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"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."

Contents

Editor's Desk	1
Sherlockian Sightings	2
A Brief History of the BSI	2
The Hound of the Baskervilles	5
Study Group – LAST	6
A Visit to Andersen Library	8
Shakespeare in the Canon	9
Parting Words and Trifles	10

Editor's Desk

These past eighteen months have brought a great deal of death among my family, friends, and family of friends. This includes a cousin of my wife, a cousin and an uncle of my mother, a good friend of ours, the father and an uncle of Tim Johnson, and too many others. Among Sherlockians, last year we mourned the death of Susan Rice (BSI "Beeswing" 1991; ASH: "Practical Handbook of Bee Culture with some Observations Upon the Segregation of the Queen" 1981). In the last issue of *Explorations* we covered the passing of Jon L. Lellenberg (BSI, invested as "Rodger Prescott" 1974). More recently we must note the deaths of J. Randolph Cox (BSI, "The Conk-Singleton Forgery Case" 1967) who passed away on September 14, 2021, and Michael F. Whelan (BSI, "Vincent Spaulding" 1974) who died in late October.

Randy Cox was a long-time member of the Norwegian Explorers. I knew him as a kind, wise sage who was a fun conversationalist. The Norwegian Explorers compiled a Festschrift with essays by people who knew him well and a selection of his own writings. The booklet was handed out at the 2013 Conference, *Sherlock Holmes Through*



Randy Cox

Time and Place. Randy recently wrote to me about how much he enjoyed *Explorations*, especially the coverage of the Study Group meetings. (Copies of the Festschrift are still available. Contact me if you are interested.)

Jon and Mike were both large men with large personalities, extremely productive, and each left an astounding legacy of writings and lives that they influenced. Both were honorary members of the Norwegian Explorers, and friends of the group and many of the members. Jon was very supportive of the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, was on the editorial board of the newsletter, and assisted as an advisor since the group's inception.

Mike was "Wiggins" of the Baker Street Irregulars from 1997 until 2020. Under his leadership the membership grew more diverse and international than it was previously, and The BSI Press started producing a greater number of wonderfully written and interesting books.

The strong personalities of Mike and Jon did lead to conflict between the two of them, but both treated me with kindness and were supportive of various projects of mine. I valued them both for their friendship and miss them deeply. ~ Phil



Sherlockian Sightings

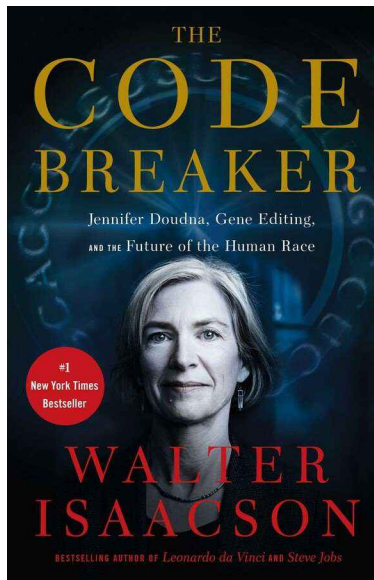
BY MICHAEL V. ECKMAN



s I read books, I keep my eyes open for references to Sherlock, Doyle, and the Canon. Below is one I found that is timely in this COVID Era.

The Code Breaker by Walter Isaacson

Walter Isaacson's *The Code Breaker* provides a history of CRISPR, a relatively easy-to-use tool that can edit DNA. CRISPR opened a new world of medical miracles and moral questions and was used in the race to create vaccines for the coronavirus. CAS13 is a CRISPR protein that can be used as a detection tool for a specific RNA sequence, such as that of the coronavirus. Isaacson reports that scientists "were able to create such a detection tool in April 2017, which they named "'specific high sensitivity enzymatic reporter unlocking,' which was reverse-engineered (though not very well) to produce the acronym SHERLOCK. The game was afoot!" SHERLOCK was commercialized by the founding of Sherlock Biosciences, a company "structured in a way that allowed it to profit on its innovations while still taking a nonprofit approach in places where there was great need." SHERLOCK was used in Nigeria in 2019 to help detect victims of an outbreak of Lassa fever. On February 14, 2020, Sherlock Biosciences and another group published separate research protocols for SHERLOCK-based COVID-19 coronavirus detection. 🦋



history of the person behind the origin of the BSI, a brief history of the group, and my take on a small part of how the selection process works.

