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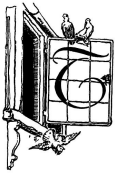
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One-hundred sixty eighth issue

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Graces of Bootprints

In a topsy turvy world

We live in a world of fake news, pandemics, anti-vaxxers, mass shootings and other events and history-making happenings that a century ago could only have been imagined in the fiction of Conan Doyle and others with a creative pen.

With these weights on us each day, it is fortunate for the readers of this journal, and all Sherlockians, to have the sitting room at 221B Baker Street to retreat into when the present world is too much for us.

With the news howling in our ears, like a child in a chimney, the familiar sitting room at Baker Street is our oasis. We can sit in the cane-backed chair unseen by our two familiar companions as they discuss their most recent adventure, entertain a damsel in distress or carefully listen to a story of ancient curses or lost gems.

It is around this hearth that we find our happy place and we owe Conan Doyle a debt of gratitude. The sitting room is the ideal place for us to spend a few hours on a weekend lost in the cozy comfort of Victorian England. When we attend a Zoom meeting four time zones away or, in better times, local meetings with long-time friends, it is this warm space in our mind's eye that brings us together. As you read through this journal and you see the name of Holmes or Watson we all find comfort in reading a friend's name that has not been lost to these hectic and stressful days.

In this issue, Barbara Rusch steps away from her Bow Window column to provide us with a detailed look at atavism and the monster in both the Sherlockian Canon and Victorian popular culture. Catherine Wynne then looks at Holmes's service to the British war effort, an article that pieces together three stories to demonstrate his patriotism. Brad Keefauver examines the friendship between Holmes and Watson and another friendship dynamic not often discussed. Mark Jones returns to *Canadian Holmes* with an article about the dark doings of Black Peter; Aleš Kolodrubec tells us about Bohemian papermakers, including one good enough for a King, and then Charles Prepolec wraps up his series on Canadian actors who have played Sherlock Holmes on the screen with a look at Matt Frewer. The issue concludes with a Strictly Personal profile of John Gehan, a series of book reviews and the Diary Notes.

Atavism and the monster in the Canon and in Victorian popular culture

By Barbara Rusch

Barbara Rusch, MBt, BSI, ASH has served the Bootmakers of Toronto and the Friends of the ACD Collection at the Toronto Public Library for close to four decades. She has chaired and spoken at several conferences, contributed to numerous anthologies and journals, and published a Doylean/Sherlockian play. Barbara is the recipient of a Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medal.

The Victorian preoccupation with atavism, the recurrence of ancestral traits in subsequent generations, was in part a reflection of anxieties surrounding increased immigration, a crumbling social structure and fears of the declining position of the Empire on the world stage. Indeed, the question of genetically acquired characteristics, both physical and psychological, became an accepted component of the cultural anthropology.

Within the 60 tales, the theory of atavism makes an appearance in various permutations and combinations, ranging from the innocuous to the perverse. Dr. Mortimer in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* is of the belief that intellectual capacity and other human traits may be measured and calculated through a combination of atavistic principles and phrenology, characterized by a close examination of the bumps and crevices of the skull, a dubious pseudo-science which gained credence in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. A self-described “picker up of shells on the shores of the great unknown ocean,” and author of “Some Freaks of Atavism,” an article published in *The Lancet* in 1882, Mortimer observes: “Mr. Holmes, I had hardly expected so dolichocephalic a skull or such well-developed supra-orbital development. I confess I covet your skull [which would be] an ornament to any anthropological museum.” No doubt he would have included Holmes amongst his atavistic freaks.

Professor Moriarty has his own opinion of Holmes’s cranium. “You have less frontal development than I should have expected,” he says. Both seem to have predetermined expectations of Holmes’s cranial structure, based no doubt on atavistic theory, as if the brains of clever people necessarily bulge out of their foreheads. Sebastian Moran is described as

having “the brow of a philosopher,” as apparently a “great cranium” is an indicator of keen intelligence. Even Holmes is of the opinion that “a large brain must have something in it.” At the opposite end of the spectrum, Mortimer claims without hesitation that the supra-orbital crest of a Negro would differ from that of an Esquimaux. Clearly Indigenous peoples can only be compared to each other, while any mention of *their* innate intelligence is distinctly absent.

In “The Greek Interpreter,” Holmes articulates his own concept of atavism. Watson tells us “The conversation came round ... to the question of atavism and hereditary aptitudes. The point under discussion was how far any singular gift in an individual was due to his ancestry and how far to his own early training.” When Watson ventures that Holmes’s extraordinary facility for observation and deduction is due to his own systematic training, Holmes begs to differ. “Art in the blood is liable to take the strangest forms,” he replies. “My turn that way is in my veins, and may have come with my grandmother, who was the sister of Vernet, the French artist.” In other words, when it comes to a question of “nature vs. nurture,” nature wins out every time.

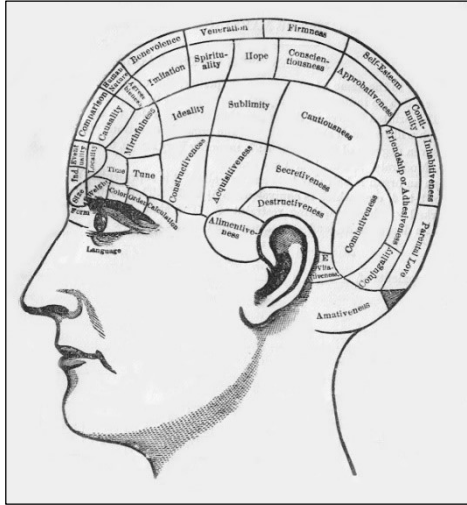


Illustration from 1887 phrenology book Heads and Faces.

Nor is it too great a leap to suggest that if artistic talents and intellectual aptitude may be passed from one generation to the next, so might a congenital proclivity toward vice or mental illness, predetermining the entire trajectory of one’s life. In fact, Cesare Lombroso (1835-1909), arguably the father of modern criminology, hypothesized that criminal behaviour was somehow preordained, the consequence of inbred predispositions. The result was what he called “*delinquento nato*,” the “born criminal,” those whose inbred propensities made them inherently evil. The clear implication is that there exists an indissoluble thread linking the miscreant to his ancestral roots, sentencing him to an implacable fate and making criminal activity all but inevitable.

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In the Canon, there are numerous instances of notorious villains manifesting disturbing atavistic tendencies. Grimesby Roylott, we are



Sherlock Holmes highlighting for Dr. Watson the strong family traits of the Baskervilles.

told, is possessed of a hereditary streak of violence bordering on mania. One of the most fascinating examples of the atavistic throwback appears in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. The tale takes place amidst the backdrop of the moors, once home to an uncivilized, lawless and ancient peoples whose presence still pervades the area surrounding the Grimpen Mire. The savage legacy of its original inhabitants has been passed down to a kind of metaphorical, if not strictly congenital, descendant in the form of Selden the murderer, who has assumed their hereditary birthright, primitive and debauched, while taking up residence in their former neighbourhood.

But it is Jack Stapleton who, despite assuming a false identity, cannot alter his congenital proclivities, inherited not just from his evil father Rodger Baskerville, the black sheep of the family, but in his debased and corrupted bloodline extending all the way back to Sir Hugo, the progenitor of the family curse. It appears the hound's are not the only gigantic footprints to have left deep and lasting impressions upon that dark and forbidding landscape. In a classic example of the sins of the father being visited upon the sons, in this case unto the ninth generation, both of these evil men pay for their misdeeds in exactly the same form of retributive justice – dying out on the moor where their acts of villainy were perpetrated.

Professor Presbury might well be the poster boy for canonical atavism, not by virtue of his genetic code, but on account of the monkey genes with which he has chosen to inject himself. Undergoing a horrible transformation – crouching in the attitude of a frog, conjuring up the image of a creature emerging from the primordial ooze, then morphing into a monkey state with a crawling, swinging gait, his thick, horny knuckles dragging on the ground, and an inexplicable urge to climb trees – he

regresses all the way to primitive man, following the Darwinian evolutionary trajectory in a kind of devolutionary path.

Atavistic inclinations undoubtedly play a role in the nefarious deeds of the greatest criminal of them all – Professor Moriarty – a throwback with “hereditary tendencies of the most diabolical kind. A criminal strain ran in his blood, which instead of being modified, was increased and rendered infinitely more dangerous by his extraordinary mental powers.” Physically, too, there is something of the atavistic about him, as though, much like Presbury, he has somehow emerged from the primordial muck. “His shoulders are rounded from much study, and his face protrudes forward and is forever slowly oscillating from side to side in a curiously reptilian fashion.”

In the 19th century, England was flooded with immigrants, many from Russia and Eastern Europe, seeking a better life and asylum from persecution. Those not of pure English extraction were often deemed “alien,” not merely “otherized,” but demonized as inherently deviant. With bloodlines suspect, the distinction between the civilized and the savage becomes blurred, while the alien becomes the scapegoat for all life’s social ills. We have come far in integrating immigrant populations into Western society in the intervening years, yet attitudes have changed little in some quarters.

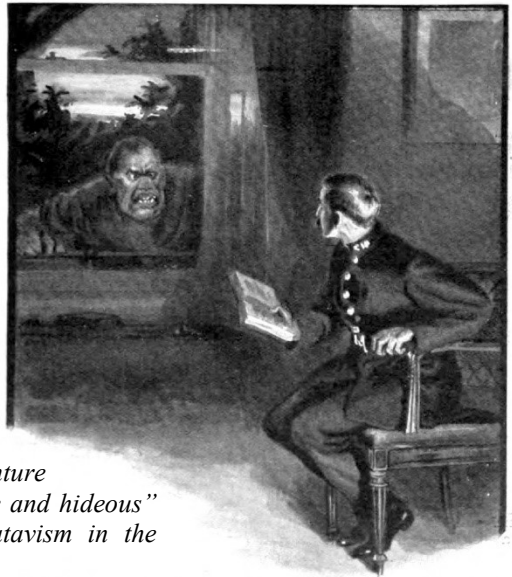
The Canon is rife with the pervasive undercurrent of these overt racist tropes attributable to atavistic principles, including numerous examples of what can only be interpreted as ethnic, religious and gender stereotyping – together with all their disparaging connotations. Women of Hispanic descent, like Maria Gibson of “Thor Bridge,” are inevitably possessed of ungovernable and irrational passions. Likewise, Mrs. Ferguson of “The Sussex Vampire” is denied the benefit of the doubt and assumed to be a blood-sucking ghoul. Jews are assigned the predictable role of seedy peddler or usurious moneylender, like Sam Brewer of “Shoscombe Old Place” who, when he comes to collect on his loans, receives a public thrashing at the hands of Sir Robert Norberton. Having “fallen into the hands of the Jews,” the upstanding British peer is apparently justified in horsewhipping his creditor, the more so on account of his ethnicity. And it appears that the United States is populated almost entirely by gangsters and ne’er-do-wells judging by the likes of Abe Slaney, Mormons Enoch Drebber and Joseph Stangerson, and James Winter, alias John Garrideb / “Killer” Evans.

