

# The Bilge Pump

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Barque Lone Star - founded November, 1970*



## **PLEASE NOTE: December 03, 2023 Meeting NOTICE**

We will be conducting our next monthly meeting virtually on **December 03** 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 Red Circle".

**Bob Katz, BSI, ASH**, will lead the discussion on the story of "The Adventure of the Red Circle".

**Derrick Bellanger** will be our guest speaker on "The Law of the Place: Sherlock Holmes and Martial Arts."

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

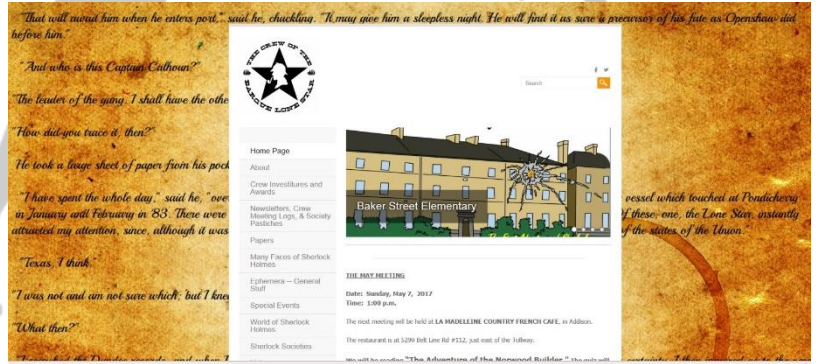
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# NOVEMBER 05 SUMMARY

Cindy Brown, BSI, ASH

There were 51 in attendance at this ZOOM meeting.

The Meeting was started with a fabulous toast given by **S.E. Dahlinger, ASH, BSI, MBt** on Dr. Watson's undiscovered masterpieces and footprints.

We then proceeded to the quiz on this month's story, "The Adventure of the Devil's Foot".

**Meghna and Pallavi Shanmugan**, two of your youngest members, give a wonderful toast then provided us a second toast on the "Bruce-Partington Plans."

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.

**Sandy Kozinn, ASH** then did a limerick of "The Devil's Foot."

**Margie Deck and Naching Kassa**, two of our members, each have books coming out that will be a great addition to the Sherlockian/Doylean world.

**Rich Krisciunas, ASH**, then did his presentation of Sherlockian Law 101. He discussed the Devil's Foot, coroner's and the earlier Scotland Yard building which is now a luxury hotel in London.

We then heard from the featured speaker **Ann Caddell, Deckmate**, whose presentation was entitled, "Yo Ho and a Bottle of Brandy", focusing on the sea aspects of the Canon.

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

*Thanks to Cindy Brown for keeping the minutes.*

# **SHERLOCK HOLMES, SCIENTIFIC DETECTIVE, SOLVES THE SILVER BLAZE HORSE-NAPPING CASE**

Carl Heifetz, The Holmes / Watson Report, July 2004

As I have stated many times before, Sherlock Holmes was a trained research scientist who used the methods of research scientists to solve many cases in his long and illustrious career. As a trained researcher, he followed these basic steps:

- (1) Clearly state the **PROBLEM** in its simplest form.
- (2) Gather all of the **DATA** that you can find on the subject.
- (3) Be very diligent to **OBSERVE** everything no matter how unrelated it may appear at the time.
- (4) Read and master all of the available **KNOWLEDGE** on the subject to see what data has previously been reported.
- (5) Sift through all of the data, current and reported, and attempt to **DEDUCE A TENTATIVE HYPOTHESIS** and **WORKING MODEL** that reasonably fits all of the available information.
- (6) List further needed information, observations, and experiments that may refute or support your hypotheses. Seek **EXPERIMENTAL PROOF** and **ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS** and determine if the results fit or point a reformulation of the hypothesis.

