



THE NORWEGIAN EXPLORERS
OF MINNESOTA, INC.



EXPLORATIONS

SPRING 2019

ISSUE NO. 76

"You may have read of the remarkable explorations of a Norwegian named Sigerson,
but I am sure that it never occurred to you that you were receiving news of your friend."

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time and energy, and here we are in April. Luckily, I have the support of marvellous fellow Explorers who have contributed interesting articles for inclusion in this issue. We hope that you will enjoy what you read. ~ *Phil Bergem*

A Word from the President

BY TOM GOTTWALT



As you will note from the many articles throughout this issue, our group has been busy since the publication of the previous edition of Explorations. Some notable recent and upcoming events include:

- Over 50 Explorers and guests attended Our December Annual Dinner & Business Meeting at the Minneapolis Golf Club. We enjoyed canonical toasts, good food and drink, the company of fellow Sherlockians, and re-elected our slate of officers.
- The movie "Holmes and Watson" opened in late December.
- January's annual "Baker Street West" event was held at Fitzgerald's on Cathedral Hill attended by 33 Explorers and guests. We celebrated the Master's January birthday and heard reports of happenings at the New York weekend and highlights from the Baker Street Irregulars Dinner.
- Also in January, some Explorers went to see "Baskerville: A Sherlock Holmes Mystery," produced by the White Bear Lake Lakeshore Players Theater.
- Our monthly Study Group continues its walk through the Canon with about fifteen or so attendees at most gatherings. Please consider joining them. The meetings are typically the third Saturday of the month.

Editor's Desk



My life is filled with an abundance of Sherlockian activities. Sometimes it might seem too much, but I enjoy it all. Since the last issue appeared in Fall, we have had our Annual meeting in December, there was the new film, *Holmes & Watson*, which I saw despite vowing not to (it was better than I had feared), the planning committee of fellow-Explorers have met several times as we organize and prepare for the upcoming conference in August, I re-read the Canon in order to come up with a glossary of military terms in the Canon for an upcoming BSI-published book, and completed my contributions for the next edition in the BSI Manuscript Series (covering "Charles Augustus Milverton" and due out in January, 2020). In spite of a desire to get this issue of Explorations out in February or March, these last two tasks sapped my

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The 2018 Annual Dinner



embers of the Norwegian Explorers gathered, once again, at the Minneapolis Golf Club, meeting on Thursday, December 6th for the Annual Dinner.

The venue and menu (English-themed with Shepherd's Pie, Fish and Chips, Yorkshire Pudding, peas and trifle) have become tradition for the group. The gathered folks partook of conversation and libations from the cash bar. Following the invocation by the Reverend Bob Brusic, we settled down to eat. Continuing with tradition, toasts were presented as people were tucking into dessert and coffee. Toasts this year were presented by Kristi Iverson (for *The Woman*), Rhonda Gilliland (to Mrs. Hudson), Amanda Downs (Mycroft), Pj Doyle (The Second Mrs. Watson), Soren Eversoll (The game is afoot!) and Steve Schier (The second most dangerous man in London).



Steve Schier presenting a toast.

After the toasts, the business meeting was held. Tom Gottwalt, President, gave an annual summary of activities and upcoming events, and Phil Bergem, as Treasurer, gave the financial report. With all else that was going on, he forgot to make out a contribution check for the Sherlock Holmes Collections, but he promised that a check for \$1,221 would be sent to the University before the end of the month. (It was.)

Once toasts were completed, Julie McKuras and Phil presented the Sigerson Awards. These light-hearted awards, all cleverly named by Julie,

are presented in recognition of people who contributed to the Explorers' Christmas Annual. (A copy of the Annual was given to each person at the Dinner and copies were also sent to New York for attendees of the BSI Dinner, *The Woman Dinner*, and the Gaslight Gala.) The awards were:

Ruth Berman and her essay "Doyle and the Chunnel" – The "Running a Tunnel" Award; Steve Schier and his "War, Peace and Russia in the Sherlockian Canon" – The "Russian Government" Award; Jeff Falkingham and his "War of Words" – The "Meddlesome and Hard to Please" Award; Mike Eckman and "Cold War in the Canon" – The "Most Astute Secret-Service Man In Europe" Award; Mike Eckman and "Holmes and War During Pax Britannica" – The "Great and Sombre Stage" Award; Julie and Mike McKuras and "The Adventure of the Vile Vintner" – The "Counterfeiter's Outfit" Award; John Ward and "Sherlock Holmes Case of the Serbian Bank Robber" – "The Rogues' Gallery" Award; Bob Brusic and "The Ghost of Baker Street Past" – The "Spiritual Would Not Avoid the Call" Award; Pasquale Accardo and "Shaw on Sherlock and Doyle on Waterloo" – The "Escape from this Weary Workaday World" Award; and Dick Caplan and "War and Peace" – "The Writing is of Interest" Award.

Phil Bergem also had the honor of being the evening's speaker, with a PowerPoint show and talk on a recent trip to Scotland and England. During

the previous August he and his wife, Karen, were able to travel there and he talked about sites related to Holmes and Doyle in Edinburgh, Middlesbrough, Portsmouth, the South Downs, Forest Row, Oxford and London.

Another popular tradition is Bob and Lucy Brusic's captions contest. They make a Sherlockian illustration available and people work to identify the source, and to come up with humorous captions or limericks. These are then read out to the amusement of all. Bob also takes traditional Christmas tunes and writes extremely clever

Holmes-related lyrics. Several of these were sung by the group, again, to the amusement of all.

The evening then drew to a close with Tom Gottwalt's reading of "When I Spend a Long Evening with Holmes," the beloved poem written by Bill Schweikert in 1984.

A Selection of Dinner Toasts

"Mrs. Hudson" by Rhonda Gilliland

Rhonda has edited three volumes of Cooked to Death which pairs mysteries with recipes. With that in mind, she presented, courtesy of Mrs. Hudson, several dishes which could be appropriately paired with stories from the Canon. These were:

"Five Orange Pips" – orange glazed carrots; "The Greek Interpreter" – spanakopita; "The Empty House" – cottage pie; "The Devil's Foot" – Cornish game hen; "The Dancing Men" – Chicago style hot dogs; "The Naval Treaty" – fish and chips; "The Blue Carbuncle" – Christmas goose; "The Crooked Man" – curried chicken; "The Engineer's Thumb" – bangers and mash; "The Red-Headed League" – red velvet cake; "The Six Napoleons" – Napoleon dessert; and "The Solitary Cyclist" – wedding cake. A toast to Mrs. Hudson for the inspiration.

