

The Bilge Pump

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The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star - founded November, 1970



PLEASE NOTE: **July 03, Meeting** NOTICE

We will be conducting our next monthly meeting virtually on July 03 at 1:00 pm central. I will send out the link for the meeting the week before the meeting. The story for the month is *The Final Problem*.

Bob Katz, BSI, will lead the discussion on the story of *The Empty House*.

Tim Kline will give us a look at playing Sherlock Holmes (the games and toys surrounding the Great Detective).

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For more information concerning our society, visit: <http://www.dfw-sherlock.org/>

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JUNE 05 SUMMARY

Cindy Brown

There were 59 in attendance at this ZOOM meeting.

The scion meeting was opened by a wonderful toast and limerick by **Sandy Kozinn, ASH**, concerning the hound from the Baskervilles. (see page 4).

Next, we had our quiz on the story, *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (Part 3). **Russell Merritt, BSI, ASH**, reached a perfect score.

Bob Katz, BSI, ASH, then led the third round of discussion of *The Hound*.

Regina Stinson, BSI, ASH, was our featured speaker for the day and did a wonderful presentation, summarizing "The Screen Life of Sherlock Holmes", focusing on the various generations of films and TV shows. The presentation helped reveal the changes over the years, including how Dr. Watson is portrayed.

Sabrina Kim then read her incredible essay, which won the 9th grade division of the Joel Senter Essay Contest (see page 7).

Deborah Ingersoll gave a very entertaining presentation on "The Traveling Companions", where she related her adventures over the years to travel to destinations around the world and discover as many items during the trip that relate to a specific story of the Canon.

We then closed the meeting with the poem written by Rich Krisciunas, dedicated to The Crew of the Barque Lone Star.

Next month the story will be "The Adventure of the Empty House", and the featured speaker will be **Tim Kline**.

As always, thanks so much to Cindy Brown for keeping the notes of the meeting.

HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES: THE CURSE

Sandy Kozinn, ASH

Listen my children and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride on an evening drear.

Through the mists of history we must strive
For no one remains who's yet alive
To remember that tale which still strikes fear.

He said to his friends, "Upstairs I've a wench,
I'll amuse myself with her to-night.

She's poor and has a bit of a stench,
But look at her face -- now that's all right."

But the maid escaped -- maybe climbed a tree --
And off through moor she ran, scot free.

But he was determined to do her harm,
He'd chase her back to her home farm,
And grab her up by her white, white arm.

Then he said "I'm off!" with a mighty roar
And rode off on his horse with the dogs before,
Just as the moon rose over the tor,
He found her lying, there on the moor.

In her body remained not a breath.
His dogs had savaged the maiden to death.



Meanwhile, his friends, riding up from the rear,
Heard the roar of a mastiff while shaking with fear,
And the beast tore away both the throat and the heart,
Till his well-savaged body and soul did part.

His friend each sat a horse, watching the dead,
Then rode back to the house o'er dell and o'er hill,
Wrapped in silence so deep and still
That they could hear, like a sentinel's tread,
The echoes of screams, and see with closed eyes,
The glow of the Hound creep over each rise.

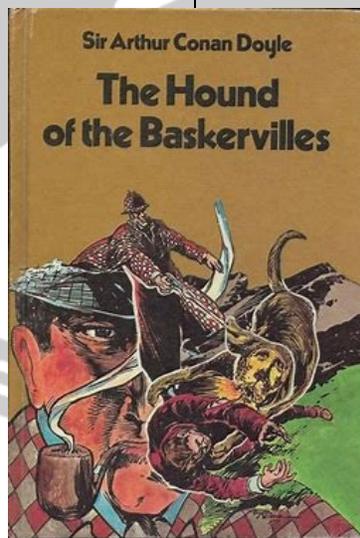
And ne'er more did a one sleep quiet in his bed.

You know the rest. In the books you have read
Of the curse that hangs on each eldest son,
Of how untimely each single one
Before his time is dead, dead, dead.

How the howl of a beast is heard in the night.

