

The Bilge Pump

Vol. 02, No. 12 - December, 2014

The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star



From the Editors: We have the end of our 2nd year of publication. I hope we are still meeting the needs of our members: have fun and provide information. We are attaching another pastiche written by Jack Brazos III titled "THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY." Starting this month, we will include the monthly puzzle we develop for the story.

Don, Steve, & Walt

January 4, 2015 Meeting

The next meeting (and future meetings) will be held on Sunday, January 4th, at **LA MADELEINE COUNTRY FRENCH CAFE**, in Addison. The restaurant is at 5290 Belt Line Rd #112, just east of the Tollway.

We will resume reading *The Valley of Fear*. The quiz will cover the entire Part 2 of the book. We will have a discussion on what role the Pinkerton Agency had in American history.

Each monthly meeting will also include toasts as well as general business, introductions, and general fellowship.

December 7, 2014 Meeting

Fifteen Sherlockians were present at La Madeleine for the December meeting. Stu provided a wonderful toast concerning the blue carbuncle, while Don provided a whimsical toast to Dean on his birthday (see page 3).

Cindy outlasted all other contestants, winning the quiz for the month, receiving a nice Victorian cookie tin, stocked with goodies, donated by Brenda. The contest was based on "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle."

Cindy outdid herself, conducting a fabulous discussion on the blue carbuncle and associated matters (See page 5).

The members unanimously agreed to move forward on hosting a meeting in late April, "Sherlock Holmes: Deep in the Heart of the Texas" (See Page 2). Details will be posted on the webpage.

Rusty has done a wonderful job on posting information on the webpage, including videos and radio plays.

The closing toast was given by Steve from a passage of The Baker Street Journal (see page 4).

PAINTING WITH A TWIST

For those of you in the DFW area, Pam has taken several of these classes, and really enjoys them. On January 17 at 3:00 pm, an art instructor will teach students how to paint the outside of 221b (see painting on right). Plus you get to socialize ! The cost is \$ 45 for a three hour session (this includes paint, canvas). If you are interested, go to <https://www.paintingwithatwist.com/events/viewevent.aspx?eventID=343650>.

Email Pam at mamamason25@hotmail.com if you want to learn more about these classes.



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

You can follow us on Twitter at: @barquelonestar

You can friend us on Facebook at: <http://www.facebook.com/BarqueLoneStar>

Who dunnit:



Third Mate
Helmsman
Spiritual Advisors

Secretaries

Webmaster

Steve Mason
Walter Pieper
Don Hobbs, BSI
Jim Webb
Cindy Brown
Pam Mason
Rusty Mason

mason.steve@epa.gov
waltpieper@att.net
221b@verizon.net
jimrwebb@ix.netcom.com
myrkrid08@yahoo.com

**FRIDAY, APRIL 24 &
SATURDAY, APRIL 25, 2015**

COME JOIN US FOR

**SHERLOCK HOLMES: DEEP
IN THE HEART OF TEXAS !!**

NO REGISTRATION FEE
VISIT WWW.DFW-SHERLOCK.ORG FOR MORE
DETAILS AND TO REGISTER

RECEPTION AT THE HOME OF DON HOBBS, BSI
("INSPECTOR LESTRADE") — THE LARGEST
FOREIGN COLLECTION OF THE CANON
&
VISIT TO THE INTERATIONAL SHERLOCK HOLMES
EXHIBITION AT THE DALLAS PEROT MUSEUM



A TOAST TO DEAN

Don Hobbs, BSI

Roses are red,
Carbuncles are blue,
Sherlock is our hero,
But that you already knew.

Our meetings are grand,
And get better every time,
Unlike my poetry,
With its very simply rhyme.

So let's raise our glasses,
So they will hit the mark,
And wish a happy birthday,
To our own Dean Clark !

TOAST TO A BOOK

Stu Nelan

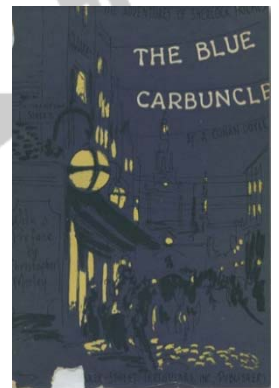
Not just any book, but a special book – “The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle”, (which is my favorite selection from the Canon) and the first book published by the Baker Street Irregulars in 1948, with an introduction by Christopher Morley, a bibliographical note by Edgar Smith, and a closing note on the Baker Street Irregulars.

The introduction by Morley is a pleasure to read, with his famous phrase of “a Christmas story without slush” when comparing this tale to Dicken’s “Christmas Carol”.

The story was published in the Strand Magazine, Jan 1982, the seventh of the Adventures to appear in the Strand. It has everything a great detective story should have: atmosphere, action, plot, deductive tours de force and a dramatic climax and denouement.

And it raises intriguing questions that have plagued Sherlockians for years:

- Is there such a thing as a “blue carbuncle”?
- Is it really crystallized charcoal?
- Was it discovered along the Amoy River in southern China?
- Does a goose have a crop?
- Was Holmes commuting a felony when he let Ryder free?



Smith, in his closing remarks, says that “this is the first time ‘The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle’ has appeared as a separate edition. It is the first time, in fact, that any one of the Adventures has been so honored. Not merely because (it) is a Christmas tale but it is assuredly one of his very best.”

The date of the adventure is (I think) universally agreed to be Friday, Dec 27, 1889 – about 9 years after Watson and Holmes first met. And after that length of time, the best Christmas greeting that Watson can come up with is “compliments of the season”? This, of course, is the pair who knew each other for over 40 years, and never once addressed each other by their first names!

So a toast to this book -- the first of the BSI!

THE WRITINGS ABOUT THE WRITINGS

From the Baker Street Journal, April, 1952

"Never," as Christopher Morley put it when he saw the material that was rolling in and weighed it against the [BAKER STREE] JOURNAL's subscription list, "has so much been written by so many for so few."

