

The Bilge Pump

Vol. 04, No. 07 - July, 2016
*The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the
Barque Lone Star*



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

August 7th Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Sunday, July 3, 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 Beryl Coronet."

The quiz will cover this tale.

Diana Tran will present on the 30th anniversary of "The Great Mouse Detective."

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

July 3rd Meeting

There were 14 attendees on hand. The opening toast was delivered by: Steve Mason, honoring The Norwegian Explorers and the University of Minnesota for hosting "The Misadventures of Sherlock Holmes" Conference in June.

Karen Olson won the Quiz, based on "The Adventure of Silver Blaze", and was awarded Sherlock Holmes in the Newspapers, volume 2.

Charles Olson gave a wonderful presentation on the influence of Edgar Allen Poe on Arthur Conan Doyle, including references in the Canon of Poe's creations.

Steve Mason gave a review of his presentation at the Minnesota Conference.

Don Hobbs also gave a review of the Conference itself.

The group discussed further details for a fall symposium, theme to be "The Women of Sherlock Holmes."

The closing reading was "The Deerstalker," from the June, 1975, Baker Street Journal (see page 2).

The full minutes may be viewed at our webpage: www.dfw-sherlock.org. Thanks to Pam Mason for developing the minutes this month.



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

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Who dunnit:



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THE most recognizable emblem of Mr. Sherlock Holmes is his deerstalker cap. Beyond doubt, the Great Detective affected one upon occasion (the authentic color for which, I suggest, was gray, to match the travelling-cloak with which he wore it in Boscombe).

Indeed, an 1886 illustration of the lounge-car in the fabled Orient Express prominently features what can only be a clay pipe-smoking Holmes in his cloak and cap, attended by an earnest Watson—a year before the publication of *STUD* and fully five years before Sidney Paget placed the deerstalker on Holmes's head in a Strand Magazine drawing!

This new visual evidence surely must destroy once for all the cynical notion of Paget's having invented a deer-stalkered Sherlock (see *Smithsonian*, March 1979, pp. 136-37).

Because of its connection with the Sage of Baker Street, the deerstalker cap has enjoyed a peculiar sort of attention, having been transmuted, for Sherlockians at least, from the proper headgear for rough expeditions into something akin to laurel leaves.

To the uninitiated, however, the honorable fore-and-aft is, alas, perhaps more than a bit comedic—owing principally, one suspects, not so much to its connection with the Canon's Holmes as to that with the parodied Holmes of popular culture.

This turn of events is a sad one, since it has had the effect of discouraging hundreds of dedicated Sherlockians from fulfilling a fond fantasy: wearing deerstalkers themselves.

At any large gathering of Sherlockians, a scattering of deerstalker caps occurs, under some of which one can find those who are so fanatically devoted to Holmes's memory that they wouldn't dream of leaving their caps at home.

In addition, there are those so committed to play that they don't care how it all "looks." And then there are those who frankly don't seem to know that there's

anything odd in a deerstalker at all. Huzzah for the lot of them!

But for the greatest number of us . . . well, there is safety in numbers, and we might don the deerstalker now and again — in the company of others so doing— and cast about us occasional, guilty, side-long glances to see who is looking and whether or not they wear bemused or hilarious expressions.

More commonly, like a legion of forlorn Prufrocks, we simply succumb: we dare not disturb the universe, and our deerstalkers that beg for some sunshine or fog lie limply on the bookshelf next to a well-worn copy of the Canon.

Now. Have I articulated anything that is not true for any but the most curmudgeonly of Sherlockians?

The question on the floor, then: Shall we wear— yes, actually wear — our deerstalkers at Sherlockian convocations, perhaps even daily?

The answer: Certainly.

Sherlock Holmes wore his when it pleased him. Christopher Morley was not loath to sport one for photographers from national magazines, nor were other of our Founding Fathers.

But, one may cry, those were other days, more innocent times. Today we are more sophisticated, the dictates of fashion change, and this is neither 1895 nor 1935.

There is but one sensible reply to this remonstrance: It is always 1895.

And then, especially in the United States today, where athletic "warmup" suits are considered (by some, at any rate) to be appropriate attire for public wear, a deerstalker cap, even in town, is conservative.

Moreover, the deerstalker is the emblem not only of Sherlock Holmes, but also of Sherlock Holmes's disciples.

Dedication to Sherlockiana bestows upon the individual the right to imitate the Master in this particular way.

Go thou and do likewise.

17 STEPS TO THE BERYL CORONET

Brad Keefauver, Sherlock Peoria

Seventeen thoughts for further ponderance of the case at hand...

THE FINE ART OF PAVEMENT-SCRAPING

Watson writes: "Down the centre of Baker Street it had been ploughed into a brown crumbly band by the traffic, but at either side and on the heaped-up edges of the foot-paths it still lay as white as when it fell. The gray pavement had been cleaned and scraped, but was still dangerously slippery ..."