The adventure entitled "Silver Blaze," written by Dr. John H. Watson, provides many excellent examples of Sherlock Holmes's methods of scientific analysis. There being too many illustrations to discuss thoroughly in the space allotted, and the fact that I have already elaborated upon them at length in previous communications, I will restrict my current focus on only two aspects that I have not focused on before:

- (1) how Mr. Holmes's knowledge of animal behavior and
- (2) the use of animals as experimental subjects significantly enhanced his ability to deduce the solution to the problem of the missing horse and the dead trainer:

## **ANIMAL BEHAVIOR**

Sherlock Holmes was forced to become a student of animal behavior in a very dramatic and painful way. When Victor Trevor's dog attached himself to Mr. Holmes's ankle (GLOR), the latter learned to study the behavior of canines very carefully before approaching them. No doubt, from that time forward, he was alert to cues given to him by members of the canine species with whom he came into contact.

This knowledge of animal behavior clearly helped Mr. Holmes when he investigated the interaction of Professor Presbury and Carlo the wolfhound (CREE). His interest in the deportment of animals is clearly delineated in the statement he made to Dr. Watson in the introduction to this case. Among other statements, Mr. Holmes remarked, "A dog reflects the family life." Thus, it was surprising to Sherlock Holmes that the dog attacked his master. Seeking an alternative hypothesis, Mr. Holmes reasoned that the dog attacked Prof. Presbury because of his langur-like actions and scent. Behavioral evaluation of the professor indicated that the scholar had made a monkey of himself with the serum of langur.

Another example is the dog that did nothing in the daytime in "The Adventure of Shoscombe Old Place." Although the Shoscombe spaniel recognized the carriage that his mistress used for her daily rides, her dog did not seem to recognize her presence. This indicated that she was not in the carriage, and had been replaced by another individual.

In our story under discussion, this knowledge of animal behavior informed Sherlock Holmes that the person who sneaked into the barn and made off with Silver Blaze was a person that the dog knew very well. Hence, the classic conversation between Inspector Gregory and Sherlock Holmes, to wit:

"Is there any point to which you would wish to draw my attention?"

"To the curious incident of the dog in the night-time."

"The dog did nothing in the night-time."

"That was the curious incident," remarked Sherlock Holmes. Can there be any doubt that the solution to Silver Blaze was greatly assisted by Sherlock Holmes's appreciation of how animals act?

## ANIMAL EXPERIMENTATION

Now let us turn our attention to how Mr. Holmes's knowledge of the experimental use of animals in research and teaching also facilitated the clearing up of this mystery. Let's first start with establishing that Sherlock Holmes was exposed to such procedures. Sherlock Holmes had an excellent scientific education.

He matriculated at one or both of England's major universities, the exact one depending on whose theories you accept and where the authors were educated. Then, Mr. Holmes went on to do post-graduate training at St. Bart's laboratory associated with the University College of London. There can be no doubt that Sherlock Holmes was educated in the use of animals in research during his stay at that institution.

In the curriculum for the Winter Session for 1894 is listed the following courses that would include the use of laboratory animals: General Course of Physiology, General Course of Practical Physiology, Advanced Course of Practical Physiology, and Laboratory, and Special Instruction for "persons who are desirous of conducting original investigations in Physiology or Histology".

One might ask, "Were animals used in experimentation and teaching of medical students in

England in the 1890s?" The answer I received in response to my emailed query was, "Regarding your question, animals were certainly used in research and in the teaching of physiology and medicine in the UK, and the practice was widespread from the 1870s onward." This is supported by a text entitled *Antivivisection and Medical Science in Victorian Society* by Richard D. French. According to figure 19 therein, as far back as 1887 there were approximately 250 vivisections in physiology for research and training purposes in England.

Further, Mr. Holmes showed no compunction in the use of animals to determine whether sugar pills contained a deadly dose of poison. Recall how he fed "the poor little devil of a terrier" the second of two pills to find that it contained a deadly poison? (STUD)

Also, Mr. Holmes experimented with the body of a dead pig hanging from the ceiling to see if he could drive a harpoon through it (BLAC). In addition, Mr. Holmes realized that the lame dog at the Ferguson residence was an experimental prelude to the attempted poisoning, by a South American-bird arrow, of the infant that so riled Mr. Ferguson's older son (SUSS). Thus, there is a surfeit of examples regarding Mr. Holmes's experience with the experimental use of animals.

