



THE NORWEGIAN EXPLORERS
OF MINNESOTA, INC.



EXPLORATIONS

FALL 2020

ISSUE NO. 81

"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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Editor's Desk

Lespite the pandemic, my wife and I traveled to Albuquerque, New Mexico, to visit a close friend and see the area. While there, I visited the nearby town of Moriarty and paid homage to John Bennett Shaw at the Frontier Bar. He would visit the saloon for The Brothers Three of Moriarty scion society's annual celebration, often with the theme of Unhappy-Birthday-You-Bastard-Moriarty. The bar has since closed, but I took some photos and praised the memory of John Bennett Shaw. While in the area I also took a day trip to Santa Fe where I had a wonderful lunch with Jon Lellenberg, a long-time friend of the Norwegian Explorers and the Sherlock Holmes Collections.

As mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter, the Norwegian Explorers Annual Dinner will be a virtual gathering this year. In order to partially make up for 2020 being, well, 2020, for this peculiar year, the Norwegian Explorers Board has decided to mail copies of the 2020 *Christmas Annual* to all

(Continued on page 11)

A Word from the President


BY TOM GOTTWALT

We continue in our Sherlockian world as many of us are in our professional and other worlds — virtually. One bright spot for me continues to be watching various old and newer Sherlockian movies, whether it's in a group Zoom gathering or on TV.

The delightful *Enola Holmes* movie, recently released on Netflix, has the potential to re-energize another generation's appreciation of Holmes and the Victorian era. I've heard from several parents that their children, both boys and girls, are so enamored with it that they are watching it multiple times. Many new enthusiasts of the more recent incarnations of Holmes and Sherlockian tales pick up the trail and follow it all the way to the Canon. Let's hope that happens for some of the young people learning of Enola Holmes (and her brothers) for the first time. I recommend encouraging any young people (and older ones, too) to watch the movie. Let them know that the game is still afoot.

After our Summer Hiatus we've resumed our Study Group meetings, though we'll be doing them via Zoom for the foreseeable future.

We're also planning to use Zoom for our Annual Dinner and Business Meeting on Thursday, December 3rd. We'll have an abbreviated format from past years, but we hope you can join us for that.

Despite our recent challenges and our move to a virtual world in almost all respects, it's still 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. 

June Study Group Session

BY AMANDA DOWNS



n June 20, 2020, the Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota held a monthly meeting online through Zoom, hosted by Karen Ellery. We met to discuss Gahan Wilson's book *Everybody's Favorite Duck*. Gahan Wilson was a lifelong fan of Holmes, and his quirky sense of humor is well-known by many who enjoyed his cartoons and illustrations in *Playboy*, *The New Yorker*, and *Colliers*. His talents extended into writing, and he was a prolific author of short stories and books.

The online meeting format allowed for a larger group to meet, and we welcomed visitors from several other BSI scion societies. Attendees included Norwegian Explorers Karen Ellery, Beverly and Curt Proud, Bob and Lucy Brusic, Mary Loving (also with Hounds of the Internet), Amanda Downs Champlin, Kit Gordon, Dick Sveum (also a member of many other scions), Steve Miller, Max Magee (also with the Notorious Canary Trainers), Phil Bergem, Bob Scharfman (and with Hugo's Companions, Hounds of the Baskerville), and Tom Gottwalt. Non-Explorers attending were Greg Ruby (Sherlockians of Baltimore and The Fourth Garrideb), Terry Cratin (Omaha Sherlockian Society), and Jerry Margolin (Sherlockian art and illustration collector, extraordinaire).

Everybody's Favorite Duck is a parody of classic detective stories, featuring detectives Enoch Bone and John Weston (spoofing Sherlock Holmes and John Watson). Bone and Weston come out of retirement to protect President Parker as he visits Waldo World (a Disneyland parody) to see History Hall, a place full of lifelike robots. Villainous plots and high-jinks abound as traps, disguises, and contraptions are unleashed upon the intrepid detectives. Readers at the meeting agreed that the Professor (based on Moriarty), the Mandarin (based on Fu Manchu), and Spectrobert (based on the French arch-villain Fantomas) are well-written villains with great lines.

Special guest Jerry Margolin spoke about his close friendship with Gahan Wilson and the art-

ist's drawings in his vast collection of Holmes-related art. Jerry shared a fantastic Gahan Wilson drawing with Holmes sitting down to puff his pipe while Jerry himself is portrayed petting a lap-dog Hound of the Baskervilles. Wilson's eye for weird, fun details is a joy. Jerry also showed his uncorrected, advanced proof of *Everybody's Favorite Duck*, a First Edition copy, and a limited edition (book #3) of the print run, all signed with added drawings by Gahan Wilson.

Karen Ellery shared her copy of *Gahan Wilson: 50 Years of Playboy Cartoons* with the group. The collection includes three volumes in a slipcase with a complete tribute to a clever, hilarious cartoonist with a career spanning decades.

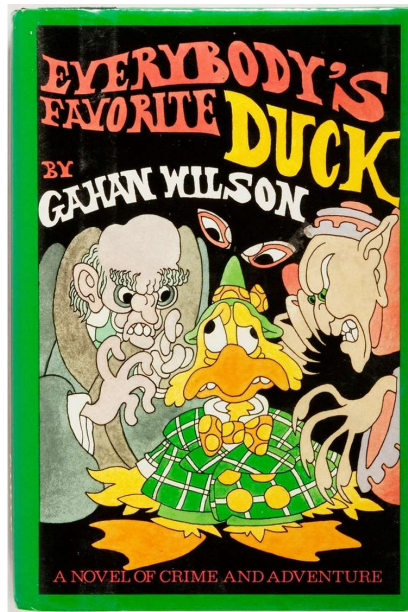
Dick Sveum told us he had seen many Gahan Wilson cartoons in print and thought of him as a celebrity cartoonist. But when they met in person, Wilson shared that he often had to bring 4-5 different cartoons to an editor and was often asked to redraw them. Wilson was a hard-working and approachable artist.

