The Bilge Pump

Vol. 12, No. 09 September, 2024

The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star

founded November, 1970

PLEASE NOTE: October 06, 2024 Meeting NOTICE

We will be conducting our next monthly meeting virtually on **October 06** 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 Three Garridebs".

Bob Katz, BSI, ASH, will lead the discussion on the story of "The Adventure of the Three Garridebs". **Rich Krisciunas, ASH**, will provide us with another Canonical Law 101.

Our Special Guest Speaker will be **Tamar Zeffron, BSI**.

IN THIS ISSUE

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

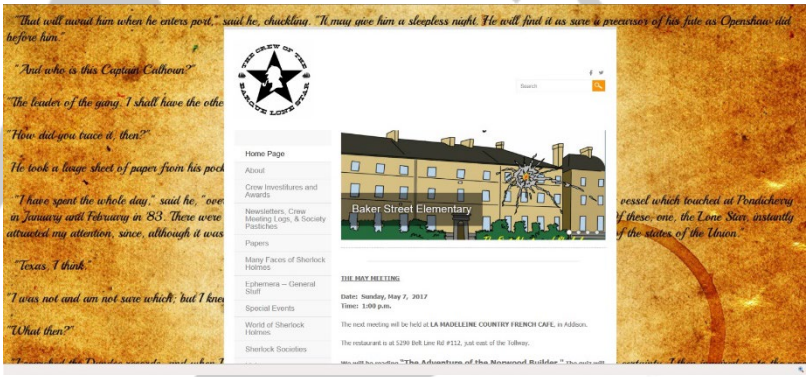
You can follow us on Twitter at: @barquelonestar

You can friend us on Facebook at: http://www.facebook.com/BarqueLoneStar

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

Our Website:

www.dfw-sherlock.org



Our Facebook Page:

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

SEPTEMBER 01 SUMMARY

Cindy Brown, BSI, ASH

There were **69** in attendance at this ZOOM meeting.

Ann Caddell, Deckmate, opened the meeting with a toast to Sherlock Holmes and the Supernatural (see page 4).

The Crew then held a minute of silence for our dear friend from across the pond, who passed away on Saturday, David Stuart Davies. He wrote many Sherlockian pastiches and was possibly best known for his biography of Jeremy Brett, *Bending the Willow*.

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

Next, our own **Bob Katz, BSI, ASH,** led a discussion of the story for the month, including the family dynamics in the Canon.

The Crew's 9th book is being planned for 2024. *Mr. Holmes Neighborhood* will tell stories about the people who live on Baker Street, and what they must think of their curious neighbor (see page 6).

Next Sandy Kozinn presented a limerick on The Sussex Vampire (see page 4).

Rich Krisciunas led us through Sherlockian Law 101 and how it pertained to this month's story.

Our feature presenter was Max Magee who spoke on Becoming a Sherlockian, or Max's Hierarchy of Nerds. There are at least 5 stages of being a Sherlockian and maybe even a sixth stage.

Brad Keefauver, BSI, then led us through the Canonical Top 10 for the month, "People Who Suck in the Canon.

Shana Carter, ASH, read from the BSJ, "John Watson, 1852", from January, 1952 (see page 5).

The closing toast was given by ***Rich Krisciunas, ASH,*** *and was dedicated to the Crew of the Barque Lone Star.*

Thanks to Cindy Brown, BSI, Deckmate, for keeping the minutes.

To DRACULA

Ann Caddell, Deckmate

Throughout his long career, Sherlock Holmes never succumbed to the temptation to consider the supernatural as a possible solution even in the most vexing of cases. He stood firm in his conviction that there was a natural explanation for everything, and his confidence was always justified. But a few of the stories start with a tantalizing suggestion of otherworldly doings, before Holmes brings us solidly back to earth.

Today's story, the Adventure of the Sussex Vampire, is a great example.