Those of darker skin pigments (with the notable exception of Effie Munro’s little daughter Lucy in “The Yellow Face”) inevitably bear an uncanny resemblance to the creatures Victorian cultural anthropologists identified as evolutionary throwbacks, characterized by a receding chin,

sloping forehead, monkey-like ears, large jaw, twisted or flattened upturned nose, asymmetrical face and high cheekbones.

Examples falling neatly within this model appear all too frequently. Steve Dixie of “The Three Gables” is depicted as a “mad bull,” distinguished by his hideous lips and woolly hair. Beppo, the former sculptor and thief of the Black Pearl of the Borgias in “The Six Napoleons,” is described unappetizingly as “an alert, sharp-faced simian man, with thick eyebrows and a very peculiar projection of the lower part of the face, like the muzzle of a baboon.” This is as fair a depiction as one may expect of the “Other,” which Watson categorizes as “the outcast of Europe,” but might just as easily be a characterization of the outcast of humanity, a clearly devolutionary ape-like creature, hardly reminiscent of a man at all. For blatant xenophobia this would be difficult to exceed, though it just may be outdone in the denigrating description of Tonga, native of the Andaman Islands in *The Sign of the Four*, described as more depraved beast than human being. He was “a little black man ... an unhallowed dwarf with this hideous face and strong yellow teeth, a great misshapen head and a shock of tangled, dishevelled hair ... whose features were marked with all bestiality and cruelty. His small eyes glowed with a sombre light, and his thick lips were writhed back from his teeth, which grinned and chattered ... with half animal fury.”

But for sinister racial overtones, you just can’t beat the deadly drama of “Wisteria Lodge.” While Henderson’s servant, Lucas, is depicted as a benign “chocolate brown,” the description of Garcia’s “half-breed cook” is enough to give anyone the willies, a brutish, atavistic throwback, more monster than man, a chilling vision of a “huge and hideous mulatto with the pronounced features of a negroid type,” “a perfect savage,” and a “yellow devil.” To complete the revolting picture, the terrifying face at the window “wasn’t black, nor was it white, but a kind of queer shade like clay with a



“...a perfect savage” looks in on Constable Walters in “The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge.” This “huge and hideous” cook is just one example of atavism in the Canon.

splash of milk in it. And the look of it – the great staring goggle eyes, and the line of white teeth like a hungry beast.” The noxious ingredients for the unsavoury victuals he prepares include white cocks torn savagely to pieces, platters of charred bones, pails of blood and mummified animals, all indicative of burnt offerings and sacrificial rites, and hinting broadly at cannibalism. Holmes manages to decipher the repulsive charms contained within that toxic kitchen deep within the pages of a volume in the British Library entitled *Voodooism and the Negroid Religions*. For the 21st-century reader, the racist rhetoric is discomfiting, to say the least. In our era of #BlackLivesMatter and the struggle for racial equality, the considerations they raise become all the more disturbing – and relevant.

Beasts of the Canon

Those exhibiting depraved – even monstrous – characteristics are often associated with animals or wild beasts, both resembling them and exploiting them. Presbury is likened to a monkey, a bat and a frog, and while in his monkey state taunts and attempts to inflict injury on his own dog, Roy. Eugenia Ronder’s husband is depicted as every bit the beast of his caged and no doubt abused menagerie, equated to a human pig or wild boar. His dreadful face was “formidable in its bestiality. One could imagine that vile mouth, champing and foaming in its rage, and ... those small vicious eyes darting pure malignancy as they looked upon the world. Ruffian, bully, beast – it was all written in that heavy-jowled face.”

Other villains with a penchant for animals – or for inflicting harm upon them – include Grimesby Roylott, who is described as a “fierce, old bird of prey.” His affinity for exotic animals includes keeping a cheetah and a baboon that wander about the estate with considerably more freedom than his two stepdaughters, while he turns his snake into a murder weapon. Jack Stapleton is both a merciless killer of delicate butterflies and guilty of unspeakable cruelty to the hound he tortures and starves, actually creating a wild beast from what should have been an ordinary domestic pet. Colonel Sebastian Moran, in relentless pursuit of magnificent tigers, elevates their massacre to a fine art. Modern psychologists confirm that those who start off abusing defenceless creatures often graduate to perpetrating their barbarity upon human beings. All of these two-legged creatures rival their four-legged counterparts in savagery.

The Monster in Disguise

While all of these malefactors are horrifying in their own way, they also reflect the fascination mixed with fear of the “monster,” a concept which permeated the popular culture. For the Victorians, this morbid obsession with the grotesque and what was perceived as the degenerate found its

natural outlet in the freak show, a safe way to experience the hideous, that liminal space between man and beast which at once titillated and terrified. From the Elephant Man to the Siamese Twins, freak shows were all the rage. Nor was the spectacle restricted to the big top and sideshows which catered to the prurient gaze of the lower classes, but appealed from coarse tastes to refined throughout all strata of society. Queen Victoria welcomed P.T. Barnum, the ultimate ringmaster of human curiosities, and his protégé General Tom Thumb to court twice. Even Sherlock Holmes was not immune to the lure of the monstrous. Equally enthralled and horrified at the diabolical misdeeds perpetrated by Professor Moriarty, he concedes, “My horror at his crimes was lost in my admiration at his skill.”

It proved next to impossible to keep the monster behind the bars of a cage or within the canvas of a circus tent. He was on the loose in the streets of London, where the voyeuristic thrill reached its apogee in the form of the elusive Jack the Ripper. As mythologized as he was feared, the first notorious serial killer lurked in the shadows of London’s Whitechapel district, terrorizing its denizens with his atrocities – all ghastly, gruesome and grisly – in the fall of 1888, the more so in that his identity remained shrouded in mystery. In the Victorian imagination, he epitomized the ultimate throwback, a demon in the guise of a proper English gentleman. This recurring theme pervades late 19th century English literature – from Robert Louis Stevenson’s novel *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, which enjoyed a second life as a stage play, and Oscar Wilde’s *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, both published in that same grim year, to various “incarnations” of *The Werewolf* throughout the century, and *Dracula*, Bram Stoker’s 1897 masterpiece. This theme of the anti-hero as diabolical chameleon, enjoying a life of outward respectability while harbouring a depraved soul, seemed to confirm the theory of social Darwinism that it is possible for man to devolve down the evolutionary ladder, unable to escape the dubious legacy bequeathed to him. Like his veneer of top hat and stuffed shirt – the accoutrements of white male privilege which provide a kind of protective suit of armour – he lives a layered existence, alternately posing as the Victorian gentleman and the Victorian monster, along with the horrifying transmogrification of one to the other. Moreover, like the visitor lost in a maze of mirrors at a funhouse, it is difficult to distinguish what is real from its reflection, most especially when the mirror image is obscured and distorted.

This recurring refrain of the fiend in camouflage – on the written page, on the stage, within the parameters of a picture frame and out on the streets – captivated a public with a taste for mystery and a preoccupation with the macabre. It was as if the Victorians were all too cognizant that their combination of congenitally tainted blood and primitive urges, primarily

sexual, lay simmering just below the surface, crouching insidiously and waiting to pounce upon any unsuspecting and innocent young woman who crossed their path. On some level they seemed to be aware that the “Other” was in truth themselves, the monster within, thinly veiled beneath a fancy waistcoat. As *Pogo* cartoonist Walt Kelly wrote so tellingly, “We have met the enemy and he is us.”

All of this provided grist for the imagination of Conan Doyle, as we find this pattern of genetic imperative together with monster in disguise scattered throughout the Canon. Selden, the notorious convict, is cloaked as Sir Henry Baskerville, discovered dead in his respectable suit of clothes. Jack Stapleton, though a more carefully contrived criminal, is also practising a ruse, out wandering the moors in the pretentious costume of a mild-mannered lepidopterist, his butterfly net, the indispensable accessory, symbolic of his web of duplicity and deceit. Colonel Sebastian Moran, respected military man, serves as chief henchman for Professor Moriarty, the supreme evil genius, secreted beneath the mask of a brilliant mathematician.

Often the literary allusions are unmistakable. Professor Presbury, in his quest for sexual prowess, becomes a stalker, a malignant marauder masked as the elderly distinguished scholar. Like Dr. Jekyll, he has morphed into the monstrous Mr. Hyde, and like Count Dracula, scales the side of his house to inflict harm on his fiancée. But which is the mask – the benign educator or the ominous, simian creature he has become? Baron Gruner, the most loathsome sexual predator of them all, poses as an aristocratic collector of fine porcelain. Who is he in all his seething malevolence if not Dorian Gray stepping out of his picture frame to terrorize and ruin the latest female victim upon whom he has chosen to prey? Like Dorian, Gruner’s physical beauty is destroyed in the ultimate act of retributive justice, his superficial outward appearance at last reconciled with his blighted and hideous inner soul. In the Canon, few are what they seem. But the true nature of these monsters cannot remain concealed indefinitely, and their abominations are ultimately exposed.

And yet, the question that begs answering remains: If they are ruled solely by atavistic instincts, can these fiends, however evil, in any true sense be held accountable for their atrocities? At least in the Canon, the question has a simple answer, for in the end, if they survive at all, they are irrevocably diminished. They pay, if not with their lives, with their reputations, their freedom and whatever appeal they retain in a world they have managed to dupe and betray. Inevitably, evil will be unmasked, crimes will be avenged, and retributive justice, in the form of Sherlock Holmes, will triumph.

Sherlock Holmes on the Home Front

By Catherine Wynne

Dr Catherine Wynne is Reader in Victorian and Early Twentieth-Century Literature and Culture at the University of Hull, UK. She is working on a new edition of The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes for Oxford World Classics. Her latest publication is Lady Butler: War Artist and Traveller, 1846-1933 (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2019).