We discussed several talking points about the book, including how to classify this story. Steve Miller said he considered the book to be a pastiche and an homage to Holmes and Moriarty and other great villains of history.

Bob Brusic shared the idea that the book could be considered a burlesque genre book: a style in literature that mocks or imitates a subject by representing it in an ironic or ludicrous way. Phil Bergem considered the book as an homage; he felt there was not a Holmes flavor to the writing style, but Doyle's characters are echoed in the narrative. The story was almost like a James Bond movie with many fantastical traps and adventures.

Karen Ellery observed there are almost no deductions in the story; the character of Enoch Bone rides on reputation alone. Bone is a Nero Wolf parody with some added Holmes characteristics. The John Weston character is a man of action with a history of romancing women. And true to form, Anthene (the daughter of villainous Spectrobert) is drawn to Weston.

We discussed the nature of artifice versus reality in the book. The amusement park setting of Waldo's World is an escapist tribute to artifice,



and Art Waldo is an obvious stand-in for Walt Disney. The book was written in the 1980s, an era of decadence and prosperity. Mary Loving noted that the character of President Parker, who visits Waldo's World, might be based on then-President Reagan. Phil Bergem thought that Parker's character was a fresh portrayal of a general presidential personality, a parody of a modern political image.

The book had science fiction elements as well as adventure and mystery. In an era before cell phones and laptop computers, Wilson imagined automatons that could easily pass for real humans. Tom Gottwalt said the Waldo's World setting might appeal to readers whose intellect is not at the same level as that of Holmes. The Bones character is also more physical than cerebral.

Some criticisms of *Everybody's Favorite Duck* came up in the discussion. When their plans are foiled, the book's villains do not seek to alter their tactics. They are very much like comic book villains, with gadgets and plots rather than cunning, flexible minds. Bev noted that the bad guys were dastardly; they did not care who or how many people would be killed. And Bones is often racing ahead, calling people idiots and behaving like a clichéd version of Holmes. Bob Brusie agreed that he didn't see a lot of the Canonical Holmes and Watson in the story.

On a lighter note, Bev said that the story's epilogue tickled her funny bone. Mary Loving also enjoyed it as a bizarre and awry sort of Scooby-Doo adventure. The little asides that Weston gives to the reader about Bones were amusing glimpses into the character of Bones. The book is worth reading as a bracing, enjoyable romp by an author whose humor and dedication to Holmes are well-known and respected in the Sherlockian community. 🐼

The Rivals of Sherlock Holmes, Better Than No Holmes at All?

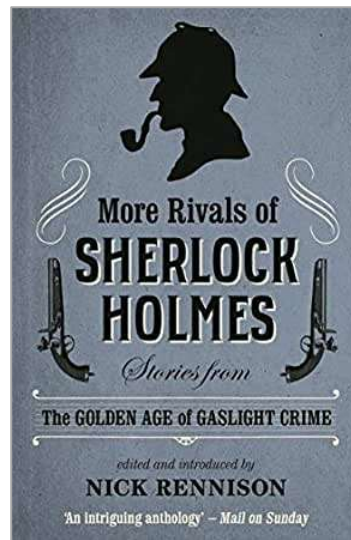
BY ROBERT BRUSIC



For those of a certain persuasion it is difficult to imagine a world devoid of Sherlock Holmes. Yet, for much of the English-speaking world, that was the case for a number of years at the close of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century.

It must have been a little like hiking across a barren desert without the taste of water.

To slake that thirst, a number of writers put pen to paper to fill the void. There were dozens and dozens of magazines like the *Strand* and dozens and dozens of detectives solving fictional crime. These rivals of Sherlock Holmes included such redoubtable figures as Lady Molly of Scotland Yard, Miss Florence Cusack — note the ladies — and Dick Donovan.¹ Some had specialized qualities like the blind detective Max Carrados, the completely ruthless Horace Dorrington, and the scientific Dr. John Thorndyke.



Most of these crime solvers are forgotten today, though some of them can be seen on television under the bucket title *The Rivals of Sherlock Holmes*. Their stories lack the depth and staying power of Sherlock Holmes, especially when the latter was resurrected; most of them just faded away. Still, for a time they

filled a gap, providing some fictional nourishment in a barren land. To be fair, some of them are still worth reading (and watching) today.

About fourteen of these fill-the-gap detectives appear in a book entitled *More Rivals of Sherlock Holmes*, edited and introduced by Nick Rennison. Most of the stories are slow going for my taste; and, though I read them one at a time before bedtime, I can rarely recall the story line in the morning.

Nonetheless, one short story from 1895, in particular, was of passing interest to me. It is a

¹ *Editor's note:* Dick Donovan was the pen name of J.E. Preston Muddock (1843–1934). He wrote nearly three hundred detective and mystery stories, many with a character also named Dick Donovan. When the stories first appeared, Donovan was almost as popular as Sherlock Holmes, and four of them were used to fill the gap in *The Strand* between COPP and SILV. Despite his abundant output, the names of neither Muddock nor Donovan are well known today. His daughter, Dorothy, married the *Strand* editor, H. Greenhough Smith, in 1900.

story by David Christie Murr featuring John Pym entitled “The Case of Muevos Y Sagra.” The editor of the book, Nick Rennison, discusses the influence of Conan Doyle in this story. Rennison makes the interesting point that Pym is not so much a rival of Sherlock Holmes as he is a copy. Rennison presses his point by noting how the influence of Holmes lurks in the background of the narrative, particularly in Pym’s mastery of arcane subjects — his experiments in chemistry, his pipe smoking, his own faithful Watson, and, egregiously, in the plot of the story. The point is made by quoting the exciting conclusion of the case.

“Now” said Pym, ‘let us have a look....’ I flashed the lantern, and there on the floor, struggling in the butterfly net, was a gigantic spider covered with coarse, reddish gray hair.... ‘This, gentlemen (said Pym), is the largest and most formidable of the Mygalida. It is commonly known as the great South American Hairy Spider. It is exceedingly fierce and venomous....’”