The Baker Street Irregulars — as a social gathering group centered around the Sherlock Holmes stories — was conceived of and founded by Christopher Morley. Morley was born on May 5, 1890, to English-born parents. As the Morley-expert Steve Rothman put it, "he was among the first generation to grow up on the Holmes stories."¹ He spent his first ten years in Haverford, Pennsylvania, on the outskirts of Philadelphia, where his father was a mathematics professor at Haverford College. Later the family moved to Baltimore when his father started teaching at John Hopkins University. From an early age he loved books and reading, and frequented the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore. He was first introduced to Conan Doyle's non-Sherlockian writings and soon thereafter found the Canonical tales. In addition to his own entertainment, he would read the stories with his younger brothers, Frank and Felix. Emulating their father, who set examinations for his students, Kit (as Christopher was known) would quiz his brothers on plot elements and details from the Holmes tales. This activity would reappear later in life.

Kit became an undergraduate at Haverford College at the age of sixteen and eventually was awarded a Rhodes Scholarship to study at Oxford. While at Haverford he "began his practice of forming fellowships and informal organizations."² After graduating from Oxford in 1913 with an Honours degree in Modern History he obtained a position with the publisher Doubleday, Page & Co. He later moved on to the *New York Evening Post* where he wrote a column titled "The Bowling Green." At this time he developed the idea of The Three Hours for Lunch Club. "Its rationale was to be truant from one's workplace with agreeable friends doing agreeable things: lunching, drinking [despite and to spite Prohibition – *ed.*], sightseeing, book shopping. The THLC met whenever Kit was so moved, whenever a friend from out of town came by or two

A Brief History of the Baker Street Irregulars

BY PHILLIP BERGEM



xplorer Linda Waite posed some questions about the Baker Street Irregulars: how it started, how people are selected, how Investiture names are chosen. I decided to answer Linda's inquiry by giving a bit of a

¹ Rothman, Steven, ed. *The Standard Doyle Company: Christopher Morley on Sherlock Holmes*. New York: Fordham University Press, 1990, 1.

² Rothman, 6.

or more friends met with him. They would have jaunts to Brooklyn, to Hoboken, to Philadelphia.”³ He would write of his excursions in “The Bowling Green,” and it became a popular part of his column.

In 1926 the *New York Evening Post* hired a new editor who got rid of the Saturday Literary Review supplement, and Kit and his co-workers were out of work. Several of the ousted writers created the *Saturday Review of Literature*. While editing and writing for *Saturday Review of Literature*, Morley continued with “The Bowling Green,” including essays about excursions and gatherings, and serialization of some of his growing collection of novels and poetry. Starting in 1926, this included frequent references to Sherlock Holmes and his adventures.

Soon after Arthur Conan Doyle’s death in 1930, Morley was commissioned to write a preface for *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* to be printed by Doubleday Doran. “Morley agreed to write the preface if the fee were enough for him to go to London and revisit Baker Street. It was, and his preface, ‘In Memoriam: Sherlock Holmes’ still graces the volume.”⁴ The essay appeared in *The Saturday Review of Literature* on August 2, 1930, shortly before the Doubleday two-volume collection was released.

Morley continued to partake in long lunches and dinners with friends. The first of Morley’s Baker Street Irregulars events was a cocktail party on January 6, 1934, at the Hotel Duane on Madison Avenue.⁵ Kit, in his “Trade Winds” column in the *SRL*, wrote that the gathering of “The ‘Baker Street Irregulars,’ a club of Holmes-and-Watson

devotees,” was held in celebration of Sherlock Holmes’s birthday.⁶

In the *SRL* for May 19th there appeared a Holmes-themed crossword puzzle which had been developed by Chris’s brother Frank while on a trans-Atlantic crossing from England to the United States. Chris wrote that “all those who send me correct solutions — but they must be correct in every detail — will automatically become members of the Baker Street Irregulars.”⁷

There were six people who responded with correct solutions by the end of May, including Emily Coit, a woman from Florida, and Vincent Starrett from Chicago. Chris sent invitations for a dinner to the male respondents, including those who got all but one word correct. The event, held on June 5, 1934, at Christ Cella’s establishment on East 45th Street, was the first formal dinner of the Baker Street Irregulars. There were a number of women who successfully completed the puzzle, and even more who got it mostly correct, but they were purposefully excluded from the event.

