

The Bilge Pump

Vol. 09, No. 03 - March, 2021

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



PLEASE NOTE:

April 04 Meeting NOTICE

We will be conducting our next monthly meeting virtually on April 04 at 1:00 pm. Will send out the link for the meeting the week before the meeting. The story for the month is "The Adventure of the Yellow Face".

Our Special Guest Speaker will be **Charles Peters**, a stage actor who resides in San Diego, CA. Charles will discuss what it is like to portray Sherlock on stage (what it takes to prepare physically, trying to do an accent, imitating his mannerisms, etc)...

We will cover topic 9 on "The Life and Times of Arthur Conan Doyle: Marriages and Children through the Years by **Edith Pouden**."

February 07 Summary

There were 64 in attendance at this ZOOM meeting.

The meeting started out with a very timely toast by Joe Fay (see page 3).

We then conducted the monthly quiz on the story "The Cardboard Box," which was won by Bruce Aikin.

Robert Katz, BSI, then led a lively discussion on the story, including its first few paragraphs, and the postponement of putting it in the Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes.

Our special guest speaker this month was Bonnie McBird, who did a reading of her most recent book which will be for sale soon in the U.S. It is called The Three Locks. We were also treated to a video that she wrote, which was given at the London's Society dinner, called, "The 221B Sleuth".

We then went to the lightning round quiz for the day, and it was All Things Sherlockian. The winners of the quiz were Lola Beard and Mark Alberstat.

Next, we had a wonderful presentation given by Donnie Zaldin on The First Short Story Written by Arthur Conan Doyle, concerning a boy and began tiger, written when Conan Doyle was 6 years old.

The meeting had lots of great discussions and we look forward to next months meeting on April 4.



For more information concerning our society, visit: <http://www.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

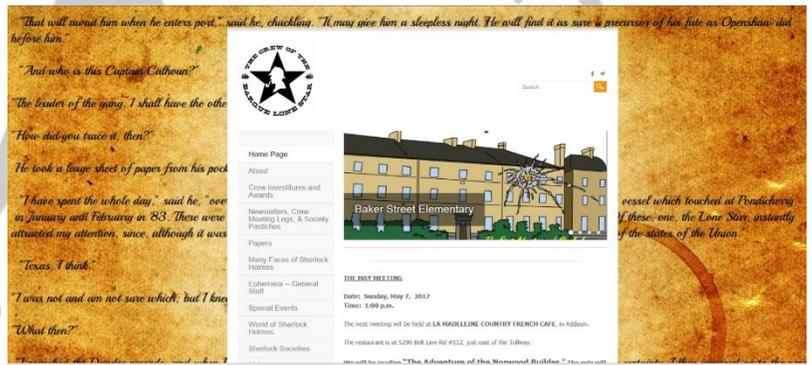
Steve Mason
Walter Pieper
Don Hobbs, BSI
Dr. Jim Webb, BSI
Cindy Brown, Brenda Hutchison
Pam Mason
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Our Website:

www.dfw-sherlock.org



Our Facebook Page:

<https://www.facebook.com/BarqueLoneStar/>

"TO THE BARQUE LONE STAR"

Presented by Joe Fay

When the temperatures are dropping
And the frozen pipes are popping
And drowning all your furniture and books

And junior Senators choose to go
To Cancun, Mexico
Rather than remain and help the
folks

When Fox News has Abbott on
And he heaps the blame upon
The Windmills and their frozen metal
spokes

When you're boiling all you drink
'Cause the water from your sink
Is as dirty as the snow flushed
down the privy

When you get your 'lectric bill
And discover that it will
Drain the savings that you built
your whole dang lives

When your governor then declares
That no one needs to wear
Protective masks to keep more folks alive

Just remember Barque Lone Star
That the country thinks you are
A thirteen on a scale of one to five

And may recovery be quick
From the cold and for the sick
And you get back to happy, healthy lives

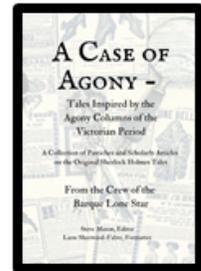
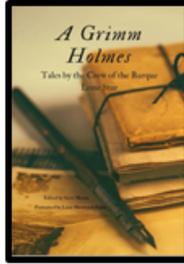
BUT IF NOT...

You can always grab your Holmes
In your freezing, flooded homes
And escape to where
it's...always...1895.

Here's to the Crew of the Barque
Lone Star! We love you and hope for
a swift, safe, and full recovery from
the recent challenges in Texas!



**The Crew of the
Barque Lone Star
Society is producing
our 5th book as part of
our 50th Anniversary.**



For this year, we are asking for members to submit a short paper on what Sherlock Holmes means to them... This could involve many things: how you met Sherlock, what has kept you involved in this passion for years, how did Sherlock help you through the past year or so, etc. This could be very insightful if we get to relive your wild childhood reading or watching Sherlock.

1. You can use any format you feel most comfortable writing – such as, essay, pastiche, poem, limerick, radio play, or even artwork
2. Your paper should not exceed 1,500 words, so that our book does not have more pages than a dictionary... Obviously, a shorter paper is fine.
3. Feel free to include with your story a photo of you dressed as Sherlock Holmes or any artwork you may have done in the past...
4. Your story will be edited by one or two member volunteer editors, but only for grammar, typos... we will not edit the content of your story.
5. This project is not limited to just those members in the DFW area. Any member (if you're getting this email) is welcome to submit a paper.
6. We plan to finalize the anthology by the end of the calendar year, so we ask for members to submit their entry by August 31.