One is driven to suggest that this may be a copy (or even a pastiche) of the canonical detective.

“Muevos Y Sagra” is not, admits Rennison, the best story in the bunch. But he speculates that it must have given something of a thrill to readers thirsty for thrills and chills in those Holmesless decades. While the great detective was away, lesser lights played. And the field was open to those lesser lights, now known as the rivals of Sherlock Holmes. 🕷

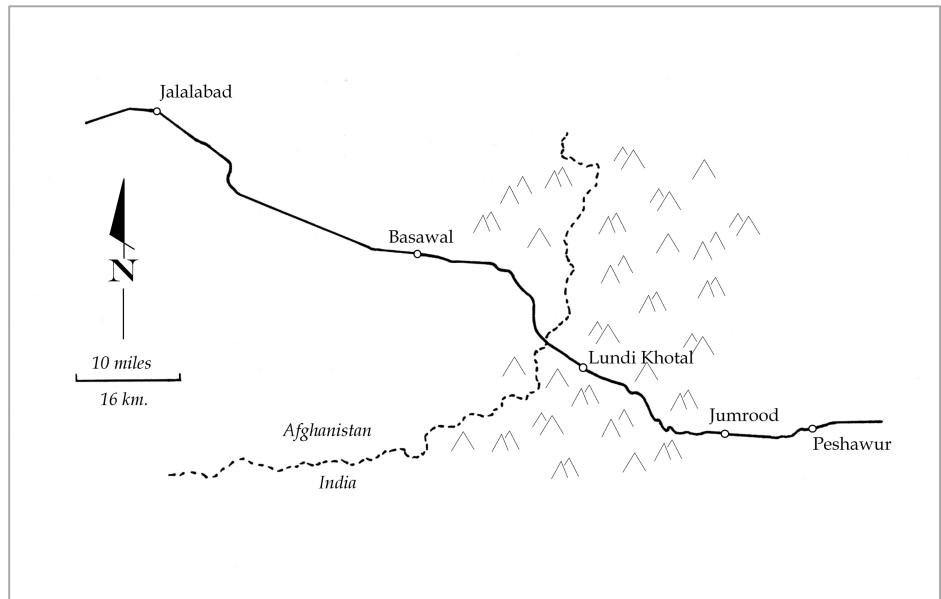
My Time at University and in the Military (part 2)

BY JOHN H. WATSON, M.D.
EDITED BY PHILLIP BERGEM



ere we continue the serialization of a long-lost letter written by John H. Watson to his niece, in which he reveals heretofore unknown details of his time in military service...

I HAD BEEN assigned to the Fifth, or, more appropriately, the 5th (Northumberland Fusiliers) Regiment of Foot, who had already been stationed in India for ten years. During my short time with them I learned the account of their recent movements, and I made notes that I still possess and have in front of me. When the Second Afghan War started in November 1878, they had been part of the 2nd Division Peshawur Valley Field Force. During the First Campaign, the Fifth had spent



Khyber Pass and Vicinity

time garrisoned at a fort in Jumrood guarding the eastern side of the Khyber Pass, and at Basawal on the west side of the Pass. Following the peace terms that marked the end of the First Campaign they were marched about 200 miles east to Changi where they were then stationed for a few months.

In August [1879] they had received orders to return to England. The joy the men had felt by this news was quickly dashed when the ghazis attacked the embassy at Cabul in early September, killing the diplomatic mission. The second phase of the Afghan War had begun. The sailing orders were then cancelled, and they were moved back to Lundi Khotal, within the Khyber Pass, protecting supply lines. In April they returned to Basawal where they had been stationed a year previously.¹⁹ They soon moved 30 miles west to the fort at Jalalabad, and this is where I met up with them in mid May.

My journey from Bombay was routine as I travelled first by train and then with a supply convoy. Things became less routine when we got to the Pass where I was exposed to the stench and sight