In “A Visit to Three Fronts” (1916) Arthur Conan Doyle recounts how he was invited by the “Italian authorities” to visit their front lines. This prompted him to secure additional permission to see British and French lines as well, thus enabling him to “visit the battle line of each of three great Western allies” (1). On June 11 1916 Doyle attended an “elaborate” dinner in St Menehould in north-east France at which “there was a special menu card whose crest bore a drawing of pipe, revolver and violin to represent Sherlock Holmes” (2). This prompted General Humbert to question Doyle about the detective: “*Sherlock Holmes, est ce qu’il est un soldat dans l’armée Anglaise?*” [Sherlock Holmes, is he a soldier in the British army?] To which Doyle replied: “*il est trop vieux pour service*” [he is too old for service] (3).

“His Last Bow,” which appeared in *The Strand Magazine* in September of the following year, reveals Holmes’s activities on the verge of the war. After infiltrating and outing a German spy in Britain, Holmes informs Watson that “there’s an East wind coming.” Holmes’s appearance in *The Strand* in 1917 represented his contribution to the war effort. But Holmes, as this essay argues, was a “*soldat*” long before “His Last Bow.”

Three stories in the Canon reveal Holmes’s success at keeping Britain safe from war amidst domestic betrayal. Each of these stories – “The Adventure of the Naval Treaty,” “The Adventure of the Second Stain” and “The Adventure of the Bruce-Partington Plans” – involves the theft of vital documents (a treaty, a letter and plans, respectively) necessary to British and European stability.

Holmes rarely leaves the confines of England to solve crimes. He declares to Watson in “The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax” that “on general principles it is best that I should not leave the country.” While Holmes policed domestic and national boundaries, his reach was also geo-political. This accounts for his significance at home and his appeal beyond

the confines of what Joseph MacLaughlin in *Writing the Urban Jungle: Reading Empire in London from Doyle to Eliot* defines as the “‘home’-land.” (4) A cursory glance at the tales, for instance, reveals their permeability to wide-ranging global influences. Caroline Reitz in *Detecting the Nation: Fictions of Detection and the Imperial Venture* argues that the “persistent imbrication of foreign and domestic worlds” (5) demonstrates the interconnections between the domestic and the international.

In “The Naval Treaty,” “The Second Stain” and “The Bruce Partington Plans” Holmes does not leave the home front but regulates domestic space and nation from the environs of Baker Street, safeguarding Britain from both rogue nationals and foreign spies. Read chronologically, the stories convey the heightened tensions in European relations, which is reflected in the increasing violence of the stories and in the manner in which the vital missing documents get further away from Britain until, in the final story in this sequence, the documents make their way to Paris.

In what I term the tales of “Domestic and Continental” intrigue, the origins of conspiracy and crime arise in the English home and the instigators are also English. “The Naval Treaty” reflects the shifting alliances in British foreign policy in the last years of the 19th century. Set in the late 1880s, the case involves the theft of a treaty from the desk of Percy Phelps, a Foreign Office official. The treaty defines “the position of Great Britain towards the Triple Alliance,” outlining the role Britain would pursue if France were to gain ascendancy over Italy in the Mediterranean. Holmes discovers that the treaty was stolen by Joseph Harrison, the brother of Phelps’s fiancée. Phelps collapses due to the stress and disgrace over the theft. The story, much like *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, demonstrates degeneracy at the heart of the family. In that example the evil Stapleton inherits the characteristics and behaviour of Sir Hugo while the staid and respectable housekeeper Mrs. Barrymore has a brother who is a murderer.

“The Second Stain,” first published in 1904, charts similar territory in its exposure of an unstable home, female dishonour and male anxiety. A letter, the publication of which could lead to European war, is stolen from the locked dispatch box in the bedroom of Trelawney Hope, the government Secretary for European Affairs. His wife Lady Hilda has been blackmailed into stealing it in exchange for a compromising letter from her past. However, after her blackmailer, Eduardo Lucas, alias M. Fournaye, is killed with his own Oriental dagger by his jealous French wife, Lady Hilda returns to his house and recovers the document from under the floorboards. The story’s frontispiece illustrated by Sidney Paget shows Holmes’s penetration of the home by presenting the detective

crouched on the floor with his hand in the box in the floorboard of Lucas's study. Holmes must delve deep into various homes to re-arrange matters on the political stage.

Finally, in "The Bruce-Partington Plans" Holmes discloses more dishonour in the home which reverberates at a national and European level. Plans of a submarine have been stolen from Woolwich arsenal by Colonel Valentine Walter, whose brother Sir James is the official guardian of the papers. Walter has sold the plans to the spy Hugo Oberstein. Sir James's suspicions and the family dishonour culminate in his suicide. Names are significant in this story: West's name signals that he is on the side of good, but his attempt to save his country costs him his life. Violet also shares a similar surname (Westbury). Moreover, she shares her first name with the brave governess in "The Adventure of the Copper Beeches" whom Holmes admires. By contrast, Valentine shows no love for either his brother or his country.

In "The Second Stain" Holmes uses the language of war as he comments on a development in the case as "my latest from the front!" These three Continental stories reflect the escalating European crisis as the dissemination of these valuable documents reflects the increased risk of war. In "The Naval Treaty" the papers remain under the bedroom floorboards; in "The Second Stain," the letter is recovered from the house of a foreign spy and in "The Bruce-Partington Plans," the documents reach Paris. This movement from the English bedroom of the "Naval Treaty" to the Hotel du Louvre of "The Bruce-Partington Plans" reveals the developing Continental tensions, a point which is underlined in the British Premier's warning to Holmes in the intermediate story, "The Second Stain," that the "whole of Europe is an armed camp." Mycroft enlists his brother's help in solving the crime by informing Holmes that he is serving his country. When Holmes then breaks into Oberstein's London home he mischievously declares that "England, home and beauty" exonerate his illegal activity. "The Adventure of the Bruce-Partington Plans" demonstrates that Holmes is willing to break the 'official' law, while "The Naval Treaty" and "The Second Stain" reveal how he keeps the law at bay by not involving the police. Holmes's sardonic detachment ensures that the Continental stories do not devolve into propaganda or jingoism. Although Mycroft attempts to stimulate Holmes's sense of duty to his country, the detective's service is always balanced by his apolitical love of his profession, his pursuit of what he describes in "The Adventure of the Copper Beeches" of "art for its own sake." In "The Bruce-Partington Plans" he consults a large map of London and he traces the web which extends to Europe through the English home. In these stories the family unit is exposed, chastened and, in the case of "The Naval Treaty" and "The

Second Stain,” rehabilitated. By putting the domestic space in order, Holmes re-orders the political space. These stories demonstrate that to prevent war England requires *un soldat dans la maison anglaise*.

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Write for Canadian Holmes

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Post-Trevor and Pre-Watson: That other friend of Sherlock Holmes

By Brad Keefauver

Brad Keefauver is a long-time Sherlockian, now living in Peoria, Illinois. He is the author of The Rise and Fall of an Eighties Sherlockian. This is his first article in Canadian Holmes. Brad's Sherlockian blog can be found at: <http://sherlockpeoria.blogspot.com/>

“How do I meet this friend of yours?” It's a simple question. It's also something we tend to race by on our way to John H. Watson getting to meet Sherlock Holmes for the first time. But stopping to contemplate those words brings an entirely different relationship to the forefront. John Watson is asking young Stamford about a friend of the former dresser's — Stamford's friend Sherlock Holmes.

Now, one might be tempted to write this off as Watson jumping to conclusions, but when you look at what Stamford has to say about Holmes, it becomes plain that Holmes and Stamford got along pretty well.

Stamford talks about Holmes “bemoaning himself this morning because he could not get someone to go halves with him in some nice rooms.” Does that sound like the way Holmes would go on with some random passerby in the lab at Bart's?

“He is a little queer in his ideas — an enthusiast in some branches of science,” Stamford observes, “As far as I know he is a decent fellow enough.”

Sure, Stamford doesn't know about the whole “consulting detective” thing, but how long did Watson have to live in the same apartment with Sherlock Holmes before he found out? Stamford got to know Holmes as the latter did experiments in the lab, a setting that would encourage the assumption of a medical role and a certain discretion about someone else's experiments. Holmes would probably have more motivation to let Stamford (and everyone else at Bart's) stay in the dark about the detective business longer than he did with Watson.

The *Oxford Sherlock Holmes* is good on Stamford's place in things, stating that a “dresser” was “a medical student whose duty is to dress

wounds. Stamford would have been ‘under’ Watson in the sense of being a member of a surgeon’s team in which he was the inferior to Watson, a ‘houseman’ (a graduate resident doctor but not the principal operator on patients, save in emergencies).” Stamford is plainly of a similar social standing to both Watson and Holmes, as whether in the Criterion Bar, the Holborn restaurant, or the St. Bart’s lab, he seems like a fellow both don’t mind just hanging out with.

Elliot Kimball’s 1962 monograph *Watsoniana* makes Watson’s orderly Murray a key source for information on Watson, claiming that Murray, Holmes and Watson got together for Watson’s birthday (July 7, according to Kimball) every year. However, it was at Dr. Stamford’s home where Watson finally passes away, after a luncheon with Stamford and both men’s wives. (Watson dies on Stamford’s terrace, curiously enough.) Apparently, to Kimball’s mind, the two men got along much better than their early days of association suggest; of which Watson writes “Stamford had never been a particular crony of mine.”



1902 illustration by Richard Gutschmidt showing Stamford introducing Holmes to Watson.

That “no crony” line is probably the cause of a general Sherlockian lack of interest in Stamford over the years, seeing the poor fellow as a sort of “one-lunch-stand” for a lonely Watson who was desperate for companionship. But when one considers Stamford from the perspective of Holmes, things get a lot more interesting.

“His studies are very desultory and eccentric, but he has amassed a lot of out-of-the-way knowledge which would astonish his professors,” Stamford says of Holmes, which indicates a few things. Holmes didn’t display this knowledge in any class, in front of any professors, yet did impress Stamford with it. And Holmes deeply impressed Stamford with it, as Stamford has a real sense of the sheer mass and diversity of that

knowledge. Could Stamford have concocted a list as Watson did titled “Sherlock Holmes — his limits?” I believe he could have.