The final product will be put together in book form and posted on our website and shared with all society members as a .pdf file. We plan on publishing copies of the book as a gift for those who submit a piece.

Our Society has a wonderful website, chocked full of Sherlockian items. Visit us at...
www.dfw-sherlock.org

If you would like to participate, you can email us at:
mason.steve8080@gmail.com



DID YOU HEAR... ?

Liese Sherwood-Fabre, PhD

Sherlock Holmes was not above acquiring and using gossip for his own purposes.

Although in this case, the rumor was not without merit.

In “The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge,” he spent time among the village gossips to collect information on Mr. Henderson of High Gable, collected similar information from the publican in “The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist,” and consulted with Langdale Pike, a gossip merchant, in “The Adventure of the Three Gables.”



Gossip, on the other hand, encompasses a major portion of human interaction.

While associated with sharing negative information about others, scientists define gossip as “talking about people who aren’t present,” which can be positive, negative, or neutral.

While gossip is often viewed negatively, beyond helping to solve cases, it has been found to be an important part of social interaction.

Studies have found that such talk breaks down into 76% neutral, 15% negative and 9% positive, and theories suggest that these conversations are what helped early man survive. (2)

Researchers distinguish between rumors and gossip.

Such models suggest language developed to build social networks.

Rumors are “public communications that are infused with private hypotheses about how the world works,” which help individuals (and societies) to make sense of what is occurring and assist in coping with anxieties and uncertainties. These may involve hoped-for consequences (wish rumors) or feared consequences (dread rumors) and often spread faster when anxieties are intense. (1)

The basis of this and similar hypotheses is that language is a social behavior, sharing information on who did what among the network’s members. (3)

Holmes confronted such a situation in the investigation of the death of Sir Charles Baskerville, where villagers attributed the man’s death to the superstition surrounding a hound and a curse on his family.

While such communications might be viewed as “idle chit-chat,” a study conducted in India found using a village’s recognized “gossips” (identified by others in the community) was an effective means of diffusing important public health information and increasing others’ positive actions. (4)

In addition to providing useful information, gossip has also been found to be an effective means of moderating social behavior.

In one study, participants played a game in which monetary rewards were divided at the end of each round of play.

Over the course of several games, players shared information about participants who kept more of their winnings for themselves.

The others ostracized such stingy players and actually forced them to be more cooperative and generous than in earlier games. (5)

When gossip involves a severe enough transgression — one involving a social norm that will result in the general public's rejection of the transgressor — it plays a role in creating a scandal through publicizing the behavior.

Such information sharing can be both by word of mouth as well as through other media — those papers that specialized in such information that Langdale Pike supplied as well as social media of today. (6)



In several cases in the Canon, perpetrators committed a crime to prevent the spread of such information and, thus, avoid a scandal.

The ostracism that could have ensued from such common knowledge of their action might have led to the destruction of their livelihood, marriage, or social status.

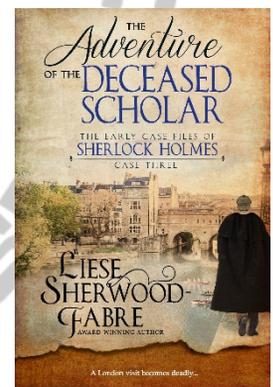
In more than one case, Holmes chose to assist them in averting such gossip by applying his own concept of justice, and rather than sharing it with the legal authorities, kept the particulars to himself.

As Watson noted, many of his case notes in the dispatch box at Cox & Co. held others' secrets — most likely enough to raise Langdale Pike's income even higher.

Luckily for such clients, Holmes was one who respected their confidences.

- (1) <https://www.apa.org/science/about/psa/2005/04/gossip>
- (2) <https://time.com/5680457/why-do-people-gossip/>
- (3) <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/talking-apes/201502/why-you-were-born-gossip>
- (4) <https://academic.oup.com/restud/article/86/6/2453/5345571>
- (5) <https://www.apa.org/science/about/psa/2005/04/gossip>
- (6) Ari Adut, *On Scandal: Moral Disturbances in Society, Politics and Art*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Dr. Sherwood-Fabre is pleased to announce that Case Three of the Early Case Files of Sherlock Holmes ("The Adventure of the Deceased Scholar") is now available for pre-order (all platforms are listed here: <https://books2read.com/u/3LYAYw>)



"THE CRANK ON THE MOOR: THE LEGACY OF MR. FRANKLAND"

By David Richardson, *The Holmes and Watson Report*, July, 2002

We hear of Mr. Frankland in Dr. Watson's initial report to Holmes in *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, where he is characterized as "an elderly man, red-faced, white-haired, and choleric, [with a] passion . . . for the British law."

He is said to be "learned in old manorial and communal rights" (something which we shall see is quite significant).

As a neighbor of Sir Henry's on the moor, he initially strikes Watson as (except for his proclivity for lawsuits) "kindly [and] good-natured," and is said to offer some sorely-needed "comic relief" (might *this* judgment have been influenced by *his* residing in Lafler Hall?).

Perhaps because of *this*, Watson seems to have chosen to stress the absurdist quality of Mr. Frankland's actions, although perhaps he was following that instinct for the dramatic for which Holmes so often chided him.

