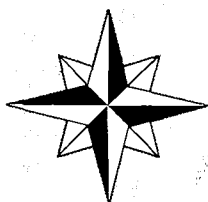




# EXPLORATIONS



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*The Stockbrokers Clerk*  
Sydney Paget  
Strand March 1893

## FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

Although we are still basking in the glow of our conference last July, time marches on. The Norwegian Explorers 2008 Sherlockian year started off with a well represented presence at the Baker Street Irregulars' New York Birthday celebration. The weather was pleasant; the festivities were fun and the friends were warm. You'll find a report later on in this issue.

Upon our return, Norwegian Explorers battled Professor Moriarty in order to hold our own birthday celebration. After we convened at Brits Pub in Minneapolis, the Professor broke an upstairs water pipe forcing the restaurant to close. After a bitterly cold walk down Nicollet Avenue, we persevered

and reconvened at The Local.

Since the last Explorations, we have lost two members of our Society: Paul Smedegaard and Joseph Connors. Paul lived in Racine, Wisconsin, and was a member of nearly a dozen societies, most of which were in the Midwest. He started and fostered a number of societies, particularly in Chicago. He was a great friend of the Norwegian Explorers and will be missed. More on Joe elsewhere in this issue.

Our next event is the annual radio show at the Pavek Museum of Broadcasting on April 19. Formal notices are being composed as I write this column. We are also organizing a night at the Park Square Theatre perform-

*(Continued on page 2)*

## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

As this issue goes to press, the Norwegian Explorers are well into our 60th year. Since the first scion meeting in January 1948 at the Covered Wagon in Minneapolis, we have grown and flourished. We are fortunate to conduct meetings throughout the Twin Cities—not the least impressive spot being the Elmer L. Anderson library at the University of Minnesota. Explorers appreciate the kind words of congratulations that we have received on our diamond anniversary and look forward to continued fellowship and scholarship in our next 60 years.

The Explorers Study Group finished up a review of the stories and novels in the Canon last year and have begun a new

round of discussion. You'll find reports from recent sessions included in this issue.

The Norwegian Explorers are proud of our close relationship with the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University. Access to the materials therein enhance our research and personal sleuthing. Throughout this issue, you'll note the many Paget illustrations—more examples of the outstanding resources that are available to Sherlockians at the UofM.

My personal thanks go out to the members who share their time and writing to make this publication possible. Keep the articles, reviews and miscellanea coming!

Pj Doyle, ASH



## FROM THE PRESIDENT (cont.)

(Continued from page 1)

ance of *Sherlock Holmes, the Final Adventure*. The play runs from May 30 to June 22. Also, don't forget our monthly study group. Contact me if you'd like to be put on our e-mail notification list for the sessions.

I am immersed in *Arthur Conan Doyle: A Life in Letters*, (Lellenberg, Stashower & Foley.) Part of the joy of the letters is insight into the day-to-day life of the period. By early 1892, Conan Doyle was enjoying financial success from his writings and had left the practice of medicine. In one letter, his mother, Mary Doyle, writes to a physician, "My son is very good and generous to us. He pays half of his brother's expenses at Woolwich. Besides paying for one sister abroad at school and keeping two sisters living with him, he has his own wife and children to maintain." Other letters show that he also sent money her way. Truly a remarkable man: "Steel True, Blade Straight."

The Norwegian Explorers are off to a great start and look forward to a wonderful Sherlockian 2008!

-Gary Thaden

[Gthaden@Gmail.Com](mailto:Gthaden@Gmail.Com) or 612-377-2029



## ADIEU, DR CONNORS

Joe Connors was 93 years young when he died on January 26. The professor emeritus of English at the University of St Thomas, author, historian and Sherlockian inspired his students and delighted his friends..

His passion for history and education was matched by his love of Holmes, golf and the Queen's English. He had a talent to inspire as he presented literature in the context of its era. He credited Doyle's ability to transport readers into the milieu of the Victorian Age with the re-readability of the Canon.

Joe was a true gentleman and scholar: eloquent, generous and extraordinarily kind. Whether in Sherlockian conversation over lunch, or sharing a round of golf at Highland, Joe was a spirited friend and will be missed.

-Pj Doyle



## HOLIDAYS ALA HOLMES

### Holmes in Lights

December 2007 marked the 16th annual Holidazzle Parade — a storybook procession that winds along the Nicollet Mall in downtown Minneapolis. Kudos to Ruth Berman, who saw AND observed the Master amid the million-plus brilliant lights along the parade route. Thanks to Macy's for keeping green (and red) the memory...

### Annual Dinner

Explorers gathered at the Minneapolis Golf Club on December 6 for the traditional holiday party. Julie McKuras reprised her Gillette-to-Brett Conference presentation on the Edith Miser radio scripts. Also featured were annual Sigerson Awards, officer election, toasts, irregular contests and a moving benediction from Bob Brusick:

*That many of us are interest in mystery, O Lord, is no mystery at all. We look for sense in an often senseless world; and we pursue the truth where many try to hide or evade the truth. Happily, there is no mystery when we look around this room and perceive the elementary reasons for us to give thanks. For example, we take comfort and delight in the gifts of food and fellowship, friends and family, fact and fiction — all of which have shaped our minds, bodies and imaginations.*

*Sadly, O Lord, we also observe the darker mysteries in life, those things that are out of joint. We ask you to inspire people to find resources to turn things around and make them right, especially for those who are hungry, homeless and cold. Uplifted by light and color and sound we join the angelic chorus in proclaiming and urging peace, good will among people and nations. During this season of thanks and giving we are moved to stand on the terrace, keeping green the memory of those who have gone before us. Fill us with the wonder of a complex creation, O God, and open our eyes and minds to the challenges that surround us. And may we always stand in awe before the great mystery that lifts our spirits and gives us hope.*

Amen.



Joseph Connors

## BIRTHDAY WEEKEND FESTIVITIES

The centerpiece of the Birthday Weekend, the annual dinner of The Baker Street Irregulars, was held on Friday night at the Union League Club on E. 37<sup>th</sup> St. Starting an hour or so before dinner, approximately 175 Irregulars and invited guests assembled in the impressive, book-lined anteroom outside the banquet hall for cocktails and conversation. Usually, *The Woman* for the year is introduced during this cocktail hour, but in the first irregularity of the evening, this year's honoree was unable to attend, so her identity was kept under wraps until next year. Serendipitously, the absence of *The Woman* allowed us an unexpected bonus. The time usually allotted to remarks by the new honoree was ably filled by Heloise Rathbone, granddaughter of Basil, who was attending her first BSI dinner. Ms. Rathbone, who bears a striking resemblance to her grandfather, treated us to an impromptu reminiscence of her memories of the great man.

Once the crowd had filed into the banquet hall and found their assigned places at the circular tables, Mike Whelan "Wiggins" greeted the assemblage and apprised us of current and planned BSI activities. Plans are underway for the *A Study in Scarlet* Expedition to Utah in September, 2008. Next year's Birthday Weekend will feature a Sunday outing to Christopher Morley's home and gravesite on Long Island. In May 2009 Harvard University is hosting a symposium in honor of the sesquicentennial of Arthur Conan Doyle and the 75th anniversary of the founding of the BSI. New books from the BSI include *To Keep the Memory Green*, essays in honor of the late Richard Lancelyn Green; and *"A Remarkable Mixture,"* a compilation of Morley-Montgomery Award winning articles from the BAKER STREET JOURNAL. Eddy Awards were presented to editors of recent BSI books and Christmas Annuals: Albert Rosenblatt, Christopher & Barbara Roden, and Roy Pilot.