“I know nothing more of him than I have learned from meeting him occasionally in the laboratory,” Stamford demurs once Watson has decided he would like an introduction, and Watson calls him “mealy-mouthed” for walking things back. Stamford then makes the sort of observation that shows he knows Holmes pretty well.

“Holmes is a little too scientific for my tastes — it approaches cold-bloodedness. I could imagine his giving a friend a little pinch of the latest vegetable alkaloid, not out of malevolence, you understand, but simply out of a spirit of inquiry in order to have an accurate idea of the effects. To do him justice, I think that he would take it himself with the same readiness.”

Watson eventually sees Holmes prove that very point in “The Adventure of the Devil’s Foot,” but it is Stamford who knows that side of Holmes far before Watson does. And Stamford knows enough to try to warn Watson away.

Stamford had been present for Holmes beating a corpse with a stick, not an activity one idly joins a stranger for. One even has to wonder if Holmes invited Stamford to join him for his little corpse-beating adventure. Which brings me back to that early statement by Stamford: “He was bemoaning himself this morning, because he could not get someone to go halves with him in some nice rooms which he had found, and which were too much for his purse.”

Was Stamford actually Holmes’s first choice for a roommate?

Could the consulting detective have been envisioning Stamford in the role that Watson eventually took on, the doctor/partner in the investigation of crime? Could Stamford have actually been both prototype and first choice for what Holmes would eventually call his “Agency?”

It is Stamford that calls Holmes “a walking calendar of crime,” and even suggests that Holmes build a career around his interest by publishing a newspaper called *Police News of the Past*. This is not merely a line the clever Stamford just whipped off as Holmes cited the uses of his newly discovered blood test. Clearly, Stamford has been hearing much about the history of crime from Holmes in previous displays of Holmes’s “desultory and eccentric” studies. (Holmes may have been fresh from his reading “for three months ... twelve hours a day at the annals of crime,” as he would suggest to Inspector MacDonald in *The Valley of Fear*.)

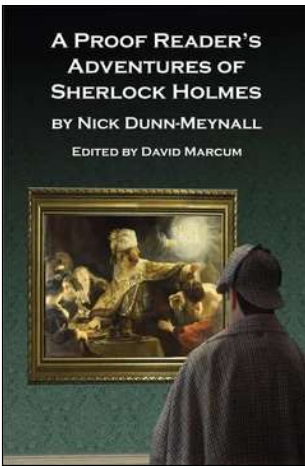
As beloved as Watson is among Sherlockians, as much as he has perfectly filled that part as Holmes’s partner, there seems a very strong probability that he was not the first candidate for the job. Stamford, however, did not seem to need cheap lodgings or a rooming buddy to hang

out with. And we can be grateful for that, because how did Stamford put it in his attempts to portray all that was Holmes?

“It is not easy to express the inexpressible.”

Those, my friends, are not the words of a man who was going to be writing four novels and 52 short stories about Sherlock Holmes. But perhaps we should give Stamford honorary credit for writing “Mazarin Stone,” however, just to pay tribute to him and his role as “the potential” — the “Watson” that might have been.

Reviews continued from 37



A Proof Reader's Adventures of Sherlock Holmes – Hardcover by Nick Dunn-Meynell (2021 MX Publishing \$30.75 CAD)

Nick Dunn-Meynell is no stranger to *Canadian Holmes* readers as he is a frequent contributor with insightful articles. This book strays from the strict article format and could even for some fall under the pastiche column but that would be doing it a great disservice.

If you have ever wondered what the conversation around the Baker Street hearth was after “The Adventure of the Speckled Band” and the other 11 stories in *The Adventures*, then this book of sequels is for you.

Dunn-Meynell takes some of the age-old Sherlockian questions and sets them into an explanatory conversation between Holmes and Watson, adding in their thoughts on a certain literary agent and a tone between the two friends not always found in the original stories. Filled with surprises, clever scenarios and the author’s own dry sense of humour these conversational essays are a thoughtful look at each of the 12 stories.

- Mark Alberstat

The forgotten victims of Black Peter

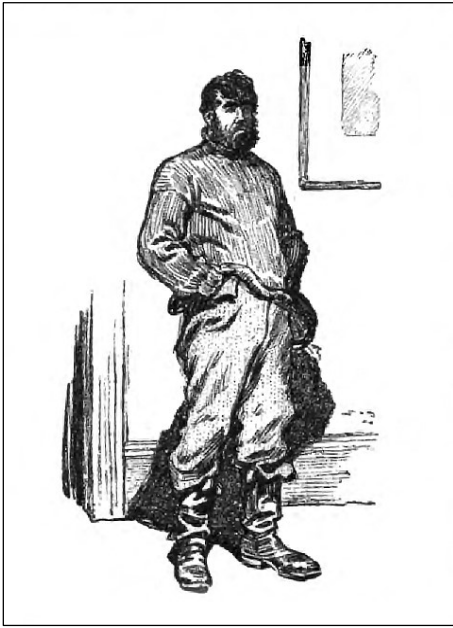
By Mark Jones

Mark Jones is a Sherlockian and Doylean based in York, in the United Kingdom. He writes widely on all matters ACD and is co-host of Doings of Doyle - The Arthur Conan Doyle Podcast.

One of the surprising features of the Sherlockian Canon is the number of villains who are found dead at the beginning of a case. In fact, of the 14 stories that begin with the discovery of a body, the victim is a villain in eight: one thinks of Sir Eustace Brackenstall, Charles McCarthy or, the murder that started it all, Enoch Drebber. In the other six cases, the victims are innocent victims, such as Cadogan West, Willoughby Smith and Sir Charles Baskerville. Where the villain predeceases the arrival of our heroes, we are reliant on third parties to understand just how villainous they were: not for them the confrontation with Holmes in Baker Street or the confession in cuffs. We are left to determine their villainy through the details of the case.

Looking down this particular aisle of the rogues' gallery, there can surely be no better example of the "villain as victim" than Captain Peter Carey, or Black Peter. Who can forget the image of Black Peter speared to the wall of his cabin with a harpoon or, in the more poetic words of Inspector Stanley Hopkins, "pinned like a beetle to a card." He was known to be a violent drunk, a domestic tyrant, a wife-beater; a man who assaulted the local vicar and was "the terror of all around him." When he was found dead, there was no outpouring of grief from any quarter: Hopkins said he had "not heard one single word of sorrow about [Carey's] terrible end." Even Black Peter's daughter told Holmes that she was glad her father was dead and blessed the hand that struck him down. There is strong corroborating witness testimony for all these offences and no reason to cast them in doubt.

But the same cannot be said for Carey's greatest crime, the murder of John Hopley Neligan Senior, the banker who was rescued at sea and murdered by Carey for the contents of a treasured tin-box. The description



Patrick Cairns as drawn by Frederic Dorr Steele for the February 1904 Collier's Magazine

of this murder comes to us from a wholly untrustworthy source, Patrick Cairns, the harpooner who pinned Black Peter to that wall. It's Cairns's testimony that fills in the blanks of the story and paints Black Peter in the darkest of lights. But given the murder Cairns had just committed, we might want to challenge what he said and the facts immortalized in Watson's record.

The story of Neligan senior comes to us from two sources. The first is John Hopley Neligan junior, the son of the murdered man, who tells us that his father was partner in a bank that failed, who fled to Norway with a tin-box of securities with the intention of paying off his creditors and was never seen again. The second source is the aforementioned Patrick Cairns who tells us that Neligan senior was rescued by Black Peter and the crew of the *Sea Unicorn* and that, one night, Black Peter threw Neligan Senior overboard for the contents of that same tin-box.

Twelve years later, Patrick Cairns tracked Black Peter down to Woodman's Lee and attempted to blackmail him for the murder of Neligan senior, with the result we all know. But there is something deeply unsettling about the way in which the events of this case unfold and that is the dependence on three coincidences. The first is that John Hopley Neligan shares his initials with his father, which we can reasonably accept as naming sons after their fathers was commonplace. The second is that Peter Carey and Patrick Cairns also share initials, which is perhaps more of a stretch but let us accept it. The third coincidence, though, is far harder to rationalize: that Neligan Junior and Patrick Cairns, conducting separate investigations, both arrived at Woodman's Lee on exactly the same night 12 years after the incident that set their actions in motion. Surely, "the odds are enormous against it."

Two possible explanations for this coincidence come to mind. The first is that Neligan junior and Patrick Cairns were in cahoots but, if this were

so, why did Neligan junior need to be in Woodman's Lee at all? Couldn't Carey have recovered the ship's log for him? And was Neligan junior – a young man, frail and thin, with chattering teeth and frightened eyes – really the type to order a murder anyway? That feels unsatisfactory. The second is that both men were drawn to Woodman's Lee that evening by a shared trigger event. The problem is that no such shared event apparently exists: Neligan junior said he was guided to Black Peter when some of his father's missing securities were traded on the stock market, (1) while Patrick Cairns was tipped off as to Black Peter's whereabouts by a mysterious unnamed mutual acquaintance in London.

The logical conclusion is that Patrick Cairns is lying, as the only trigger that could reasonably bring both he and Neligan junior to Woodman's Lee on that day was the recent sale of the securities. So why did Cairns lie? Why did he claim he knew nothing of the securities and thought there were other treasures in that tin-box? Bear in mind that, by the time of his confession, Patrick Cairns is in handcuffs in Baker Street and under arrest for murder. The horrible conclusion is that Cairns was hiding something even worse than the crime for which he had been arrested.

The clue to what this crime may be is hidden in Patrick Cairns's testimony about the rescue of Neligan Senior. This is what he says:

We were coming out of the ice-pack on our way home, with head winds and a week's southerly gale, when we picked up a little craft that had been blown north. There was one man on her—a landsman. The crew had thought she would founder, and had made for the Norwegian coast in the dinghy. I guess they were all drowned. Well, we took him on board, this man, and he and the skipper had some long talks in the cabin. All the baggage we took off with him was one tin box. So far as I know, the man's name was never mentioned, and on the second night he disappeared as if he had never been. It was given out that he had either thrown himself overboard or fallen overboard in the heavy weather that we were having. Only one man knew what had happened to him, and that was me, for with my own eyes I saw the skipper tip up his heels and put him over the rail in the middle watch of a dark night, two days before we sighted the Shetland lights.