Watson tells us that Frankland "fights for the mere pleasure of fighting," being "equally ready to take up either side of a question."

I think that *this* judgment of Watson's shows that he did not actually realize the underlying unity of Mr. Frankland's actions, which I hope to demonstrate to you.

Mr. Frankland appears to engender lawsuits as much as file them (we hear that seven were pending at the time Watson wrote), and he does so by taking direct action (he seems to be what we might now call "proactive").

He at times "will shut up a right-of-way and defy the parish to make him open it," then, in a sort of role-reversal, he will "tear down some man's gate, and declare that a path has existed there from time immemorial."

Taken pair-wise, these actions no doubt do seem absurd, but we shall see that there is a surprising method to be found beneath their seeming madness.

We are also informed that Mr. Frankland may sue Dr. Mortimer for excavating a barrow and removing a skull therefrom, not because of the violation of any antiquities law (quite probably none of which existed at that time), but because he did not have the permission of the next-of-kin!

(A rather clever pretext, when one comes to think of it.)

We next hear of Mr. Frankland's lawsuits when he halts Dr. Watson on his return from visiting Laura Lyons and demands that he stop and celebrate a "red-letter day," for Frankland has won two lawsuits!

These nicely encapsulate the absurdist quality of Watson's earlier report (although Watson obviously cannot have selected them for that purpose), as one involves the re-establishment of a right, and the other the disestablishment of one.

Frankland has, so he tells us, "established, . . . a right of way through the centre of old Middleton's park . . . within a hundred yards of his own front door."

A great victory, so he also tells us, for the rights of commoners over the magnates.

This triumph was paired with his success in "clos[ing] the wood where the Fernworthy folk used to picnic," which would seem to be something of a loss for the rights of commoners.

There is, however, I believe, a clue in his explanation for the latter suit that will give us some insight into his actions, and reveal a fundamental consistency hitherto unsuspected.

His comment upon this case is to say "These infernal people seem to think . . . they can swarm where they like with their papers and their bottles."

Let us digress a bit on the only other aspect of Mr. Frankland that seems to have caught Dr. Watson's attention:

he is said to be an amateur astronomer.

But the nature of his observations - and, more importantly, the nature of his telescope -- argue that this was a blind, a story he put about to account for his possession and use of this telescope.

Telescopes come in two basic flavors: astronomical and terrestrial.

An amateur astronomer would, of course, have and use an astronomical telescope.

But it is clear from Watson's report that Mr. Frankland has a terrestrial telescope.

How can we tell?

The distinction between the two flavors is that a terrestrial telescope has what we would call a "normal" image - objects viewed through it appear "upright," whereas an astronomical one shows an inverted image.

Watson viewed the boy on the moor through Mr. Frankland's telescope without remark, arguing strongly that what he saw was the normal (upright) image of a terrestrial telescope.

The possession of a terrestrial telescope, plus the observation that Mr. Frankland "sweeps the moor" with it rather give the lie to the claim that he is an amateur astronomer.

It would seem that he acquired and employed his telescope for much more mundane purposes, to wit, keeping track of his neighbors' activities (no doubt seeking information for future lawsuits), an activity which quite agrees with what

we now suspect to have been the true interests of "the crank."

To put these somewhat disparate observations about Mr. Frankland into a context which will permit us to come to some understanding of him, we need to turn to the very place where he lived and examine its recent (recent, that is, to Mr. Frankland) history.

To do this, we have a most helpful guide in Baring-Gould's *A Book of Dartmoor*.

Before you start murmuring "I didn't know he wrote a book like that," let me say that the book in question was written by Sabine Baring-Gould, our William's grandfather, and was published - by a somewhat amusing coincidence - in 1900.

I cannot resist the urge to say a little about Sabine Baring-Gould.

He was in many ways a most remarkable man.

An ordained cleric of the Church of England, he was an amateur archaeologist, architect, artist, teacher, and a collector of English folk songs (to summarize one list of his achievements).

He was also a most prolific author; at one time he had more books listed under his name in the British Museum Library than any other English author.

He may or may not be familiar to you as the author of the hymn *Onward Christian Soldiers*.

What he tells us about Dartmoor that is relevant to our inquiry is a bit about its history in the Regency.

At that time, one Sir Thomas Tyrwhitt was Steward of the Forest (of Dartmoor) for the then Prince of Wales, the future King George IV. If you have seen pictures of Dartmoor - or had the great fortune to have been there - you know that it is a most treeless place.

Baring-Gould explains that Dartmoor has likely never been covered with trees, and the term "forest" likely derives from *feresta*, a place for wild beasts, one in this case set aside for the King to hunt them.

Sir Thomas, who was later to be appointed Usher of the Black Rod - something like the Sergeant-at-Arms of the House of Lords, seems to have seen Dartmoor not so much as a place to hunt, but as a wonderful place to "develop," needing only the plough and a bit of lime to be turned into fertile farmland.

The result was a mini-boomlet of leasing and the building of "great entrance gates" where mansions were to appear (and perhaps, may we suggest, where great Halls already existed).

Sir Thomas is also responsible for one of the actual placenames we encounter in HOUN, for he founded - in honor of his patron, the Prince of Wales - Prince's Town (now known as simply as Princetown).