Here, in the writings about the Writings, has been found, by those who feel the kindred urge, a bottomless well of wisdom and delight.

What is it that makes this subject inexhaustible? Why do those who read the magic tales, for all the utter satisfaction their reading gives them, insist on adding something to the lore themselves? Whence comes the irresistible impulse to dig deeper into the meaning of things Sherlockian, and to seek a closer identification or interpretation of the truth?

There is nothing like it, to one's knowledge, in all the field of literature. Not Robinson Crusoe, nor Mr. Pickwick, nor yet great Hamlet has been so honored by the imp of the inquisitive. Do Alice and Don Quixote inspire long hours of research to determine the whys and where-fores of some foible they displayed?

Ivanhoe and Hiawatha, Dr. Jekyll and David Copperfield, Hercules and George Babbitt -- who cares if they were married once or twice, or how profound their knowledge of the Solar System may have been?

We know just where Achilles had his wound, and we let it go at that; and what kind of snake it was that Cleopatra took into her bosom. We know so very much of all the figures

that move upon the literary scene, and, knowing, cease to care or question. But Sherlock Holmes is different. Of him we know, of course, as much as any other - and yet he still remains the great enigma; the one of all the lot we fain would know as we would know ourselves. There is some kind of empathy, perhaps, that moves us to the endless search; that makes us never satisfied with what has been revealed. It may well be, in emulation of his own approach to life, and as a tribute to his master mind.

Whatever it may be, we know it will go on: we know that men will write of Sherlock Holmes, and what he thought and did and was, for many years to come. The surface up to now, has not been scratched.

It's That Time of Year Again

This is a great time to subscribe, or renew your subscription to three of the most popular and well-written journals concerning Sherlock Holmes.

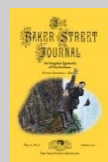


The Serpentine Muse is a quarterly journal of ASH activities and light-hearted Sherlockian topics. Contents include event reports, short articles, toasts, contests, poetry, drawings, and photos of and by ASH members and others. The Muse is published in December, March, June, and September.

Subscriptions to The Serpentine Muse are \$15 for 4 issues.

Send check (made out to "Evelyn A. Herzog") to:

Evelyn A. Herzog
301 Warren Ave, #203
Baltimore, MD 21230



The Baker Street Journal continues to be the leading Sherlockian publication since its founding in 1946 by Edgar

W. Smith.

With both serious scholarship and articles that "play the game," the Journal is essential reading for anyone interested in Sherlock Holmes, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and a world where it is always 1895.

Your subscription includes, for \$39.95:

- Four regular quarterly issues
- The Baker Street Journal Christmas Annual

<http://www.bakerstreetjournal.com/itemsforsale/subscriptions.html>

The Sherlock Holmes Journal is published

twice a year, usually in July and December. It is the official voice of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London.

It is home to the most erudite scholarship, publishing learned articles from Holmesians world-wide who have something to say on any aspect of Sherlock Holmes and his world. It has been appearing without a break since the first issue in May 1952.

Membership to the Society includes the Journal, for \$39.00, at <http://www.sherlock-holmes.org.uk/join/pay-online.php?cat=AssocAdult>



Crew Movie Night

Walt Pieper



The crew's latest installment of Movie Night took place on Saturday evening December 13th at the home of Walt and Linda Pieper.

Also present were Steve, Pam and Rusty Mason, Dean Clark, Tim Kline and Cindy Brown. Food served consisted of seasonal Chex mix and homemade brownies. Alcoholic refreshments were provided by Steve, Tim and Cindy.

The group viewed The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle. One version had Jeremy Brett as Holmes and the second version had Peter Cushing as Holmes.

Although both actors presented the story well, everyone felt that the Brett version gave the most faithful adaptation.

Next Movie Night will take place in February of next year, date and time TBA.



The theme will be A Night With Christopher Plummer where we will view Murder By Decree and Silver Blaze.

Everyone had a great time and all are looking forward to the February event.



'Sherlock Holmes' and 'Doctor Who' Theme Park Attractions in the Works

Fox News

Crime-solvers and sci-fi nerds unite—a theme park expansion just for you is on the way. BBC Worldwide has just signed a more than \$3 billion deal with U.K. property developer London Resort Company Holdings (LRCH) and Paramount Pictures that will have attractions including those based on "Doctor Who," and "Sherlock Holmes" reports the Guardian. The new park would be built by the Thames estuary in north Kent.

According to David Testa, a director for LRCH, the new development will "combine the glamour of Hollywood with the best of British culture."

The new park would attract foreign and domestic tourists with rides, characters and other attractions based on "Doctor Who," "Sherlock Holmes" and "Top Gear."



"We're always looking for opportunities to extend fans' enjoyment of their favorite shows and the idea behind this resort is a

really exciting way of celebrating the very special place the BBC has in British culture," said Stephen Davies, director of live events at BBC Worldwide, at a press event.

Paramount and LRCH already have an agreement that grants the developer access to the entertainment company's vast library of movies including "Mission: Impossible," "Star Trek," "The Godfather" and "The Italian Job." If construction unfolds according to plan, the park could be open as early as Easter of 2020.

Let's buy our tickets early, and beat the crowds !!

The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle: Odds & Ends, and Gems

Presented by Cindy Brown, December, 2014 Crew Meeting

From the San Francisco Scowlers who have initiated the James Ryder Toast, given to the dumbest crook of the past year. This being the Bay Area, the candidates are abundant. There was the mugger [now deceased] who tried to shoot his victim and when the gun didn't go off, turned it on himself to see what was wrong. Or the deaf bank robber who tried to fake it, but couldn't hear the alarms sounding all around him. Or the bank robber who tried to disguise himself as a woman but forgot about the goatee and mustache. Another friend suggested I look over recipes for a cooking a goose. Anything in the southern fried or bbq line? The one time I ever cooked a goose, I was impressed by the amount of goose grease it created, and discovered it has had a remarkable variety of uses over the years. Shoe polish, hair tonic, a healing salve, cure for constipation, cough medicine, and wax substitute. Wow, who would have thought!



