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@gmail.com and on Twitter at @CanadianHolmes*

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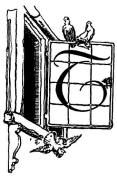


Traces of Bootprints

Fact and Fiction

One of the compelling factors when reading the Sherlockian Canon is the setting of London and the various inhabitants of the stories. Although at some level we all know the stories to be works of fiction, part of what entices us in is the bits of the stories which are fact.

Any reader of this column could find and gaze at Barts Hospital, stroll down the Strand, walk along Baker Street, dine at Simpson's or hike around Dartmoor on a foggy day. It is these touches which take the stories from the page to the city and country, the concrete and glass of today while also transporting us to the London where it is always 1895.

In addition to the streets and places mentioned in the stories that have a stone and mortar reality are some of the people. Holmes meets with Prime Ministers and Kings, without names, of course, to maintain confidentiality, and attends concerts by Wagner at Covent Garden, Pablo de Sarasate at St. James's Hall, and at the close of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, Holmes takes a box for the French opera, Les Huguenots by Meyerbeer, performed by the De Reszke siblings.

This clever and subtle blending of fact and fiction helps raise the stories from the average to the classics they are now. Sometimes the people mentioned are slightly veiled. The most famous of these would be Irene Adler. For decades Sherlockians have been debating who this character is based upon. In this edition Cliff Goldfarb and Hartley Nathan look at Porky Shinwell and his very real-to-life counterpart. We also have Barbara Rusch take us underground, Hiroko Nakashima takes us to a modern-day coffee shop in Tokyo while we gaze at mirrored reflections in the stories with Sonia Fetherston. Rich Krisciunas gives us a toast to "the woman," and Jean Paton takes us to her condominium's book club. Karen Campbell's quiz on "The Noble Bachelor" is followed by a gem of an article by Liese Sherwood-Fabre. Yours truly, looks at the Conan Doyle story "The Lord of Château Noir," and the issue wraps up with the usual roundup of book reviews and Diary Notes.

Put up your feet, put some Wagner on the stereo and enjoy this edition of *Canadian Holmes.*

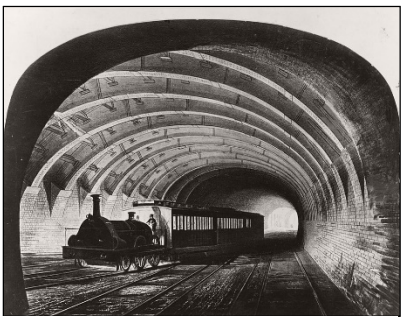
The view from the bow window

Barbara Rusch explores various aspects of Victorian and Edwardian life as they relate to the canonical tales. Bow Window illustration by Laurie Fraser Manifold.

By the 1850s, London had become the largest city in the world, with a population of 2½ million people. As a result of the increasing number of workers travelling into the city each day, its centre was becoming untenably congested. The solution became known as the London Underground, a triumph of innovative engineering, which began construction in 1860 and opened in 1863, when the world's first underground system of mass transportation; the new Metropolitan Line, carried 40,000 passengers a day. Though considered an enormous success, the steam locomotives emitted a sulfurous fog in the stations and tunnels. Shortly after the turn of the century, the problem was solved when all the Underground lines went electric.

Be that as it may, Holmes could often be found commuting to and from crime scenes, though more often by hansom cab than by Underground. Nevertheless, there are four Canonical tales which reference that public transportation system.

But for admirers of the Holmes adventures, the greatest connection to the Underground is undoubtedly the view from the bow window of 221 B itself, from which he could practically glimpse the spot which has become inextricably linked with the great sleuth. At the Baker Street Station, the oldest on the entire tube route, boasting the most platforms (10 in all) and connecting five separate lines, several framed scenes from the Canon adorn the tiled walls. They are a fitting tribute to the iconic consulting detective who helped shape history, transporting London life as much as the technological wonder which continues to transport millions around the great metropolis he called home.



The first Metropolitan train on the underground line passing through Praed Street, London, Ca. 1863

"I had always wanted to travel…"

A Sherlockian travel column

Mystery Dining in Tokyo

Hiroko Nakashima is a Tokyo-based Sherlockian

A very interesting café opened in Tokyo this past August named Nazo-ya cafe. Nazo means mystery or riddle; ya is the suffix for a store and restaurant in Japanese.

The café has two locations, Kanazawa and Tokyo. Of course, I went to the Tokyo café.

The interior is the Dancing Men! My Sherlockian interest was excited!

This café is not only Sherlock Holmes themed but mystery themed, with all menu items named from the titles of well-known mysteries.

Let's introduce the menu:

- A Study in Scarlet - Breakfast of Sherlock Holmes
- Delicious Death (from Agatha Christie)
- Miss Marple's Maple Waffle (Agatha Christie)
- Delta in the Darkness (Japanese mystery)
- Black Trank (Japanese mystery)
- Equation of midsummer (only summer, Japanese mystery)
- Game of moonlight (only autumn, Japanese mystery)
- The Tragedy of X, Y
- The Three Coffins

A section of the menu featuring The Dancing Men

Display of the riddles *Photo by Hiroko Nakashima*

The café also has two types of riddles: normal and monthly.

If you can figure out the monthly riddle, updated on the 20th of each month, you can order "Detective Blend" at a discount or receive a Great Detective notebook.

Anyone want to try? https://nazoyacafe.jp/

Miss Marple's Maple Waffle
Photo by Hiroko Nakashima

Reflections on Sherlockian Mirrors

by Sonia Fetherston

Sonia Fetherston, BSI is an irregular contributor to Canadian Holmes. *A past recipient of the Derrick Murdoch Award, she resides on the west coast of the United States – though she assures us her favourite holidays are always spent in beautiful British Columbia.*

Illustrations by Laurie Fraser Manifold

"I could arrange a looking-glass, maybe…."
Mrs. Warren to Sherlock Holmes, "The Adventure of the Red Circle"

erlin uses a magic one to spy on King Arthur's enemies. Alice steps through one and encounters a world of unicorns and Jabberwocks. Dorian Gray employs one to compare his beautiful face with the loathsome visage of his own portrait. Snow White's stepmother depends on one to bolster her fragile ego. Mirrors are deeply symbolic objects, representing truth, revelation and self-awareness. They're present in folklore and mythology, poetry, horror stories, romances and many other literary genres. As luck would have it, some of the most intriguing mirrors can be found in the pages of the Holmes Canon. Why are they there and what does their presence indicate?

In the short story titled "The Adventure of the Copper Beeches," Violet Hunter is offered a generous sum of money to comply with some extraordinary requests. Her employer tells her to cut off her hair, for example, and to wear a dress that "bore unmistakable signs" of belonging to someone else. But when she's made to sit in a chair that is carefully staged beside a window – for several days running – Violet finally concludes that something fishy is "going on behind my back." In order to know what's afoot, Violet uses a simple trick:

> …I soon devised a means. My hand-mirror had been broken, so a happy thought seized me, and I concealed a piece of the glass in my handkerchief. On the next occasion…I put my handkerchief up to my eyes and was able with a little management to see all that there

was behind me. I perceived that there was a man standing in the Southampton Road, a small bearded man in a gray suit, who seemed to be looking in my direction.

Her mirror gazing ends abruptly when her ruse is suspected. No matter, by this time Violet has enough clues so that Sherlock Holmes can get to work. Her story is a cautionary one: if a thing seems too good to be true, it probably is – and that's why her mirror is so critical. It enables *perception*. It shows the way to truth.

When young women look into mirrors the normal way of things is that they see themselves. Violet peers into her mirror to find something terribly incongruous. This is the man who is "looking earnestly" out of the concealed mirror and into her startled eyes. The person looking back is not the Self but the Other. There is always an implied relationship between the one doing the looking and the one looking back. In that instant Violet

makes a profound connection, not just with Fowler — for that's who he is — but by extension she also connects with her employer's missing daughter. Additional evidence that she's seen – the coil of hair, for one – might be explained away. Being linked to the watcher and the daughter, however, is transformative. In that instant the case she presents to Holmes changes from one of "recovering lost lead pencils and giving advice to young ladies from boarding-schools," into a mystery the Great Detective deems "most interesting."

It's curious that Violet's mirror is a shard. On a purely symbolic level the broken mirror in "The Copper Beeches" suggests several interpretations from which readers can choose. It represents the fracture imposed by the Rucastles on the, until now, star-crossed couple – Fowler and their daughter. It also stands for the fragmenting relationship between Violet and her employers; previous to using the mirror, she found the Rucastles to be an odd, yet pleasant, couple. Now they represent a threat. Most important of all, the broken mirror corresponds to the shattering of the illusory world (what Watson calls a "strange side-alley of human experience") in which Violet finds herself living and working.

The Latin word for mirror is "speculum," from whence we have the verb "to speculate." In other words, to *reflect* on something. Mirrors compel us to think. Literary mirrors are often associated with women who – just as in real life – employ them to understand very personal things about themselves: for example, age, sexuality and even frame of mind. Vanity is transcended. "A sense of doubleness, necessary for self-consciousness and intrinsic to mirroring, now infects her identity," one critic writes of females and mirrors. (1) It is just such a situation in which another Canonical woman finds herself. She is Emilia Lucca, and her story is found in "The Adventure of The Red Circle."