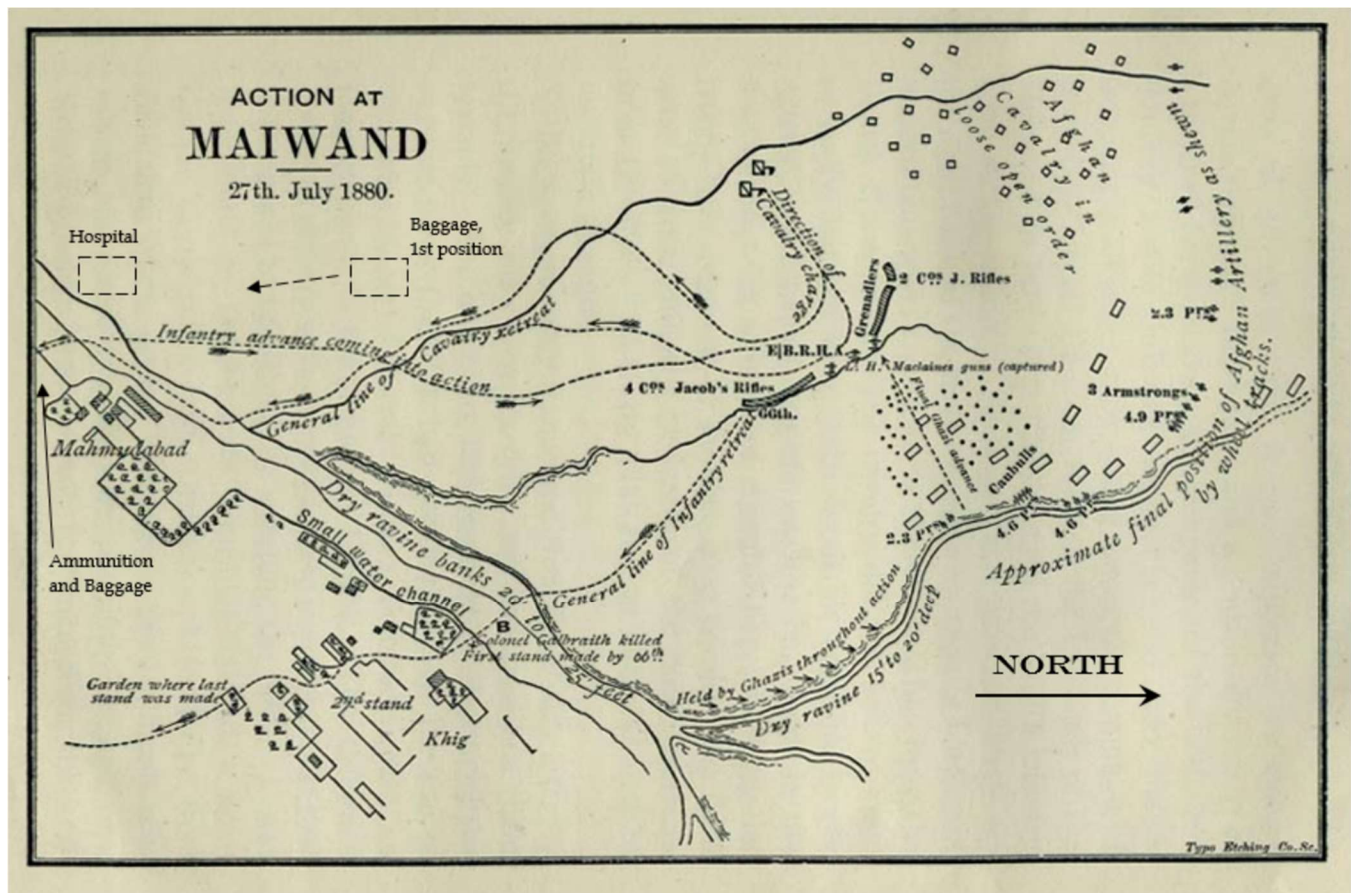
of the thousands of pack animals that had died trying to supply the war effort. As it turned out, I was with the Fifth for only a few weeks. There were a few raids which I accompanied, and at last I made use of my medical training, but most of my time was spent with nothing to do or treating minor ailments and heat exhaustion.

In early June, in the peculiar ways of the military, I and several others were ordered on to Candahar and attached to the Berkshires.²⁰ My life was soon to change in ways I could not have fathomed. We travelled west to Cabul and then, with a military escort, made the 300-mile trek to Candahar.

The small troupe reached Candahar in the last days of June, and we reported for duty.²¹ There was enough activity around the Cantonment that I was immediately put into action tending to the sick and wounded, quite different from my time at Jalalabad. It was at this time that I was assigned my orderly, Private Neil Murray. As I was from a humble background, and not accustomed to having a servant, we quickly became friends, which

was to my benefit before a month had passed.

At the beginning of the year [1880] the Berkshires had been in Kurrachee, on the coast in the northern part of the Bombay Presidency.²² They advanced to Candahar, arriving by April, and had been kept occupied with drilling and various skirmishes. The waiting was to change. Brigadier-General Burrowes was ordered to investigate the activities of Ayoub Khan, who was reported to be amassing an army to the west. A large contingent, including much of the 66th, headed out from Candahar on July 5th. We followed the dusty road, crossing the Argandab and Kushki Nakud rivers, and by the 10th we had reached the Helmund River, opposite the city of Girishk. It was here, a few days later, that several companies, native infantry and cavalymen, saw action against a large group of mutineers. They were successful in routing the enemy and captured several of the guns. Following that we returned to the encampment at Kushki Nakud where a field-hospital had been set up, and I helped attend to the few men who had been wounded or otherwise injured.



Maiwand battleground map [Adapted from *The Afghan Wars, 1878-1880*, by Archibald Forbes (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1892), p. 293]


We had a few days in which to rest, but reports had come that there was a small advanced-guard of Ayoub's men who were in Maiwand, about ten miles north of our encampment. On the morning of July 27th our force of over 2,500 men and a dozen guns set out. To my surprise, the band played joyfully as we marched, and the men were excited about the prospect of more action against ghazis. The ease with which we had defeated the enemy at Girishk had set the day's expectations.

The column made good time in reaching the objective, halting to regroup occasionally, and we passed several small villages until we reached one — which I later found to be called Mundabad — and stopped. The advance column had crossed a deep ravine, dry given the lack of rain and the heat, and set up the artillery positions on a rough plain west of a second village called Khig.²³ The surgeons and medical staff were instructed to set up a primitive field hospital across the broad ravine from Mundabad, situated between the baggage wagons arranged near the action and the reserve located closer to the village. Although it was only mid-morning, the day was already extremely hot, and many canteens were already low. From our position, we watched the start of the battle.

As I write this, the first part of the day remains clear to me and comes back as if it had happened last week. It began with several volleys of gunfire from E brigade. Burrowes advanced with several companies of the 66th, Grenadiers, and Jacobs Rifles, then set up their positions. The noise from the guns and rifles was thunderous, and the smoke reduced the visibility. The Afghanis returned with musket or rifle fire, but it had little effect. Then, after about 30 minutes, the noise increased appreciably as the ghazi guns opened up and began pouring round after round into our positions. Not long after this, the wounded began to arrive at our makeshift hospital. It was whilst we were attending to the first of the wounded that the 66th's Medical Officer, Surgeon-Major Preston, was himself wounded in the back with a bullet, either a stray or from sniper fire. One of my fellow surgeons attended to him as I carried on the work he had been providing to a soldier.

This was my first activity under extreme fire. I had been involved in some skirmishes whilst with the Fifth in northern Afghanistan, but none had been this treacherous. I am pleased to admit that I, and my fellow surgeons and medical staff, rose to the occasion and, remembering our training,

performed our duties as needed. Murray stayed with me and assisted the Medical Staff Corps with providing water, moving patients about, and wiping the ever-present sweat from my brow.