I love how the story starts with a deliciously deadpan note. A letter from a law firm arrives at 221B saying that a client has made an inquiry concerning vampires. With a masterstroke of understatement, the letter continues:

"As our firm specializes entirely upon the assessment of machinery, the matter hardly comes within our purview, and we have therefore recommended Mr. Ferguson to call upon you and lay the matter before you."

Of course, after brief research, Holmes dismisses any thought of vampirism in Hungary and Transylvania, and walking corpses that can only be held in their coffins with a stake through the heart. He insists that this agency must remain flat-footed upon the ground. Needless to say, he soon demonstrates that Mr. Ferguson's mystery has a completely natural, if somewhat far-fetched, solution.

But why introduce the concept of vampires to begin with? The Sussex Vampire is one of the later stories, published in 1924. Was Conan Doyle simply running out of ideas? Or was he trying to tap into a major element of popular culture?

The idea of the vampire is an ancient one, and vampire stories showed up in Victorian literature throughout the 19th century. But the blockbuster novel that cemented so many vampire tropes in the British mind, including the ones referenced by Holmes, is Bram Stoker's masterpiece, Dracula. The book was published in 1897 and was an immediate success with both the public and the critics, although some felt that the novel was too frightening, the horror too overt, and some of the settings too close to home.

Despite, or because of, the book's atmosphere of terror, Count Dracula became and remains the quintessential vampire in the imagination of the entire English-speaking world.

Like so many of the Victorian literati, Conan Doyle and Bram Stoker knew each other. There was a lot of cross-pollination in 19th century English lit. Stoker reportedly enjoyed the character of Sherlock Holmes, who made his debut ten years before Count Dracula arrived on the scene. Some critics believe that Professor Van Helsing, Stoker's logical, analytical vampire hunter, is partially based on Holmes.

At any rate, by the early 20th century, both the creepy, night-stalking vampire and the clear-eyed, pragmatic detective were firmly established types in English literature. It's not surprising that Conan Doyle used a hint of vampirism to launch a new Holmes adventure. And we have Stoker to thank for the immediate, flesh-crawling dread we can't help feeling at the thought of a vampire. So I'd like to propose a toast – just not a garlic toast – to Bram Stoker and his immortal creation, Count Dracula.

Jacky acted as if he were three.
A teenager, as nasty as could be.
With curare he shot
First the dog, then the tot,
Then Holmes said "Send that boy off to sea!"

Sandy Kozinn, Deckmate

JOHN H. WATSON, B. 1852

Shana Carter, ASH

From the *Baker Street Journal*, Volume 1, number 4, January 1952, Editor: Edgar W. Smith

He does not tell us so himself, but we know, somehow — by deduction and the logic of events, or better still, perhaps, by intuition - that John H. Watson, M.D., was born in l852. Just when and where is not important; nor do we care too much to know his family tree or how his youth was spent or which of his three separate continents brings him today the fondest memories.

What matters, where Dr. Watson is concerned (and what else really matters anywhere with anyone?) is that he lived at, all, and that he did the things he did.

The things he did! He stood as friend and strong right arm to Sherlock Holmes. How better could one live? And what greater glory could there 'be than to have shared with all the world the essence of those great events in which he took the Master's part?

John Watson has taken on new stature with the years. We see him now, in the retrospect of his 172nd birthday, as the symbol of a day and age long gone and much beloved: a better symbol, we may come to think, than Sherlock Holmes himself."

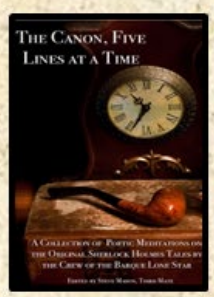
To subscribe to the Baker Street Journal, go to https://bakerstreetirregulars.com/the-baker-street-journal/

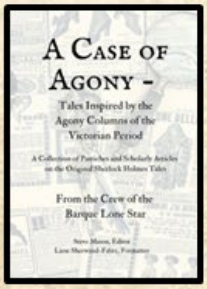
The Crew of the Barque Lone Star Society has published 8 wonderful books. You may download a free copy of the books (as .pdf files) on our website...