How all on the moor now shiver with fright.

So never go out, unless you're a fool,
When the sun has sunk down, when there is no light,
You just mustn't do it, it simply ain't right,
To go out on the moor when evil does rule!



HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES: THE STORY

Someone's killing at Baskerville, and fast.

Will the current heir end up the last?

His chances were poor:

The hound howled on the moor.

Then Holmes saw that picture from the past.



The experience wasn't much fun,
And the end bad for 'most everyone.

Moral: Don't walk at night

When a dog might shine bright

Or the way through the swamp's been
undone.



The Crew of the Barque Lone Star Society is producing our 6th book as part of our 51st Anniversary



For 2022, we will be putting a together entitled *The Canon: The Rest of the Story*

Members may submit an essay or pastiche which “continues” or “fills in the blanks” of one of the 60 stories. In other words, what happened after Watson stopped writing, or were items to the story that Watson accidentally or deliberately left out.

- **Your pastiche / essay should be 3,000-5,000 words. Obviously, a shorter piece is fine.**
- **Your pastiche / essay will be edited by one or two editors, but only for grammar, typos, etc... we will not edit the content of your piece.**
- **This project is not limited to those members in the DFW area. Any member is welcome to submit a piece.**
- **We plan to finalize the compilation by the end of the calendar year, so we ask members to submit their entry by August 31.**
- **As in previous years, all submitters will receive a complimentary copy of the book as our thanks.**





An Incredible Likeness

Sabrina Kim, 1st Prize, 7th - 9th Grade,
Joel Senter Essay Contest

As any casual Sherlock Holmes reader knows, John Watson and Sherlock Holmes are vastly different characters. Holmes is intelligent, aloof, and has a particular disdain for the frivolities of society, whereas Watson is kind, occasionally a little daft, and has a distinct taste for justice. However, upon closer inspection, the well-versed reader can find a paramount similarity between the two - a thrill-seeking, danger-loving streak. This adrenaline junkie behavior is a trait that allows them not only to live together but also to become a practically unstoppable duo.

For John Watson, the loyal companion, the desire for a precarious lifestyle appears to be an acquired taste. He frequently reminds readers of his involvement in the Second Afghan War - where, despite being a surgeon and not in battle himself, he was surrounded by action. Like many veterans, Watson likely found it difficult to readjust to the pace of peacetime and acclimate to living a life without constant peril. Instead of properly calibrating, Watson met and moved in with Holmes, whose life involved nearly as much hazard as Watson's in the army. Soon after he got caught up in Holmes' work, Watson didn't just adapt to it - he pursued it. In "The Adventure of the Speckled Band," when Holmes woke Watson early for a case, Watson assured him that he "would not miss it for the world." He hastily arose to hear out the client's story, joining Holmes in yet another adventure. His eagerness to involve himself in yet another potentially life-threatening case is a likely example of the way Watson has transferred his army life to his real-world life - by filling the memory of his time in Afghanistan with equally harrowing, mentally exhaustive challenges at Holmes' side.



On the other hand, for Sherlock Holmes, his adventurousness perhaps originates less from his past than from how his brain is wired. In modern times, Holmes would likely be considered neurodivergent: likely on the autistic or OCD spectrums. Holmes' typically obsessive, thorough behavior and his unique abilities to observe what others simply cannot are all telling signs of a

brain that isn't necessarily wired like most peoples'. For Holmes, these differences are not a deficit. In fact, his brain is his most powerful weapon. It's well-documented that some people with autism or related mental differences have abilities that most people do not, something that Holmes portrays regularly. It is likely that whatever enables Holmes to observe to such a degree is also what drives him to obsessively track down cases to challenge his restless mind. In "The Adventure of the Red-Headed League," Watson reflects on Holmes' bizarre, erratic behavior, noting that he would frequently become lazy, only for these languorous periods to be broken up when "the lust of the chase would suddenly come upon him, and that his brilliant



reasoning power would rise to the level of intuition." This sporadic, drastic change recorded by Watson clearly displays Holmes' cognitive functions, which not only appear to be quite different from those of an average person, but also seem to pivot around his love for mystery and adventure.