Once, while catching my breath, I looked through the haze, dust, and powder smoke to see, in the distance, women carrying water to the ghazi fighters. We would all wish for some of that water in the time to come. At one point the smoke cleared somewhat, and I could see a woman pick up one of the ghazi colours and call to the men around her.²⁴ Her action seemed to vitalize the men, and they fought with greater ferocity. As I continued to attend to the wounded I would occasionally look out onto the battlefield. A short time later, through another brief clearing of smoke, I saw the woman with the flag fall to the ground, presumably shot. The dust and smoke closed around her again, and my attention was solely focused on treating the increasing number of wounded. 

Endnotes

- ¹⁹ Details were confirmed with *A History of the Northumberland Fusiliers, 1674-1902*, by H. M. Walker (London: John Murray, 1919), pp. 410-415. (Accessed at the University of Minnesota, Ames Library.)
- ²⁰ Properly known as the 66th (Berkshire) Regiment of Foot.
- ²¹ In STUD Watson wrote that he "succeeded in reaching Candahar in safety, where I found my regiment, and at once entered upon my new duties." This implies that he met up with the Fifth Northumberland Fusiliers in Kandahar, but, as they never reached that area of Afghanistan, he must have meant that he found the 66th Berkshire Regiment.
- ²² Details were confirmed with *The 66th Berkshire Regiment, a Brief History of its Services at Home and Abroad, from 1758 to 1881*, by J. Percy Groves (London: Hamilton, Adams & Co., 1887), pp. 96-118.
- ²³ The villages are better known today as Mahmudabad and Khik.
- ²⁴ This must have been Malalai of Maiwand, referred to by some as "The Afghan Jeanne d'Arc."

Part 3 will continue in the next issue.



Editor's note: Chris is a new member of the Norwegian Explorers, having joined this past summer. He accepted our request to write about his attendance of the virtual conference "A Scintillation of Scions XIII" (a.k.a. "SOS At Home"), held on Saturday, June 13, 2020. We appreciate his debut in Explorations.

Scintillation Sincerity

BY CHRISTOPHER ATKINSON

The Scintillation of Scions virtual conference ceremoniously created and confirmed the sense of place for this Sherlockian. As one of the newest members of The Norwegian Explorers, the Scintillation conference reminded me of rites and ritual religiously respected by many a Sherlockian, namely those in attendance at the conference and those attending in spirit: rituals richly embraced by use of the entire English vocabulary. While my spontaneity in producing perfectly prodigious phrases fails momentarily, I felt welcomed as in days of old.

Yes, this Sherlockian is not an utter novice to The Game. In the early 1990s, my Dad and I were members in The Sign of Four Faces, Sioux Falls, South Dakota under the tutelage of Mr. Cary Wencil. My long-standing favorite story from the Canon is "The Adventure of The Musgrave Ritual." I would enjoy hearing what your favorite story is.

The spirit of adding meaning to story was a main theme of the Scintillation conference. Attendees enjoyed the graceful prose of expert presenters including Ray Betzner, Ashley Polasek, Steve Mason, Julie McKuras, Howard Ostrom, Daniel Stashower, and Dana Richards. Their sincere efforts showed in their preparation and enjoyment of being among friends. I learned a lot.

Not to be left medium rare, a double encore entrenched the afternoon as a memorable, well-done event. A running of "Silver Blaze" featured Beetlebaum. Lastly, a final tribute to The Master featured Larry Hagman (J. R. Ewing from *Dallas*) in the 1976 film *The Return of the World's Greatest Detective*.

"A Scintillation of Scions 2020" provided something for both the novice and experienced Sherlockian. A variety of talks and entertainment provided avenues for fellowship and enjoyment. In closing, the fond feeling of being among the throng

of Sherlockians again was the icing on this conference's already sweet cake. 🍰

Doctor Finds Cure for Hiatus Malaise

BY JEFF FALKINGHAM

Have you ever wondered what Watson did between Sherlock's "death" at Reichenbach in *The Final Problem* and the Great Detective's triumphant return in *The Empty House*? W. P. Lawler has an answer!

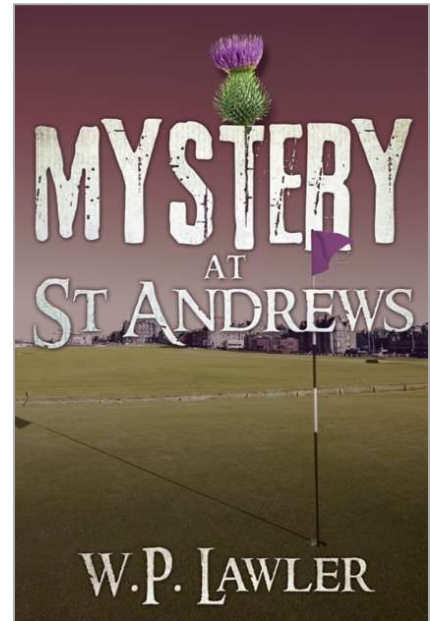
In *Mystery at St Andrews* (MX Publishing, 2013), Mr. Lawler proposes that: (1) Watson's grief over the loss of his friend was so intense that (2) his wife Mary suggests that he take a golf trip to Scotland, where (3) he immediately joins a former adversary in trying to bring another old adversary to justice.

It's an odd mix. Posit #1 will be totally acceptable to Sherlockians; #3 even more so to Watsonians; #2 a bit of a surprise to Doyle devotees, as there is scant evidence in the Canon of Watson ever having any interest in golf. But Lawler has the good doctor himself explain

that, though his golfing days are now few and far between (due to his partnership with Holmes, then demands of a growing family), he had often, in the past, relied on a round or two of golf to revive his spirits.

So, "the game is [soon] afoot," eh? Well ... not so fast.

