

The Bilge Pump

Vol. 05, No. 06 - June, 2017
*The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the
Barque Lone Star*



July 2nd Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Sunday, July 2nd, 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 Sussex Vampire."

The quiz will cover this tale.

Rusty Mason will present "Sherlock Holmes of my Youth: Part 2: Cross-overs in TV and Film."

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

June 4th Meeting

There were 19 crew members in attendance, including 4 visiting first-timers. Sandra Little provided a wonderful, titled "A Moss Rose by any Other Name" (see page 3).

The quiz was based on "The Veiled Lodger." The quiz was won by Sandra Little, with Brenda Hutchinson taking second. Both received great prizes for their efforts.

There will be no movie night in June. Hopefully, we will resume in July.

Lawrence Fischman provided an excellent discussion on why we continue to read and study the Canon, and even instilling a passion in us today.

Both Lawrence and Liese Sherwood-Fabre autographed their books after the meeting.

Rusty Mason was invested as the most recent deck mate, raising the total of our deck mates to 19.

Dorothy Kassinoff won the gangway prize, the Deduction game from the 1970s..

The Baker Street Journal was an excerpt on "And So, Can Never Die" from (see page 4).

Thanks to Brenda Hutchison for taking notes of the meeting.

You can read the full notes on our website, www.dfw-sherlock.org



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

You can follow us on Twitter at: [@barquelonestar](https://twitter.com/barquelonestar)

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Who dunnit:



Third Mate
Helmsman
Spiritual Advisors

Secretaries
Historian
Webmaster

Steve Mason
Walter Pieper
Don Hobbs, BSI
Jim Webb

Cindy Brown, Brenda Hutchison
Pam Mason
Rusty Mason

mason.steve@epa.gov
waltpieper@att.net
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jimrwebb@ix.netcom.com

myrkrid08@yahoo.com

Our Website: www.dfw-sherlock.org

"That will await him when he enters port," said he, chuckling. "It may give him a sleepless night. He will find it as sure a precursor of his fate as Openshaw did before him."

"And who is this Captain Calhoun?"

"The leader of the gang. I shall have the other..."

"How did you trace it, then?"

He took a large sheet of paper from his pocket.

"I have spent the whole day," said he, "over in January and February in '83. There were attracted my attention, since, although it was..."

"Texas, I think."

"I was not and am not sure which; but I knew..."

"What then?"

"I searched the Dover records, and when I..."

vessel which touched at Pondicherry of these, one, the Lone Star, instantly of the states of the Union."

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A MOSS ROSE BY ANY OTHER NAME

Sandra Little

Here we are, dedicating yet another raising of the glass to the adventures of Sherrinford Hope and his faithful companion, Ormond Sacker.

Say what you will, but my cynical side doubts Holmes and Watson would have continued their unabated popularity in the modern era with such ease if Doyle had kept "two" unusual names. Whether or not Watson can be accurately saddled with the label of "the normal one", given his life experience, is highly debatable-- but at least his name is nondescript.

It does help, Watson is the quite relatable "John," when one modernizes and dares to deviate from Holmes and Watson. It even feminizes nicely to Joan, should you want to play a bit with gender. Sherlock...not so much. As a matter of fact, even when fic writers... the poor man's... or more accurately, poor woman's, pastiche... make their gender flips...when Sherlock is a "woman" -- Sherlock is still Sherlock.

Nor is a nickname suitable... although I confess to calling him Sherly once, in a humorous piece simply so John could say Sherly you can't be serious (and of course the response would be "I am serious and don't call me Sherly") And I will tell you, as an occasional writer of such things, even when Holmes is a highly-functioning, sentient "umbrella," his name is still Sherlock.

The name starts to get nonsensical after a while. A bit like Chandler Bing and tartlettes. So much so you occasionally make the switch back into the canonverse just to avoid it for a bit-- to get back to good ol Holmes and Watson.

It means bright-haired one in Old English, or short-cut hair-- depending on whether you go with scir or scear for the etymology of the first syllable-- which would seem to imply the original Holmes was conceived of as blond. Though there haven't been too many of those

since Paget made the fateful decision to chose his brother as a model.

And Doyle himself has claimed the inspiration for the name had little to do with looks and more to do with his luck at rugby. He supposedly played against a Sherlock-- had 30 runs against a bowler by that name... or was it a reference to bowler TF Shacklock and wicketkeeper Mordacai Sherwin... portmanteaued into the ultimate cricketeer? Or perhaps even an ode to violinist Alfred Sherlock?

Combine that with older brother Mycroft, and possibly even "older" brother Sherrinford... (and if you are feeling whimsical, younger sister Eurus) and you'd have to agree Mr. and Mrs. Holmes had a thing for unusual names. Even with the tremendous popularity of BBC Sherlock at what may have been its peak in 2012, only 5 people in the UK... and... quite possibly the world... named their son Sherlock.

I will admit to attempting to name my cat brothers Sherlock and Mycroft, but failing. I just couldn't do it... more power to you if you can. I couldn't imagine telling my vet "his name is Sherlock" without flushing a bit. I ended up coming close though... choosing a more esoteric version... Shezza and Mykie. Sherlock seemed off limits, somehow. Permanently taken.