When both Watson and Holmes are engaged in a case, the deductive power of the both of them increases tenfold. Holmes' cerebral intelligence, though impressive on its own, is magnified by Watson's resourceful drive. There are countless cases throughout the canon in which the only way

Holmes is able to find the solution to a mystery is through Watson's omnipresence, constant aid, and motivation. For instance, in "The Adventure of the Abbey Grange," despite the fact everything seems to be open-and-shut, Holmes admits that he "simply can't leave the case in this condition." This is followed by a lengthy scene of analysis in which both Watson and Holmes continue to dissect the circumstances, eventually to return and solve the case. As Holmes himself frequently dictates, he would be "lost without" Watson, who often shares observations and helps with the Baker Street cases. Watson's observations motivate Holmes, whose own deductions, in turn, motivate Watson. And, truly, if not for Watson's aid, the case of the Abbey Grange would have been ignored, and the culprit would have evaded acknowledgment forever.

Though Watson and Holmes are equally admirable men and problem-solvers in their own right, and though each has their own individual drive towards mental challenges and risky situations, when they work together towards a shared goal, no call to adventure is ever left unanswered.

WOVEN INTO HISTORY

Liese Sherwood-Fabre, PhD, Lone Star Deck-Mate

While Holmes' tweed deerstalker shown in Paget's illustrations was never mentioned in the actual writings, he did wear a tweed coat in *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and a tweed suit in "A Scandal in Bohemia." Other men were described as wearing tweed suits in eight other cases, but the mere mention of this very popular weave was enough to evoke in the reader's mind the image of the man's suit.



"Balmoral Tweed" created by Prince Albert after purchasing Balmoral castle in 1853. (5)

While some attribute the fabric's name to the Tweed River, most references agree that its moniker developed by accident. The Scottish word for twill is *tweel*, and in 1826, a London milliner misread the label on a shipment of wool *tweel* and advertised the arrival of tweed fabric. The name stuck and has

been used ever since. (6)

Scottish farmers developed the cloth, called *Clò-Mór* (meaning "the big cloth") in the 1700s to protect them from the elements. Woven by hand, the fabric is a natural fiber (virgin wool) in a soft, open weave, that originally was quite thick and not as colorful or intricately designed as now. (1) The wool, from Cheviot sheep, produced garments that were warm, waterproof, and thick. The threads were dyed with natural plant colors such as lichens. (2)

In the mid-1800s, automation increased production, and demand for the fabric reached beyond the aristocracy. While men's fashions included tweed jackets, suits, and other accessories such as hats, by the early 1860s, women also included tweed in their wardrobe. As they pursued outdoor sports such as walking, shooting, and cycling, they often wore jackets, cloaks, coats, and, later, matching jackets and skirts for informal or sporting wear. (7)

By the 1830s, the British aristocracy were using the fabric for their staff uniforms with specially commissioned patterns for their country estates. (3) Unique designs were used to distinguish those from the different estates during hunting and other outdoor activities. Not only were the garments weather-resistant, the patterns' natural dyes served as a camouflage. (4) The most famous of these estate tweeds was the granite and crimson heather



To protect themselves from the rise in automated tweed mills, the self-employed weavers in the Outer Hebrides formed the Harris Tweed Authority in 1909 to safeguard the cloth and patterns from imitation. Shielded by an Act of Parliament, only that fabric sanctioned by the Authority can carry the certification of hand-woven Harris tweed. (8)

In addition to Harris tweed, other popular tweeds can be characterized by their weave, the type of sheep, or their origin. Included among these are:

- Donegal tweed from the Irish Donegal County with rainbow-specks of yarn in its knobby surface
- Saxony tweed originating from Saxony, Germany and made with merino wool
- Herringbone tweed uses a weave that forms a V pattern on the surface similar to fish bones
- Shetland tweed hails from the Shetland Islands and is characterized by a lighter, more delicate wool
- Barleycorn tweed sports bumpy “barleycorn kernels” along its surface
- Cheviot tweed is a rougher and heavier fabric from the Cheviot Hills
- Overcheck twill uses a plain twill pattern with an overlaid check design (9)