"Mycroft" by Amanda Downs

Although he appeared in only two of Dr. Watson's chronicles, and was merely mentioned in two others, Mycroft Holmes remains pivotal to the adventures of the Canon. His infrequent appearances leave him shrouded in mystery, making him all the more fascinating. With his focus on his work for the British government, and intellectual, rather than physical ambition, Mycroft's lack of visibility is greatly due to a life of routine and disdain for public life. As a founding member of the Diogenes Club, he clearly chose and preferred quiet isolation over social interaction.

Often portrayed as dismissive or disdainful of his brother, Mycroft nevertheless kept the secret of Sherlock's life after the terrible events at the Reichenbach Falls. He maintained Sherlock's rooms during the Great Hiatus, proving himself to be loyal to the bonds of brotherhood. Some could argue this secrecy was for the security of the British Empire, but there was risk in keeping the rooms exactly as his brother left them, and risk in being Sherlock's sole contact. Those facts speak volumes about his affection for his brother, the importance of family, and the trust between them.

In his turn, Sherlock Holmes extended high praise to his brother, stating he has the "tidest and most orderly brain, with the greatest capacity for storing facts, of any man living." Sherlock was not a man to dole out easy flattery; this was simply a statement of facts to confirm his admiration of his elder brother. I have no doubt that Sherlock himself would join us as we raise a glass to the more intelligent Holmes brother, Mycroft Holmes.

"The Second Mrs. Watson" by Pj Doyle

In keeping with the subject of this year's theme for the Christmas annual, I find myself recalling a quote from Mary Roach's book, *Grunt: The Curious Science of Humans at War* (2016). "Heroism doesn't always happen in a burst of glory. Sometimes small triumphs and large hearts change the course of history."

This observation could easily apply to some of the lesser-known figures in the Canon. Consider, for example, the ladies who love and are loved by John H. Watson, MD.

Debate has raged for years on the number and lineage of Watsonian spouses. His "experience of women, which extends over many nations and three separate continents" would solidify his appreciation of the gender. And his noble nature explains his discrete omission of names and details of these encounters.

Many would cite Mary Watson, née Morstan, as wife number one, simply because she is the first mentioned by name. But that was September of 1888. What transpired in all those years prior?

I submit that we may never know who, nor how many, may have come before. We can, however, surmise that they would have been as heroic as Mary Roach's quote. Even if the wedding(s) occurred after his retirement from the military, each Mrs. Watson would have embodied the long-suffering qualities of a military wife: patience, courage, tolerance and a dash of adventure. A recipe that could be served with pride.

And so: a toast, my friends, to the second Mrs. Watson — whomever she might be.

The game is afoot!

by Soren Eversoll

"It was on a bitterly cold and frosty morning, towards the end of the winter of '97, that I was awakened by a tugging at my shoulder. It was Holmes. The candle in his hand shone upon his eager,

stooping face, and told me at a glance that something was amiss. 'Come, Watson, come!' he cried. 'The game is afoot!' "

And thus begins "The Abbey Grange," when the Canon was introduced to the immortal phrase that would become synonymous with our image of Sherlock Holmes. Holmes wasn't the first, however. The detective himself may likely have stolen the expression from Shakespeare, who used it in the plays Henry IV and V. However, it is with Holmes that we remember this immortal phrase, one which defines both our view of the character and our view of the stories themselves. "The game is afoot" encapsulates our own feelings when reading the Canon, when a peaceful evening is interrupted by a client knocking at the door or some adventure on the other side of town. With every Holmes story, we are drawn into a world of intrigue and mystery, one that never makes us want to put the story down. The "Game" has also become the act of playing along with the stories, where John Watson was the detective's literary agent and the real location of the 221B rooms is still hidden in some back alley of Baker Street. It is thanks to the Game that we are gathered here, so many decades after they were written, in continued enjoyment and love for the Sherlock Holmes canon, something that I know has been a fantastic part of all our lives. It is only right that we honor it as such. And so, please raise your glasses to: "The game is afoot!"

where Kathy had been a beloved staff member, specializing in working with the hearing impaired. Fifty or so people were in attendance, many sharing reminiscences of Kathy and of her dedication to her calling and to her patients. Her passion for Sherlock Holmes was mentioned, and I said a few words on behalf of the Explorers.

The photos show a mosaic of tiles in the courtyard of the building, and a close-up of a tile dedicated to Kathy, which can be seen in the third column from the left in the third row from the bottom in the Mosaic.



Movie review: *Flaccid Ferrell Foolishness*

BY JEFF FALKINGHAM



I've never seen a Will Ferrell movie that I thoroughly enjoyed. Many start out with a clever premise, which then is beaten to death because the man simply doesn't know when to stop pushing the envelope. Others quickly abandon the original premise in pursuit of others, none of which is ever fully developed. The latter takes trump (pun intended) in his latest endeavor, *Holmes & Watson*.

In many of his movies, Ferrell plays a pompous ass who believes that he is smarter than everyone

else in the room. That's an apt description, not only of the political leader(s) that Ferrell makes fun of in this movie, but also of Holmes himself, as portrayed by a wide variety of actors throughout the

Kathy Moran Wellness Center

BY JOHN BERGQUIST



In Friday, Jan. 4th, Inez and I were able to attend the dedication of the "Kathy Moran Wellness Center" at Ebenezer Park Apartments in Minneapolis,



years. Ferrell gets in his digs at many of them. There's the Euclidian geometry employed by Downey in a boxing match, the whiz-bang workings of Cumberbatch's high-tech 21st-century mind, the condescension in Rathbone's rapid wrap-ups, the cool detachment of Brett's vacant stare, and more.

John C. Reilly, on the other hand, seems content in channeling Nigel Bruce in his "bumbling buffoon" portrayal of Watson. Actually, that's not quite true. Reilly's Watson is *not* content in his role. He aspires, instead, to be recognized as an equal to Holmes, a "co-detective" on this case, and throughout the Canon.

