

The Bilge Pump

Vol. 11, No. 10 - October, 2023

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



PLEASE NOTE: November 05, 2023 Meeting NOTICE

We will be conducting our next monthly meeting virtually on **November 05** at 1:00 pm central. I will send out the link for the meeting the week before the meeting. The story for the month is "**The Adventure of the Devil's Foot**".

Bob Katz, BSI, ASH, will lead the discussion on the story of "**The Adventure of the Devil's Foot**".

Ann Caddell, Deckmate, will be our guest speaker on "'Yo Ho and a Bottle of Brandy.'"

FOR THOSE IN THE DFW AREA, WE WILL HAVE OUR NEXT QUARTERLY SOCIAL DINNER AT "2 GUYS FROM ITALY" AT 5:30 pm CENTRAL ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 5TH.

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

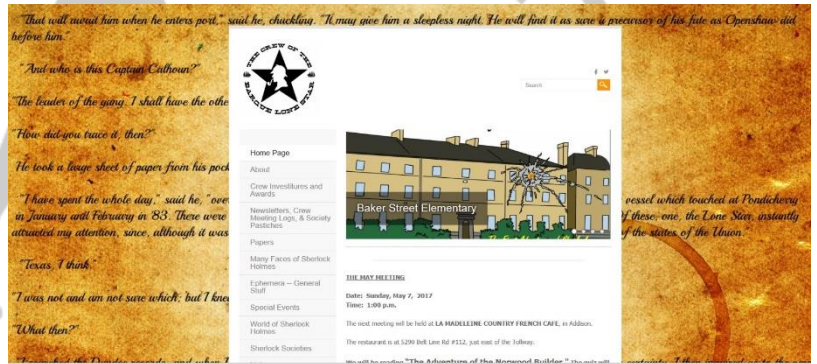
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<p>Who dunnit:</p> 	<p>Third Mate Helmsman Spiritual Advisors</p> <p>Secretary Historian Webmaster</p>	<p>Steve Mason, BSI Walter Pieper Don Hobbs, BSI Dr. Jim Webb, BSI Cindy Brown Pam Mason Rusty Mason</p>	<p>mason.steve8080@gmail.com waltpieper@att.net 221b@verizon.net jimrwebb@ix.netcom.com myrkrid08@yahoo.com</p>
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Our Website:

www.dfw-sherlock.org



Our Facebook Page:

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

OCTOBER 01 SUMMARY

Cindy Brown, BSI, ASH

There were 57 in attendance at this ZOOM meeting.

The Meeting was started with a toast given by Micah Cover to Dr. John Watson (see page 4).

We then proceeded to the quiz on this month's story, "The Adventure of the Bruce-Partington Plans".

Philip Ehrensaft then provided us a second toast on the "Bruce-Partington Plans" (see page 5).

Next our own **Bob Katz, BSI, ASH**, led a discussion of the story for the month.

Plans are moving ahead on upcoming "Sherlockian Whimiscal Tour" which will occur next Spring.

We have now reached 300 crew members to assist keep our Barque afloat... Congratulations to all who participate in our program.

Sandy Kozinn, ASH then did a limerick of "The Bruce-Partington Plans" (see page 5).

Edith Pouden, Deckmate, gave a wonderful presentation on her thoughts on Wisteria Lodge and its tip of the cap to other Canonical stories.

Stephen Lee, was the featured speaker of the day with a presentation entitled, "Sherlock Holmes and the Silent Contest". (See page 8 for more details.)

Rich Krisciunas, ASH, then did the closing toast, to the Crew of the Barque Lone Star.

A TOAST TO JOHN WATSON

Micah Cover

John: Hebrew. God is gracious.

H: Eighth letter of alphabet. In Spirituality, meaning "Soul's Window." "H" stands for Honesty, Health, Help, Hope, and finally Home.

8: The Symbol of Infinity. 8 symbolizes authority, self-confidence, inner-strength and inner wisdom.

Watson: In the Bible, the "Watson" surname derives from terms meaning "ruler of the army."

