerville <i>By Monica Schmidt</i>	16
Adapting Sherlock: Granada's "Authentic" 1980s Series The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes <i>By Thomas Vranken</i>	17
Recent Discovery of Two Canadian Sherlockian and Doylean Connections <i>By Doug Wrigglesworth</i>	26
Sherlockian World News	28
A Toast to dogs in the Canon <i>By Peter Calamai</i>	29
From the Editors' Bookshelf	31
Letters from Lomax <i>By Peggy Perdue</i>	32
News Notes From Across the Country	34
Bootmakers' Diary <i>By Donny Zaldin, David Sanders and Bruce Aikin</i>	36



# GRACES OF BOOTPRINTS

## *Pet Project*

The cover art on this issue says it all – we have gone to the dogs. A Sherlockian’s best friend is heavily featured in this issue and for good reason. Dogs play a prominent or supporting role in many of the stories in the Sherlockian Canon.

Often times if you are not a “dog person” you are a “cat person.” The friendly feline, however, hardly gets a mention in the 60 stories. Charles Augustus Milverton had a cat – hardly a ringing endorsement for owning one – Dr. Grimesby Roylott had a cheetah – hardly the lap warming house cat one imagines – and there is a brief mention of a cat by the hearth in “The Adventure of the Yellow Face.” Does this lack of cats in the Canon show us that murder and mayhem are more associated with dogs than cats? We know Doyle was a dog fancier and even has one at hand in the only known motion picture of him. Should readers of the Canon be wary of canines? Trevor’s froze on Holmes’s leg, and Carlo was a faithful pet of Professor Presbury’s until he used that dog-gone monkey serum on himself. The curious incident of dogs in the Canon may not be how quiet the dog was in the night, but the variety of canines, the multitude of ways they are used in the stories. And the almost complete lack of their domesticated rival, the cat.

In this issue our look at dogs begins with Warren Randall’s article on dogs in the Canon, with original art by Laurie Fraser Manifold. Nick Dunn-Meynell’s discovery of Lestrade’s *Hound of the Baskervilles* notebook also ties into dogs, of course, as we read the inspector’s account of the late-night vigil from that adventure, and Peter Calamai wraps up our looks at canines in the Canon with a toast.

The rest of the journal is filled with other goodies. Wendy Heyman-Marsaw’s Mrs. Hudson’s Kitchen column kicks off the issue, Don Hobbs writes about collecting foreign language editions, Monica Schmidt toasts Sir Henry Baskerville, Thomas Vranken looks at the Granada series, and Doug Wrigglesworth finds two Canadian connections. A new feature is found in this issue, which wraps up some Sherlockian news from around the world, and of course we have book reviews, Peggy Perdue’s Letters from Lomax and the Diary Notes.

# *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 Criterion Bar and The Holborn Restaurant*

“I was standing at the Criterion Bar, when someone tapped me on the shoulder, and turning around I recognized young Stamford “by Jove!” I cried; if he really wants someone to share the rooms and the expense, I am the very man for him.” “You don’t know Sherlock Holmes yet,” he said; “perhaps you would not care for him as a constant companion.” “In the exuberance of my joy, I asked him (Stamford) to have lunch with me at the Holborn, and we started off together in a hansom.” (Dr. Watson & Stamford – *A Study in Scarlet*)

I find it surprising that the young Dr. Watson, who was seeking a less expensive living arrangement, and professes that “so alarming did the state of my finances become...that I must make an alteration in my style of living” should be frequenting The Criterion Bar and The Holborn Restaurant. They are both of the highest quality and very dear in price. Nonetheless, his choices proved to be most fortuitous.

Jack Tracy, who wrote an excellent encyclopedia about my lodgers, describes The Criterion as a “...sumptuous restaurant, bar, and variety theatre, located in Regent Circus, Piccadilly. The bar is on the American pattern and is referred to as The Long Bar or the American Bar.”

In 1870 a firm of wine merchants and caterers held a limited architectural competition to design a large restaurant, tavern and public rooms. The competition was won by architect Thomas Verity, and is regarded to be his best work. Building began in the summer of 1871 and was completed in 1873 at a cost of approximately £8,000,000 in today’s currency. It is a splendid place with a Neo-Byzantine interior decorated in gold and marble. The Criterion is a five-level complex with the Long Bar located on the ground floor. The bar has a ceiling of gold mosaic,

covered at the sides, and is decorated with a blue and white mosaic pattern. From its inception the new venture proved to be very profitable.

The restaurant soon gained a well-deserved reputation for serving fine modern British and European food. Its clientele included many royal and noble names, including Watson's literary agent, Arthur Conan Doyle. The restaurant was also a popular meeting place for women who were members of the suffrage movement and The Actresses Franchise League. The bar installed a plaque in 1953 to commemorate the historic meeting between Watson and Stamford. The Criterion is still listed by some as one of the top 10 most historic restaurants in the world, although it is now known as The Savini at Criterion. The plaque remains in place.

The Holborn Restaurant was located at 218 High Holborn, an area closely associated with the legal profession. In fact, there was a separate Lincoln's Inn entrance to accommodate the barristers. The Holborn was very popular with clubs and societies, including the Masons, who had their own hall above the restaurant. Novelist and historian Sir Walter Besant (1836-1901) stated that "it is a very gorgeous building and a palace of modern luxury." The Holborn survived until 1954, at which point it was converted into offices. Its iconic architecture, however, remains almost untouched.

The recipe I have chosen from The Holborn menu is a dish that the good doctor may have enjoyed. It dates back to the time of Chaucer.

#### Recipe:

*Salmis de Gibier (game birds or duck) aux Champignons (mushrooms)*

Ingredients: 2 game birds roasted rare, 3 chopped shallots, 2 oz. butter, 1 heaping Tbs. flour, bouquet garni, thinly cut orange zest, pepper, salt, lemon juice, ¼ pint red or white wine, ¼ lb. sautéed mushrooms, large bread croûtons sautéed in butter, orange quarters.

Mode: Remove meat in nice, neat pieces from carcass. Use bones and trimmings to make ¾ pint stock. Melt butter and cook shallots until rich, golden brown, then stir in flour and moisten with stock. Simmer 20 minutes with the bouquet garni, and orange zest and a bit of lemon juice until mixture is a rich, concentrated sauce – almost of a spoon coating consistency. Strain into clean pan. Season to taste and add wine and mushrooms. Simmer 5 minutes, then add game, cover and leave for 10 minutes. The sauce should never boil once the game is added – it should barely simmer. Place pieces of game on top of the croûtons and serve sauce separately, or put the game and sauce into a serving dish, with croûtons tucked around edge. Garnish with orange quarters.

# *A Priori: Canis Familiaris*

By Warren Randall, MBt, BSI, ASH, SHSL, ShD

*Warren Randall, was crushed at age 6 to find that his local branch of the public library lacked any new Sherlock Holmes cases. He later discovered what Bootmakers, ASH's and Irregulars do in the nighttime. He earns his bread and cheese at New York's Stony Brook University.*

**H**istory allows that there have been three groups who have required the legal protection of law; chronologically, these are Animals, Children and Women. Interestingly enough each of these protected groups also enjoys a singular status in the saga of Sherlock Holmes.

To begin, you must know that the British SPCA was created in a



*Illustration by Laurie Fraser Manifold*

London coffeehouse in 1824, two years after passage of Martin's Act, also known as *The Cruel Treatment of Animals Act*. The Society won royal patronage in 1837 and Queen Victoria's permission to add the royal R in 1840. By the time of Holmes's first cases, there was a cadre of sworn RSPCA inspectors with the power to enforce the Act.

Interesting, but you might ask, what does this have to do with the cases of Mr. Sherlock Holmes? The better question might be why wasn't Holmes called to account by the RSPCA? In certain respects, being a dog in the company of Holmes could be hazardous to your health.

It was Holmes, in "The Adventure of the Creeping Man," who said "I have serious thoughts of writing a small monograph upon the uses of dogs in the work of the detective." Let us examine the uses of dogs in the labours of this detective, in light of a statement that elsewhere is attributed to a certain literary agent:

"A dog reflects the family life. Whoever saw a frisky dog in a gloomy family, or a sad dog in a happy one? Snarling people have snarling dogs, dangerous people have dangerous ones."



*Illustration by Laurie Fraser Manifold*



One can mention some situations in the Canon for which one might conclude that dead families have dead dogs.

In the cases of Holmes, there are but five dogs with names. Why that is so we cannot say, but they are an odd litter for many reasons:

Toby is “half spaniel and half lurcher.”

Pompey is “something between a beagle and a foxhound.”

Roy is a wolfhound.

And the name Carlo blesses us twice, as an ill-treated spaniel and as an unfortunate mastiff.