In the second irregularity of the evening, Andy Fusco, who was tapped to give the annual reading of the BSI Constitution & By-Laws, had not brought a copy to read, and none was at the podium. The traditional toasts to Mrs. Hudson, Mycroft, Watson's Second Wife, and Sherlock Holmes appeared to be given without

a hitch. However, in the third irregularity of the evening, yours truly - who had been asked to give the toast to Mycroft - realized that he had left the copy of his carefully prepared and timed toast back in his room at the Algonquin and was forced to wing it. No-one seemed to notice. After a call-and-response recitation of the Musgrave Ritual, we dug into the splendid banquet.

The after-dinner program included talks by Michael Dirda and Betsy Rosenblatt. Michael, who charmed the audience at the Explorers' conference in Minneapolis last July with his fantasies concerning the namesake of his investiture, "Langdale Pike," continued in that vein, claiming that Langdale Pike was the true identity of Vincent Starrett! Betsy, with a persuasive mustering of facts and logic worthy of the attorney that she is, entertainingly picked apart the premise of Samuel Rosenberg's *Naked Is the Best Disguise*. Bruce Montgomery and Henry Boote provided musical entertainment, including leading the singing of "Aunt Clara" and a tribute to the four Irregulars of longest standing: Peter Blau, Art Levine, George McCormack and David Weiss. Ray Betzner gave a less fanciful tribute to Vincent Starrett and announced the publication of a new, 75th anniversary edition of Starrett's *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*, edited and with commentary by Ray. Irv Kamil paid tribute to nine fallen Irregulars, including Explorer Paul Smedegaard, in "Stand with me here upon the terrace."

The most anticipated moment of the evening came when Wiggins read the Birthday Honours List, announcing the new Irregulars and their investitures. The class of 2008 consists of Betsy Rosenblatt, "Lucy Ferrier"; Dana Richards, "The Priory School"; David Morrill, "Count von Kramm"; Barbara Roisman Cooper, "Mary Maberley"; Randall Stock, "South African Securities"; John Genova, "Harry Pinner"; and Guy Marriott, "The Hotel du Louvre." Sherry Rose Bond ("Violet Hunter") received a Two-Shilling Award.

Bob Thomalen concluded the festivities with a recitation of "A Long Evening with Holmes."

-John Bergquist, BSI



"...Heloise  
Rathbone,  
granddaughter of  
Basil...treated us to  
an impromptu  
reminiscence....."

## SHERLOCK SOLO

Several Explorers and others who traveled to Manhattan for Birthday Weekend Festivities, were fortunate to attend a performance of *Sherlock Solo: An Original Presentation by the Master Detective* at the Kirk Theatre. Written and performed by Victor Cahn, the play brings Holmes out of retirement to tell of a previously undisclosed case that unfolded during the absence of his customary narrator, Dr Watson. In his solo presentation, Cahn recounts the tale of a mysterious woman who proves an unsettling presence in the Master's life.

Cahn has written several works produced Off-Broadway and is Professor of English at Skidmore College.



Victor Cahn and Julie McKuras

The play was well researched and Cahn admirably captured the persona of Holmes in retirement. Following the performance, Cahn and the Resonance Ensemble's Managing Director, Rachel Reiner met with Sherlockians to answer questions and accept accolades.



## ANNIVERSARY GREETINGS FROM ST LOUIS

*Moriarty strikes again...the following was inadvertently missing from the Explorers 60th Anniversary booklet...*

"On behalf of myself and my scion society, The Parallel Case of St Louis, I wish to congratulate The Norwegian Explorers on their 60th Anniversary. It is quite an achievement. Your Society is one of the most respected and has one of the most accomplished histories in the world of Sherlock Holmes. I can only hope that The Parallel Case of St Louis can someday come anywhere close to your fine record. Enjoy the accolades. You certainly deserve them."

—Joe Eckrich, BSI



## EXPLORATIONS

### GILLETTE TO BRETT II

People of a certain age will remember scout meetings or family gatherings where the program was home movies, a treat often replete with whirring gears, tangled film, and burnt celluloid. The creators of the Wessex Press Conference *From Gillette to Brett II*, in Indianapolis, November 17-18, clearly had such a memory in mind when they planned the program. The booklet states forthrightly: "Wessex Press believes in the romance of the chattering projector, scratches and splices, and the flickering beam on the silver screen...in other words, we believe a film festival should be a film festival! (If you want to watch video, go to Blockbuster!)"

For the most part they realized their objectives (Although several presentations relied on digital projection, no one remonstrated). My notes indicate that the 100 plus conference attendees had ten blocks of time to view Holmes on film. From first viewing to last, however, it was not so much *Gillette to Brett* as it was *Longden to Hagman*. That is, the film that opened the conference was a 1951 adaptation of *The Man With the Twisted Lip*. The final one was a 1976 made for television movie, *The Return of the World's Greatest Detective*, in which the future star of *Dallas* became Sherlock Holmes through an improbable motorcycle mishap.

In introducing the Hagman/Holmes adventure Steven Doyle dabbled in a bit of speculation. He noted that the Hagman movie was a pilot for a series that did not develop. Doyle hypothesized that, if the series had evolved, it might have flooded the television market with Holmes stories. Such saturation could have discouraged Granada Studios from developing their own series. That circumstance, horrors to think, would have left us in a world where Hagman, not Brett, was Sherlock Holmes - a chilling prospect.

Other projected images included the hilarious (and rare) Laurel and Hardy outing entitled *Do Detectives Think?* as well as a Rathbone/Bruce entry, *House of Fear*. So many cinematic offerings (such as Holmesian film trailers and cartoons) were available that one was loath to leave the conference room for fear of missing a filmed adventure.

The movies were fleshed out (so to speak) by living, breathing speakers, some of whom used projected images to illustrate their talks. For

(continued on page 15)

...the tale of a  
mysterious  
woman who  
proves to be an  
unsettling  
presence in the  
Master's life...

## THE LION'S MANE—AN ALTERNATE READING

While attending an otherwise excellent discussion group on *The Lion's Mane* recently, I felt a strange prickly sensation at the back of my neck - and it wasn't from one of the tentacles of *Cyanea Capillata*. This metaphorical stinging itched in a way that suggested something was not quite right in the narrative. Many in the group agreed that the plot of this story was thin enough to qualify as pastiche, something dashed off by Holmes or, in the absence of Dr. Watson, perhaps by Doyle himself.

Some noted how uncharacteristic it was for Holmes to give himself "up entirely to that soothing life of Nature for which (he) had so often yearned during the long years spend amid the gloom of London." This was almost too much to believe of the London-loving sleuth of the earlier stories. Even more peculiar was his twittery reaction upon meeting Maud Bellamy, whom he reported "showed me that she possessed strong character as well as great beauty. Maud Bellamy will always remain in my memory as a most complete and remarkable woman." That sounds more like something a detective like Guy Noir might say.

These plot distractions were nettlesome, to be sure, something we shared in conversation. But privately something more problematic was nipping at my neck. At one point in the story Holmes exudes his old self-confidence when he responds to Inspector Bardle's preening compliment about doing things thoroughly: "I should hardly be what I am if I did not," Holmes puffs airily. Yet later the impatient detective admits to being slow, culpably slow. In our insightful discussion someone observed that a phrase had been deleted from the original manuscript at this point, a phrase which read: "you have nearly met me at my Waterloo."

