

The Bilge Pump

Vol. 04, No. 02 - February, 2016
*The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the
Barque Lone Star*



From the Editors: Thanks for all your support. Steve & Walt

March 6th Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Sunday, March 6th, at LA MADELEINE COUNTRY FRENCH CAFE, in Addison.

The restaurant is at 5290 Belt Line Rd #112, just east of the Tollway.

We will be reading "The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb."

The quiz will cover this tale.

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

February 7th Meeting

There were 19 in attendance at the monthly meeting, including 5 visitors (2 from the East Coast.) Pam Mason read a wonderful toast, "Ruminations on the Cardboard Box," from the *Serpentine Muse Journal*.

The quiz on "The Adventure of the Cardboard Box" was won by Sharon Lowry, scoring a perfect 10 out of 10. She accepted the prize, *The Sherlock Holmes Puzzle Collection*.

Steve Mason then did a presentation exploring the duplication of the opening of the "Cardboard Box" to the "Resident Patient." The group also discussed the use of earlobes as a means of identification presently and in the future.

Don Hobbs and Dean Clark offered up a summary of events during the BSI Weekend in New York. The Crew was well represented and was awarded with several distinctions.

Don also displayed a copy of *Spain and Sherlock Holmes*, the latest installment of the BSI International series. Don was the editor of this edition.

Sandra Little reported the Allen Library has released Carole Nelson Douglas' speech during our November symposium on YouTube.

Steve Mason gave the Closing Toast from the Baker Street Journal on December, 1961, entitled "Yes Virginia, there is a Sherlock Holmes."

Thanks to Brenda for taking the minutes of the cruise. The full minutes are posted on our webpage at: <http://www.dfw-sherlock.org/log-of-the-crew.html>

Jack Pugh, one of our long-time crew mates, has chosen to move to an assisted living facility in the Highland Village area. This will limit his chance to participate with us. We will not publish his address, for his privacy, but if you would like to send Jack a card or note, email me and I will be happy to provide you his address.

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
Historian
Webmaster

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RUMINATIONS ON A CARDBOARD BOX

Dorothy Belle Pollack, *The Serpentine Muse*

Surprise, surprise!
A box, small size,
 Is speeded through the mails.

It is a story
Rather gory
 In some of its details.

For it appears
Two human ears
 Have suffered amputation,
Which fact, alas,
Is rather crass,
 And causes perturbation.

In fact it serves
To jangle nerves
 Of poor Miss Susan C.
For such a gift
Has her quite miffed -
 And understandably!

We meet a trio
(Not con brio)
 Of Susan, Sarah, Mary.
And so it goes.
But Alec knows
 Of which one to be wary.

And now, attention! -
While I mention
 A fact you should be knowing.
The moral here
Is crystal clear -
 Do NOT, my friends, go rowing!



Dorothy wrote many, many lovely poems and other items in the ***Serpentine Muse Journal***, the official journal of the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes (ASH). To subscribe to the journal, visit the ASH website at:

<https://ash-nyc.com/>

YES, VIRGINIA THERE IS A SHERLOCK HOLMES

Baker Street Journal – December, 1961

Dear Mister Editor:

I am a young blonde girl (38-22-36) and all my friends in our chorus line laugh at me because I believe in Sherlock Holmes. They say that there is no such person and that he was invented just to fool people.

I asked my sugar daddy and he said to write to The Baker Street Journal, because if you see it in the Journal, it's so. Please tell me, is there a Sherlock Holmes? Virginia B. G. West

Dear Virginia, your daddy is correct. If you see it in The Baker Street Journal, it is so——and so it is. Your friends are all wrong, and you are right. There has to be a Sherlock Holmes. How can we dismiss the existence of such a great man whose adventures have given so much pleasure to so many people?

Just because he has become a legend one does not have to stop believing in him. Many other great men have become legends, and everybody believes in them.

None of your friends ever saw Abraham Lincoln or George Washington (or maybe even Babe Ruth and Diamond Jim Brady——two really fabulous characters) but they believe in them all. They are certainly legendary figures. King Arthur and Robin Hood are too, and many, many others, too numerous to list here.