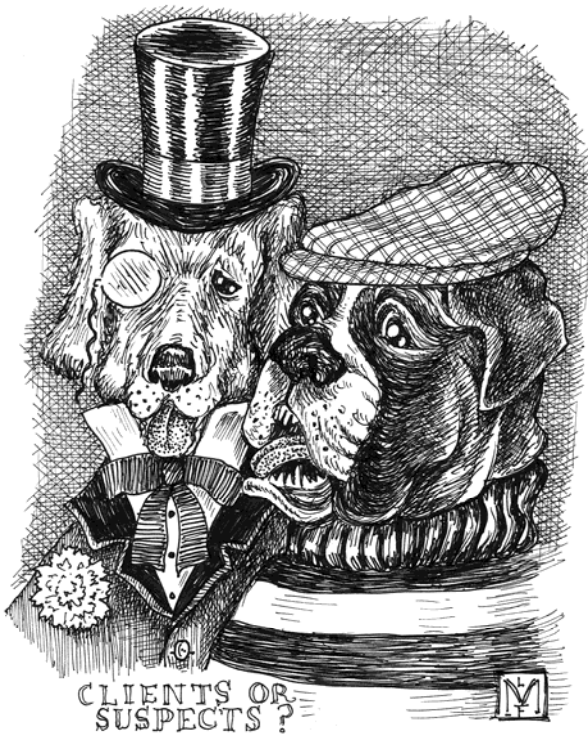
The rest of the pack are anonymous (perhaps there were names, cut by a miserly, word-counting editor) and thus strut and fret briefly upon the scene:

an Airedale,

a bull-terrier and a bull-pup,

mastiffs,

and -hounds galore, pre-fixed with blood-, drag-, stag-, and sleuth.



*Illustration by Laurie Fraser Manifold*

Sadly, the first dog we encounter was Watson's bull-pup, of which more later.

After Watson's dog there was Mrs. Hudson's terrier. We are informed that when the poor dog didn't keel over, "[Holmes] with a perfect shriek of delight rushed to the box, cut the other pill in two, dissolved it, added milk, and presented it to the terrier. The unfortunate creature's tongue seemed hardly to have been moistened in it before it gave a convulsive shiver in every limb, and lay as rigid and lifeless as if it had been struck by lightning."

Later, in the great, final act of another case, it was reported that Holmes, with no shriek of delight, had "emptied five barrels of his revolver into the creature's flank."

There were acts of indifference as well. Holmes thought nothing of having Toby walk the entire length of London in what proved to be a goose-less wild chase and likewise, elsewhere, he was ready to allow Pompey to fruitlessly follow a scent in a 20-mile circle.

Dogs in other cases are subjected to cruel and unusual treatment:

Carlo, the spaniel, was certainly the victim of an unsanctioned medical experiment;

MacPherson's Airedale had succumbed to a poisonous attack as well;

Lady Beatrice's Shoscombe spaniel was unkindly ill-treated.

Holmes was not at all disconcerted upon observation of these outcomes.

And we must ask what devilry Holmes was organizing to induce Trevor's dog to "freeze" on to his ankle as he went down to chapel?" The bull-terrier certainly knew him as Trevor's "friend." Was Holmes guilty of behavior similar to that of Prof. Presbury in front of the restrained Roy, some 23 years later? We must examine the details since it was also 23 years before Holmes ever went near a chapel again, not to mention he is reported as going into a church but once!

No less sanguine was his friend and partner, Watson, who, "running up, blew [the other Carlo's] brains out." Later, the good doctor seems less inclined to act violently when after another run, "stooped [and] panting, [he] pressed [his] pistol to the dreadful, shimmering head, but it was useless to press the trigger. The giant hound was dead."

And dare we ask what happened to Dr. Watson's bull-pup, that he once kept and keeps no more?

As for Holmes, himself, while he displays some of the better attributes of our four-legged friends: intelligence, strength, calm disposition, and loyalty, and is described being a foxhound, a staghound and twice, like a

...continued on page 15

# *The Perils of a Foreign Language Collector*

By Don Hobbs, BSI

*Don has been collecting Sherlockiana for more than 30 years. Most of that time he has concentrated on foreign translations. He is the General Editor for the BSI International Series and is currently working on Canada and Sherlock Holmes. When not pursuing his Sherlockian interests he is an Applications Specialist for a radiology software company.*



As a collector of foreign translations of the Canon, I am constantly faced with the dilemma of knowing what it is I actually bought. It is probably the most frequent question I am asked about my collection: “How do you know that it is really Sherlock Holmes by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle?” It is a valid question and also a valid concern I have about my collection. Over the past 30 years I have bought thousands of books and most of them I cannot read. So how do I figure out what it is I have bought? What are the keys to successfully adding books to my collection?

To begin with, books written in the Roman alphabet pose few obstacles when extracting the bibliographic information within. Using a program as simple as Google Translate, I can learn the word “translator” very easily. All of the books in my collector are recorded in my electronic bibliography, *The Galactic Sherlock Holmes*. In the GSH, I make a jpeg scan of the book’s cover and record the translator’s name, when it is available. I also include the name of the city where it is published, the name of the publisher, the year of publication, the number of pages and finally, the canonical contents. Again, the Roman alphabetical languages pose very few issues in extracting these bits of information. Using a searchable Complete Canon, I can always get the contents. For those that pose a little more difficulty, I also use a program that allows me to search the entire Canon. I can search by keyword, title a certain phrase.

The biggest issue I face is when I am dealing with non-Roman alphabets. Armenian and Georgian are just a couple of the challenges. These languages and the Cyrillic ones, like Russian, Bulgarian, and Tajik, use the same numbering system as Roman alphabets. This is the single most reliable tool in tracing a book’s contents. Good old Dr. Watson must have known that future generations of Sherlockians would

need a simple way of deducing information in books written in foreign languages. The Canon is chock-full of numerical clues, such as dates, addresses and times. One of the first things I do when I get new books in non-Roman alphabets is pull up their numbering system. So many of the canonical stories have numerical clues that, often times, this is all I need to get the bibliographic information I require.

The real challenge comes with non-Roman alphabetical languages that use a completely different numbering system, such as Malayalam, old traditional Chinese, Marathi, Gujarati and Bengali, to name just a few. I once bought a set of books translated into what I believed to be Thai but when I got deeper into the identification process, I found that none of the numbers matched. I soon discovered that it was in Malayalam, a language spoken in southern India, in the state of Kerala. The two alphabets look very similar but not their numbers. With the help of the Internet, I have created a table with many of the most popular numbering systems and the language they belong with. I have included that table, found on page 11, so the reader can see exactly what I deal with on a daily basis. This table is by no means a complete representation of the different numbers but it is a good reference point that does show the diversity of numbers.

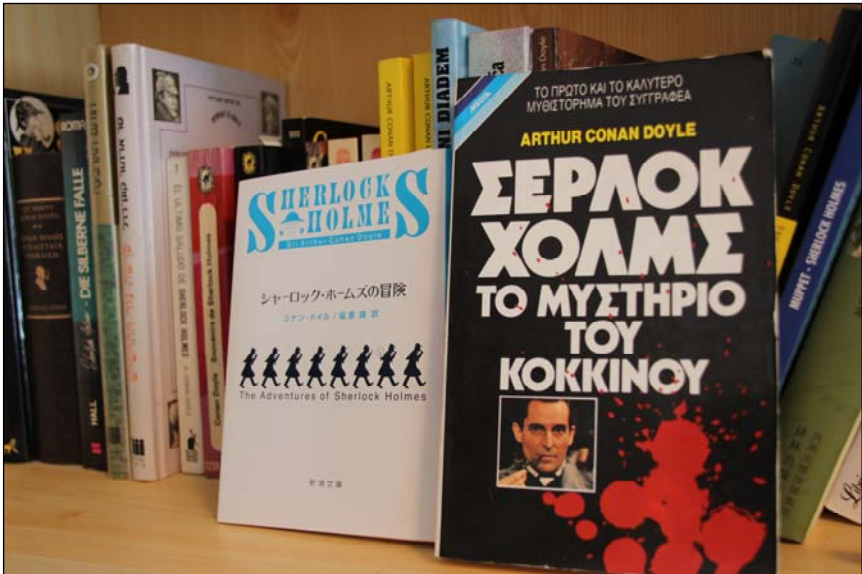
Of course, there are many stories without numerical clues and these are the ones that pose the greatest challenge. How does one figure out the story's title when it is written in a language without letters or numbers that can be recognized without reading the language? This is where the human element comes into play. Over the years, I have accumulated an army of volunteers who help me when all else fails. I use this resource only after exhausting all other means. I get a great deal of satisfaction from deciphering the bibliographic information from a book without any outside help. However, there are some books that are difficult and that is when I reach out to my helpers. Yuichi Hirayama, BSI, is one of these helpers. He helps me with all of my Japanese and Chinese books. Another helper was a graduate student at the University of Texas in Austin. I found her by searching a meetup website for Texas people who read Russian. She is from Russia and answered my plea and offered to help me. She has been helping me with all of the Cyrillic books I buy for more than a decade. She eventually graduated and moved to Switzerland but still helps me every time I ask her. I also have contacts in the National Bengali Society, the National Gujarati Society and the National Malayalam Society, an owner of a local Thai restaurant, a professor of Ottoman Turk studies, and an employee at the largest bookstore in Estonia. All I do is scan the cover, the bibliographic pages and tables of

contents and email these scans to a person. They provide me with the necessary information, which I add to *The Galactic Sherlock Holmes*.