Spoiler alert: Sherlock's failure to acknowledge his companion's contributions arouses suspicions that Watson is, in fact, the villain in this case, out to sabotage and sully his partner's reputation. The two appear to work out their differences in a song-and-dance routine late in the film, only to have Sherlock's true feelings on the matter later revealed in the relatively puny plaque placed at the entrance to 221B Baker Street (one of the better sight gags in the film).

The development, or lack of it, in the relationship between the film's two title characters is one of the more interesting themes here. Watson's shortcomings — and his frustration with them — are nowhere more evident than in a scene where the two visit Mycroft at the Diogenes Club. Who among us does *not* believe that the world's two smartest men, who also happen to be brothers, would be able to share one another's thoughts, without a single word passing between them? Funny!! But far too fleeting, which is true of so many notions in this film.

Beyond his brief encounter with Mycroft, Sherlock's relationship with Lestrade is spot-on as well. Their diametrically-opposed theories about Moriarty had me thinking of Mark Twain's "Double-Barrelled Detective" satire, where Sherlock's deductions are all in error, leading to a totally wrong conclusion. Here, that tale is turned on its head: While Lestrade's much more logical explanation misses its mark, Sherlock's wild, hare-brained obsession with Moriarty proves to be fully warranted. (And, without giving too much away, the "link" between Moriarty and Mrs. Hudson is a delicious twist!)

Twain's "Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court" is also mirrored (as in left being right, and vice-versa) in this film. Besides America's loutish

leadership, its citizenry also is stereotyped — by its obsession with guns and violence. And, of course, *only* in America, *never* in Victorian England, could a *woman* become a "doctor" (in air-quotes, no less) — a shot at Lucy Liu's Watson in *Elementary*? The only thing missing here is "*the woman*," Irene Adler. Maybe they're saving her for the sequel? (Yet another idea on which Ferrell is likely to fail in following through.)

There are many clever ideas in this movie. Unfortunately, none is given a chance to develop. Instead, the viewer is forced to slosh through buckets of vomit, vials of urine, handfuls of horse manure, scads of sexual innuendo, and an endless series of pratfalls and slapstick. In other words, exactly what one should expect from a Will Ferrell movie, eh? It just seems to me that Holmes and Watson, and their legions of fans, deserve better.

In summary: Victorian London is laden with dark, narrow side streets, where it's easy to get lost in the fog. Will Ferrell needs a "lamp-lighter" (in the form of a firm-handed director?) to show him the way. Otherwise, like the political leader he most loves to lampoon, Ferrell too often strays off script, getting himself into needless trouble, from which he can't (or at least shouldn't be able to) just walk away and move on to his next gig, or gag.

Baker Street West Gathering

BY TOM GOTTWALT



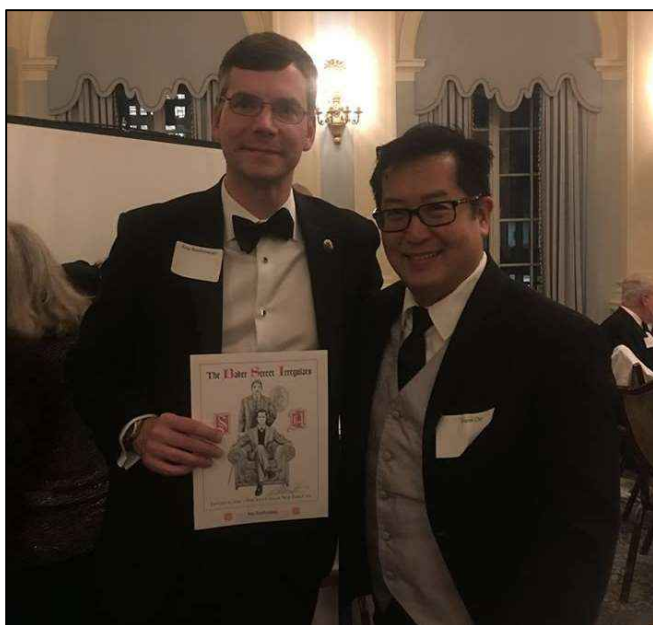
itzgerald's on Cathedral Hill was the venue for our annual "Baker Street West" celebration of the Master's January birthday. We consistently hold this event after the early January New York City weekend and Baker Street Irregulars Dinner. Thirty-three Explorers and guests made for a nice turnout and the largest group in a few years.

Explorers Julie and Mike McKuras, Dick Sveum, John Bergquist, Ray Riethmeier, Monica Schmidt, and Mike Miller made the trip to New York and most were with us to share their impressions and experiences.

Dick Sveum shared a nice collection of "show and tell" items he'd brought back from the weekend. He also recounted the weekend's events which included the ASH Wednesday Dinner, the Christopher Morley Walk (begun years ago by our

own Allen Mackler), the Distinguished Speakers Lecture featuring Ken Ludwig, the Baker Street Babes and their Baker Street Bash, the Gillette Luncheon, and of course the BSI Dinner. One of the highlights of the dinner for Norwegian Explorers was the induction of our own Monica Schmidt into the BSI, with the investiture of "Julia Stoner."

Ray Riethmeier first attended the Weekend last year and this year had the added pleasure of being invited to attend the BSI Dinner. He shared his impressions of that first Dinner experience which included the serendipitous experience of noting the program cover's artist was Frank Cho, a comics/graphic novel illustrator whom he has admired for years.



Ray Riethmeier and Frank Cho

Photo by Julie McKuras

John Bergquist had the privilege of being the recipient of an Eddy award for his contributions to various BSI publications.

Julie McKuras recounted her observations of the weekend as well and shared her observations and enthusiasm about her recent trip with Mike McKuras to the Sherlock Holmes Society of London's Annual Dinner. That dinner is special for its sublime location in the British Houses of Parliament. Another Explorer, Mike Miller, also attended that dinner.

President Tom Gottwalt welcomed the group and gave an update on recent local Sherlockian events as well as a forecast of upcoming events. He also thanked the attendees for their attendance, since it can sometimes be difficult to attend

given the unpredictable Minnesota winter weather. This year was no exception as there was lots of snow and driving conditions were not ideal. Nonetheless, the group enjoyed good food, drink and Sherlockian companionship. 🦋



Study Group Discussion: The Sussex Vampire

BY KAREN MURDOCK



fifteen Explorers met on February 16 in the Saint Anthony Park library to discuss "The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire," with Steve Schier as leader of the group.