It's a horrifying tale of lust, and blood lust, that begins simply enough when a landlady, Mrs. Warren, brings Holmes a problem concerning her elusive lodger, a young man who pays handsomely for a room in which to tread endlessly.

"We can hear that quick step of his pacing up and down, up and down, night, morning, and noon," she tells the detective. At mealtimes she leaves a tray beside the lodger's door; the occupant never emerges, just snatches in the tray and then later leaves it, empty, outside the door. "If he chooses to lie concealed it is no direct business of yours," Holmes counsels the landlady. "We have no excuse for an intrusion…." Then he's persuaded to come and observe the lodger from a darkened box room (or storage closet) further along the hall by means of a strategically placed mirror. "I could arrange a looking-glass, maybe," Mrs. Warren offers Holmes, "and if you were behind the door -- --"

Dr. Watson, who accompanies Holmes on the surveillance mission, picks up the story:

> "The mirror was so placed that, seated in the dark, we could very plainly see the door opposite….Presently the landlady appeared with the tray, laid it down upon a chair beside the closed door, and then, treading heavily, departed. Crouching together in the angle of the door, we kept our eyes fixed upon the mirror. Suddenly, as the landlady's footsteps died away, there was a creak of a turning key, the handle revolved, and two thin hands darted out and lifted the tray from the chair. An instant later it was hurriedly replaced, and I caught a glimpse of a dark, beautiful, horrified face…."

To their surprise the reflection belongs not to the man who rented the room but to a mysterious young woman. Emilia is hiding from her violent tormenter. Hers is a terrifying and lonely existence and now that her seclusion is breached by Holmes, Watson and Mrs. Warren, the brutalization of Emilia continues along a new avenue. It's a heart-wrenching moment. She sees the mirror, knows she's being watched and knows she's no longer safe. Identity is forged as a result of experience.

Emilia's extraordinary face reveals who she *is* – how others see her, as well as what her dreadful interior world is like.

The mirror in "The Red Circle" cannot have been like Violet Hunter's small shard. This is a mirror large enough to reflect an entire face so that it can be seen clearly from a distance equal to the width of a hallway and so on into the closet where Holmes and Watson wait in the dark, perhaps eight (or more) feet distant. It's likely a wall-mounted mirror that Mrs. Warren has taken down and moved there. This is an object of extreme disharmony. On the one hand it does what mirrors do — tell the truth. Yet it is pressed into a dishonest activity perpetrated on the unsuspecting young woman. As such, the mirror participates in just the sort of invasion of privacy that Holmes warns against.

Nearly as interesting as Emilia is the landlady. First is her tongue-in-cheek name: Warren, that being an underground tenement of rabbits. Next is her character. Watson observes that she has "the pertinacity and cunning of her sex" and it may well be that he's correct. Mrs. Warren is lightning-quick to suggest rigging a mirror outside her lodger's door, almost as though she's been plotting something of the sort for several days – with or without Holmes's help. And there's her use of the words "looking-glass." The term was more common in 19th-century Britain, certainly. However, used by someone of Mrs. Warren's class, it sounds rather pretentious. Even Banker-to-the-Royals, Alexander Holder, in "The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet," has a plain, garden-variety "mirror" in his private dressing room. One observer, admittedly looking down his nose, offers the insight that persons from the lower classes "gravitate to euphemism." (2)

If mirrors disclose truth and identity in "The Copper Beeches" and "The Red Circle," another mirror is responsible for the ultimate reveal: unmasking a man intent on homicide in "The Adventure of the Dying Detective." This story concerns a struggle between the evil Culverton Smith, who is an expert in deadly microbes, and Holmes, who is sent a fatal dose of a tropical disease concealed in an attractive box. In order to coax a confession out of his would-be assassin, he must convince those closest to him that he's dying. While Mrs. Hudson weeps, the detective sends a frantic Watson flying to Culverton Smith's house for help. Culverton Smith is deformed not only in body – "small and frail, twisted in the shoulders and back" – but also in character, a feature revealed by his mirror. The words of Watson:

> "The man motioned me to a chair, and turned to resume his own. As he did so I caught a glimpse of his face in the mirror over the mantelpiece. I could have sworn that it was set in a malicious and abominable smile. Yet I persuaded myself that it must have been

some nervous contraction which I had surprised, for he turned to me an instant later with genuine concern upon his features."

In his desperation to save Holmes, Watson suppresses the mirror's unerring truthfulness. The effect of Smith's "malicious and abominable" expression is somewhat similar to the effect produced by the mirrored walls in Boss McGinty's saloon, found in *The Valley of Fear*. In that case McGinty's corruption, just like Culverton Smith's, is not just revealed but actually intensified – exaggerated – amplified – by his mirrors:

"McMurdo pushed open the swinging door of the saloon and made his way amid the crowd of men within, through an atmosphere blurred with tobacco smoke and heavy with the smell of spirits. The place was brilliantly lighted, and the huge, heavily gilt mirrors on every wall reflected and multiplied the garish illumination."

As for Smith, the anguished Watson is so distraught that it is not until later, when he is back in Baker Street and hiding behind Holmes's bed, when he will finally be able to absorb the truth. Smith's mirror is especially striking in that it belongs to, and is closely associated with, a man. Throughout all of literature, including the Sherlockian Canon, mirrors are overwhelmingly the realm of women. "From childhood through old age, female characters have been mesmerized by mirrors….women continue their dialogs with the glass." (3) Does this impart a kind of femininity to Smith? They say poison is a woman's weapon; perhaps deadly microbes are, as well!

Mirrors figure in a couple of other Sherlockian stories. In "The Adventure of the Veiled Lodger," Mrs. Ronder beholds her horribly disfigured face in the mirror and hurls curses ("oh, how I cursed him!") at the circus lion that attacked her. Her glass revealed a sad truth: the only way forward was to live out her life "seen by none." In "The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax," Watson uses a mirror to discern whether the lady is actually dead, or still breathing. When his mirror finally dims with her condensing breath, he knows she will pull through.

Truth is all any mirror can tell. The Sherlockian Canon's mirrors share many of the traditions of mirrors found in ancient myths to popular literature. Keen perception of self, and a profound connection with others – they are there, in the glass. In its depths we discover who we *all* really, truthfully are.

Notes

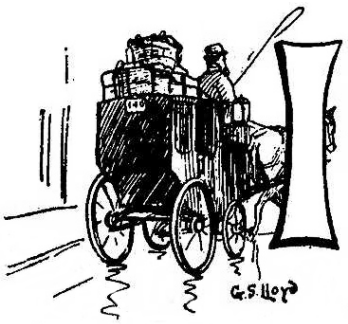
(1) Jenijoy La Belle, *Herself Beheld; The Literature of the Looking Glass*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988, p. 51.

(2) Ben Yagoda, "The Looking-Glass vs. Mirror War: Language and Class," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, 9 February 2012.

(3) La Belle, pp. 3-4.

A toast to "The Woman"

Rich Krisciunas, a Sherlockian living in Michigan, delivered this toast to The Greek Interpreters of East Lansing on April 24, 2019



It's a dark, rainy night on the Sussex Downs
And the old bee farmer stirs in his bed.
Sleeping has become near impossible
As old memories still dance in his head.
Of villains, murderers and con-men,
Inept inspectors, forgers and crooks,
His mind's filled with all of the stories
Of his exploits now captured in books.
He jumps out of bed and lights a candle.
Although older, he remains a picture of health.
He makes his way to a nearby bookcase
And reaches up for an old book on the shelf.
Next to his monographs about polyphonic motets,
tobacco ashes, and the form of the hand,
He finds a book by his friend Dr. Watson and
Lays it by the gold sovereign on his nightstand.
The book's tattered cover recalls his Adventures.
He turns the pages to a story he'll never forget
About a scandal, a Bohemian king and a photograph
And The Woman and the day they first met.
Her beauty among women was unrivalled
Her mind like no other woman he'd known.
The only one ever to outwit him at his game.
She turned the heads of all men, even his own.
There at the end of the third chapter,
before the tale of the Red-Headed League,
He gently takes out her photo,
And gazes intently on The Woman of intrigue.
No longer distracted by cases and problems,
He turns to things in his life that he's missed.
Most mysteries he could solve in an instant
Except, what was it like to be kissed?

"Good night, Mr. Sherlock Holmes,"
were the last words he heard her speak.
Her angelic voice echoes in flashbacks.
Look closely. There's a tear on his cheek.
To Irene Adler, let's raise our glasses
As the old Master ponders and reflects,
His mind's full of thoughts of "if only?"
To "The Woman," please give your respects.

Letter to the editor

Dear Editors,

As part of the Sherlockian community for many years, I assumed that everyone knew Sherlock Holmes. When I suggested "The Red-Headed League" as a title for our condominium's book club, I looked forward to a discussion of one of my favorite stories, and some mention of that special little corner of Toronto, the Arthur Conan Doyle Room in the Toronto Reference Library, not far from our condominium.