The truth about any bibliography is that it is obsolete as soon as it is committed to paper. Since the *GSH* is electronic, any new entry, new or old can be inserted at the exact spot it needs to be, both chronologically and alphabetically. This is especially helpful with foreign translations of the Canon because I am contently finding “new” editions from the 1900s to the present. When I burn the *GSH* to a CD I give it a version number that corresponds to the year and month. With so much information available in today’s electronic world, with instantaneous correspondence between people, I can provide the Sherlockian collector of foreign translations of the Canon (all four of them) with the most accurate, up to date collector’s tool available. Those who come across a translation of the Canon and are not sure what they have can simply scroll through the *GSH*, a mere 1,900 pages, until they find the cover that matches theirs. Then the rest of the information is at their fingertips. As an added bonus, while scrolling through those 1,900 pages, they can get an idea of how popular Sherlock Holmes is in so many different cultures.

At the present there are translations in 109 languages representing more than 60 countries! So as one can see, I do have the collection mania in its most acute form and especially on the subject of foreign translations of the Canon.

Happy Collecting!



Language	Arabic	Bengali	Chinese	Chinese	Chinese	Gujarati	Lao	Malayalam
0	٠	০	九	玖	文	૯	ລ	൯
1	١	১	〇	零	〇	૦	໐	൧
2	٢	২	一	壹	一	૧	໑	൨
3	٣	৩	二	貳		૨	໒	൩
4	٤	৪	三	參		૩	໓	൪
5	٥	৫	四	肆	ㄨ	૪	໔	൫
6	٦	৬	五	伍	ㄨ	૫	໕	൬
7	٧	৭	六	陸	ㄨ	૬	໖	൭
8	٨	৮	七	柒	ㄨ	૭	໗	൮
9	٩	৯	八	捌	ㄨ	૮	໘	൯

# *From the Notebooks of Inspector Lestrade*

By Nick Dunn-Meynell

*Nick Dunn-Meynell, a Sherlockian living in Brentford, U.K., discovered this notebook beneath the false bottom of a hat box deposited by Conan Doyle in a bank vault at Crowborough, Sussex, in 1922. This manuscript was found in July 1947, and that is all Dunn-Meynell is prepared to reveal.*

“We sat for some minutes in a stillness which was only broken by the scratching of Lestrade’s pencil as he gave the finishing touches to his short-hand account.” – Dr. Watson’s account from *A Study in Scarlet*



“Confound this land of mist! Oh, Watson, Watson, if Sir Henry dies I will never forgive myself. Why did I not foresee this fog!”

“Mr. Holmes, sir, I must really ask you to be a little more quiet. You said we should tiptoe and speak in whispers as Stapleton keeps a dog. I beg of you to stop stamping and swearing and slapping that rock. You will awaken the dead, to say nothing of the dog.”

“Holmes, one thing puzzles me. If you camped out on the moor, you would surely have experienced such mists.”

“My dear Watson, the weather forecast made no mention of it. And yet I seem to detect the hand of providence at work. The world, it seems, is not ruled by chance. Every cloud has a silver lining, and this particular cloud is wonderfully dramatic.”

“You are the dramatist in real life, Holmes. Not I.”

“What would my profession be without the clever forecast and the subtle trap?”

“Except for the weather forecasts.”

“A touch, Watson, I do confess it.”

“Mr. Holmes, sir, I think we should arrest Stapleton now. Dr Watson says that he saw him going to an outhouse to prepare the hound for release. The doctor heard the beast. If we arrest him now we will have

the dog as evidence and there will be no need to put Sir Henry's life in danger. If we wait until the hound is out, there will be nothing to connect Stapleton with the attempt on Sir Henry's life."

"But the warrant, Lestrade, you forget the warrant!"

"I did not forget the warrant. I have it with me."

"No, no, inspector, it is unsigned and worthless."

"But Mr. Holmes, you specifically instructed me to keep it unsigned."

"This is hardly the time to discuss such trifles. An arrest is impossible without a signed warrant."

"I'm a Scotland Yard inspector, sir. I don't need a warrant to make an arrest."

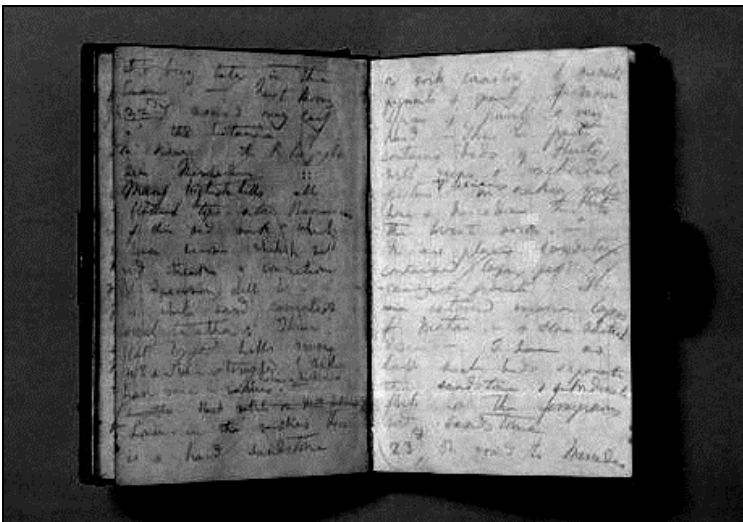
"Think, Lestrade. What if that scuffling noise Watson heard turns out not to be the hound at all? Stapleton is a naturalist. He could keep a bittern. I gather from Watson's reports that they can sound uncannily like a hound. No, no, Lestrade, circumstantial evidence is not enough. To paraphrase Emerson, we need to take our lean-jawed pike in the milk."

"I think Lestrade has a point. Even if we take the hound with its teeth buried in Sir Henry's throat, how would his death prove Stapleton's guilt?"

"In itself it will prove nothing."

"Then what will have been achieved?"

"It is very simple. Stapleton must follow the hound. When he hears our gunshots he will panic and flee. That will prove his guilt. An innocent man would never fly."





“But Mr. Holmes, if there is nothing to connect him with the hound then his only reason for fleeing would seem to be out of fear lest as a Baskerville himself he should be its next victim. His flight would prove his innocence, not his guilt. And what if he is the cold-blooded villain you say he is? Has your experience of him led you to conclude that he is the kind of man who would panic? Assuming he was indeed the murderer, he brazened it out when he found you and Watson standing over the corpse of Selden. Why did he not fly then? Why should he this time? However, I assume that if you are so sure he will do a runner you have had the local police surround the area to take him when he does?”

“Lestrade, that is an offensive question. Holmes would hardly have sent our trap away if he had not ensured that Stapleton could not escape. Of course he has called in the local police. They are concealed in this fog.”

“No, no, my dear Watson, I have done no such thing. Do you imagine that a man as cunning as Stapleton would not sense if there were a hundred flat-footed bobbies about his house? As for the trap, the neighing of the horse would have given us away.”

“But how can we follow him?” I asked.

“There will be no need. Where in the world can he go?”

“Where can he go? Anywhere on Earth! Mr. Holmes, if you have not told the local police then I shall be properly landed in it if I cannot at least produce the man for questioning!”

“Never fear, Lestrade. He must flee into the Mire and so to his destruction. He is bound to leave Baskerville’s boot behind there and that will prove it.”

“Holmes, why on Earth should he go there? And why should he continue to hold on to the boot after letting the hound have Sir Henry’s scent?”

“You do not understand the criminal mind, Watson. I saw that, Lestrade. Do not tap your forehead in that offensive manner.”

“Why should he enter the Mire if you feel certain he must lose his way in this mist?”

“His blind panic will cause him to forget that. Watson, when have you known me to be wrong?”

“Norbury.”

“I never make exceptions. The exception disproves the rule.”

“Holmes, I’ve been thinking. We have Laura Lyons’ testimony that Stapleton dictated the letter sending Sir Charles to his doom, we know that Stapleton is a Baskerville who will inherit the Baskerville estate

should Sir Henry die, we know that as a Mr. Vandaleur his career as a headmaster ended in infamy, we know that his sister is actually his wife, and I am certain that the creature in his outhouse is not a bitter. Is that not enough?"

"Circumstantial, my dear Watson. A jury would laugh you out of court. Nothing but Stapleton's death in the Grimpen Mire will confirm his guilt."

"We could take him when he returns to the outhouse to release the hound."

"The same old Watson. You never learn. Any such attempt would warn Stapleton that we were on to him and so enable him to escape."

"But he'll do that anyway."

"I'm sorry, sir, but I'm going to be in enough hot water as it is for not notifying the local police of my presence. I cannot risk Sir Henry's life too."

"Oh, very well, Lestrade, but you have robbed me of the greatest dramatic climax of my career. Watson, I am depending on you to bear in mind that some facts should be suppressed. I trust that you will record what *should* have happened."