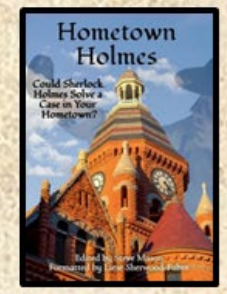
https://www.dfw-sherlock.org/society--crew-member-anthologies-pastiches.html

Or you may purchase a soft-back version of any of our books (at cost) at...

https://www.barnesandnoble.com/s/the%20crew%20of%20the%20barque%20lone%20star







The Crew of the Barque Lone Star Society is producing our 9th book in our 54th year of existence.

Have you ever wondered how the neighbours of 221 Baker Street, or those who worked on the street (such as the police officer, commissionaire, delivery boys) dealt with the constant drama permeating from the most famous address in the world?

Mr. Holmes' Neighbourhood will let residents and workers to voice their take on the world of Sherlock Holmes.

1. Stories should be 3,000 – 5,000 words, which is the average length for a short story. Obviously, a shorter story is fine.
2. 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.
3. This project is not limited to just those members in the DFW area. Any member, or true Sherlockian, is welcome to submit a pastiche.
4. We plan to finalize the anthology by the end of the calendar year, so we ask for members to submit their entry by October 1.

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 pastiche in the anthology.

THE GAME'S AFOOT -- A LOOK AT SHERLOCKIAN GAMES

Tim Kline, Deckmate

I do not play the MAGIC: The Gathering card game. Although extremely popular with younger teens and kids I found that not all cards are available in the printed sets that are produced by Wizards of the West Coast.

These fine cards I found on the internet are custom made by individuals involved in the "The Most Played Trading Card Game Ever".

These cards were inspired by one of the newest MAGIC games entitled Murders at Karlov Manor.

Now I have found that there are actually a few more custom cards made about detectives in this game and they are Sphinx in a detective hat, goblin in a detective hat, elf in a detective hat and Undercover Crocodelf aka Elf Crocodile Detective with the hats not really being traditional deerstalkers.

The Magic's afoot.

A SLIPPERY SUBJECT

Liese Sherwood-Fabre, PhD, BSI, Deckmate

In "The Adventure of the Dying Detective," Mrs. Hudson begged Dr. Watson to visit Holmes at 221B Baker Street, fearing he was dying. When Watson arrived, he found Holmes in very poor condition: with a gaunt face and a "brightness of fever, … a hectic flush upon either cheek, and dark crusts [clinging] to his lips." Over the next few hours, Holmes' appearance only worsened, producing "a cold sweat [that] glimmered upon his brow." The true nature of Holmes' illness and appearance was revealed at the adventure's end. He had refused food and drink for three days to make himself appear sick. To further enhance his deathly appearance, he rubbed Vaseline on his forehead, dropped belladonna in his eyes, rouge on his cheekbones, and crusts of beeswax around his mouth.

When this case occurred in 1887, Vaseline had already been on the market for seventeen years, originally patented by Robert Chesebrough in 1870. (1) Vaseline is a brand name for petroleum jelly, a combination of more than 25 hydrocarbons with a chemical formula of $C_{25}H_{52}$. (2) While the primary hydrocarbon is 1,1,2-Trimethylbenzeindole, the product contains several ingredients related to the petroleum refining process with paraffin wax and paraffin oil being two primary ones. (3)

Robert Chesebrough moved with his family from Britain to the US in 1837. At 22, he was a chemist working for a company making kerosene from sperm whale oil. When petroleum was discovered in Titusville, Pennsylvania, in 1859, he traveled to the area hoping to identify potential products that could be developed from the newly extracted oil. (4)