The second annual dinner was on January 6, 1936,⁸ and the planted seed of the BSI as an organization had taken root, although it grew slowly and sporadically in those early years. The dinners were an

excuse to gather with friends, eat, drink, socialize and act a bit silly while focusing on the Sherlock Holmes stories.

Edgar W. Smith first wrote to Morley in 1938, and they quickly became friends. Despite Smith’s job as a vice president of General Motors, he made time for and enjoyed his association with the Canon, Morley, and the Irregulars. Between 1936



Christopher Morley

³ Rothman, 8.

⁴ Lellenberg, Jon, ed. *Irregular Memories of the 'Thirties*. New York: The Baker Street Irregulars, 1990, 3.

⁵ Lellenberg, 4.

⁶ Rothman, 15.

⁷ Lellenberg, 46.

⁸ Lellenberg, 50.

and 1939 there were no dinners, although Morley did continue to correspond with like-minded friends and write about Holmes and Watson in various columns. Smith took over many of the duties of planning the annual event starting with the 1940 Dinner, often with the assistance of his secretaries at work. Dinners have been held every year since 1940, with the exception of 2021 which was a virtual event because of the coronavirus pandemic.

It was in 1944 that Smith decided to assign investiture names. The first of these were all titles of the Sherlock Holmes stories or books. In 1944 these were given to fourteen individuals, including Chris, Felix and Frank Morley, Vincent Starrett, and Smith himself. There were four more investitures handed out in 1945 and twelve in 1949. These were all to close friends of Morley or Smith.

According to the Baker Street Irregulars' website, "In 1948, Cy Keller, a banker and magician from Baltimore, suggested that Investitures be accompanied by a shilling. Since then, a new BSI member's certificate of Investiture has included a real shilling attached to it." Keller received his investiture, and shilling, in 1951.

The BSI has always been a literary group. Christopher Morley was a prolific writer. Edgar W. Smith edited *Profile by Gaslight* and the Baker Street Journal, including writing many articles for the journal, as well as editing the Irregulars' own printing of "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle" in 1948. Julian Wolff took over as leader of the BSI and also as editor of the *Baker Street Journal* after Smith unexpectedly died in 1960. Michael Whelan had a vision of expanding the BSI Press, and he achieved this admirably. Among the many books released there have been series focused on international writings, professions in the Canon, and the story manuscripts.

At some point the BSI had become something beyond what Morley had started. He wanted small dinners where a group of friends and acquaintances could converse on a range of subjects, with Holmes and Watson as a central theme. It had grown into a large group of people who wanted to be in with the in crowd. There are some who feel it would be nice to return to the small dinners where you can talk with everyone. There are others who are glad that it has expanded into a large, world-wide membership with increasing diversity.

What had started as an annual dinner has grown into a Birthday "Weekend" that lasts from Wednesday evening until Sunday afternoon. There

are many more events that are open to people not in the BSI. In addition, the BSI started having events throughout the year that are open to members and non-members alike. These included Silver Blaze races, summer conferences and excursions to Canonical places.

One of the biggest changes came in 1991 when membership was opened up to women. The first Investiture for a woman was given to Dame Jean Conan Doyle, Arthur's daughter. Also invested that year was Katherine McMahon, one of the women who had solved the crossword puzzle in 1934.

The BSI has become many things for many people. It is still exclusive, but that is part of the charm and prestige that appeals to many. I love the Norwegian Explorers, but if you pay your dues, you are a member. There's nothing overly prestigious about that. If the BSI was open to all, it would not be the same group. That said, the historical elitism with a bias towards wealthy white males is outdated and is changing, however slowly.

So, then, who are the typical people who are selected for membership? It is a broad mix of the famous and the relatively unknown. Some are authors such as Laurie King, Bonnie MacBird and Neil Gaiman. Playwright Jeffrey Hatcher was inducted on the strength of his wonderful series of Sherlockian plays. Others are significant in their own scion societies or help to spread the stories to other countries. Mitch Higurashi of Japan is one such person. Many others are selected because they show promise of advancing the BSI or interest in Sherlock Holmes.