That was when it came to me: Holmes was so far off his game that *Waterloo* may be an apt description for the adventure's unconvincing conclusion. Was it really a murderous jellyfish that committed the crime? Not likely. Indeed, in the end *Cyanea* may be nothing more than a bloated, gelatinous red herring. Sad to say, Holmes may have been so preoccupied with the beauties of nature and the charms of Maud Bellamy that he neglected to see what was obvious to everyone all along. That is, it really was Ian Murdoch who cleverly contrived the demise of Fitzroy McPherson.

How, one wonders, could Holmes have missed the palpable physiological clue that stared him in the face? When Murdoch arrives, it is, tellingly, his shadow we first see. Subsequently he is described as "the mathematical coach at the establishment, a tall, dark, thin man, so taciturn and aloof that none can be said to have been his friend. He seemed to live in some high abstract region of surds and conic sections..." What comes to mind is the specter of Professor James Moriarty!

Of course, in this context, many years after Reichenbach, it could just as well be the description of an evil offspring of Moriarty. So much like his father (or his uncle), we see how Murdoch/Moriarty enjoyed punishing his students by flogging them with "*some algebraic demonstration before breakfast*" (emphasis mine). As for that infamous incident of once throwing McPherson's dog through a plate-glass window, that too is highly suggestive. Rather than an explosion of foul temper, however, could that in fact have actually been an impulsive terrestrial demonstration of his forebear's mathematical work on the physical laws of force? The peculiar incident of the dog through the glass pane could be regarded as canine proof of the abstruse mathematics at the base of *The Dynamics of an Asteroid*. The trajectories of both bodies can be plotted as similar.

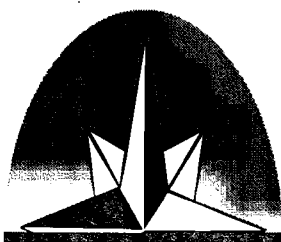
From there it is easy to deduce that jealousy was the ostensible motive for the whip lash death of the unfortunate McPherson. As the plot progresses, though, it is apparent that the cunning Murdoch led the besotted detective on in such a way that we might in fact be witnessing some form of ancestral revenge. Having pushed reason this far, we might go on to see how the crime was really committed. The malignant mathematician could have readily obtained a thin wire scourge at any brothel in Sussex. Such an implement was but one of many Victorian secrets and Edwardian enigmas at the turn of the 20th century.

Moreover, it would have been an easy matter for a man of Murdoch's evil genius to contrive and construct an ersatz *Cyanea Capillata*. All it would take is a bit of cleverly inflated canvas and a mesh of wire streamers, suspended to mime a mane beneath the surface of the lagoon. Remember, the vibrating, hairy creature

(continued on page 16)

"...it could just as well be the description of an evil offspring of Moriarty."

## HOUSE, MD VS SHERLOCK HOLMES

**Note to Readers:**

Periodically, Explorers raise the topic of the multi-media Sherlock Holmes. Is interest strong enough to warrant a formal film festival or ongoing media society?

Please contact *Explorations* with suggestions.

Possibilities might include an annual multi-media festival or a quarterly film showing. Many have personal collections. Do you have a suggestion to share items or coordinate with Special Collections or the University Film Society?

On November 12, Explorers assembled at the Andersen Library at the U. of M. to view an episode of *House, M.D.* on DVD and then to engage in a lively discussion moderated by Gary Thaden. The dialogue compared and contrasted *House M.D.* with the Canon.

Viewers note similarities between Gregory House and Sherlock Holmes: both are tall, thin, single Caucasian males of about the same age with high intelligence and a musical bent. They often look disheveled while pursuing cases (though Holmes tends to more formal attire.)

Both suffer depression and sport chips on their arrogant shoulders. Neither seems upper class, rather live a middle class existence. Their technical occupations require solutions to complex problems. Both are valuable members of society, yet scorn authority; House belittles hospital management while Holmes demeans British police.

Some *House M.D.* characters resemble names from the Canon. For example, House's chief sidekick is Wilson as Holmes' is Watson. While Holmes employs his Baker Street Irregulars, the good doctor has a team of medical students and interns to do his bidding.

Both have a 221B address and both self-medicate to an extent that is unhealthy. House and Holmes use Scientific Method in their approach to problem-solving. Though often confounded for long periods of time, both eventually solve their respective puzzles.

Still, I observe as many differences as similarities: while Watson narrates most of the Canon, *House, M.D.* is presented in the third person. House is physically challenged with a stroke-induced limp. While Holmes is generally physically fit, Watson is the one who suffers from his war wound (or wounds.) House' depression seems constant, while Holmes finds relief when challenged by a case. House seems persistently infatuated with the female form, while Holmes remains indifferent. Holmes employs disguises; House is always House - unless adopting another identity at the prescription counter.

We come to expect a haughty show as Holmes reveals solutions. House, on the other hand, doesn't revel in victory. He often disappears entirely once the solution is reached.

House diagnoses, prescribes, observes, then



changes his diagnosis, prescriptions and observations. This sequence may be repeated several times in one show. Holmes waits until he is absolutely certain - often until the criminal is apprehended and has confessed.

The Canon is set primarily in Victorian London, while the venue for *House, M.D.* is a very modern Boston hospital. House's 221B is very contemporary compared to Holmes' Victorian rooms. Sherlock Holmes's cocaine and morphine are obtained legally, although we never witness a drug transaction; House falsifies documents to obtain his Vicodin.

In summary, both characters are remarkable in their own medium. The nearly immediate success of *House M.D.* may jeopardize its long term potential as a cult. However, many Sherlockians remain intrigued by both.

Charles Clifford



*While on CIA assignment, House calls Wilson with a question. Before closing the conversation, he taunts his friend, "And don't worry. I'm sure they know all about your smuggling heroin in from Afghanistan."*

*A panicky Wilson blurts, "But I've never been to Afghanistan!"*

*House hangs up.*

## HOLMES IN PRINT

### Sherlock Holmes and The County Courthouse Caper

by Jeff Falkingham

Reviewed by Linda Schacher

In his preface, the author states, "Despite the title of the book, the story is not really about Sherlock Holmes. The true hero is the Minnesota River Valley..." The County Courthouse Caper is almost an aside to this tale of murder and revenge in the environs of Browns Valley during November, 1886.

Petey, a young boy happens to be at the train station when a stranger who has just exited the train offers to pay him to take his baggage to the local hotel. Almost immediately the stranger has an altercation with an unsavory local.

The ostensible reason for the stranger's visit is to investigate the theory that Itasca is not the true headwaters of the Mississippi River. However, after helping Petey out of a jam he immediately becomes involved with the boy, his family and local politics. He also blows his cover and confesses to be Sherlock Holmes, a detective from London. Throughout the story Holmes uses the alias Mr. Baker. At the behest of Petey's father Holmes agrees to look into the matter of the county courthouse being moved to a different county seat with possible voter rigging, but a matter of six murders crop up which take up his immediate attention. The locals in Browns Valley are a mixture of actual citizens and fictional characters. At the end of the book is a list of fact and fiction people and places.

This is not a Holmes for students of the Master. He makes guesses and his mistakes nearly cause additional deaths. Resolution is brought about mainly through trial and error.

The citizens of Browns Valley in 1886 appear on the outside, to have a somewhat peaceful co existence with the original native inhabitants. The Sioux uprising of 1862 has not faded from memory and plays a role in this story. Despite outward appearances the Massacre of Wounded Knee is

still four years off.

The author is correct in stating the Minnesota River Valley is the hero. Coteau des Praires in particular warrants further investigation.