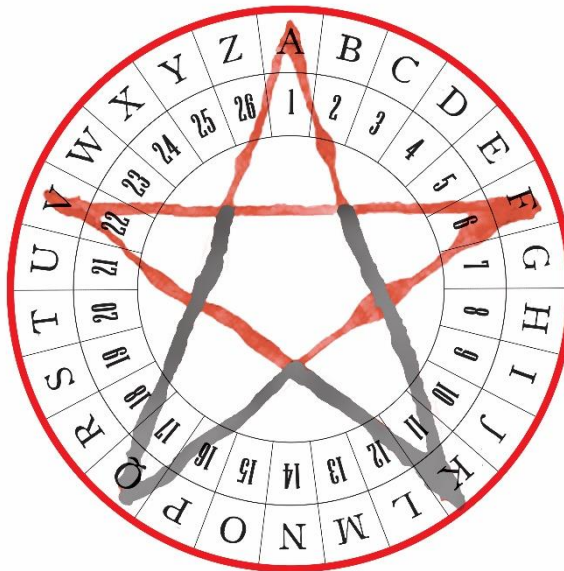
Therefore, Watson's all these things. Doctor John Watson is gracious. He is our window to the soul of Sherlock Holmes. He is honest, a bringer of health and of help. As a soldier, he is a ruler of his own character of authority, self-confidence, and inner strength and wisdom.

And he has given our imagination hope - and a

home.

He is infinitely our friend.

My Friends, to John Watson.



A TOAST TO SIR AC DOYLE, PRESCIENT MILITARY JOURNALIST

Philip Ehrensaft

Since submarine plans are at the heart of our selected story this month, let's an eminent military journalist of the pre-World War I decades, and an early perceiver of the implications of the coming submarine technologies, of Arthur Conan Doyle. During trips to Germany, Doyle became aware of — and alarmed by — German progress in nascent, submarine technology. In 1914, Doyle teamed up with a young military hero by the name of Winston Churchill, warning the UK public about the dangers of the new technology and prodding the British military to do what it took to counter oncoming submarine warfare,

Doyle's short story *Danger!*, published in *The Strand* in July 1914, the month before World War I's guns of August began blazing, was written specifically to heighten public awareness of his island nation's vulnerability to Germany's submarines.

*There once was a man, Valentine,
Whose conduct was much less than fine.
Holmes' brain, on the track,
Traced the facts quickly back,
And managed to trick Oberstein..*

The New York Times interviewed Doyle on February 18, 2015, about his story's warnings. Doyle's response: "In the story I place the incidents of the submarine blockade some years hence ; it was a story of the future, and my reason was that, after studying the subject, I concluded that the submarine at present was not capable of the result which I



depicted. But it is still my opinion that if this war had been delayed for five years, and if the submarine during that time had gone on improving as rapidly as it has done in the past, England would have been placed in a most serious position, exactly as outlined in the story.

Let's raise our glasses to toast AD Doyle the military journalist, one of the multiple hats that Doyle wore so very well.

Sandy Kozinn, ASH

RUSSIA THROUGH THE EYES OF VICTORIAN ENGLAND

Liese Sherwood-Fabre, PhD, Deck-Mate

There are several references to Russians in the Canon, including one with an imposter (“The Adventure of the Resident Patient”), two immigrants (“The Adventure of the Golden Pince-Nez”), and one not shared by Watson (“The Adventure of the Old Russian Woman”). While English and Russian relations date back to the 11th century, the British image of that country was not always favorable. Russia is mentioned as Britain’s rival in “The Adventure of the Naval Treaty” and described as a police state in *The Valley of Fear*. These representations of the largest Empire at the time were influenced by ongoing political tensions, despite close familial bonds between the two countries.



The first formal relations between England and Russia occurred in 1074 when the King of Denmark married his niece Gytha of Wessex to Prince Vladimir Monomakh. Gytha, the daughter of the last Anglo-Saxon king, Harold Godwinson, fled to Europe after her father was killed in battle. Her husband became the Grand Prince of what was then called Kievan Rus', which encompassed parts of Belarus, Russia, and Ukraine, and later came to be known as the Russian Empire. (1)



True diplomatic and trade exchanges, however, had to wait more than 500 years. In 1553, Richard

Chancellor landed near what was later Archangelsk following a storm during an effort to find a northwest passage to China. After surviving the shipwreck, he traveled overland toward Moscow and met with Tsar Ivan IV (the Terrible).

He returned to England with a letter from the Tsar proposing establishing trading relations between the two countries, and Queen Mary created the Moscovy Company with exclusive rights to trade with Russia. Ivan IV provided a building to the company, called “The Old English Court,” from which

they operated for almost 100 years, and continued his correspondence with Mary’s successor, Queen Elizabeth I. (2) Speculation even suggested that the Tsar proposed marriage to Elizabeth, but it was never confirmed. (3)

Additional trade exchanges occurred during a visit by Peter I (the Great) to England in 1698. Chancellor had introduced tobacco into Russia during his visit (it had been part of the goods in his ship), but Britain received exclusive rights to trade tobacco in the country when Peter the Great sold them for seven years.