It goes without saying that book club members are readers. But to my surprise, most had never read a Sherlock Holmes story — one thought perhaps she had read one for an English course. Watson still has work to do to make that "I hear of Sherlock everywhere" phrase into reality! (Lest you blame our current Ontario education system for this lapse, note that current members of the book club are aged 28 to 85, and come from England, Massachusetts, French-speaking Quebec and various points in Ontario – including two native Torontonians.)

Most members of the book club had never visited the Reference Library, Raymond Moriyama's architectural masterpiece at 789 Yonge Street, let alone the Victorian-style sitting room resembling Holmes's own.

A few members knew the current Cumberbatch Holmes, others remembered the Jeremy Brett television series, which sparked world-wide interest in Holmes during the years it ran, 1984 to 1994. The recent Holmes and Watson of Robert Downey Jr. and Jude Law did not rate a mention, though Basil Rathbone's name did come up.

We had a good discussion of the story (with 20 questions à la Bootmaker meetings). Members were intrigued by the items we had taken from our own collection: an 1894 bound edition of *The Strand* (which contained "The Adventure of Silver Blaze"), an engraved shoehorn, clay pipe fragments we mudlarked from the Thames, a *Baker Street Cookbook* ("but I wouldn't want to actually *eat* anything from that, would you?")

- Jean Paton

We never mention Lord Shinwell

By Clifford S. Goldfarb and Hartley R. Nathan
Part of our "Sherlock Holmes, The Jewish Connection" Series

Cliff S. Goldfarb is Chairman of the Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at the Toronto Reference Library and writes frequently on Doylean topics. Hartley R. Nathan is one of the founders of The Bootmakers of Toronto and was Meyers on two occasions. He has recently retired from practising law full time. Cliff and Hartley have been writing and presenting Sherlockian papers together for over 40 years and have written Investigating Sherlock Holmes *(Mosaic Press, 2014).*

ir Arthur Conan Doyle names individuals in many of the Holmes stories, usually as the subjects of untold cases or as minor characters who appear once and have no role to play in the story itself.

He very seldom introduces a real-life person as a continuing character in a story. Usually it is a casual throwaway. Society lawyer Sir George Lewis, Queen Victoria, Hyams the tailor, violinists Norma Neruda and Pablo Sarasate are all real people casually mentioned in Holmes stories. However, in one case, "The Adventure of the Illustrious Client," a well-known public figure becomes an important character in the story. There is little doubt that in naming a character Shinwell Johnson, Conan Doyle was referring to a real person, namely, Emanuel Shinwell (October 18, 1884 - May 8, 1986), political disturber and labour activist, Labour MP and parliamentary secretary, later to be a cabinet minister and, even later, Baron Shinwell of Easington. For convenience and to distinguish him from the character in the story, we will be referring to him as "Manny," as he was familiarly known.

"The Adventure of the Illustrious Client"

"Illustrious Client" was first published in *Collier's Weekly*, November 8, 1924 and in *The Strand Magazine* in two parts, February and March 1925. The manuscript is dated July 1924. (1)

After Holmes mentions Shinwell Johnson, Watson goes on to introduce him:

> I have not had occasion to mention Shinwell Johnson in these memoirs because I have seldom drawn my cases from the latter phases of my friend's career. During the first years of the century he became a valuable assistant. Johnson, I grieve to say, made his name first as a very dangerous villain and served two terms at Parkhurst. Finally, he repented and allied himself to Holmes, acting as his agent in the huge criminal underworld of London and obtaining information which often proved to be of vital importance. Had Johnson been a "nark" of the police he would soon have been exposed but as he dealt with cases which never came directly into the courts, his activities were never realized by his companions. With the glamour of his two convictions upon him, he had the entrée of every night-club, doss-house, and gambling den in the town, and his quick observation and active brain made him an ideal agent for gaining information. It was to him that Sherlock Holmes now proposed to turn.

He is mentioned eight times in the tale, which is quite a lot for an incidental character.

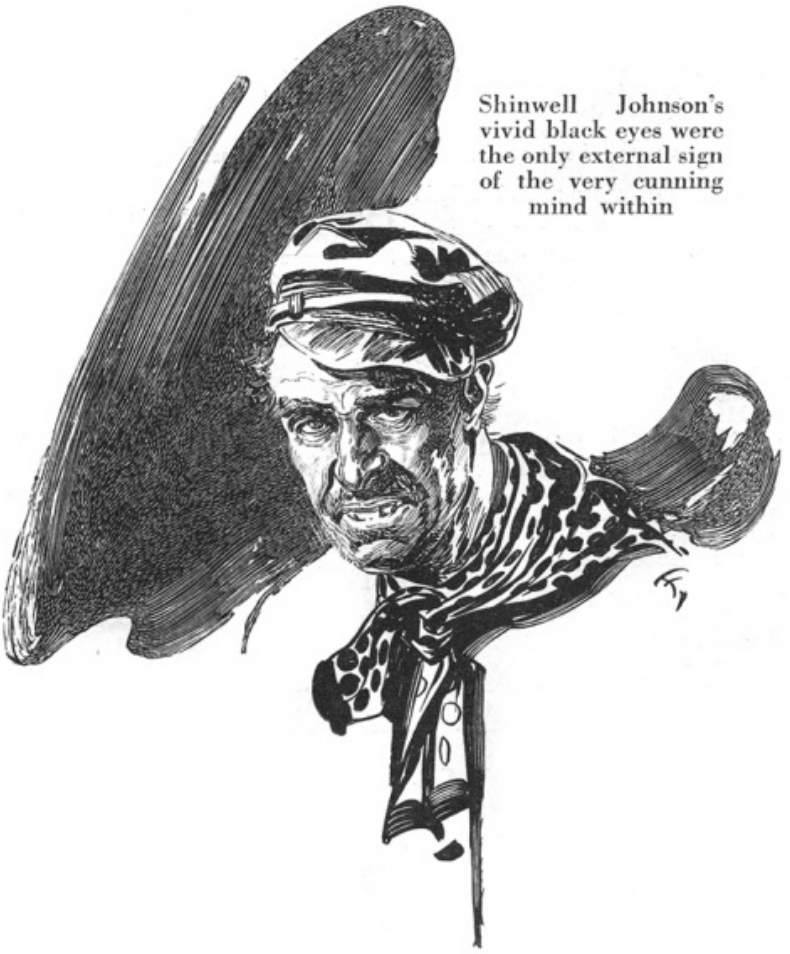
Why Would Conan Doyle know of Shinwell?

The main source for identification of the names Doyle used in his stories is Donald A. Redmond's *Sherlock Holmes, A Study in Sources*.(2) Redmond relied on British scholar Colin Prestige, and both identify Manny as the source for Shinwell Johnson. So far as we know, there are no other theories on this subject.

Shinwell Johnson later introduces Kitty Winter who refers to Shinwell as "Porky." We will have more to say about this unusual combination of names later.

We set out to determine how Sir Arthur Conan Doyle would have known about "Shinwell," or whether he might even have met him. We considered whether "Shinwell" was merely the name of a public figure Conan Doyle inserted into a story or whether he is there for a reason. We will show that the name "Shinwell" was very well-known to the British public and undoubtedly to Conan Doyle. Shinwell was one of those public figures who, in their own era, were household names but are barely remembered today.

In our considered opinion it would be extremely unlikely that Conan Doyle did not know who Manny Shinwell was. He, like others, knew of him from newspapers published in Scotland and England, and knew further that he was "a rough customer" and knew that he was a Jewish rough customer, not like the Sassoon family or the English Rothschilds.



John R. Flanagan's vision of Shinwell Johnson in Collier's Magazine*, 8 November, 1924*

Perhaps Manny would have come to Conan Doyle's attention prior to July 1924 through silent film newsreels, or radio news reports about him, as BBC radio was established October 18, 1922.

Who was Emanuel Shinwell?

Born in the East End of London to a large family of Jewish immigrants, he moved to Glasgow as a boy and left school at 11. He became a trade union organizer and one of the leading figures of Red Clydeside, a period

of political radicalism in Glasgow. He was imprisoned for six weeks in Carlton Jail in Edinburgh in 1919 for his involvement in the disturbances in Glasgow in January of that year. The most intense riots took place on January 31, 1919 in what became known as the "Battle of George Square" or "Bloody Friday." Between January 28 and September 29, 1919 there were 12 articles in *The Times* dealing with the Glasgow Riot. Shinwell is mentioned prominently in all of them. During the same eight-month period, Conan Doyle wrote or was referred to in *The Times* 78 times (excluding advertisements). None of them were in connection with the Glasgow Riots. The most relevant one was his letter on June 23, 1919, with reference to the Epsom Incident, in which a small number of Canadian soldiers rioted, upset at dock strikes which prevented them from embarking on their return to Canada. Conan Doyle's comment was that Canadian troops generally were very well behaved. It was likely Shinwell's arrest and conviction that would have brought him to Conan Doyle's attention, although as an acute reader of *The Times*, he might already have known of Shinwell as a radical trade union leader and one of the founders of the British Labour Party. Certainly, *The Times* viewed Shinwell as a firebrand Communist determined to take down British civilization.