*Continued from page 7.*

"Newfoundland." At various times when he wasn't himself being dogged, he was known for dogging others while eagerly on a scent and as a dogged sleuth.

Watson refers to him once as a sleuth-hound, so perhaps Holmes did have a well-hidden soft spot for his fellow creatures: consider his plaint of that dog with nothing to do in the nighttime. Maybe it is this soft spot that kept the RSPCA from climbing those 17 steps.

# *A Toast to Sir Henry Baskerville*

By Monica Schmidt

*Monica M. Schmidt, ASH, JHWS is the current president of The Younger Stamfords of Iowa City, IA. She is a member of several Sherlockian organizations. When not participating in Sherlockian events, Monica can be found at the cinema taking in the latest Hollywood has to offer.*



ir Henry Baskerville: gentleman farmer from Canada. Since I am from Iowa, the concept of the gentleman farmer is something to which I can relate. After all, there is a surprising number of thirty-something, sturdy-built, weather-beaten farmers in Iowa, and even a few who might exhibit the air of a gentleman!

As the target for the mysterious hell hound, one wonders “why is this young Baronet worthy of the attentions of Mr. Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson; what makes him worth all the trouble to protect?” Well, Sir Henry’s Canadian heritage and gentleman farmer status are not his only noteworthy traits. Considering the looming threat awaiting him at Baskerville Hall, he exhibits a great deal of bravery in travelling to his ancestral home. Sir Henry is also a complete romantic at heart – he quickly fell head over heels for the lovely “Miss” Stapleton – everybody loves a hint of sentiment in their protagonist, as it makes them all that much more likable. When one considers the terrible treatment he receives at the hand of Mr. Stapleton, his bravery and romantic nature just ups his likability factor all that much more; he’s the type of guy you root for in a narrative. Oh, and it certainly did not hurt that Sir Henry just inherited a respectable title and a huge fortune (meaning that there is money in this case, dear fellows!)

But what sets Sir Henry apart and, in my opinion, makes him worthy to be the reader’s champion is that he was a harbinger of change and progress. While Baskerville Hall might lose some of its moody mystique, Sir Henry recognizes the need for updating the lonely manor by bringing touches of modernity, like electric lights, to the estate. Thanks to Sir Henry’s adoption of newly available technologies, Dartmoor would no longer exist in shades of menace and mystery! He is a forward-thinker and literal bringer of light into the darkness! Holmes recognized his potential, deemed him worthy of his attentions, and sought to protect Sir Henry from his family’s curse – an act for which we can all be thankful.

So, let us raise a glass to the bringer of light – Sir Henry Baskerville.

# *Adapting Sherlock: Granada's "Authentic" 1980s Series The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*

By Thomas Vranken

*Thomas Vranken is currently completing a PhD on Sherlock Holmes at the University of Melbourne, Australia.*



adaptations of popular pieces of fiction are almost always held up to the yardstick of authenticity. Yet those doing the measuring seem to be particularly exacting when it comes to stories featuring Sherlock Holmes. Thus David Stratton, probably Australia's best-known film critic, condemned Guy Ritchie's 2009 film *Sherlock Holmes* for having "ridden roughshod over one of literature's greatest creations" (2010), while an otherwise complimentary review of the CBS series *Elementary* (in which Lucy Liu co-stars) concedes that "the thought of a female Watson" may cause some viewers' "blood [to] boil" (O'Neil 2014). Even *Sherlock*, the widely lauded BBC series starring Benedict Cumberbatch, is frequently noted for the many ways in which it has "deviated [from] the original" (Gilbert 2010).

Against these supposedly inauthentic adaptations, one might be tempted to hold up a more overtly faithful production. *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* was one of a series of "heritage television programmes" produced by Granada during the 1980s (Pearson 1998, p. 145). [1] And, at first glance, great pains appear to have been taken to ensure that the adaptation remained faithful to Arthur Conan Doyle's original short-story collection of 1892. Indeed, Michael Cox, the show's creator and producer, wrote of wanting the series to be "faithful to Doyle's text"; he further claimed that Jeremy Brett had partly been chosen to play Holmes because he resembled "a Sidney Paget illustration from *The Strand Magazine*" (1995, p. 10). [2] However, while the adaptation is largely authentic, it also subtly alters Doyle's work in a number of fundamental ways. Focusing on three popular episodes (and well-known Holmes stories) – "A Scandal in Bohemia," "The Red-Headed League," and "The Speckled Band" – it can be argued that the show is skewed to conform to modern ideas and preconceptions surrounding the stories' setting, politics and protagonists.



*Granada's Jeremy Brett by Charles Prepolec*

When it comes to setting, Doyle is very specific. [3] We are told, for instance, that “A Scandal in Bohemia” begins “on the 20th of March, 1888” (p. 2), while “The Speckled Band” is set “early in April, in the year ‘83” (p. 207). Similar care is taken to inform the reader that Watson lives near Oxford Street in the suburb of Kensington (p. 77), and that the

“Red-Headed League” character William Morris has moved to “17 King Edward Street, near St Paul’s” (p. 70). In this respect, Doyle’s approach to world-building resembles that of his contemporary Naturalists – invoking details from the world of the reader with an almost scientific exactitude in an attempt to create the appearance of reality. A particularly interesting example of this can be found a little later on in “The Red-Headed League,” when Watson and Holmes decide to stop past the scene of the crime:

“Sarasate plays at St James’s Hall this afternoon,” [Holmes] remarked. “What do you think, Watson? Could your patients spare you for a few hours?” “I have nothing to do today. My practice is never very absorbing.” “Then put on your hat, and come. I am going through the City first, and we can have some lunch on the way[”] ... We travelled by the Underground as far as Aldersgate; and a short walk took us to Saxe-Coburg Square, the scene of the singular story which we had listened to in the morning. (p. 73)

In “A Case of Identity,” Holmes informs us that “a certain selection and discretion must be used in producing a realistic effect ... [For] the details ... to an observer contain the vital essence of the whole matter” (p. 32). And in the passage quoted above, this is certainly the case. However, Watson’s factually detailed description of events does more than simply provide Doyle’s story with verisimilitude; rather, it also imbues it with a certain timeliness. By casually referring to a variety of very specifically late 19<sup>th</sup>-century phenomena already familiar to the reader – from the Spanish violinist Pablo de Sarasate, to the London Underground and St James’s Hall [4] – Doyle ensures that, at least for his original audience, his story appears not only realistic but modern and up to date as well.[5]

In Granada’s television adaptation, Holmes’s setting is skewed to match more nostalgic preconceptions. From the show’s opening credits, we enter a stylized representation of late Victorian London – a world of pompous men in overcoats and mischievous young beggars. However, the book’s wealth of specific temporal signifiers has disappeared, and when exactly the onscreen action is taking place is left unclear. For instance, while the story is careful to inform us that the Red-Headed League published its newspaper advertisement on the 17th of April 1890 (p. 60) and was dissolved on the 9th of October 1890 (p. 69), the television adaptation does not specify a year for either event. Brett’s own description of the show’s setting impressionistically calls up a romantic

image of “the late Victorian era full of gaslit, fogbound streets, the scent of shag tobacco” (1986, p. 13). Indeed, the setting of Granada’s adaptation is further romanticized by the introduction of a variety of quaint historical detail. Thus, in “The Red-Headed League,” Wilson announces that he plans to travel to Bath to improve his health (22:30); in “A Scandal in Bohemia,” the king has a reputation for being “a fine duelist” (13:25); and in “The Speckled Band,” a flashback shows Julia and her fiancé playing a light-hearted game of croquet (14:30). Ironically, therefore, though Doyle’s collection was in many ways keen to appear up to date, Granada could only make its adaptation appear authentic to our modern preconceptions by infusing the stories with nostalgia. [6]

In socio-political terms, Granada’s *Sherlock Holmes* is also more acceptable to a latter-day audience than the book. Read now, a number of Doyle’s Holmes stories appear politically suspect. One example is the generalizing exoticism of “The Speckled Band.” Dr Roylott, his daughter informs us, is a man who “has a passion ... for Indian animals ... he has at this moment a cheetah and a baboon” (p. 213). The fact that cheetahs and baboons are actually native to Africa (Hutchinson 1992, pp. 173, 68) does not seem to disturb anyone in the story: even Holmes, with his encyclopedic mind and didactic personality, offers no correction. Thus, there is a sense in which the otherwise highly distinct worlds of India and Africa are here casually lumped together as simply the non-Western “Other.”