Let us now return to the matter of "Silver Blaze." When Mr. Holmes learned of three lame sheep in Colonel Ross's paddock, he knew that they were used by Mr. Straker as practice for his dastardly attempt to cripple Silver Blaze.

Thus, there can be no doubt that Mr. Holmes's training and experience with both animal behavior and animal experimentation enhanced his ability to resolve the events that took place in Silver Blaze's horse-napping and the death of Mr. Straker.

# THE GREAT SEASONS AND THE GREATER AND LESSER FEASTS AND FASTS OF THE SHERLOCKIAN YEAR

Karen Murdock, Deckmate

Published in *Canadian Holmes*, Volume 26, number 3, Lady Day (Spring) 2003

The urge to set aside certain days of the year as special is a human universal. Any large and like-minded group will, if given enough time, develop its own holidays. The United States of America, for example, has been in existence, as an independent nation, for 226 years<sup>i</sup>. During that long period of time the nation has developed a slate of holidays, most of which are observed uniquely by Americans. Some of these holidays are always on the same day (e.g. Independence Day) and some of them vary in specific date but always occupy the same slot (e.g. Thanksgiving, which is always the fourth Thursday in November). The religious holidays of Christmas and Easter are important in, but are not limited to, the United States.

## Major Holidays of the (secular) American Calendar

NAME OF HOLIDAY	DATE OF HOLIDAY
New Year's Day	January 1
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday in January
Valentine's Day	February 14
Presidents' Day	third Monday in February
St. Patrick's Day <sup>ii</sup>	March 17
Mother's Day	second Sunday in May
Memorial Day	last Monday in May
Father's Day	third Sunday in June
Independence Day	July 4
Labor Day	first Monday in September
Halloween	October 31
Thanksgiving	fourth Thursday in November
New Year's Eve	December 31

Other nations of the world have completely different sets of holidays. Japan, for example, celebrates several national holidays, but these are unique to the nation of Japan. The only holiday which the Japanese and the Americans share in common is New Year's Day (January 1<sup>st</sup>).

## Major Holidays of the Japanese Calendar<sup>iii</sup>

NAME OF HOLIDAY	DATE OF HOLIDAY
New Year's Day	January 1
Coming-of-Age Day	second Monday of January
National Foundation Day	February 11
Vernal Equinox	around March 21
Green Day	April 29
Constitution Day	May 3
Children's Day	May 5
Marine Day	July 20
Respect-for-the-Aged Day	September 15
Autumnal Equinox	September 23 or 24
Sports Day	second Monday of October
Culture Day	November 3
Labor Thanksgiving Day	November 23
The Emperor's Birthday	December 23

India, which declared its independence on January 26, 1950, now celebrates Republic Day (Basant Panchmi) each year on January 26<sup>th</sup>, with fairs, speeches, and parades. Sierra Leone and Togo both celebrate their Independence Day on April 27, Peru on July 28, Bolivia August 6, and so on throughout the year.<sup>iv</sup> National holidays are unique to each nation.

Some holidays transcend national borders. New Years Day is widely celebrated on January 1<sup>st</sup> in many countries, although not all holidays are scheduled according to the Gregorian calendar. (The Muslim, Hindu, and Jewish calendars are alternate means of timekeeping, and most of Asia adheres to a lunar calendar.) November 11, which commemorates the armistice which ended World War I, is celebrated as Veterans Day in the United States, as Remembrance Day in Canada and the United Kingdom. However, only Russia celebrates May 9 as Victory Day, a celebration of the victory over Nazi Germany in World War II. This is almost a sacred holiday in Russia, commemorating what Russians call the Great Patriotic War. Other nations which fought against Germany in World War II, but did not suffer as much as Russia did, scarcely notice this day. Holidays, in short, are universal, but the particular holidays celebrated by groups of people or nations are specific to that group.