In the early 1900s, tweed reached world-wide popularity. Coco Chanel raised it to haute couture in the 1920s by incorporating it into her designs, and it

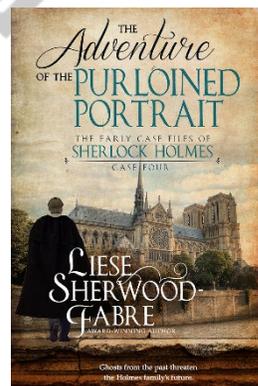
reached the world’s pinnacle when Sir Edmund Hillary wore it when he ascended Mount Everest. (10)

With a shift in fashions, tweed’s popularity plummeted, and Harris tweed production in 2006 had dropped 90% from its peak in the 1960s. Mills closed, and workers lost their jobs following an effort by one businessman to corner the market on Harris tweed. When his venture failed, efforts by two other businessmen to revive the industry emerged. Of great concern was the loss of the centuries of patterns which the first businessman had eliminated. More than eight thousand of these designs were found in a warehouse, preserving this rich tradition, and Harris tweed is again winning export awards. (11)

It was not happenstance that Holmes wore a tweed coat while roaming the Dartmoor moors. Not only did it protect him from the elements, it also helped him blend into the surroundings—perfect for observing without being observed. One must wonder, however, if it was a houndstooth weave.

- 1) https://www.josephturner.co.uk/customer/pages/about/what_is_tweed
- 2) <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/article/tweed-weaves-tales-of-scottish-history-and-landscapes>
- 3) https://www.josephturner.co.uk/customer/pages/about/what_is_tweed
- 4) <https://www.britannica.com/topic/tweed>
- 5) <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/what-is-tweed#8-different-types-of-tweed>
- 6) <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/article/tweed-weaves-tales-of-scottish-history-and-landscapes>
- 7) <https://fashion-history.lovetoknow.com/fabrics-fibers/tweed>
- 8) <https://clan.com/blog/history-of-tweed>
- 9) <https://www.masterclass.com/articles/what-is-tweed#8-different-types-of-tweed>
- 10) <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/travel/article/tweed-weaves-tales-of-scottish-history-and-landscapes>
- 11) <https://clan.com/blog/history-of-tweed>

Liese Sherwood-Fabre’s fourth case in “The Early Case Files of Sherlock Holmes” (“The Adventure of the Purloined Portrait”) was recently reviewed in the spring edition of The Baker Street Journal, where it was called “an entertaining read and a good puzzle.” Available from your favorite bookseller, links to all can be found at books2read.com/u/mZZjzD or liesesherwoodfabre.com



ORIGINS OF THE IRREGULAR SHILLING

This article was based on an interview with J. Bliss Austin, BSI, conducted in July, 1979, by Bruce Kennedy, BSI. Gaslight Publications, Catalogue # 1, Winter / Spring, 1981

Old Irregular J. Bliss Austin recently reminisced with Bruce Kennedy, BSI, about the early days of the Baker Street Irregulars (BSI) and about the origination of Shilling Investitures in particular.

"The matter of certificates of membership in the BSI really came up in connection with the so-called 'Trilogy Dinner' in 1944 - the 31st of March - when the people who were publishing the three books *Profiles by Gaslight*, *The Misadventures of Sherlock Holmes*, and *Morley's Textbook of Friendship* were all being plugged at a dinner party at the Murray Hill Hotel, Austin recalls.

"As might be expected, the dinner attracted a lot of attention - was covered by *Time*, by *Life*, and the press gave it quite a play too. But this gave clear indication that something must be done to curb the interest of the idly curious. At the BSI Dinner in January, 1944, there had been 38 people present, which was a good number for such an occasion."