Women are treated in a similarly dubious fashion in Doyle’s stories. Note, for instance, this extract from one of Holmes’s explanatory monologues in “A Scandal in Bohemia:”

“When a woman thinks that her house is on fire, her instinct is at once to rush to the thing she values most. It is a perfectly overpowering impulse, and I have more than once taken advantage of it ... A married woman grabs at her baby – an unmarried one reaches for her jewel box.” (p. 26)

Richard Fusco goes so far as to label Doyle’s worldview misogynistic (2001 p. 124); and, in the above passage, women are attacked on a number of fronts. Most fundamentally, the passage perpetuates the 19th-century idea that women are irrational – a particularly loaded accusation, given the extent to which power rests largely upon rationality in the Holmes stories. Indeed, their being governed by “instinct” and “overpowering impulse” renders women exploitable victims, creatures

that Holmes is able to have “more than once taken advantage of.” The passage is equally patronizing when it comes to prescribing the roles available to women. At first, the passage seems to at least acknowledge that being an unmarried, independent woman is an option. However, it is significant that such women are said to value their jewelry boxes most. By bringing together ideas of virginity, beauty and economic wealth, the jewelry box becomes perhaps the perfect symbol of marriageability. Thus, women are here categorized not as not being either married or unmarried but as being either married or intent upon becoming so in the future.

However, in Granada’s *Sherlock Holmes*, the story’s most overtly sexist lines have been cut: meaning that Holmes no longer declares women to be “naturally secretive” (p. 22) and that the jewel box passage quoted above has also disappeared. Moreover, in the television adaptation, Holmes’s fussy housekeeper Mrs Hudson is made to occupy a noticeably larger role. Thus, while she is still not exactly an empowered New Woman, her character has taken on a greater prominence and agency (“I must answer the door ... might be a clue,” she whispers cheekily to Watson in “The Man with the Twisted Lip” 03:10). Similarly, more effort is made to be racially correct. Though baboons are again erroneously presented as “Indian animals” by Granada, Dr. Roylott’s cheetah has become a leopard – an animal that actually is native to the Indian subcontinent. However, perhaps the show’s most politically significant alteration comes when Holmes learns that Dr. Roylott killed his Indian butler. In Doyle’s book, this is a revelation that Holmes seems happy to let pass by (p. 212). In Granada’s television adaptation, on the other hand, Holmes is visibly shocked to hear that Dr. Roylott “beat the poor fellow to his death” – “it is a wicked world,” he exclaims (29:00). Thus, in the television show, the detective has been quietly transformed. For, while Holmes might once have been a quasi-imperialistic male chauvinist, he has now become both less disrespectful of women and more indignant at colonial injustice.

Indeed, in many respects, our image of Watson and Holmes has become decidedly distinct from Doyle’s stories. Take, for instance, the following passage of Watsonian narration from “The Speckled Band:”

At Waterloo we were fortunate in catching a train for Leatherhead, where we hired a trap at the station inn, and drove for four or five miles through the lovely Surrey lanes. It was a perfect day, with a bright sun and a few fleecy clouds in the heavens. The trees and wayside hedges were just throwing out



their first green shoots, and the air was full of the pleasant smell of the moist earth. To me at least there was a strange contrast between the sweet promise of the spring and this sinister quest upon which we were engaged. (p. 224)

In the popular imagination, Watson is often little more than a bland foil for his greater companion. In the passage quoted above, however, he takes on a role of greater significance and contemplation. For in his musings on “perfect” nature, idyllic images of the natural world are used to emphasize and foreshadow the very *unnaturalness* of Dr. Roylott’s sinister schemes. Moreover, one could argue, Doyle uses Watson to make a statement about the effects of urban living. Indeed, while Doyle’s text is often viewed as glorifying the city (see, for instance, McConnell 1987, p. 182), it is the process of moving from the mechanized (the train) to the pre-mechanized (the trap) that allows Watson to slow down and gain a greater degree of aesthetic appreciation and thus psychological depth. In Granada’s television adaptation, on the other hand, this reflective pastoral scene has effectively disappeared, as has Watson’s psychologizing narration more generally. As a result, Watson is condemned to the more limited role that he has come to typically occupy.

Moreover, in Granada’s television adaptation, Holmes is himself skewed to match more recent preconceptions. In Doyle’s book, although Holmes is usually successful, this is by no means always the case. Indeed, the collection begins with “A Scandal in Bohemia,” in which Holmes admits to having been “beaten” (p. 31). Moreover, in later stories, the detective’s initial theories often prove incorrect. In “The Speckled Band,” for instance, he is depicted “scratching his chin with some perplexity” (p. 227) and berating himself for having “come to an entirely erroneous conclusion” (p. 238). However, over the years, Holmes seems to have become infallible. Franco Moretti, for instance, claims that “Holmes cannot go wrong” (1990 248); for Rosemary Jann, meanwhile, Holmes is “all but invincible” (1995, p. 3); even Basil Rathbone, the most famous of Holmes’s incarnations, complained that the detective “was a sort of god ... could he not fail just once[?]” (1989, p. 182). And in Granada’s television adaptation, it is this godlike Sherlock Holmes that Brett often seems to portray. An interesting example of this can be found in “The Speckled Band.” In Doyle’s story, when Holmes and Watson stumble upon Dr. Roylott’s baboon in the dark, neither of them initially recognizes the creature for what it is. As a result, Watson claims that “Holmes was for the moment as startled as I. His hand closed like a vice upon my wrist in his agitation” (p. 235). In

Granada's adaptation, on the other hand, Homes displays no such agitation. Not even momentary ignorance is allowed to besmirch Holmes's deductive powers. Instead, the protagonist's realization is immediate – "it's the baboon," he calmly assures his shaken companion (46:56). As a result, Holmes seems to have moved from being an often flawed detective into being one who is almost omniscient (especially when compared to Watson).

According to Moretti, "detective fiction's object is to return to the beginning" (1990, p. 241). The same may be said of Granada's television adaptation of Doyle's *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. However, in this, even Granada was not completely successful. While the series remains largely faithful to Doyle's original stories, it also modernizes them in a range of subtle yet significant ways. The show is skewed to conform to latter-day ideas and preconceptions surrounding the collection's setting, politics and protagonists. But this is not necessarily a criticism. Perhaps the series – and, indeed, all adaptations of Sherlock Holmes – should simply be seen as manifestations of a broader trend in which the Holmes stories are drifting away from their initial formulation, into the public sphere.

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## Endnotes

[1] The series aired on ITV in 1984-5. Adaptations of Doyle's subsequent Sherlock Holmes collections (*The Return of Sherlock Holmes*, *The Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes*, and *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*) followed, running until 1994. In Canada, the series appeared on CBC.

[2] Granada's subsequent adaptations of the Sherlock Holmes stories were less overtly faithful. As Neil Mccaw notes, with *The Return of*

*Sherlock Holmes* (for which Michael Cox was replaced as producer by June Wyndham-Davies), “Conan Doyle’s narratives were altered more frequently and more significantly” (2010, p. 27).

[3] And studious: as noted in the recent exhibition *Sherlock Holmes: The Man Who Never Lived and Will Never Die*, held at the Museum of London, Doyle’s “knowledge of the city during the late 1880s was largely derived from the perusal of contemporary street atlases” (Cannadine 2014, p. 18).

[4] “Pablo de Sarasate, the virtuoso violinist and composer, was born in Pamplona, Spain, on March 10, 1844, and died in Biarritz on September 20, 1908 [he engaged in] concert tours that made him famous all over the Western world” (Duffin 2007, p. 134); “An underground railway was first built in London in 1863 ... London also had, in 1869-70, the first tube” (Van Dulken 2001, p. 146); “St James’s Hall, on the north side of Piccadilly, close to Piccadilly Circus, was built as London’s principal concert hall in 1858” (Crawford 1999, p. 380).

[5] As Alex Werner notes, while early Holmes stories such as those in *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (the first collection of Holmes short stories) “look back to a few years earlier,” “they are intrinsically contemporary in character. Their setting is the modern city” (2014, p. 108).

[6] Although it should be noted that nostalgia did go on to become more of a feature of Doyle’s later Holmes stories, the time of composition and first reading becoming increasingly “distant” from that in which the stories were set (Cannadine 2014, p. 42).

# *Recent Discovery of Two Canadian Sherlockian and Doylean Connections*

*By Doug Wrigglesworth*

*Doug Wrigglesworth is a Sherlockian, Doylean and bibliophile. He is finally starting to understand the difference between 'collecting' and 'gathering' and trying to downsize to demonstrate it.*



When one is known to be a collector of bits and pieces related to Sherlock Holmes and his creator, often chance produces happy discoveries. My two sons, on their world travels, have added numerous treasures, from Sherlock in languages other than English, to puppets and theatre posters.



*Nigel Bruce in his Hollywood garden with some happy Canadian servicemen.*

A cheerful group to which I belong is the Newmarket Men's PROBUS Club. It is comprised of retired professionals and businessmen who share great fellowship and many common interests.

I was approached by one of our more senior members who asked if, as a Sherlockian, I knew of Nigel Bruce. What followed was a fascinating story of a young airman stationed in Victoria BC in 1943.

A daughter of Nigel Bruce was also stationed at the RCAF Station in Victoria. She suggested to the young airman that he

should take advantage of her father’s hospitality in Los Angeles on one of his leaves. (Often free “hops” were available on military planes.) So a half dozen or so young airmen and sailors were warmly welcomed by “Dr. Watson.” They were introduced to a number of Hollywood stars of the day, including Holmes himself (Basil Rathbone). Nigel Bruce’s garden proved a wonderful place to enjoy a leave. My friend tells me that he flew home to Victoria “in the tail-gunner’s seat” of a bomber.