An excellent example of holidays which transcend national and ethnic boundaries are the religious holidays celebrated by the great faiths of humankind, whose adherents may live throughout the world but who are united in their devotions on certain days of the year. The very word "holiday" comes from the Middle English *holidai*, meaning holy day. In the sacred realm, as in the secular realm, people have developed special days commemorating events important to each particular faith. In Judaism, for example, none of the major holidays is given a fixed date upon the secular (Gregorian) calendar. The ancient Jewish calendar counted the appearance of the new moon each month as extremely important. The new moon of the seventh month of

the year marked the Head of the Year (Hebrew “Rosh Hashanah”).<sup>v</sup> The current Jewish calendar is a very complicated one based on both the sun and the moon, with an extra month added during leap years.

### Major Holidays of the Jewish Calendar <sup>vi</sup>

NAME OF HOLIDAY	DATE OF HOLIDAY (on Gregorian calendar)
Rosh Hashanah (New Year)	early September to early October
Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)	nine days after Rosh Hashanah
Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles)	nine day celebration, five days after Yom Kippur, September or October
Hanukkah (Festival of Lights)	early to late December
Purim (Day of Lots)	February or March
Passover (Pesah)	March or April
Shavuot (Pentecost)	fifty days after Passover—May or June

The Christian church has been around for two millennia and has, during that time, evolved an elaborate calendar of seasons, feasts, fasts, saints’ days, and other holidays. The length of the Christian “church year” coincides with the “calendar year,”<sup>vii</sup> although the church year begins anew not on January 1<sup>st</sup>, but on the first Sunday of Advent, which is four Sundays before Christmas.<sup>viii</sup> The seasons of the calendar year are Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall. The seasons of the Christian church year are Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost. The principal feast days of the Christian church are Easter, Ascension Day, Pentecost, Trinity Sunday, All Saints’ Day, Christmas, and Epiphany. Its principal fast days are Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.<sup>ix</sup>

The followers of Sherlock Holmes have only been around for about a hundred years<sup>x</sup>, are not widely recognized as practicing a religion<sup>xi</sup>, and have not yet developed a full calendar of seasons and holidays. However, I believe that holidays are important in forging a sense of group identity, not to mention being a lot of fun just for their own sake. So I would like to propose a formal calendar for devotees of Sherlock Holmes.

### **The Great Seasons**

For simplicity’s sake, I am basing my Sherlockian year on the calendar year, specifically on the Gregorian calendar. However, “New Year’s Day” for Sherlockians falls not on January 1<sup>st</sup> but on or near January 6<sup>th</sup>, purportedly the birthday of Sherlock Holmes<sup>xii</sup>. As the Christian church recognizes six seasons of the church year, I propose six seasons for the Sherlockian year.



## The Great Seasons of the Sherlockian Year

NAME OF SEASON	DATES OF SEASON
Nativity	first through third Saturdays in January, inclusive
Afoot <sup>xiii</sup>	third Sunday in January through first Friday in April
Reichenbach	first Saturday in April through June 5
Shingle of Southsea <sup>xiv</sup>	June 6 through (American)Labor Day (first Monday in September)
Hounding (Equinoctial Gales) <sup>xv</sup>	first Tuesday in September through October 31
Crowded Thoroughfare <sup>xvi</sup>	November 1 through first Friday in January

### Greater Feasts and Fasts of the Sherlockian Year

It must be noted that the fledgling Church Sherlockiana has, so far, not suffered from any great lack of feasts or a notable dearth of excuses for a party.<sup>xvii</sup> But we can always use more! I therefore propose a complete slate of major holidays for the followers of Sherlock Holmes to celebrate. One of these dates—January 6<sup>th</sup>—is already widely celebrated in the Sherlockian world. Blue Carbuncle Day, December 27<sup>th</sup>, is widely recognized, although not universally celebrated.<sup>xviii</sup> April 5 is Canonical. John Watson’s birthday was made up by William S. Baring-Gould, one of the greatest of Sherlockian scholars. Two of these holidays—the Feast Day of the Scions and All Sherlockians’ Day—I invented myself, mainly because I thought that Sherlockians needed new holidays around June and October.