The selection of new members is, as best as I know, solely the decision of the current leader of the BSI, who is referred to as Wiggins. That said, it is no longer possible for Wiggins to directly know all the people who are considered for membership. Each year in late summer a letter, now an email, is sent to members of the BSI asking for recommendations of people to invite to the upcoming dinner. Potential invitees are vetted and a certain number of guest invitations extended. (BSI Dinners are open only to members and invited guests. Members are invited every year.) While at the Dinner, Wiggins, and presumably trusted advisors, talk with the guests to gauge their characters. The cohesiveness of the group requires that members are likable, pleasant people. It usually takes several opportunities to scope a person out before the decision is made to bring them into the BSI. It is

difficult to choose, balancing the number of worthy people with the need to keep the group to a manageable size. Investiture titles are assigned by Wiggins using a story title or phrase from the Canon. Sometimes they are related to the person's name, profession, or activities, such as for actor Curtis Armstrong, invested as "An Actor and a Rare One," a line from *The Sign of the Four*. Choices for others is less clear, such as "The Duchess of Devonshire" for Julie McKuras or "Birdy Edwards" for me, but they are all cherished by the newly invested. New Investitures are normally presented at the Annual Dinner held in New York each January and are kept secret until the end of the evening. This ensures that everyone stays until the end when they are handed out in a "Birthday Honours List" in the same manner as knighthoods presented by a monarch. Honorees are given a beautiful certificate with their name and investiture title, with an attached shilling from Queen Victoria's reign.

In the current membership of the Norwegian Explorers there are 33 who are in the BSI, including honorary memberships. This includes 11 who are more active or live locally. According to Willis Frick's website, Sherlocktron, as of October 2021 there have been 711 Investitures awarded and there are 302 living Irregulars.

There is much more history of the BSI that is fascinating. Subjects such as the "Buy Laws," the Trilogy Dinner, and the picketing by disenfranchised women in the 1970s are interesting, but outside the scope of this simple account. Many books are available — and continue to be written — that cover historical aspects of the BSI, and the BSI Oral History Project (www.bsitrust.org/2015/01/oral-history.html) is an attempt to capture cherished institutional memory.

The Leaders of the Baker Street Irregulars have been:

- Christopher Morley ("The Sign of the Four") as the "Gasogene" until 1940
- Edgar W. Smith ("The Hound of the Baskervilles") as "Buttons," later "Buttons-cum-Commissionaire," 1940–1960
- Julian Wolff ("The Red-Headed League") as "Commissionaire," 1960–1986
- Thomas L. Stix, Jr. ("The Norwood Builder") as "Wiggins," 1986–1997

- Michael F. Whelan ("Vincent Spaulding") as "Wiggins," 1997–2020
- Michael H. Kean ("General Charles Gordon") as "Wiggins," 2020 to present

Resources

Explanation of BSI Honours & Terms.

www.bsitrust.org/2015/01/glossary.html

BSI History. bakerstreetirregulars.com/bsi-history/

Frick, Willis, The Investitured (or Invested) Irregulars. sherlocktron.com/invest.pdf

Special thanks to Dick Sveum and Julie McKuras for input and suggestions. 🐾

The Hound of the Baskervilles



A new adaptation of The Hound of the Baskervilles showed up this fall. The ever-popular story was adapted by Steven LaVigne for performance by the Classics Lost 'n' Found Theater Company, a local community theater group. Performances were held on October 22nd and 23rd at the Lake Nokomis Presbyterian Church in south Minneapolis. There was a large cast, fourteen performers, with Sherlock Holmes played by Stephen Greenhalgh and Dr. Watson by Hazen Markoe.