While snow removal might not be a topic of interest to Hounds in warmer climes, the snow-blower fans among us have to wonder what Victorian Londoners did when the white stuff started to pile up. In this tale, the streets seem to be left for traffic to deal with, but the sidewalks on Baker Street have plainly had a shovel's attention, though salt was not something Londoners wasted on the sidewalks.

Was this the general state of things? Did the city government have to clear the streets on occasion, did the city shut down after a big snow, or were the citizens industrious enough to clear things themselves?

Holder speaks of the cabs going slow through the snow, so it almost sounds like the streets were left alone -- was this the case?

ALEXANDER HOLDER SYNDROME

The client in this case is not a man who handles stress well.

He is running "hard" "occasional little springs," jerking his hands up and down, wagging his head, contorting his face, swaying his body, plucking at his hair, and beating his head against the wall ... hard.



Then, after all this, he mops his brow, composes himself, and tells Holmes a story about one of the "most exalted names in England."

When Holmes and Watson accompany this man home, are they really thinking this is a serious case to be undertaken, or are they just accompanying the loon home to find who cares for him and advise them to keep a tighter rein on him?

Is Holder's behaviour within the boundaries of what we could expect from a man in his situation, or is he just plain nuts and will remain so once the business of the coronet is finished?

FAMOUS BANKERS OF LONDON

After his introduction to Holder, Watson writes: "The name was indeed well known to us as belonging to the senior partner in the second largest private banking concern in the City of London."



Why is Watson so familiar with the senior partners of private banks?

Would Holder have been in Watson's social circle? Would Holmes and Watson have known of Holder through some professional matter, and if so, did it involve an untold tale?

Or were prominent bankers more of a celebrity then than now?

EVALUATING THE VALUABLES

Banker Holder, in explaining his work, says: "there are many noble families to whom we have advanced large sums upon the security of their pictures, libraries, or plate."

While we're all familiar with the prices great works of art or metals can bring, I'm sure the



thought of nobles being advanced great amounts of money based on their libraries intrigues the bookmen and bookwomen among us.

What sort of books would the nobles have in their libraries that would be of such high values back in Victorian London?

What was their equivalent of a first edition Harry Potter or Beeton's Christmas Annual?

THE ILLUSTRIOUS BERYL CORONET

In this tale, everyone appears to have heard of everyone and everything that comes up. When Holder's mysterious client asks, "Y ou have doubtless heard of the Beryl Coronet?"

Holder recognizes the name immediately, citing it as "One of the most precious public possessions of the empire."

Would a gold coronet of thirty-nine beryls really be that precious in comparison to other crown jewels of England? And if it was that well known, as well as a public possession, wouldn't it have been on display somewhere?

Or were such things displayed? Sherlockians have often tried to identify nobles that Watson supposedly changed the names of, but has anyone ever ventured a theory on the true identity of the Beryl Coronet?

THE STRANGE SCANDAL OF THE NON-SCANDAL

Once again we find Sherlock Holmes supposedly averting a massive public scandal, only to have Watson publish the whole mess a few years later in the Strand Magazine. The matter takes a deeper turn,



however, when one considers that Alexander Holder called in the police about the missing piece of coronet and had his son arrested.

How was it the papers never picked up on that little bit of news? How many people knew of the broken coronet and how it came to be in Holder's hands?

If the mystery client was somehow able to cover up the scandal of the broken coronet, would it have been any harder to cover up a coronet with a piece missing?

ACCEPTABLE SECURITY OR DANGEROUS GAME OF LET'S PRETEND?

We assume that the fellow who used the Beryl Coronet as collateral showed up on Monday with the 50,000 pounds (and whatever interest was due).

But what if something had gone wrong and he hadn't been able to come up with the cash?



What would "the second largest private banking concern in the City of London" have been able to do about it? If the Coronet is a "public possession," wouldn't they be charged with receiving stolen property if they tried to sell it or ransom it back to the government somehow?

Did the involvement of the Coronet have any true value in this deal, or was Holder merely going through the motions to placate the whims of some impractical royal?

AND THE PLOT THICKENS ...

As one delves further into "The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet," one begins to notice further oddities, such as the way Holder's client says plainly of the coronet, "Any injury to it would be almost as serious as



its complete loss, for there are no beryls in the world to match these,

and it would be impossible to replace them."

He seems to make a point of spelling out almost exactly what will wind up happening to the coronet, which makes one wonder if the whole thing wasn't some sort of set-up.

Could Alexander Holder have been the target of some conspiracy to get him thrown out of his position at the second largest private bank in London?

Or might such a plot have had more far-reaching effects than that?

INBREEDING AMONG WELL-BRED VICTORIANS

"Twice my boy has asked her to marry him, for he loves her devotedly, but each time she has refused him," Alexander Holder says of his son Arthur and his adopted daughter Mary (his brother's daughter).



As much as we hate to see Mary Holder running off with a scoundrel like Burnwell, she does at least seem to have sense enough to stay away from her first cousin.

How common and accepted was marriage between first cousins in the Victorian era?