This is not a pastiche of Holmes. It is an interesting history of the land and its settlers with painful reminders of the treatment of the Dakota people during the darkest hours of government policies on both state and national levels.



### The Singular Adventures of Mr Sherlock Holmes

by Alan Stockwell

In this enjoyable book, Stockwell provides a collection of pastiche adventures, worthy to be considered in the lineage of tales penned by Dr Watson. Stories extend the Baker Street experience in a way that, once taken up, is difficult to put down. Among them, the solution to the famously unresolved mystery of James Phillimore. The carefully crafted plots hold the reader's attention, with the introduction of a new range of well-drawn characters.



### Eye of the Crow

by Shane Peacock

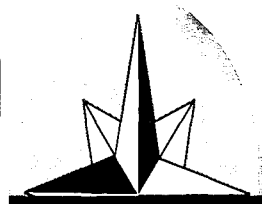
His first in a series for young readers shows Holmes at age thirteen. Due to family politics, he is bullied at school, belongs nowhere and has only his wits to help him. But what wits! His powers of observation are already apparent. He amuses himself by constructing histories from the smallest detail for those he meets. For fun, he focuses his attention on a sensational murder. But his game turns deadly and he finds himself the accused — in London where they hang boys of thirteen. Peacock has created a boy who bears the seeds of the Master Detective: a relentless eye, a sense of justice and a complex ego. The series is sure to become a favorite with young readers.



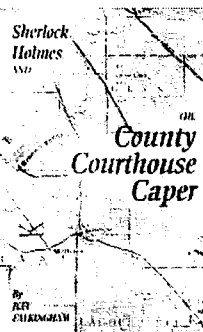
### Eliminate the Impossible

by Alistair Duncan

Not available for review, the book examines the influence of Holmes on crime writing and a study of locations in the stories.



Note: Sherlock Holmes and The County Courthouse Caper was published in a limited edition of 1,000. Browns Valley, a small Minnesota border town, was struck by flood in 2007. Some proceeds from the sale of the book benefit BV Flood Relief. For details: <http://www.cccaper.com>.



## HOLMES IN PRINT (continued)

### Thursday Next: First Among Sequels

by Jasper Fforde

Reviewed by Mike Eckman

In *Thursday Next: First Among Sequels*, the Holmes stories are referred to as "closed books, unavailable to enter..." This may come as a surprise until we realize that the entry spoken of is to actually go into the book, experience the settings, and possibly interact with characters. Thursday Next is a Jurisdiction agent and member of the Council of Genres, which governs fiction and free trade of ideas and characters between genres in the BookWorld. The Council is alarmed by news that Holmes is murdered at the end of *The Memoirs* and thus puts four volumes of the series at risk of spontaneously unraveling unless something can be done.

*First Among Sequels* is the fifth in the Thursday Next series by Jasper Fforde. Others are *The Eyre Affair*, *Lost in a Good Book*, *The Well of Lost Plots*, and *Something Rotten*. *The Great Samuel Pepys Fiasco* is referred to often throughout *First Among Sequels* but is listed as no longer available. Thursday is an Outlander (human) who is able to enter the BookWorld. Most other agents are fictional characters. Of course, she has a full life in the real world, including an uncle Mycroft.

In the universe that Thursday travels through as a Jurisdiction agent, books are scattered like stars but "clumped together in genres, attracted by the gravitational tug of their mutual plotlines." In most cases, an agent can bookjump into a novel to correct a problem but some books remain outside the influence of the Council of Genres. "Pilgrim's Progress and the Sherlock Holmes series are good examples," Thursday explains, "We know roughly where they are, due to the literary influence they exert on similar books, but we still haven't figured out a way in."

The inability to enter the series becomes important when it is reported that "We've got a Major Narrative Flexation brewing in *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*." A review of the text shows it has been modified. The final page is where Watson "discovers that Holmes has apparently fallen to his death - and the book ends twenty-nine pages before it was meant to." Since Holmes's death is where *Memoirs* ends, it is probable that the Narrative Flexation is brewing in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*. Nevertheless, several Jurisdiction agents, but not Thursday, are assigned to enter the Holmes series through Doyle's other works.

Since Thursday is not directly involved in the Holmes problem and she has her own concerns with someone trying to kill her, we only learn of any progress on the Holmes problem from others. At one point, it is suggested that "With a well-positioned Textual Sieve, we could bounce the series to a Storycode Engine at TGC (Text Grand Central) and rewrite the ending with the Holmes and Watson from *The Seven-Percent Solution*. It would hold things together long enough to give us time to effect a permanent answer." This idea is apparently unsuccessful as later Zhark (the Emperor from the Zhark series of bad science fiction) and Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle (the hedgehog from Beatrix Potter) are assigned to "try to get into 'The Speckled Band' by way of 'The Disintegrator Ray' by fourteen hundred hours."

Zhark and Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle are apparently not successful either. By the end of the book, Thursday realizes her pursuer, Holmes's murder, and other problems indicate that not only individual characters but whole series are at risk. Thursday comes to the realization that "It seemed too bizarre to comprehend, but it had to be the truth - there was a serial killer loose in the BookWorld." Needless to say, the book ends with a cliffhanger to allow for the next installment of the Thursday Next series scheduled for July 2009 and tentatively titled *One of Our Thursdays is Missing*. The paperback of *First Among Sequels* will be published in June 2008.

<http://www.jasperfforde.com/> has more information on Thursday Next.



### Sherlock, John and Trevor: A Sherlockian Trio in a Trio of Sherlockian Adventures

by C C Williamson (pen name of Charles Clifford)

A collection of three stories set in the early 20th century, these pastiches embroil Holmes in baseball and the occult. The third member of the trio, Trevor, is a former member of the Baker Street Irregulars, who assists the detective and the doctor as an adult.

Available at <http://www.authorhouse.com>



“...Holmes has apparently fallen to his death - and the book ends twenty-nine pages before it was meant to.”



## THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE OLD BAILEY, LONDON 1674 - 1834

Many Sherlockians will enjoy browsing *The Proceedings of the Old Bailey London 1674 to 1834*. The online resource is, in its own words, a fully searchable edition of the largest body of texts detailing the lives of non-elite people ever published and contains accounts of over 100,000 criminal trials held at London's central criminal court. The *Proceedings* are available at <http://www.brionline.ac.uk/oldbailey/>.

A digitization project is underway covering *Proceedings* from November 1834 to April 1913. Site sponsors received funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council to allow addition of 100,000 trials to the website. More than half complete, a new website, with the 200,000 trial reports published between 1674 and 1913, will be launched in spring 2008.

With the addition of the information through 1913, Sherlockians have great incentive to visit the site and review crimes committed during the time period that Holmes was active. The *Proceedings* allows several research options.

**Search the *Proceedings*:** By Keyword, Name, Place and Map Search, Crime, Verdict and Punishment, Advanced Search, Browse by Date, Reference Number, Statistics, Search the Associated Records, Manuscripts and Ordinary Accounts Keyword.

**About the *Proceedings*:** Publishing History of the *Proceedings*, Value of *Proceedings* as Historical Source, Associated Records, Advertisements (in the *proceedings*), Notable Trials, Historical Background, Crime, Justice and Punishment, London and its Hinterland, The Old Bailey Courthouse, Community Histories, Gender in the *Proceedings*, Glossary, Bibliography.