When the expected rush of business for the new town did not develop, he thought of a most modern scheme: he went down to Plymouth and suggested his town would be a wonderful place for a prison to house all those captured seamen now residing on prison hulks in the harbor.

The prison was duly built of Dartmoor granite, and so was there to play its role in our tale.

Alas for Sir Thomas (but fortunately for us), Dartmoor proved to be quite unarable, and the efforts of the "improvers," as those who bought into his scheme became known, were ultimately unsuccessful.

As a result, the moor lapsed back into disuse, but not without leaving behind a great many stone walls and land claims (called New Takes, many of which were actually illegal) that encroached upon the original common land of the moor.

It is with this situation in mind that we should view Mr. Frankland's actions.

Let us review them:

- He re-establishes ancient pathways.

- He blocks new (relatively speaking) developments.
- He objects to the excavation of ancient sites.
- He keeps a lookout on his chosen territory.
- He sues to prevent littering.

Viewed in the light of our new knowledge, these point to a very different assessment of his character than that which Watson implied when he called him "Old Frankland the crank."

I think we can now recognize Mr Frankland for what he truly was - a man who, without even knowing the term, was nonetheless acting as a true -- and, one must say, one of the earliest in the British Isles -- environmentalist.

We can, I believe, confirm this through one further item which Watson does not mention, no doubt because it seemed irrelevant to the

tale he wished to relate, but which I think we may find provides the last piece of our Frankland puzzle.

In 1883, the Dartmoor Preservation Association was founded, and its second objective is stated in oddly familiar language.

The object is to be "[t]he protection and preservation of public access to and on Dartmoor subject to the ancient rights of commoners."

While this language is so similar to that employed by Mr. Frankland that there can be no doubt it came from him, he is unlikely to have been a member of this Association, as he seems not to have been a "joining" sort of person, preferring, it would seem, to take independent action.

But our identification of him as one of the first "Preservers" of Dartmoor is, I think, a certain one, and rather rescues him from the "crankdom" to which Watson assigned him.

INSENSIBLE UPON THE BEARSKIN: *Fainting in the Canon*

Karen Murdock

Originally Published in *The Serpentine Muse*, Volume 20, number 3 (Summer 2004)



I rose to my feet, stared at him for some seconds in utter amazement, and then it appears that I must have fainted for the first and last time in my life. (EMPT)

Horner, who had shown signs of intense emotion during the proceedings, fainted away at the conclusion and was carried out of court. (BLUE)

But the lady has fainted! (BLAN)

Clunk! Splonk! How often has it happened to you?! Never? You are, quite obviously, not a character in the Sherlockian Canon. Fainting is rare in real life. But it is common in the Canon.

Sometimes a character only pretends to faint (all page references are to the Doubleday edition):

Sherlock Holmes	REIG
Sherlock Holmes	DYIN
Bannister (1)	3STU
Lady Hilda Trelawney Hope	SECO

Lady Brackenstall in *ABBE* claims to have been knocked unconscious by a burglar and then to have fainted when the burglar killed her husband. Good story, but it turns out that she is lying.

Quite a number of Canonical characters come close to fainting but do manage to hang onto consciousness:

“The boots” at Stangerson’s hotel	STUD
Jefferson Hope	STUD
Major Sholto	SIGN
Mary Morstan	SIGN
James Windibank	IDEN
Elias Openshaw	FIVE
James Ryder	BLUE

Victor Hatherley	ENGR
Hatty Doran	NOBL
Silas Brown	SILV
Effie Munro	YELL
Harry Pinner	STOC
Nancy Barclay	CROO
Percy Phelps	NAVA
Violet Smith	SOLI
Bannister	3STU
Lady Brackenstall	ABBE
Lady Hilda Trelawney Hope	SECO
Laura Lyons	HOUN
Jack McMurdo	VALL
Brother Morris	VALL
John Scott Eccles	WIST

All these near-faints and faked faints aside, however, twenty-five characters in the Canon actually do faint (2). The gold medal for Best Faint goes to Thorneycroft Huxtable with his over-the-top-and-under-the-table entrance to 221B in *PRIO*:

We have had some dramatic entrances and exits upon our small stage at Baker Street, but I cannot recollect anything more sudden and startling than the first appearance of Dr. Thorneycroft Huxtable, M.A., Ph.D., etc. [. . .] his first action, when the door had closed upon him, was to stagger against the table, whence he slipped down upon the floor, and there was that majestic figure prostrate and insensible upon our bearskin hearthrug.



The silver medal in this hotly-contested Canonical event goes to Trevor Senior in *GLOR*:

Mr. Trevor stood slowly up, fixed his large blue eyes upon me with a strange wild stare, and then

pitched forward, with his face among the nutshells which strewed the cloth, in a dead faint.