In 1849, husband-and-wife murderers Frederick and Maria Manning were publicly hanged together outside Horsemonger Lane Gaol in London. It's thought that Doyle used Maria Manning incident as a model for the Story of the Blue Carbuncle. The felonious pair — she a Swiss-born domestic; he a shifty laborer with a penchant for the inside job — lured to dinner in their Bermondsey home. He was a wealthy friend named O'Connor, who had

designs on the redheaded Manning. They murdered him for his loot and stuffed the body under the floorboards. On the same day Mrs. Manning visited O'Connor's lodgings, stealing the dead man's railway shares and money. She returned the next day to complete the robbery. However, it is apparent the couple were planning to double cross each other; Marie fled with most of the loot, Frederick took the smaller portion and also fled.

They were apprehended separately on the lam. A massive, jeering throng turned out to see the two off (Mrs. Manning's choice of black satin for the occasion is said to have caused the look to go out of fashion until the time of Coco Chanel).

Among that crowd was Charles Dickens, who took a break from working on David Copperfield to write The Times a letter published Nov. 14 demanding executions be removed and only take place within prison walls on account of the unedifying conduct of the spectators.

A carbuncle is an archaic name given to any red gemstone. The name applied particularly to red garnet.[1] The word occurs in four places in most English translations of the Bible.

- Exodus 28:17 and 39:10 both refer to the carbuncle's use as the third stone in the breastplate of the Hoshen.
- Ezekiel 28:13 refers to the carbuncle's presence in the Garden of Eden.
- Isaiah 54:12 uses carbuncle to convey the value of the Lord's blessing to His faithful barren woman servant:
- "And I will make her windows of agates, and thy her gates of carbuncles...
- The Greek term Anthrax — meaning coal, in reference to

the color of burning coal; in this sense, a carbuncle is usually taken to mean a gem, particularly a deep-red garnet, un-faceted and convex

- A carbuncle plays a mystic role in Nathaniel Hawthorne's story, "The Great Carbuncle."
- Hamlet by William Shakespeare refers to carbuncles in act 2 scene 2 line 401: "With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus..."

A carbuncle can also refer to a red swollen cluster of boils or open wound. Yuck!!!

But Back to Our Story

The Commissioner held out his hand and displayed upon the center of the palm a brilliantly scintillating blue stone, rather smaller than a bean in size, but of such purity and radiance it twinkled like an electric point in the dark hollow of his hand.

Sherlock Holmes sat up with a whistle. "By Jove, Peterson!" said he, "this is a treasure trove indeed. I suppose you know what you have got?"

"A diamond, sir? A precious stone. It cuts into glass as though it were putty."

"It's more than a precious stone. It is the precious stone."

"Not the Countess of Morcar's blue carbuncle!" exclaimed Watson.

"Precisely so, said Holmes."

Holmes went on to describe it as a nucleus and focus of crime. Every good stone is. They are the devil's pet baits. In the larger and older jewels every facet may stand for a bloody deed. This stone is not yet twenty years old. It was found in the banks of the Amoy River in Southern China and is remarkable in having every characteristic of the carbuncle, save it is blue in shade instead of ruby red. In

spite of its youth, it has already a sinister history. There have been two murders, a vitriol-throwing (acid attack), a suicide, and several robberies brought about for the sake of this forty-grain weight of crystallized charcoal.

And on to our Story with Some Musings:

How could Holmes let James Ryder go? What happened to John Horner? Who ended up with the reward? And so on. The master has left us with sufficient clues we can form some deductions, and perhaps shed light on his decisions and actions, if we but rightly understand the Countess of Morcar, and the nature of the knowledge Holmes held in his hands. Let's construct a mosaic from just a few of the statements and events of this chronicle.

We know at the outset Holmes has been following the case rather closely. Holmes says "I ought to know its size and shape, seeing I have read the advertisement every day lately."

Holmes has three or four days of morning papers on the couch near him when Watson entered.

The stone is also no mystery to Sherlock. "It is absolutely unique, and its value can only be conjectured,"

Most telling are the contents of a single statement Holmes makes after Peterson's comment upon the amount of the reward being offered: "A thousand pounds! Great Lord of mercy!" Holmes responds "That is the reward, and I have reason to know there are sentimental considerations in the background which would induce the Countess to part with half of her fortune if she could but recover the gem." I have reason to know.

Holmes KNOWS. He does not deduce. He does not speculate. He KNOWS. And he knows, because he has been involved with the stone before! Consider its history. "This stone is not yet twenty years old," he says. "There have been two murders, a vitriol-throwing, a suicide, and several robberies brought about for the sake of this forty-grain weight."

How does Holmes know this level of detail? From a study of all the good stones, since they are all a "nucleus and focus of crime"? He refers to it with a familiarity and ease that belies mere study. There are sentimental considerations in the background which would induce her to part with half her fortune just to recover the gem. This is very close knowledge of the Countess and her situation indeed, not something that can be deduced from an Agony column!

Let us not err from the start, by thinking of "sentiment" as only the softer, intimate or romantic feelings. Its definition is simply: "Passion or feeling; a state of mind in view of some subject; feeling toward or respecting some person or thing; disposition prompting to action or expression" Sentiment, then, incorporates the full range of emotion and feeling, not just the soft ones. Harsh bitterness, anger, lust, resentment, and the like are sentiments as well.