No one doubts their reality, even though we must depend on stories printed in books for what we

know about them. And what stories, and what books we have about Sherlock Holmes? How can anyone read Vincent Starrett's Private Life of Sherlock Holmes and then say that he does not exist?

Who can read Dr. Watson's reminiscences without knowing that there must be a Sherlock Holmes? How can a person visit those famous places connected with him, Baker Street, the Criterion Bar, the Reichenbach, all marked with plaques, and then be so silly as to believe that there never was such a man?

What is more, Sherlock Holmes enjoys one great advantage over all those other legendary people; he is immortal, and we shall always have him with us.

No Sherlock Holmes, indeed! The next thing your misguided friends will say is that there is no Santa Clause.

Or, to be completely ridiculous, somebody may insist that there is no Dr. Watson, who gave us all those wonderful stories. The world is in a bad enough state as it is. Let us not make it worse by removing one of the fixed points in a changing age, one of the few influences for good among so many that tend to move in the opposite direction.

Yes, Virginia, there is a Sherlock Holmes, and I am glad that you wrote to me because I enjoyed this opportunity to say what I thought about that great and good man who has gladdened my heart and the hearts of so many others all over the world.

Numismatic Friends Dinner

Greg Ruby, The Fourth Garridebs

The Fourth Garrideb will be in Dallas, Texas for the American Numismatic Association's National Money Show being held March 3-5, 2016 at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center.

The Numismatic Friends of Sherlock Holmes Dinner will be held on Thursday, March 3, 2016. Drinks at 7P, dinner at 7:45P at the Green Door Public House, just a few blocks from the Convention Center. Both Sherlockians and



Numismatists are invited to attend. Individuals will order off the restaurant's menu and be responsible for their own tabs.

The dinner is purely social – no scholarly papers, no slideshows, no quizzes . . . just toasts.

The Green Door Public House is the only free-standing restaurant in the Farmer's Market area, conveniently located a few short blocks from the heart of downtown. The Green Door Public House occupies the first floor of a two-story brick building built in the late 1800's.

Its history includes four saloons during the early 1900's and was remodeled and occupied by Liberty Bank in the 1920's when prohibition

began. During prohibition, speakeasy owners would paint their doors green to alert customers that they had the "goods."

We'll have updates as we get closer to March. If you want to attend, please email Greg at [Greg Ruby](mailto:GregRuby@fourthgarrideb.com) or Steve Mason.

Perot Museum Potential Display

Are you the world's biggest Snoopy fan? Maybe you still have that beer bottle collection from college? Did you try to catch 'em all during the Pokémon heyday? Remember when you thought Beanie Babies were a good investment?

Or maybe you have the largest foreign edition Sherlock Holmes collection, or the most Sherlock Holmes games!!

You're in luck, collectors young and old! The Perot Museum

of Nature and Science wants to display your meticulously curated collections as part of an upcoming exhibition titled Eye of the Collector. The exhibit, which will run April 16 until September 5, will examine reasons that people and museums collect things.

This will be the first exhibit that the museum has curated itself, said Krista Villarreal Moore, senior communications manager for The Perot. Since the museum opened in 2012, it has relied on



traveling exhibitions from other museums to supplement the permanent collection.

Eye of the Collector will be a deep examination of what it means to collect, why we collect and what stories are hidden within private collections.

<http://www.guidelive.com/culture/2016/01/29/collect-odd-stuff-submit-memorabilia-perot-dallas>

THE DEADLINE TO ENTER IS SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 21.

Forty-Nine References to Tobacco

Liese Sherwood-Fabre

In *The Sign of the Four*, Sherlock Holmes shares with Watson that he has authored a number of technical monographs to assist in solving crimes. Among his treatises is “Upon the Distinction between the Ashes of the Various Tobaccos,” in which he provides information on the ash from 140 different tobaccos. (1)

In fact, Matthew Hilton points out that of the sixty works in the canon, only eleven do not mention Holmes smoking.

