

*Baker Street Elementary
& The Victorian Web*

Presents
"The Life and Times in Victorian London"



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& The Victorian Web

The Life and Times in Victorian London

108 -- A Tin of Diamonds - The Crown Jewels - 09/07/2020



*Welcome to topic number 108...
today we will be discussing the
crown jewels of the kingdom.*

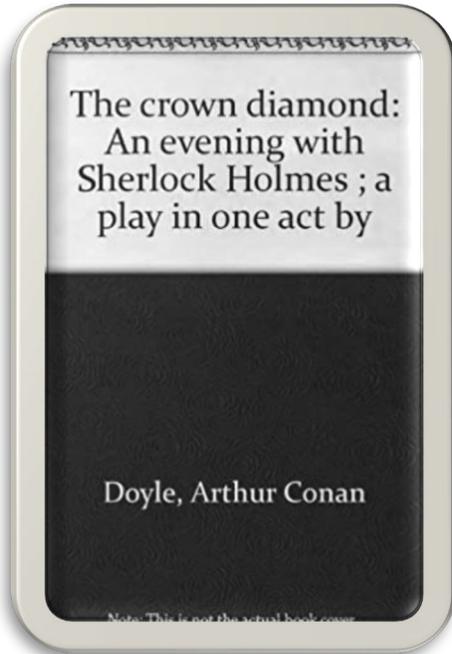


Miss Christina and I have been asked to narrate this session...

True, Master Redmond... and I have to say, jewelry and I have always been acceptable to each other...



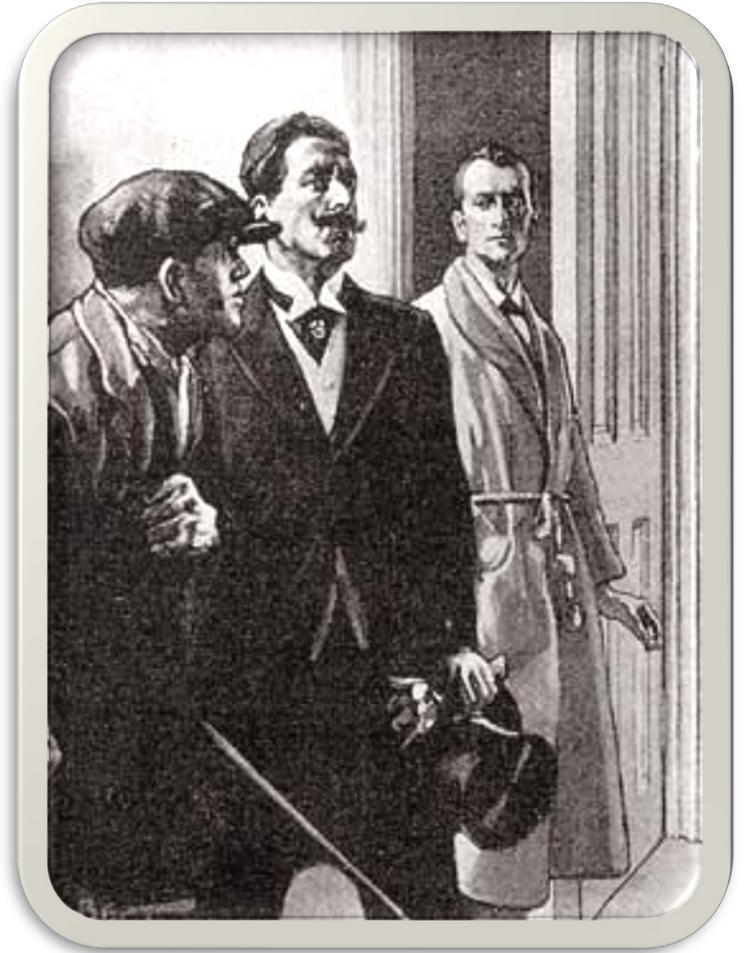
Sir Arthur Conan Doyle will rewrite "The Crown Diamond" (originally penned as a one-act play) as the short story "The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone." The basis of the tale will involve the theft of a yellow diamond, part of the British Crown Jewels.



As the story opens, Holmes will share he has determined Count Sylvius Negretto is in possession of a stolen diamond — part of the Crown Jewels that had been on public display. The narrative will describe how the detective tricks the thief into revealing where he's hidden the diamond and arranges for his arrest.



Negretto's success at having actually purloined the gem will put him above all other thieves and their attempts to steal the Crown Jewels. Colonel Blood, in 1671 came the closest to actually stealing Charles II's collection.



At that time, the Jewels consisted primarily of a crown, a scepter, an orb, spurs, an ampulla (held the oil to anoint the monarch) and a spoon (oil from the ampulla was poured into it).



