The Bilge Pump

Vol. 14, No. 01 January, 2026

The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star

founded November, 1970

PLEASE NOTE: February 01, 2026 Meeting NOTICE

We will be conducting our next monthly meeting virtually on February 01 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 Five Orange Pips".**

Bob Katz, BSI, ASH, will lead the discussion on the story.

Our special guest speaker will be **Sarah Halter**, Executive Director of the Indiana Medical History Museum.

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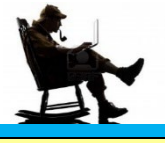


For more information concerning our society, visit: http://www.dfw-sherlock.org/

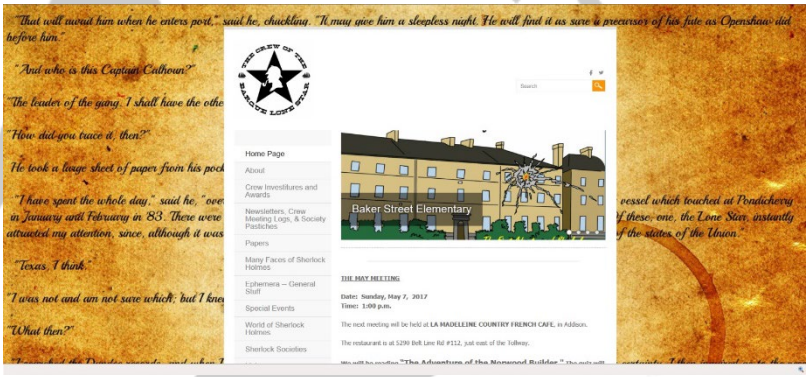
You can follow us on Twitter at: @barquelonestar

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

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

Our Website:

www.dfw-sherlock.org



Our Facebook Page:

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

JANUARY 04 SUMMARY

There were **76** in attendance at this ZOOM meeting.

The opening toast was given by **James Raglin** on the Deerstalker.

Our own Dr. Robert Katz, BSI, led the story discussion this month by starting the conversation regarding Lestrade and how he was called into this case. Lestrade is generally a policeman in the Sherlock Holmes stories, however this month he was called by the accused as a special consultant to help pursue her innocence. Turner's daughter asked for Lestrade of Scotland Yard to be brought into the case. This was discussed at great length and included how English law might have been different at that point in time. Some thought that English police officers were allowed to work moonlighting so to speak outside of his normal work schedule.

In the announcements, Steve Mason, BSI, showed a adventurama developed by Sarah Daniels on "The Three Students". Sarah can make others for members of the group.

We then went on to announcements. The Crew of the Barque Lone Star has published its 10th book called Rejected Holmes. The book is now in print and will be distributed at the BSI Weekend in New York, or else delivered through the mail by Steve Mason. The next book will be done in partnership with the Beacon Society. It will consist of two volumes. One volume will be specifically written by kids and the next volume written by adults for kids. And by kids we are talking 18- to 13-year-olds. Each story should be between 3000 and 5000 words and the deadline to submit a story will be October 1st 2026.

The Scowrers and Molly Maguires scion society will be meeting Sunday January 25th and this will be an anniversary meeting for the scion society. If you would like to attend you should RSVP at mcmurdo@scowrers.org.

Edith Pouden noted that the Legion of Zoom will be holding its third annual virtual meeting on March 15, 2026. Also, she noted that the Bimetallic question will be meeting on March 10th 2026.

Jon Schimburg noted that now is the time to be registering for the Chicago conference It's Always 1895. This will be a conference honoring Vincent Starrett. The conference is scheduled for October 23rd to 26.

Madeleine Quinones, BSI, noted that the John H Watson Society will be meeting January 26, 2026, and the meeting will be one hour later this month and every month going forward.

Brian Wilson from Tulsa noted that Afghan Perceivers will be meeting next weekend and will be having a Tulsa film festival. they will also be toasting Gillette and visiting a Brew Pup.

The Sounds of the Baskerville will be meeting January 18th 2026.

The St. Louis Homes in the Heartland Conference will be July 24th through the 26th 2026.

Our Poet Laurette Sandy Kozinn gave us a limerick on the story, "The Boscombe Valley Mystery".

Next Sandy Kozinn gave us a limerick on Lestrade called An Erroneous Deduction.

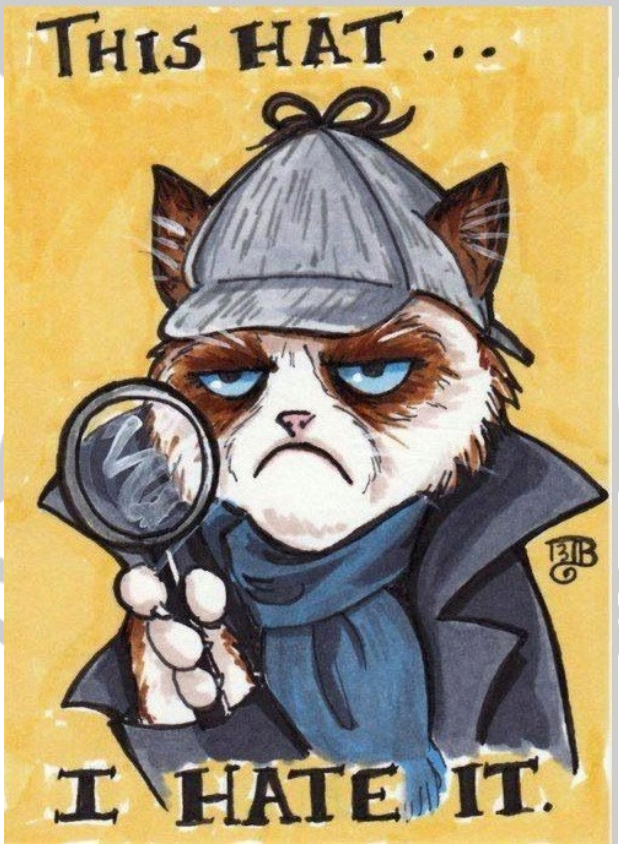
Rich Krisciunas, BSI, then took us through Sherlockian Law 101 and dissected the Boscombe Valley Mystery.