While tobacco appears as one of Holmes’ tools of his trade, it also clearly characterizes him as representative of a growing cultural trend among the middle and lower-middle classes of his day. (2)

Prior to the 1800s, both British men and women most commonly used tobacco in the form of snuff, a mixture of the powdered leaf and spices sniffed through the nose to cause sneezing.

Polite Victorian society, however, banned smoking tobacco even as it grew in popularity. Despite Queen Victoria’s attitude toward the habit, the upper classes introduced cigar smoking, and the practice trickled down to the lower classes. (3)

Royal disdain limited smoking to men and only in certain venues. Clubs and large homes designated a “smoking room.” Where such a space did not exist, the man of the house would smoke outside in the dark after servants had gone to bed.

No one was supposed to see him, and he also took great pains not to smell of smoke. Smoking jackets and special caps kept the odor from penetrating his clothes or hair. (4)

Pipe smoking also increased in use during the Victorian era, with some credit given to the introduction of the briar pipe. (5) In the 1850s and earlier, pipes were often made of clay or, for higher end smokers, meerschaum (made from the mineral sepiolite). (6)

The descriptive briar had nothing to do with the wild rose plant, but originated from the French word for heath, *bryere*.

Pipe makers began to use the root of the white heath, found in France, in the early 1800s, but did not introduce it in Britain until the 1850s.

The cigarette did not gain popularity in Britain until the end of the century when manufacturing processes were able to offer a consistent product.

The “roll your own” preference of U.S. smokers never reached across the ocean. When the Wills tobacco firm offered their “Woodbine” brand at five for a penny, sales took off.

Women were also targeted beginning the 1900s,



and sales increased even more. (7)

Tobacco and all the accoutrements for smoking them—be it with a pipe, as a cigar, or the cigarette—were all sold through tobacconist shops.

Tobacco would arrive in blocks, which the tobacconist would then shred, or cut and blend into different varieties and keep in air-tight containers.

A review of one weekly tobacco journal included a list of more than 112 brands for the 12 products (loose tobacco, cigars, and cigarettes) offered by just one of the wholesalers supplying such shops. (8)

Given the number of brands and variety of tobacco and blends available through the various manufacturers, Holmes’ research based on only 140 of them appears to have merely scratched the surface.

Researching all the types offered would seem to be more than a “three pipe problem” for the great detective. (9)

- 1) Doyle, Arthur Conan (2012-12-13). The Complete Sherlock Holmes: with an introduction from Robert Ryan (Kindle Locations 2401-2402). Simon & Schuster UK. Kindle Edition.
- 2) Hilton, Matthew, Smoking in British Popular Culture 1800-2000. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2000. Print.
- 3) <http://www.giveup.ca/HistorySmoking/Early-Victorian-Days.html>
- 4) Graham, Kelley, Gone to the Shops, Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2008. Print.
- 5) <http://www.giveup.ca/HistorySmoking/Early-Victorian-Days.html>
- 6) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meerschaum_pipe
- 7) Mitchell, Sally (editor). Victorian Britain. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc. 1988. Print.
- 8) Lilley, C.; Hardin, S.; Delano, T.; and Pond, W. (eds.) Tobacco: An Illustrated Weekly Journal for the Wholesale and Retail Dealers in Cigars, Manufactured Tobacco and Smoker's Articles. Volume 74. Lockwood Trade Journal Company, 1922.
- 9) Doyle, Arthur Conan (2012-12-13). The Complete Sherlock Holmes: with an introduction from Robert Ryan (Kindle Locations 10746-10750). Simon & Schuster UK. Kindle Edition.

By Liese Sherwood-Fabre, PhD. You can read more about this award-winning author's writing (as well as her previous articles in the Bilge Pump) and sign up for her newsletter at www.liesesherwoodfabre.com. A non-Sherlockian adventure can be downloaded at: <http://www.liesesherwoodfabre.com/extras.html>

Beacon Award Winner – 2013

From the Beacon Society



Mrs. Shannon Carlisle is the accelerated learning teacher at Moore Elementary, a school in Franklin, Tennessee, serving kindergarten-4th grade students. Her role is to ensure the unique intellect of every individual be challenged by developing critical thinking, creative thinking, and research skills through the study of the Common Core State Standards.