For Show & Tell, Steve S. showed his copy of *The Exploits of Sherlock Holmes*, a collection of pastiches by John Dickson Carr and Adrian Conan Doyle. One of these tales is "The Giant Rat of Sumatra." Karen Murdock showed a wooden Christmas goose cutout she received from Carolyn Senter. Beverly Proud announced that the Commonwealth Theatre Company in Lanesboro will be putting on Jeffrey Hatcher's play, "Holmes and Watson," from April to July this year. Mary Loving showed a new facsimile of the 1887 *Beeton's Christmas Annual*, the first appearance of Sherlock Holmes in print. Tom Gottwalt showed *The Official Sherlock Puzzle Book*.

Karen M. passed out a sheet showing some notable figures of speech she had found in SUSS. One of these is aphaeresis (uh FARE uh sis), the dropping of a letter, syllable or sound from the beginning of a word. The maid Dolores does this because she does not speak perfect English:

"She lie like that one day, two day. I 'fraid she die," said the girl.

Doyle customarily shortens the word "around" into "round" as in:

... a fine turn of speed which had carried him **round** many an opposing back

The room, as I gazed **round**, was a most singular mixture of dates and of places.

There was general agreement that one of the "unchronicled cases" Holmes mentions in SUSS, "the giant rat of Sumatra, a story for which the world is not yet prepared," has to be one of the

greatest titles for pastiches. Bob Brusich said he has eight different novels with that title. (He thinks the best is the one by Rick Boyer.)

Steve S. said that vampires have been a persistent part of western culture for the past 300 years. They were something of a craze in late Victorian England. Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula* was published in 1897. Steve S. said that vampires are both "erotic and demotic." Peter Cavanaugh said that the biggest stage hit at the turn of the 20th century was about vampires; Doyle was being trendy when he wrote SUSS.

Karen M. said that we should bear in mind that Doyle's readers would have felt a jolt in the juxtaposition of "Sussex" and "Vampire." The county of Sussex contains some of the southernmost suburbs of London. People might expect to find a vampire in a dark and dangerous place like London. But not out in the safe and bucolic suburbs! The equivalent title in the Twin Cities might be "The Burnsville Vampire." Steve Miller suggested that somebody should write a collection of stories entitled *Monsters of the Twin Cities*, which would include "The Burnsville Vampire" and "Creature from the Black Lake Calhoun."

More discussion of vampires ensued. Mary said that Steve Moffat and Mark Gatiss, the producers of the BBC's "Sherlock," are currently working on a "Dracula" series, which should be showing up on PBS's "Masterpiece Mystery."

Karen Ellery said she came to Sherlock Holmes through seeing Frank Langella play Holmes in the Gillette play. Bob B. pointed out that "Holmes would have no patience with this conversation" about vampires. In SUSS, Holmes says, "Rubbish, Watson, rubbish! What have we to do with walking corpses who can only be held in their grave by stakes driven through their hearts? It's pure lunacy."

Steve S. gave a review of vampire literature and said that several of the stories in *The Casebook* have dark or supernatural themes (e.g., ILLU, CREE, SHOS). Pete Cavanaugh said he could never understand how Arthur Conan Doyle could believe in fairies and be deeply involved in spiritualism yet produce a character as rational as Sherlock Holmes. Steve M. said that Doyle maintained the integrity of Holmes but did have Professor Challenger become a believer in spiritualism. Tom G. said that it was the death of Doyle's son Kingsley that really precipitated ACD into spiritualism; he could not accept that his son was really gone.

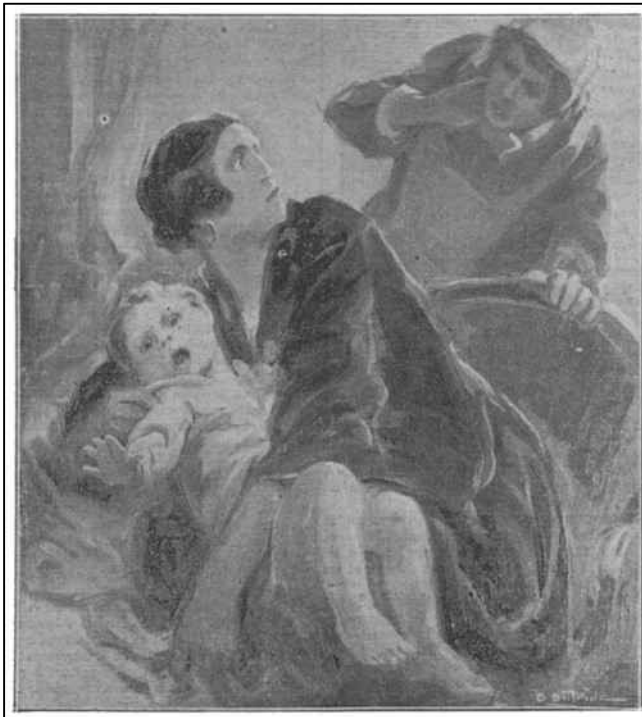
Steve S. said there is a book entitled *The Vampire Stories of Arthur Conan Doyle*. Included in this collection are the Canonical stories SUSS, 3GAB

and ILLU. Non-Sherlockian stories include "The Captain of the Polestar," "The American's Tale," "The Parasite," and "The Ring of Thoth." While these stories may not all have a Dracula-like vampire, they all deal with the theme of someone's essence being sucked out by another person or creature.

Karen M. said the theme of "dangerous foreigners" runs throughout the Sherlock Holmes Canon (and some of those scary, dangerous foreigners are Americans, such as Abe

Slaney in DANC). In SUSS it is Bob Ferguson's wife, from Peru, who is initially thought to be the menace to her child, although the real culprit is Ferguson's sociopathic 15-year-old son, Jacky.

Holmes said, "I think a year at sea would be my prescription for Master Jacky." Sharon Hogenon said that, in her youth, juvenile delinquents who got into trouble with the law were often given the choice of joining the army or going to jail. The group agreed that the Royal Navy would hardly accept a lad who was crippled and that just sending Jacky away on a trip around the



world for a year would not solve the problem, unless he were to be washed overboard in a storm. Steve S. said that sociopathy is really hard to cure and that Jacky needed to be locked up where he could not hurt his baby half-brother.