### Greater Feasts and Fasts of the Sherlockian Year

DATE OF FEAST (OR FAST)	NAME OF FEAST (OR FAST)
January 6 *	The Master’s Birthday (The Nativity)
April 5 *	Resurrection Day <sup>xix</sup>
June 5 *	Feast Day of the Scions <sup>xx</sup>
August 7 *	John H. Watson’s Birthday (Chroniclermas) <sup>xxi</sup>
October 5	Death of Sherlock Holmes (major fast day) <sup>xxii</sup>
October 10 *	All Sherlockians’ Day (Feast of the Saints) <sup>xxiii</sup>
December 27	Blue Carbuncle Day

\* or closest Saturday thereto

## Lesser Feasts and Fasts

The secular American calendar recognizes such minor holidays as Groundhog Day, April Fool's Day, Earth Day, Flag Day, Columbus Day, and Veterans Day. The Jewish faith recognizes lesser fasts and lesser festivals such as New Moon, Tisha B'av, the Seventeenth of Tammuz, the Ten Days of Penitence and so on. The Christian church has its Lesser Feasts and Fasts including the feast days of many saints. I propose the following Lesser Feasts and Fasts for the Sherlockian year:

### Lesser Feasts and Fasts of the Sherlockian Year

DATE OF HOLIDAY	NAME OF HOLIDAY
January 1	First Meeting ("St. Bart's Lab Day")
January 30	"He Who Is Gone" Day <sup>xxiv</sup>
February 12	Mycroft Holmes's Birthday <sup>xxv</sup>
February 21	"2/21" Day <sup>xxvi</sup>
March 25	Lady Day <sup>xxvii</sup>
May 4	Reichenbach Day <sup>xxviii</sup>
May 22	Literary Agent's Birthday
May 24	Queen Victoria's Birthday
July 24	Sherlockian Thespian Day <sup>xxix</sup>
July 27	Maiwand Day (minor fast day)
August 24	Saint Bartholomew's Day
September 29	Michaelmas <sup>xxx</sup>
October 19	Slaying of the Hound
October 31	Birthday of Professor James Moriarty <sup>xxxi</sup>

We can always use another excuse to celebrate the Master. Above all, holidays affirm our identity and our traditions and remind us of the things we think are important in our particular pursuit. Although the specific holidays we celebrate in our sacred and our secular lives set us apart from other people, the celebration of any holiday affirms our connections with all other people who celebrate holidays, in whatever lands and for whatever purposes. Holidays are human. To celebrate them deepens our humanity.

<sup>i</sup> Dating from the nation's "birthday," July 4, 1776.

<sup>ii</sup> Originally a religious holiday, but now almost entirely secular, at least in the United States.

<sup>iii</sup> I am indebted to my friend Todd Henry, who spent five years in Japan in the 1990s, for providing me with information about this nation's holidays.

<sup>iv</sup> Two very interesting books on this subject are Lavinia Dobler, *National Holidays Around the World* (New York: Fleet Press, 1968) and Anneli Rufus, *The World Holiday Book: Celebrations for Every Day of the Year* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1994).

<sup>v</sup> Samuel M. Silver, *Explaining Judaism to Jews and Christians* (New York: Arco Publishing, 1973).

<sup>vi</sup> *The Jewish Tradition* (Niles, Illinois: Argus Communications, 1978) and Milton Sternberg, *Basic Judaism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1947).

<sup>vii</sup> i.e., the time it takes for the earth to make one full revolution about the sun.

<sup>viii</sup> Advent is always four Sundays before Christmas, even if Christmas (which is always December 25) falls on a Sunday. Therefore, the length of the Advent season can vary by up to a week, depending upon which day of the week December 25<sup>th</sup> falls on.

<sup>ix</sup> *The Book of Common Prayer (According to the use of The Episcopal Church)*, (New York: The Seabury Press, 1979), pp. 15-17.

<sup>x</sup> The earliest pieces collected by Edgar Smith in *The Incunabular Sherlock Holmes* (Morristown, New Jersey: The Baker Street Irregulars, 1958) date from 1902. These are “More Sherlock Holmes Theories” by Arthur Bartlett Maurice and “*The Hound of the Baskervilles* at Fault” by Frank Sidgwick.