The hallway to Mrs Carlisle's classroom is decorated with Baker Street signs, and her classroom door is "221B," the front door of the great detective. She even signs her memos and newsletters to our staff and the parent community "Chief Sherlockian."

During the first week of the school year, she invites the 4th graders to 221b Baker Street (her classroom) to have them solve the "Mystery of the Borrowed Bear." The students are told they are Sherlockians-in-Training and by the end of the week they can earn the title of Sherlockians. As a part of the investigation, the students learn about Sherlock Holmes.

Because of her Sherlockian Training and her Baker Street hallway decorations, our students have begun to learn who Sherlock Holmes is and have taken further steps themselves to learn more about the great

detective. The newly-published The 100-Year-Old Secret, book one of The Sherlock Files, by Tracy Barrett, has been checked out over 40 times since it was catalogued in our library. The Mysteries of Sherlock Holmes: based on the stories of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was entered into our library's circulation February 2007, but wasn't until Mrs. Carlisle became our Chief Sherlockian it was finally checked out in October 2011.

Recently, the walls of our library were painted with a fantastic mural highlighting characters from some of our best-loved books. In a hot air balloon, flying high over Clifford the Big Red Dog, is Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson with the line "It's Moore... Elementary my dear Watson". Students are creating their own deerstalkers for crazy hat day. They are attending the play "Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure" at the Nashville Children's Theater on their own. One student gets a lot of attention when he wears his Priest Holmes jersey. And ultimately, our students are learning about the science of deduction and applying it daily as they complete tasks in all subject areas.

Alisha Erickson, Assistant Principal

For information on the wonderful work of Shannon, see the brochure attached to this newsletter.

17 Steps to the Engineer's Thumb

Brad Keefauver, Sherlock Peoria

WATSON VERSUS JOURNALISM

Watson writes of ENGI: "The story has, I believe, been told more than once in the newspapers, but, like all such narratives, its effect is much less striking when set forth en bloc in a single half-column of print ..."

Did newspapers ever carry the full tale of Victor Hatherly?

Since the suspected criminals were never found, nor were their counterfeit coins, was there actually more to report than the attack on the engineer and the burning of the house?

Watson claims it's better "when the facts slowly evolve before your own eyes, and the mystery clears gradually away as each new discovery furnishes a step which leads on to the complete truth," but is this more of the good doctor's self-promotion?

Does ENGI really evolve slowly, or is it basically a two step tale, the first part being Hatherly's tale and the second part being the discovery that the villains have gotten away?

PAINFUL, LINGERING, AND CURABLE

Among Watson's patients who worked at Paddington Station was a fellow with a "painful and lingering disease" that Watson cured.

Given the current state of medicine in 1889, any speculation on what manner of disease might this have been? Something connected with working at a railway station, perhaps?

WATSON'S ECCENTRIC FRIEND

"I continually visited him and occasionally even persuaded him to forego his Bohemian habits so far as to come and visit us." While the cases of Sherlock Holmes were always the *raison d'être* for Watson's writings, wouldn't you like to know just what went on during a social evening at the Watson's home?

In other stories we see the topics Holmes discusses when dining with Watson and Lestrade, but would his subject matter change when dining with Mrs. Watson?

HATHERLY FORCES A CARD

"I gave the maid a card," Victor Hatherly tells Watson, "but I see that she has left it upon the side-table."

Watson takes up the card and reads, "Mr. Victor Hatherley, hydraulic engineer, 16A, Victoria Street (3d floor)," then writes, "That was the name, style, and abode of my morning visitor."

Okay, Victor's a little delirious, as he seems to be more concerned with etiquette and presenting his card as an introduction than the fact his thumb's been chopped off ... or was this what one would expect of that day and age?

And then we have Watson, who not only feels the need to explain to us what those nouns, proper and otherwise, on that card are, but then goes on to call Hatherly's occupation his "style."

Any Hounds familiar with this usage of the word, or was Watson being a little free with his wordage?

LET'S GET A SECOND OPINION ...

Now, we're all used to Watson's universal brandy cure-all, but what about his treatment in this case.