Holmes says "sentimental considerations," not reasons or feelings. From the perspective of the sentiments, the softer sentiments are most frequently well known by others, quite visible, and generally sensible. Hidden sentiments are most certainly the harsher. (malice, greed, envy, jealousy, rage, avarice, bitterness) the types of sentiments that foster insensibility, irrationality, and may drive a person to some act of vengeance, or even murder, upon which keeping all in the background becomes a requirement for self-preservation. But here, it's the considerations that are hidden, and they are strong enough to induce the Countess to do something. This implies external sources may be at work. In other words, the considerations will force her in directions not necessarily entirely of her own will!

And what do these considerations (of a sentimental nature) induce her to do? She will part with half her fortune. Now this is extreme and even

irrational. The softer sentiments, even love, would not be of sufficient power to cause someone with the Countess' sort of wealth to toss half of it away just to recover a lost gem. It's very much more likely the sentiments involved here are among the harsher ones, spite, jealousy, revenge... the sort that can culminate in violence, murder, vitriol throwing, and motivate suicide. These are the sentiments that would take control of a person... that could still hold power sufficient to cause them to lose sight of reason, and give up half their fortune. And for what? For nothing more than recovery of the gem! Not even to insure a prosecution of the thief... but simply to get the gem back! To retain the status the gem confers to oneself... to insure someone else can not have it... to silence further inquiry into the matter. Think again about the gem's bloody and violent history, remembering it's less than twenty years old. The London aristocracy's town houses and mansions had by this time become the command centers of the London season. Wealth and ownership, ostentation and flamboyance, were yet the defining characteristics of people's lives.

And now enter a new, absolutely unique, gem into the picture, and the battle among the elite ensues for its possession, with our Countess coming out on top. Yet as the wife of an Earl, or holding the title of Countess in her own right, she's not necessarily among the wealthiest of the peerage, but sits in the middle. A little speculation might even suggest one of the murders or the suicide along the way was her own husband, whether by her own hand or not. Vitriol throwings, murders, suicides: certainly create a picture of deep intrigues along with the criminal actions is suggested. Holmes says the crimes were done for the sake of the stone. Not to obtain possession of it. . .or to insure it's safety. . .but simply "for its sake.

As Holmes noted "this would induce her to part with half her fortune just to recover the gem." This is very close knowledge of the Countess. The Countess desiring return of the gem at any price, for the sole purpose of retaining ownership and insuring no one else could possess it. It appears Mr. Sherlock Holmes himself, has already had dealings with both she and this gem, and knows full well the details and events of its volatile history. It is his considerations, held in the background where even she cannot see, that will induce her to part with so much if needed, lest he should reveal what Holmes is also well aware, that the Countess' obsession has not abated. He knows he can secure Horner's release without James Ryder's involvement.

Possibly, he sees this event as a means to a much larger end, with his ultimate target being to finally to snare the Countess herself.

But I digress, let's look briefly at Catherine Cusak, Here is the real villain in this particular affair. Here is the one who schemed, watched, and waited for a chance to remove from the Countess the one thing she knew would hurt her the most. Here is the one who took the FIRST step in the crime, revealing the gem to Ryder, who is merely a pawn in the game. True, very little is made about her by Holmes himself (quite intentionally) except as a passing reference. But she not only tempted Ryder to crime; she aided in design of the scheme, and provided corroboration of his story to the police, as she conspired to damage her employer and send the innocent Horner to ruin.

Why did he let Ryder go? It is not Ryder he wants. His sights are set on much greater things. In the end, we know, Holmes simply lets Ryder go. He knows the Countess will not press the charges. The danger is too great! Horner will be free, and the Countess will contrive a tale to explain it away, which the police will not contest. Holmes has not even communicated

with the Countess yet. . .but he knows these things. No doubt, the maid will be dealt with too, in ways only the Countess can contrive, and we can presume she can contrive much... she, who came out on top of the heap in the brawl for ownership of the gem to begin with! In the end, the explanation Holmes gives for letting Ryder go is singularly feeble and unconvincing. He seems to be as much trying to justify it to himself, as he is trying to convince Watson. This is especially shown in the conflicting statements "it is just possible I am saving a soul" and "This fellow will not go wrong again."

A valid question might be why Holmes pursued the solution of the crime at all. Once he had the gem, he could easily have dealt with the Countess, secured Horner's release, and returned the gem, without all the fussing and rambling about. He knew he held all the cards needed! In answer, this is the one issue in the entire event he fully and honestly explains to Watson. "Chance has put in our way a most singular and whimsical problem, and its solution is its own reward." In this respect, at least, our Mr. Sherlock Holmes is a bit selfish. He likes having his little problems to solve!

Now to one of my favorite things, on God's green earth. Rocks!!

Let's look at some of the gems that have gone down in history, with the byline of mystery, murder, mayhem.

1. HOPE DIAMOND

At 45.52 carats, the beautiful grayish-blue Hope Diamond. Its history traces back to the 17th-century diamond mines of India. Originally from 112.19-carat, and owned by the French merchant Jean Baptiste Tavernier. Tavernier sold the stone to King Louis XIV of France in 1668, who later had the stone re-cut. In 1792, after Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette



attempted to flee France — their escape was foiled and they were guillotined in 1793 — the diamond was stolen during a looting of the French Royal Treasury.

The diamond is believed to have then been owned by King George IV of England, and then likely sold through private channels and was purchased by Henry Philip Hope, from whom it got its name. It was passed down to Hope's family members until it was ultimately sold to help pay off their debts. In 1909, Pierre Cartier bought the Hope Diamond and sold it to Evalyn Walsh McLean, an American mining heiress and socialite.

McLean had many misfortunes: her son died in a car accident, her daughter died of a drug overdose, her husband died in a sanitarium and her family was forced to sell their newspaper, the Washington Post, in a bankruptcy auction. After McLean's death from pneumonia in 1947, Harry Winston Inc. purchased her entire jewelry collection. In 1958, Winston donated the iconic Hope Diamond, which is worth a quarter of a billion dollars, to the Smithsonian Institution National Museum of Natural History in Washington, D.C., where it resides on display to this day.