The Historical Background section provides information on crime and punishment. For example, under "Partial Verdicts", we learn that defendants convicted of stealing from a dwelling house goods worth 40 shillings or more had to be sentenced to death. By reducing the value below 40 shillings, juries could avoid this statutory penalty. In 1827, 40 shillings was increased to 100. There was, however, a lower threshold for shoplifting. Defendants convicted of shoplifting items valued at 5 shillings or more had to be sentenced to death. In 1827, 5 shillings was about \$1.25 or about \$25 to \$30 today.

Some searches on Canonical names produced the following number of hits. Note that the hit

can refer to the accused, the victim, or other person mentioned in the original text of the record.

0 given name Mycroft  
1 surname Sigerson  
2 given name Sherlock  
7 surname Moriarty  
719 surname Holmes  
1,132 surname Watson

One Moriarty hit can serve as an example and may provide information about an ancestor of James Moriarty.

John Moriarty, Henry Worms, Morris Worms, theft: simple grand larceny, theft: receiving stolen goods, 13<sup>th</sup> January, 1825. The *Proceedings* of the Old Bailey Ref: t18250113-200

Trial Summary: Crime(s): theft: simple grand larceny, theft: receiving stolen goods, Punishment Type: transportation, no punishment given: sentence Respited, imprisonment, (Punishment details may be provided at the end of the trial.) Verdict: Guilty, Guilty, Guilty, Other trials on 13 Jan 1825

Name search for: JOHN MORIARTY, HENRY WORMS, MORRIS WORMS,

Crime Location: Fox and Peacock, public-house, Gray's Inn-lane Associated Records...

Each underlined items links to further information on the site. The original text of the record is also given. For this trial, the first and last paragraphs describe the crime in more detail and tell what happened to John Moriarty. Middle paragraphs contain testimony and comments on the proceedings.

381. JOHN MORIARTY was indicted for stealing, on the 23d of December, a quart pot, value 18 d., the goods of William Winder; and HENRY WORMS and MORRIS WORMS were indicted for feloniously receiving the same, well knowing it to have been stolen.

...

JOHN MORIARTY - GUILTY. Aged 38.  
Confined Three Months.

Additional information about the project is in the article "Digitizing the Hanging Court" in the April 2007 issue of *Smithsonian* magazine, available on line at [http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history-archaeology/old\\_bailey.html](http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history-archaeology/old_bailey.html).

Mike Eckman

"Sherlockians  
have great  
incentive to visit  
the site and review  
crimes committed  
during the time  
period that Holmes  
was active."

## SHERLOCK HOLMES STUDY GROUP

### The Sign of Four

In *SIGN*, Conan Doyle's second Canonical novel, we learn more of the character of Sherlock Holmes. Immediately, we find out that he is seriously addicted to morphine and cocaine. It appears that Holmes is not long for this world; he is in a deep depression and injecting the drug. Fortunately for us all, an interesting case falls into his lap at an opportune time. Throughout the rest of the Canon, we get only fleeting references to cocaine. Might we assume Watson succeeds in reforming our favorite detective?

Our Study Group met at the Roseville Librar in a large, comfortable room. May Blunder (Karen Murdock) led the discussion. Since we just happened to be in a fine library, she found a large reference map which showed the Andaman Islands and

Agra, India. She mentioned that a fort, something like Doyle described, did exist at Agra. On the other hand, no "Pygmy-like" humans are native to the Andamans.

On the subject of Holmes' addictions and depression, it is apparent, from *The Sign of Four* that Watson and Holmes have become close. Would our young Watson have put up with the pathetic sight of another roommate shooting himself up three times a day, for several months? Likely Watson would have found another 221B, had he not had an extreme appreciation for Holmes' talent and general "goodness".

We're not sure, nor do we really care, about the character, Thaddeus Sholto. He seems a pathetic physical specimen: bald, disheveled, obese, too dependent upon his hookah. However, he does insist on recognizing Miss Morstan's rights, even in the face of strong opposition from his brother. It is Thaddeus, who sends the annual pearl and

he who sets up the bizarre meeting.

We discussed similarities and differences between Jonathan Small and Jefferson Hope. On first look, it appears Hope is a more sympathetic character. Most readers at least understand his point of view. We can pardon his roles as judge, jury and executioner, as his victims are guilty. Small, however, seems less admirable. The messenger who gets brutally stabbed and buried does not deserve his fate. But if we were in Small's position, what could we do? Any other actions would result in his death. Did he really need to reacquire the treasure and settle with Morstan? He did bring about some measure of justice, however.

The reader can not help to notice the familiar Sherlockian quotes in this novel, such as, "Give me problems, give me work, give me the most abstruse cryptogram, or the most intricate analysis, and I am in my own proper atmosphere. I can dispense then with artificial stimulants. But I abhor the dull routine of existence. I crave for mental exaltation. That is why I have chosen my own particular profession, or rather created it, for I am the only one in the world." And, "Yes, I have been guilty of several monographs. They are all upon technical subjects. Here, for example, is one 'Upon the Distinction between the Ashes of the Various Tobaccos.'"

We cannot help but note, that Sherlock Holmes is well-read, quoting authors such as Goethe, "Mensch aus dir schuf, Denn zum wurdigen Mann war und zum Schade dass die Natur nur einen Schelmen der Stoff." It is difficult to reconcile how we find such a literary Holmes here, while in *A Study In Scarlet* he boasts that he cares little about any knowledge except that which helped him solve cases. Some suggest that in *STUD*, Holmes knew that the earth revolved around the sun, but that he was merely making a point about the Science of Deduction. Strangely, such quotes are rare in the rest of the Canon.

- Charles Clifford



**"Give me  
problems, give me  
work, give me the  
most abstruse  
cryptogram...."**



## SHERLOCK HOLMES STUDY GROUP (continued)

## A Scandal in Bohemia

From Watson's introduction to this adventure, we learn that Sherlock Holmes seldom let emotions affect his thinking - except for in *A Scandal In Bohemia*. It appears that emotion - not just any emotion, but that akin to love - allows Holmes to be outsmarted. In keeping with this popular view, many in the Study Group at the Maplewood Library, thought Holmes underestimated Irene Adler - the woman. He seemed to express true surprise when her servant informed him that Irene Adler had left for the Continent, never to return.

"What! Do you mean that she has left England?" Illustration by Sydney Paget was Holmes' incredulous reaction.

That surprise came from underestimation. On the other hand, given that Holmes had a touch of the dramatic, one might look on this expression as some fine acting for the benefit of the King of Bohemia.

It is surprising, that the World's Greatest Detective would hear the words, "Good-night, Mister Sherlock Holmes", and not suspect he had been found out. Would he not have found something in the voice to remind him of the woman he had spoken with an hour before? It seems more likely that Sherlock Holmes had realized earlier that he had solved the case; it was apparent when Adler married Norton, that she had more to lose by a public release of the photo than would the King. After the ceremony, it only remained for Holmes to conclude the case to the King's satisfaction.

Back on Baker Street, Holmes immediately recognized the King of Bohemia, Wilhelm Gottsreich Sigismund von Ormstein. When the King mentioned the adventuress Irene Adler, Holmes asked Watson for the index book. Perhaps Holmes merely feigned surprise as he read about the lady. From his reaction, it appeared that he already knew much about her - obviously

some earlier exposure, or she would not have been listed in his index. Could Holmes have been an admirer? At any rate, the King had plenty of funds with which to attract Holmes to the case.



Was having Holmes bested by a woman a mere marketing ploy by Conan Doyle? Many readers of the time were female, so he might used this twist to sell Sherlock Holmes.

Important questions posed by this tale are: Is Irene Adler truly on a very different level than the King? How had the King wronged her to such an extent that her threats of blackmail should be excused? Could Adler have been a professional extortionist rather than an adventurer? We hold nothing against her marrying a lawyer, but we can see the extortionist/lawyer connection as being advantageous to Adler.