The Tsar used these funds to build his navy. (4) (After the exclusivity ended in 1705, other countries could trade their own tobacco products, which may be why Professor Coram preferred Egyptian cigarettes.)

During the Victorian era, several marriages between the countries' nobility further supported political relations. Maria, the daughter of Alexander II, married Queen Victoria's second son, Alfred, the Duke of Edinburgh, and her sister married Alexander III, making Tsar Nicholas II (Russia's final Tsar) the cousin of King George V.

Nicholas II also married a granddaughter of Queen Victoria. These ties, however, failed to move George V to provide asylum to his cousin following the Russian Revolution. (5)

Such marital bonds, however, did help solidify the two countries' political relations following the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo in 1815. At the end of this conflict with France, these two nations were the most powerful states in Europe, and their dealings remained stable for several years, in part due to a concern over a recurrence of the French threat. (6) During this period, the British public's awareness of Russian culture increased, with Russia participating in two world exhibitions at the Crystal Palace. (7)

Discord, however, rose once again when Russia occupied what is now Romania (on the border with Turkey) in 1853. After Turkey declared war on Russia, England and France joined on the Turkish side six months later. The war, primarily fought on the Crimean Peninsula, exposed both Russia's outdated equipment (8) and Britain's own neglected military resources and led to both reforming their assets following the Treaty of Paris in 1856. (9)

Russia's continued interest in Central Asia led to new political tensions between the two countries. The conflict over the region was dubbed the "Great Game."

Both had a particular interest in Afghanistan. England desired to use the country as a buffer between Russian

interests and India. Russia, on the other hand, viewed the country as a means to expand into new areas. (10)

At home in the aftermath of the Crimean War, Tsar Alexander II introduced efforts to modernize his country, including abolishing serfdom (slavery) and giving locals some political power.

The creation of a more open society, however, led to demands for further reforms and limits to the Tsar's power. (11) After his assassination in 1881, his son, Alexander III reversed many of his father's reforms and cracked down on protestors seeking their return and expansion. (12)

Alexander III's suppression of the opposition continued the tradition of sending convicted criminals to Siberia. From 1801 to 1917, it is estimated that more than a million Russians were sent to forced labor camps to serve out sometimes life sentences. Prior to the completion of the Siberian railway, prisoners walked the 4500 miles over three years to begin their sentences. (13)



Fyodor Dostoyevsky was among those who spent time in Siberia, and he described the conditions in his novel *The House of the Dead*, published in 1861

after his release from prison.

By the 1880s, many of his novels had been translated and published in England and rode a wave of British interest in all things Russian in the early 20th century. (14) His depictions of Russian justice and punishment most likely lay behind the references to Russia in *The Valley of Fear* where McGinty decries the arrest of McMurdo as being like that in Russia, and to the punishment of Anna and Alexis in Siberia in "The Adventure of the Golden Pince-Nez."

Despite some presentations to the contrary—such as the exhibitions at the Crystal Palace—British images of Russia were often limited to those of an aggressor nation involved in the Crimean War and the Great

Game, which threatened British sovereignty (as in “The Adventure of the Naval Treaty”).

The publication of Dostoyevsky’s work into English in the 1880s extended this view of an aggressor state against its own citizens in its depictions of Siberian

prisons (as in “The Adventure of the Golden Pince-Nez.”), but also created sympathy for oppressed groups within the country. Perhaps it was such sympathy that lay, in part, behind Holmes’ own efforts to obtain the release of one Siberian prisoner with the evidence Anna passed to him.

- 1) <https://www.rbth.com/history/329096-russian-tsars-british-royals>
- 2) <https://imagesandhistory.wordpress.com/2017/12/10/how-england-discovered-muscovy/>
- 3) <https://www.rbth.com/history/329096-russian-tsars-british-royals>
- 4) https://www.rbth.com/society/2014/06/07/nicotine_nation_the_story_of_russias_addiction_to_the_cigarette_37287.html
- 5) <https://www.rbth.com/history/329096-russian-tsars-british-royals>
- 6) <https://open.library.ubc.ca/media/stream/pdf/831/1.0106291/1>
- 7) <https://books.openbookpublishers.com/10.11647/obp.0022.pdf>
- 8) Britannica, The Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Crimean War". Encyclopedia Britannica, 16 Aug. 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Crimean-War>. Accessed 18 September 2023.
- 9) S. Mitchell (ed.), *Victorian Britain: An Encyclopedia*, London: Garland Publishing, 1988, page 202-203.
- 10) <https://www.loc.gov/ghe/cascade/index.html?appid=a0930b1f4e424987ba68c28880f088ea>
- 11) Mosse, W.E.. "Alexander II". Encyclopedia Britannica, 3 Aug. 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Alexander-II-emperor-of-Russia>. Accessed 18 September 2023.
- 12) Florinsky, Michael T.. "Alexander III". Encyclopedia Britannica, 3 Aug. 2023, <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Alexander-III-emperor-of-Russia>. Accessed 16 September 2023.
- 13) <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3738277/Horrific-punishments-dreamt-Tsars-sent-millions-Siberia.htm>
- 14) <https://afisha.london/en/2022/11/11/dostoevsky-in-london-and-his-influence-on-the-british-classics/>