Manny was the Labour MP for Linlithgowshire and Secretary of Mines in the Ramsay MacDonald government from 1922 to 1924. He won the seat in 1922, lost it in 1923 to James Kidd — the Unionist candidate, won it in 1924 from James Kidd and lost it again to him in 1924 and won it again from Kidd's daughter in 1928.

Emanuel Shinwell

A major concern for Shinwell during this period was mine safety, including water in the mines. He also lobbied on the welfare of pit ponies, miners's wages and a threatened miners' strike. He told Parliament that he did not have the power to prevent London merchants from increasing the price of coal.(3) He had the honour of being received by King

George V, who wanted to speak to him about the conditions for seamen, knowing that Manny was connected with the Seamen's Union.(4) He also spoke in favour of nationalizing the coal industry. For Conan Doyle to use the name Shinwell in 1924 with reference to anyone else would be incomprehensible. By the way, the only Shinwell who seemed to be known to the public was Manny. He is the only Shinwell whose name appears in the London Post Office directory for 1924.(5)

So, how does Shinwell Johnson compare to Manny Shinwell? There are a number of parallels:

Johnson made his name as a dangerous villain and served two terms at Parkhurst. Manny made his name as a dangerous labour organizer and served a term in Carlton jail (he also served many terms in Parliament but even to Conan Doyle that would not seem to compare to a prison term).

Both men repented and became law-abiding, while still maintaining full contact with their former compatriots.

Both men had a quick eye for observation and an active mind.

Some Sherlockian theories suggest that the "illustrious" person in the title of "The Illustrious Client" was the Prince of Wales. By 1924 Manny's career could be said to be "illustrious." Shinwell Johnson was certainly Sherlock's most illustrious Canonical agent.

Shinwell after "Illustrious Client" and after Conan Doyle

Clearly Conan Doyle could have had no idea of the heights which Manny would scale in British politics after "Illustrious Client" was published.While Manny had already made quite a name for himself by that time, he went on to a career which can only be described as even more distinguished. He held junior office in the minority Labour governments of 1924 and 1929-31.

During the Second World War he was a leading backbench critic of the coalition government. Shinwell was friendly with Churchill, claimed that he agreed with him during the 1930s, and reports several instances where Churchill spoke well of him in Parliament. He also visited Churchill at his home in Hyde Park Gate. He said Churchill offered him a Cabinet post during the War but he refused, saying "We [the Opposition] won't embarrass you. We want to win." He said Churchill replied: "I know. That's why we remained friends". (6)

Shinwell is best remembered as the Minister of Fuel and Power in Clement Attlee's Cabinet who nationalized coal mining in 1946. He was in charge of Britain's coal supply during the extremely harsh winter of January to March 1947, during which the supply system collapsed, leaving Britain to freeze and virtually close down. He became unpopular with the

public and was sacked in October 1947. He then served as Secretary of State for War and then as Minister of Defence in 1950-51.

After Labour's defeat in 1951, Shinwell continued to serve in the shadow cabinet in opposition until he stepped down in 1955. Thereafter he was a senior backbencher until 1970, by which time he was in his mid-80s. That year he accepted a life peerage and was an active member of the House of Lords until shortly before his death, aged 101, in 1986.

We note that many of his accomplishments, and his ennoblement to the Lords, came after Doyle's death in 1930. Still, he was already well-enough known by 1924 that Doyle had to know who he was referring to.

Source of "Porky"

We now come back to Shinwell Johnson's nickname "Porky." One meaning of Porky comes from Cockney rhyming slang: "a big lie", which rhymes with 'pie'. As in, "Stop telling porkies." (7) As we pointed out earlier, there does not seem to be any rule of thumb for how Doyle chose to throw names into the Holmes stories. Sometimes it's a person he knew and other times there are no known connections. We are not sure he would joke about someone he didn't know – especially if the joke might be offensive. The suggestion that Conan Doyle might have known Shinwell well enough to have jokingly called him "Porky" is intriguing. It is definitely worth speculating if he knew him well enough, reference to "pork" might have been Conan Doyle's inside joke about a non-practicing Jew.

Despite what we've just said, we aren't standing on the proposition that Conan Doyle was directing "Porky" at Manny. Donald Redmond proposes that "Porky" and "Johnson" are not related to Manny but can be identified as an American named William Eugene Johnson, who was a standing source of amusement on both sides of the Atlantic, for he was a professional Prohibitionist of the most ardent sort, universally known as "Pussyfoot" Johnson. (8)

As to Manny's "Jewish side," he was not observant and could be described as more of a political Zionist. His obituary made the following comments after he died on May 8, 1986: (9)

> Shinwell, the oldest of 13 children, came from a very poor immigrant family. His father was a tailor from Poland and his mother a Londoner of Dutch Jewish descent. When he was nine years old, the family moved to Glasgow, where he acquired his broad Scottish accent and a reputation as a bare-knuckle boxer. He threw himself into the workers' struggle at an early age and was jailed for inciting riots.

In 1933, the year the Nazis seized power in Germany, Shinwell made a speech at the British Labor Party conference in which he proudly avowed his membership in the Jewish race and said he had never sought to conceal it.

In 1938, during a Commons debate on the Spanish Civil War, Shinwell criticized the Government's favourable position towards Franco. Commander Bower [later Lord Boothby], Conservative MP, shouted at him "to go back to Poland." Shinwell walked across the floor to slap him in the face.

Manny later said that, after the Commander had congratulated him on a speech, the two were reconciled in the Lobby of Parliament. Manny considered this to be a chauvinistic insult, rather than anti-Semitism.

Shinwell on Doyle

The Oscar Slater case is in the popular press these days because of the many favourable reviews of Margalit Fox's book, *Conan Doyle for the Defence*. Oscar Slater was a German Jew of questionable character who was wrongfully convicted of murdering an elderly woman in Glasgow. Quite possibly that case was the first time that Manny and Conan Doyle might have crossed paths. Presumably this could have been as early as 1912, when Doyle published his article in *The Times* about Oscar Slater.(10) Manny spoke about the Slater Case in *Shinwell Talking*, one of his several autobiographies:

> I lived quite near to where the event occurred, the West End of Glasgow…. I was married, with two children. Just across the street was the road where the murder occurred. … After a long trial, he was sentenced to death and imprisoned [on reprieve] at Peterhead in north Scotland. His case was taken up by quite a number of people: I was a bit involved as a Town Councillor so far as petitions were concerned. It was discovered by many of us that the prosecution had introduced his general character. He was a gambler. He was responsible for prostitution and that sort of thing and had a really bad reputation. He was a foreigner – also Jewish I believe…He had actually been prosecuted and sentenced not for murdering someone, but because he was a rascal.(11)

In Parliament, he recounted the Slater case when a similar case of wrongful conviction occurred in the 1970s:

> Eighteen years afterwards, largely because of the submissions and the persistence of the late Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, it was decided to hold an inquiry, and Oscar Slater was pardoned.(12)

The involvement in the Slater petitions meant there was a good chance that Doyle would have already been aware of him by the time Shinwell became Secretary for Mines in 1924.

Conclusion

As far as contacts between Conan Doyle and Shinwell, we have checked Shinwell's various autobiographies, as well as Conan Doyle's published works, a daily chronology of his activities and all of the major biographies, plus a few more esoteric sources. Unfortunately, none of them has any reference to Emanuel Shinwell. This is not conclusive that there was no contact. We often find new evidence for this sort of thing. For example, we have previously written that we know that Doyle and Bram Stoker, author of *Dracula*, were friends from 1891, yet until quite recently the earliest evidence we could find for any direct meeting was 1907. It is inconceivable that Doyle did not know who Manny Shinwell was when he was writing "Illustrious Client" in July of 1924. Perhaps, someday evidence of a meeting between the two will come into our hands.

Emanuel Shinwell

Apart from "Illustrious Client," "Shinwell" does not appear in any other of Conan Doyle's writings.(13) But, nevertheless, we are convinced that there is only one person after whom Shinwell "Porky" Johnson can be named – Emanuel Shinwell, later Lord Shinwell. By the same token, Lord Shinwell in his published writing mentions Sir Arthur Conan Doyle precisely once – in discussing the case of Oscar Slater. Therefore, our assumption is that they never mentioned each other – if they had pictures of each other, they were obviously turned to the wall.

Shinwell Family (14)

We have been in touch with several Toronto members of Manny's family. They told us that Manny was friends with many notable individuals in the UK, including Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and H. G. Wells. Shinwell is a surname shared only by members of that family. All the Shinwells are somehow related. The name, according to the family, did not come with the family from Eastern Europe to the UK but was developed or evolved in the UK.(15)

Shinwell Autobiographical books

The Britain I Want (1943, London: Macdonald)
When the men come home (1944, London: V. Gollancz Ltd.)
Conflict without malice (1955, London: Odhams Press Ltd.)
I've Lived Through It All (1973, London: Gollancz)
Lead With the Left: My First Ninety-Six Years (London: Cassell), 1981.
Shinwell Talking: A Conversational Biography to Celebrate his hundredth birthday, John Doxat (1984, London: Quiller Press Ltd.)