Would the reader care to take a chance on marrying Adler? Sleeping with one eye open might become a habit. No, there is little chance that Sherlock Holmes was in love with Irene Adler. And, yes, he did underestimate the woman and for this, he will always be embarrassed.

Charles Clifford

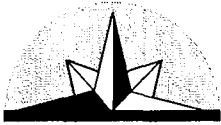
STUD WATSONIAN  
WEEKEND

Chicago's STUD Sherlockian Society once again hosts a Watsonian Weekend, April 11-13. 2008 events include the annual STUD Dinner, the 49th Running of the Chicago Silver Blaze at Hawthorne Race Course, a Fun(d)-raising pizza party at the home of Susan Diamond and Allen Devitt and the Fortescue Honours Brunch.

Explorer Julie McKuras will reprise and enhance her presentation on Edith Meiser.

For more information, or to register, contact Bill Sawisch at (708) 366-3241,

or e-mail [szdiamond@comcast.net](mailto:szdiamond@comcast.net)



"Was having Holmes bested by a woman a mere marketing ploy?"

## SHERLOCK HOLMES STUDY GROUP (continued)

## The Red Headed League

REDH was the topic of discussion for the fourteen Norwegian Explorers who gathered in the festively decorated University Club of Saint Paul on December 15, 2007. The subject of our deliberations was particularly significant because *The Red-Headed League* is not only one of the Baker Street Dozen, it was the first Holmes story ever read by our discussion leader, John Berquist. John encountered the story as a high school freshman in an English class, and, as the cliché has it, the rest is history. The erstwhile 14-year old, now transformed via BSI investiture into "The King of Scandinavia," began the session by passing around his photographs of places in London that might have been Saxe-Coburg Square and Pope's Court.

At first blush, the year in which this adventure takes place seems to be unquestionably 1890—the year before it was first published in the *Strand Magazine*. But Baring-Gould dates it as October 29-30, 1887. There is even more uncertainty about the month, though Watson clearly states it was in the autumn and the date October 9 appears on a sign. Some internal inconsistencies in the story confound the issue, but Dorothy Sayers, no mean sleuth herself, attributed the confusion to the poor penmanship of a medical man.

The members of the study group wisely did not get bogged down in the business of dates; instead we moved to the more important topic of dirt disposal. Where did the aptly named John Clay and his associate(s) dump it? Was it stowed in another underground chamber, scattered about the square or the street, or surreptitiously carted away? The strategies employed by the prisoners of war in "The Great Escape" were reviewed, but no consensus emerged.

We were much more confident in our agreement that if John Clay was "the fourth smartest man in London," his betters must have been Mycroft, the Master himself, and Moriarty. No one proposed Jabez Wilson for the honor—undoubtedly he is one of the dimmest and most gullible characters in the Canon. Clearly, the carrot-topped pawnbroker was a few volumes short of the complete unabridged *Encyclopedia Britannica*. But we did worry about what happened to him. Some feared he might have been done in by Clay, "a murder, thief, smasher, and forger." One of the group even went so far as to suggest that Jabez had been in on the plot to steal the French gold from the beginning, and that the visit to 221B Baker Street and the nonsense about the Red-Headed League and copying the *Encyclopedia* was pure fabrication. Needless to say, this thesis requires considerable supporting evidence and elaboration before it can be considered a plausible explanation. But there could have been other accomplices—perhaps the 14-year old serving girl or a mole within the bank to feed information to the moles tunneling under it.

As usual, the conversation ranged broadly, touching on such topics as why the Red-Headed League was dissolved before the caper was concluded (to save four quid?), the development of the characters of Holmes and Watson and their relationship over the course of the Canon, the use of contemporary references such as the recital by Pablo Sarasate, the extent to which the stories follow the rules of mystery writing set down by the Detection Club, and how a simple heist story is made memorable by the introduction of *The Red-Headed League*. As always, one can describe the meetings of the Norwegian Explorers Study Group in the words Mark Twain once used for science: "One gets such wholesale return of conjecture out of such a trifling investment of fact."

Truman Schwartz



Illustration by Sydney Paget

"One gets such wholesale return of conjecture out of such a trifling investment of fact."

## SHERLOCK HOLMES STUDY GROUP (continued)

### A Case of Identity

Although the temperature was below zero and there was some miscommunication about the meeting, 12 people were in attendance at the January 19 study group at the Merriam Park Library.

Before the case study began, John Bergquist gave an interesting and informative recap of his recent trip to New York for the annual meeting of the *Baker Street Irregulars*. From discussions at the *Algonquin Hotel* to drinks at the *Harvard Club*; from attending off-Broadway plays to browsing the world-famous *Mysterious Book Shop* (offering the best in mystery, crime, suspense, espionage and detective fiction) and *The Strand Bookstore* (celebrating 80 years of literary New York and boasting 18 miles of books); from a vendor fair where participants could 'hawk' their books and wares to presentations by a variety of notables; John made it sound so wonderful that we all decided to add it to our "Bucket List" of things we really want to do at least once!

The next order of business was recognition of the *Birthday of Edgar Allan Poe* with our own little reenactment of a ceremony that occurs annually in Baltimore, Maryland. At precisely midnight each January 19<sup>th</sup> a mysterious stranger, clad in black cape and white scarf, appears at Westminster Graveyard. He places three red roses and a half-empty bottle of cognac at the memorial to the man who lies buried there: Edgar Allan Poe. In homage to the *Poe Toaster*, as the stranger is called, we had a centerpiece of three red roses, a book of Poe's collected works, and a bottle of brandy. We each took a thimbleful of the brandy and toasted the creator of the

detective story, his sleuth, Monsieur August Dupin, and all their descendants, not the least of whom is Sherlock Holmes!

Karen Murdock then opened the discussion of IDEN with the question: *Whatever made Mr. Dundas throw his teeth?* After some debate the consensus was that they probably didn't fit, and he was throwing them in disgust after trying to eat a meal. But we also agreed that no matter what they were made of, they probably wouldn't have stood up to that abuse for very long!

We next addressed the question: *Is Mary Sutherland the stupidest character in the Canon?*

Although no one actually looked it up, we didn't think there is a category in the Compendium listing Stupid Women, but we considered that pretty much anyone dancing with a man who lives in the same house and is married to her mother should at least realize his whiskers are fake. Of course, the fact that her mother was in on the fraud didn't help, but Mary defi-

nately has to be one of the more gullible women in the history of detective literature.

On the subject of *why Holmes didn't tell Mary the truth* after he unmasked 'Hosmer Angel,' most of the group thought that, contrary to subsequent Holmes stories, in this case justice was not served. He found the culprit, but did not make him pay for his crime, and the victim never knew what really happened. We all agreed *this was one of those cases for which he did not collect a fee*, as the resolution of the case was so unsatisfactory, and he could hardly have asked Mary to pay him without giving her an answer. She's probably still awaiting Hosmer's return.

At the end of the day, everyone agreed this story was, on the whole, unsatisfactory, and not representative of the talent Conan Doyle would display in the future.

• Kristi Iverson



"...this was one of those cases for which he did not collect a fee."



Illustration by Sydney Paget



## SHERLOCK HOLMES STUDY GROUP (continued)

### The Boscombe Valley Mystery

On February 16, the Norwegian Explorers Study Group met at the Merriam Park Library in St. Paul to discuss "The Boscombe Valley Mystery." This story was first published in 1891 and was the fourth in the book, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. A tip of the deerstalker goes to Kristi Iverson for moderating this discussion and bringing treats.