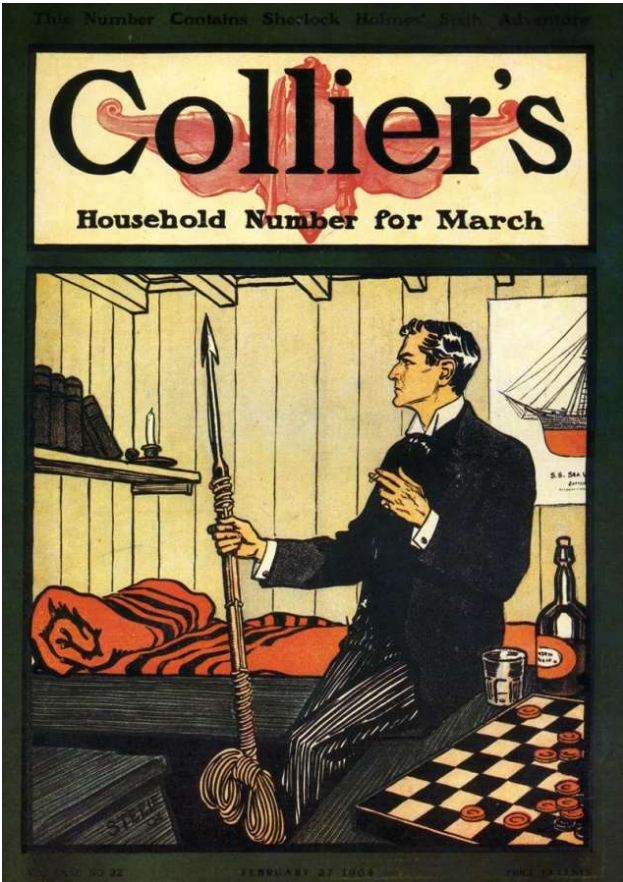
The really intriguing bit is this:

There was one man on her—a landsman. The crew had thought she would founder, and had made for the Norwegian coast in the dinghy. I guess they were all drowned.

Neligan Senior was a landsman – we have that fact corroborated by his son – and yet, in the middle of a storm, Neligan senior chose to stay onboard a yacht alone rather than stick with an experienced crew and take his chances with them. What’s more, he apparently had more success on his own than his crew who never made it to the coast. This is surely an example of the impossible that must be eliminated to arrive at the truth.

So what is the truth of the case? It’s rational to suppose that Neligan Senior never separated from his crew and that they were all rescued by the *Sea Unicorn* – and that they were all subsequently murdered. The reason

was almost certainly the same – greed – and the instigator almost certainly the same – Black Peter. But while Peter Carey could murder a single man on his own, he would need help to finish off an entire crew. Most likely he induced the help of his shipmates on the promise of a share of the securities. If this were the case, it explains why Cairns lied in Baker Street. Though arrested for murder, he was already laying out a story of self-defence



and wasn’t going to admit anything that could lead to a charge of multiple counts of murder.

We can also deduce that Black Peter tricked his crew out of their ill-gotten share and this was the real beef between Patrick Cairns and Peter Carey. Stanley Hopkins said that, no sooner had the *Sea Unicorn* docked all those years ago, that Carey immediately set off on his travels, never

staying in one space for four years, before he eventually settled down to tormenting the inhabitants of Woodman's Lee. This sounds an awful lot like a man on the run.

We may never know what happened to the securities. Patrick Cairns claimed that he dared not sell them but equally he didn't reveal where he had put them. He may have been working with other members of the *Sea Unicorn* and passed the securities to them, in which case he might look forward to his share after a short spell in prison, always assuming his plea of self-defence was successful.

There's a tantalizing detail that suggests Holmes knew he only had part of the story. At the end of the case, he famously told Hopkins: "If you want me for the trial, my address and that of Watson will be somewhere in Norway—I'll send particulars later." Maybe he sensed there was more to the fate of Neligan senior's crew and set out to lay their memories, and the loose ends of the case, to rest.

Finally, there may be one further piece of villainy we can lay at Black Peter's door. Neligan senior was a partner in Dawson and Neligan, a bank that failed and ruined half the families of Cornwall. But who were his creditors? The primary industry in Cornwall at the time was tin-mining, and among this tin mining folk were a family at Redruth called Tregennis who were forced to sell their venture for undisclosed reasons. The family feud that ensued was ultimately settled in 1897 when Mortimer Tregennis murdered his siblings for money with the Devil's Foot root.

Had Neligan senior made it to Norway, he might have been able to pay back the Tregennises and to avert one of the most appalling crimes in the Canon. And so we might add the names of the Tregennises – along with those of the crew of Neligan's yacht – to the long and growing list of the forgotten victims of Black Peter.

Notes

(1) There is a useful discussion of how the securities would have been traded in Nathan, Hartley R. and Goldfarb, Clifford S. 'Try Canadian Pacific Railway' in Miranker, Glen ed. *Deadly Harpoon*, (BSI Manuscript Series, 2018). Plenty of serendipity is required for both Peter Carey to have traded the securities and Neligan Junior to have learned who sold them.

Was the paper made in Bohemia?

By Aleš Kolodrubec

Aleš Kolodrubec is an Executive Founder and President of the Czech Society of Sherlock Holmes. This is his first article in Canadian Holmes.

Editor's Note: This article first appeared in the The Passengers' Log in January 2012. It won the Passengers' Carole Dukes Montpellier Award for the best article published in The Log for that year.

The very first short story of Sherlock Holmes, “A Scandal in Bohemia,” is very dear to every Bohemian – Bohemian by origin or by soul, and especially by both. The story was originally published in *The Strand Magazine* in July 1891. Dr Watson’s recounting of the events started “One night - it was on the 20th of March, 1888...” albeit some scholars date it as 1887 or 1889. And it is full of interesting topics to puzzle generations of Sherlockian scholars, such as Irene Adler, to whom Sherlock Holmes always refers under the honourable title of *the* woman and keeps her photograph on the mantelpiece, or the true identity of Wilhelm Gottsreich Sigismond von Ormstein, Grand Duke of Cassel-Felstein, the hereditary King of Bohemia.

But now let’s have a look at another problem, minor when compared with the above-mentioned ones, but nevertheless also important. It is the question of the origin of the paper that Holmes’s noble client used when writing his letter asking the detective for his professional help. From the paper’s watermark Holmes determined the place of its origin and read from *The Continental Gazetteer*: “Eglow, Eglonitz – here we are, Egria. It is in a German-speaking country – in Bohemia, not far from Carlsbad. Remarkable as being the scene of the death of Wallenstein, and for its numerous glass factories and paper mills.” And dear Doctor Watson readily concluded, “The paper was made in Bohemia.”

Holmes most probably used one of the copies of *The Gazetteer of the World* coming out in London since 1885. However, the name of the town quoted above is slightly corrupted, as it should say “Eger” if it is intended to be the German version. However, the name of Eger is ambiguous. Here it refers to Cheb-Eger, but it can also denote the North Hungarian town of Eger (in German known as Erlau, or Eğri in Turkish), which is the second largest city in Northern Hungary. It is well known for its red and white



Map of Hungary showing the capital of Budapest and the town of Eger.

wines, especially for Hungary's most famous red wine, Egri Bikavér (Bull's Blood of Eger). It is also sought out as a thermal spa and for its sights such as the castle and the northernmost Turkish minaret (the city was occupied for 91 years by the Turks, who seized it in 1596).

Nevertheless, from the context of the story, it is clear that the town of Eger in the Carlsbad Region (Karlovy Vary in Czech) of today's Czech Republic is meant (in 1888 this was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire). Its Czech name is Cheb and this will be used throughout the remainder of this article; Eger is its German version. According to a census it had 18,658 inhabitants in 1890 (compared with more than 30,000 today), only 72 of Czech nationality but 16,795 German. No wonder it was a centre of the German-speaking region known as Egerland until 1945; the name of the town in local Sudeten German being *Egha*.

The very first written record comes from 1061 when a settlement called Egire, situated on the river of the same name (Ohře in Czech) on a trade route from Central Bavaria to Prague, is mentioned. In 1179 it was known as Egra, from 1322 as Eger and the surrounding territory as Regio Egere or Provincia Egrensis, and after the 14th century also as Cheb or Chba. From 1850 it was given the twin official names of Eger and Cheb.

Holmes's *Gazetteer* mentioned Wallenstein, whose full name was Albrecht Wenzel Eusebius von Wallenstein (actually von Waldstein; and in Czech Albrecht Václav Eusebius z Valdštejna). He was a Bohemian soldier and politician who was assassinated in Cheb on February 25, 1634.



Picture postcard of the Cheb paper mill, before 1904, from the private collection of the author.

But let's return to our main focus. The question stands regarding the above-mentioned paper mills. Ask any Czech citizen now about a paper mill in Cheb and the answer will be: "No, there is nothing like that there." When it comes to handmade paper, people will remember and refer to Velké Losiny – a North Moravian town with a famous paper mill founded in 1550 that is still producing high-quality handmade paper for artists, and excellent stationery. But hardly anybody will connect it with Cheb; even local inhabitants will reject such an idea.

So, which was wrong? The *Gazetteer* or Holmes? The Great Detective was rarely mistaken; in most cases the poor Doctor's memory failed him and Watson is blamed. The situation in this case was a bit different and needed a detective-like investigation. The results were an exploration of the history around Czech papermaking and a confirmation that the Great Detective was right.

According to old archive sources, as well as an 18th/19th century Czech encyclopaedia, the first paper manufacturers came to Bohemia from today's Italy, upon the invitation of King Charles IV, and they founded the paper mill at Cheb in 1370 to meet growing demand for quality paper from Prague's Charles University. This evidence, however, is not proven. Nevertheless, the close relations between Cheb and the German town of Nuremberg, where a paper mill had existed since 1390, may support it. However, the 16th century documents clearly prove the existence of the

Cheb paper mill. A 1540 property contract speaks of a grain mill at a small settlement, Stain an der Eger (later called Stein in German or Skalka in Czech), near Cheb. Thus, Holmes was right! The town then bought the grain mill as well as the whole settlement on May 4, 1540 and invested in the construction of a paper mill next to the existing grain one. In return, the city received a percentage of the paper produced by the mill.

Both mills stood near the river Ohře (again, Eger in German), at a stream coming down as its left influx from Skalka. During the centuries the paper mill experienced ups and downs and changed owners several times. It was in the hands of different members of the Schütz family from 1801 until 1877, when a daughter of Margaretha Schütz – Magdalena Adler, né Schütz – inherited the paper mill, and it was in her ownership until 1896.