Huxtable and Trevor Senior are joined in unconsciousness by the following Canonical characters:

*Jonathan Small	SIGN
Mrs. St. Clair	TWIS
John Horner	BLUE
*Victor Hatherley	ENGR
Hatty Doran	NOBL
Mary Holder	BERY
Trevor Senior	GLOR
Nancy Barclay	CROO
“more than one” person in Col. Barclay’s household (3)	CROO
Dr. Watson	EMPT
* Sherlock Holmes (4)	NORW
Elsie Patrick Cubitt	DANC
*Thornycroft Huxtable	PRIO
Horace Harker	SIXN
Sir Henry Baskerville	HOUN
Beryl Stapleton	HOUN
Lady in the Brixton bus	REDC
Col. Valentine Walter	BRUC
*Mrs. Porter	DEVI
Baron Gruner’s servant	ILLU
*Godfrey Emsworth	BLAN
Mrs. Emsworth (5)	BLAN
*Ian Murdoch	LION
Eugenia Ronder	VEIL

For the characters marked with an asterisk, a very good medical reason caused them to have passed out (lack of food, loss of blood, breathing poisonous fumes, attacked by a really unusual and unexpected sea creature, etc.). For the others, a general diagnosis of “emotional shock” may be given. (We don’t know why the lady in the Brixton bus fainted. We only hope that she got home safely.)

The majority of people who keel over from emotional shock in the Canon are men. This goes against the usual notion (fondly held by Victorian men) of Victorian women being weak, emotionally frail creatures, much prone to succumbing to attacks of “the vapours.”

The numerical dominance of males in the Canon partly explains this unexpected finding. Of the named characters in the Canon, 755 are males, 159 females (6). However, many of the named characters do not appear “in person.” Inactive, albeit named, characters include authors, artists,

military leaders, and statesmen who are mentioned only in passing, the principal players in Watson’s unchronicled cases, various law-abiding homeowners in the vicinity of Wisteria Lodge, and any number of victims of the Scowlers.

A count of “active” characters in the Canon is inevitably subjective, but includes approximately 51% of the named males and 77% of the named females. Approximately 3.6% of the active males and 8.2% of the active females in the Canon faint. This extraordinarily high percentage indicates that the author “used the act of fainting to represent acute emotional stress and, of course, to heighten an already dramatic event (7).”

MEDICAL DIGRESSION

The medical term for fainting is *vasovagal (vasodepressor) syncope*. *Syncope* is a brief loss of consciousness caused by temporary acute impairment of the circulation of blood to the brain. It can be caused by emotional shock, pain or injury, loss of blood, hunger (8), prolonged standing, and various health problems such as heart disease (9).

The loss of consciousness in a faint is not usually sudden, as it is in a blackout. Warning signs may include blood draining from the face, sweating, nausea, a sensation of warmth or cold, yawning, lightheadedness, buzzing in the ears, or dilation of the pupils.

A special type of fainting is *carotid sinus syncope*, sometimes called “tight collar syndrome.” The carotid arteries supply blood to the head and neck. Each artery contains, midway up the neck, a carotid sinus, a section with nerve endings sensitive to pressure. When a carotid sinus is stimulated, the heart rate slows and the blood vessels dilate. As blood pressure falls, so does the flow of blood to the brain, which may result in a faint. A tight collar pressing upon the carotid sinus can start the process. Blood does not drain from the fact and there is no nausea or sweating.

If a person who is lying down or sitting stands up quickly, blood flow to the brain may decrease temporarily. This can cause positional hypotension, a kind of *vasomotor syncope*. Elderly people who have been sitting or lying down for awhile are susceptible to this.

When Watson fainted in EMPT, his tight collar may have contributed to his collapse by restricting the flow of blood to his brain. Perhaps positional hypotension contributed

too, as Watson “rose to my feet, stared at him [Sherlock Holmes] some seconds in utter amazement,” and then fainted. Holmes did the right thing by loosening Watson’s collar and leaving him on the floor to restore his circulation.

FACE DOWN IN THE CANON

The Canon—written by a medical man—offers vivid and varied descriptions of people either fainting or about to faint. They show many of the classic symptoms:

BLOOD DRAINING FROM THE FACE. While not all characters exhibiting this symptom faint, the implication is that they came close to doing so:

Miss Stoner turned white to the lips as she listened. (SPEC)



I couldn't stand it, and the doctor was as white as a sheet. Indeed, he fell into a chair in a sort of faint, and we nearly had him on our hands as well. (DEVI)

The lady sprang to her feet, with the colour all dashed in an instant from her beautiful face. (SECO)

At the short account of her father's death, Miss Morstan had turned deadly white, and for a moment I feared that she was about to faint. (SIGN)

She [Elsie Patrick Cubitt] turned deadly white, read the letter, and threw it into the fire. (DANC)

SWEATING. Several characters break into perspiration when under emotional stress. Jem Ryder sweated, although it was a cold December day, as he rushed to his sister’s house in the Brixton Road (BLUE). She noticed that he had become pale (another warning sign), but he did not faint on that occasion. Ian Murdoch in LION did faint after sweating. He continued to sweat after he had come round. Col. Elias Openshaw in FIVE—under great mental stress after receiving a death threat from the KKK—sometimes broke out into a cold sweat. “At such times,” reported his nephew, “I have seen his face, even on a cold day, glisten with moisture, as though it were new raised

from a basin.” John Openshaw does not report, however, if the colonel fainted from emotional shock after these episodes of sweating.

BUZZING IN THE EARS. This prelude to a faint occurs to several Canonical characters. Victor Hatherley in ENGR reported of his ordeal in Eyford:

I glanced down at my hand, which was throbbing painfully, and then, for the first time, saw that my thumb had been cut off and that the blood was pouring from my wound. I endeavoured to tie my handkerchief round it, but there came a sudden buzzing in my ears, and next moment I fell in a dead faint among the rose-bushes.