At what point did it gain the social stigma and illegal status it has today?

THE ADVENTURE OF THE STREATHAM VAMPIRE

Dr. Watson describes Mary Holder thusly: "She was rather above the middle height, slim, with dark hair and eyes, which seemed the darker



against the absolute pallor of her skin.

I do not think that I have ever seen such deadly paleness in a woman's face.

Her lips, too, were bloodless, but her eyes were flushed . . ."

While it's true Mary Holder has every reason to be a little pale, the way a medical doctor describes her as

"deadly" pale beyond anything he has seen before tends to make a more fanciful sort such as myself wonder. Was there something more than jewel thievery going on here? Consider the facts about Sir George Burnwell.

He is only encountered at night in this tale. He has a hypnotic "glamour" that is so powerful Alexander Holder can only think about him objectively when he is nowhere nearby.

He has the strength to bend and break off a piece of a coronet that a healthy young man cannot bend back into its original state. And associating with him seems to have drained all the blood from Mary Burnwell.

Might "Sir George" have actually been a certain foreign nobleman trying to reclaim a personal treasure stolen from him centuries before?

Is the love triangle of Lucy, Arthur, and "Sir

George" a bit too close to the triangle of Lucy Westenra, Arthur Holmwood, and Count Dracula?



Might the pseudonym "Burnwell" have referred to one of the traditional methods of destroying Dracula's kind? Or, as in the case of a certain Mrs. Ferguson, is this all mere coincidence?

CROWNS VERSUS FIREPLACE POKERS

What exactly was the beryl coronet made of? A little gold, thirty-nine beryls . . . whenever the broken off corner is referred to, gold is the mentioned material.

Yet it took the strength of two men to break it between them, and when Sherlock Holmes tries to break off the other corner, it doesn't even bend . . . and here was a man who could bend a fireplace poker.

Why was this thing so tough?

MIXING OF THE SOCIAL STRATA

Holmes explains that he "went in the shape of a loafer to Sir George's house, managed to pick up an acquaintance with his valet, learned that his master had cut his head the

night before, and, finally, at the expense of six shillings, made all sure by buying a pair of his cast-off shoes."

Just how does a bum strike up an acquaintance with a gentleman's valet?

Does he just walk up to the back door and see if any of the hired help wants to loaf with him?

And wouldn't the six shilling offer mark Holmes as something other than a loafer, in which case, why the disguise to begin with?

Wouldn't the straight-off bribe work just as well?



THE DECOR OF THE NOBLE RUINED GAMBLER'S HOME

Sir George Burnwell is said to have "took down a life-preserver from the wall."

Now, we know Holmes isn't speaking of a white ring with "S.S. Minnow" printed on it, but why would Sir George have such a thing on his wall?

Were such blunt instruments decorative in the least?

NO BARGAINS FOR SHERLOCK HOLMES

Does it strike anyone else as odd that Holmes has a gun to a criminal's head, then offers him a thousand pounds each for stolen gems that the detective could have stolen back with seemingly little criminal consequence?

Or that Holmes actually does wind up paying that same amount to a fence to get the gems back, when the police are well aware of the

matter and could have accompanied him to just take them back?

For a man we often accuse of being overly criminal, Sherlock sure doesn't seem to want to treat the real criminals unfairly in this tale.

Or did he actually take the gems and pocket the three thousand when he finally got it?

Would Sherlock have had been walking around with three thousand of his own money in his pocket when he went to see Burnwell to begin with?

A THOUSAND POUNDS AND NO TRICKS

Whether or not Holmes kept the three thousand he supposedly paid for the gems, he did clear a tidy thousand pounds in this case.



He also turns over the gems with very little drama. No breakfast table surprises.

No slipping it in the client's coat pocket or back in the dresser. Did the prospect of that thousand pounds take precedence over any dramatics Holmes might have otherwise tried?

A TIME FOR SNOW AND ICE

With all the talk of beryls and snow in this tale, one can't help but think of "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle," another tale featuring winter and jewelry.

The matters of the Mazarin Stone and the Borgia pearl both took place in summer.

The Musgrave and Agra treasures both appeared (and subsequently

disappeared) in the fall. Upon casually surveying the Canon, however, there don't seem to be any tales of precious stones taking place in the spring.



Is this just coincidence, or did Watson have something against thinking about gems in the springtime, which made he leave

out such chronicles of that season?

With his love of the ladies and quick-to-fall-in-love nature, did he steer clear of diamonds in the spring out of bachelor self-defense? (Yes, it's a reach, but at question sixteen, any straw seems quite grabbable.)

MEANWHILE, BACK IN A STINKING JAIL CELL . . .

While it seems quite natural that Holmes might forego his usual tricks in his haste to get his reward, what about poor young Arthur Holder?



Sure, Holmes stops in at the jail at about one a.m. to tell the young fellow that everything is going to be fine, but shouldn't he be doing something about getting the boy out?