Hazen Markoe and Stephen Greenhalgh

While there were some scenes that diverged from those written by Conan Doyle, and some of the acting was overplayed, it was an enjoyable

evening spent with people who definitely enjoyed what they were doing. For a local production it was a decent turnout, with about 25 audience members on the Friday night, and they had to set out extra chairs. 🐾



Study Group Session – “His Last Bow”

BY KAREN MURDOCK

The October Discussion Group meeting was held via Zoom on October 16, 2021, to discuss “His Last Bow.” Those in attendance included Phil Bergem, Ruth Berman, Bob Brusic, Tom Bunner (NC), Karen Ellery, Kit Gordon, Lindsay Hall, David Hitchcock (Fayetteville, NY), Timothy Kline (Plano, TX), Margaret Lebien, Mary Loving, Diane Madsen (FL), Steve Miller, Luis Molina, Karen Murdock, Howard Ostrom (Ocala, FL), Steve Schier, Dick Sveum, Karen Titrud, Linda Waite, and Sonia Yazmadjian.

As usual we began the event with general discussion and some show-and-tell. Phil Bergem asked if the Explorers would be in favor of an “in person” banquet this December. Opinion was divided on the issue. Steve Schier said he was in favor of having a banquet; he has had his booster shot and “I’m 10 feet tall and bulletproof.”

Steve Miller announced that on the next Saturday, October 23, the Minnesota Independent Scholars’ Forum would host a discussion on “Sherlock Holmes and Copyright.”

Karen Murdock said that her book on figures of speech in the Canon is now about 80 percent complete and she has begun the process of seeking a publisher for it.

Karen Ellery showed a Halloween decoration from Department 56 of a skeleton figurine dressed like Sherlock Holmes and following “the footprints of a gigantic hound.”

Mary Loving showed her custom-made Sherlock Holmes birdhouse.

Following that, we went around the screen and introduced ourselves, since several participants in this meeting are from other states. Steve Miller led the discussion on “His Last Bow.” The story was first published in *The Strand Magazine* in September 1917, while World War I was raging. It takes place in 1914 and is chronologically the last Sher-

lock Holmes story (though not the last to be published; the stories in *The Case-Book* were to follow.) LAST is one of only two Canonical stories told in the third person (the other is MAZA). Karen M. thought this was a severe weakness of the story, but Phil B. pointed out that this structure was necessary in order to relate the conversation between Von Herling and Von Bork.

Karen M. said the cat which is petted by Martha is one of only three actual cats in the Canon (others are in CHAS and YELL), though there are several metaphorical allusions to cats and several members of the larger cat family put in an appearance (lions, tigers, and a cheetah, for example).

Dave H. said this is not even a detective story; it is a spy story (in the tradition of John Buchan’s *39 Steps*). Karen M. said that SECO and BRUC are also spy stories, but they are told in the conventional form, with Watson as narrator.

Howard said this tale had only been adapted only once into a movie (starring Eille Norwood) so it has not been popular. Mary L. said that *Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Weapon* (starring Basil Rathbone) was a World War II propaganda piece,



From the magazine *Lectures Pour Tous*, April 1, 1919, “Service de guerre” [“His Last Bow”] Illustration by Richard Wallace

just as LAST can be seen as a World War I propaganda piece.

Diane said the Germans hoped to exploit the innocent character of Victorian Britain. It is ironic, then, that two British Victorians (Holmes and Martha) brought down the German spy ring. Diane pointed out that Holmes and Watson commit several crimes in the story — chloroforming, kidnapping, and theft.

Tom B. pointed out the personal side of the story — Doyle's son was killed in the war. Phil B. said Doyle also lost a brother, nephew, and brother-in-law in the war. Steve S. said Doyle's attitude pivoted after the war and the stories in *The Case Book* are much darker in tone than earlier stories.

Steve M. raised the issue of "Martha" — who was she? Karen M. said the notion that "Martha" was actually Mrs. Hudson could be traced back to an essay by Vincent Starrett published in 1934. Karen said she found the notion "romantic but implausible." Ruth B. said Mrs. Hudson was much more of a take-charge person than Martha seemed to be; she thought Martha was hired for the occasion. Diane pointed out that Sherlock Holmes did not trust many women — Martha was an exception. She might have been in the British intelligence service. Diane felt that her gender helped Martha with her "cover." A man like Von Bork would not notice a female housekeeper operating in the background, even though she was living in the same house as he was.

Steve S. said that he liked the American slang that Holmes uses. It is much annotated in the Oxford edition of *His Last Bow*. Mary said that posing as an Irish-American was an excellent cover for Holmes since the enmity of the Irish and the English was well known.