Familysearch says there have been 353 Sherlock Holmeses since the 19th Century. I have only heard of one in real life. Saw him in the newspaper, actually. In the crime report.

Under arrest by the Dallas police department on burglary and drug charges. (And yes, that is...oddly fitting...), but I somehow don't think growing up with that name went over too well for him.

No, the name Sherlock seems destined only to one person... the world's only consulting detective. So, let us toast one of the most unique people ...and names in history. To Sherlock Holmes.

"AND SO, CAN NEVER DIE"

Excerpt from BAKER STREET JOURNAL – September, 1993

Disregarding the advice of Thomas Wolfe, I went home again. I went home to the small town library where so many of my early adventures began. Although the library was in a new location, it had not changed much since my formative years. I had returned home at the request of the library.

The summer reading-program activities have centered around the theme "Investigate the Library."

Since Sherlock Holmes is the prime detective, it was a fitting subject for the young readers.

I did not know what to expect, for I had never faced an audience between the ages of 6 and 12. I began by explaining the "magic" that surrounded them on the bookshelves in the library. I explained how a young doctor by the name of Arthur Conan Doyle decided to take up his pen and write about a detective.

We talked about Basil of Baker Street springing from the pen of Eve Titus, becoming The Great Mouse Detective. I then told them my story: how I had heard the stories about Sherlock Holmes when my cousin read then to me, but I wanted to read them myself. I explained how the librarian had been my guide and of the thrill of finding Holmes.

As I looked at their faces, I knew that they too had discovered the enchantment found on these shelves.

With my presentation concluded, I opened the "Magic Door."

"Does anyone have any questions about Sherlock Holmes?" I asked.

The hands shot into the air, and what took place over the span of thirty minutes was as amazing as anything Watson described.

"What, was his first case?" was the first question.

The questions grew progressively more difficult to answer. The most difficult question of the day concerned Dr. Watson's bull pup.

"What happened to the dog?" a young man asked.

"Why hasn't anybody written a book about Watson's dog?" followed.

I was bewildered. I did not know if anyone had written a book about Dr. Watson's dog.

"When was Sherlock Holmes born?" she asked. How does one explain when Holmes was born?

In his introduction to Profile by Gaslight, Edgar W. Smith replied Sherlock Holmes was born on the 6th of January, 1854, in the town of Mycroft in the North Riding Yorkshire.

We can have little patience with those who are ignorant of this vital fact—who believe, in their innocence, that the sprang full-panoplied from the brow of Conan Doyle, or that the birth occurred, far from Yorkshire and as late as 1887, in the cold bed of the printed page. I explained that the year 1854 is about the only

conclusive answer about Sherlock Holmes to be found—as soon as someone believes that they have found a solution, someone else examines the data from their perspective and discovers another unique rejoinder. The place and month are still the subject of debate. This is the fun of playing the Game. Her eyes probed my countenance. Her look revealed that she could not accept this answer.

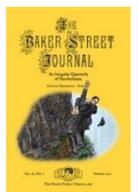
With apologies to Mr. Smith, who was not looking into those eyes, it became evident that no printed page could remain "cold" once they too had seen those eyes.

"There is another conclusive answer concerning the birth of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson," I offered. Vincent Starrett supplied the solution in 1942 in his sonnet "221B."

Mr. Starrett explained that as long as the reader realizes that "only those things the heart believes are true," Holmes and Watson are "born" every time someone opens the book and begins to read. I envy them, for I know they have so much to discover and a lifetime to discover them, and I well know where those discoveries may lead them. As I left them, they were busy constructing their own deerstalker caps. I took great comfort in the fact that for them, at that moment, it was 1895. So long as this is true, these "two men of note... can never die."

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.

Got to: <http://www.bakerstreetjournal.com/itemsforsale/subscriptions.html> for subscription information.



TAKING THE HEAT IN VICTORIAN ENGLAND

Liese Sherwood-Fabre

In the “Adventure of the Illustrious Client,” Watson notes that he and Holmes both enjoyed Turkish baths, and the relaxation Holmes found in the routine made him more open than in other environments.

Holmes’s affection for the bath, however, seems to have developed later than Watson’s because Holmes had questioned the need for such a bath (over one at home) at the beginning of “The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax.”

Watson’s defense of his preference was that the bath’s dry heat offered an “alternative in medicine” to treat his rheumatic feelings.



By 1902 (when Sir James Damery had arranged for a meeting with the great detective) Watson reported the bath on Northumberland Avenue was their favorite.

Interestingly, the Charing Cross Turkish Baths did truly exist on Northumberland Avenue, just minutes away from 221B. (1)

The popularity of Victorian Turkish baths was already waning by the time Watson and Holmes relaxed in the Charing Cross drying room.

Their sudden rise in the mid-1800s resulted from two enthusiasts who had read David Urquhart’s 1850 book *The Pillars of Hercules*. Urquhart described the Hammam (Turkish bath) in detail, and sparked the interest of Dr. Richard Barter and Charles Bartholomew.