IN WHAT WAY WRONGED

David Richardson, The Holmes / Watson Report, May 2004

It has come to seem to me that the dynamic usually assumed to lie beneath the action of "A Scandal in Bohemia" - that Irene Adler is threatening the King of Bohemia because she was dropped as his mistress - does not quite work. At the conclusion of the case we learn that Irene Adler considered herself a wronged woman, but she does not say directly just what the offense of the King was. And such a dynamic does not seem to me to adequately account for the King's actions or his response to the eventual outcome. Irene writes to Holmes, in her Parthian shot:

As to the photograph, your client may rest in peace. I love and am loved by a better man than he. The King may do what he will without hindrance from one whom he has cruelly wronged. I keep it only to safeguard myself, and to preserve a weapon which will always secure me from any steps which he might take in the future.

"Cruelly wronged" sounds like something more than "King discards mistress," and the question of why she feels the need for a safeguard is not addressed. To throw some light on her claim and the problem of the King's behavior, let us look first at how we come to hear of Miss Adler (after, of course, Watson told us that Holmes had apotheosized her). The King speaks first:

The facts are briefly these: Some five years ago, during a lengthy visit to Warsaw, I made the acquaintance of the well known adventuress, Irene Adler. The name is no doubt familiar to you.

"Kindly look her up in my index, Doctor," murmured Holmes without opening his eyes. For many years he had adopted a system of docketing all paragraphs concerning men and things, so that it was difficult to name a subject or a person on which he could not at once furnish information. In this case I found her biography sandwiched in between that of a Hebrew rabbi and that of a staff-commander who had written a monograph upon the deep-sea fishes.

"Let me see!" said Holmes. "Hum! Born in New Jersey in the year 1858. Contralto - hum! La Scala, hum! Prima donna Imperial Opera of Warsaw - yes! Retired from operatic stage - ha! Living in London - quite so!"

We may be inclined to wonder how she came to be in Holmes's index, but the company she is found in would seem to absolve her from criminal inclusion. But if we do our sums, a couple of things in this brief recitation do not add up (or, more exactly, subtract off). The current year is 1888, and so Miss Adler can be no more than 30 (as it is early in 1888, she

might well be only 29). And we have to ask, what is an ambitious young American singer who has advanced to the level of prima donna (that is to say, to have begun to sing lead roles) in an Imperial Opera doing "retiring" before - and possibly well before - her 30th birthday? Particularly when such a spectacular debut - La Scala ain't exactly chopped liver - is on record? But when did she actually retire? How long has she been living in London? The King claims to have met her "some five years ago" in Warsaw. During, let us note, a "lengthy visit," which terminology suggests at most a few months (if the King had lived there for a year or two, surely he would have spoken of a "stay" and not a "visit").

There are two difficulties with the account as we have it. The first is that we are not told just when this "retirement" took place. It is evidently not recent, since Miss Adler has had time to captivate the men of the Serpentine Mews (but then, they do seem to show that lively interest often displayed for new arrivals). She has also been in London long enough to have established a daily routine, and has been giving concerts.

However - and this is the second difficulty - what I find strange is that we never actually hear the King give a reason for Miss Adler's actions against him. Indeed, the King makes a most remarkable contrast with Holmes's other clients. Many who arrive on his doorstep are only too happy to give him fulsome details of their reasons for consulting him (think of Jabez Wilson, Mary Sutherland, Victor Hatherly, Violet Hunter, etc.), but Holmes has to almost cross-examine the King to find out why he is there. And when we examine their exchange, we see that the King has been content to let Holmes take the lead and make assumptions as to what his client's problem is, and then he agrees with them (even if they are not quite right). Even the central fact that the King wants Holmes to recover *the* photograph has to be elicited rather than being directly stated.

It is usually assumed that Irene is intending to blackmail the King - a judgment fostered by Holmes's initial assumption that that is what is likely to be going on. He continues the exchange quoted above with the King:

"Your Majesty, as I understand, became entangled with this young person, wrote her some compromising letters, and is now desirous of getting those letters back."