Notes

(1) The manuscript is now in the National Library of Scotland: http://www.bestofsherlock.com/ref/illustrious-client.htm
(2) Kingston and Montreal (McGill – Queens University Press, 1982) p. 216.
(3) *The Times*, March 5 and April 9, 1924
(4) John Doxat, *Shinwell Talking* (see list of Shinwell autobiographies, above.)
(5) London Library search
(6) Supra., n. 4, at p.12. Andrew Roberts, *Churchill: Walking With Destiny*, Penguin Random House, UK, 2018, refers throughout to Shinwell and gives a totally different picture than Manny gives in his own writing.

Generally, Shinwell was a thorn in Churchill's side, constantly heckling him and refusing to support him.
(7) https://www.urbandictionary.com/define.php?term=Porky. Another meaning, from the same source, is a fat person. Neither of these is listed in the OED.
(8) Supra., n.2
(9) *The Washington Post*, May 9, 1986
(10) "The Case of Oscar Slater," *The Times*, August 21, 1912. Fox's book was published by Random House LLC, New York, in 2018.
(11) Supra., n. 4
(12) "The Case of Mr. D. C. Anderson," Q.C., HL Deb 21 January 1976 vol. 367 cc521-61 http://hansard.millbanksystems. com/lords/1976/jan/21/the-case-of-mr-d-c-anderson-qc#S5LV0367P0_19760121_HOL_166
(13) To the extent that they can be searched electronically.
(14) We thank Lawrence (Larry) Fox for alerting us to the Shinwell family in Toronto, introducing us to Bert Shinwell and his son David, and to David Shinwell for providing us with biographical information and useful suggestions. Bert's father and Manny Shinwell were brothers.
(15) Not necessarily. Cf. 1911 UK Census data. But even if the name is not unique, the only Shinwell who seemed to be known to the public was Manny.

The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor Quiz

This quiz was created by Karen Campbell and presented to the Bootmakers on February 25, 2017

1. At the outset of the story, why has Watson remained Indoors all day?
(a) His old war wound has been bothering him
(b) He wants to do some writing
(c) He wants to read his medical journals
(d) He is expecting a patient

2. What season is it?
(a) Spring (b) Summer (c) Autumn (d) Winter

3. Holmes's other morning letters have included ones from:
(a) A commissionaire and a railway guard
(b) Inspector Lestrade
(c) A maidservant and a plumber
(d) A tide waiter and a fishmonger

4. What "little problem" has Holmes recently cleared up?
(a) The Abergevenny murders
(b) The Grosvenor Square Furniture Van
(c) The Tarlton Mystery
(d) The Aluminium Crutch

5. What city was Hatty Doran from?
(a) New York (b) Philadelphia (c) Washington, D.C. (d) San Francisco

6. Which of the following members of the aristocracy was at Lord St. Simon's wedding?
(a) The Duchess of Balmoral
(b) The Duke of Holdernesse
(c) Lord Mount James
(d) Sir Eustace Brakenstall

Lord Robert St. Simon as envisioned by F. C. Drake in US newspapers in March 1892.

Lord Robert St. Simon as envisioned by Sidney Paget in The Strand Magazine, *April 1892.*

7. How had Hatty Doran's father made his fortune?
(a) Diamonds (b) Oil (c) Silver (d) Gold

8. What did Hatty Doran drop during the wedding ceremony?
(a) Her hat (b) Her bouquet (c) Her glove (d) Her ring

9. Where had Flora Miller been employed when Lord St. Simon met her?
(a) The Black Swan
(b) The Alpha
(c) The Allegro
(d) The Copa Cabana

10. Holmes remembers similar cases happening in
(a) Aberdeen and Munich
(b) Dublin and Berne
(c) Edinburgh and Hammelburg
(d) Belfast and Vienna

11. What body of water did Holmes tell Lestrade he should drag for clues?
(a) The Thames
(b) The pond at Kew Gardens
(c) The Serpentine
(d) Trafalgar Square Fountain

12. What was on the back of the note from FHM that caught Holmes's attention?
(a) A milliner's account (b) Another note (c) A drawing (d) A hotel bill

13. What was the main course of the cold supper Holmes ordered?
(a) Goose (b) Pheasant (c) Chicken (d) Turkey

14. With whom did Hatty confer after the wedding?
(a) Her mother (b) Her sister (c) Her maid (d) Her aunt

15. Where did Frank go prospecting?
(a) Alaska (b) Texas (c) California (d) Arizona

16. Who had presumably killed Frank?
(a) The Apache (b) The Sioux (c) The Navaho (d) The Cherokee

17. Holmes mentions "the folly of a monarch." Which monarch does he mean?
(a) V.R. (b) Henry VIII (c) William III (d) George III

18. What beverage was on the hotel bill?
(a) Sherry (b) Claret (c) Bordeaux (d) Sauvignon

19. Holmes uses two pieces of paper to make a deduction. One belonged to Francis Moulton. Who did the other belong to, and what two deductions does Holmes make from it?

20. Holmes says his most recent client was a king. Which king?

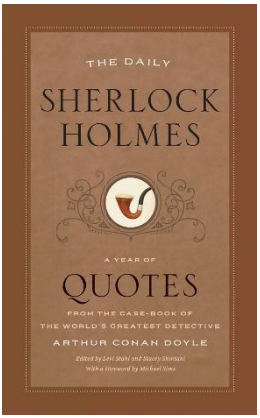
Answers

1 a, 2 c, 3 d, 4 b, 5 d, 6 a, 7 d, 8 b, 9 c, 10 a, 11 d, 12 d, 13 b, 14 c, 15 d, 16 a, 17 d, 18 a.

19. Letter from Lord Robert St. Simon: the writer used a quill pen and got a smear of ink on his finger

20. Scandinavia

Reviews continued from page 35



The Daily Sherlock Holmes – A Year of Quotes edited by Levi Stahl and Stacey Shintani (2019, University of Chicago Press, $14.00 US)

Put aside the pastiches and works of scholarship - here we have a fun little book that could take the year to read through, if you take one quote at a time.

The editors have gone through the Canon and found 365 quotes worthy of highlighting. The book starts off, rightly so, with the now-famous meeting between Holmes and Watson at Barts. After that, stories and quotes are in no particular order. All are, of course, gems to the Sherlockian but could be a fun way to read the Canon at your desk if you don't have the time or space to accommodate a copy of all 60 stories. There are times when Watson tells us an exact date in a story. It seems a missed opportunity when this book does not note one of these given anniversaries. An example would be the 23rd of January: "On the 23rd you incommoded me" is a quote from "The Final Problem." This conversation between Holmes and Moriarty is memorable. What Sherlockian wouldn't want to be reminded of this date? Despite this minor shortcoming, the book is a fun and entertaining way to get your daily dose of Sherlockiana.

- Mark Alberstat

Diamonds that attract attention

By Liese Sherwood-Fabre

Liese Sherwood-Fabre lives in Texas and is a member of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star and the Studious Scarlets Society. She has two essays featured in Villains, Violets, and Victims: Agency and Feminism in the Original Sherlock Holmes Canon*, now available.*

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle rewrote *The Crown Diamond: An evening with Sherlock Holmes* (originally penned as a one-act play) to become the short story "The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone." The basis of the tale involves the theft of a yellow diamond, part of the British Crown Jewels. As the story opens, Holmes shares he has determined Count Sylvius Negretto is in possession of a stolen diamond-part of the Crown Jewels that had been on public display. The narrative describes how the detective tricks the thief into revealing where he's hidden the diamond and arranges for his arrest.

Negretto's success at having actually purloined the gem puts him above all other thieves and their attempts to steal the Crown Jewels. Colonel Thomas Blood (1618-24 August 1680), in 1671 came the closest to actually stealing Charles II's collection. At that time, the Jewels consisted primarily of a crown, a sceptre, an orb, spurs, an ampulla (a container used to hold the oil to anoint the monarch) and a spoon (oil from the ampulla was poured into it). Blood made friends with Edwards, the Assistant Keeper of the Jewels, who was allowed to show the collection for a fee. After Blood overpowered the 76-year-old guard, Edwards's son made an unexpected visit to his father and caught the colonel and his cohorts with the evidence. Blood had

Colonel Thomas Blood

disguised himself as a parson and hidden the crown in his robes. The thieves never made it out of the tower. (1)

The jewels that Blood attempted to steal had been assembled for Charles II's coronation. Following the English Civil War and Charles I's execution, Oliver Cromwell had sold the previous Crown Jewels (some dating back more than 400 years and used in each coronation) or melted them down to mint coins. Only the ampulla and spoon survived. (2) Some of the gems from the previous collection were sought out, recovered and used to adorn Charles II's regalia. These include sapphires (one dating back to 1042), diamonds, rubies and pearls. (3)