Barter remodeled a vapor bath in Blarney, Ireland and Bartholomew asked Urquhart to design help him design another bath in Blarney and then used that design to open a chain of baths across England. (2)



The bath was designed with a series of pools and rooms, each with a specific function.

After the man (and in some cases, women had separate facilities in the same building) had paid the entrance fee, they left their shoes and belongings in lockers and then disrobed, wrapping a towel about the waist and the shoulders.

They then passed through a series of three rooms, each one hotter than the last.

The dry heat, which distinguished the Turkish bath from other steam baths, reached a temperature of about 154° F in the last room.

After a cold-water plunge, the person lay on a table for a “shampooing.”

In this process, a “shampooer” would first massage the muscles, then vigorously scrub the body with camel hair gloves, and finally crack all the joints.

Finally, the bather would relax in the cooling-off room. (3)

Early descriptions of the baths’ benefits included cures for all sorts of illnesses, including smallpox, gout, liver troubles, and, as in the case of Dr. Watson, rheumatism.

These were all attributed to the release of toxins through the skin and perspiration.

The medical community, however, was never able to substantiate such claims, and within thirty years,

Bartholomew offered some of his baths for sale as hyped promises of cures never materialized. (4)

At their height, more than 100 Turkish baths operated in London.

By 2017, only 12 remain. (5)

Holmes and Watson’s preferred bath was turned into a warehouse sometime in the 1900s, but the Charing Cross Bath at 25 Northumberland Avenue has recently been resurrected as a Thai spa. (6)

The dry-hot bath has been replaced with steam rooms, and the shampooing with a Thai massage.

While Holmes and Watson might not recognize the treatment, they would most certainly appreciate the relaxation offered at the present facility.



- 1) Leslie Katz, “Plunging into ‘the full tide of human existence’: the Charing Cross Neighbourhood in the Sherlock Holmes Adventures.” February 19, 2017.
- 2) Peter Kandela (2000). The Rise and Fall of the Turkish Bath in Victorian England. *International Journal of Dermatology*, 39, 71.
- 3) Malcolm R. Shifrin, “Victorian Turkish baths” www.victorianturkishbath.org. May 2017.
- 4) Kandela, 73.
- 5) Malcolm R. Shifrin, “Victorian Turkish baths” www.victorianturkishbath.org. May 2017.
- 6) <https://www.bookyourlifestyle.com/thai-square-spa-101308.html>

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>

17 STEPS TO "THE SUSSEX VAMPIRE"

Brad Keefauver, Sherlock Peoria

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

MORRISON, MORRISON, AND SUSPICIOUS

E.J.C. writes, "As our firm specializes entirely upon the assessment of machinery the matter hardly comes within our purview, and we have therefore recommended Mr. Ferguson to call upon you and lay the matter before you. We have not forgotten your successful action in the case of Matilda Briggs.

Why would tea broker Robert Ferguson seek advice from machine assessors about vampires? Why would machine assessors need help with a ship and a giant rat? Is there as much more to these "machine assessors" as there was to a certain "government clerk" named Mycroft? What might that "much more" have been?



WHAT STORIES DID HOLMES'S NANNY TELL HIM?

"Anything is better than stagnation," Sherlock Holmes says, "but really we seem to have been

switched on to a Grimms' fairy tale."

I don't seem to recall hearing of a Grimm's fairy tale with vampires in it . . . does anyone else know of one? What tale might he have been referring to? As a child, was Holmes exposed to the older, more violent versions of the tales, or had they been cleaned up a bit even then?

OKAY, IT'S NOT ALPHABETICAL ORDER...

In Holmes's index we find:

1. "Voyage of the Gloria Scott"
2. Victor Lynch
3. Venomous lizard
4. Vittoria
5. Vanderbilt
6. Vipers
7. Vigor
8. Vampirism in Hungary
9. Vampires in Transylvania

Can we deduce anything from this sequence? The first five seem to be in reverse alphabetical order, after which it becomes a little messy. Could we safely say it's chronological? Or even state which were cases and which were clippings?

THE 221B DEPARTMENT OF POSIONOUS REPTILES

"Venomous lizard or gila," Holmes reads, then remarks, "Remarkable case, that!"

Is it a coincidence that Holmes ran into someone who used a gila monster for a crime as well as someone who used a "swamp adder" for a crime? Could a gila monster climb a bell rope? Could

it kill a young lady in her sleep? (Watson couldn't, of course, title the story after the true dying gasp, "A ... striped ... sausage ...")

RUBBISH, WATSON, RUBBISH!

"What have we to do with walking corpses who can only be held in their grave by stakes driven through their hearts? It's pure lunacy."

Methinks the detective doth protest too much. Does he say the idea of vampires is lunacy, or that the idea that he and Watson should have anything to do with them is lunacy? If vampires themselves are such lunacy, why keep a write-up of them in his great index?



WATSON, THE VOICE OF REASON

"But surely," the good doctor asserts, "the vampire was not necessarily a dead man? A living person might have the habit."