As a former army surgeon with training in such things as amputations and traumatic injuries, should he be doing anything more than bandaging that stump?

While he's probably not up to plastic surgery, shouldn't he be doing something more to close that thing off?

SHE'S GOT MONO!

A mysterious and beautiful foreigner appears once Victor Hatherly is on the job, and she tries to

persuade him that he'd be better off leaving.

Hatherly immediately diagnoses: "This woman might, for all I knew, be a monomaniac."

Have Hatherly's experiences with women been that bad? Why would he jump to that conclusion so quickly? Monomania in the family?

HE'S AN ENGINEER, NOT A ROCKET SCIENTIST

Bad enough Hatherly decides to check out a hydraulic press room by going inside it, but does he really have to start smarting off to his mysterious employer while still inside?

Wouldn't he have wanted to check out the workings of the machine first?

MAYBE HE WANTED PANCAKES

Colonel Lysander Stark seemed handy enough with edged weapons. Why mess up a perfectly good hydraulic press with engineer goop?

And if Hatherly's demise messed the press up any further, he'd have to get yet another engineer.

Was this just a fit of temper, or is there any redeeming factors to killing people with a hydraulic press?

SHADES OF THE STAPLETONS!

Is Elise the wife of Fritz? His sister?

Ferguson's girlfriend? What sort of deductions can the Hounds make about the arrangements of the villains' household?

FORSOOTH, KNAVE, A PEASANT I SPY!

Watson writes: "Early that morning a peasant had met a cart containing several people . . ." Okay, I'm an out-of-touch American in the 2000s, but did they still have peasants in Victorian England?

HE MUST HAVE BEEN FAMILY

“During two years I have had three consultations and one small job, and that is absolutely all that my profession has brought me. My gross takings amount to L27 10s,” Hatherly explains.

Yet he seems to have a clerk working for him, bringing him the card of his fourth consultation in two years.

What was this clerk doing for three years?

WHERE THERE ARE BOOKS ...

We bookish sorts must identify them. In his client’s house, Hatherly “glanced at the books upon the table, and in spite of my ignorance of German I could see that two of them were treatises on science, the others being volumes of poetry.”

German poetry?

Or a German translation of some other country’s poets?

If it were indeed poetry in the original German, do we have any speculation on who the poet might have been?

NOT THE LADIES MAN, THIS HATHERLY

While he says Elise was beautiful, Victor Hatherly also speaks of: “her

eyes glancing back, like those of a frightened horse.”

Hopefully, Victor didn’t meet this gal again once Watson had the story published.

Or do the ladies present think they’d allow a man to get away with comparing any of their features to a horse?

THE REMARKABLE HOLMES MEMORY

In the course of the case, Sherlock Holmes remembers a year-old personal ad: “Lost, on the 9th inst., Mr. Jeremiah Hayling, aged twenty-six, a hydraulic engineer.”

If Mr. Hayling was an orphan like Mr. Hatherly, who was advertising in all the papers for him?

And why would Holmes remember a single personal ad after all this time?

Was Holmes brought in on the disappearance, perhaps?

Or was his memory really just THAT good?

THE DEGREES OF PIRACY

The villain of the piece is said by Holmes to be “like those out-and-out pirates who will leave no survivor from a captured ship.”

Isn’t piracy merely the act of armed robbery on the high seas?

Does one become more of a pirate by killing one’s victims?

TAKING THE MORNING INSPECTOR

In both TWIS and ENGI, we find Holmes working with Inspector Bradstreet when the case takes an early morning turn.

Is Bradstreet a believer in the early bird theory, or is the timing just a coincidence?

NOT THE SEVERED THUMB STORY AGAIN!

Sherlock Holmes, a man known for avoiding social situations that might bore him, advises Hatherly on his experience, “Indirectly it may be of value, you know; you have only to put it into words to gain the reputation of being excellent company for the remainder of your existence.”

Is there anything to this advice, or was Holmes just once again showing his disdain for socializing?

Is this some backhanded reference to the old “war” stories of some other social acquaintance of Holmes?