The Jewels played, and continue to play, important symbolic roles in the coronation ritual. The future monarch enters Westminster Abbey, escorted by two maces (staffs representing authority), three swords (signifying mercy, spiritual justice and temporal justice), the Great Sword of State and St. Edward's Staff. The anointing with oil using the ampulla and spoon follows. The sovereign is then dressed in the coronation robes and presented with spurs (indicating knighthood and chivalry) and armills (bracelets symbolizing sincerity and wisdom). The orb (for Christian sovereignty) is placed in the right hand, then returned to the altar. A ring is then placed on the right hand, and two scepters (one for temporal power and the other for equity and mercy) are presented. The final act involves placing the crown on the new monarch's head. (4)

Since Charles II, different monarchs have added crowns as well as other pieces to the collection. Altogether, the Crown Jewels consist of 140 items, including additional orbs, bracelets, swords and banqueting plate. (5) During the London bombings in WWII, most of these items were buried in underground chambers at Windsor Castle. Under a trap door hidden by rugs in the footman's vestibule, an old escape route led to the two chambers where the Jewels were stored. The most valuable, however, were taken from their settings and kept in a cookie tin, ready for a quick getaway, if needed. These included the Second Star of Africa, the largest diamond in the world; the First Star of Africa; two additional diamonds; the Stewart sapphire; and the Black Prince's ruby. The hiding place for these special pieces was only recently uncovered during research for a documentary on Queen Elizabeth's rise to power. The royal librarian discovered letters detailing how the family had secreted the gems. (6)

Today, the entire collection can be viewed as part of a Tower of London tour for about $27. The Jewels are kept in the Jewel House behind bombproof glass and surveilled by cameras. (7) Such current precautions represent a much more secure system than when a son's unexpected visit or the careful investigation of the world's greatest consulting detective saved the day.

Notes
(1) http://www.englishmonarchs.co.uk/crown_jewels.htm
(2) https://www.rct.uk/collection/themes/trails/the-crown-jewels/the-regalia-of-charles-ii
(3) http://www.englishmonarchs.co.uk/crown_jewels.htm
(4) https://www.royal.uk/crown-jewels
(5) http://www.englishmonarchs.co.uk/crown_jewels.htm
(6) https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/retropolis/wp/2018/01/13/as-the-nazis-bombed-britain-the-royals-hid-the-crown-jewels-in-the-least-likely-place/
(7) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewel_House

A tale of two artists

Here are depictions by two different artists for that famous scene in "The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone." The image on the left is by Alfred Gilbert from the October 1921 *Strand Magazine*. The other is by Pierre Georges Dutriac for *Dimanche Illustré* of 5 January 1930.

Il se ramassait sur lui-même, prêt à bondir, quand la porte de la chambre à coucher s'étant ouverte, une voix se fit entendre, glaciale et sardonique : « Hé là, comte ! Vous n'allez pas m'abîmer ça ? »

"a few lines upon a sheet of paper" – Conan Doyle's other work for The Strand Magazine

By Mark Alberstat

Mark Alberstat is co-editor of Canadian Holmes *and author of many Sherlockian and Doylean articles.*

he Voice of Science, discussed in the previous edition of this column, was Conan Doyle's first story in *The Strand Magazine*. It is a short story that follows a straightforward plot and is, on the whole, a forgettable piece of light fiction. Four months later, however, "A Scandal in Bohemia" was published, along with 10 illustrations by Sidney Paget, and the Holmes phenomenon began. Over the next 30 months, 25 Holmes stories appeared. During that long stretch the prolific author wrote nothing else for the journal, which was quickly becoming one of the most popular monthly publications in England. In the August 1892 edition, Harry How published "A Day with Conan Doyle," a 3,000-word interview/article with the now-popular author.

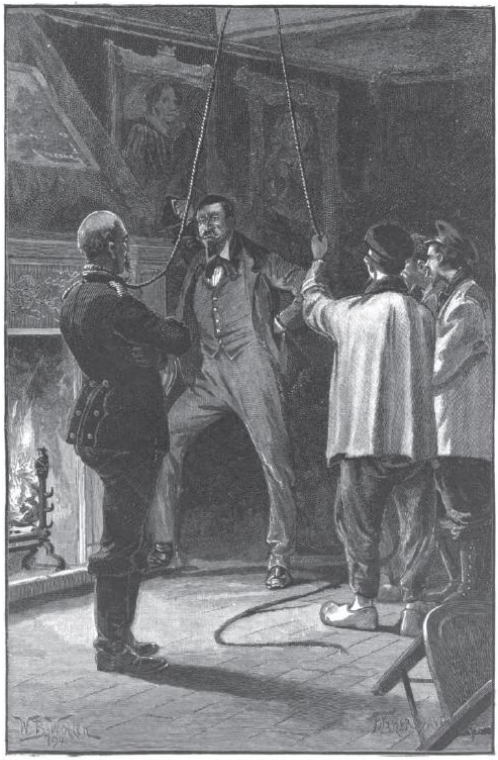

"CAPTAIN BAUMGARTEN."

After this incredible output, and putting Holmes in a watery grave, Doyle took several months off from *The Strand*, and reappeared in the July 1894 edition with "The Lord of Château Noir," with six illustrations by William B. Wollen.

This story appeared in a variety of other journals, many of which ran a notice promoting it. *The Chicago Daily Tribune* of July 14, 1894 reported "A. Conan Doyle requires no introduction to story-readers. His bright, crisp style is as familiar as the heroes of his thrilling detective tales.

"The Lord of Château Noir" is the name he has given to the latest of his romances, which will be published in tomorrow's Tribune." (1)

The Barking, East Ham & Ilford Advertiser of July 14, 1894 said "The July number of The Strand Magazine commences the eighth volume. Mr. A. Conan Doyle, the author of "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes," has written what he considers to be his best short story, for this number, entitled "The Lord of Château Noir." (2)



"THE CORD WAS SLIPPED OVER HIS HEAD."
(*See page* 10.)

In a letter to his mother on May 2, 1894 he told her: "I wrote a fine story "The Lord of Chateau Noir" a real clinker. I sold it to an American for £150." (3)

Owen Dudley Edwards, in *The Quest for Sherlock Holmes*, calls the story "one of the very greatest pieces of historical fiction he ever wrote."

The dark story is set during the Franco-Prussian war (July 19, 1870 – May 10, 1871). In the north of France, the German troops are being harassed in a guerilla war by the Lord of Chateau Noir. The local German colonel sends Captain Baumgarten, along with 20 men, to capture the local noble. After the taking of the chateau, the tables are turned on the Captain, who becomes a captive of the Lord of Chateau Noir. The count tells his captive of his son's capture and murder by German troops. As he tells the story, he inflicts the same wounds on Baumgarten as his son received. Like all good Doyle tales, the story has a twist at the end, which I encourage you to discover by reading this tale.

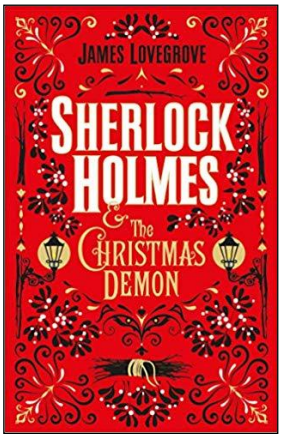
Notes

(1) Mattias Bostrom, Mark Alberstat, Leah Guinn eds., *Sherlock Holmes and Conan Doyle in the Newspapers, Vol 5*. Wessex Press, 2020 p. 12

(2) Ibid

(3) Lellenberg, Jon, Stashower, Daniel & Folley, Charles, *Arthur Conan Doyle: A life in Letters*, New York: Penguin, 2007. p.333.

"Holmes gave me a brief review"



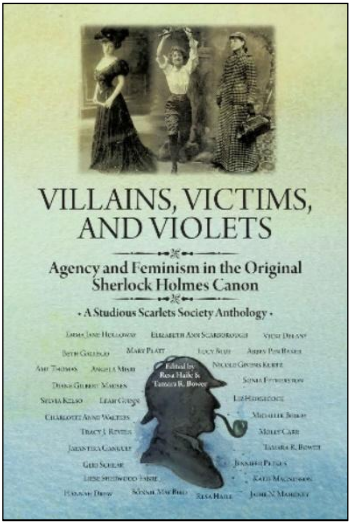
Sherlock Holmes and the Christmas Demon by James Lovegrove (2019 Titan, $25.99 CAD)

It is late December 1890 and Sherlock Holmes has a new client, Eve Allerthorpe. She fears she is losing her mind, and along with it, will lose a fortune she will inherit on Christmas Eve when she turns 21. However, if she is found not of sound mind the inheritance will be divided between other family members.

Holmes and Watson travel to Fellscar Keep in Yorkshire, home of the Allerthorpes. Fellscar Keep is known to be the centre of local myth and legend, one of those being the "Black Thurrick," an evil anti-Christmas being that takes the toys of children who have been bad and leaves bundles of birch twigs in their place. If no offering appears for the being, the Black Thurrick will steal the children away. Eve Allerthorpe believe she has seen and is being tormented by the Black Thurrick. The mystery leaves the confines of legend when one of the household is found dead. Lovegrove is a master of the pastiche. His writing is fluid, the story moves along at a good pace and keeps you guessing. Although set at Christmas time, the novel can be read year round and enjoyed. If you like pastiches, this one will not disappoint.