Oil-rig workers had noticed a waxy grease that would cover the rig's rods had healing properties. They would use this "rod wax" on their cuts and burns. In the early Victorian era, skin care involved very greasy and smelly products such as goose grease and lard. Chesebrough was intrigued by the rod wax's healing properties and spent ten years purifying the product into a colorless and odorless gel, which he christened "Vaseline." To market the product, he would demonstrate its properties to potential customers by self-inflicting burns and treating them with Vaseline, while showing healed patches he'd previously treated with his "wonder jelly." (5) People were so impressed with his product that by 1874, a jar was sold every minute, or 1400 jars per day. (6) In 1883, Queen Victoria knighted him after she became a fan. (7)

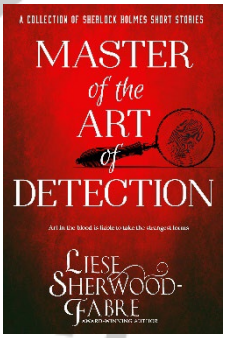
While some of petroleum jelly's components include paraffin waxes, these ingredients do not crystallize in this product, and its melting point is slightly above or below body temperature (depending on the blend). As a result, its medicinal qualities include serving as a lubricant as well as creating a water-repellant surface. (8) Because it does not freeze, Commander Peary carried a jar with him to keep his skin safe on his successful expedition to the North Pole in 1909. The product also played a significant role in treating burns in both World War I and World War II. (9) And Vaseline continues to be one of the first lines of defense in early-stage eczema, psoriasis, and actinic keratoses. (10)

Vaseline's ability to heal and protect skin has made it an invaluable tool for many, from oil-rig workers to polar explorers. Its role in both world wars and its ongoing use in treating skin conditions offer further testament to its enduring legacy. Holmes' clever use of it as part of his disguise adds another, more devious, chapter to its history: a product so versatile it could even fake an illness.

---

1) https://www.vaseline.com/us/en/who-we-are/our-history.html
2) https://www.petroacc.com/products/petroleum-jelly#:~:text=Petroleum%20Jelly%20or%20Vaseline%20would,also%20called%20Petrolatum%20and%20Vaseline.
3) https://www.avacaremedical.com/blog/how-is-petroleum-jelly-made.html
4) https://paraffinwaxco.com/vaseline-history/

5) https://www.jaad.org/article/S0190-9622(11)01375-2/abstract
6) https://paraffinwaxco.com/vaseline-history/
7) https://www.jaad.org/article/S0190-9622(11)01375-2/abstract
8) https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/medicine-and-dentistry/petroleum-jelly
9) https://paraffinwaxco.com/vaseline-history/
10) https://www.jaad.org/article/S0190-9622(11)01375-2/abstract



Liese Sherwood-Fabre is pleased to announce that her latest book, Master of the Art of Detection—a short-story collection of more traditional Holmes and Watson Adventures—is now available at all major booksellers. You can find your favorite here: books2read.com/u/mB1W1p

A BOY NAMED ISADORA

Karen Murdock, Deckmate

Published in the Petrel Flyer
Volume 20, no. 4 (Summer 2008)

Some, and not the least interesting, were complete failures, and as such will hardly bear narrating, since no final explanation is forthcoming. A problem without a solution may interest the student, but can hardly fail to annoy the casual reader. Among these unfinished tales is that of Mr. James Phillimore, who, stepping back into his own house to get his umbrella, was never more seen in this world. No less remarkable is that of the cutter Alicia, which sailed one spring morning into a small patch of mist from where she never again emerged, nor was anything further ever heard of herself and her crew. A third case worthy of note is that of Isadora Persano, the well-known journalist and duellist, who was found stark staring mad with a match box in front of him which contained a remarkable worm said to be unknown to science.

Sherlockians have long wondered about the man so casually mentioned by Watson in "The Problem of Thor Bridge." We have wondered about that remarkable worm (1). We have wondered how anybody can live long enough to become "well-known" as a duelist. Most of all, we have wondered about his given name. Isadora—like most names ending in "a"—is a female name (the male versions are Isador or Isadoro). But the match box is found "in front of him"—so obviously, in this case, the person named Isadora is a man.