#### The Facts

In this story, Holmes is called to Boscombe Valley in Herefordshire by Lestrade to investigate the death of Charles McCarthy. McCarthy was found dead after quarreling with his son, James, near Boscombe pool. Because of circumstantial evidence, James is arrested for the murder. His neighbor, Miss Turner, loves him and believes him to be innocent, so she insists that Lestrade call in Holmes for his help.

#### Features of Interest

- *There he goes again.*

There was quite a bit of discussion about the fact that this is another one of Holmes's cases where he lets the guilty party go free. He has done this before (DEVI, ABBE, BLUE), usually out of a sense of compassion, although one has to wonder in this case where the compassion was for the families of the victims Turner left dead in Australia. Did Holmes make a mistake by letting Turner go? Arguments were made on both sides but there was no clear consensus. Holmes seemed to be touched by Turner's story of blackmail and his desire to protect his daughter from what he considered an undesirable marriage. Holmes also was swayed by the fact that Turner was dying of diabetes and not expected to live more than another month. He did say that Turner would be soon "answering to a higher Court" so perhaps he felt that would be sufficient justice.

- *Our dear Mrs. Watson.* This story starts with Watson enjoying a happy domestic scene at the breakfast table with the current Mrs. Watson. He receives a telegram from Holmes asking him to accompany him to Boscombe Valley for the case, so Mrs. Watson encourages him to go because "you're looking pale." This Mrs. Watson is presumably the former Mary Morstan, because Watson then says "I would be ungrateful if I were not (to go), seeing what I gained through one of them (Holmes's cases)." It was pointed out by the group that Mary Watson must be very understanding because Watson's later rather gushing description of Miss Turner is not what one might expect to read from a married man, at least one who doesn't want to end up sleeping on the sofa for a night or two.

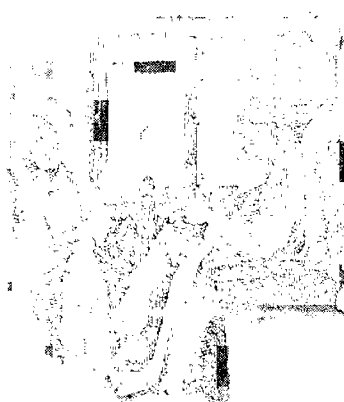
- *Rain, rain, go away.* When Holmes and Watson arrive at the station in Ross, Lestrade meets them and announces he has hired a carriage to take them to the scene of the crime. Holmes demurs, stating that since the barometric pressure is at 29, he can wait until later to go. Firstly,

this seems unlike Holmes, who usually can't wait to examine a crime scene if for no other reason than a concern about others obscuring or destroying important evidence before he has had a chance to examine it. Secondly, the discussion group pointed out a barometric pressure of 29 indicates that rain is imminent if it is not already raining. What explanation can there be for Holmes's gaffe? He states that there is no wind and not a cloud in the sky, which would not be the case if the pressure were actually 29. Perhaps this was an error by the Agent or the publisher that was never corrected.

- *"This may interest you, Lestrade."* At the crime scene Holmes conducts a pretty nifty investigation and gives Lestrade the following description of the murderer: "(He) Is a tall man, left-handed, limps with the right leg, wears thick-soled shooting-boots and a grey cloak, smokes

(continued on page 17)

"...this was one of those cases for which he did not collect a fee."



## GILLETTE TO BRETT II

(continued from page 4)

"...these evanescent  
images which we  
saw at the  
conference have  
helped and still help  
keep the memory of  
Holmes and Watson  
alive."

example, Terry Faherty, suggested - and illustrated - "The Top Ten Reasons to Love the Universal Sherlock Holmes Films." His reasons were arguable but entertaining. For instance, the films made up the most enduring mystery series of the 1940s; they introduced a whole generation to Holmes stories; they took on the Nazis. Moreover, the popularity of the series inspired Doubleday to reprint the canon after it had largely languished in obscurity.

Another speaker was Julie McKuras, best known for her hospitable leadership of the Norwegian Explorers. In her illustrated talk McKuras introduced the audience to Edith Meiser, (another) "Fascinating and Beautiful Woman." Meiser (1899-1993), is known far and wide to Sherlockians for creating over 300 Holmes radio scripts in the 1930s and 1940s. But she was also an accomplished actor on stage and screen. During her lengthy career she performed with such luminaries as George Burns and Gracie Allen, Jack Benny, Vivian Vance, and Eve Arden. Happily and fortuitously (for Sherlockians at least), she was persuaded by Austin McLean to donate her Holmes radio scripts to the University of Minnesota, from which archive the Red-Throated League derives dramatic substance for their annual performances.

The conference also had the pleasure of hearing David Stuart Davies discuss "Holmes and Watson on Screen" Davies made his point cinematically, showing how the relationship between Holmes and Watson was (in his own words) like a typically English marriage: no sex, no emotion. Kathryn White (who is coincidentally married to Davies) spoke about portrayals of women in Sherlockian cinema, by whose presence sex and sometimes emotion were visibly more apparent.

Scott Nollen did a quick scan of Holmes in movies from 1903 through the 1936 version of *Der Hund von Baskerville* (a favorite, we learned, of Adolph Hitler). Michael Hoey, also known as Lestrade's son, gave a talk about growing up in his father's, Dennis Hoey, shadow. The elder Hoey had a career far beyond Lestrade while the son had his own career in movies. Jeremy Paul gave the final presentation. His was a touching talk, recounting stories of working with Jeremy Brett. Paul's reminiscences, including his tribute to Brett after his

death, were quite effective - no sex, perhaps, but lots of warm emotion.

The speakers were uniformly fine. But the most compelling sensation from the conference was the grinding sound of the film projector in ones ears and a plethora of flickering images in ones brain. John Longden and Campbell Singer, Oliver Hardy and Stanley Laurel, Eille Norwood and Hubert Willis, John Barrymore and Roland Young, Arthur Wontner and Ian Fleming, Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce, Jeremy Brett and David Burke (then Edward Hardwicke): these are but a few of the dynamic duos who have cinematically portrayed Sherlock Holmes and John Watson over the years. Of course, the film partners occupy a different universe from the real Holmes and Watson of the canon. Yet those evanescent images which we saw at the conference have helped and still help keep the memory of Holmes and Watson alive. The flickering beam on the silvery screen, in all its transitory splendor, has reflected light back onto the canon so that Holmes and Watson still live not only in the movies, but also in our hearts

Bob and Lucy Brusic



## HOLMES SIGHTINGS

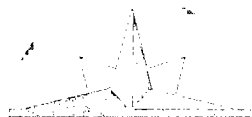
- Vincent Bugliosi's *Reclaiming History*:
  - ⇒ Page 1287: Thomas Mann, US Ambassador to Mexico in September 1963, wanted FBI to investigate an Oswald sighting. Since Oswald was in New Orleans at the time, it could not be true. Hoover "referred to Mann as 'one of the pseudo-investigators, a Sherlock Holmes.'"
  - ⇒ Page 1351: Jim Garrison relied on Warren Commission critics to gather information for his unsuccessful prosecution of Clay Shaw. These critics came to be known by the New Orleans Professionals as "The Dealey Plaza Irregulars."
- The July 29 *New York Times* crossword featured a theme of adding "TH" to the end of a familiar phrase or name. 92 across sought "Sherlock at the Space Needle?" Answer was "Seattle Sleuth"

Mike Eckman



## THE LION'S MANE

(continued from page 5)



"...make-up artistry,  
something Holmes  
should have spotted  
instantly."

was never seen in the flesh (so to speak). Rather, it was observed some three feet below the surface of the water. Moreover, it was hastily crushed by an all too conveniently placed boulder. The thick, oily scum oozing out from below only added a touch of verisimilitude. The reticulated pattern of red, inflamed lines that criss-crossed Murdoch's naked shoulder was doubtless an example of make-up artistry, something Holmes should have spotted instantly. The salad oil which relieved Murdoch's alleged agony is also suggestive. Could that have been the bottled remainder of the oily scum which we observed oozing out from under the faux jellyfish?