Perhaps one who occasionally persuaded him to dine with the friend’s wife and himself?

Reporting on the BSI Weekend

Don Hobbs, BSI

The Baker Street Irregulars celebrated the 162nd birthday of Sherlock Holmes in New York City with a variety of events, official and unofficial, from January 13 to January 17. This year's festivities bore an enormous imprint from The Crew of the Barque Lone Star.

Five regular Crew members attended: Third Mate Steve Mason, Don Hobbs (the Crew's only active BSI member), Rusty Mason, Stu Nelan, and Dean Clark.

This number was augmented by Stu's daughter Kami, now a resident of Washington, D.C., but who has been a regular at the BSI weekend in recent years and Texas native Tiffany Rae Knight, now living in New York but who attended the January meeting of the Crew and who has expressed the desire to become a Mate of the Crew. (At the conclusion of the weekend, it was announced that Tiffany would become co-hostess of the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes (ASH) Brunch Sunday morning of the BSI Weekend beginning next year.)

However, the Crew's presence in New York went far beyond just the impressive attendance figure.

Among the prominent events during the weekend was the official publication of "Spain and Sherlock Holmes" which was the first book issued since Don Hobbs became the BSI's General Editor of the International Series.

Hobbs said this book was praised by John Bergquist, the BSI's overall editorial leader, for

being the best edited of any in the BSI's International Series. This was a compliment to the Crew at large because several members helped with streamlining the prose after Don had obtained the initial translations.

Steve was honored in several ways. His play "When Death Comes A'Callin'" won The Jan Whimsey Award for 2016. This award is for writings that appear in the ASH quarterly newsletter, "The Serpentine Muse."

Steve also was named communications chair for the Beacon Society. In addition, original artwork by Steve that he donated to the BSI auction was purchased by Jerry Margolin. This is a huge compliment to Steve's talent because Margolin is one of the largest collectors of Sherlockian artwork (an original Sidney Paget is among his treasures).

Steve, Rusty and Stu also performed in Dean's radio play "The Case of the Missing Vernet" during the Gaslight Gala. This was the sixth play that Dean has either authored or co-authored that has been performed during the BSI weekend. He is too modest to say so publicly but he is pretty proud of that number.

A well-deserved accomplishment for both Dean and Steve. The rest of the members of the Crew can stick their collective chests out with pride for such a fabulous showing in the Big Apple. All the more reason to plan ahead for the next BSI Weekend and Birthday Celebration to be held the weekend of January 6th, 2017.

56 Stories in 56 Days - The Engineer's Thumb

Posted on October 27, 2011 by barefootonbakerstreet

This is a curious story, gripping but very different to the usual formula, writes Charlotte Walters. On the one hand, as a stand-alone short story about a hydraulic engineer who inadvertently goes off to fix a press used in coin forging and gets his thumb cut off by a cruel German baddie, it's a really absorbing little story.

The part where the poor young man is trapped inside the press with it coming down on top of him is as exciting as an action sequence from Indiana Jones. But on the other hand, as a Holmes adventure, it gives little opportunity to see the detection and observation that makes up the usual formula we know and love.

There is, of course, Holmes' observation that the horse which pulled the carriage from the station to the mystery forging house taking the engineer to his work was described as 'fresh and glossy' and therefore hadn't travelled far to reach it. This explained much

about the location of the press but was irrelevant really as the column of smoke billowing from its ruins gave away its location anyway. Holmes was also the one who linked the incident to a previous disappearance of a hydraulic engineer but this too didn't lead to any particular resolution, except for suggesting that the German had form in his murdering ways.

But that's it really; Holmes has very little impact beyond these two points. But does that matter when the story is as neat and concise as this one? And what of the ending? The villains escape but the crushing of the engineer's oil lamp in the press has caused the whole forging operation to be swallowed by flames. I suppose this is a closure of sorts but I was left wanting more – more deduction and more comeuppance.

Pacey and gripping, but more just 'short story' rather than 'Sherlock Holmes short story' – 7 out of 10.