On May 10, 1944, Austin remembers, Edgar Smith, then Commissionaire of the BSI wrote to the Irregulars:

"BSI membership certificates are at last by way of becoming available with issuance scheduled for the 1945 dinner. At the suggestion of the Gasogene [Earle Walbridge] and the Tantalus

[William S. Hall], and to meet the problems which recent distasteful publicity has created, it is intended that affiliation with the organization will henceforth be identified and constrained by the establishment of Adventures in Membership, 60 in all, of course, each constituting an investiture to be maintained for life or until resignation, and new applications for adherence to be susceptible of consideration only upon the existence of a vacancy. Designations of individual Adventures in Membership will be made late

in the year and applications for identification with specific tales will meanwhile be entertained."

At that time, it should be remembered, it was intended that membership in the BSI would be limited to 60, one for each Canonical tale. It is also instructive to observe the Irregulars in those days chose their own investitures, which were then confined to story titles.

In the minutes of the dinner of January, 19, 1945, there appears the following:

"Announcement was made at this juncture of the awards of Titular Investitures during the preceding year and illuminated certificates of membership were presented" to three of the fifteen then-investitured Irregulars, "in token of other similar certificates now owing to others."



"These illuminated certificates were quite large," says Bliss Austin. "The measured 13 by 19 inches. They were embellished at the top by the Holmes coat of arms as described by Bill Hall in *Profile By Gaslight* - three black bugles on a silver field with a rampant lion in gold above it."

In March of 1945, in a letter to the BSI Edgar Smith wrote: "The issuance of certificates of membership under the system of Titular Investiture is proceeding slowly. Perhaps by the end of the year the full 60 may have been distributed."

"It turned out these fancy, illuminated certificates were going to be far more expensive, and more trouble, than they had counted on," reminisces Austin, "so actually this idea began to wither. Nothing was happening for a while, but then Cy Keller of the *Six Napoleons* came through with a suggestion."

Keller's proposal was that "the British shilling, Victorian by preference, be adopted as the insignia and Tellus of Irregulars everywhere," in the words of Edgar Smith, writing in the *Baker Street Journal* (vol 1, no. 1). But Smith took the idea a step further, inspired as he was to substitute the Victorian shilling for the extravagant certificates "by the urge to minimize the number of coins that would otherwise be called into play. But it was Cy Keller, obviously, who dreamed up the Irregular Shilling, however altered his idea may have become in its eventual application."

The minutes for the dinner of January 7, 1949, tell about this:

"The first order of business was the awarding of the Irregular Shilling to those who have made an outstanding contribution to the Cause in the year just passed..."

"You see, the certificates had been dropped and the Shilling had been substituted," says Austin. But he points out that not all the Irregulars were given theirs at that 1949 conclave. Membership had about doubled since 1945, and only 17 persons received Shillings, some, including Austin himself, having to wait until the following year. "Some of us had gotten our Investitures very early in the

game, but we did not get our Shillings quite so early. The next year, at the dinner of January 6, 1950, there was a bigger group."

In fact, 16 Irregular Shillings were distributed in 1950. Recalls Austin: "The minutes state, 'The Buttons-cum-Commissionaire [Edgar Smith] next announced the awards of the Irregular Shillings to those not previously so honoured, who had achieved basis for Titular Investiture during the year 1949.' Actually, of course, we

had picked our Investitures way ahead," at the 1945 dinner or even earlier. "From then on, there were a few Investitures made every year."

Herewith is a list of those who received the first Irregular Shilling in the 1949 and 1950 BSI dinners, together with their Titular Investitures. Those marked with an asterisk (*) are listed in the 1945 minutes as being eligible for the illuminated certificates.