Holmes then heads home to the comfort of his non-jail-cell bed, and then sometime after nine when Papa Holder finally shows up, Holmes gets his check, tells his tale, and then lets the banker run off to get his son out of the lockup.

Couldn't things have been handled a little more expeditiously for the young man's sake?

Spreading the Word

Liese Sherwood-Fabre

Throughout the canon, Holmes and Watson constantly communicate with each other, law enforcement officials, and clients through letters and telegrams sent and received throughout the day, often with replies coming only a few hours after the first is sent.

Given its speed and efficiency for sending and receiving messages, the communication system developed in Victorian England has been labeled the precursor of the present-day Internet. (1)

Until the mid-1800s, a family member who traveled or moved away from home quickly lost touch with those who remained behind.

A letter was simply beyond the reach of many.

The British Post Office was established in 1682 and was used from its inception as a source of revenue to finance, among other things, the almost constant warfare with France. When national finances lagged, the cost of mailing a letter would increase. (2) The charge was based on the distance and number of pages sent, often adding up to more than the lower-class daily wage.

The burden was also on the recipient to pay the postage. (It being considered unseemly to prepay the service and suggest the recipient wasn't able to afford it.) To reduce costs, the writer might turn the page horizontally and write perpendicular to the original text and use a wax seal to avoid the added charge of an envelope. Another trick would be to include a code on the outside of the letter.

The recipient would get the message, but avoid the charge by refusing the letter's receipt. (3)

Eighteen thirty-seven became a watershed year for communications in Britain and the world.

During her first year as monarch, Queen Victoria created a committee, chaired by Rowland Hill, to study the postal problem.

He had already noted issues such as that mentioned above as well as the unnecessary cost of letter carriers having to make numerous trips to deliver and collect postage when the recipient was not at home.

In response, he proposed a uniform pre-paid postal rate of one penny.

In 1840, the Penny Post was inaugurated, allowing for any letter up to one ounce to be sent

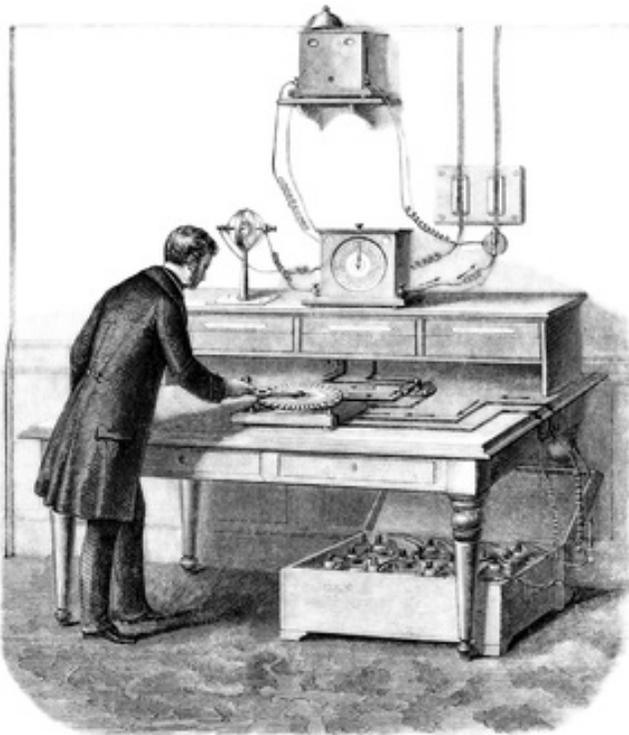


throughout the country for a penny. (4)

In May, 1840, the pre-paid postage stamp was introduced along with pre-paid envelopes, called "Mulreadies" after a well-known artist who illustrated them. (5)

Also in 1837, Charles Wheatstone and William Cooke demonstrated the first electrical telegraph, sending messages between Camden Town and Euston railway stations (about nineteen miles apart). Their device involved using an electrical current to create an electromagnetic field to move needles located on a grid containing 20 of the 26 letters of the alphabet to spell out messages.

At first, the system was used to send information along railway lines to monitor trains' locations, but its commercial value was soon



Samuel Morse, Alfred Vail and Leonard Gale who are credited with the world's first global telecommunications network.

These men had been working on their own electrical telegraph using a single cable and code of "dots" and "dashes" to send messages.

They only got around to patent it in 1840, but its greater simplicity moved them ahead of the Wheatstone and Cooke device. (7)

Until the introduction of the Penny Post and telegraphy, the speed of communication had not changed significantly from Roman times.

With the advent of Hill's reforms, the volume of mail increased exponentially, leading to numerous deliveries each day (twelve in London and elsewhere at least six).

And telegraphed messages traveled even faster.

A murderer known to have boarded a train at one station was apprehended upon his arrival at Paddington Station after the police received a telegram with his description. (8)

For Holmes and Watson, such speed served them with the rapid responses needed as they sent enquiries across the city, country, and the world.