- Mark Alberstat

Villains, Victims and Violets: Agency and Feminism in the Original Sherlock Holmes Canon is a "Studious Scarlets Society" anthology edited by Resa Haile and Tamara R. Bower. (2019 Brown Walker Press, $50.00 CAD)



This compilation is a captivating dive into the deep waters of the Holmes Canon that encourages the reader to take a second look at female characters in the stories. Editors Resa Haile and Tamara R. Bower have done their job with care, providing a great variety of topics and viewpoints from a talented group of writers. The book is jam-packed with 32

essays, and since I can't cover them all, I'll just mention a few that I personally found noteworthy.

Let's start with Vicki Delany, a name likely to be familiar to Bootmakers due to her *Sherlock Holmes Bookshop* series of mysteries. In "Unable to save herself: an examination of women as persons in three stories of the Sherlock Holmes Canon," Delany does a neat job of providing examples of the difference between "people" and "persons" and shows herself to be adept at essays as well as fiction.

"The Adventure of the Copper Beeches" would be generally considered one of the more female-forward stories of the Canon, and many Sherlockian scholars have found the indefatigable Violet Hunter worthy of a focused character analysis. In "Women's fancies must be consulted," Resa Haile gives Hunter her due but also takes time to consider minor characters like the testy Miss Stoper, dour Mrs. Toller and long-suffering Alice Rucastle.

"Mary Sutherland Under Sail" by Leah Guinn caught my interest because I have generally sided with the many Sherlockians who consider Sutherland to be one of Holmes's stupidest clients. I wondered if Guinn would find something redeemable in this pathetic, exasperating character? That she does, and if the result is still not wholly believable, it is nonetheless an ingenious argument worthy of consideration. At the end of her essay, Guinn even has the generosity to defend Holmes's treatment of the case, where others have thought him heartless and dismissive.

Bonnie MacBird's "Lady Hilda Revealed" comes as a fictional divertissement in the middle of the book. Although a fully imaginary account of the pre-Second Stain life of Lady Hilda Trelawny Hope, it seemed to ring true, and I felt like I understood this complex character better at the end of it. Readers who have not read any of the books in MacBird's Sherlock Holmes thriller series will want to spend more time in the hands of this gifted storyteller—but that is another book review for another time (Editor's note: see review page 34-35). Now let's return to the essays of *Villains, Victims and Violets* and look at a few more examples of what's on offer within.

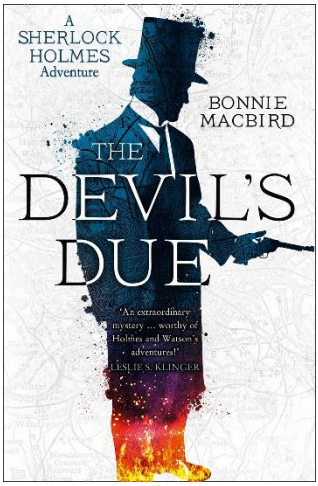
It's good to see Toronto's own woman of letters Angela Misri appear on the scene in "Unapologetically Powerful: *The* Woman." As indicated in the title, Misri is concerned with not merely *a* woman but *the* woman. She points out that Watson, who we know is not infrequently an unreliable narrator for other reasons, is especially unreliable when speaking of Irene Adler due to a male bias and, she argues, possibly jealousy as well. No bias is enough to obscure Adler's supremacy, however, and Misri shows us a woman who is not only the first lady of the opera but also of her own destiny.

Several authors in *Villains, Victims and Violets* point out that Victorian attitudes toward women in the Canon frequently combine with contemporary attitudes toward foreigners. In "The deadly love of Maria Gibson," Jayantika Ganguly examines one of the villain-victims of the Holmes stories and reveals her to be much more than the object her husband treats her as, much more than just a faded tropical flower. Ganguly also offers an alternative solution to the mystery of Thor Bridge in her essay, but no spoilers here, you'll have to read the book to find out what it is.

A quote from Holmes that *Canadian Holmes* readers are likely to recognize is the assertion that he has "been beaten four times—three times by men, and once by a woman." Most Sherlockians seem to assume that the woman mentioned was Irene Adler. However, in a book that repeatedly asks us to reconsider our views of the roles that women play in the Canon, it's not too surprising to find an essay that questions this assumption as well. In "The Woman Who Beat Him: The Maid, the Governess, or the Landlady," after a plausible argument dispensing with Irene Adler, writer Amy Thomas offers three seemingly implausible substitutes for the woman who beat Holmes: Rachel Howells, Mary Morstan and Mrs. Hudson. Once more, I will encourage you to read the essay, rather than tell you who emerges as Thomas's top candidate.

There are many other solid essays in *Villains, Victims and Violets,* and I can recommend it to anyone looking for some fresh ideas in Sherlockian scholarship. In summary, this is an admirable, thought-provoking book, one that takes both major and minor characters from the Canon and elevates them, one by one, from victims and villains to "persons."

- Peggy Perdue



The Devil's Due by Bonnie MacBird (2019 Harper Collins $32.99 CAD)

Mycroft summons Sherlock – with a visiting Watson in tow – to the Diogenes Club. The elder Holmes asks his sibling to dig deeper into a recent string of bizarre deaths in London. Philanthropists, all of them members of a secret group called the Luminarians, are dying suddenly. In each case, someone close to them dies by suicide not long after.

The younger Holmes is already probing one of the strange deaths but isn't interested

in taking on more. He's already trying to unravel an anarchist plot with a French connection. He's soon also recruited by the headmistress of a girl's school to investigate goings-on there.

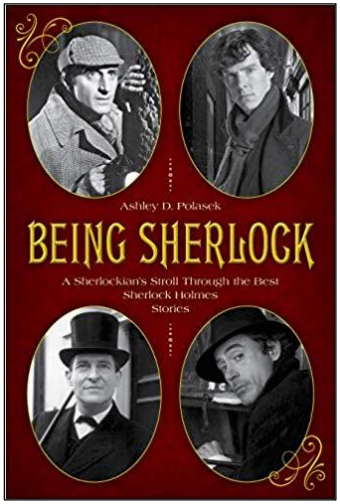
But as the body count continues to rise, the detective and his chronicler find themselves doing battle with a multiple murderer dubbed the Alphabet Killer. Meanwhile, Sherlock Holmes is also under siege on multiple fronts, including by media and law enforcement.

The plot of MacBird's third Holmes novel is pretty busy, with ABC murders, anarchists and girls' school antics. But it's not difficult to keep track of the tangled skeins, in part because the story lines are well documented right up front on the dust jacket.

But what the blurb doesn't tell readers is the way Watson must step up, which is the thing that makes this work most entertaining. Holmes faces unusual obstacles and needs more help than usual from Boswell as they race around London juggling cases.

MacBird's last novel, Unquiet Spirits, with its wine and whisky theme, is a tough act to follow. But the American author has done an admirable job with this Lucifer-themed story.

- JoAnn Alberstat



Being Sherlock: A Sherlockian's Stroll Through the Best Sherlock Holmes Stories by Ashley D. Polasek (2019 Lyons Press, $35.00 CAD)

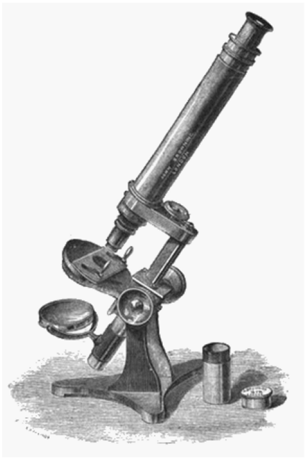
This collection consists of 11 selected stories, 10 short stories and *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Polasek first discusses the story and its various manifestations on the screen, big and little, and then these entertaining and well-researched essays are followed by Doyle's original text.

As Polasek points out in the introduction, the Sherlock Holmes "cultural juggernaut" continues to grow and this book will introduce some readers to the rich variety of screen Holmeses. The introduction and essays all have a wide variety of images from William Gillette to Ian McKellen and Will Ferrell. The one thing this reviewer would have liked from this book is more Polasek and less Doyle. Lyons Press has contracted Polasek for another book so those wishing for more will have it in the not too distant future.

- Mark Alberstat

Strictly Personal

Where a Canadian Sherlockian goes under the microscope for all of us to learn more about them.