1949		1950	
Vincent Starrett *	"A Study in Scarlet"	Laurence P. Dodge *	"The Six Napoleons"
Elmer Davis	"A Case of Identity"	Felix Morley *	"The Second Stain"
William S. Hall *	"The Blue Carbuncle"	Dr. Roland Hammond *	"Silver Blaze"
Ben Abramson	"The Beryl Coronet"	Dr. Julian Wolff *	"The Red-Headed League"
Jay Finlay Christ	"The Final Problem"	Owen Frisbie	"The Musgrave Ritual"
Rex Stout	"The Boscombe Valley Mystery"	Earle Walbridge *	"The Sussex Vampire"
Robert Keith Leavitt	"The Cardboard Box"	Bliss Austin *	"The Engineer's Thumb"
Charles Honce *	"The Empty House"	Fred Annay	"The Dying Detective"
Fletcher Pratt	"The Dancing Men"	Nathan Bengis	"The Lion's Mane"
James Montgomery	"The Red Circle"	J.N. Williamson	"The Illustrious Client"
Rev. Leslie Marshall	"A Scandal in Bohemia"	C.R. Andrew	"Shoscombe Old Place"
James Keddie, Jr.	"The Crooked Man"	Howard Haycroft	"The Devil's Foot"
Richard W. Clarke	"The Copper Beeches"	Fulton Oursler	"The Abbey Grange"
Allen Robertson	"The Reigate Squires"	Rufus Tucker *	"The Greek Interpreter"
Russell McLauchlin	"The Naval Treaty"	Wilbur McKee *	"The Solitary Cyclist"
Edgar W. Smith *	"The Hound of the Baskervilles"	Charles Goodman	"The Stockbroker's Clerk"
Christopher Morley *	"The Sign of the Four"		

The following are listed as Investitured Irregulars for 1945, but are absent from the 1949-1950 lists: Frank Morley ("The Three Garridebs"); P.M. Stone ("The Speckled Band")

HERLOCK SHOLMES - The Yellow Phiz!

Charles Hamilton (Peter Todd), March 18, 1916, *The Greyfriars Herald*

Another Grand Story dealing with the Amazing Adventures of Herlock Sholmes, Detective.

Chapter 1

Herlock Sholmes was examining a series of pawntickets, of which he had a large and interesting collection, when a visitor was shown into our sitting-room at Shaker Street.

He was a young man with a somewhat pale and harassed face. It was evidently some deep-seated trouble which had brought him to consult my amazing friend.

"Mr. Sholmes!" he began eagerly.

"One moment!" said Sholmes. He finished his examination of the tickets. "Jotson, three of these are nearly up. Perhaps you will be good enough to see our friend Mr. Solomons in the morning. Now, sir, I am quite at your service!"

The young man plunged eagerly into his story.

"My name is Green," he said. "I live in the salubrious suburb of Peckham. I am sorely troubled, Mr. Sholmes, by a mystery that weighs upon my spirits and disturbs my domestic peace. I have recently——"

"Married," said Herlock Sholmes quietly.

Mr. Green started.

"How did you know?" he gasped.

Sholmes smiled.

"To a trained eye it is obvious," he replied. "A button is missing from your waistcoat, and your coat-collar requires brushing. It is quite evident that you have no longer the advantage of possessing a careful landlady."

"It is true, Mr. Sholmes. I have married — and when I was united with my dear Sempronia Whilks, I deemed myself the happiest man living! She had every charm that the most sensitive lover could desire or dream of — a comfortable balance at the bank, a large house standing in its own grounds, two motor-cars, and a relation in the peerage. She was a widow, Mr. Sholmes, the late Alderman Whilks having died suddenly after a dinner at the Mansion House. For three months, sir, I was deliriously happy. But now" — he made a tragic gesture— "now, Mr. Sholmes, my happiness is dashed — perhaps for ever."

"The bank has failed?" I asked sympathetically.

"No, it is not that."

"The motor-cars have broken down?"

"No, no!"

"The mortgagees have foreclosed on the house?"

"No, no! In all those respects, Sempronia is as charming as ever. But a hidden mystery preys upon my peace of mind."

"Pray give us some details, Mr. Green!" said Sholmes. "You may speak quite freely before my friend, Dr. Jotson."