The most likely explanation for the name "Isadora" is that it is a misprint. Arthur Conan Doyle had very legible handwriting, but his lower-case "a" was sometimes confused with his lower-case "o" by the printers who transcribed his tales. (2)

Another explanation may be found in the old Johnny Cash song "A Boy Named Sue." (3) You may recall the situation:

My daddy left home when I was three
And he didn't leave much to ma and me
Just this old guitar and an empty bottle of booze.
Now, I don't blame him 'cause he run and hid
But the meanest thing that he ever did
Was before he left, he went and named me "Sue."

The upshot of this unfortunate christening is that the boy named "Sue" grows up fighting everyone who teases him about his name. Years later, he runs into his father for the first time in his life in a bar in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. They get into a huge fight ("kickin' and a-gougin' in the mud and the blood and the beer"). In the end

He went for his gun and I pulled mine first,
He stood there lookin' at me and I saw him smile.

And he said, "Son, this world is rough,
And if a man's gonna make it, he's gotta be tough,
And I knew I wouldn't be there to help ya along.
So I give ya that name and I said goodbye,
I knew you'd have to get tough or die,
And it's the name that helped to make you strong."

He said, "Now you just fought one hell of a fight
And I know you hate me, and you got the right
To kill me now, and I wouldn't blame you if you do.
But ya ought to thank me, before I die,
For the gravel in your guts and the spit in your eye
Cause I'm the son-of-a-bitch that named you "Sue."(4)

Maybe Papa Persano was thinking along the same lines as the father of the boy named Sue. Maybe Papa Persano named his son Isadora because he intended to desert Mama Persano and the bambino and he wanted the boy to grow up with "gravel in his guts and spit in his eye." If so, it certainly worked. The boy named Isadora apparently grew up so touchy about his name that he ended up dueling (and, presumably, killing) anyone who teased him about it. Maybe Grimesby Roylott in SPEC also hated his name and that helps to explain, in part, his nasty disposition. It is fortunate, indeed, that Sherlock and Mycroft were not so sensitive.

ENDNOTES:

1. The 1976 Baker Street Irregulars investiture of the famous science fiction author Isaac Asimov (1920-1992) was "The Remarkable Worm." Alvin Blomquist in 1955 received the investiture "Isadora Persano."

2. The "Long Island Cave mystery" mentioned in REDC has occasioned much speculation, since there are no caves on Long Island. However, a simpler explanation is that Doyle intended this to be the "Long Island cove" mystery. Owen Dudley Edwards, who edited the volume "His Last Bow" for The Oxford Sherlock Holmes, changed "cave" to "cove" and noted that there are no caves on Long Island and that "ACD's handwriting, while good, has had its 'o' taken for 'a' in other cases." Wags have sometimes suggested that the question raised in BLUE of whether or not a goose actually has a crop can be explained in similar manner.

3. Although made famous by Johnny Cash (1932-2003), who recorded the song at his San Quentin Prison concert in 1969, "A Boy Named Sue" was actually written by Shel Silverstein (1930-1999), who later became famous for his books of comic children's verse such as *Where the Sidewalk Ends* (1974) and *A Light in the Attic* (1981). Silverstein won a 1970 Grammy award for "A Boy Named Sue."

4. The song has a happy ending then, because

I got all choked up and I threw down my gun
And I called him my pa, and he called me his son,
And I came away with a different point of view.

However, the narrator vows that if he ever has a son, the lad will be named "anything but Sue!"

A TALE FROM THE CRYPT
Unearthing "the Illustrious Client"

Bill Mason, BSI, the Holmes-Watson Report, May 2007

Ask most people who have any kind of understanding of the Canon to recommend a Sherlock Holmes story about vampires, and odds are good that the answer will be "The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire." After all, there is a mention of vampires in the title, the client suspects that vampirism is involved, and Holmes even finds two passages in one of his index volumes about vampires. But, when all is said and done, he rejects the whole idea as nothing but rubbish. "What have we to do with walking corpses who can only be held in their grave by stakes driven through their hearts?" he asks Watson. "The world is big enough for us. No ghosts need apply."