Karen M. wondered about Holmes's reaction when Von Bork threatens to "get level" with him. Holmes responds: "The old sweet song," said Holmes. "How often have I heard it in days gone by. It was a favorite ditty of the late lamented Professor Moriarty. Colonel Sebastian Moran has also been known to warble it. And yet I live and keep bees upon the South Downs." Karen M. wondered when Moriarty would have had time to threaten to get even with Holmes. Several explanations were offered, each one more improbable than the last.

Steve S. said that Holmes's cottage in Sussex offered him much less protection than his apart-

ment in London and wondered why someone seeking revenge had not killed Holmes in his retirement (or during his working career, for that matter).

David said having the combination of the safe be "August 1914" was far-fetched. (The trigger of World War I was the assassination of the Austrian archduke Franz Ferdinand, and this could not have been foreseen.)

Steve M. said that Holmes shows respect for Von Bork. He is a worthy rival.

Karen M. called attention to the last paragraph in the story, where Holmes says, "There's an east wind coming all the same, such a wind as never blew on England yet. It will be cold and bitter, Watson, and a good many of us may wither before its blast. But it's God's own wind none the less, and a cleaner, better, stronger land will lie in the sunshine when the storm has cleared." Karen said this seemed to imply that God was in favor of World War I. She said she found this "theologically appalling." Steve M. called attention to a book by Philip Jenkins — *The Great and Holy War: How World War I Became a Religious Crusade* (2014). The war was seen as a Crusade by all participants. Both sides felt that God was with them and that the war would bring a better world. Bob commented that "Nobody ever said that Holmes was a good theologian." Steve S. said it was empirically not the case that the war brought a better world, so Holmes's was a bad prediction. England was in bad shape in the 1920s.

Steve M. said the story was not a mystery — we see "whodunit" right away at the beginning of the story. However, LAST has one of the best endings of any of the Sherlock Holmes stories.

David said he liked the fact that Von Bork and Von Herling started out talking on the terrace — and Holmes and Watson ended up talking on the terrace. He thought this was a nice balance.

Steve S. quoted from the essay by Tom Drucker in *About 60*, which said that this story was a fitting end to a long career.

Phil B. said that this is the only story in which automobiles are mentioned. Benz really did have a 100-horsepower car. The "little Ford" was probably a Model T; one-third of cars in England at the time were Model Ts.

Steve M. called attention to the book *The Strange Death of Liberal England*, by George Dangerfield, published in 1935. The book claimed that the Liberal Party ruined itself in the years before

the war by dealing with women's suffrage, labor strikes, and the Irish question.

We rated the story on a scale of 1 to 5. There was no consensus at all and ratings ranged from 2 to 5. Phil B. said he liked the camaraderie at the end of the story. Steve S. rated it low and said, "I don't think it ages well." Karen T. said she found it "rather poetic." Mary said "it reminded people why they were in the war" and she thought that knowing "we've got Sherlock Holmes on our side" would boost morale on the home front.

Discussion ended at 3:50. Mary said our Discussion Group had now completed reading and discussing all 60 stories in the order proposed by William S. Baring-Gould. For our next cycle through the Canon we will be discussing the stories in alphabetical order based on the 4-letter code developed by Jay Finlay Christ. The first story in that order is "The Abbey Grange" (ABBE). We will discuss that story in November. 🐾

A Visit to Andersen Library

BY PHILLIP BERGEM

In early November I made an appointment at the Elmer L. Andersen Library to conduct some research for the next of the BSI Manuscript Series. Despite the COVID precautions, the Wallin Center reading room at the Library is open for business provided you remain fully masked. Appointments are required, so that requested material can be retrieved and brought to the reading room, but they are easily made. Details are at:

www.lib.umn.edu/collections/special/rare



Tim Johnson's email address is provided, and it is to him that you make the appointment request and indicate the materials you would like to see. There are also links to the catalog and finding aids to help you with the descriptions.