The letter only has the word "vampire" in it. Why is Holmes assuming every legendary aspect is implied in its use? Even when Watson makes his point and Holmes agrees, the detective still

refuses to consider a blood-drinking mental disorder in his tirade. Why is Holmes so set on theorizing before the facts?

HOUSE ARREST BY A TEA BROKER

Robert Ferguson writes, of his wife, "She is now confined to her room."

Could a husband keep his wife prisoner at his whim? Later we read: "Then she rushed to her room and locked herself in," which seems to be the real story. Why was Ferguson attempting the impression of control?

THE EFFECTS OF AN OLD WOUND

"A spaniel had lain in a basket in the corner. It came slowly forward towards its master, walking with difficulty. Its hind legs moved irregularly and its tail was on the ground."

When asked how long the dog has been like this, Ferguson replies, "It may have been four months ago." Is the dog still paralyzed from a dose of curare four months old? Are the effects of the poison that long-lasting?

CALLING DOCTOR L-O-V-E

In this story we get one of the few accounts of Watson's bedside manner alone with a patient. He just can't seem to get over how beautiful his patient is, a condition that seems to take precedence over any medical diagnosis. Was this a fatal flaw in the doctor's medical practice?



AND DID THE COUNTRY KNOW HIM, AS WELL?

Watson: "It is in Sussex, South of Horsham."

Holmes: "Not very far, eh? And Cheeseman's?"

Watson: "I know that country, Holmes. It is full of old houses which are named after the men who built them centuries ago."

While Sherlock Holmes is the member of the duo we most associate with Sussex, Watson seems to have spent a little time there himself apart from his friend, enough to "know" the country. Can we speculate as to how Watson came to know that part of Sussex? Does his "familiar, but not too familiar" tone and reference to the houses above all else indicate time spent there post-childhood?

MORE MULTI-PURPOSE BUSINESS?

"This gentleman married some five years ago a Peruvian lady the daughter of a Peruvian merchant, whom he had met in connection with the importation of nitrates."

"This gentleman," we later learn, is tea-broker Robert Ferguson. What is the connection between nitrates and tea, if any? Since Peru's nitrate supplies

basically came from 2000 years of accumulated bird droppings (from cormorants, no less), one would hope not! So why was Ferguson there?

NIGEL BRUCE STOPS IN AT BAKER STREET

"Of course I remembered him," Nigel Bruce says of Ferguson. "It's like him to be so concerned over a friend's case."

Basil Rathbone shakes his head at this, and says, "I never get your limits, Watson. There are unexplored possibilities about you. Take a wire down, like a good fellow. 'Will examine your case with pleasure.'"

"Your case!" Nigel Bruce sputters.

"We must not let him think that this agency is a home for the weak-minded. Of course it is his case."

If ever there was justification for the Nigel Bruce portrayal of Watson, this scene in "Sussex Vampire" is it. Holmes gives him the back-handed compliment that the Bruce-ian Watson will never pick up the full implication of, then patronizingly gives Watson secretarial duty. Holmes then follows with the weak-minded jibe, straight at his friend. Is Holmes really saying that there seems to be no limit to Watson's foolishness? Should Watson have picked up on the old "I have a friend who" ruse?

THE BOY BECOMES A MAN

"Hullo, Watson," Big Bob Ferguson says. "You don't look quite the man you did when I threw you over the ropes into the crowd at the Old Deer Park."

How old would we expect Watson to have been during his

rugby career? Was he of an age when he could truly be called a man and not a boy? At what age might the change in label have occurred in those days?

THE STAR OF THE BLACKHEATH BOILERSTOKERS

"I believe your friend Watson played Rugby for Blackheath when I was three-quarter for Richmond."

What does this statement tell us about friend Watson's past? Would he have had to live in Blackheath to be on the team?

THE STUNTING OF JACK FERGUSON

"And yet the kiddies have got to be protected," Bob Ferguson states, and later commands, "Run away, little Jacky."

One of the most remarkable things about this story is Ferguson's treatment of his fifteen-year-old son, calling him a "kiddie" and "little Jacky." While Holmes respectfully refers to the teenager as Jack, and the baby as "little man," Papa Ferguson seems intent on preventing his elder son from growing up. Treated forever like a child, Jack Ferguson responds in kind. Why would Big Bob do this to his son? Is it due to his first wife's death or Jack's crippling injury?



FERGUSON'S GUIDE TO TRAINS

"There is an excellent train at two from Victoria if you could come," says Big Bob.

It's a silly question, but I have to ask it ... was the train rated "excellent" just due to its departure time, or were there actually better quality trains the choosy traveller could be on the lookout for?

FEARFUL FRIEND DELORES

"She verra ill. She need doctor. I frightened stay alone with her without doctor," says Delores, the Peruvian personal assistant.

Why is Delores so frightened to stay alone with someone to whom she is more friend than servant? Did she feel responsible for Mrs. Ferguson, or was she actually afraid of her?

THE ONE-SIDED TALE OF THE HUSBAND

"The lady was very beautiful, but the fact of her foreign birth and of her alien religion always

caused a separation of interests and of feelings between husband and wife, so that after a time his love may have cooled towards her and he may have come to regard their union as a mistake. He felt there were sides of her character which he could never explore or understand."