Receiving additional information in a matter hours often gave them that one essential bit needed to solve a mystery.

recognized and the devices were installed in post offices across the country to send other messages as well. (6)

The Wheatstone and Cooke device, however, required six electrical cables, and while they were able to reduce the number over time, it was

1) Tom Sandage, *The Victorian Internet*. (New York: Bloomsbury, 1998).

2) <http://www.victorianweb.org/history/pennypos.html>

3) <http://www.victorianweb.org/technology/letters/intro.html>

4) <http://www.victorianweb.org/history/pennypos.html>

5) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mulready_stationery

6) https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Electrical_telegraph&oldid=723236853

7) <http://www.cntr.salford.ac.uk/comms/ebirth.php>

8) Ibid

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>

SHERLOCK HOLMES VS. GODZILLA

Thanks to Bill Pervin for alerting us of this production...



Holmes and Watson fight the greatest evil yet in this spooflicious comedy. Time travelers, a fictional giant lizard and a villain from drive-in movies challenge our deductive hero with evil and seduction of every stripe. Watson helps as best he can but is distracted by the call of the wild in the form of both automaton seductresses and an unwillingly cross-dressed assistant.

In the end, Holmes must face Godzilla and his own goeey inner demons to save the world from its farcical fate.

Sherlock Holmes vs. Godzilla premiered at the Pocket Sandwich Theatre. It won the 2011 Steve Lovett Award for Outstanding New Work by a Local Playwright.

Sherlock Holmes vs. Godzilla was revived at PST in August, 2013.

"Tossing political correctness overboard in a cascade of tossed popcorn and a parade of Stepford-style shebots, Ben Schroth proves once again that reason trumps brute strength, as long as there are plenty of doughnuts! Sherlock Holmes v. Godzilla reinvigorates the jelly-filled dimension of eternal truth and exploitation."

---Alexandra Bonifield, Critical Rant and Rave

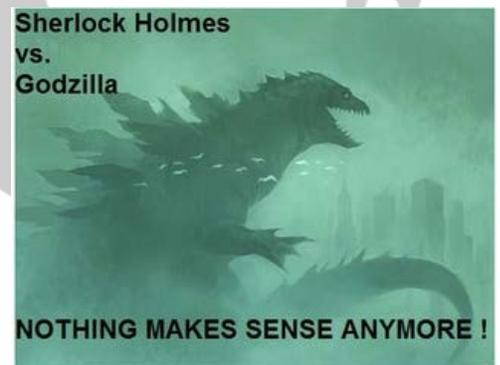
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56 Stories in 56 Days - The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet

Posted on September 30, 2011

by barefootonbakerstreet



Homes is full of energy in this one, analysing footprints at great length, charging around in disguise and even holding a gun to the head of a villain – it's like a film by Guy Ritchie, writes Charlotte Anne Walters.

The story of private banker Alexander Holder loaning money to a royal personage and keeping the priceless beryl coronet as security, takes on a dramatic turn when parts of the jewel go missing and he catches his son with the remainder in his hand beside the bureau from which it had been taken. As is often the case, all against the wayward young man looks hopeless and only Holmes is confident of his innocence.

We then follow Holmes as he unravels the mystery and finds the missing stones in his own unique way. This involves lots of detailed footprint analysis, disguising himself as a common loafer and having a sprightly exchange with the real villain who is a typical cad – a sort of Dorian Grey type who has made the banker's niece fall so in love with him that she would betray her own family for him.

I have always enjoyed the escapism element to the Holmes stories, the way they draw you into another time and it's not just the narrative which captures the reader, but also the settings, the epoch itself.

At the start of this story Watson paints such a lovely scene that for a moment you are right there with him in the sitting room at 221B with Sherlock Holmes, a fire burning in the grate, cosy and warm as snow lays on the ground outside and a bitter wintery air pervades over Victorian London.

The story is also noteworthy for containing the famous line spoken by Holmes – 'When you have excluded the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.'