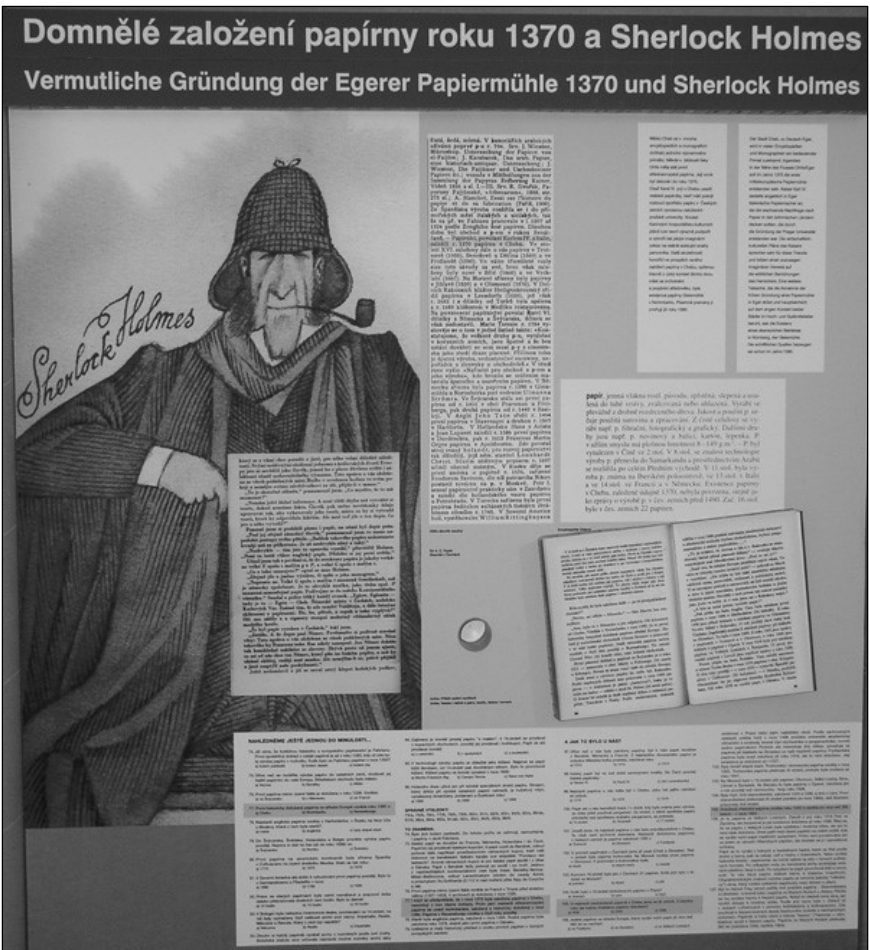


Photo of the 2004 Sherlockian display for “Zkuste si to bez papíru” exhibition.

It is very interesting that at the time “A Scandal in Bohemia” took place the paper mill was owned by a lady bearing the same name as *the* woman Irene Adler –Holmes’s *femme fatal* who outwitted him in the very case connected with Bohemia! Between 1896 and 1904 the paper mill was in the hands of Magdalena Adler’s children.

The importance of handmade paper manufacturing declined in the second half of the 19th century. With growing production of cheaper wood-based industrial paper, handmade paper production, and the demand for it, went down. The paper mill met its end on August 6, 1904 when, at about noon, both mills burnt down, never to be reconstructed. Afterwards the ground was bought by the city of Cheb. After 60 years even the original grounds of the paper mill disappeared, this time under the waters of the Skalka dam constructed between 1962 and 1964. The lake above the dam covers the ruins completely. It is about five kilometres long and its maximum depth is 12 metres.

And so, two opposite elements – fire and water – finished this once famous place that even got into the Sherlockian Canon. “The paper made in Bohemia” and its place of origin, however, lives its own life in memories.

In 2004 an exhibition, “Zkuste si to bez papíru” (“Try it without Paper”), was held in Cheb and a book bearing the same name was printed. The exhibition was focused on the history of paper production in the Eger region as there were several other paper mills beside the Eger one – however they were smaller and of lesser importance. A small group of the Czech Society of Sherlock Holmes (CSSH), along with the author, participated in the grand opening of this exhibition, where a panel devoted to Holmes and “A Scandal in Bohemia” was shown.

In June 2007 Guy Marriot of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London (SHSL), accompanied by several members of CSSH, including the author, explored the place of the former paper mill hidden under the dam lake from the opposite riverbank

The paper production is very closely related to another clue that was an indicator for Holmes’s deduction about the origin of the paper. Yes, it was mentioned by Watson, but Holmes led him there. And, as this quote from “A Scandal in Bohemia” shows that clue was the watermark (also known as a filigree):

“Peculiar – that is the very word,” said Holmes. “It is not an English paper at all. Hold it up to the light.” I did so, and saw a large E with a small g, a P, and a large G with a small t woven into the texture of the paper.

If we dive a little bit into the history of papermaking it will help us to clarify what that watermark was like and how it appeared on the sheet of paper.

The word “paper” is derived from the Latin word *papyrus*, which comes from the Greek *papuros*. Papyrus is a paper-like material made from the papyrus plant (*Cyperus papyrus* in Latin). It was widely used in ancient Egypt for writing several thousand years before the introduction of the paper that we use today. The invention of paper as we know it originates from China in the year 105 AD. The Chinese kept its production secret. Despite their effort it made its way to Japan in 610 AD. In the 8th century the secret arrived in the Islamic world and paper manufacturing spread from Samarkand via Damascus, Cairo, Morocco and further to Europe.

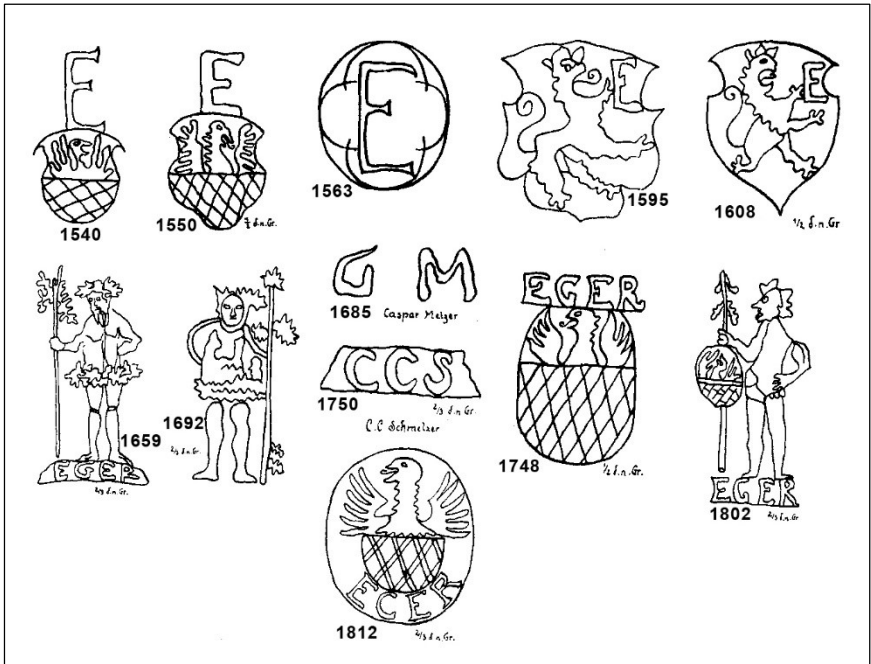
A water suspension of natural fibres is used as a raw material for paper production. The pulp is scooped out of a vat by a mould formed of a wooden frame with wire screen. When the mass settles and dries enough, the sheet is removed, further adjusted and dried, making a sheet of hand-made paper.

The Chinese used mulberry, however, later rags were used and in Europe they were the basic material. Rag-and-bone men bought old rags from a wide area surrounding a paper mill, collected them and sold the lot to a mill. Rags were prepared in a crusher or stamping mill, further producing the pulp. This process demanded great supplies of water and that’s why paper mills were founded on rivers. Water energy was also used for the crushing of rags and making a water suspension of cotton particles.

Watermark or filigree is a sign that appears on paper when viewing it against a source of light (from a window, a lamp, or probably in Holmes’s case, against a burning fire in a fireplace). This sign is prepared by using a thin wire soldered to the screen and creating thus the desired image – a logo, producer’s name, etc. (Other ways of making a watermark are also possible and its visibility can vary too. But in our case, this was the method used.)

The first filigree for the Cheb paper mill was made by a goldsmith, Jorg, in 1540. In the illustration (page 29) you can see different samples of watermarks from our paper mill, showing either connection with Cheb (bearing “E” or “Eger” when owned by the city) or with its private owner (“CM” for Caspar Melzer from 1685 or “CCS” for C.C. Schmelzer from 1850). The Canon’s “Eg P Gt” standing for Eger (or Egria) Papier Gesellschaft is not recorded in the archives, however, a custom-made filigree for the noble family might have been possible.

And thus, for his letter to Holmes, the hereditary King of Bohemia really used a sheet of paper, with the proposed watermark, manufactured at a Cheb paper mill, whose existence is now known.



Watermarks from the Cheb papermill. Illustration courtesy of the State District Archive - Cheb Branch.

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Canadian Holmes On Screen: Matt Frewer – The Hound of the Baskervilles (2000)

By Charles Prepolec MBt, BSI

Charles Prepolec, M.Bt., BSI (“The Man with the Twisted Lip”) is a Calgary AB Sherlockian, former mystery specialty bookshop owner, collector and freelance editor. His most recent fiction anthology is Gaslight Gothic: Strange Tales of Sherlock Holmes (2018 EDGE)

Matt Frewer: Gemini Award-winning 6’3” Canadian film, television, and voice actor, best known for his groundbreaking role as the Artificial Intelligence and 1980s icon Max Headroom, which he played both in a UK and US series, as well as in Coca-Cola commercials and the Art of Noise music video *Paranoimia*. A staple of Canadian and US film and television, generally in character roles, his most recent work includes appearances on *Fear the Walking Dead* (2019) and *Perry Mason* (2020). Curiously, he has appeared in six different adaptations of Stephen King stories, more than any other actor.