When we finally encounter Mrs. Ferguson at the tale's end, she speaks perfect English and is completely rational. Everyone in the household seems to know what is going on, except Big Bob. Is Holmes's "leave everything to sort itself out" actually going to be a happy ending for this household? Or are Big Bob's weird prejudices, his peculiar relationship with his teenage son, and his communication gaps with the rest of the household going to continue once Holmes and Watson are gone? Might Ferguson have ignored Holmes's advice for his spoiled teenager, and kept the boy in Sussex, to the eventual despair of everyone? Does solving the blood-sucking mystery truly resolve the effects of "foreign birth and alien religion," the cooling of Ferguson's love, and Big Bob's notions that the union was a mistake?

R.I.P. ADAM WEST



56 STORIES IN 56 DAYS - "THE SUSSEX VAMPIRE"

Posted on November 12, 2011 by barefootonbakerstreet

Well, it's not exactly Buffy or Twilight but it's just as far-fetched, writes Charlotte Anne Walters.

I really want to like this story – it's something a bit different and the title makes it sound very exciting but I just can't warm to it. I think it's because I don't find the plot very believable. Would you really risk your own marriage and the love of your husband just to protect him from heartbreak over the realities of his eldest son?

Would you really take the blame knowing that it might cost you your marriage and threaten the future of your own child? And if you feared that a quiver of arrows might be used to harm your child surely you would remove them, not leave them hanging on the wall? And is it fair to send a disabled young boy, despite his wrongdoings, away to sea for a year?

So many questions and not enough satisfactory answers for my liking I'm afraid. Which is a shame really as the general premise of the story is a good one. Mr. Ferguson comes to see Holmes for help in clearing up a very unpleasant incident in his household.

He had married a beautiful, spirited South American woman and had no doubt over her love and devotion for him.

They had a baby together but he also had a son from a previous marriage who had a spinal condition. He had witnessed his wife beating this youth on two occasions and then found her crouched over the baby with blood around her mouth and a wound on the child's neck. She fled to her bedroom and hadn't seen him since.

Holmes managed to deduce from the weapons on the wall and a curiously disabled dog that a poisoned arrow had been shot into the child's neck by the jealous eldest boy.

The wife, who was anticipating such an attack, was trying to suck the poison out. She hid the truth from her husband as she didn't want to break his heart over the son whom he loved so much.

Like I say at the start, there is so much about this that doesn't quite hold true that it detracts from the story for me. However, it is still a good tale at its heart and I did enjoy re-reading it.

It is also the story in which Holmes says the line – 'I never get your limits Watson. There are unexplored possibilities about you', upon hearing of Watson's earlier prowess on the rugby field. I have used this idea to great effect in my own novel and tried to explore some of those previously unexplored possibilities.

There is also another expression which seemed more like something my Nan would say rather than a wealthy gentleman, a bit like the 'I'll just put my slippers on' line in *The Blue Carbuncle*.

Mr Ferguson says – 'And yet the kiddies have got to be protected.' Kiddies? I can hear my mum's voice in my head saying "Kids are baby goats not human children!" – her usual phrase of chastisement if I ever said 'kid' instead of child.

All in all, a bit of a disappointing story but still gives the usual enjoyment of watching Holmes save the day. 6 out of 10.

AN INQUIRY INTO "THE SUSSEX VAMPIRE"

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

"The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire" was first published in "The Strand Magazine," on January 1924.

According to Baring-Gould's chronology, as set down in "The Annotated Sherlock Holmes," Second Edition, 1974, the case takes place from Thursday, November 19, to Saturday, November 21, 1896. At the time Holmes is 42 years old and Watson 44.

Notable Quotes:

"The world is big enough for us. No ghosts need apply."

"I never get your limits, Watson. There are unexplored possibilities about you."

= The Giant Rat of Sumatra =

Yet another of the lost cases of Sherlock Holmes! And probably "the" one most students of the Sacred Writings would like to read. Oceans of speculative ink have been spilled about this mysterious rodent, with much speculation attached to its true nature.

What "did" Holmes refer to? Was it a case in which an actual giant rat (that the world was as yet unprepared for) had an important part?

Some have postulated that the Giant Rat of Sumatra was not an actual rat, but the sobriquet of a master criminal.

Although anyone who has been in any port city and gone to the docks in the evenings has seen rats large enough to convince cats to travel in pairs, they do not fit the "giant" description.

The largest critter that I personally know about that might loosely be referred to as a rat is the capybara and it tips the scales at about nine pounds.

It does, indeed look like a large rat and, for the ratty community, it would indeed appear as a giant. Many identify Holmes' critter as "Rhizonys

sumatrensis"--the great Sumatran bamboo rat.

But would even a snarling, stomping herd of either of these two candidates make for "a story for which the world is not yet prepared"?

Doubtful. Others suggest a link to Professor. Challenger. What say you, Hounds?

= Curious Reference Volumes =

Second only to The Tin Box, Holmes' reference volumes are a bit of Sherlockiana that any true follower of the Canon would unhesitatingly bargain away his grandmother for.