As the museum states on its website, it "appears to have maintained the Hope curse-free."

2. BLACK PRINCE'S RUBY

Black Prince's ruby isn't actually a ruby at all, but a large spinel — a hard, glassy mineral that crystallizes into various shades, including fiery red.

Spinel is worth significantly less than rubies, which is why the Black Prince's ruby is also known as "the great impostor."

It was first recorded during the 14th century, when it was plundered from the Moorish Kingdom of Granada. The "ruby" was then owned by Edward of Woodstock, who was called "the Black Prince," because of



his success on the battlefield during the Hundred Years' War. In 1415, King Henry V attained the Black Prince's ruby and had it set in his battle helmet alongside real rubies. The king wore the helmet when he defeated the French forces at the Battle of Agincourt. The gem was passed along to British royalty, including Henry VIII and his daughter, Elizabeth I, until King Charles I was beheaded for treason in 1649 and the stone was sold. (Remember King Charles I from The Musgrave Ritual.)

Charles II bought the stone back from an unknown party, but nearly lost it when the infamous Irish colonel Thomas Blood attempted to steal the crown jewels of England from the Tower of London in 1671.

Currently, the Black Prince's ruby is set dead-center at the front of the Imperial State Crown of England.

3. DELHI PURPLE SAPPHIRE

The Delhi Purple sapphire is another imposter, because it isn't really a sapphire, but an amethyst.

The mysterious stone is rumored to have been stolen by a British soldier from the Temple of Indra, the Hindu god of war and weather, in Kanpur, India, during the Indian Mutiny of 1857. It was brought to England by Colonel W. Ferris, whose family then supposedly suffered many financial and health woes. The stone was given to Edward Heron-Allen, a scientist and writer, in 1890, who claimed to have started having bad luck immediately after receiving it. He gave the amethyst away to friends, who were also struck with misfortune and quickly returned the gift back to him. Wary of its alleged powers, he kept it locked away in seven boxes and surrounded by good luck charms.



After his death, Heron-Allen's daughter donated the amethyst to London's Natural History Museum in 1943. Along with the stone, she gave them a letter her father wrote cautioning future owners against directly handling it. The mysterious Delhi Purple sapphire is now permanently on display as part of the Natural History Museum's Vault Collection of precious gemstones.

4. LA PEREGRINA PEARL

This is the pearl which Elizabeth Taylor proudly showed off during her cameo of the 1969 film "Anne of a Thousand Days." Elizabeth Taylor loved her gems — and one of her favorites was La Peregrina Pearl, a 50.6-carat pearl that is one of the largest found pearls in the world.



The pearl was discovered in the Gulf of Panama during the 16th century. King Philip II of Spain gave the pearl to Queen Mary I of England before their marriage in 1554, but he later abandoned her and she died in 1558 without an heir. She was nicknamed "Bloody Mary" after her death because of the hundreds of Protestants she ordered to be executed during her five-year reign.

Following the queen's death, the Pearl was returned to King Philip II, who then proposed to Mary I's younger half-sister, Elizabeth I. The pearl was worn by Spanish royalty until the 19th century, when Napoleon invaded and the French seized the Spanish crown — and the pearl. La Peregrina Pearl was passed down to members of the Napoleon Bonaparte family, but was ultimately sold to Lord James Hamilton in 1873. It was then sold at a Sotheby's auction in 1969 to Richard Burton, who gave it to his wife, Elizabeth Taylor, as a Valentine's Day present.

After Taylor's death in 2011, La Peregrina Pearl was bought for \$11.8 million by an anonymous buyer at a Christie's auction.

5. STAR OF INDIA

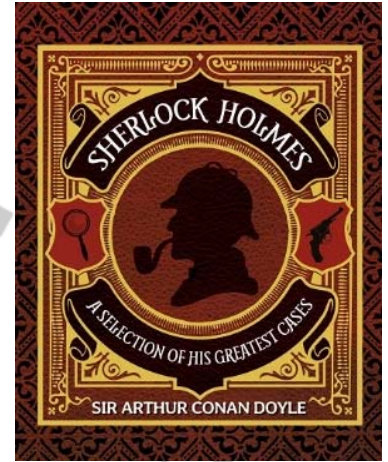
The deep blue, oval star sapphire known as the Star of India weighs 563.35 carats. Unlike the other gemstones in this gallery, this star sapphire is a rounded, polished cabochon, rather than faceted. The largest found blue sapphire in the world, the Star of India's origin is believed to trace back to Sri Lanka, where it was discovered an estimated 300 years ago. The stone's rare, characteristic star design occurred naturally.



In 1900, the Star of India was donated by industrialist J.P. Morgan to the American Museum of Natural History in New York. It was stolen from the museum in 1964, when a group of thieves left a bathroom window unlocked during the day and climbed in through the window at night. At the time, the uninsured Star of India was the only gem in the museum's exhibit that was protected by an alarm, but as luck would have it, the alarm's battery was dead, according to media reports. The men snatched the gem, along with several other precious stones that were on exhibit, and escaped back out the window. The robbery was one of the biggest gem heists in American history, but the three thieves were captured within only two days. While some of the stolen gems were never seen again, the Star of India was miraculously recovered in a Miami bus station locker several months later. The Star of India was put back on display at the American Museum of Natural History, where it remains on permanent display to this day — hopefully guarded by a more reliable alarm system.