Michael Ranieri

Age, Birthplace: 61, July 31, 1958, Toronto
Occupation: Graphic Designer
Current city of residence: Toronto
In school I excelled at: Graphic Design and Theatre
A great evening for me is: An evening out at the theatre followed by a wonderful meal.
Other hobbies and interests: I'm the cohost of the Sherlockian podcast "I Grok Sherlock," which reviews and critiques the Canonical stories and their related materials. I direct and act in amateur theatre. I enjoy all kinds of music but especially jazz. I like to go hiking. I'm an avid reader of detective fiction, science fiction and Arthurian legend, including Robin Hood.
Favourite dining experience: Italian, Asian and Indian.
First Sherlockian memory: I don't remember ever not knowing about Sherlock Holmes. Probably my first exposure was from cartoons—Daffy Duck, Mr. Magoo, Popeye, The Muppets. Then, of course, I watched the Basil Rathbone films on TV. I read the stories for the first time when I purchased a series of novels from Ballantine books with beautiful cover illustrations by Dick Anderson. And in junior high I directed, wrote and videotaped a parody, "The Son of Sherlock Holmes."
Three favourite Canonical tales: The Final Problem, The Empty House, The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge
Favourite non-Sherlockian reading: Ellery Queen (with Ellery as a character), Robin Hood, science fiction, philosophy and religion.
Most prized item in my Sherlockian collection: The 6 Ballantine book series with cover illustrations by Dick Anderson.
Favourite non-Sherlockian movie: "Groundhog Day" (1993)
Favourite Sherlockian movie: "The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes" (1970), "Without a Clue" (1988) and "Murder By Decree" (1979).

If I could live anywhere in the world it would be: I always wanted to be a film actor and live in California. After theatre school and pursuing an acting career for about 10 years, and then having come to the realization, as many have done before me, that this profession was not in the cards for me, the US became less attractive—though I continue to enjoy travelling to many US cities! And I also enjoy travelling to countries all over the world. But I very much recognize the benefits of living in Canada.

If I could live at any time in history, it would be: The year 2265. Space travel and mini-skirts!

If I could ask Holmes, Watson and Doyle each one question, they would be:

1. Holmes: What did you do during your Great Hiatus?
2. Watson: What were your experiences with women on three continents?
3. Doyle: What's with all the story inconsistencies?

When/How did you first learn of/join the Bootmakers: I was scheduled to direct a Sherlock Holmes play in October of 2013 for an amateur theatre company. I wanted to ensure the show's success with good attendance. So I thought I would contact any and all Sherlock Holmes related groups in the Toronto area. I discovered that the Bootmakers were the premier group. I knew if I just showed up at a meeting close to the performance date and announced my show I might not be very successful as I was a stranger. So I came to all the meetings starting at the beginning of the year. When the date of the shows arrived many of the Bootmakers attended and we even had a Talk-Back evening after one of the shows where I introduced the Bootmakers in the audience and they helped answer questions about Sherlock Holmes and Conan Doyle. After that, I just continued to come to the meetings and the next year I became a member.

I would like my epitaph to read: "Wish You Were Here"

My last words will be: "Rosebud"

What question(s) do you wish you had been asked? How did you become president of the group? When I consented to helping out the group by becoming vice president I didn't know that accepting that job meant committing to being the president the following year. Let that be a lesson to you, kids, always read the fine print! I'm having a great time being president and helping promote, grow and sustain the group as best I can.

OOTMAKERS' DIARY

... it is a page from some private diary.
— The Five Orange Pips

Saturday September 7, 2019

At 1p.m., Meyers, Mike Ranieri called the meeting to order to investigate the disappearance of "The Naval Treaty."

After welcoming us, Meyers called for offers to do papers for future meetings or suggestions for possible speakers.

Thelma Beam introduced graphologist Elaine Charal, who went on to show a series of slides about how a person's personality can be read through their handwriting. As well as samples of Sir Arthur and Lady Conan Doyle, Elaine analyzed samples of Bootmakers Thelma Beam, Mike Ranieri, John Gehan and Karen Gold, all of whom had submitted samples several weeks before.

A break was then called where attendees enjoyed Tim Horton's coffee and tea, along with their doughnuts and Tim bits, provided by Mrs. Hudson, Philip Elliott, and Mrs. Turner, David Sanders.

Cliff Goldfarb, once all were seated again, presented an interesting speculation on who the real Irene Adler may have been. After suggesting and eliminating several possible candidates, such as Lola Montez, and Pauline Lucca; Elizabeth Garrett Howard - mistress to Napoleon III - emerged as the frontrunner.

The quiz was then handed out and after enough time for people to try their hand, it was taken up by Quiz Mistress Karen Campbell. Winners were John Gehan and Steven Wintle.

Karen Gold, our Lassus, led us in a singalong to, "Lord Holdhurst's Ode to Percy," based on "Do You Want to Know a Secret?" by The Beatles.

Doug Wrigglesworth gave an interesting wrap-up talk of "The Naval Treaty."

The meeting concluded with draws for several door prizes. Lucky winners were Karen Gold, Thelma Beam and Dave Drennan.

Meyers dismissed the meeting with a reminder that the next meeting would include a luncheon on October 26 with a change of venue to The Toronto Lawn and Tennis Club.

Saturday September 28, 2019

Bootmakers David Sanders, John Gehan and his wife Mary attended a showing of the 1922 film, *Sherlock Holmes*, at The Vintage Film Festival, at the Capitol Theatre in Port Hope, Ontario.

- David Sanders

Friday November 8 – Sunday November 10, 2019

"Building an Archive: a celebration of the arrival of the BSI Archive at the Lilly Library" held 8-10 November in Bloomington, Indiana was a conference devoted to libraries and archives and the people who love them. The conference was put on by the Baker Street Irregulars to celebrate the transfer of the BSI Archive from Harvard's Houghton Library to Indiana University's Lilly Library.

The Lilly is one of the USA's great university libraries, home to several collections that may be said to have a familial relationship with the BSI Archive. There's an existing collection of materials by and about Sherlock Holmes and Arthur Conan Doyle, a Victorian-era "London Low Life" collection, and an Ian Fleming Collection, including typescripts for the author's James Bond novels. Conference attendees visited the library at the start of the conference to view the exhibit "The History of the BSI in 221 Objects" and get a glimpse of the Library's other holdings, including a visit to the fascinating Puzzle Room.

The rest of the conference was held at the Hilton Garden Inn in Bloomington, and featured talks and presentations by a Sherlockian Who's Who of book collectors, booksellers, publishers, librarians and archivists. Marilyn and Hartley Nathan rounded out the Toronto contingent, and there were assorted far-flung Bootmakers in attendance as well. A Saturday evening banquet was followed by an entertaining discussion between conference organizer and well-known collector Glen Miranker and Mysterious Bookshop owner Otto Penzler, in which Glen interviewed Otto on his long and fascinating career. As an added bonus, there were cards and all sorts of interesting ephemera being doled out. Here's a hot tip for the ephemera collectors out there: conference co-organizer Ross Davies apparently has a knack for coming up with creative ephemeral souvenirs. You may like to check out the next conference he's helping to organize: the BSI's "Sherlock Holmes and the British Empire" to be held in Bear Mountain, NY on July 17-19, 2020.

https://bakerstreetirregulars.com/2019/08/03/bsi-2020-conference-dates/

- Peggy Perdue

Saturday, October 26, 2019 – "The Final Problem"

The Bootmakers of Toronto met for the fourth story meeting of the year in the Toronto Lawn Tennis Club. Thirty-five people attended at our annual brunch meeting.

Due to problems on the TTC there was a delay for the start of the meeting, which was called to order at 12:11 p.m., by Meyers, Michael Ranieri.

The members then enjoyed the delicious repast provided by the chefs of the Lawn Tennis Club.

After the meal our first speaker was Donny Zaldin. His presentation was from the book *Sherlock Holmes Is Like…* edited by Chris Redmond. Donny wrote the first chapter in the book: *Sherlock Holmes is like Sir George Lewis*. Sir George Lewis was a well-known lawyer who was mentioned in "The Illustrious Client." Lewis, who was born in 1833 and whose father was also a lawyer, once represented Albert Edward, the Prince of Wales. Lewis was also known as a "poor man's lawyer," for aiding people who could not afford legal representation. There are many parallels between the lives of Sir George and Sherlock Holmes.

The quiz on "The Final Problem" was then handed out.

Doug Wrigglesworth announced that he is overseeing the awards for the January Banquet. The committee for the True Davidson Award for the best formal paper presented at a meeting is being chaired by Philip Elliott. The Derrick Murdoch Award committee for the best article in *Canadian Holmes* is being chaired by Kathy Burns. The Warren Carleton Committee for the best non-formal presentation is being chaired by David Sanders. The committees need members so people were asked to volunteer. Doug will be in charge of the committee for Master Bootmakers.

Karen Campbell then took up the quiz. The first-place winner was Zeynep Kahramanoglu, who received a copy of *Sherlock Holmes Is Like...* The other winners were David Drennan, Barbara Rusch and Kathy Burns.

Donny Zaldin announced that he has published a book about the Silver Blaze Races in Saratoga Springs, New York and in Toronto. It will be available at the December 7th meeting.

Karen Gold distributed the lyrics sheets for "You're A Mean One, Moriarty," sung to the tune of "You're A Mean One, Mr. Grinch."

Bruce Aikin then gave the story dénouement.

A drawing was then held for some door prizes. Doug Wrigglesworth received a copy of *Moriarty*. Harold Oades won *Sherlock Holmes On Screen*. Barbara Rusch and Cliff Goldfarb won tickets to the German silent film on November 23rd.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:23 p.m.

- Bruce Aikin

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