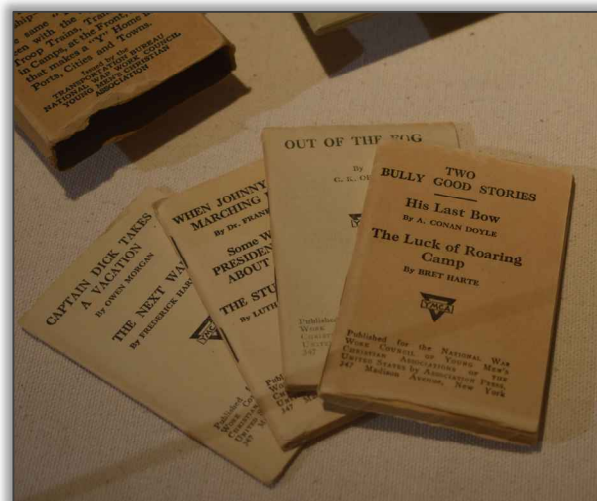
It was nice to see Tim again, in person and not on a screen during a Zoom session. I did not get a photo of him, but I

did get a picture of another friend I hadn't seen for a while, Linus van Pelt in his Sherlockian garb.

I also stopped by to look at the exhibition space on the first floor. It presently has a very nice exhibition titled "The YMCA and Relief for War Victims during WWI." The exhibit runs through February 8, 2022, and you do not need an appointment to view it.

www.continuum.umn.edu/2021/09/the-ymca-and-relief-for-war-victims-during-ww1/

The exhibit drew on the Kautz Family YMCA Archives housed at Andersen, and there was a bit of overlap between it and the Sherlock Holmes Collections. One of the items shown was a small booklet handed out to service members with the war-related "His Last Bow" by A. Conan Doyle and "The Luck of Roaring Camp" by Bret Harte, labeled as "two bully good stories." It was nice to see the connection between the various collections.



On the subject of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, the Norwegian Explorers are proud of the long-lasting relationship between the Collections and the Explorers (as was highlighted in the article about the history of the Explorers in the last issue of *Explorations*).

The Norwegian Explorers makes periodic donations to the Sherlock Holmes Collections, and a number of individual Explorers make donations and are also members of the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections. You can support the Collections and receive the wonderful newsletter, produced by Julie McKuras four times per year, by becoming a member. 🐾

www.lib.umn.edu/collections/special/holmes/become-friend-holmes

Shakespeare in the Canon

BY KAREN MURDOCK AND PHILLIP BERGEM



As has been noted in many of the Writings on the Writings, there are a number of quotations in the Sherlock Holmes stories that come from Shakespeare's works, with varying degrees of closeness to the Shakespearian text. *The New Good Old Index* by Bill Goodrich is an invaluable Sherlockian reference work. The following list is taken from pages 363–371, with added research completed to flesh out the material. Canonical references use page numbers in the current Doubleday edition, and the Chapter and Verse method of Canonical citation developed by Paul Thomas Miller.

chapterandverseholmes.co.uk/



Here are the Canonical quotes along with the associated Shakespearian quote.

"...he can't be quite in the sere and yellow." (STUD 33; STUD 4:21)

"Is fall'n into the sear, the yellow leaf." (*Macbeth*, Act V, scene 3, lines 23)

"All is well that ends well." (SIGN 141; SIGN 11:47)
All's Well That Ends Well (title)

"...it would make all fiction... most stale and unprofitable." (IDEN 191; IDEN 1:3)

"How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable." (*Hamlet*, Act I, scene 2, line 133)

"Ah, thereby hangs a rather painful tale." (BOSC 210; BOSC 1:309)

"Out of the saddles and into the dirt; and thereby hangs a tale." (*The Taming of the Shrew*, Act IV, scene 1, line 59)

"And then, from hour to hour, we rot and rot; and thereby hangs a tale." (*As You Like It*, Act II, scene 7, line 28)

"Well, thereby hangs a tale." (*The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Act I, scene 4, line 155)

"O, thereby hangs a tale." (*Othello*, Act III, scene 1, line 8)

"Violence does, in truth, recoil upon the violent." (SPEC 272; SPEC 1:566)

"These violent delights have violent ends." (*Romeo and Juliet*, Act II, scene 6, line 9)

"It's not an airy nothing, you see." (FINA 470; FINA 1:30)

"Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing." (*A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Act V, scene 1, line 16)

"This man's occupation is gone." (FINA 477; FINA 1:293)

"Farewell! Othello's occupation's gone." (*Othello*, Act III, scene 3, line 357)

"I have usually found that there was method in his madness." (REIG 402; REIG 1:139)