This is Mr. Lawler's first attempt at a Sherlockian pastiche. As such, you'd think he would have followed the tried-and-true style of the popular



short stories. Instead, he chose the two-part format used, to much less acclaim, in *A Study in Scarlet* and *The Valley of Fear*. As a result, we get something reminiscent of a *Columbo* episode from the 1970s, where we are 20 minutes into the show before the detective makes his first appearance. Here, although Watson is billed as the story's central figure, there's no sign of him until we reach Part II, nearly halfway through the 254-page book.

That's not to say that Part I is devoid of value! To the contrary, it provides an interesting back story, in which we learn much about the village of St Andrews, perhaps too much about the Royal and Ancient Golf Course that lies at the heart of it, and almost (but not quite) enough about the characters that frequent it. We meet most of these characters, not at 221B Baker Street, but at MacTavish's, the pub that serves as the stately golf course's 19th hole.

Key players, outlined by the narrator's brief descriptions of them, include Angus MacTavish, the "short, round" tavern owner; local yokel regulars Mike Mueller, a "large, old, red-bearded eavesdropper," and Andy Kirk, a "twelve stone, over six feet tall" cooper (barrel-maker); plus a pair of out-of-town newcomers in Col. C. M. Sebastian, "a tall figure in a black top hat," and Addy, "one of the most beautiful women he had ever seen." Finally, and most intriguing, there is a mysterious stranger known only as "the Quiet One."

In case readers don't readily pick up on the clues, the unnamed narrator immediately confirms (no spoilers here) that Sebastian is the stepson of Augustus Moran, and that Addy is, in fact, Irene Adler Norton. The author is not nearly so forthcoming about the "rather thin, tall, middle-aged man" they call the Quiet One. In early chapters (named after each of the 18 holes on the "Auld" Course) we learn that: (A) Quiet One is a mute; (B) his name is Charles Hutchings; (C) he is a golf savant; (D) he has come to St Andrews for the sole purpose of improving his golf game. In later chapters, we learn that only one of these is true.

While the Front 9 chapters set the stage, "the game" picks up pace on the Back 9. With Watson now the narrator, Part II of the tale reads much more like your typical Sherlockian adventure. The newly widowed Adler Norton fears for her life after discovering, upon her return from America to Europe, a plan by Sebastian Moran to import, through Scotland, a dangerous new weapon that could alter history. With her irresistible charm,

she has no trouble enlisting the aid of Watson. The doctor sees it as a perfect remedy for ending his malaise. He seizes the opportunity not only to avenge Sherlock's death, but also to demonstrate his own mastery of methods he learned from his old friend.

The second half of the book is delightful! A cat-and-mouse game matching Addy and her "agents" (including an aspiring caddie named Wiggins) against Col. Moran and his henchmen is full of twists and turns. The location and possession of the weapon's secret plans and miniature prototype change hands from one to another and back again. Watson is on an emotional roller coaster, as he balances the thrill of the adventure, the challenge of filling Sherlock's shoes, and increasing fear for Mrs. Norton's life — as well as his own.

Non-fans might find the highly detailed golf matches, in both halves of the book, to be "too much golf" (as if there is such a thing!). That's about the only major flaw I could find in the story. A tip of my deerstalker cap to the author's craftiness in creating and maintaining the enigma of the Quiet One — right up to the end! A minor criticism might be that, after playing such a major role in Part I, the likeable Andy Kirk is nowhere to be found in Part II.

Also missing is Sherlock Holmes himself. Of course, we all know that when this story takes place, the "dead" detective is otherwise occupied, traveling as a Norwegian Explorer named Siger-son. Right? 🦋



Sherlockian Connections with Star Trek



In a past issue (# 74, Spring/Summer 2018) we explored the actor connections between the Doctor Who television series and Sherlock Holmes. In this issue we would like to examine the actors who played parts in both Star Trek television shows and movies and in Sherlock Holmes productions.

Benedict Cumberbatch portrayed Sherlock Holmes in the BBC series *Sherlock* and Kahn in *Star Trek Into Darkness* (2013).

Christopher Plummer was Sherlock Holmes in *Murder by Decree* (1979) and General Chang in *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country* (1991).

Leonard Nimoy famously played Spock in the Original Series and in many movies. He also played Sherlock Holmes on stage in a Royal Shakespeare production in 1976.



In *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country*, Spock says, “An ancestor of mine maintained that if you eliminate the impossible, whatever remains — however improbable — must be the truth.” (This was

thanks to the director/writer Nicholas Meyer.)

In a non-Sherlockian connection, Nimoy and John de Lancie (Q on *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and several other of the franchise series) voiced characters in a stage performance of *The Lost World*, produced by Alien Voices in 1997.

William Shatner, who was Captain Kirk in the Original Series and in many movies, played Stapleton in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1972). Shatner, co-writing with Michael Tobias, wrote a book called *Believe*, that involved Arthur Conan Doyle and Harry Houdini.

Brent Spiner, playing Data, and LeVar Burton, playing Geordi La Forge, acted as Sherlock Holmes and John Watson on the holodeck in several episodes of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* (“Elementary, Dear Data” (1988) and “Ship in a Bottle” (1993)). Daniel Davis portrayed Moriarty in both episodes.



Marina Sirtis acted as Counsellor Deanna Troi on *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and several related movies. She was also Lucretia Venucci in the Granada series episode of “The Six Napoleons” (1986).

And now a few more obscure connections:

Frank Langella played Sherlock Holmes in a stage production of “Sherlock Holmes: The Strange Case of Alice Faulkner” for the Williamstown Theatre Festival. It was filmed for television

by A&E and shown as an episode of *Standing Room Only* in 1981. He was also Minister Jaro in three episodes of *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* in 1993.

Fritz Weaver played Holmes in the 1965 Broadway musical *Baker Street: A Musical Adventure of Sherlock Holmes*. He was also a character called Kovat in an episode of *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* titled “Tribunal” (1994). (Thanks to Roger Johnson and Greg Ruby’s website for The Fourth Garrideb for this connection.)