That being said, I find it puzzling that Holmes would have saved have clippings or entries on such things as venomous reptiles and vampirism.

I would have expected that such things would have been beyond the scope of the main focus of the entries--criminals.

While I can understand Holmes having information about Irene Adler in his collection, why gila monsters (references about which could be found in any good encyclopedia, and we know Holmes had at least one set of encyclopaedias).

And why, of all things, vampires? Although "Dracula" wouldn't see the light of day (pun intended) for another year, Varney the Vampire, Carmilla, and many others already had become a part of the popular culture, why would the Great Detective keep any reference to the "living dead"?

= The Planet Peru =

Again we witness strange behavior is seen in exotic foreigners, such as Mrs. Ferguson, who is (gasp!) Peruvian. I am always amused by Ferguson's remark in his letter, "The lady was very beautiful, but the fact of her foreign birth and of her alien religion...."

It is almost a certainty that she was Roman Catholic and not Church of England--but "alien religion"?

The Church of Rome may have been singularly bothersome to Henry VIII and later Elizabeth I, but not alien. And what would the good sisters who probably raised and schooled the future Mrs. Ferguson have had to say about that?

Perhaps Ferguson thought that, as a Catholic, his wife was more likely than Protestants to show a predilection for drinking human blood.

It is often quite remarkable, considering the length and breadth of the British Empire, that Victorians could have been that parochial.

= A Contradiction, Mr. Holmes? =

Holmes tells Ferguson that "One forms provisional theories and waits for time or fuller knowledge to explode them."

This appears to be contradictory to the Great Detective's dictum about it being a capital mistake to speculate when having insufficient data.

= A Peculiar Collection for a Lady? =

Considering the time--1896--although it would not be unusual for an educated young woman from Peru to have a collection of artifact from her country, wouldn't this collection most likely consist of textiles or pottery.

A soldier or an archaeologist would have been more inclined (within the context of the times) to have a collection of native weapons. Hounds?

= Li'l Jacky =

Jack's behavior towards his father is somewhat creepy and certainly out of character for a Victorian (or any other era) teenager.

A teenage boy embracing his father with "the abandon of a loving girl" to the point of embarrassing the man!

And then he coos and nests his head on his father's breast? One would have expected Ferguson to long before this have done something to somehow "toughen" up his son, such as sending him to a good, strict boy's school, for example.

Holmes' suggestion of "a year at sea" is valid, but appears strange in view of Jack's handicap.

Unless, of course, the handicap either wasn't that severe or was a put-on, which, of course, our sleuth would have immediately detected.

Generally, a spinal injury results in motion problems, or even paralysis below the waist. Hounds?

What else happened in 1896:

EMPIRE

- Jameson Raid failure in South Africa provokes crisis; British negotiations with Boers (to 1899) fail.
- Kaiser's telegram to Kruger, congratulating him on the defeat of the Jameson Raid.
- Matabele Revolt suppressed (1896-97).
- Protectorate established in Sierra Leone and East Africa.
- Conquest of Sudan begins with the start of Kitchener's campaign against the Madhi (1896-99).
- Anglo-French treaty settles boundaries in Siam.
- Sudanese railway extended to Wadi Haifa.
- Widespread famine in India, to 1897.

BRITAIN

- Hotel Cecil, the Strand, built.
- National Portrait Gallery moves to present site in Trafalgar Square.

- Beginning of period of rising prices and falling wages (until 1914).
- Truck Act: regulates deductions from wages or fines for bad workmanship.
- Conciliation Act: boards can settle industrial disputes if both sides are willing.
- First all-steel English building erected at West Hartlepool.
- Locomotives Act: repeal of "Red Flag" restriction; maximum speed raised to 14 mph.
- Royal Victorian Order founded as Personal Order of Sovereign.

WORLD

- First modern Olympic Games are held at Athens.
- Utah admitted as state in the U.S.A.
- Klondike Gold Rush in Canada.
- France annexes Madagascar.
- State visit of Tsar Nicholas to France (Paris).
- Van Houten's Franchise Bill extends the Dutch franchise.
- French Tunisian protectorate recognized by Italy.
- Italians are defeated by Menelek of Abyssinia at Battle of Adwa, resulting in Treaty of Addis-Ababa and end of Italian protectorate.
- Massacre of Armenians by Kurds and Circassians supported by the Sultan.
- Insurrection in Crete against Turkish rule.
- Beginning of the Klondike Gold Rush.
- Foundation of Russo-Chinese Bank.
- Cassini Treaty: China gives Russia the right to build a railway through Manchuria to Port Arthur.
- Russian newspapers granted temporary licenses; imported

books and newspapers are strictly censored.

- First public film exhibition, in U.S.
- Philippine Revolution ends declaring Philippines free from Spanish rule.