"From the first week at Whilks Hall, Mr. Sholmes, I became aware that Sempronia was concealing something from me. One wing of that imposing mansion was never opened to me. Sempronia kept the key, and sometimes she would disappear into those deserted rooms alone, and remain for hours. After a time I grew curious on the subject. I asked for an explanation. To my surprise, Sempronia burst into tears, and begged me to trust her. Mr. Sholmes, I would have trusted her with my fortune, if I had possessed one; but I was uneasy and alarmed. That closed wing of the house became an obsession in my mind. I could not find it in my heart to force an entrance there against Sempronia's wish, but I prowled round the place occasionally, looking at the windows. On several occasions I heard cries proceeding from the rooms, yet it is supposed to be untenanted."

"Cries! Of what nature?" asked Sholmes, interested.

"It was somewhat like the crying of infants, Mr. Sholmes. But when I asked Sempronia for an explanation, she trembled and was silent. Mr. Sholmes, I know well that Sempronia loves me. Only this morning she stroked my hair and called me her dusky little Charley. Yet she keeps this weird secret from me. She tells me

that if I knew it I should love her no longer. Mr. Sholmes, I can bear no more. You must help me to penetrate this mystery, for Sempronia's sake and my own."

"I am quite at your service, Mr. Green," said Herlock Sholmes, rising. "We will proceed at once to Whilks Hall. Come, Jotson, unless you have another engagement."

"My dear Sholmes, I had intended to attend the funeral of one of my patients, but I will come with you with pleasure!"

"You have no more details to give me, Mr. Green?"

The young man hesitated.

"I have, Mr. Sholmes, yet it so extraordinary I almost fear to relate it."

"Pray proceed!"

"In prowling around the ruined wing, a prey to uneasiness and curiosity, I happened to glance at the windows, and I saw" — Mr. Green shuddered "I saw a face, Mr. Sholmes. It was a terrible-looking face — yellow in colour, and marked with what appeared to be daubs of black and blue paint. A grocer's boy, who was passing on his way to the kitchen door, saw it too, and ejaculated: 'What a chivvy!' It was indeed an extraordinary and alarming chivvy. Mr. Sholmes! It disappeared at once!"

"Extraordinary!" I exclaimed.

"Since then," said Mr. Green hoarsely, "I have seen it again—and others. In all, I have

counted fifteen — every chivvy of them a hideous-looking phiz, as ugly and ferocious in expression as the masks used by boys on the fifth of November. Mr. Sholmes, I am not dreaming. Extraordinary as it appears, it is the fact!"

Sholmes smiled.

"The improbability of your story, Mr. Green, renders it all the more likely to be correct, in my opinion. My system, as you are perhaps aware, is not that of Scotland Yard. But let us go."

And, in a few minutes more, a motor-bus was bearing us to Peckham.

Chapter 2

We arrived at Whilks Hall, one of the finest of the great fashionable mansions of Peckham. As we crossed the extensive grounds, Mr. Green pointed out to us the deserted wing. He gripped Sholmes' arm suddenly.

"Look!" he breathed.

At a large window a face suddenly appeared. I could not help a thrill of horror as I saw it. It was a face that, once seen, could never be forgotten — yellow in hue, with strange marks of red and blue and black — a huge misshapen nose, and wide, curling, grinning mouth. As we gazed, it was joined by a crowd more, all looking at us as we stood. Then suddenly a blind was drawn, and the yellow phizzes vanished from our sight.

"You saw them?" said Mr. Green huskily. "What do you say now, Mr. Sholmes?"

Sholmes' look was sombre.

"Let us proceed," he said.

A door opened, and a lady came forth, and Mr. Green ran towards her. It was evidently Mrs. Green, late Whilks. I turned to Sholmes.

"Sholmes, what does this dreadful mystery mean?" I murmured.

He shook his head.

"Jotson, I confess I am puzzled. Let us go on."

We hurried after Mr. Green. The beautiful Sempronia was endeavouring to prevent him from entering the door of the deserted wing. She threw herself on her knees.

"It is useless, Sempronia!" said the young man. "Let me pass with my friends who have come to investigate this mystery. Otherwise, I leave this house to-day, and return to my humble but happy lodgings in Camden Town."