*Blood made friends with Edwards,
the Assistant Keeper of the
Jewels, who was allowed to show
the collection for a fee.*



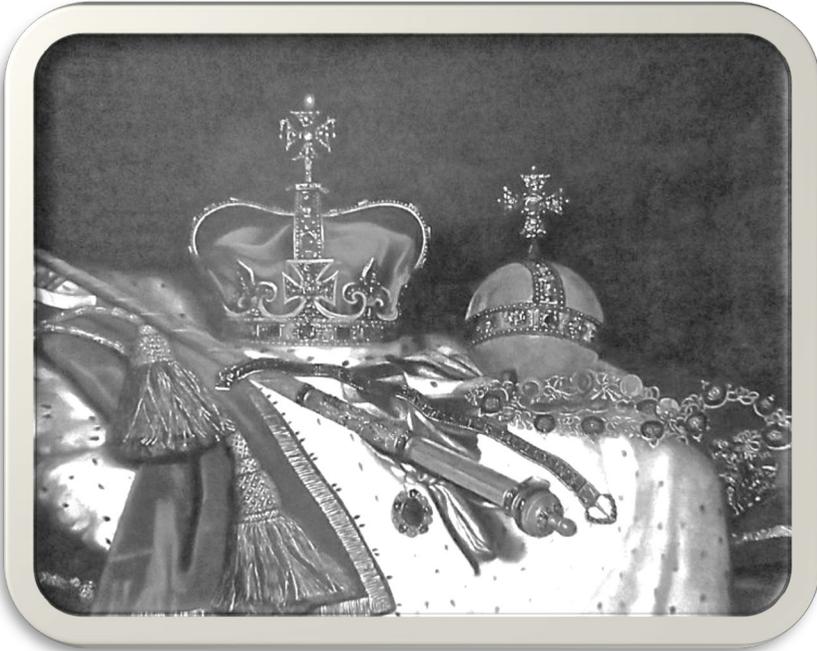
After Blood overpowered the 76-year-old guard, Edwards' son made an unexpected visit to his father and caught the colonel and his cohorts with the evidence. Blood had disguised himself as a parson and hidden the crown in his robes. The thieves never made it out of the tower.



The Jewels Blood attempted to steal had been assembled for Charles II's coronation. Following the English Civil War and Charles I's execution, Oliver Cromwell had sold the previous Crown Jewels (some dating back more than 400 years and used in each coronation) or melted them down to mint coins.



Only the ampulla and spoon survived. Some of the gems from the previous collection were sought out, recovered, and used to adorn Charles II's regalia. These include sapphires (one dating back to 1042), diamonds, rubies, and pearls.



The Jewels played, and continue to play, important symbolic roles in the coronation ritual.



The future monarch enters Westminster Abbey, escorted by two maces (staffs representing authority), three swords (signifying mercy, spiritual justice, and temporal justice), the Great Sword of State and St. Edward's Staff. The anointing with oil using the ampulla and spoon follows.



The sovereign is then dressed in the coronation robes and presented with spurs (indicating knighthood and chivalry) and armills (bracelets symbolizing sincerity and wisdom). The orb (for Christian sovereignty) is placed in the right hand, then returned to the altar.



A ring is then placed on the right hand, and two scepters (one for temporal power and the other for equity and mercy) are presented. The final act involves placing the crown on the new monarch's head.



Since Charles II, different monarchs have added crowns as well as other pieces to the collection. Altogether, the Crown Jewels consist of 140 items including additional orbs, bracelets, swords, and banqueting plate.



During the London bombings in WWII, most of these items will be buried in underground chambers at Windsor Castle. Under a trap door hidden by rugs in the footman's vestibule, an old escape route will lead to the two chambers where the Jewels will be stored.



The most valuable, however, will be taken from their settings and kept in a cookie tin, ready for a quick getaway, if needed.



*First & Second
Star of Africa*



These will include the Second Star of Africa, the largest diamond in the world; the First Star of Africa; two additional diamonds; the Stewart sapphire; and the Black Prince's ruby.



The hiding place for these special pieces will only be uncovered during research for a documentary on Queen Elizabeth's rise to power in the 21st century. The royal librarian will discover letters detailing how the family will have secreted the gems.



In 2020, the entire collection can be viewed as part of a Tower of London tour for about \$27. The Jewels will be kept in the Jewel House behind bombproof glass and surveilled by cameras.



Such precautions will represent a much more secure system than when a son's unexpected visit or the careful investigation of the world's greatest consulting detective saved the day.



*...So we have completed
topic 108 in our series...*

*Yes, but we'll be back
with another topic
soon...*



Original Source Material for this topic:

- 1) http://www.englishmonarchs.co.uk/crown_jewels.htm
- 2) <https://www.rct.uk/collection/themes/trails/the-crown-jewels/the-regalia-of-charles-ii>
- 3) http://www.englishmonarchs.co.uk/crown_jewels.htm
- 4) <https://www.royal.uk/crown-jewels>
- 5) http://www.englishmonarchs.co.uk/crown_jewels.htm
- 6) <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/retropolis/wp/2018/01/13/as-the-nazis-bombed-britain-the-royals-hid-the-crown-jewels-in-the-least-likely-place/>
- 7) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jewel_House



Baker Street Elementary

"The Life and Times in Victorian London"

IS CREATED THROUGH THE INGENUITY & HARD WORK OF:

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WE ARE EXTREMELY

THANKFUL TO LIESE AND

GEORGE FOR THEIR SUPPORT

OF THIS PROJECT...