ART

- Wells publishes Island of Dr. Moreau.
- Gilbert and Sullivan debut The Grand Duke.
- Giacomo Puccini debuts La Bohème at Turin.
- Toulouse-Lautrec paints Maxime Dethomas.
- R. Strauss debuts Also Sprach Zarathustra.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

- Antoine Henri Becquerel, observes radiation from uranium affects photographic plates; discovery of radioactivity.
- Nobel Prizes started, for physics, physiology or medicine, chemistry, literature, furtherance of the cause of peace.
- Guglielmo Marconi demonstrates on Salisbury Plain the practicability of wireless telegraphy.
- J.J. Thompson identifies the electron, though not by name.
- Emile Achard first describes paratyphoid fever.
- Samuel Langley (U.S.A.), successfully flies a steam-driven model aircraft.
- Rehn, of Frankfurt, sutures a heart wound; beginning of heart surgery.
- Zeeman observes that light emitted by a substance placed in a magnetic field undergoes changes.
- Earliest record of water chlorination, during typhoid outbreak in Italy.

STORY INFO PAGES FOR "THE SUSSEX VAMPIRE"

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

- **First published in:** The Strand Magazine and Hearst's International Magazine, both in January 1924.
- **Time frame of story (known/surmised):** November 19 (stated), 1901 (highly likely)
- **HOLMES & WATSON living arrangements:** Sharing quarters at 221B
- **Opening scene:** Holmes received a note in the last post from an attorneys' firm, referring a client to Holmes, concerning vampires.
- **Client:** Mr. Robert Ferguson, of Ferguson and Muirhead, tea brokers, of Mincing Lane. Once known as "Big Bob", he had played Rugby for Richmond, while Watson played for Blackheath. Ferguson had been the finest three-quarter Richmond ever had, and was always a good-natured chap.
- **Crime or concern:** Ferguson's wife, a beautiful Peruvian, was caught in the act of assaulting Jacky, Ferguson's son by a previous marriage. She struck him once with a stick and left a great weal on his arm, and once very savagely with her hands. Then she was seen by the nurse leaning over the baby and apparently biting his neck. There was a small wound from which a stream of blood had escaped. The nurse was horrified and she wished to call the husband, but the lady implored her not to do so. No explanation was ever given, and the matter was passed over. Then in a second incident, Ferguson himself saw his wife rise from a kneeling position beside the infant's cot and saw blood upon the child's exposed neck and upon the sheet. He then turned to his wife's face and saw blood all round her lips. It was she — she beyond all question — who had drunk the poor baby's blood.
- **Villain:** Jacky, the 15-year old crippled son of Ferguson by a former marriage. He had a curious, shambling gait which indicated he was suffering from a weak spine. He had pricked the child with one of those arrows dipped in curare or some other devilish drug, after experimenting on the dog.
- **Motive:** Jealousy and hatred. A distorted love, a maniacal exaggerated love for the natural father, and possibly for his dead mother. Jacky's very soul was consumed with hatred for the splendid child of the new union, whose health and beauty were a contrast to his own weakness.
- **Logic used to solve:** The idea of a vampire was to Holmes absurd, but he knew that a bleeding wound could be sucked for some other purpose than to draw the blood from it. Eleanor of Castile, wife of Edward I and mother of Edward II, in the 13th century, saved the King's life by this very act, sucking out the poison from a poisoned arrow. In a South American household Holmes' instinct felt the presence of those weapons before he ever saw them. When he saw that little empty quiver beside the small birdbow, it was just what he expected. If the child were pricked with one of those arrows dipped a poison, it would mean death if the venom were not sucked out. And the dog. If one were to use such a poison, would one not try it first in order to see that it had not lost its power? Holmes did not foresee the dog, but at least he understood the clue.
- **Policemen:** None involved

- **Holmes' fees:** No mention.
- **Transport:** HOLMES & WATSON took an excellent train at 2:00 from Victoria down to Lamberly, in Sussex.
- **Food:** Delores carried tea up to her mistress' room.
- **Drink & Vices:** None mentioned.
- **Other cases mentioned:** Holmes' successful action in the case of Matilda Briggs. Matilda Briggs was not the name of a young woman; it was a ship which is associated with the giant rat of Sumatra, a story for which the world is not yet prepared. (This seems to be one of the more intriguing of the unpublished cases.) Also mentioned: Voyage of the Gloria Scott, Victor Lynch the forger, Vittoria the circus belle, Vanderbilt and the Yeggman, Vigor the Hammersmith wonder, and

the case of the Venomous Lizard.

- **Notable Quotables:** SH on vampires: "Rubbish, Watson, rubbish! What have we to do with walking corpses who can only be held in their grave by stakes driven through their hearts? It's pure lunacy."
- Holmes said it was a delicate case, "but I have not been struck up to now with its complexity. It has been a case for intellectual deduction, but when this original intellectual deduction is confirmed point by point by quite a number of independent incidents, then the subjective becomes objective and we can say confidently that we have reached our goal. I had, in fact, reached it before we left Baker Street, and the rest has merely been

observation and confirmation."