"Though this be madness, yet there is method in't." (*Hamlet*, Act II, scene 2, line 209)

"I trust that age doth not wither nor custom stale my infinite variety." (EMPT 489; EMPT 1:230)

"Age cannot wither her, nor custom stale her infinite variety." (*Antony and Cleopatra*, Act II, scene 2, lines 240–241)

"'Journeys end in lovers' meetings,' as the old play says." (EMPT 492; EMPT 1:329)

"Journeys end with lovers' meetings. What brings you here?" (REDC 908; REDC 2:7–8)

"Journeys end in lovers meeting." (*Twelfth Night*, Act II, scene 3, line 44)

"...and the landlady babbled of green peas at seven-thirty." (3STU 603; 3STU 1:372)

"...for his nose was as sharp as a pen, and a' babbled of green fields." (*Henry V*, Act II, scene 3, line 17)

"'Come, Watson, come!' he cried. The game is afoot." (ABBE 636; ABBE 1:4–5)

"...which assured me that the game was afoot." (WIST 879; WIST 2:107)

"Before the game is afoot, thou still let'st slip."
(*Henry IV Part I*, Act I, scene 3, line 278)

"I see you stand like greyhounds in the slips,
straining upon the start. The game's afoot." (*Henry V*, Act III, scene 1, line 31–32)

"A touch, Watson—an undeniable touch!" (HOUN 697; HOUN 5:230)

"'A touch! A distinct touch!' cried Holmes." (VALL 769; VALL 1:23–24)

"A touch, a touch, I do confess." (*Hamlet*, Act V, scene 2, line 296)

"And yet the course of true love does not run quite as smoothly as one would under the circumstances expect." (HOUN 717; HOUN 9:38)

"The course of true love never did run smooth; but, either it was different in blood." (*A Midsummer Night's Dream* Act I, scene 1, lines 134–135)

"I will go no further in this matter." (VALL 771; VALL 1:73)

"We will proceed no further in this business." (*Macbeth*, Act I, scene 7, line 31)

"He had put off all questions with a smile, as one who did not wish to have greatness thrust upon him." (VALL 832; VALL 10:57)

"...some are born great, some achieve greatness, some have greatness thrust upon 'em." (*Twelfth Night*, Act II, scene 5, lines 154)

"You can write me down an ass this time, Watson" (BRUC 929; BRUC 1:802)

"O that he were here to write me down an ass!" (*Much Ado About Nothing* Act IV, scene 2, line 77)

"But her mind was pure as snow" (LADY 947; LADY 1: 226)

"Be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow" (*Hamlet*, Act III, scene 1, line 135)

"Thrice is he armed who hath his quarrel just." (LADY 950; LADY 1:389)

"Thrice is he arm'd that hath his quarrel just." (*Henry VI Part 2*, Act III, scene 2, line 233)

"Grasp the nettle, Watson!" (MAZA 1015; MAZA 1:146)

"...out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety" (*Henry IV Part I*, Act II, scene 3, line 9) 🐾

Parting Words and Trifles



There have been two interviews of prominent Explorers recently posted online.

- In the last issue we mentioned about Scott Monty and Burt Wolder interviewing Bergquist and Bergem for their *I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere* podcast. In September they interviewed Tim Johnson about **The Shaw 100**, a list that John Bennett Shaw developed of recommended books for a Sherlockian library. As Tim is the curator of the Sherlock Holmes Collections that contains Shaw's former collection, he is the perfect person to discuss this subject.

www.ihearofsherlock.com/2021/09/episode-224-shaw-100.html

- Rob Nunn, a schoolteacher from Edwardsville, IL, has been interviewing various Sherlockians and posting them to his *Interesting Though Elementary* blog. In September he interviewed long-time Explorer Pj Doyle. Pj comes across as wonderful as she truly is, and the interview is a delight to read. Our thanks to both Rob and Pj for allowing us this opportunity to learn more about her as a person and as a Sherlockian.

interestingthoughelementary.blogspot.com/2021/09/

- We aim to have dues paid at the end/beginning of the year. Accompanying this issue is a note regarding the status of your dues as of the time of mailing. For people who have not yet paid, please take care of the matter by mid-January. Your continued support is appreciated. 🐾

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