The pain in my own neck was easing somewhat as I arrived at these conclusions, though I continued to be perplexed and disturbed at how Sherlock Holmes could have failed to reason thus. However, a new insight gradually surfaced from the oily lagoon of my mind. Perhaps Holmes was not really wrong after all. Perhaps he saw what I saw and much more besides. It could be that he feigned preoccupation with the natural and feminine beauty in his way. That is, he logically penetrated Murdoch's scheme, but preferred to keep his conclusions to himself. In other words, he needed to bide his time in order to collect evidence on this pestilential progeny of the Napoleon of crime.

I find it comforting to realize that although Holmes was living in retirement by the seaside, he was still in the swim of things. Eventually he would gather all the evidence he needed to convict Murdoch/Moriarty and his network of organized crime whose tentacles spread throughout the Empire like a giant jellyfish. In doing so, Holmes would, of course, be playing a dangerous game. It would be like history repeating itself. With his customary determination Sherlock Holmes would go well beyond the matter of a contrived Capillata. In boldly going where only he had gone before, Holmes would be waging war with a vicious crime organization at the beginning of the new century. We can be assured that once again the great detective would selflessly risk life and limb in the cause of justice. As in the days of old, Sherlock Holmes would go from the lion's mane into the lion's den!

Robert Brusic

## HOLMES IN THE NEWS

Britons are losing a grip on fact and fiction—with nearly one in four believing Winston Churchill and Florence Nightingale are myths. And, more than half know Sherlock Holmes actually existed. In a new survey, 47% of people thought that Richard the Lionheart, the 12th century English king, was a myth.

They were also under the impression that Charles Dickens, one of the most famous writings in English literature, was a fictional character himself.

Indian political leader Gandhi; Cleopatra, ruler of ancient Egypt, adventurer Sir Walter Raleigh; British military leader Bernard Montgomery; and Boudica, famous for leading a major uprising against occupying Roman forces, were all thought to be characters dreamt up for films and books.

Britons thought fictional [sic] characters like Sherlock Holmes and pilot Biggles\* were real, according to the survey of 3,000 people commissioned to celebrate UKTV Gold's forthcoming Robin Hood season.

Over half those questioned (58%) believe that the detective created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle for his novels of the late 1880s, actually lived in Baker Street with sidekick Watson.

Historical figures and the percentage of Britons who believe they are myths:

1. Richard the Lionheart (47%)
2. Winston Churchill (23%)
3. Florence Nightingale (23%)
4. Bernard Montgomery (6%)
5. Boudica (5%)
6. Sir Walter Raleigh (4%)
7. Duke of Wellington (4%)
8. Cleopatra (4%)
9. Gandhi (3%)
10. Charles Dickens (3%)

Fictional [sic] figures and the percentage who believe they are real:

1. Sherlock Holmes (58%)
2. Biggles (33%)

Sky News February 4, 2008

Note: Biggles is a creation of WE Johns. James Bigglesworth (Biggles) is a fictional pilot and adventurer who first appeared in "The White Fokker" in 1932. The first collection of Biggles stories, *The Camels are Coming*, was published that same year. -ed



## BOSC STUDY GROUP

(continued from page 14)



"This story marks a milestone in Sherlockian illustration."

Indian cigars, uses a cigar-holder, and carries a blunt pen-knife in his pocket." Lestrade laughs and says he is a "sceptic" but Watson, knowing better than that, is able to deduce some of Holmes's conclusions from the evidence.

- *Reading is fundamental.* At the conclusion of the case, Watson states that Miss Turner and young McCarthy would live happily together "ignorant of the black cloud that rests upon their heads," meaning the knowledge of what their fathers had done. Leslie Klinger points out in his marvelous *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes* that "they would not remain in ignorance after publication of the case in 1891." Since Miss Turner asked specifically for Sherlock Holmes to be brought in on the case, one presumes she, at least, reads the stories.

- *A close-fitting cloth cap.* This story marks a milestone in Sherlockian illustration. This is the first published instance where Holmes is shown wearing the now-iconic deerstalker hat although it is not referenced as such in the story. Out of the ten illustrations Sidney Paget drew for this story, three of them show Holmes wearing the deerstalker. According to Paget's daughter Winifred, in an article she wrote in 1954 titled "The Artist Who Made Holmes Real," which was reprinted in 1980 in *The Sherlock Holmes Companion* edited by Peter Haining, her father wore a deerstalker hat himself.

"It was during that time when my father lived in the country that he wore that now most famous of all hats — the deerstalker; and the fact that he liked it and found it comfortable inspired him to depict Holmes wearing it on so many occasions."

- *But wait — there's another First.* After studying all 356 Paget illustrations I discovered this story has another distinction by being the first and only time Paget depicts Watson as the sole subject of an illustration. (There are two

illustrations in HOUN that show Watson alone, but Holmes still dominates the drawings: one where he is in shadow and the other where he is silhouetted against the Moon.) In this instance, Watson is lounging on a chaise, killing time by reading a yellow-backed novel while Holmes and Lestrade visit James McCarthy in prison. I must say Watson does look quite fetching in this illustration; is this the pose that made feminine hearts beat on three continents? Perhaps so.

- *A policeman's lot is not a happy one.* Is it just me, or is Lestrade a bit of a jerk in this story? First he's called in to assist by Miss Turner and other neighbors who believe in James McCarthy's innocence but he seems to take one look at the evidence and decides McCarthy is guilty: "This case is a plain as a pikestaff," he says. But then Lestrade accuses Holmes of "being quick in forming his conclusions." Later Lestrade tries to make a joke at Holmes's expense:

"We have got to the deductions and the inferences," said Lestrade, winking at me. "I find it hard enough to tackle facts, Holmes, without flying away after theories and fancies."

"You are right," said Holmes demurely, "you do find it very hard to tackle the facts,"

After Holmes examines the crime scene, he attempts to give Lestrade all the clues he needs to find the real perpetrator but Lestrade refuses to make the search, stating

he would "become the laughing-stock of Scotland Yard." Strangely enough, Holmes later refers to Lestrade as an "imbecile." From what I can see, Lestrade does nothing in this case other than chauffeur Holmes and Watson around, denigrate Holmes's efforts with a patronizing attitude, and show off his 'country' outfit which includes a light-brown dustcoat and leather leggings. Yet Holmes refers to Lestrade as "the best of a bad lot." No wonder Holmes is so busy at times if this is the best Scotland Yard can do.

- Mary Loving



Illustration by Sydney Paget

**The Norwegian Explorers**

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Elmer L. Andersen Library

University of Minnesota

222 21st Avenue South

Minneapolis, MN 55455

Pj Doyle, ASH

Editor, Explorations

4242 Stevens Avenue South

Minneapolis MN 55409

Phone: 612-824-1964

Fax: 651-209-7775

Email: pj\_doyle@msn.com

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NEWS OF YOUR  
FRIEND."