Here is a nice gift book for the budding Sherlockian on your Christmas list. At **Half Price Books**, a book entitled **Sherlock Holmes: A Selection of His Greatest Cases**. It comes in a slipcover. The quality of the paper is good and it has some Paget illustrations. It was published this year by Arcturus Publishing in London, with a short introduction by Martin Edwards. The price was \$10. The cases they selected as the "greatest" are HOUN, REDH, FIVE, TWIS, SPEC, COPP, SILV, MUSG, REIG, FINA, EMPT, DANC AND PRIO.

This raises an interesting question: what one would include in an anthology is a somewhat different question. It is a cross between the best stories and the most representative stories. With a little of "what should the reader know about Sherlock Holmes stories when he is done" added. I would propose that an anthology should contain 1 novel and 10 stories (as above) and should be ordered by the selector, I must say that the anthology above is a good one and my choices to not vary greatly from it.



Here is my Personal choices and the reasoning behind them.

- 1) SCAN - Although STUD and SIGN were written and published first this is really the story that introduced Sherlock Holmes to the world at large. That alone qualifies it, but also, an anthology without "The Woman", really? First because (for the vast majority or readers) it was the introduction Holmes and his talents and quirks
- 2) SILV - Must be included for "The Incident of the Dog in the Night" if nothing else. Placed here because one needs to see Sherlock At his best and succeeding early on in the collection.
- 3) GREE - Mycroft and the Diogenes Club should be represented. Put here because it is at least 1/2 successful for Holmes (building his track record) and because it is good to introduce Mycroft before EMPT and I don't want to split up FINA and EMPT.
- 4) FINA - Moriarty should also be represented. By this point I expect the reader to be looking for him.
- 5) EMPT - Because (as ACD found out) you cannot kill off Sherlock Holmes without resurrecting him.
- 6) FIVE - Of the stories with an American connection this is to my mind the most atmospheric. I also think one story with a conspiracy atmosphere should be included. Placed here to get back to mysteries that are both typical and among ACD's best.
- 7) BLAC - I wanted to include a later story. And the settings in this one are wonderful. I think every anthology should include a favorite of the editor that is outside of the typical "best" stories. Placed here because I realize it is not a typical choice, and I am following the adage the the weakest material should go towards the middle.
- 8) MUSG - One needs the Coal Scuttle, the Persian slipper the VR. I also feel compelled to include one from Holmes' youth. Besides I cannot resist the conceit that the royal crown not only escaped Cromwell, but has in fact been found. This could easily be switched with PRIO, but I like moving to the more traditional mystery PRIO towards the end.
- 9) PRIO - Almost a perfectly typical Holmes story. Nice mystery good characterization ("the second most interesting thing I have seen"). Placed here as a good strong story to end with, before moving into the good humored BLUE and the novel.
- 10) BLUE - Good deductions from the hat and you get to see Holmes as a detective (wagering on the geoses origin to obtain his information) as well as a reasoner. Besides what is an anthology without a Christmas story. Good fun story to end the short stories section.
- 11) HOUN - A classic on literature as well detective fiction and Gothic novels. Could not possibly be left out. Placed last because I don't want to switch from short stories to a novel and then back again. It could have gone first, but I think SCAN is a better Intro to Holmes.

Sherlock vs. Elementary: Which Version of Sherlock Holmes Is Most Like Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's?

Tiffany Chang on Dec 15, 2014

There have been many interpretations of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, the famous fictional crime fighting duo from the works written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, both on television and in the movies.

Today, especially, there is the question of which 21st century Sherlock Holmes is your favorite on TV, whether it's Elementary's Jonny Lee Miller, or do you prefer the performance of Benedict Cumberbatch, aka the busiest actor in the world, in BBC's Sherlock.

However, a more important and interesting question, despite whatever your preference may be, is which of these two versions of the infamous detective is the most like the traditional character of Conan Doyle's books.

Let's compare the two series and find out.

Miller's Sherlock is a more current version of the consulting detective. He is portrayed as a recovering drug addict and former consultant to Scotland Yard. He assists the NYPD by solving crimes, which do not relate to the stories by Conan Doyle.

His indifference to police procedures often lead to conflict with Captain Thomas Gregson (Aidan Quinn), who in a way, is like the American version of Inspector Lestrade, and the two of them still remain mutually

respectful of one another much, similar to the relationship between Sherlock and Lestrade in the BBC series.

He is accompanied by Dr. Joan Watson (Lucy Liu), the American version of Dr. John Watson with a gender change; she is a former surgeon and was hired by Sherlock's father to help Sherlock in his rehabilitation.

They eventually began to work together on solving cases for the NYPD. The series also features Holmes' ongoing conflict with his arch nemesis Jamie Moriarty/Irene Adler (both are played by two different people in the BBC series), the American, and female, version of James Moriarty, (Natalie Dormer).

Supporting roles include Jon Michael Hill as Detective Marcus Bell and Rhys Ifans as Mycroft.

Cumberbatch's Sherlock, however, is much closer to the one in Conan Doyle's stories but with a modern twist. He is assisted by his flatmate and friend, Dr. John Watson (Martin Freeman), who has returned from military service in Afghanistan with the Royal Army Medical Corps.

Metropolitan Police Service Detective Inspector Greg Lestrade (Rupert Graves) and others are, at first, keptical of Holmes, but over time, his remarkable intellect and powers of observation and deduction change their view of

him. Sherlock also becomes a reluctant celebrity, with the press reporting on his cases and eccentric personal life, with both ordinary people and the British government asking for his help through Watson's blog, which documents their adventures together like book Watson did with his many diaries.

Additionally, BBC's Sherlock seems to be paying an homage of sorts to Conan Doyle's novels like "Hound of the Baskervilles" and "A Study in Pink," and Holmes' conflict with arch nemesis Jim Moriarty (Andrew Scott) is much more like the one in the books, where it's a constant game of cat and mouse.

Other characters include Una Stubbs as Mrs. Hudson, Holmes' and Watsons' landlady at 221B Baker Street (who does not appear in Elementary, and for the record, Miller's version of Sherlock does not live at the infamous London address), and series co-creator Mark Gatiss stars as Mycroft.