"Precisely so. But how-"

Holmes next establishes that the King has not married secretly, nor are there any legal papers or certificates, and then asks, quite reasonably:

"Then I fail to follow your Majesty. If this young person should produce her letters for blackmailing or other purposes, how is she to prove their authenticity?"

There follows the exchange with the King which results in the discovery that there is a photograph with both the King and Irene that will authenticate the letters. How it will do so is not explained, and perhaps, in view of some of the suggestions which have been made, it is best to leave the question as Watson did - unanswered - and simply assume that it indeed could.

But the blackmailing scenario which Holmes has envisioned - the King must buy back the letters to avoid their being sent to the family of the bride, with the photograph held in reserve as final proof - goes immediately off the rails, for it transpires that Irene is not threatening to send the letters to extort some payment from the King. No, she proposes to send the photograph itself, and not just if the King refuses to cough up: she is going to send it - period.

This may be dishonorable behavior, but it is not blackmail. Indeed, it begins to look more like that fine old Italian cold dish ' revenge. And we note that when Holmes asks what Irene proposes to do, the King answers succinctly, if a tad self-pityingly, "To ruin me." This sounds far from an intent to blackmail, for a ruined blackmailee could hardly be expected to be a source of either present or future remuneration. And a motive of revenge fits much more plausibly with that claim of having been "cruelly wronged."

It has seemed to me that the King's actions - and attitude - suggest strongly that it was Irene who actually broke off the relationship, quite likely because she had grown tired of the then Crown Prince, who does, even in his more exalted state in Holmes's rooms, come across as a rather boorish fellow. His evident dismay at hearing that Irene has married, and his exclamations at "what a woman" she is, bespeak someone who is still infatuated with her rather than someone who abandoned a mistress because he had grown tired of her.

An extremely convincing reason for Irene to "retire" to London has been put forward by S.E. Dahlinger,⁸ who suggests that roles for true contraltos were becoming scarce and that Irene decided to stop performing for a while and move to London to retrain her voice so it would be more suitable for the roles then being written. Unfortunately, this hypothesis seems to leave Irene with no particular reason to be so upset and for her to seek revenge.

A possible scenario which has occurred to me is that Irene may have found out (after she moved to London) that her performance opportunities were not drying up because of the unsuitability of her voice, but because the Crown Prince

she discarded was putting some obstacles in her way through what one might call the old king network (or czar network, since Warsaw was then a part of the Russian Empire). The discovery that this was so might well have resolved her to put a spoke in Willie's wheel should any opportunity offer.

Alas, at this point we are forced to move from semi-informed speculation to downright guessing (and I do know what Holmes thought of that). Attempting to resolve these issues, I hypothesize that Irene was unaware that her threat would have the effect of "ruining" the King, and thus was somewhat taken aback by the measures he took to recover the photograph. But a broken-off marriage would not quite seem to lead to "ruin." Embarrassment, yes, but it surely should not "seriously compromise" the "great House of Ormstein." Unless . . . what was really at stake was not the bride, but the bride's dowry.

I have suggested elsewhere that the "King" was not really a king, but just a Grand Duke, and it seems quite reasonable to suppose that a substantial dowry just might just have been needed to keep the "great" House of Ormstein away from its creditors.

Accepting this speculation, it then seems probable to me that the discovery of this complication, possibly by Godfrey Norton, was what sparked the heated discussion that Holmes witnessed at Briony Lodge. Whatever it was, it was certainly not the traditional knee-on-hanky marriage proposal that led immediately to the wedding.

Viewed in this light, I think the King's - and Irene's - actions and reactions become somewhat more explicable. The King would obviously not be anxious to reveal to Holmes his own actual role in the affair (that he was dumpee rather than dumper, and sabotaged Irene's career to boot), nor does he really want to reveal that the House of Ormstein is in need of a cash infusion.

This hypothesis also fits with the encomiums ("what a woman") the King heaps upon Irene when it is clear he is out of danger. It also helps explain the evident ease with which Irene abandons her cause while retaining the photograph as surety against any future actions of the King (or Holmes, as Irene really seems to fear).

It may offer a clue as to why Holmes snubbed the King: he had developed suspicions as to what was really going on (in much the same way as we have), and in consequence held the King in something more than his usual casual contempt for aristocrats. It leaves unexplained that apotheosis ("In his eyes she eclipses and predominates the whole of her sex") that Watson startled us with when he began. That, I suppose, must be an investigation for another day.