- **Other interesting:** Holmes refers twice to his business as an "agency". "This agency stands flat-footed upon the ground, and there it must remain." "We must not let him think that this agency is a home for the weak-minded." These two references are the only times Holmes ever referred to his detective business as an "agency".
- When all was said and done: Holmes' prescription for Master Jacky was a year at sea.
- Holmes wrote to the attorneys' firm thanking them for their recommendation, and assuring them that the matter had been brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

A TOAST TO EMILIA LUCCA

Joe Moran, BSI, Sherlockian Scholarship, Holmes & Watson Report, July, 1998

(Presented to Montague Street Lodgers of Brooklyn, 2 FEB 97)

Watson's narrative of "The Red Circle" gives us only a rather skimpy description of Signora Emilia Lucca. This is surprising, since she is the principal character in this case.

When he and Holmes first spot her from their box-room vantage point across the hall at Mrs. Warren's house in Great Orme Street, he tells us only that I caught a glimpse of a dark, beautiful horrified face..."

When she arrives at the scene of Gorgiano's death in the house in Howe Street, he describes her as "... a tall and beautiful woman... her face pale and drawn with frightful apprehension..."

After the group returns to her small sitting room at Mrs. Warren's house, Watson tells us that "She spoke in rapid and fluent but very unconventional [Ungrammatical] English..."

We may think we know nothing about Her beyond that, except what Watson reports that she tells us herself – very little.

But we have clues elsewhere from which we may infer that she apparently suffered from a very troublesome medical condition.

Consider Mrs Warren's description of the quarters rented by Gennaro Lucca for his wife's secret hiding-place: "There is a sitting-room and bedroom, and all complete, at the top

of the house." Note: There is no mention that these rooms were equipped with a private toilet.

We aren't privy to the details of the plumbing facilities in Mrs. Warren's house.

From what we know of London housing at the end of the Victorian era, however, it's likely that Crapper's great invention was installed somewhere in the house.

But it's also pretty likely that any such toilet fixture would have been located centrally within the house, rather than reserved for use by a single lodger on the top floor.

Holmes gives us a small clue on this point, when when he asks: "But surely you or the girl enters [the lodger's] room of a morning?"

It seems fair to infer that what Holmes has in mind is the need to empty the chamber pot in the room. But Mrs Warren replies: "No sir; he looks after himself entirely."

This leaves us all to wonder how that chamber pot was emptied during the time Emilia Lucca occupied the premises.

We know that there was a window in the room. Emilia used it to observe the house from which she expected Gennaro to send signals to her.

Did Emilia follow the custom that had prevailed in London in earlier days (and probably still prevailed in Posillipo during the days of her

youth)? Did she use that window and the adjacent street for disposal of bodily wastes?

Probably not. By the time of this adventure, Mrs Warren's neighborhood had become too genteel to tolerate this practice.

One alternative is that Emilia used the chamber pot for an entire fortnight without ever emptying it at all. But surely that would have created an obnoxious odor.

That would have led her uneasy landlady to take more forceful action - or at least to mention it to Sherlock Holmes - and it certainly would have brought forth comment from Watson and others who entered the room.

We are left with another alternative: that Emilia Lucca did not use the thunder mug at all during the two full weeks she stayed hidden in the room.

Does this mean that Emilia was an anal-retentive personality?

No -- I prefer to think instead that fear had caused her to suffer from a medical problem.

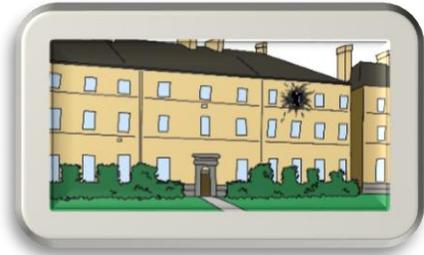
Of the hundreds of characters in the entire Canon, Emilia Lucca was afflicted with the worst case of constipation!

Thus I ask that we extend our sympathies for her medical problem as we offer this toast: To Signora Emilia Lucca!

Baker Street Elementary

Created by: Joe Fay, Rusty & Steve Mason

The First Adventures of Sherlock Holmes and John Watson



Baker Street Elementary
Number 113 - 06/11/2017

Fay, Mason, & Mason

THIS IS THE PROGRAM TO A MUSICAL CONCERT MY MOTHER TOOK ME TO THIS LAST WEEKEND...

SOUNDS FUN, WHO WAS PERFORMING?



THE FRENCH VIOLINIST, JEAN-DELPHIN ALARDO.

I HAVE NEVER BEEN TO A CONCERT... DO THE MUSICIANS JUMP INTO THE CROWD, AND BE CARRIED ABOVE THEIR HEADS?



NO, NOT HARDLY...



DOES THE CROWD HOLD UP CANDLES OR MATCHES AT THE PERFORMANCE END, TO ENCOURAGE THE MUSICIANS TO PERFORM ENCORES?

WHERE DO YOU GET THESE IDEAS?



WELL AT LEAST DO THE MUSICIANS SMASH THEIR INSTRUMENTS AT THE END OF THE CONCERT?

OF COURSE NOT !!



SOUNDS BORING TO ME...

IT'S A CONCERT, NOT A SOCCER MATCH !!



CONCERTS WOULD BE MORE EXCITING IF I WAS IN CHARGE...



STAND STRONG, MANCHESTER !!