And, thanks to **mentalfloss.com**, we have the following: “In a small, nearly unrecognizable moment in [*The Next Generation*], a screen displaying a United Federation of Planets call log shows a ship named ... the USS *Sherlock Holmes* and given the registry number NCC-221B.... [I]t appears only briefly, and if viewers aren’t watching carefully, they’ll miss it.” Evidently such screens were shown in the episodes “Heart of Glory” and “Symbiosis” (both 1988).

If readers know of additional connections, let us know, and we will include them in a future issue. 🐾

Modern-setting Holmes Pastiche Works Well


BY PHILLIP BERGEM

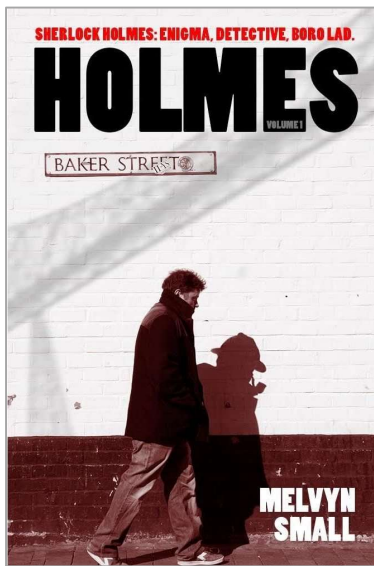
During my High School years, I lived near Middlesbrough, an industrial town in northeast England about 200 miles north of London. When I read that a book of Holmes stories was set in Middlesbrough, I knew I had to get it. I confess that I was not expecting much, especially since I oftentimes find pastiches wanting, but I was pleasantly surprised by how much I liked these stories.

There are actually two collections, *Holmes Volume 1* and *Holmes Volume 2*, written by Melvyn Small. Each contains six short stories inspired by the tales of Arthur Conan Doyle. These are set in contemporary England, and Sherlock Holmes is a savvy computer hacker, with few friends, but incredibly observant and able to make leaps of deductive reasoning. So far it sounds familiar, right? Except this isn’t a re-hash of BBC’s *Sherlock*. These adventures — they’re really not mysteries, but then neither were the originals — are set in and around Middlesbrough instead of London.

Small manages to present a series of interesting accounts, many interconnected with an overarching situation. There are plenty of familiar names and characters to delight the reader. This Holmes is a cross between Jonny Lee Miller and Benedict Cumberbatch and speaks the curse-filled lingo of a Boro lad, with many phrases I haven't heard since my youth. Most importantly, Small captured the relationship between Holmes and Watson. They spend much of their time along Baker Street, in a pub called The Twisted Lip, drinking a beer called Engineer's Thumb. All but the beer name is real and pre-date the stories. If you wish to get even more involved, you can use Google Streetview to explore the area to get an added dimension.

This was my first experience with print-on-demand books through Amazon, and it worked out well. If you decide to explore North Yorkshire with Holmes and Watson, I'd suggest getting both volumes 1 and 2. (After volume 1 you will want to read more.) The combined price is a reasonable \$24. There is a third book, a novella-length story (90 pages) called *The Darlington Substitution*. I wound up buying it to get free Amazon shipping, but it was a worthwhile addition. My only complaint would be that Small squandered an opportunity with the name. "The Darlington Substitution Scandal" is a case mentioned in SCAN. As there is the town of Darlington close to Middlesbrough, this story could have included the area, but instead involves a person by that name.

The complaint is petty and did not stop me from enjoying the story. If you would like to read of a modern-day Holmes partaking in engaging adventures, and you don't mind a bit of crude language, I recommend *Holmes Volumes 1 and 2*, and *The Darlington Substitution Scandal*, by Melvyn Small. They are also available digitally for Kindle. If you like that format, there is a fourth book available, *Holmes and the Riverside Thriller*. 



Frederic Dorr Steele Memorial

BY BURT WOLDER AND ANDREW MALEC



After Frederic Dorr Steele's death in 1944 a memorial exhibition of his drawings was held at a gallery in New York City. In the catalogue, Christopher Morley had this to say:

Sometimes our Baker Street Irregulars get a little noisy at their dinners; but there was always a period of attentive and affectionate silence. It was when Freddy Steele, smiling in his quiet shy way, would rise to say a few words impromptu. Most of us had known and admired his draughtsman skill since our boyhoods; he had done as much as any man to visualize and fix for us the lineaments and attitudes of Sherlock Holmes. He was never too tired, or too busy, to join us when he could, and I like to think he knew how deep our homage was. We did not forget that he had done many other things too; but on those occasions, to us as well as to him, his love of Sherlock was paramount. We send after him our united love and admiration in memory.

Steele's ashes were interred without a marker in the Steele/King family plot at the Albany Rural Cemetery in Menands, New York. This discovery by Linda Hunt prompted a committee of concerned Irregulars to come together to solicit funds for construction and placement of a grave marker, mindful of the successful Vincent Starrett memorial in 1986. Steele's descendants were consulted, gave their blessing, and will be kept fully apprised about all developments.

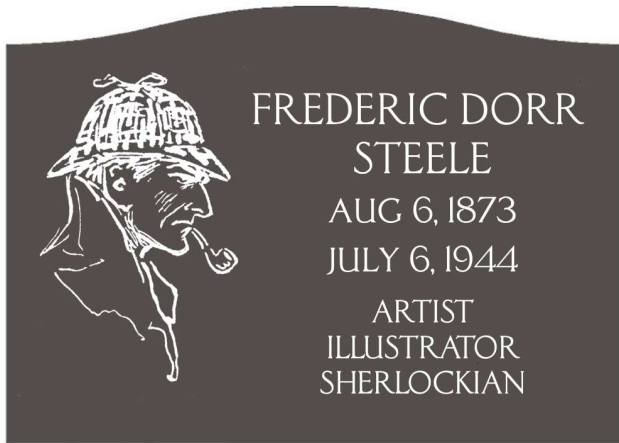
Fundraising began in mid-June 2020 and quickly reached its goal. Over \$6,000 was raised for the grave marker, its perpetual care, and eventual refurbishment. The Norwegian Explorers as a group, as well as several individual members individually, made generous contributions to the campaign. A video about FDS accompanied the campaign and can still be seen here:

<https://youtu.be/oT3POIni-fg>.