A TWIST ON CANONICAL TITLES -- ANSWERS

The Three Garridebs of Westchester County, New York

We took 11 story titles, replaced a word or phrase in each with one from a different story. See if you can identify the new titles from the clues provided. The answers will be provided next month.

1. I guess hitchhiking was out of the question for him.	The Man With the Twisted Thumb
2. Not who you'd want when negotiating an international deal.	The Crooked Interpreter
3. The low-end version for the visually and financially impaired.	The Adventure of the Copper Pince-Nez
4. The titular individual in this case must have had amazing coordination.	The Adventure of the Dancing Cyclist
5. Might have chipped some teeth on Nathan's fossils.	The Hound of the Garridebs
6. An ironic description, when you think about it.	The Adventure of the Blanched Colourman
7. Holmes to Hudson.	The Resident Detective
8. The smiley one.	The Adventure of the Yellow Circle
9. Scowrers in Herefordshire.	The Boscombe Valley of Fear
10. A dark lantern's light source?	Black Blaze
11. Aka a visit to the Container Store.	The Adventure of the Empty Box

SHERLOCKIAN SCHOLARSHIP: L'affaires du Couer

BY Melissa Hellen, Holmes and Watson Report, Sherlock Peoria

(Another Sherlockian unwisely leaps into the fray)

A wise man once said, "What you start out loving about a person you'll eventually end up hating about them."

Call it a ying-yang thing.

Call it the flipside of a good quality.

Whatever you want to call it, there's a lot of truth in the statement, and I think it's worth keeping in mind when discussing this "Holmes and Adler" business.

No story makes as much of Holmes's reaction to a woman as SCAN does over Irene Adler. And this is largely based on the fact that she had a lot in common with Holmes.

She was theatrical, intelligent, a risk-taker, decisive, not bound by convention, and shared many other qualities with the famous detective.

And isn't that the traditional formula for a successful pairing?

However, I'm not so sure we should back what seems to us – or what seemed to Watson - like the obvious choice of possible romantic links to the Master.

It reminds me of what Holmes himself once said on evidence: viewed from a slightly different angle; it may point in the exact opposite direction to the one you thought it did ... point to.

The evidence, I mean. The -- pay attention, can't you?

But first: about this whole idea of constantly pairing Holmes with Canonical women.

What the deuce is it to me, or to you, or to anyone else whom he may or may not have found attractive? Will someone tell me, please?

I didn't come to Holmes looking for, a Harlequin Romance.

"Ah, but the romance was there."

"Shut up, Watson. You see romance in a rubbish tip."

It's like a Victorian version of the Enquirer anymore.

Every couple of months, somebody's back on the subject: "Alien mum confesses: 'I Had Sherlock's Love-Child,'" "Wolfe Paternity Blood Test Shocker" and "Adler Claims 'Bloody Deerstalker Was Planted.'"

Pooh ... what a waste of brainpower.

Yet, having said that, I will now proceed to hop into the mud puddle with all the rest of the kids and put in my tuppence on the subject.

This is my "take" on it all: If there truly were anyone special in Sherlock Holmes's heart, no one - and I mean NO ONE - other than Holmes himself would know it.

Especially not Watson, and that means, especially not us.

Sherlock Holmes never let go of one iota of information before its time, never unguardedly babbled his thoughts on any matter without weighing each word, never, ever, ever in the whole of the Canon.

Do you remember Watson ever quoting Holmes as saying "Woopsie!" or "You didn't hear that, old man," or "Heh, heh, heh, that was just the cocaine talking, Watson."

Whoever coined the phrase "close as wax" was, I am certain, picturing Sherlock Holmes when he said it.

Oh, it's true, a person - a demented, desperate-for-attention sort of person - could as easily make a strong a case for Holmes' having the hots for poor, dim, dead-common Mary Sutherland, the belle of the Gasfitters' Ball and the unlikeliest of available female love-interests, as any other Canonical dame you'd care to name.

They could do it, but does that make it so?

Consider: Holmes told Watson "opposites attract," and "the angel calls to the caveman."

If an angel and a caveman can date, why not a genius and the hands-down densest female in the entire Received Text?