Jeff Falkingham said Holmes had no proof to offer Ferguson of Jacky's guilt; it was Holmes who saw the look of hatred on Jacky's face when the baby was brought into the room. Bob might not be prepared to believe Holmes.

Pete Cavanaugh said that parents had to be pretty dumb to hang deadly weapons on the walls of their house when there were children about.

Bob Brusic said that, in keeping with Valentine's Day, this is a love story. But in the case of Jacky, there is a sort of love triangle with the father, Jacky, and the baby. Steve M. felt that Bob was "emotionally divorced" from his wife.

Karen E. pointed out parallels with THOR and DANC in the wife not communicating her history and her feelings to her husband.

Someone asked why the wife was not poisoned when she sucked poison from the child. Pete C. said that curare has to be injected into the bloodstream in order to be deadly. If swallowed it will not kill.

Opinions on the tale varied widely. Curt Proud criticized the lack of plausibility and the weak ending. Karen E. liked the complex characters. Sharon H. (a retired social worker) said the situation of a jealous sibling and a parent in denial about a bad kid had psychological depth and was very believable — Sharon said she had known people like this. Beverly P. said that Holmes was thoughtful and gentle towards Bob Ferguson and the love and loyalty of Bob's wife was very touching.

Mary pointed out a parallel between Carlo, the spaniel — who was partially paralyzed by Jacky, who was practicing to attack his baby brother — and several lame sheep in SILV, upon whom John Straker was testing out his cataract knife. 🐾



Holmes is Verbed

BY BOB GORDON



If you have a Macintosh, you have likely used Spotlight, the built-in search facility. The Mac operating system cleverly indexes everything so you find files

by looking for a word in the file not just the file's name. Prior to Spotlight, Apple had a search tool called Sherlock, so named for obvious reasons.

A company named Karelia Software then released a companion app that offered access to web-based services such as movie listings and stock quotes. They called it, of course, Watson.

Apple's Sherlock evolved from version 1 to version 2. In version 3, Sherlock largely incorporated all the capabilities found in Watson. By extending Sherlock, Apple made Watson superfluous.

And now, "Sherlock" is a verb used when Apple extends the operating system to include features found in an existing application. 🐾

Where the Deer and the Antelope Play: Sherlock Holmes and Hopalong Cassidy

BY BOB BRUSIC



certain visual icons invoke Sherlock Holmes in the public eye, whether or not the detective himself is present. The deerstalker cap, the curved meerschau pipe, and the magnifying glass in hand symbolically, if not canonically, denote Holmes. These identifying objects appear with great regularity in advertisements, movies, and scion society gatherings. Hence, when Harpo Marx grabbed a magnifying glass and donned a deerstalker, as he did in *Duck Soup*, we know that some kind of game is afoot. Lou Costello did a similar schtick on occasion, as did Laurel and Hardy and the redoubtable Three Stooges.

The merits of these appearances are generally dubious, though they are sometimes humorous. Those visual icons establish a tenuous connection with the ubiquitous Holmes, and the visual message suggests that some kind of detective tomfoolery is in progress. While such references to Holmes often occur in movies, they rarely appear in westerns, a genre not usually associated with Sherlock Holmes.

Yet, late night television did evoke Holmes on the range on at least one occasion. In 1941, Paramount Pictures released *Twilight on the Trail*, starring William Boyd as Hopalong Cassidy. Assisted by Brad King as Johnny Nelson, and Andy Clyde as California, Boyd did his usual competent job at

rounding up a band of cattle rustlers who were harassing an old friend.

However, in order to throw the gang off their guard, Hopalong, Johnny, and California arrive at the ranch acting like a trio of effete English sleuths. As they debark from the stagecoach, they mask their real competence by wearing affected clothing and speaking in painful English accents. “We are three detectives,” they lisp in order to instill a false confidence in the mind of any desperado who may be present. “We never fail.”

One member of the trio, California, determinedly tries to throw evil doers off the scent by puffing on a meerschaum and sporting a loose fitting deerstalker. He completes the comedic reference to Sherlock Holmes by inspecting everything in sight with an outsized magnifying glass. At one point this ersatz Holmes inspects the front end of a horse and draws Hopalong’s gravelly question, “What’re ya lookin’ for?” “Clues,” growls the faux Sherlock. “Never mind the clues, professor, they can wait,” mutters Cassidy, as he enters the bunkhouse. Later, tossing the deerstalker on the bunk, California/Holmes grumbles, “I’ll sure be glad when this is over — me using those high falutin’ English words ... don’t know the meaning of half of them.” Soon enough the timid trio drop their detective disguises and the action picks up. Before long the bumbling sleuth with pipe and magnifying glass becomes a competent cowboy on horseback with six-shooter.

On the whole, these early scenes in *Twilight on the Trail* are not an especially memorable addition to the legend of Sherlock Holmes. But this brief bit of burlesque does indicate how far the great detective’s shadow stretched — all the way from foggy Baker Street to the sunny American West. It is intriguing to see how, even in jest, one legend can be linked with another — after all, Hopalong Cassidy had a good run in his day. Moreover, it gives one pause to realize that at the same time Andy Clyde donned his deerstalker at Paramount, Basil Rathbone was trying one on for size for the first of Universal Pictures’ dozen Holmes movies, starting in 1942 with *Sherlock Holmes and the Voice of Terror*. In one of those productions, *Sherlock Holmes in Washington*, the detective actually made it to the eastern part of the United States.

But it was only in the company of Hopalong Cassidy that the great detective made it, albeit briefly and irreverently, to the American west. There, for a few brief moments, it is possible to

see, where seldom is heard, a discouraging word ... Holmes, Holmes on the range. 🐾

Study Group Session: *The Missing Three-Quarter*

BY KAREN MURDOCK



n Saturday, March 16, 2019, a dozen Explorers met in the basement of Merriam Park Library in Saint Paul to discuss “The Missing Three-Quarter.”

Kristi Iverson led the discussion.

For “Show & Tell,” Mary Loving showed some anise extract (used in baking cookies and cakes) and a book of Sherlock Holmes paper dolls. She also told of a new scion, “Doyle’s Rotary Coffin,” which is dedicated to the proposition that “All Holmes is Good Holmes,” and accepts any member who subscribes to that philosophy. Steve Miller showed a box set of Titan’s Vinyl Figures of Cumberbatch and Freeman as Holmes and Watson, and a DVD of a Russian production of SIGN (with English subtitles). Karen Murdock passed around a list of some of the notable figures of speech in MISS, and she urged fellow Explorers to write encouraging letters to a young lady (a first-year student at Penn State University, York Campus) who was giving a public presentation the following week on Sherlock Holmes. This gave rise to a discussion of letter-writing and other traditions and technologies with which young people nowadays may be unfamiliar.