Holmes is right, too. He reveals that there is no vampire in Sussex. The blood-sucking in this story is all really benevolent first aid and only subject to what might be understated as "a misunderstanding."

However, there should be no misunderstanding about vampires in the Canon. There is indeed a story that in many ways (far too many to be coincidental) parallels, and essentially retells, the most famous and influential vampire story of all time.

The Story Line

(Note: The numbers in parentheses refer to points of similarity that will later be explained.)'

A murderous aristocrat from Central Europe {1), with a history of violence and death behind him (2), moves to England in search of fresh victims (3). He leases a large house, which serves as his base of operations (4). He has unusual power and influence over women (5) - a power he uses for evil (6).

While in England, he destroys one woman (7) and sets his sights on another (8) - a woman of exceptional qualities (9). His threat to this woman is recognized by her friends and protectors (10), who are determined to save her (11).

They call on the most knowledgeable and accomplished expert they can find to help (12), and he is assisted in his efforts by his trusted friend, a medical doctor (13). Although the villain is a brilliant (14) and totally ruthless foe (15) who has anticipated almost every obstacle in his path (16), he is defeated (17) and his intended victim is rescued (18).

This is, of course, the plot of "The Illustrious Client," which appeared for the first time in 1924. But it is also the plot of *Dracula,* Bram Stoker's most famous novel, which was published more than a quarter of a century earlier, in 1897. That Arthur Conan Doyle (or Dr. John **H.** Watson) was familiar with such a successful and popular novel cannot be doubted, but finding an admission from either of · those worthy men of letters that the plot was actually "lifted" is almost certainly not going to happen. Instead, we must consider the internal evidence.

Points of Similarity

1) Baron Gruner of Austria (ILLU). Count Dracula of Transylvania *(Dracula).*

2) Sherlock Holmes knows Baron Gruner as "the Austrian murderer," *and he had no* doubt of *his "guilt" in the death* of *his wife and* of a *potential witness (ILLU).*

Count Dracula has flourished over a period of "centuries," (Dracula Chapter 23) in Europe, where he could "fatten on the blood of the living" (Ch,18).

3) Baron' Gruner "had come to England" (ILLU).

"So he came to London to invade a new land" *(Dracula,* Ch. 25).

4) At Vernon Lodge, near Kingston, "a large house" (ILLU). At Carfax, near Purfleet *(Dracula,* Ch. 8).

5) Baron Gruner "is said to have the whole sex at his mercy and to have made ample use of the fact" (]LLU).

"Your girls that you all love are mine already," Dracula boasted *(Dracula,* Ch. 23).

6) Baron Gruner "has some hold over" Violet de Merville. "She dotes on him, she is obsessed by him ... She will not hear one word against him" (ILLU).

Says Mina Harker: "I was powerless to act, my feet and my hands and my brain were weighted" *(Dracula,* Ch. 19). "I did not want to hinder him," she confesses (Ch. 21).

7) Kitty Winter, who said, "I am one of a hundred that he has tempted and used and ruined and thrown into the refuse heap ... Your refuse heap is more likely to be a grave ... he'll be the death of you" (ILLU).

Lucy Westenra, who finally succumbed to Dracula's bite and after her untimely death became "Un-Dead" *(Dracula,* Ch. 15), only resting in her grave after being destroyed by Van Helsing and his colleagues (Ch. J 6).

8) Violet de Merville, the intended bride of Baron Gruner (ILLU).

Mina Harker, whom Dracula intended to make "my companion and helper" *(Dracula,* Ch. 21).

9) Violet de Merville, "young, beautiful, accomplished, a wonder- woman in every way." She was "a lovely, innocent girl, whom we are endeavoring to save from the clutches of a fiend" (ILLU).