You could hardly get any further opposite Sherlock Holmes than Mary Sutherland. He is eagle-eyed.

Even on a good day she can't see past the end of her nose.

He thinks the genius is in the details, she waltzes around London with mismatched shoes buttoned up sideways.

He prides himself on his iron control of his emotions, she's fond of "banging out of the house."

He "effects a certain quiet primness" of dress and is subtly colour coordinated, while she wears matted plush and puts purple and brown together (gag!)

He's so thin he's got some people around here worried that he's consumptive, while her initials, as "Billy the tug-boat" can attest, are "H.M.S."

He can sort out her little mystery without leaving his armchair and cosy fire, while she spends whole evenings with her own stepfather who's wearing the Victorian equivalent of a rubber nose and glasses, and she hasn't a clue who the fellow really is.

Holmes is all brain with a bit of appendix on the side; Mary Sutherland couldn't reason her way out of a wicker poke with a map, a torch, and a tour guide.

Hey presto: a match made in heaven! I ask you, what could be better?

I'm being ridiculous, of course. I no more think Holmes was interested in Mary Sutherland than I think he was interested in any of them -- ANY of them, mind you.

Sherlock Holmes had different ideas of fun. If he had any interest at all in Irene Adler beyond the fulfilling of his royal commission, it was probably to hire her to be a part of that "small but efficient organization" he was building.

Certainly she'd have made a dandy accomplice in any case where a woman operative was wanted.

Yes, a wise man once said, "What you start out loving about a person you'll eventually end up hating."

(Oh, all right, all right. I said it, last week to my husband, whose logical mind fascinated me until he turned it to evil ends - i.e., justifying the deplorable snowed-under condition of his computer desk.)

I think I should get very tired indeed of someone who constantly bested me at my own game; In fact, I'm certain of it.

Why should that be significant?

Because I know Holmes and I share at least one trait: competitiveness.

One rarely wants to remain permanently attached to someone with whom they directly compete -- It's a very volatile combination.

I think Holmes would be about as likely to cuddle up with Irene Adler as he would with that other great competitor in his life, James Moriarty.

They had exactly the same attractions, Adler and Moriarty -- though I heard Arty Morty had the better legs -- and just remember, Holmes finished up by tossing HIM off a cliff.

WHAT'S IN "SHERLOCK"?

How clever are you? Test yourself. See if you can find twenty or more words of four or more letters in the name "SHERLOCK."

To make it a little more challenging, if you use the singular form a word, such as HOLE, do not then also count the plural form HOLES. ... and no proper nouns need apply.

I will give you my list next month.

HOLMES, WHAT MISCHIEF ARE YOU PLOTTING NOW?

CREATING VALENTINE'S DAY CARDS, OF COURSE.



VALENTINE'S DAY CARDS? FOR GIRLS? I THOUGHT YOU DISDAINED GIRLS.

DON'T BE SILLY, WATSON. I AM NOT AFTER GIRLS' AFFECTION. I AM AFTER THE SWEETS THAT ARE RETURNED FOR THESE CARDS.



OH... GUESS THAT EXPLAINS YOUR ENLISTMENT OF THE YOUNGIN'S TO AID YOU.

CORRECT. I'VE LEARNED GIRLS ANTICIPATE RECEIVING THESE CARDS. SIMPLE CHOICE OF WORDS, HERE AND THERE, AND WE REAP THE BENEFITS. WITH THE YOUNGIN'S HELP, THERE IS MORE HOPE FOR DELECTIBLE REWARDS.



OH, HOLMES, THIS IS SO MORALLY WRONG ...

... IGNATIUS?

HELLO, JOHN. ARE YOU HERE TO ASSIST IN OUR ENDEAVOR?



HELP? HOLMES, WHO ELSE PARTICIPATES IN THIS LITTLE OPERATION OF YOURS?

STAMFORD IS INCLUDED. CARE TO JOIN US IN THIS 'LITTLE OPERATION'? WE ANTICIPATE ENOUGH CANDY TO LAST US THROUGH SPRING. YOU WILL GET A SHARE OF THE PROCEEDS.



... HAND ME A PEN ...