Hatty Doran in NOBL nearly fainted during her wedding service. She said the words spoken around her sounded “like the buzzing of a bee.”

DILATION OF THE PUPILS.

Holmes said Trevor Senior’s “large blue eyes [fixed] upon me with a strange wild stare” before he fainted in GLOR.



SLOW PULSE. When Dr. Thorneycroft Huxtable lies unconscious, Watson finds “the stream of life trickled thin and small.”

FASHIONABLE FAINTING

In the late 19th century, to attain the then-fashionable small waist, a woman would lace her corset tightly. Many women took this too far. In *The Agony of Fashion*, Eline Canter Cremers-van der Does writes:

The tapes [of the corset] could, if pulled too tight, make a deep ridge which might ultimately damage the liver[. . .] The corset pushed the liver partly upwards, partly downwards; upwards it pressed into the lungs, impeding breathing; downwards it pressed into the abdomen, making breathing practically impossible, which occasioned the much sought-after “heaving bosom.”

A corset laced this tightly increased the risk that even the slightest exertion or a sudden shock would put such a demand on a woman’s heart that the wearer of the corset would faint. Tight collars on dresses were also at fault.

There was some advantage to fainting, however, as Cremers-van der Does observes:

Fainting, a power tool in the hands of a clever woman to be used if she did not immediately get her way, was blamed on the tight corset. The real culprit in the drama was actually the tight collar, which obstructed the flow of blood to the brain. This fainting, the so-called "vapours," and the headache, the "migraine," may have given a lady more power than voting rights and legal equality.

TREATMENTS, SOME DUBIOUS

What should you do if someone has fainted or seems about to faint? Modern medical advice is to loosen the person's clothing and have him lie down with his feet slightly higher than his head. A medical misconception in Victorian times was that a person who had fainted needed a stimulant, such as brandy (10). Upon Dr. Huxtable's dramatic faint, "Holmes hurried with a cushion for his head, and I with brandy for his lips. The cushion, at least, was a good idea. It would have been a better idea, however, if Holmes had put the cushion under Dr. Huxtable's feet rather than under his head. The brandy is dubious at best.

While the usual remedy for women who fainted was "smelling salts" (not mentioned in the Canon), the usual remedy for men was brandy poured down their unresponsive throats (11). The tendency of Canonical

characters to faint may explain the prevalence of hip flasks filled with brandy. This universal specific presumably averted fainting in the case of John Scott Eccles in WIST: "He had gulped off the brandy and the colour had returned to his face." It returned the stricken man to consciousness in the cases of Dr. Thorneycroft Huxtable, Dr. Watson, and Sir Henry Baskerville. J. G. Wood just happened to have this miraculous medicine on hand (in his picnic basket?!) when he needed it most. After being stung by *Cyanea capillata* (LION), he "gulped down brandy, a whole bottleful, and it seems to have saved his life."



Brandy is, by far, the most common type of alcohol in the Canon, appearing in seventeen of the tales, almost always in a medical context. Col. Elias Openshaw in FIVE seems to be the only character who drinks brandy for pleasure; and even he used it, at least in part, as self-medication in an attempt to blot out his fears of the KKK. The prevalence of brandy is directly linked to the prevalence of fainting, as it is always the treatment of first resort when any character faints or looks as though he might. If it were not for the great number of characters who faint, brandy would be as rare as Curaçao in the Canon.

ENDNOTES:

1. Bannister was partly faking this fainting episode. But only partly. He was dreadfully shaken by seeing his young master's gloves in the room and looked "quite ghastly." Some people were never meant to lie.
2. Maurice Campbell reported 21 instances of fainting, but acknowledged that this was based on a casual count. Rodin and Key repeat the figure of 21 in their book. I have added a few more here.
3. I am counting "more than one" as meaning "two," for a total of 25 fainters. Of course, more than two of Colonel Barclay's servants could have fainted when they saw his dead body with its "most dreadful expression of fear and horror."
4. While there is no evidence that Sherlock Holmes faints in NORW, Watson writes, "I have known him [Holmes] presume upon his iron strength until he has fainted from pure inanition."
5. She is the only one who faints upon receiving good news.
6. Based upon the "Names" lists in Clarkson's *The Canonical Compendium*.
7. Rodin and Key, p. 228
8. Hunger is a major factor in the faint of the usually-well-fed Dr. Thorneycroft Huxtable in PRIO, for he is as good as news after "a glass of milk and a biscuit."

9. Trevor Senior in GLOR attributes his faint to heart disease, although it is a stroke that carries him off several weeks later.
10. In low doses, alcohol is a stimulant. The initial euphoria of intoxication often stimulates excited or uninhibited behavior. In higher doses, alcohol is a depressant. The relationship between stimulants and depressants was apparently not very well understood in Dr. Watson's day. His treatment for Lady Frances Carfax as she lay near death from suffocation and an overdose of chloroform (a depressant) was "injected ether" (another depressant). Rodin and Key comment, "Using one anesthetic agent to overcome the effects of another is rather startling because both are depressants of the central nervous system."
11. A medical look at the use of brandy in the Canon is "Doctor Watson's Universal Specific" in Van Liere's *A Doctor Enjoys Sherlock Holmes*. A thorough—and thoroughly amusing—discussion of the medicinal uses of alcoholic beverages in the Victorian age is Patricia Guy's "Just What the Doctor Ordered: Victorian Medicinal Imbibing," *The Serpentine Muse*, Volume 12, no. 4.