The Canadian Connection:

Matthew ‘Matt’ George Frewer (b. January 4, 1958 -) was born in Washington, D.C., where his father, Royal Canadian Naval officer Captain (Ret’d) Frederick Charlesley Frewer, was posted at the time. Raised in Victoria, BC, and then Peterborough, Ontario, Frewer attended the prestigious Lakefield College School, which numbers HRH Prince Andrew, Duke of York, amongst its alumni, and then Queen’s University in Kingston, ON. After an early injury quashed plans for a hockey career, he decided on

acting and moved to England, where he remained for 11 years, studying at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School and completing the acting course there in 1980. While in England, he met and married English actress Amanda Hillwood (Dr. Grayling Russell in the Inspector Morse series). He made his big screen film debut in *The Lords of Discipline* (1983) before his breakout role in the British television film 'Max Headroom: 20 Minutes into the Future' in 1985. He has been in demand and working steadily ever since.

The Sherlock Holmes Connection:

On July 12, 2000, Montreal-based Muse Entertainment Enterprises announced their intention to produce a new \$4.5 million version of the classic Sherlock Holmes tale *The Hound of the Baskervilles* for television. Matt Frewer was cast as Sherlock Holmes, alongside Edmonton-born actor Kenneth Welsh as Watson and young American Jason London as Sir Henry. The Hound was played by a black German shepherd named Eno. Filmed entirely in and around Montreal, this production had certain challenges to meet, namely in turning the charming



Matt Frewer as Sherlock Holmes with Kenneth Welsh as Dr. Watson.

streets of Old Montreal and the surrounding countryside into the familiar locations of 19th century England. This included a 500-foot stone wall, which required the creation and placement of some 3000 "rocks" on location in Harrington, Quebec, in the foothills of the Laurentian Mountains. Each "rock" was made from Styrofoam, then coated with a layer of concrete, and bits of fungus and moss, and individually hand painted. The bog, where the hound meets its fate, was created on location in Laval, Quebec. *The Hound of the Baskervilles* was broadcast on October 28, 2000 on the CTV Network in Canada, with an Odyssey Channel (later Hallmark) screening in the US one week previously.

Commenting on the role, Frewer remarked:

“It is really fun and challenging to play Holmes. The challenge is to keep a bubble of fun going, otherwise Holmes would become a different sort of character. Holmes has a ruffled charm; a Professor Higgins quality. It delights him that he is so clever and so far ahead of everyone. He has been played by so many actors in the past that the audience has certain expectations. After I’ve met these expectations, I can fill in the rest of the character.”

While Frewer’s Holmes was not exactly well-received by Sherlockians, or the public in general, Muse produced three more telefilms with Frewer and Welsh. *The Sign of Four* which aired March 23, 2001 in the USA. *The Royal Scandal*, a solid mash-up of “Scandal in Bohemia” and “Bruce-Partington Plans” (likely the best of the bunch), with Liliana Komorowska as Irene Adler and Canadian acting legend R. H. Thomson as an excellent, if slender, Mycroft, aired October 19, 2001. The final entry, *The Case of the Whitechapel Vampire*, an entirely original story by series director Rodney Gibbons (the previous entries were all adapted by Joe Wiesenfeld), aired October 27, 2002.

The Curious Connections:

Frewer was not, in fact, originally cast to play Sherlock Holmes but Stapleton. He was boosted into the part of Holmes when the actor originally cast as Holmes had a filming conflict and dropped out. Reportedly, the actor originally cast is thought to have been Charles Dance, who instead opted to appear as Sir Henry Carlyle in the 2000 *Murder Rooms* pilot – *The Dark Beginnings of Sherlock Holmes* – with Ian Richardson as Dr. Joseph Bell.



Strictly Personal

Where a Canadian
Sherlockian goes under
the microscope.

Name: John Gehan

Age: 70

Birthplace: Hotel Dieu Hospital
Kingston, Ontario, Canada

Occupation: retired (from a
variety of things)

Current city of residence: Queensville, Ontario
Canada

Major accomplishments in life: Marrying the love of my life and having
2 outstanding sons.

Goal in life: Do unto others, etc.

In school I excelled at: Reading books that were not on the curriculum.

A great evening for me is: At home with a good book (probably
Sherlockian) or a good film (sci-fi, western, from the 30s, 40s or 50s.) You
might also throw a Scotch into that picture.

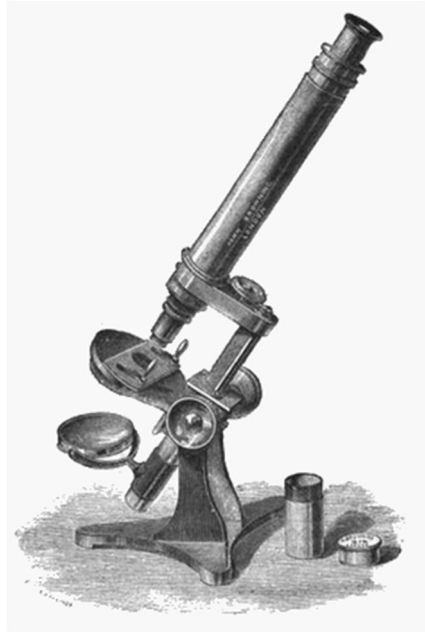
Favourite dining experience: Simple fare with a cold Guinness and an
interesting discussion with interesting people.

Other hobbies and interests: Crazy about old films. Godzilla films,
Spaghetti Westerns, anything with Boris Karloff in it. (Karloff, by the way,
would have been a wonderful Moriarty)

I'm currently working on: Re-reading the Canon in order of publication.

Three favourite canonical tales: "The Crooked Man," "The Devil's
Foot" and *Valley of Fear*. (The flashback in *Valley of Fear* is a great stand
on its own story. "Crooked Man" is a wonderful story of love and betrayal.
"Devil's Foot" has what I feel is the most abhorrent villain of the Canon,
Mortimer Tregennis.

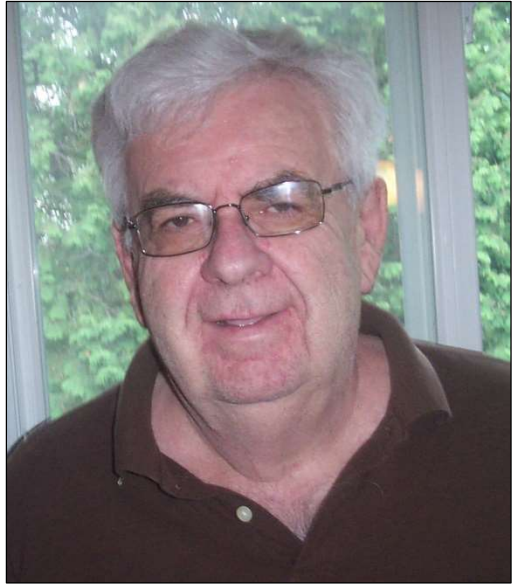
Three least favourite Canonical tales: OK, this is the tough one. I could
even find something good to say about "The Mazarin Stone." Like in
"Silver Blaze" Holmes plays a prank on a snooty aristocrat who has been
disrespectful. The other two would be "Blanchard Soldier" and "Lion's



Mane.” These two are not great stories and show, by Watson not being there, how important he is as narrator.

Favourite non-Sherlockian reading: Biography and autobiography of actors in movies I admire.

Favourite Sherlockian movie: The Hammer Films *Hound of the Baskervilles* 1959. They monkey around with the story a bit too much but Peter Cushing is good as Holmes. The major reason though is Andre Morell’s performance as Watson.



Have not seen a better Watson before or since.

Favourite non-Sherlockian movie: *Touch of Evil* starring and directed by Orson Welles. This film even tops *Citizen Kane* IMHO.

Most prized possession in my Sherlockian collection: A slightly beat up copy of Baring-Gould’s *Annotated Sherlock Holmes*, It was a 1980 Christmas present from my then fiancée now wife.

If I could live at anytime in history, it would be: Actually, I would have to say now. Technology enables me to connect with Sherlockians around the world.

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

Holmes: What were your parents like?

Watson: I would love to hear about these affairs on three continents.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle: Do you every wonder where you went wrong with Adrian?

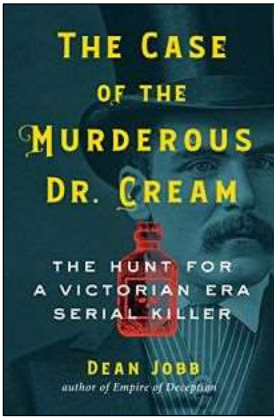
First learned of The Bootmakers: From my dear friend and Sherlockian mentor Doug Wrigglesworth MBt.

I would like my epitaph to read: I’ll get the next round.

My last words will be: Michael Caine never played Sherlock Holmes.

What question do I wish I would have been asked: Why should someone join the Bootmakers? Very simple answer: You get a subscription to *Canadian Holmes*, one of the world’s premier Sherlockian publications.

“Holmes gave me a brief review”



The Case of the Murderous Dr. Cream: The Hunt for a Victorian Era Serial Killer by Dean Jobb (2021 Algonquin, \$27.95 CAD)

Jobb's latest true-crime book is an exhaustive examination of the life and death of Thomas Neil Cream, a Victorian doctor and serial poisoner with deep Canadian roots. With the occasional reference to Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes this book will be of interest to anyone who is curious about the era's crimes, murders and investigations. Jobb's extensive research not only tells the story of Cream but also gives the reader a rich understanding of the time.

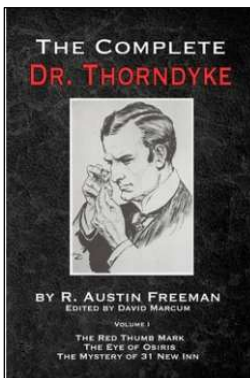
With a medical degree from McGill, Cream practised in London, Ontario before fleeing to the US while under suspicion of a chloroform poisoning.

In 1881 Cream was convicted of poisoning a patient in Chicago. Ten years later the life sentence was commuted, and he immigrated to England where he murdered several women with strychnine, which led to his arrest and execution in 1892.

Although the fictional accounts of Sherlock Holmes often throw some level of scorn on Scotland Yard for their ineptitude, in this case the Yard's failures allowed Cream to be on the loose longer than he should have, leading to several more murders.

One further interest for Sherlockians in the book is that Cream treated Louisa Harvey to a glass of wine at the Northumberland Arms before trying to kill her. The pub today is, of course, The Sherlock Holmes.