A second happy coincidence occurred when reading the book my fellow history buff, seven-year-old grandson, Oscar, gave me at Christmas. Titled *My Grandfather’s War*, it is a collection of anecdotes about Canadians who served during the Great War. As Oscar and I have chatted frequently on such topics, he is beginning to understand that warfare is nothing at all like the movies.

On reading the book, I come upon a selection from the published memoirs of the irrepressible John George Diefenbaker, our former Prime Minister. He was describing his very brief military experience while stationed in England during 1916-17. He reports of an enjoyable evening spent at Windlesham, along with a number of other Canadian Officers from the Crowborough Camp, dining with “Sir Conan Doyle” (sic):

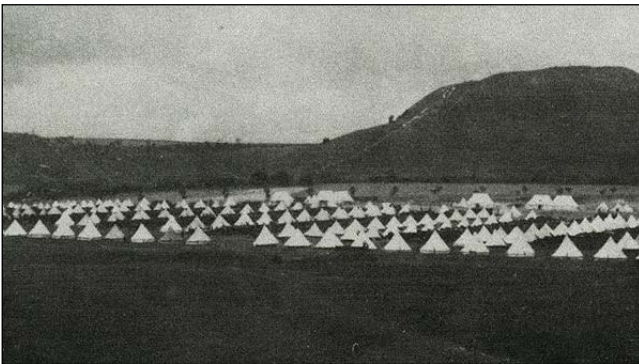
“Nor will I forget one evening in Crowborough when I, along with several other officers, had dinner with Sir Conan Doyle (I did not cry “Excellent!” nor he “Elementary.”)”

Brian Pugh, in his excellent Chronology, identifies February 10, 1917 as the date that Conan Doyle and his wife Jean entertained 130 Canadian officers at Windlesham.

It is well known that Conan Doyle was most hospitable to Canadian soldiers of all ranks while they were stationed at Crowborough Camp.

And so our Sherlockian connections continue to fascinate – and

continue to provide historic and personal connections that enrich our lives.



*Crowborough Camp during the Great War*

# Sherlockian World News

Since we all love things Victorian, especially Victorian London, readers will enjoy their time watching this YouTube video [https://youtu.be/O\\_me3NrPMh8](https://youtu.be/O_me3NrPMh8). This 11-minute video pairs old motion pictures of London with modern ones, in some ways, taking us back to those bygone days of pea soup fogs and hansom cabs.

The International Exhibition of Sherlock Holmes that made such a splash in London last year will be setting up shop in Edmonton (see ad below). For more information see: <http://sherlockholmesexhibition.com/>



Sherlockian products continue to appear, including the new Pokémon game Sherlock Pikachu, and several comic book and web action series.

The three-volume *MX Book of New Sherlock Holmes Stories* has now been joined by a fourth volume. Proceeds go to preservation of Conan Doyle's former home, Undershaw.

Several major Sherlockian conferences and conventions are coming up. The big every-three-years conference at the University of Minnesota in June; A Scintillation of Scions in Baltimore that same month; and a special Baker Street Irregulars weekend in September at Chautauqua, New York, a place that's very near Toronto, just west of Buffalo.



# *A Toast to dogs in the Canon*

By Peter Calamai

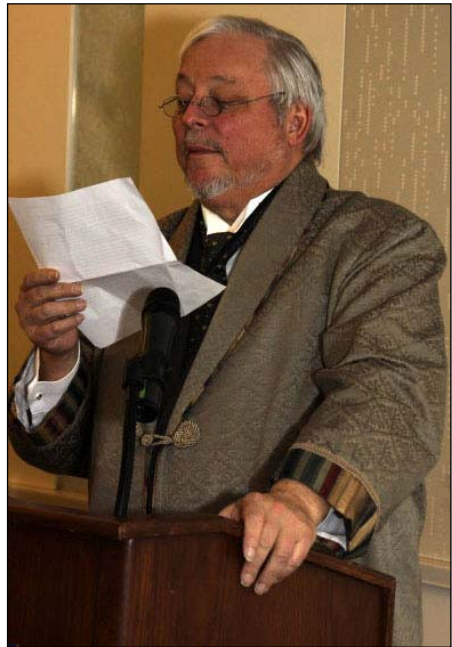
*Peter, that dog-gone scribe from Ottawa, gave this toast at the 2011 Blue Carbuncle dinner. Peter entered the room with two invisible dogs on leashes. He managed to keep them under control through his toast.*



Herlockians owe everything to a dog. If an unnamed bull-terrier hadn't frozen on Holmes's ankle at university, forcing a long convalescence, Holmes would never have formed a friendship with the dog's owner, Victor Trevor. And we all know that friendship led to the *Gloria Scott* case, which launched the career of the world's first consulting detective.

Perhaps in subconscious gratitude, Holmes overtly identifies with dogs. In the first published story he tells Constable Vance that "I am one of the hounds and not the wolf" (*A Study in Scarlet*). A decade later, he is referring to "two old hounds like Watson and myself" ("The Adventure of the Priory School"). Indeed, Holmes is unabashed about his canophilia, openly declaring "I am a dog-fancier myself" ("The Adventure of Schoscombe Old Place") and praising the "beautiful, faithful nature of dogs" ("The Adventure of the Lion's Mane").

This canine affinity extends well beyond mere words. At various times in the stories, Holmes's actions are likened to those of a foxhound, a staghound, a retriever and, of course, a sleuthhound. Not only that, but Holmes is twice recorded as snarling ("The Adventure of the Second Stain" and "The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire") and in two



*Peter Calamai, dressed as Horace Harker, delivering this toast.  
Photo by Bruce Aikin.*



other instances a development cause his ears to “prick up” (“The Adventure of Silver Blaze” and “The Adventure of the Dancing Men”).

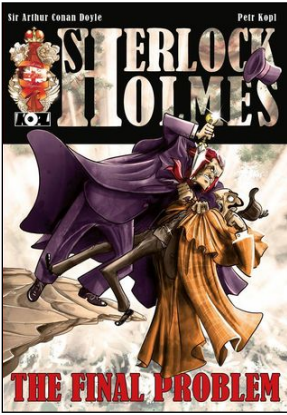
Yet this no superficial romanticism. Holmes valued dogs for their practical contribution to the whole art of detection. In *The Sign of Four* he says that he prefers the help of a certain spaniel lurcher to “that of the whole detective force of London.” In “Shoscombe Old Place,” when a black spaniel snaps at a figure that is supposed to be her mistress, Holmes declares that “dogs don’t make mistakes.” More’s the shame that he apparently never did write an intended monograph on the uses of dogs in the work of the detective (“The Adventure of the Creeping Man”).

Yet despite the high regard in which Holmes held dogs, they don’t fare all that well in the Canon. Roughly three score are mentioned, although 43 of those are the pack that Mr. Sherman threatens to loose on Watson. You might say those are invisible like the ones I brought with me tonight.

Of the 17 other individual dogs, seven suffer ill-treatment, ranging from being doused with petroleum and set on fire to being tossed through a plate-glass window. Two more are fatally shot by Holmes or Watson, one trustingly laps up deadly poison administered by Holmes, another is hit with a poisoned dart and one succumbs to the toxic stings of a jelly fish.

Only five are awarded the distinction of names – Toby, Pompey, Roy and two named Carlo. Other dogs with pivotal roles in the stories are anonymous – Victor Trevor’s all-important bull terrier, Watson’s bull-pup, Mr. Mortimer’s stick-carrying spaniel, the howling spectral hound and the dog that did nothing in the night-time. But while largely unsung and sometimes ill-treated, the dogs of the Canon more often than not exemplify courage, fidelity, selflessness and even love. Together they constitute the Barking Street Irregulars . . . and I ask you to drink to their canine memory.

# From the Editors' Bookshelf



(*The Lost World* and *The Final Problem*, MX Publishing, \$16.95 US each)

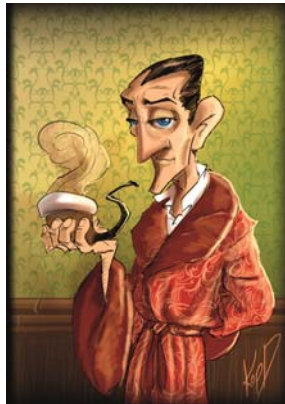
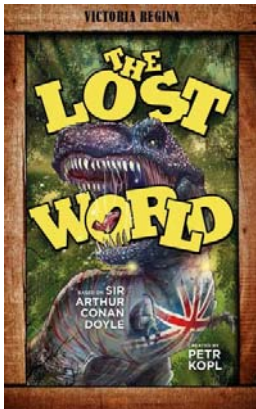
Petr Kopl has a unique art style which lends itself well to graphic novels and this is seen nowhere better than his version of *The Final Problem* and *The Lost World*.

*The Final Problem* is actually a mash-up of three stories; the title one, “Charles Augustus Milverton,” and “The Empty House.” Kopl does the combining of the stories well and fluidly, and the art work and combined storyline keep the reader interested. The artwork is also fun to look at

and reminiscent of another artist’s representation of characters we all know so well.