A nonprofit corporation, Frederic Dorr Steele Memorial, Inc., has been created in New York State to both facilitate the completion of the grave marker project and to sponsor future efforts to commemorate Steele. We are honored to serve as

Directors of that nonprofit along with Linda Hunt, Harrison Hunt, and Bob Katz.

As we write, arrangements are being finalized on the production and placement of the grave marker. A new web site is being developed to facilitate the work of the nonprofit corporation, and to explore and develop future endeavors in recognition of Steele and his work. 🐾



(Editor's Desk – continued from page 1)

members. Accompanying this issue is a note regarding your membership and dues status.

We know how some things can slip and are therefore forgiving. However, if you haven't paid dues since 2018, we will assume that you are no longer interested, and this will be the last mailing you will receive unless you renew your membership. This can be done by check paid to "The Norwegian Explorers" or by PayPal. Details are on the Norwegian Explorers website:

www.norwegianexplorers.org/membership.html

~ Phil 🐾

Left Coast Sherlockian Symposium 2020

The Left Coast Sherlockian Symposium was held on October 10th. As is so common at present, the meeting was a virtual one with people attending using Zoom. There were 118 attendees and 10 panellists and organizers involved. A number of Norwegian Explorers participated, including Tim Johnson, Melissa Aho, Richard Sveum, Julie McKuras, Brad Keefauver and Phil Bergem. Speakers were Les

Klinger, Angela Misri, Mina Hoffman and fellow Explorers Bonnie MacBird and Rob Nunn.

Rob started off with a presentation about how he uses Sherlockian stories and themes to teach 10 and 11-year-old children in school. Rob was engaging and said he found that every kid enjoyed reading more at the end of the year than they did at the beginning. A memorable line from Rob was that Sherlockiana is all about friendship. This prompted a comment from Patrick Ewing of "Come for the stories, stay for the friendship."

Following Rob was Angela Misri, author of the Portia Adams adventure series, set in 1930s London where she inherited 211 Baker Street. Angela shared her experiences and provided advice as a pastiche writer. Angela is quite humble, very nice and treats Conan Doyle with great respect. She said it is difficult to write within a universe started by someone else

Bonnie MacBird was up next, delayed by a power outage at her flat in London. She spoke of the area along and near Baker Street, historically and in the present day. Her presentation had fascinating photos and information.

Next up was a showing of the film "Sherlock Holmes and the Furtive Festivity," presented by the director, Mina Hoffman, and the writer, Caroline Duessel. The film, completed as a senior thesis project, was extremely well done and well received by the audience. Mina talked about the 6 months of preparation required for 6 days of shooting to produce a 13-minute film.

The final presentation was by Les Klinger, reading from letters written between John Watson and Arthur Conan Doyle. Les is always entertaining, and this day proved no exception. The letters first appeared in Klinger's "A Study in Correspondence" printed in *Papers at An Exhibition* (Baker Street Irregulars, 2009) with a few additions from other sources.

Following the speaking sessions there was some social time hosted by speakers and organizers. This gave everyone the opportunity to talk amongst ourselves, share thoughts and discuss the events. This time included an added treat in the form of Professor D.R. Schreiber, a historical conjurer who performed a series of magic tricks.

The entire event was fun and well organized. Congratulations to Elinor Gray, Beth Gallego, the speakers and all other folks involved. 🐾

Parting Words and Trifles



In our last issue there was an article on publishing imprints that have been used by Explorers. There is one more that has come to our attention. Melissa Aho printed her book *A Short History of the Mosque in Minnesota* under her personal publishing house "Second Goldfish." As yet, she has not used it for anything Sherlockian, but she says, "hopefully one day."



- Congratulations to Michael V. Eckman, who had his article, "Back to His Native Strand," in the Summer 2020 *Baker Street Journal*. It combines his interests in Sherlock Holmes and P. G. Wodehouse. The same issue also has excerpts of a talk Nicholas Meyer gave during his book tour for *The Adventure of the Peculiar Protocols*. Many Explorers were fortunate to hear Mr. Meyer talk about his book, and several other interesting topics, at last year's Explorers Annual Dinner.
- Congratulations also go out to Ray Riethmeier for a letter in the second issue of the newly launched *Sherlock Holmes Magazine*.
- Continuing with virtual Sherlockian events, the Six Napoleons of Baltimore, Watson's Tin Box of Ellicott City, the Sherlockians of Baltimore, and the Pratt Library will be hosting A Saturday with Sherlock Holmes: My Favorite Sherlockian Character on Saturday, November 14th, from 9:00 A.M. to noon CST. "Who is your favorite canonical character, apart from Holmes and Watson?"

Jabez Wilson? Kitty Winter? Inspector Lestrade? Discover who our speakers have chosen — and see if you agree with them." (Phil Bergem will be speaking about Birdy Edwards.) The program is free and online, but you must register for it at:

https://calendar.prattlibrary.org/event/saturday_with_sherlock_at_the_pratt

- We look forward to interacting virtually with you at the Norwegian Explorers Annual Dinner on Thursday, December 3rd. It will be a Zoom meeting, but one we expect will still be fun. Copies of the 2020 *Christmas Annual* will be mailed out to all members who are current (paid up for 2019 or 2020) with dues.
- The 2021 New York Festivities will all be done remotely as well. (Which is a pity since it is a year with 2, 2, and 1 in it.) Thus far we have heard of only the BSI Dinner (still invite only) and the Distinguished Speakers Lecture (open to all) taking place, but additional events are sure to be announced. Tom will send out information when it becomes available. 🐾



The now-closed Frontier Bar in Moriarty, New Mexico, in 2020. Site of John Bennett Shaw's famous (or infamous) Brothers Three of Moriarty meetings.

The Norwegian Explorers

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