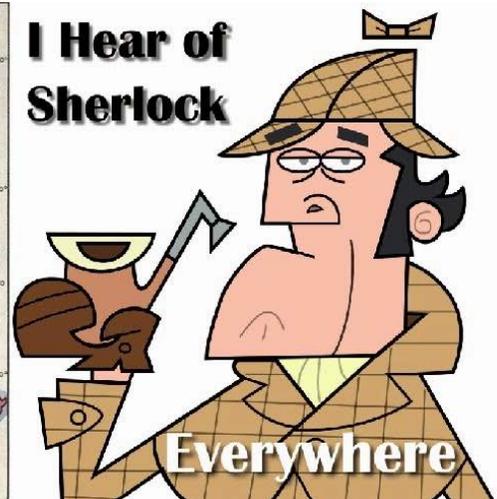
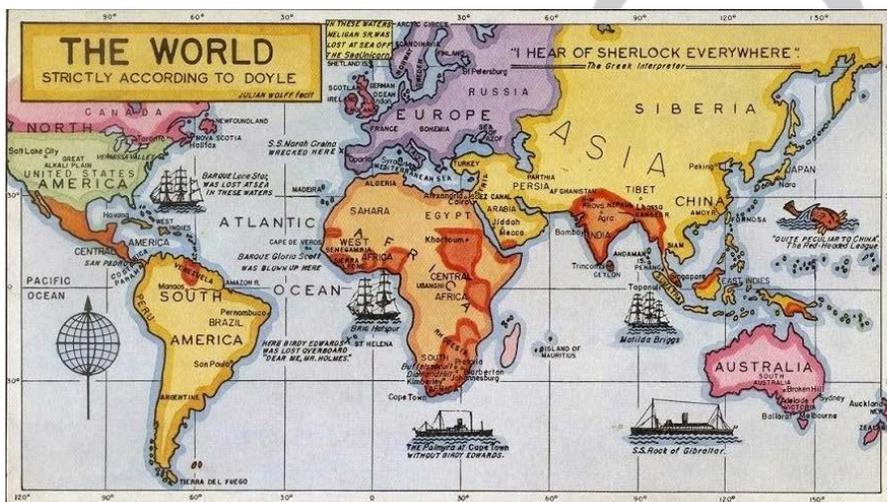
Also rather noteworthy, but for a less positive reason, is the incestuous love the son has for his cousin. This is made even more-so by the fact that his father really wanted them to marry, even though she was like a daughter to him and called him Dad. Was marriage between first cousins acceptable then in Victorian times?

I thought they were more prudish than modern society and such a thing would have been unthinkable but clearly I am wrong.

I have to say that I did feel a bit sorry for poor Mary at the end, running away with a ruthless player and losing her family, certain to face much heartache. Yes, I know she probably deserved it after stealing the coronet and handing it to him but haven't we all done foolish things for love at least once in our lives?

Good deduction, love, incest and family troubles – what more can you want in a story? – 7 out of 10.

CONGRATULATIONS TO: I HEAR OF SHERLOCK EVERYWHERE ON THEIR UPCOMING 100TH EPISODE



As the creators of the program, Scott Monty and Burt Wolder, have said, "The 100th episode of I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere is set to be published on **July 15, 2016**. It's been nine years in the making, and we're looking forward to celebrating with you."

www.ihose.com

An Inquiry Into "The Beryl Coronet"

Murray, the Courageous Orderly (a.k.a. Alexander Braun), Hounds of the Internet

"The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet" was first published in The Strand Magazine in May 1892. According to Baring-Gould's chronology, as set down in The Annotated Sherlock Holmes, Second Edition, 1974, the case takes place on Friday, December 19 to Saturday, December 20, 1890.

At the time Holmes is 36 years old and Watson 38.

Notable Quotes:

"It is an old maxim of mine that when you have excluded the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth."

The Brown Crumbly Band

At the opening of the story, Watson writes that "Down the centre of Baker Street [the snow] had been ploughed into a brown crumbly band by the traffic..."

You didn't want to throw snowballs in London back then, because a large percentage of the "brown crumbly" stuff was horse manure.

Nineteenth-century cities depended on thousands of horses for their daily functioning. London in 1900 had 11,000 cabs.

There were also buses, each of which required 12 horses per day.

This does not take into account the countless carts, drays, and wains, all working constantly to deliver the goods needed by the rapidly growing population of the largest city in the world.

Considering that the average horse produces 15 to 35 pounds of manure per day, it is unsurprising

that the streets of all great cities were layered with it.

In the warmer months, this attracted battalions of flies and the dried and ground-up manure was blown everywhere.

In 1900 New York, its population of 100,000 horses produced 2.5 million pounds of manure per day, all of which had to be daily swept up and disposed of.

In 1898 the first international urban-planning conference convened in that city and closed after only three days, instead of the scheduled ten, because the delegates could see no solution to the growing crisis posed by the output of urban horses.

The problem appeared intractable--the larger and richer cities became, the more horses they needed to function.

In a letter to *The Times* of London in 1894, a reader estimated that in 50 years every street in London would lie under nine feet of manure.

Moreover--he added--all these horses had to be stabled, requiring ever-larger areas of increasingly valuable land.

As the number of horses grew, he warned, more land would have to be devoted to producing hay to feed them, rather than producing food for people, and this had still to be brought into cities and distributed by horse-drawn vehicles!

Urban civilization was Time frame of story (known/surmised): doomed, he concluded. Thank heavens for the internal combustion engine!

The National Treasure

When asked by his illustrious client whether he has heard of the Beryl Coronet, Holder replies that it is "One of the most precious public possessions of the Empire."

According to the client, the coronet consisted of "...thirty-nine enormous beryls, and the price of the gold chasing [was] incalculable."

He added that the lowest estimate would put its worth at £100,000 (~\$3.0 million today).

Whenever we discuss this case, it always disturbs me that Holder's client (identified by many Canon scholars as most likely being "Tum-Tum," (a.k.a. HRH Albert Edward, Prince of Wales) was playing fast and loose with public property.

It appears the coronet was just as much national property as the Crown Jewels or Buckingham Palace.