Some of the artwork and story line in this book borders on the British tradition of bawdy humour, but the fun is created in such a way as it is more of a wink and nod to and with the reader than an attempt at titillation at the cost of our well-known characters.

Kopl’s version of *The Lost World* follows the general outline of Doyle’s original story but adds in the fun of some Steampunk elements and a tribe of natives found on top of the plateau. This is the 8th book in Kopl’s Victoria Regina series. The others are *The Phantom of the Opera*, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, *The Final Problem*, *A Scandal in Bohemia*, *The Devil’s Foot*, *The Lost World*, *Dracula* and *The Mysterious Castle in the Carpathians*



# Letters From Lomax

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



A new exhibition called Special Collections A to Z opened in the Toronto Reference Library's TD Gallery in late February. It's a collaborative show that uses an alphabetical theme to provide a sampling from all of Toronto Public Library's special collections of rare and unique materials. The Arthur Conan Doyle Collections is there in full force, with contributions to the "G is for Games," "M is for Miniature Books," and "V is for Villains" themes, as well as a full case of materials called "S is for Sherlock."

Bootmakers who visit the library will naturally head straight for the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection, (and I wouldn't have it any other way) but this seems like a good time to let you know about some of Toronto Public Library's other special and rare book collections. These include the Baldwin Collection of Canadiana, the Canadian Documentary Art Collection, Special Collections in the Arts, the Merrill Collection of Science Fiction, Speculation & Fantasy, and the Osborne Collection of Early Children's Books. The sum total of these collections adds up to over four million items.

Toronto Public Library has been collecting these materials since 1884. Yes, even before the world began in 1895! The earliest acquisitions are mostly in the Baldwin Collection of Canadiana, a collection of primary resources about the history of Canada. The Collection includes books, pamphlets, periodicals, newspapers, broadsides and ephemera. It was named for Robert Baldwin, who was one of the first proponents of creating a bi-cultural English-French nation. He is also remembered for advocating a British model of responsible government that led the way to independence without revolution. The Canadian Documentary Art Collection, which also forms part of the Baldwin Collection, contains paintings, drawings, prints, postcards and photographs that depict life and locations in Canada. Although any part of Canada may be included, there is a special focus on early Toronto.

The materials in TPL's Special Collections in the Arts are similarly devoted to Canada in large part, although international items such as antique engravings from Europe and colourful Kabuki prints from Japan are also a significant part of the Collection. Stage designs, playbills, photographs and manuscripts related to Canadian productions in the

performing arts are important holdings, as well as over 3,000 Canadian parlour songs and piano pieces.

*Canadian Holmes* readers who take an interest in genre fiction beyond the detective story will definitely want to take a look at the Merrill Collection's outstanding holdings in science fiction, speculative literature and fantasy. The Collection first opened under the name "The Spaced-Out Library" in 1970, just a year before the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection opened in 1971. The Merrill Collection has original manuscripts, correspondence, first and limited editions, as well as a variety of subject reference tools. Their original art and science fiction and fantasy art books are a true feast for the eyes.

The Osborne Collection of Early Children's Books is similar to both the ACD and Merrill Collections in its focus on literature. It has a longer history, having opened in 1949 after British librarian Edgar Osborne donated his personal collection of rare and notable children's books to Toronto Public Library. The Osborne Collection hosts many class visits annually, but this collection is by no means just for children. Anyone would appreciate the artistry and imagination that has gone into the books, artwork and artifacts in its holdings.

The Merrill and Osbourne collections, like the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection, have Friends groups of volunteers that promote the collection and run interesting public events. Check the library's website for details of upcoming programs. Meanwhile, if you are in Toronto during the Special Collections A to Z show, do stop by and see all these wonderful collections side by side in one extraordinary smorgasbord of books, ephemera and artworks. The show runs in the Toronto Reference Library's first floor TD Gallery until April 24, 2016. *Canadian Holmes's* many readers outside Toronto can also see a portion of the exhibition at the Virtual Exhibit site: <http://omeka.tplcs.ca/virtual-exhibits/exhibits/show/from-a-to-z/intro>. As well, a growing number of items from Toronto Public Library's specials collections can be seen online in TPL's digital archive: [torontopubliclibrary.ca/digital-archive](http://torontopubliclibrary.ca/digital-archive)





## News Notes From Across the Country

Halifax — The Spence Munros are as active as ever. In January, 19 of the faithful showed up for the Master's birthday bash at a local Greek restaurant. Toasts, a talk and general merriment ensued. In February, eight members met at Mark and JoAnn Alberstat's house to watch *The Scarlet Claw*, followed by a potluck dinner. In March, a dozen attended a meeting based around the first half of *The Valley of Fear*. Grant Bradbury supplied the quiz for this meeting.

Edmonton – On Sunday, February 7, The Wisteria Lodgers had their first official meeting and decided to meet the first Sunday of every month.

The story for this meeting was “The Adventure of Silver Blaze.” We took the quiz and then rated and discussed the story.

We discussed the famous Sherlockisms such as “the curious incident of the dog in the night.”

The group then discussed collaboration with Telus World of Science on the Sherlock Holmes Exhibition. The Lodgers are planning to put on skits and have presentations during the exhibition. They will also act as experts, answering any questions of guests. The meeting ended by discussing the BBC *Sherlock: The Abominable Bride*. Some had issues with the movie, but most enjoyed it.

Montreal — The Bimetallic Question opened their February 4 meeting by extending a big Sherlockian thank you to Ottawa mystery book expert Jim Reicker for his generous donation of books to the Society. It was also a great pleasure at the start of the meeting to welcome back returning member, Philip Ehrensaft, to the BMQ's membership rolls.

The meeting's quiz was based on “The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge” and prepared by Susan Fitch. The quiz contained a challenge within its 53 questions to correctly identify all of the 13 different animals Conan Doyle mentions in the story. Raf Jans claimed first place with a score of 50, narrowly beating out Carol Abramson by 3 points.

Conversation on the quiz story was perhaps inspired by it being Valentine's month! In keeping with a theme running throughout the meeting of accepting and celebrating love in all its forms (If Holmes and Watson enjoyed a "bromance" as speculated by some, then why not just accept this possibility in 2016), Miyako Matsuda Pelletier discussed the notion of homosexuality in the story. Scott Eccles's description of Garcia could be considered one of physical love for his host. Elliott Newman noted how homosexuality in Victorian times could not even be spoken of, and was called "The love that dare not speak its name."

Bruno Paul Stenson indulged our interest in Montreal's Victorian sporting life with an excellent interactive slide presentation on the Victoria Rink (where in 1875 the first recorded indoor ice hockey game in history was played) and on the origins of hockey itself.

Vancouver – The Stormy Petrels' annual birthday brunch was celebrated at The White Spot Restaurant near Stanley Park on January 9 with 18 of the faithful attending.

February was a regular meeting at our usual Hampton Place at UBC and we discussed "The Adventure of the Dancing Men." This meeting was attended by special guest, Bob Coghill.

March we discussed "The Solitary Cyclist," and also a couple of us attended *The Game's Afoot – Stories from Sherlock Holmes* by two professional storytellers from Ontario who were touring the West Coast.

Twenty-three members attended The Masters Dinner on March 12, including special guest Dan Polvere of The Speckled Band of Boston, now residing just across the border in Washington State.

During dinner we toasts were followed by the traditional skits of "How They Met" and "How Watson Learned the Trick."


Two award presentations took place. The first went to Elsa Haffenden in recognition of her long-time continued dedication as treasurer and hostess.

The second award was presented to Krista Lee Munro as she stepped down as editor of the *Petrel Flyer*.

The dinner closed with the traditional reading of Vincent Starrett's "221b" by Len Haffenden and Fran Martin.



# BOOTMAKERS' DIARY



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

— *The Five Orange Pips*

*Wednesday, January 13 to Sunday, January 17, 2016: BSI Weekend*

A contingent of 15 Bootmakers – Peter and Mary Calamai, Bob Coghill, Hartley and Marilyn Nathan, Peggy Perdue, Michael Pollak, Charles and Kris Prepolec, Chris Redmond, Barbara Rusch and Donny Zaldin, Stephanie Thomas and Edwin Van der Flaes – joins Sherlockians from over half a dozen countries and attends the 82nd annual Sherlock Homes birthday celebrations of the Baker Street Irregulars. Organized by the BSI's Wiggins, Mike Whelan, and Mary Ann Bradley, the long weekend is filled with formal and informal opportunities to gather for the common purpose of celebrating the Master's 162nd birthday and BSI accomplishments with Sherlockian camaraderie and entertainment.

On Wednesday, the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes (ASH) Dinner kicks off the weekend with an informal dinner.

On Thursday, early risers participate in the Christopher Morley Walking Tour and Lunch. In the late afternoon, authors published in the 2015 issues of *The Baker Street Journal* attend an annual cocktail reception in their honour. Bootmaker Chris Redmond is the recipient of the 2015 Morley-Montgomery Award for the best article of the year, titled "Dr. Hill Barton Pays a Call."