Although nobody in the group thought that MISS was a very good story, it does have some good features. Steve Schier read from an essay by Dan Andriacco praising the well-drawn minor characters in the story (Overton, Lord Mount-James, Dr. Armstrong). Karen Ellery said that the tracking dog, Pompey, was also a great character and that, unlike that other famous Canonical tracking dog, Toby in SIGN, Pompey actually finds his quarry.

Kristi asked whether the wife in the story had received proper medical care. She said the best treatment of tuberculosis at the time would have been to move the woman out of England into some place where the air was **dry** (Arizona, perhaps). Karen E. said, “She might not have wanted to leave her husband,” even if he could afford to send

her abroad. Steve M. said, tongue-in-cheek, "If Watson had given her brandy, she would have lived." Karen M. pointed out that Doyle's first wife died of tuberculosis even though she had been moved to several supposedly-healthy places, was married to a physician, and got the best care possible, given the state of medicine in the late 19th century.

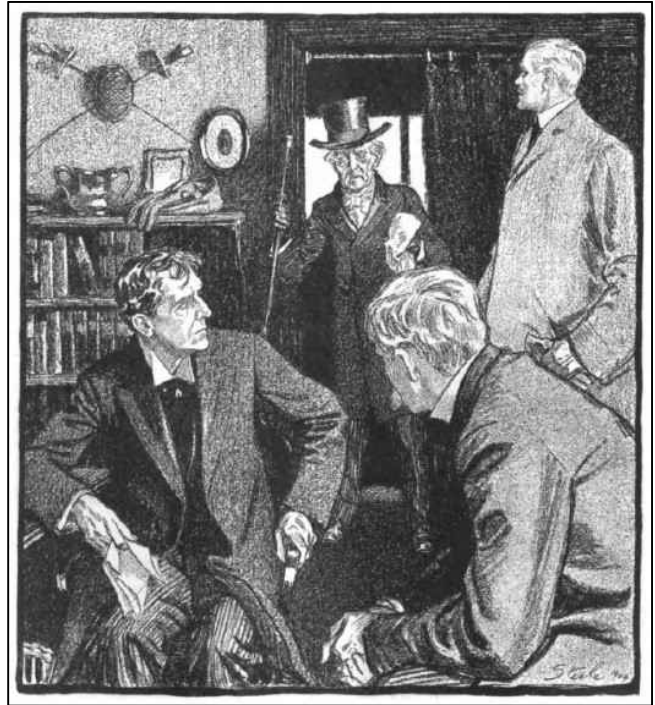
Kristi said she had looked up information about the game of rugby and did not think that the loss of one "three-quarter" was all that important since there are four players of that position on a rugby team. Karen M. said that in any sport — baseball, football, basketball, rugby, anything — the loss of a team's best player is a crippling blow. Karen E. said that, in the world of theatre, "You don't want the understudy to come on" in a play if you are an actor, you want the star to play the part.

Kristi said that Sherlock Holmes was, by his own admission, oblivious to the world of sport and would not have understood anything of Cyril Overton's explanation of his problem:

Godfrey Staunton — you've heard of him, of course? He's simply the hinge that the whole team turns on. I'd rather spare two from the pack, and have Godfrey for my three-quarter line. Whether it's passing, or tackling, or dribbling, there's no one to touch him, and then, he's got the head, and can hold us all together. What am I to do? That's what I ask you, Mr. Holmes. There's Moorhouse, first reserve, but he is trained as a half, and he always edges right in on to the scrum instead of keeping out on the touchline. He's a fine place-kick, it's true, but then he has no judgment, and he can't sprint for nuts. Why, Morton or Johnson, the Oxford fliers, could romp round him. Stevenson is fast enough, but he couldn't drop from the twenty-five line, and a three-quarter who can't either punt or drop isn't worth a place for pace alone. No, Mr. Holmes, we are done unless you can help me to find Godfrey Staunton.

Holmes would not have wanted to waste any of his brain cells on sports. Watson did know about rugby and had played the game, but, as Overton went on about rugby, Steve M. said, "Watson may have enjoyed Sherlock sinking into the mire" of rugby jargon. Sharon Hogenson said it was not surprising that Holmes knew nothing about rugby; it would have been *more* surprising

if Holmes *did* know about that game. Karen E. said that Holmes was a boxer and a fencer and a musician when he was a college student and did not



have time for other pursuits. Curt Proud asked where Holmes had gone to college. There is much debate among Sherlockian scholars on this point, with the majority favoring either Oxford or Cambridge.

The question of "red herrings" came up. Karen M. said that two factors which Holmes thought might be important in solving the mystery — the looming big match with Oxford and the rich uncle — proved to be just coincidences and had nothing to do with the disappearance of Godfrey Staunton. Mary L. said that MISS had several elements of a good story but had no villain. Pete Cavanaugh said not only was there no villain, but there was no crime and "nothing big and scary going on." Steve M. said that it would have been a better story if Armstrong had proved to be a villain and a criminal; he thought the ending of the story was a let-down. Steve S. said there were a lot of good stories in *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* (EMPT, DANC, PRIO, ABBE). Just not this one.

Karen M. wondered where Holmes had obtained the anise extract and syringe; he certainly would not have brought them from London since he and Watson left on the spur of the moment and did not have time to pack anything. Karen E. said that since anise was the scent followed by drag hounds, it would have been readily available in rural areas of England.