<sup>xi</sup> John Bennett Shaw once said, “Sam Rosenberg [. . .] maintained, after going as my guest to the Baker Street Irregulars dinner in New York and visiting with the Sherlockians, that we probably are the germ of the next great religion.” (see Shaw, “The Cult of Sherlock Holmes,” in *Cultivating Sherlock Holmes*, edited by Bryce L. Crawford Jr. and Joseph B. Connors [Published by the Sumac Press, La Crosse, Wisconsin for the Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota, 1978]). However, the followers of the Master have not yet developed into The Church Sherlockiana.

<sup>xii</sup> Suspicions persist among Old Irregulars that Christopher Morley chose January 6<sup>th</sup> as The Master’s birthday because it was the birthday of his younger brother Felix (born January 6, 1894). Felix’s son, Tony, is a good friend of mine. (He is, oddly, *not* a Sherlockian.) I once asked Tony about the January 6<sup>th</sup> birthday tradition and he said, “Well, of course, *I* was brought up believing that January 6<sup>th</sup> was Sherlock Holmes’s birthday.” He was surprised when I told him that Canonical evidence for that date is, to say no more, slender.

<sup>xiii</sup> The reference is to Holmes’s dramatic words to Watson at the start of “The Adventure of the Abbey Grange”: “Come, Watson, come! The game is afoot.” Major Canonical chronologists are universal in their agreement that the date for ABBE was January 1897, although all that Watson says about when the case commenced was that “It was on a bitterly cold and frosty morning, towards the end of the winter of ’97.” (Lucky are they for whom January is “towards the end of the winter”!) In any case, “Afoot” designates the winter season for Sherlockians in the Northern Hemisphere.

<sup>xiv</sup> The name “Shingle of Southsea” was chosen for its alliterative value, and also because The Literary Agent once practiced medicine in Southsea. Canonically, “Glades of the New Forest” would have been equally appropriate as a name for the season, because Watson says, in CARD, “I yearned for the glades of the New Forest or the shingle of Southsea.” But “Shingle of Southsea” *sounds* better. So it gets the nod. During this three-month season, Sherlockians are allowed to take time off from their devotion to The Cause. From June 6<sup>th</sup> to September 6<sup>th</sup>, you do not have to read a single Sherlockian story or think a single Sherlockian thought.

<sup>xv</sup> I just could not decide upon a name for the fall season. It is the time of year when *Hound* happened, so “Hounding” seemed like a good name. It has that hard, Anglo-Saxon directness. But, then, the Autumnal Equinox occurs around September 23<sup>rd</sup>, and, as Watson writes in FIVE, “the equinoctial gales had set in with exceptional violence” and, later, “Very long and very severe were the equinoctial gales that year.” The word “equinoctial” is such a luscious one that I thought that “Equinoctial Gales” was maybe even a better name for the season than “Hounding.” I just couldn’t decide. So I put them both in.

<sup>xvi</sup> The title comes from *The Sign of the Four* in the description Watson gives of the crowds outside the Lyceum Theatre. “The yellow glare from the shop-windows streamed out into the steamy, vaporous air, and threw a murky, shifting radiance across the crowded thoroughfare.” The traditional “holiday season,” loosely tied to the holidays of Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, and the New Year, is always a busy time, with many get-togethers both sacred and secular. This seems like a good time for Sherlockians to throng together, too.

<sup>xvii</sup> And, just in case it had, Joel and Carolyn Senter came out, in 1999, with their little book entitled *366 Excuses for a Sherlockian Party* (Cincinnati: Classic Specialties Books, 1999). This lists at least one event of Sherlockian importance for each and every day of the year, including Leap Day. In case even *that* might not have been enough, George Vanderburgh is busily beaver away at updating Svend Petersen’s *Sherlock Holmes Almanac* (privately printed, 1956). The soon-to-be-published update (Petersen et al., *A Sherlock Holmes Almanac*, Shelburne, Ontario: The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box, 2003) will include hundreds of listings, by date, of Sherlockian and vaguely Sherlockian events to commemorate all year long.