Ultimately, both series are great shows that put their own modern stamp on the character of Sherlock Holmes. However, due to the more procedural elements of Elementary, BBC's Sherlock can be seen as the 21st century series that most resembles Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's original works.

PAINTING WITH A TWIST (PART 2)

At the last painting session Pam sat in on, they were supposed to paint a cute little sign post (Christmas-themed) for you to hang proudly in your house.

Another student created this one instead...



Sherlockian Scholarship: Victor Victorian -- Some Thoughts on Cross-Dressing in the Canon

Rosemary Michaud, *The Holmes Watson Report*, March, 1997

Men dressed as women, women dressed as men: it is a minor but pervasive theme which runs throughout the adventures of Sherlock Holmes. What is the meaning of it, Watson? The first Canonical female impersonator appears in the first Canonical tale, *A Study in Scarlet*. The clever disguise prompts Holmes to comment, "Old woman be damned!" which is, significantly, the deepest extent of Holmes's profanity which was ever reported by Watson. Holmes was thoroughly disgusted with himself for not seeing through the disguise, and with good reason. Although he had baited his trap deliberately to catch the person who had dropped the ring at the murder scene, it apparently never occurred to Holmes to doubt the identity of the elderly woman who came to pick up the lost wedding band. What a fine actor that "young man, and an active one" must have been, to pull the shawl over Holmes's eyes so completely! Holmes recovered from that setback only to be fooled again years later by the reverse of the same dodge, the appearance of the infamous "slim youth in an ulster" who was, as we all know now, the talented Irene Adler. If Holmes ever said, "Slim youth in an ulster be damned!" Watson did not see fit to pass the comment along to his readers.

That was the last recorded episode in which anyone baffled Holmes with a cross-gender disguise. Note how quickly he recognized the alternate possibilities of the supposedly male lodger in "The Red Circle," whose place had actually been taken by the original lodger's wife. And Holmes had no trouble at all discerning the substitution of an actor for the deceased Lady Beatrice Falder in "Shoscombe Old Place." Along with his self-training to "examine faces, and not their trimmings," Holmes had clearly added a reminder not to trust to first appearances when deciding even so fundamental

an attribute as a person's gender. In fact, Holmes seems to have thought so highly of the cross-gender disguise he chose to employ it himself, as we know from the case of "The Mazarin Stone," when the great detective masqueraded as an elderly woman with a parasol in order to keep a close eye on Count Silvius.

For those who are keeping count, this makes five known instances of cross-dressing, spread among the sixty tales passed on to us by Watson. The "meaning of it" is not difficult to determine. A cross-gender disguise is simply a great way to slip through the fingers of the police, your creditors, your enemies, and even certain private consulting detectives. I believe we would learn of still more examples than these five, if we only had access to the untold cases as well. And yet, even among the known cases, there may be scope for further speculation. Are there still more instances where a client or a criminal chose to pass himself or herself off as a member of the opposite sex?

How much evidence are we required to have in order to make an intelligent supposition, when even Holmes himself seems to have decided the damnable old woman was a young man merely on the basis of her ability to elude his cab-hopping strategy? May we not be permitted a few liberties of our own?

Mind you, I am not concerned with the actual sexual orientation of any of these characters; I am merely observing that, often for reasons unconnected with sexual or even criminal matters, some of these folk might not have been all they appeared to be. It is not surprising Watson's accounts leave us without firm proof of these further examples of Canonical cross-dressing. When the truth of an individual's gender was not germane to his solution of the case, Holmes may not even have bothered to inform Watson a disguise

was used. In other cases, he may have sworn Watson to silence to protect the innocent -- or even the guilty.

Laura Lyons once complained, "Is there no such thing as a gentleman?" and I think she may have had in mind the collection of effete and smooth-faced male Canonical characters whose gender identity may be called into theoretical question. Consider John Hector McFarlane, accused of murder in "The Norwood Builder." Watson tells us, "He was flaxen-haired and handsome, in a washed-out negative fashion" with a "clean-shaven face" and a "weak, sensitive mouth." perhaps Holmes was ready to believe in McFarlane's innocence because he saw what the police did not: this young solicitor was a woman, and one who probably lacked the physical strength to commit the crime of which she was suspected.

Why was McFarlane disguised as a man? I suspect the reason was economic necessity. As the child of parents who were not well off, she had considerably more options in life as "John" than she did as "Joan," including a college education and admittance to the legal profession. Holmes not only spared her from the gallows, but preserved her secret and thereby her livelihood as well. What about the notorious James Wilder? Watson describes James as "small, nervous, alert, with intelligent light-blue eyes and mobile features." Nothing feminine stands out except perhaps "small" and "mobile features." But consider this passage, when Wilder passes Holmes and Watson on his bicycle: "I caught a glimpse of a pale, agitated face... It was like some strange caricature of the dapper James Wilder whom we had seen the night before."

Perhaps it was "Jane" Wilder, driven by haste and desperation to appear in public without her theatrical makeup. Remember too what the Duke says. "I could see his mother's face in his... All her pretty ways, too." "All her pretty ways" -- strange qualities to admire in a son, but perfectly natural to admire in a daughter.

If "James" were in fact a young lady, this would place further impediments to the inheritance of her father's title and lands. At this point in the history of England, a woman was permitted by law to own and inherit property, but the chances of an illegitimate daughter succeeding to a dukedom were less than zero once the legitimate son, Lord Saltire, was born. Her mother's "pretty ways" could not compete with a male heir.