The Baker Street Babes hold a charity ball titled the Daintiest Thing in a Dressing Gown Pajama Party, to benefit the Disabled American Veterans Trust. The evening's BSI Distinguished Speaker Lecture features James Hatcher, who wrote the screenplay for the 2015 film *Mr. Holmes* starring Sir Ian McKellen. Following, some Bootmakers and several honorary Canadians gather to attend the now traditional Annual Canadian Dinner at Virgil's Real Barbeque.

On Friday, bibliophiles search out printed and other Sherlockian treasures at Otto Penzler's Mysterious Bookshop, followed by The William Gillette Memorial Luncheon. That evening, Sherlockians attend either the annual (open to all) Gaslight Gala or (by invitation only) Baker Street Irregulars Dinner, attended by 11 Bootmakers.

This year's dinner pays homage to the historic Irregular Weekend of 1991, when women were admitted into the organization following a quarter-century of lobbying, demonstrating and picketing by women and like-minded men. Bob Coghill toasts the late Bootmaker grand dame, Maureen Green, ASH, BSI and 1991 Woman of the Year, who was held in great affection by Sherlockians worldwide, touching the hearts of all those in attendance, including her beloved husband, Edwin Van der Flaes.

As usual, attendees of both dinners celebrate the year's seven investitures at 2:21 a.m. at O'Lunney's Irish Pub near Times Square.

On Saturday morning, Sherlockian books and collectibles are snapped up at the Merchants Room, and the Beacon Society holds its annual meeting. The official events conclude with the BSI Cocktail Reception, followed by The Very Irregular Lost in New York with a Bunch of Sherlockians Dinner, for those non-theatre goers at loose ends on Saturday night.

On Sunday, the weekend concludes with the informal ASH Brunch, following which Sherlockians disperse.

– Donny Zaldin

### *Saturday January 30 – Blue Carbuncle Awards Banquet*

Forty-three Bootmakers and guests gather at the York Masonic Temple on Saturday evening (drinks at 6:00, dinner at 7:00) for the annual Bootmakers Blue Carbuncle Awards Banquet.

James Reese, this year's Meyers, welcome those in attendance, and Donny Zaldin tells us that the large silhouette of Holmes was created by Mark Alberstat using the text from "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle." The attendees then enjoy a delicious dinner.

As we partake of this delectable feast, various toasts were proposed:

A Certain Gracious Lady – Doug Wrigglesworth

The Original Meyers – Bruce Aikin

The Goose – David Sanders

The Countess of Morcar – Chris Redmond

Mrs. Henry Baker – Donny Zaldin

Commissionaire Peterson – Michael Ranieri

Dr. John H. Watson – Dave Drennan

Mr. Sherlock Holmes – Karen Gold

The subjects of these toasts are the same as those given at the very first awards banquet in 1974 and at which Chris Redmond's father Donald did the toast to the Countess of Morcar.



Our guest speaker Rosemary Aubert, author of the Ellis Portal novels, attended that first awards banquet. She tells us how her character and story style was influenced by the Holmes adventures.

Rosemary graciously brought five of her books to be given out as door prizes. The lucky recipients were Ruth Harper, Larry Beam, Barbara Rusch, David Sanders and Philip Elliott.

Doug Wrigglesworth thanks Rosemary for her most interesting talk and presents her with a bottle of Tokay Wine provided by Edith Reese.

The evening then passes on to the handing out of the 2015 awards:

True Davidson – Barbara Rusch for her tribute to Leonard Nimoy comparing him to Holmes.

Warren Carleton – James and Edith Reese for their excellent quizzes.

Derrick Murdoch – Sonia Fetherston for “A Study in V.”

Three people are invested with the rank of Master Bootmaker:

Larry Beam, who has assisted with audio visual and tech-guy, Mrs. Hudson on many occasions and support to his wife Thelma during her two terms as Meyers.

Karen Gold, who has over the last two years taken over the role of Lassus from Karen Campbell, and provided witty and entertaining Sherlockian song parodies.

Wendy Heyman-Marsaw, a Nova Scotian who has written the “Mrs. Hudson’s Kitchen” column in *Canadian Holmes* for the last four years, combining Sherlockian or Victorian history or social culture with a Victorian recipe.

The final award for the evening is the Emerald Tie Pin, which was created to honour long-standing members of the Bootmakers. This year’s recipients are Mark Alberstat, Karen Campbell, Dave Drennan and Barbara Rusch. One of the selection committee, Dayna (Nuhn) Lozinski, is in Oxford receiving an award from the Lewis Carroll Society so she makes two of the presentations via a video she made before her departure.

James Reese thanks Thelma Beam for all her hard work as Meyers and presents her with a set of Sherlock Holmes tarot cards. Thelma in return presents James with his British police whistle engraved with his name and year.

In another round, three more door prizes are drawn, the winners are Thelma Beam, Louise Goldberg and Anne Tanner.

Meyers thanks those assembled for their attendance, congratulates all the winners and thanks those who helped make the evening a success.

*Sunday January 31*

Fourteen people attend at the California Restaurant for the annual Marlene Aig Memorial Brunch. Those present are Kathy Burns, Chris Redmond, Dave Drennan, David Sanders, Philip Elliott, Ed Van der Flaes, Bruce Aikin, Doug and Jean Paton, James and Edith Reese, Barbara Rusch, Donny Zaldin and Frank Quinlan.

It is a tradition at this event for someone to tell those assembled all about the late Marlene Aig, an American who while spending a few years in Toronto became an avid member of the Bootmakers. This year that honour falls to Chris Redmond.

– David Sanders

*February 27, 2016 – Story meeting: A Case of Identity*

Forty-seven members and guests assemble in the new meeting venue of the Bootmakers: The Northern District Branch Library at 40 Orchard View Boulevard. A series of signs and sticky-notes lead us to the meeting room on the second floor.

Meyers 2016 James Reese calls the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. After making some introductory comments about this evening's meeting, he calls on Bruce Aikin to give the introduction to the story.

Bruce notes that "A Case of Identity" was supposed to be the second Sherlock Holmes short story in *The Strand Magazine*, not the third as it turned out to be. There is no major crime in the story but Holmes says that it is "unimportant matters" that often provide the charming investigations. As a chemist Bruce makes some remarks about "bisulphate of baryta." The £4,700 for which Mary's mother sold her late husband's business at the behest of Windibank was a large amount of money at that time and he really did not need the £100 from Mary.

Our next speaker is Donny Zaldin who tells us about "Sherlock Holmes in Hollywood." Since the next day is the Oscar presentation, he notes that no Sherlock Holmes movie has ever won a major award. In 1939, the first two Rathbone and Bruce Sherlock Holmes movies were released: *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. Due to the number of good movies that year, these films did not receive one nomination. Donny presents a list of eight good movies which also did not receive any nominations and asks the members to come up with a Sherlockian connection to each of them. The winners are Bruce Aikin, Karen Campbell and Cliff Goldfarb.

Thelma Beam reads "The Sherlockian World News," prepared by Chris Redmond, who is unable to be here.

A number of announcements are made, including:

The Hollyer Memorial Lecture will be on May 28 at the Metro Toronto Library – provided that the renovations are completed. The topic will be “William Gillette in Toronto.”

A new member, Rebecca Gadsden, is welcomed. She was a member of the Halifax society but has moved to Toronto.

The Scarborough Theatre is having a show called *The Maltese Bodkin*. The author is David Belke. In 2014 a number of Bootmakers went to see his pastiche called *The Reluctant Resurrection of Sherlock Holmes*. This same theatre will show, from December 2 to 17, *Sherlock Holmes and the Case of the Christmas Carol*.

We then break for refreshments provided by this evening’s Mrs. Hudson, Edith Reese.

After the break, Cliff Goldfarb and Hartley Nathan present “Sherlock Holmes: The Genealogical Connection.” They trace Sherlock Holmes’s line through the Vernet family in France. Through a lot of research they have found that Hartley is possibly related to Old Abrahams, mentioned in “The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax.” They also reveal that Cliff is possibly connected to Joseph Silver, a very unlikely Jack the Ripper candidate.

Meyers then announces the winners of the December quiz based on “The Blue Carbuncle.” Time ran out at the meeting so Jim and Edith Reese graded the papers afterwards. The winners were Don Roebuck with a perfect score of 225, Bruce Aikin – 215, Karen Campbell – 190, Dave Sanders – 175 and Frank Quinlan – 165. The winners select a prize of their choice.

The quiz on “A Case of Identity” is then taken up by our new Quiz Master, Karen Campbell. The possible score is 55. The winners are Bruce Aikin – 51, Angela Misri – 45 and Don Roebuck - 44.

Karen Gold distributed sheets for her original lyrics for Hosmer Angel, sung to the tune of Elvis Presley’s *Devil in Disguise*. After some non-1895 problems with the computer providing the music, we all join Karen in her Sherlockian song.

The meeting is then adjourned.

– Bruce Aikin



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