A rambling discussion of chemical dependency followed. The current medical model seems to be to not let any patient feel any pain at any time. This can lead to over-prescription of pain-killers and to drug addiction. 🐾

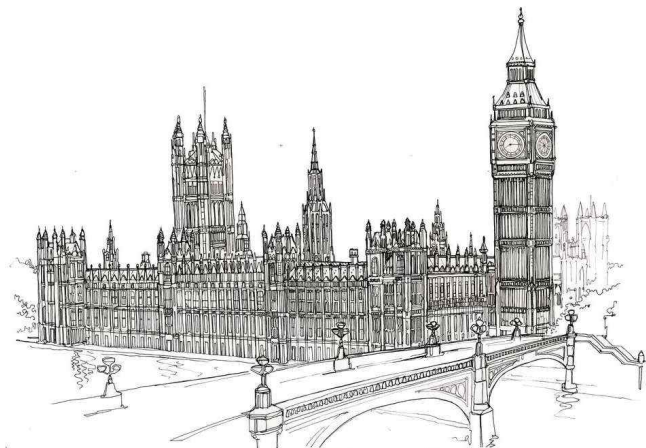
We Made a Journey Abroad

BY JULIE MCKURAS

It is always a pleasure to visit that great metropolis, London, especially when that visit includes the annual dinner of The Sherlock Holmes Society.

Following Dr. Watson's advice as written in the opening of "A Study in Scarlet," we stayed at a hotel on The Strand - unlike his, a very comfortable one - and spent as much money as we had, trying to avoid being the very worst tenants in London. On our first evening we decided to attend a play. There were many interesting choices available but we filtered our decision by asking "what's loud and will keep us awake?" We chose "TINA: The Tina Turner Musical." We didn't fall asleep and thoroughly enjoyed it.

The following day we had a wonderful lunch with friends followed that evening with a lovely dinner gathering with members of the Society, both local and international. It all confirmed the question Mike asked me when I first became involved with Sherlockian events: "do you all just eat and drink?" Well, yes, we do. We spent the next morning shopping and walking around Covent Garden until it was time to prepare for our trip to the House of Commons.



The Society's sixty-fifth Annual Dinner was held on January 19th in the Members' Dining Room at the House of Commons. One enters Parliament through a rather serpentine walkway, a necessary safety precaution. We found ourselves entering with our friend Nicholas Utechin, presented our personalized invitation cards, had bags searched, and went through metal detectors. (Why I chose to wear shoes with metal buckles is a question for the ages). The route takes you through Westminster Hall, the oldest structure of the buildings, and from one beautiful area into another, each with its own artwork and statuary, until we came to the waiting room. This was an important stop as it had a bar and friends.

We were soon called into the dining room where we found our assigned seats among the 170 guests. All were welcomed by Chairman David Jones. Both the dinner and the company were excellent and the diligent work done by Catherine Cooke to ensure everything runs smoothly was evident. The title for the evening was "The Red-Headed Heist." Member of Parliament Bob Neill gave an entertaining talk about his legal career specializing in criminal law.

Sunday morning found us attending services at the Guard's Chapel near Buckingham Palace with Jonathan and Elaine McCafferty. The Anglican service includes a professional choir and military musicians. In keeping with the eating and drinking theme, we then adjourned to The Centre Page for the Society's Traditional Morning After luncheon which gives you a chance to visit with friends before the weekend activities end. The Centre Page, located near St. Paul's Cathedral, was known as the Horn Tavern in the late 18th century and was mentioned by Charles Dickens in *The Pickwick Papers*.

Our short visit to London concluded with dinner with friends. If you have an opportunity to attend these festivities, don't miss it. It's a wonderful blend of friendship and history. 🐾

The Red-Throated League

BY PHILLIP BERGEM



he Red-Throated League has been a joyful staple of the Norwegian Explorers since 1990 when it was founded by, among others, Reverend Robert Brusie

and Bill Teeple. In the early years the group focused on singing songs modified to fit the Sherlockian theme; “The Road to Baker Street,” “The Song of Professor Moriarty,” and many based on Gilbert and Sullivan music, one of which was “Three Little Sherlockians are We.” Many of the early performances were at the Luther Seminary in St. Paul. In 1995 the troupe, now focused exclusively on performing radio plays written or adapted by Edith Meiser, joined forces with the Pavek Museum of Broadcasting in St. Louis Park to put on live action radio plays, surrounded by the treasures of that museum. As was written in *Edith Meiser and Her Adventures with Sherlock Holmes* (by Lucy Brusica, James Hubbs and William Nadel, University of Minnesota: Sherlock Holmes Collections, Special Collections and Rare Books, 1999):

Edith Meiser (1898-1993) introduced the character of Sherlock Holmes to the airwaves on October 20, 1930; the last program by Meiser aired on June 20, 1948. She adapted most of Arthur Conan Doyle’s original stories for radio; she also created many original adventures featuring Sherlock Holmes. Miss Meiser donated her collection of Sherlockian manuscripts and related material to the University of Minnesota in 1986.

From 1995 until 2018 the Red-Throated League performed a play each year at the Pavek Museum, with an audience of Sherlockians and fans of old-time radio. They have also performed every three years at the conferences hosted by the Norwegian Explorers, Special Collections and University of Minnesota, a treat well-received by the attendees.

From the beginning in 1990, Reverend Bob Brusica was the group’s director, selecting plays from the collection of Meiser scripts. He has also performed the role of Doctor Watson for as long as I can recall. Toward the end of 2018 Bob decided to retire from the Director’s position and the duty was taken over by Karen Ellery, someone who has performed in the Red-Throated League numerous times. In addition, long-time performers Mark Hillmer and Nigel Spottiswoode decided to retire and the venue was switched from the Pavek to the Andersen Library at the University of Minnesota. Heartfelt appreciation is extended to Mark, Nigel, and the Pavek Museum for the long-time association and for the many hours of entertainment you have provided.



The Red-Throated League

Photo by Tim Johnson

The latest performance was held on Saturday, April 6, 2019, in the familiar rooms at the Elmer L. Andersen Library, with thirty-five people in the audience. The play selected was “The Adventure of the Superfluous Pearl,” first aired on May 22, 1944. Following some introductory remarks by Karen Ellery, Bob Brusica and Lucy Brusica were recognized for their contributions to the Red-Throated League over the decades. The event continued with the singing of “We Never Mention Aunt Clara,” wonderfully presented by Heather Edwards, with the audience joining in on the chorus. The roles of John Watson and Sherlock Holmes were taken over by Peter Cavanaugh and Tom Gottwalt. Other cast members were Bob Brusica, Heather Edwards, Karen Ellery, Soren Eversoll, Jamie Hubbs and Bill Teeple. Sound effects, an essential part of radio drama, were done by Graham Leathers. Returning to play the equally essential music was Morva Klein. Interspersed in the “broadcast” were advertisements for Petri Wine, admirably voiced by Bill Teeple. The event was thoroughly enjoyed by the thirty-five people in attendance. In addition, Tim Johnson had on display some of the Edith Meiser materials for examination and folks were able to go up to the second floor to see the Allen Mackler room that recreates the study at 221B.