And wouldn't a "small" young woman be even more likely than a small young man to hire a confederate to do her kidnapping chores for her? Indeed, if James were truly Jane, it adds an ominous tone to the Duke's

comment "(Reuben Hayes] was a rascal from the beginning, but, in some extraordinary way, James became intimate with him." Not so extraordinary, perhaps, if James were a woman. Distasteful, yes, but not extraordinary. And then there is James McCarthy of "The Boscombe Valley Mystery." Holmes described him as "not a very quick-witted youth, though comely to look at." Was the word "comely" Holmes's little hint there was something more to tell? Watson interprets Alice Turner's for a young man, but if Alice and "James" were both young women, it would certainly explain why "no one but Mr. McCarthy [the elder] was in favor of' the marriage of the two young people.

The unscrupulous old McCarthy had disguised his daughter as a boy from the very first, in order to keep his options open for annexing the Turner estate someday. The story of James's secret wedding to a Bristol barmaid was a weak attempt to explain to Holmes why the young people could not wed, though I think Holmes probably saw through it all.

Now consider John Clay, he of "The Red-Headed League." Here is a fellow described by his employer as "small, stout-built, very quick in his ways, no hair on his face." And his ears were pierced for earrings, though of course he had a story ready to explain that detail to anyone who happened to notice. Clay's capture in the bank vault was the first time he had been apprehended by the police, as indicated by Peter Jones when he complained "we never know where to find the man himself."

Indeed, it would have been difficult for the police to locate a man who was in fact a woman, an identity Clay probably resumed as soon as it was time to hide out from pursuit. This may be the true motivation behind Clay's request, "I beg you will not touch me with your filthy hands." Yes, there is his story about royal blood, but what better way to preserve the secret of one's gender than to keep others at a distance? Holmes himself may have been unaware of Clay's gender. As Holmes admitted, "We have had some skirmishes, but we had never set eyes upon each other before. I hardly looked at his face."

Holmes was examining trouser knees instead when he inquired directions from Clay in front of Jabez Wilson's pawn shop. Later on, Holmes had only the uncertain light of the lanterns in the bank vault to see by, and he may not have discerned Clay's true gender. Besides, Holmes had already thwarted Clay's scheme, and he probably looked no further than that now the criminal was in custody.

Was Violet Hunter a woman or a man? She signed her name "Hunter," which certainly suggests the masculine habit. Had this fellow Hunter failed to obtain suitable masculine employment, and seized at Colonel Munro's governess position as his last chance to earn an honest living, somewhat like a Victorian "Tootsie?"

There was no deception in his appeal to Holmes for advice on the Rucastle offer, however; Hunter had smelled a rat and wished to be sure he could call on Holmes if the situation turned rummy later on. Holmes probably recognized Hunter as a man from the first. Watson reports Holmes was "favorably impressed by the manner and speech of his new client."

I suspect he was admiring Hunter's superb female disguise, as one gifted actor admires the talents of another. If Holmes knew Hunter was a man, this would certainly explain his willingness to let a "young woman" go alone to live under the suspicious arrangements at "The Copper Beeches." Had Hunter been a woman, Holmes might have given very different advice.

Notice the peculiar nature of Holmes's conversations with Hunter. Instead of saying, "You acted bravely," or something on those direct lines, he told her, "You seem to me to have acted all through this matter like a very brave and sensible young girl."

And then, "I should not ask it of you if I did not think you quite an exceptional woman." Observe how a slight emphasis on the words "like" and "exceptional" might suggest Holmes was in possession of some special knowledge of Hunter's true identity. No wonder he "manifested no further interest in her" when the case was concluded! Are there more instances of Canonical gender disguises? Was Inspector Baynes a woman in disguise, and was this the reason Holmes was so quick to assume she had the wrong solution to the case at "Wisteria Lodge?" He should have known better after his encounter with Irene Adler!

What about Victor Trevor? Despite his seemingly agreeable personality, he was "friendless" at college until his terrier sank its teeth into Holmes's ankle. Was "Victoria" forced to be friendless, in order to preserve the secret of her identity and to continue her education at an all-male university? Was this the reason she was powerless to rid her father's household of the evil influence of Hudson? Was she being blackmailed for her secret as her father was for his? And Holmes's remark about the deceased sister may have been his way of trying to protect his friend's feminine identity. There was probably only one Trevor offspring: the daughter who masqueraded as a man. It is rather interesting to

think Holmes as a young man was capable of making a friend of a young woman, but this friendship with Trevor is not inconsistent with what we know of his later relationships with both men and women.

There is no hint of a sexual attraction between the two students, only a friendly affection. And though Holmes is clearly fond of his companion, he does not credit him (or her) with very many admirable traits beyond family loyalty and an open nature -- qualities which he could have admired equally in a man or a woman. He does not say Trevor is particularly intelligent, for instance. This is a quality which Holmes apparently did not demand in a friend, and which he might have accepted with difficulty -- if he were capable of recognizing it at all -- in a female friend.

I have one last conjecture worth noting in this consideration of cross-gender disguise. What about Watson? No, I am certain Watson was a man. However, when he took the sample of Chinese pottery to Baron Gruner in "The Illustrious Client," I believe Watson was disguised not as "Doctor Hill Barton," but rather as "Miss Hillary Barton," the dish with the dish, as we might say. What better way to ensure the interest of the lecherous Gruner than to approach him with both of his heart's desires, an attractive woman and a valuable Ming saucer? Under ordinary circumstances, Watson might have balked at shaving off his beloved mustache and assuming female garb, but the sight of Holmes's pitiable wounds made him ready to do anything his friend asked of him. No wonder he could not retain much knowledge of ancient pottery in front of Gruner; the poor doctor was too busy trying to keep up the charade of his hastily learned feminine mannerisms.

Worse yet, perhaps he was too busy fending off Gruner's advances! Poor Watson! There must have been a lively word or two exchanged between the two friends after the case was over. Some people, like Watson, just aren't cut out for this sort of thing. But plenty of Canonical characters were cut out for it -- or at least, they might have been.