"Then I will tell you all!" sobbed Sempronia. "but do not forsake your little Sempy! Follow me!"

She swept into the house. We followed, amazed. What strange mystery was about to be revealed?

"Bobby! Tommy! called out the beautiful Sempronia. Gladys! Mary Ann! Willy! Herbert!

Charley! Frank! Fred! Wilhelmina! Francesca!
Rupert! Cecilia! Ethel! Johnny!"

There was a rush of feet. The hideous faces we had seen at the window surrounded us. Even Sholmes stood dumbfounded. But in a moment more the secret was revealed. With a sweep of her hand, Sempronia removed the fifteen Guy Fawkes' masks from the fifteen faces, and fifteen boys and girls of varying ages stood revealed.

"In mercy's name, Sempronia, what means this?" gasped Mr. Green.

"Is this place an orphanage?"

Sempronia drew herself up proudly.

"Nothing of the kind, Charles Green! Forgive me! I have always intended to reveal the truth, but always I have put it off, even as one puts off a visit to the dentist's. When you met me, you knew that I was a widow, but did know that I had fifteen children. I dared not tell you; I feared that it would diminish your love, that it would outweigh, in the balance, the bank-account, the freehold house and the

motor-cars for which you adored me. Forgive me, Charles, and take them to your heart!"

"Sempronia!"

"In my dread that you would see them, and discover my fatal secret, I disguised them with Guy Fawkes' masks," murmured Mrs. Green, "otherwise, the resemblance would have betrayed the secret; but in these masks there is little or no resemblance to my features!"

"None!" said Mr. Green.

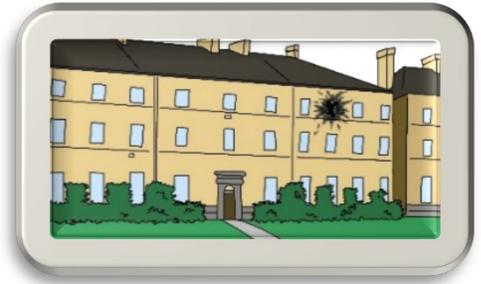
His face had cleared, and he drew Sempronia to his heart.

Sholmes and I slipped away quietly. We felt that we should be de trop at that tender scene of reconciliation. As we glanced back from the gate, we saw Mr. Green taking the merry fifteen to his heart, as requested by Sempronia; but, owing to their number, he was taking them on the instalment system!

THE END

Baker Street Elementary

Created by: Joe Fay, Rusty & Steve Mason



BAKER STREET ELEMENTARY
NUMBER 401 - 06/12/2022

FAY, MASON & MASON

IS THERE ANY CHANCE ARE FATES
ARE ACTUALLY PREDESTINED BY
THE STARS IN THE COSMOS ?



THE FIRST
ADVENTURES OF
HOLMES AND
WATSON

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I AM SURE I
DON'T KNOW...

I BELIEVE YOU WOULD
HAVE BETTER LUCK WITH
A 'TALKING BOARD'

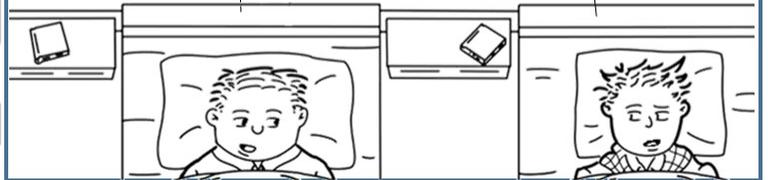


ANY CHANCE THE ROMAN, NORSE, OR GREEK GODS ARE CONTROLLING OUR LIVES ?



THESE QUESTIONS ARE NOT GOING TO HELP ME GO TO SLEEP...

STAMFORD, WHY ARE YOU TRYING TO PAWN OFF YOUR ACTIONS ?



EASY, I COULD BLAME MY MATH TEST TODAY ON A MINOR DEITY, AND I WOULD HAVE MUCH MORE FUN IF SOMEONE ELSE TOOK RESPONSIBILITY FOR MY ACTIONS...