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HERLOCK SHOLMES - The Missing Mother-in-Law

Charles Hamilton (Peter Todd), January 8, 1916, *The Greyfriars Herald*

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

Chapter 1

Herlock Sholmes took the cask from the corner, and the hypodermic syringe from the coal-box.

With his long white fingers he adjusted the needle, and turned back his trouser-leg.

For some little time his eyes rested dreamily upon the pink sock, all scored and spotted with innumerable darns.

Finally, he pressed the sharp point into the fatted calf, and sank back into the armchair with a loud snort of satisfaction.

Many times I had witnessed this operation, but never had I found the courage to protest.

But now I could contain myself no longer.

"What is it?" I asked. "Morphine or cocaine?"

He raised his eyes dreamily from the front page of *Chuckles*.

"Cocaine," he replied. "A seven-hundred-per-cent solution. Would care to try a gallon or so, my dear Jotson?"

"Sholmes," I said earnestly, "count the cost."

He shook his head.

"My dear Jotson, my chemist makes a reduction upon large quantities. He supplies my weekly cask at reasonable rates."

"I referred to the cost to your health, Sholmes. The continual use of cocaine may result in rendering permanent the state of mental idiocy which is now only intermittent."

"Perhaps you are right, my dear Jotson," he said thoughtfully. "But my powerful brain rebels at stagnation. Crime, my dear fellow, is on the down-grade. Since the death of Professor Hickorychicory — pronounced Hickychicky — really interesting crimes have been disgustingly rare. Give me a case which calls forth my transcendent abilities, and I am happy. Otherwise..."

He made a gesture towards the cask of cocaine.

At this moment the door was flung violently open, and a young man rushed into the room.

"Mr. Sholmes," he exclaimed, "shave me — excuse my agitation — I mean save me. I am the unhappy Hector McWhusky."

"Indeed!" drawled Sholmes. "I do not think I have the honour of your acquaintance, Mr. McWhusky."



"You have not heard my name?"

"No."

"Then you have not seen the morning papers. Mr. Sholmes, even now the police are on my track. They believe me guilty of the murder of the Brixton builder."

"Calm yourself, Mr. McWhusky," said Sholmes. "If the police believe you guilty, the great probability is that you are innocent. Their methods are not mine."

"Bless you for those words, Mr. Sholmes. But Inspector Pinkey is even now at the door. I saw him following me on the next motor-bus. Listen to my story."

"Take a swig at the cocaine, my dear fellow, and proceed."

"Look at the head-lines in the paper, Mr. Sholmes. 'Disappearance of a Brixton Builder! 'Murder and Incendiarism!' 'Arrest of the Criminal Hourly Expected!' Last night, Mr. Sholmes, I stayed at the house of Mr. Lathan Plasster, the Brixton builder. This man has always been the bitter enemy of our family. Judge of my astonishment, therefore, when he asked me to visit him, and showed me a will he had made in my favour, leaving a row of houses in Gerrybilt

Street. I stayed with him till after midnight, and when I left, I left him alive and well. But you will see in the paper..."

Herlock Sholmes glanced at the report.

It stated briefly that Mr. Lathan Plasster, the well-known Brixton builder, had been murdered the previous night, and his body disposed of in a burning wood-pile in the backyard.

His boots, partly burned, had been found, as well as several waistcoat-buttons, amid the charred embers.

There were bloodstains in the house, proving beyond doubt that several pints had been shed.

"I left him alive and well," repeated Hector McWhusky. "But the police..."

There were heavy footsteps on the stairs. Inspector Pinkeye, of Scotland Yard, entered the room.

"Mr. Hector McWhusky," said Pinkeye, "I arrest you——"

"Save me, Mr. Sholmes."

The inspector smiled.

"A clear case this time, Mr. Sholmes — what!"

"Perhaps so," said my companion enigmatically. "Mr. McWhusky, rely upon me. I will do what I can for you."

"Ha, more theories?" said Inspector Pinkeye. "I think my facts will weigh more with a jury than your theories, friend Sholmes. But we shall see."

And Inspector Pinkeye led his unhappy prisoner from the room.

Chapter 2

Sholmes was silent for several minutes, during which I regarded him curiously. I confess that to my mind there appeared little doubt of the young man's guilt.

Sholmes rose at last and stretched his long neck.

"Would you care for a morning in the beautiful and salubrious suburb of Brixton, Jotson?" he asked.

"Certainly, my dear fellow." "But your patients, Jotson——"

"The last of my patients died while we were busy upon the case of the Powned Pickle-Jar," I replied. "I am quite at your service."

"Good!"

An hour later we were in Brixton. Mr. Plasster's house was in the possession of the police. Inspector Pinkeye was there, and he welcomed us with an ironical smile.

It was evident that the worthy inspector was assured that he had found the right man, and that he was elated to think that Scotland Yard had succeeded, for once, without the assistance of Herlock Sholmes.

"You would like a look round, Mr. Sholmes," he said affably. "Pray go ahead. If you discover any clues I have missed, you are welcome to them. There is not the slightest doubt that young McWhusky murdered the old man, and cremated him in the wood-pile to cover up his tracks. His

stick has been found, covered with blood."

"He left it behind specially to assist you in your case, doubtless!" said Herlock Sholmes, with a touch of sarcasm.