- Mark Alberstat



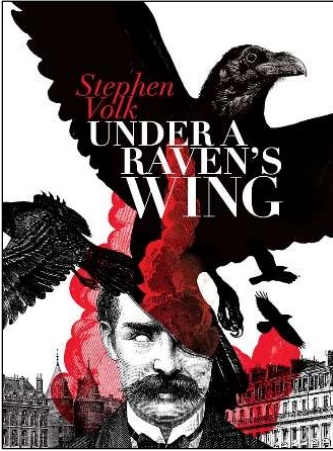
The Complete Dr. Thorndyke – 9 Volumes (2018-2021, MX Publishing, \$55.39 and 35.67 CAD, depending on the volume)

Editor David Marcum has brought together the entire Thorndyke collection. This nine-volume set covers 21 novels and over 40 short stories. Written by Richard Austin Freeman, the first Dr. Thorndyke story was printed 20 years after *A Study in Scarlet*, yet owes a tip of the hat to Conan Doyle, and Sherlock Holmes.

Tall, thin and aquiline there can be no doubt after whom Freeman modeled his medical doctor, who turned to the bar and became one of the first forensic scientists.

These often hard-to-find stories are now easily purchased in attractive volumes thanks to MX Publishing.

For more on the linkages between Dr. Thorndyke and Sherlock Holmes see Kelvin Jones's article in the Summer 2020 edition of *Canadian Holmes*.
– Mark Alberstat



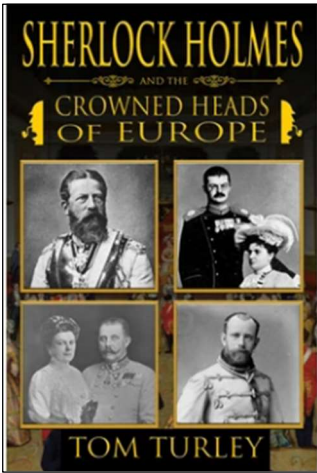
Under A Raven's Wing by Stephen Volk
(2021 PS Publishing £25.00)

This collection of Volk's short stories opens with the young Sherlock Holmes, a Cambridge dropout, venturing to 1870s Paris and being taken under the wing of detective C. Auguste Dupin. Holmes has much to learn about the art of ratiocination but he's a quick study and his teacher is one of the best in more than one way.

The six stories that follow also meld the detective fiction of Poe with that of Conan Doyle, resulting in mysteries laced with a high degree of gothic elements like insanity, disfigurement and deception. Readers take a deliciously dark trip through the 19th-century City of Lights, finding themselves in places like graveyards, the catacombs and the homes of hunchbacks and phantoms. Sometimes the adventures are action-packed. Other times, they're disturbing and horrifying.

Some of these works may be familiar to many readers, since they previously appeared in anthologies like *Gaslight Arcanum* and *Gaslight Gothic*, both co-edited by Calgary-based Sherlockian Charles Prepolec, who also pens the introduction to this collection, sharing his insight of Volk's work.

The book ends with two original tales that are a highlight of this work, whether you're a newcomer to the author's writing or a fan. One story has American political intrigue as its theme and the other is reminiscent of Ian McKellen's *Mr. Holmes*. The book is extremely well produced with fantastic artwork and would be a perfect gift for any Sherlockian who likes a touch of the macabre.
– JoAnn Alberstat



Sherlock Holmes and the Crowned Heads of Europe by Thomas A. Turley (2021, MX Publishing, \$18.74 CAD)

There is much to commend and contemplate in this fascinating book by Tom Turley. First is his mastery of defining characters. Those with principal roles to “walk on” parts are compelling and finely detailed. This is much more than describing dress or other superficial affectations. He finds a voice and motivation that reflects the complexity of each character. Crown Prince Frederick, in the first case of the book, who is unable to speak, communicates his desperation and despair. Von Bork drips with contempt. Turley is right on pitch with Dr. Watson’s storytelling and switches effortlessly to Holmes’s style when required.

The amount of research that went into the telling of the four stories is staggering. It is rare to find footnotes and a bibliography for historical fiction, but you will find them with this novel. Turley manages to take the reader on a journey from 1888 to 1913 and the motives and key characters leading up to the First World War with the engrossing manner of a saga. Countries, nation states, changing political alliances and royalty abound, but these occasionally confusing circumstances are clarified as the book progresses. Turley also provides moments of wit and wry humour. The tension mounts from the first through the last adventure.

Key elements from the Canon and its interpretations are also present. From Sherlock’s disguises, references to other Canonical tales and characters to John Watson’s appreciation of the “fairer sex.”

Sherlock Holmes and the Crowned Heads of Europe is an inspired mash-up of fact and fiction. Although we know that WWI is the ultimate ending of these historical adventures, Turley nevertheless provides an engrossing, multi-dimensional and entertaining perspective on the factors that got us there.

- Wendy Heyman-Marsaw

BOOTMAKERS' DIARY

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

— *The Five Orange Pips*

Saturday June 5, 2021

With 85 attending by Zoom Meyers called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m., to look into “The Three Students.”

Mike Ranieri gave an overview of how to connect to our Zoom meeting along with our website and urged non-members to join and get on the Bootmaker mailing list to receive meeting announcements and other society notices.

Cliff Goldfarb announced that the Cameron Hollyer Lecture would take place via Zoom at 2:00 p.m. Saturday, September 25. The speaker will be playwright Jeffrey Hatcher, who will speak on Arthur Conan Doyle as a playwright.

Hartley Nathan introduced long-time Sherlockian Les Klinger, who spoke to us from California.

Rather than a lecture, Meyers interviewed Les on how he first became interested in Sherlock Holmes and how he came to do his own annotated version of the stories. Les also spoke of his other annotations, *Dracula* and more recently, horror writer H. P. Lovecraft. He announced that a paperback version of the Lovecraft annotation would be published this fall.

Steve Emez and Phil Growick spoke of their project, *The Art of Sherlock Holmes*, in which they invited various artists to read a pastiche and create a painting containing as many of the story’s elements as they could.

Mark Alberstat told us of how Conan Doyle’s trips to Canada and the US enamoured him with the game of baseball, which resembled the British rounders, and encouraged Britons to take up the sport.

The quiz, which came next, was delayed by a few minutes when Karen Campbell’s cat suddenly jumped on her keyboard knocking her off Zoom. Once reconnected, and the quiz presented, the winners were Bruce Aikin, Rich Krisciunas, Donny Zaldin, Kathy Burns, and James Reese. Prizes were again contributed by George Vanderburgh.

Karen Gold led us in *Truth and Lies*, sung to the tune of Joni Mitchell's *Both Sides Now*.

The wrap-up was by Rich Krisciunas in the form of a poem.

Just past 3pm Meyers dismissed us with the reminder that the next meeting would take place via Zoom on Saturday July 17, the story being "The Golden Pence Nez."

– David Sanders, MBt.

Saturday, July 17, 2021

On Saturday, July 17th the Bootmakers of Toronto met via Zoom.

The meeting was called to order by Meyers, Mike Ranieri, at 1:02 p.m. There were 63 attendees from around the world.

Some announcements were made:

Meeting notices can be found on our website at TorontoBootmakers.com, on the Calendar page. For those of you who are not yet members, please consider joining. Membership includes *Canadian Holmes*, our quarterly journal. It is available electronically or in paper copy. Note: Remember to scroll down the page to find the Zoom link on the meeting notice.

The speaker for the Cameron Hollyer Memorial Lecture sponsored by the Friends of the ACD Collection will be Jeffrey Hatcher.

Mike Ranieri introduced our first speaker, Francis M. (Mike) Nevins. His presentation was titled *Ellery Queen: The Art of Detection*. Meyers first showed the introduction to Jim Hutton's *Ellery Queen* television show. Our speaker was a lawyer and former law school professor with over 40 years of experience in writing. He has won the Edgar Award from the Mystery Writers of America. He was joining us from his home in St. Louis, Missouri.

Mike began his talk by giving some background on the two writers of the Ellery Queen stories, they were Fred Dannay and Manfred "Manny" Lee, who were first cousins. They were both members of the BSI. Mike spoke to a group with Fred Dannay in 1979, and they became friends.

Mike divided the writing of the novels and short stories into four periods, with the novels and events which defined each of them. The first period produced a number of novels and then in the 1930s moved into slick magazines and movies. The second period from 1936 to 1940 moved into a radio series, where they had to produce a 60-minute radio script every week and had little time to write more novels. The third period began with the publication of *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*, in the autumn of 1941, which Dannay edited for 41 years. This period was marked by several novels and another radio series, which had 30-minute shows and

lasted for nine years. 1958 was the end of the third period. In the fourth period they produced fewer novels. Lee died on April 2, 1971, at the age of 65. Dannay died on September 3, 1982. To this day, Ellery Queen remains popular in Japan. Mike then answered questions about his talk.

Next, Jim Ballinger presented a song: Vincent Starrett's *221B* and Mattias Boström's *221B Revised* set to music.

Then Meyers asked Donny Zaldin to introduce the next speaker, Jayantika (Jay) Ganguly of the Sherlock Holmes Society of India. Jay previously spoke to the Bootmakers at our April meeting. Jay, a lawyer by profession, has the BSI investiture The Great Agra Treasure. The title of her talk is *Sherlock Holmes, Holmes Mania and Indian Stuff*. There are 30 references to India in the Sherlockian Canon. She showed pictures of a Sherlock Holmes Pub and a Sherlock Holmes Hotel in India. She then presented the Holmes Mania Quotient Test. The answers to five questions show the level of an individual Sherlockian's Holmes Mania. She then told how she determined each level of Mania. Jay then answered questions.

She can be contacted at: jay@sherlockholmessocietyofindia.com.

Karen Gold and Karen Campbell have switched places for this meeting, so Karen Gold presented the quiz on the story. The first-place winner was Rich Krisciunas, with a perfect score. There are several runners-up. George Vanderburgh provided them with prizes via email.

Karen Campbell presented her Sherlockian song parody, *The Girl with the Gold Pince-nez*, sung to the tune of *Goldfinger*, by John Barry.

Charlotte Anne Walters joined us from Shropshire, England to give a wrap-up of the story. Her first novel was *Barefoot on Baker Street*. She has several more books available from MX Publishing.

Rich Krisciunas read his original Sherlockian poem.

Mike Ranieri announced that the next meeting will be September 11th and the story will be *The Missing Three-Quarters*.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:47 p.m.

- Bruce D. Aikin, M. Bt., Sh.D.



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