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<sup>xviii</sup> On December 27<sup>th</sup>, Watson came 'round to 221B Baker Street in “The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle” to wish Sherlock Holmes “the compliments of the season.” Sherlockian stalwart Edgar W. Smith purportedly took this literally and sent out his Christmas cards each year on December 27<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>xix</sup> The day that Holmes returned (in “The Adventure of the Empty House”) and revealed himself to Watson as *not* having died at the Reichenbach. Major feast day for Sherlockians.

<sup>xx</sup> The Feast Day of the Scions could be celebrated on any of dozens of different days of the year, the founding dates of various Sherlockian societies. I have chosen June 5<sup>th</sup> to be The Feast Day of the Scions because that was the date (in 1934) of the first dinner meeting of the Baker Street Irregulars, because the Sherlockian calendar needs a major holiday around this time of the year, and because it is my birthday and I think it is just a *swell* idea to have a major Sherlockian holiday on my birthday.

<sup>xxi</sup> William S. Baring-Gould, “The Chronological Holmes,” Appendix I to *Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street: A Life of the World's First Consulting Detective* (1962).

<sup>xxii</sup> It may come as a shock to some followers of The Master to realize that Sherlock Holmes is dead. However, this fact has been officially attested to by an agency of the United States government, and that some time ago now. On October 5, 1984, the U.S. Board on Geographic Names gave its approval to designate a hill just northwest of Tulsa, Oklahoma as “Holmes Peak.” It is the policy of this Board that, if a feature is to be named for a person, that person must have been dead for at least a year. Therefore, Sherlock Holmes must have died no later than October 5, 1983. See “The Naming of Holmes Peak” by Richard S. Warner (*Baker Street Journal*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (March 1985)). I am afraid that, as a trained geographer, I must accept the ruling of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names in this matter.

<sup>xxiii</sup> The day was selected in part to honor John Bennett Shaw (October 10, 1913—October 2, 1994), who was a very great Sherlockian and a man who enjoyed a good feast. However, the main reason I chose his birthday as a major Sherlockian holiday is because we needed one around this time of the year.

<sup>xxiv</sup> The day the unfortunate monarch Charles I got his head lopped off. It is still commemorated in some places in Great Britain. See Charles Kightly, *The Customs and Ceremonies of Britain: An Encyclopaedia of Living Traditions* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986).

<sup>xxv</sup> Baring-Gould, “The Chronological Holmes.”

<sup>xxvi</sup> The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota, for one scion, have several times held meetings on February 21<sup>st</sup> to celebrate “2/21” day. However, most people outside of the United States write the day before the month, so that February 21<sup>st</sup> becomes “21/2,” which is not Canonical at all.

<sup>xxvii</sup> Lady Day is mentioned in “The Resident Patient” as being the day Dr. Percy Trevelyan moved into his house. In the Christian calendar, Lady Day is also called The Feast of the Annunciation and the “Lady” in question is Mary, the mother of Jesus. I propose that Sherlockians expand the definition from one woman to all women and make Lady Day a salute to all Sherlockian women.

<sup>xxviii</sup> The day Sherlock Holmes vanquished Professor Moriarty and disappeared from sight on his three year Great Hiatus. I have not yet decided if this should be a feast or a fast day or whether it is a major or a minor feast or fast.

<sup>xxix</sup> The day is set to honor William Gillette (July 24, 1853—April 29, 1937), one of the greatest actors ever to portray Sherlock Holmes. This would be a good day for followers of The Master to go see a Sherlockian play or watch a Sherlockian videotape or DVD.

<sup>xxx</sup> From *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. “One Michaelmas, this Hugo, with five or six of his idle and wicked companions, stole down upon the farm and carried off the maiden.” Carrying off maidens against their will is severely frowned upon nowadays, but Michaelmas is still a good day for “a long carouse, as was their nightly custom.” Maidens who desire, of their own free will, to join the carouse, are encouraged to do so.

<sup>xxxi</sup> Baring-Gould asserts that the Professor was born October 31, 1846 “at a yet-unidentified town in the West of England.”

## **THANKS!**

Many thanks to Bob Brusic for reading and commenting upon an earlier version of this paper.