"He left it behind, at all events," said Inspector Pinkeye, nettled. "There is no room for wild theories here, Sholmes."

My friend did not reply, but he proceeded to a close examination of the building.

While he was so engaged night fell, but Herlock Sholmes did not tire.

The inspector watched him at work, with the same ironical smile.

He was evidently enjoying his anticipated triumph over my amazing friend.

Suddenly the sound of a loud snore was heard, proceeding from a direction that could not be ascertained.

Herlock Sholmes smiled.

"What is that, Pinkeye?" he asked. "A snore, I presume," said the inspector testily. "What importance do you attach to that common everyday sound, Sholmes?"

"That is what we shall see."

"It is probably the housekeeper snoring," said the inspector, with a stare. "Really, Sholmes, this approaches absurdity."

Sholmes smiled again his inscrutable smile.

The sound of the snore was almost continuous.

Inspector Pinkeye returned to the lower room with a gesture of impatience.

"Come, my dear Jotson!" said Sholmes, at last.

We descended the stairs.

Inspector Pinkeye greeted us with a mocking grim.

"You are finished, Sholmes?" he asked.

"Quite."

"You have come to the conclusion that there is nothing doing?"

"Not at all. I advise you, my dear Pinkeye, to effect the release of young McWhusky at the earliest possible moment."

"Sholmes" — I could see that the worthy inspector was a little staggered by my friend's confident manner — "what do you mean? Who is the man who murdered Mr. Plasster, if not the young man who was with him last night, and who benefits under his will?"

"No man at all, Pinkeye."

"A woman?" exclaimed the inspector.

"No!"

I regarded my friend in amazement.

The inspector stared at him blankly.

"Who, then?" shouted Pinkeye.

Herlock Sholmes' reply astounded us.

"Nobody!"

"Sholmes! If this is a joke——"

"I never joke, my dear Pinkeye. There is one thing, and one thing only, that I need to conclude my case."

"And what is that?"

"A pick-axe."

"A — a — pick-axe?"

"Exactly."

I could see that the inspector believed that my amazing friend had taken leave of his senses.

The same fear came into my own mind.

But Herlock Sholmes, with the same inscrutable smile upon his face, took a pick-axe, and proceeded up the stairs.

We followed him.

Our amazement intensified when Sholmes raised the implement, and crashed it upon the wall of the upper passage.

There was a spattering of lath and plaster.

A door, cunningly concealed, burst open.

The sound of snoring suddenly ceased, and a man with a scarred face sprang into view.

"Good-evening, Mr. Lathan Plasster?" said Sholmes calmly. "Pinkeye, there is a prisoner for you, to replace the

one I have been compelled to deprive you of."

"Alive!" yelled the inspector.

"Mr. Lathan Plasster, alive and well!" smiled Sholmes. "You will arrest him upon a charge of conspiracy, with intent to cause serious bodily injury. That would certainly have resulted, Pinkeye, if you had succeeded in hanging our friend McWhusky."

The handcuffs clinked upon the wrists of the Brixton builder. Leaving the astounded Pinkeye with his prisoner, we returned to our cab.

Chapter 3

"Sholmes! I am on tenterhooks——"

Herlock Sholmes smiled as he stretched himself in the old armchair, in our rooms at Shaker Street.

"Nothing could be simpler, my dear Jotson," he drawled. "It was a cunning scheme. The Brixton builder's object was, of course, revenge. He was the old and bitter enemy of the McWhuskys, as young McWhusky told us. He had, in former days, been the suitor of McWhusky's aunt, and she had accepted him — hence his hatred of the family. The will, the bloodstains, the buttons in the burnt wood-pile, were all in the game — yet I confess that even I might have been deceived but for the fact that the plotter betrayed himself."

"How, Sholmes? I am quite in the dark!"

"The snore, Jotson."

"The snore?" I exclaimed.

"Undoubtedly. He had built himself a secret recess, wherein to lie hidden while the police hanged McWhusky for his supposed murder. During the day he lay there silent and safe. But at night, Jotson, he slept—and he snored!"

"Then it was not the housekeeper who snored!"

"That, Jotson, was the most obvious theory, which was, accordingly,

seized upon by Inspector Pinkeye, in the well-known Scotland Yard manner. I ascertained that, at that precise moment, the housekeeper was in the kitchen, frying bloaters. Evidently it was not the housekeeper who snored. Then, who was it? The conclusion was inevitable."

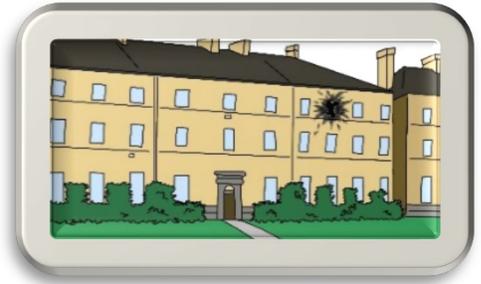
"To you, Sholmes," I said; "but to no other. It was fortunate, indeed, that young McWhusky came to you."

"Fortunate for him, and fortunate for me, my dear Jotson," said Herlock Sholmes. "This amazing case has supplied me with the stimulus I needed — and the cask of cocaine will now last me over the week-end."

THE END



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CHILD'S GREATEST DREAM
ALMOST ALWAYS EQUATES TO A
MOTHER'S WORST NIGHTMARE...**



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