Victoria herself would not have had the authority to hock either.

There is no need to go into HRH's proclivities, but Holder should have known better.

Conceivably, he could have been accused of receiving stolen goods; note that HRH avoided claiming that he had any right to use it as security, just that he "should not dream of doing so were it not absolutely certain that I should be able in four days to reclaim it."

Just having a key to the jewel box doesn't mean you can dispose of someone else's (i.e., British subjects') property.

Holder's Concern

Holder is panicked by the thought that something might happen to the precious coronet and wisely locks it in his private office safe.

Then, before he leaves, he decides that the bank isn't sufficiently secure, so he removes the diadem from a steel safe, takes it home with him and locks it in a flimsy wooden bureau that anyone can open.

Only then does he breathe a sigh of relief!

He has decided that it is safer to keep it in his possession during his comings and goings to and from the office than in a bank safe.

Considering that he did not even keep a carriage of his own, this goes beyond idiotic!

Then, as if this weren't enough, he reveals the story and whereabouts of the coronet to his household in such a careless manner that it is probable that he has been overheard by the maid.

Does the term "twit" fit or not?

Stimulating the Scandalous Occurrence

Holder made it clear that he realized that if anything happened to the coronet the result would be "a scandal which would convulse the nation."

So when it is stolen instead of proceeding discreetly, possibly by first contacting the illustrious borrower, he raises a hullabaloo ("... it had ceased to be a private matter, but had become a public one, since the ruined coronet was national property") by calling in the police, having them arrest his own son as a thief, and as icing on

the cake, offering a £1,000 reward for the missing jewels, an attention-attracting amount.

If that is not begging for a scandal, nothing is!

While one might justify Fleet Street missing the news item of so many redheaded folk congregating in one spot (REDH) it seems rather impossible that they would not have looked into this little brouhaha.

If discretion is a requirement for his profession, Holder should start perusing the want ads!

The Coronet's Condition

Incredibly, Holder shows little if any distress over the condition of the Beryl Coronet--broken and bent out of shape.

One must recall that it was specifically stated that *any* injury to it would be almost as serious as its complete loss.

So whence Holder's lightheartedness over the considerable damage?

Did he expect that HRH would have had to keep quiet about the wrecking of a national treasure to avoid scandal?

Couldn't the same have been true had the coronet not have been recovered?

What else happened in 1890: EMPIRE

- Helgoland ceded to Germans.
- Work of Rhodes Pioneers begun in Southern Rhodesia.
- Britain annexes Uganda.
- Britain recognizes French Protectorate over Madagascar.
- Treaty of Busah: improved Franco-British relations in West Africa.
- Zanzibar Settlement: Tanganyika becomes Imperial

Germany Colony; Germany excluded from Upper Nile; British Protectorate over Zanzibar.

BRITAIN

- Parnell vindicated of Phoenix Park murder charges; ruined by O'Shea divorce petition; rejected as leader of Irish Nationalists in Commons, resigns.
- Omnibus strike in London settled on basis of 12-hour day.
- January 4, Daily Graphic launched, first daily illustrated paper. Merged with Daily Sketch in 1926.
- Horniman Museum opens.
- First part of Rosebery Avenue opened.
- Dulwich Park, gifted by Dulwich College, opens.
- Vauxhall Park opens.
- City and South London Railway from Stockwell to William Street, first deep level tube railway.
- London-Paris telephone line opened.
- Financial panic in London and in Paris.
- Lunacy Act gives management of asylums to visiting committees.
- Housing of Working Classes Act.
- Sir B. Baker and Sir J. Fowler complete cantilever Forth Bridge (for railway) at Queensferry, near Edinburgh; length 1.3 miles.
- Gilbert writes, Original Comic Operas.
- Barry writes, My Lady Nicotine.
- Booth writes, In Darkest England.
- Caine writes, Bondman, a Novel.

- Sir James George Frazer writes, *The Golden Bough* (to 1915).
- Morris writes *News from Nowhere*.
- Sir William Watson writes, *Wordsworth's Grave*.

WORLD

- Bismarck dismissed.
- German control over East African territories.
- Wounded Knee massacre.
- Idaho and Wyoming are admitted into the Union.
- Workmen in France allowed compensation for contracts broken by employers.
- William III of Holland dies; Luxembourg passes to Duke of Nassau.
- Fall of Bismarck; Caprivi made Imperial Chancellor; start of personal rule of William II.
- Zemstva Law in Russia; limited franchise in local government; excluded intellectual professions.
- Russia attempts to limit Finnish Control over customs and money.
- First meeting of Japanese Legislature under new Constitution.

- French miners to elect delegates to supervise safety while working.
- In Chicago, the first entirely steel-framed building erected.
- French Explorer Monteil's journey Niger-Kano-Tchad-Tripoli; completed 1892.

- First Chinese cotton mill constructed.
- Olderbank Clubs in Italy suppressed.