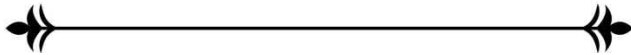
The next performance by the Red-Throated League will be on Sunday, August 11th, as part of the upcoming conference, “Dark Places, Wicked Companions, and Strange Experiences.”



(President's Word — continued from page 1)

- After many years of inspired leadership, Bob Brusic has retired from the helm of the Red Throated League, passing the torch to Karen Ellery. The first performance under Karen's direction was held at the University of Minnesota's Andersen Library, another change from the traditional location at the Pavék Museum.
- Upcoming theater opportunities include "The Play that Goes Wrong," May 7–12 at the Orpheum Theater; a three-story Agatha Christie collection "Rule of Thumb," July 12 – August 25 at the Park Square Theatre; and, coming in 2020, Jeffrey Hatcher's latest effort "Holmes and Watson."
- Planning continues for our next triennial conference at the Graduate Hotel (formerly the Commons Hotel) for August 9–11, 2019. Please mark your calendars and plan to attend.
- Another Robert Downey, Jr. Holmes movie will be coming out in December 2021.

As always, you can keep up with these and other items of interest in the monthly Notices to Norwegian Explorers members, emailed to those who have requested it, or available on our webpage under "Monthly Events." It's a great time to be a Sherlockian and a Norwegian Explorer. Thank you for your membership, and please spread the word to others. We're always looking for new members. 🐾



The First Name of "Sherlock"

BY PHILLIP BERGEM



n online exchange started with @pawkypuzzler (Margie Deck) on February 23rd, after she received her copy of the 1887 *Beeton's* facsimile, tweeting "I wonder what they thought of the name 'Sherlock Holmes?' Was Sherlock a common name then?"

Mattias Boström (mattias221b) replied in two Tweets: "It was a last name that wasn't too uncommon. When I'm searching for Sherlock in old UK newspapers, some 95% is unrelated Holmes articles about persons having Sherlock as a family name." "I don't think I've seen anyone in the 1880s and early 1890s with Sherlock as [a] first name."

Charles Prepolec (@sherlockeditor) found someone on www.findmypast.com named "Sherlock Cornelius Higgins" born in 1887 as well as a

few other examples. I chimed in with "There's another website that is useful — www.freebmd.org.uk. I searched for births & marriages from 1837 (earliest possible date) to 1890, first name 'Sherlock.' " I received two results from 1837 and one each from 1840, 1848, 1861, 1871, 1876, 1877, 1881, 1884 and 1886. Of these, seven were births and four were marriages. My deduction was that the first name of "Sherlock" was uncommon, but not unheard of before the stories were published.

Although none of the UK records for births in England and Wales identified a Sherlock Holmes born in or around 1854, one should remember the old aphorism: "Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence." 🐾



Parting Words and Trifles

- The Study Group continues its run under the very able guidance of the three Study Group leaders. The next session will be 2:00 pm on Saturday, April 20th, at the St. Anthony Park Library (2245 Como Avenue, St. Paul). The story of the month is "Abbey Grange," and the leader will be Steve Miller.
- There are four books which I would like to highlight.
 - *A Holmes by Any Other Name* — At the 2016 Explorers' Conference, one of the most memorable highlights was Bill Mason reciting a lengthy list of pastiche and parody names related to Sherlock Holmes. He has expanded his list considerably and turned it into a book. The alphabetical list includes details of the original source of the various names. If that isn't enough, there are alternative names for Dr. Watson and Professor Moriarty as well. A truly wonderful book. Available from Wildside Press (www.wildsidepress.com) or amazon.com for \$13 plus postage. (An electronic version is available for \$4.)
 - *A Chronology of the Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle: 2018 revised and Expanded Edition* — Brian Pugh of the Conan Doyle (Crowborough) Establishment has previously published several editions of this highly

useful resource. If you have a copy already, this is a worthy upgrade. If you don't have a copy, and if you ever plan to do any study or research into the life of "the Literary Agent," this is an essential addition to your library. In addition to the detailed chronology, with sources, there are numerous photos and maps, many of which I've never seen. Printed by MX Publishing and available from **amazon.com** for \$35 plus postage.

- *Deadly Harpoon* — The latest in the BSI Manuscript Series, this one highlighting "The Adventure of Black Peter." Even if I wasn't involved in this series, I would still recommend it for people who want to explore beyond the stories. Each book in the series reproduces the manuscripts, as written out by Conan Doyle, with a clear transcription and annotations, an illuminating provenance of the manuscript by Randall Stock, and many fascinating essays providing depth and background to the tale. Available from **bakerstreetirregulars.com/the-bsi-press/** for \$40 plus postage.
- *A Study in Scarlet* — If you have ever wanted to have a facsimile of the first appearance of Sherlock Holmes as he appeared in the *Beeton's Christmas Annual* of 1887, this is your opportunity. This version is nearly as good as the 1960 BSI/Sherlock Holmes Society of London printing, or the 1987 John Michael Gibson version, and it's a darn sight less expensive and much easier to come by. (The BSI/SHSL and Gibson editions typically cost \$300 – \$600, if you can find them. Even the 1987 Magico edition will now cost you over \$100.) It is very well produced

from a Gibson facsimile, with all of the pages, including advertisements, and color where appropriate. Available from **lifeisamazing.co.uk** for £15 plus £10 for postage to the U.S. and Canada. (Don't blame the publisher, Matt Wingett, for the postage cost. It is post-free in the U.K., but the demise of surface mail has resulted in high airmail postage costs between the U.K. and North America. Even at £25, about \$35, it's a worthwhile purchase.)

- And, although it's been brought up several times in this issue, I'll once again mention the upcoming Triennial Conference, "Dark Places, Wicked Companions, and Strange Experiences," at the Graduate Hotel on August 8–11, 2019 on the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis campus. These events are always a wonderful time, full of education, entertainment and camaraderie. Details and registration information can be found at **www.norwegianexplorers.org/2019_conference.html**. For local Explorers, this is a world-class conference being held in your own backyard. You don't even have to pay for airfare! 🐾



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