Mina Harker, "one of God's women, fashioned by his own hand to show us men and other women that there is a heaven ... So true, so sweet, so noble, so little an egoist..." *(Dracula,* Ch. 14).

10) Sir James Damery, General de Merville, and the unnamed "Illustrious Client" who took a "paternal interest" in Violet (ILLU).

Arthur Holmwood (Lord Godalming), Jonathan Harker; and Quincy P. Morris, "Some men so loved her that they did dare mlJch for her sake" *(Dracula,* Ch. 27).

11) "To revenge crime is important, but to prevent it is more so" (ILLU).

"But there remains a greater task, to find out the author of all this sorrow and to stamp him out" *(Dracula,* Ch. 16).

12) Sherlock Holmes, a man of "great powers" and a "well-deserved reputation" (ILLU).

"Professor Van Helsing of Amsterdam, who knows as much about obscure diseases as anyone in the world ... He is a seemingly arbitrary man; this is because he knows what he is talking about better than anyone else. He is ... one of the most advanced scientists of his day" *(Dracula,* Ch. 9).

13) Dr. John H. Watson, M.D., who assisted Holmes in breaking into the home of Baron Gruner (ILLU).

Dr. John Seward, M.D., who assisted Van Helsing in breaking into the home of Count Dracula *(Dracula,* Ch. I 9).

14) Baron Gruner is described as "a brilliant, forceful rascal" as well as "cunning," a man with "a complex mind" (JLLU).

Van Helsing described Dracula as "the cleverest and the most cunning" of foes *(Dracula,* Ch. 18), with a "mighty brain, a learning beyond compare" (Ch. 23).

15) I should say there is no more dangerous man in Europe" than Baron Gruner. He is a man ''.with whom violence is familiar and who will, literally, stick at nothing" (ILLU).

Dracula possessed "a heart that knew no fear and no remorse" *(Dracula,* Ch. 23); Van Helsing described him as both heartless and "callous" (Ch. 18).

16) "The cunning devil has told her every unsavory public scandal of his past life, but always in such a way as to make himself out to be an innocent martyr. She absolutely accepts his version and will listen to no other" (ILLU).

"Everything has been carefully thought out, and done systematically and with precision. He seemed to have been prepared for every obstacle which might be placed ... in the way' of his intentions being carried out" *(Dracula,* Ch. 17).

17) "The Baron uttered a horrible cry ... He clapped his two hands to his face and rushed round the room . .. while scream after scream resounded through the house .. . The features were blurred, discolored, inhuman, terrible" (ILLU).

Dracula "was deathly pale, just like a waxen image ... But, on the instant came the sweep and flash of Jonathan's great knife. I shrieked as I saw it shear through the throat ... It was like a miracle, but before our very eyes, and almost in the drawing of a breath, the whole body crumbled into dust and passed from our sight" *(Dracula,* Ch. 27).

18) "The effect at any rate, was all that could be desired ... the marriage between Baron Adelbert Gruner and Miss Violet de Merville would not take place" (ILLU).

"Now God be thanked that all has not been in vain ... 'The curse bas passed away!" (Dracula, Cb. 27).

Conclusion

Under the law, a fingerprint is matched beyond doubt with as few as seven points of similarity, although ·some countries require as many as 16. Yet, there are far more parallels between "The Illustrious Client" and Dracula than even the 18 major points outlined here. The attentive reader could find dozens of smaller similarities.

For instance, when Holmes hears the facts of his case, he immediately sits "in deep thought." When Van Helsing first gets the facts of his case, he tells Dr. Seward that before taking any action, he first "must think" (Ch. 9). And the major characters themselves provide mirror images: Holmes = Van Helsing; Dr. Watson = Dr. Seward; Baron Gruner = Count Dracula; Violet de Merville = Mina Harker; and Kitty Winter = Lucy Westenra.

So the evidence is strong. The connection surely can no longer be denied. All that remains is an explanation: coincidence, piracy… or perhaps something more disturbing and sinister.