ART

- Franck, Belgian organ composer dies.
- Cézanne paints *Mme. Cézanne in the Conservatory*.
- Degas paints *Dancers in Blue*.
- Pietro Mascagni writes *Cavalleria Rusticana*.
- Van Gogh paints *Portrait of Dr. Gachet, Street in Anvers*, dies.
- Prince Igor, commenced by Borodin (dies 1887), completed by Glazunov and Rimsky-Korsakov.
- Tchaikovsky composes *Queen of Spades*.
- Whistler writes, *The Gentle Art of Making Enemies*.
- Paul Claudel presents *Tête d'Or*.

- Stefan George writes, *Hymnen*.
- Arno Holtz writes, *Die Familie Selicke*.
- Ibsen writes, *Hedda Gabler*.
- Zola writes, *La Bête humaine*.

SCIENCE

- Bertillon publishes *La photographie judiciaire*, in which he explains his anthropometry.
- Emil von Behring, German bacteriologist, discovers immunity to tetanus can be given by use of serum; introduces name "antitoxin."
- Halstead, at John Hopkins Hospital, first to use rubber gloves in surgery.
- Moving-picture films, precursor of cinematography (q.v., 1894) shown in New York.
- Cyanide process of preparation of gold from crude ore developed in South Africa.
- Lockyer's theory of stellar evolution.
- P. Rudolph's anastigmatic camera lens.
- Discovery of Cleopatra's tomb.

Story Info Pages for "The Beryl Coronet"

McMurdo's Camp, <https://mcmurdoscamp.wordpress.com/>

- First published in: The Strand Magazine, May 1892
- Time frame of story (known/surmised): February – year not given, likely mid-1880's.
- H&W living arrangements: Sharing bachelor quarters at 221B Baker St.
- Opening scene: A well-dressed portly gentleman runs down the street from the train station to see Holmes, and is in a state of high agitation. Explains that one of the highest, noblest, most exalted men in England took out a short-term loan of £50,000 and left a valuable coronet loaded with jewels as security, an odd arrangement.
- Client: Alexander Holder, a very prominent and well-know banker, one of the foremost citizens of London.
- Crime or concern: Client took coronet home with him for safekeeping (a foolish move) and later found his son Arthur wrenching, or bending it, with a piece of the coronet and some beryls missing. Arthur refused to explain.
- Villain: Sir George Brunwell, an upper class bounder and, unknown to the Holmes' client, the lover of Mary, his niece and adopted daughter.
- Motive: Money. Steal the the coronet and jewels and sell them.
- Logic used to solve: Arthur's story did not add up. Holmes summary: "Your son came down from his bed, went, at great risk, to your dressing-room, opened your bureau, took out your coronet, broke off by main force a small portion of it, went off to some other place, concealed three gems out of the thirty-nine, with such skill that nobody can find them, and then returned with the other thirty-six into the room in which he exposed himself to the greatest danger of being discovered."
- Policemen: Client had been to see the police who responded in force to the missing coronet, but who were unable to recover anything or find the thief. Police advised client to consult Holmes.
- Holmes' fees: SH to client: "You place no limit on the sum I may draw."
 - Client's reply: "I would give my fortune to have them back." SH: "Very good."
 - Holmes charged client £4000, which included £3000, 6s, in Holmes' expenditures.
- Transport: H&W and client took a short railway journey to the southern suburb of Streatham, and a short walk to Fairbank, the client's home.
- Food: Holmes went out to investigate and took a slice of beef from the joint upon the sideboard, sandwiched it between two rounds of bread, and thrust this rude meal into his pocket.
- Drink, Vices: none mentioned
- Other cases mentioned: none
- Notable Quotables: "It is an old maxim of mine that when you have excluded the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth."
- Other interestings: Both the Holder son Arthur and (adopted) daughter Mary refer to Alexander as "dad".
 - Holmes tracks events by footprints in the snow. Arthur had gone out barefoot some distance.
 - Holmes goes out to investigate while disguised as a common loafer. Gets cleaned up and visits Brunwell.
- Holmes' hypothetical son: "Your son has carried himself in this matter as I should be proud to see my own son do, should I ever chance to have one."
- When all is said and done: Mary stole the coronet and gave it to Brunwell. Arthur gave chase and took the big hunk of it back by force, damaged, and covered for Mary. Holmes sees Brunwell, promises silence, gets name of fence who paid Brunwell £600 for the 3 beryls. Holmes pays fence £3000 and returns beryls. Mary runs off with Brunwell and gets what she deserves. Holders are sad to lose Mary, but happy to avoid ruin.

Baker Street Elementary

Created by Joe Fay,
Rusty & Steve Mason



The First Adventures of Sherlock Holmes and John Watson

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Fay, Mason, & Mason

WHO DID BRITISH FORCES DEFEAT
IN THE BATTLE OF QUEBEC CANADA?



WHO DID BRITISH FORCES DEFEAT IN THE BATTLE OF QUEBEC CANADA?
I choose to not answer this question, which could be in conflict
with my religious beliefs...



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HEY, IT'S
WORTH A SHOT...