Our featured speaker this month was Michael Barton who spoke on Pamela Coleman Smith who was also known as the Tarot Card Lady.

Brad Keefauver, BSI, gave us the Canonical Top 10 followed by Shanna Carter's, BSI, reading from the BSJ volume 4.

Richard Krisciunas then closed the meeting with a toast to the Crew of the Barque Lone Star.

Thanks to Cindy for taking the minutes as always.

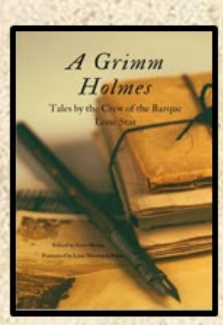


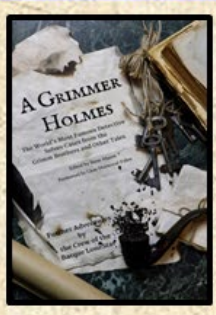
The Crew of the Barque Lone Star Society has published 10 wonderful books. Each book is chocked full of wonderful essays and pastiches by our own Society members. You may download a free copy of the books (as .pdf, Nook, or Kindle files) on our website...

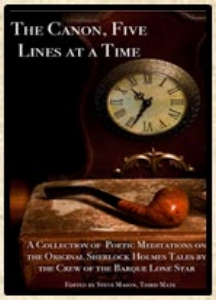
https://www.dfw-sherlock.org/society--crew-member-anthologies-pastiches.html

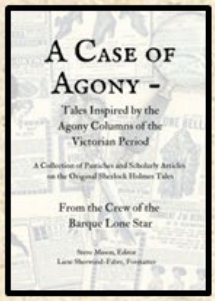
Or you may purchase a soft-back version of any of our books (at cost) at...

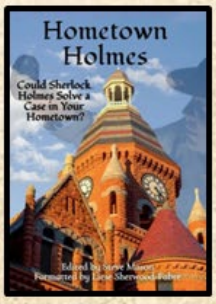
https://www.barnesandnoble.com/s/the%20crew%20of%20the%20barque%20lone%20star

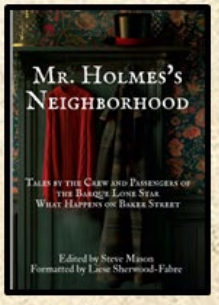












The Crew of the Barque Lone Star Society is producing our 11th book in our 56th year of existence, in partnership with The Beacon Society!

The average Sherlockian was first exposed to Sherlock Holmes at the age of 11 years old. The Crew and Beacon Society is producing a two-volume book set to help young readers enjoy Sherlock Holmes.

The 1st volume will be stories, illustrations, poems, etc. authored by younger Sherlockians. The 2nd volume will be authored by adult Sherlockians.

1. Stories should be 3,000 – 5,000 words, which is the average length for a short story. Shorter stories are also welcome.
2. This is a family book, with minors participating. The target audience is 8-13 year olds, so entries should be age-appropriate.
3. Your story will be proofread by volunteer editors for grammar, mechanics, and punctuation. No edits will be made to the content of your story.
4. This project is not limited to Crew or Beacon Society members. Any Sherlockian is welcome to participate.
5. The anthology will be finalized by the end of the calendar year, so we ask for entries to be submitted by October 1 to mason.steve8080@gmail.com.
6. All participants will receive a complimentary book as our thanks.

The final product will be published in book form and posted on our websites and shared with all society members as a .pdf, Kindle, and Nook file for free. Physical copies of the books will be sold on the Barnes & Noble along with our other books at cost.

A TIP OF THE HAT

James Raglin

Felted grey, with flaps to shield the eyes,

The Deerstalker sits, where logic lies.

A tweed-clad mind, with pipe and keenest gaze,

Through London fog, he finds the hidden ways.

A checkered cap, for country chase or street,

Where mysteries unfold, and clues we meet.

Once again that policeman, Lestrade,
An erroneous deduction has made,
He accepts with no fight
That Holmes has it right.
"Why does fate play such tricks," Holmes then said.

Like Montague and Capulet,
True love won't run smooth -- well, not yet!
Then Holmes thinks: "I'll ignore
The actual law,
Then both justice and love can be met."

Sandy Kozinn

NEW YEAR AT 221B

Ann Caddell

Here dwell together still two men of note

Who never lived and so can never die.

But does their world seem ever more remote,

As one by one, the years go rushing by?

No, these two friends are never far away.

The game's afoot; their spirit has not flown.

We hear the distant view-halloo today

As clear as when Victoria held the throne.

The changing years don't change this fabled street.

A yellow fog still shrouds the windowpane.

The hansom cab continues on its beat;

The gas lamp still shines ghostly in the rain.

A new year dawns - for us - but they survive,

Where it is always eighteen ninety-five.

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Save the Date

TORISTS INTERNATIONAL S.S.

WHICH IS THE TRUE CAPED CRUSADER?

OR

MARCH 28, 2026

Our speaker will be Johanna Draper Carlson - whose topic is *Superhero Sherlock Holmes - He has met various super heroes but is he one*?

The event will be at The Great Escape Restaurant, 9540 Irving Park Road, Schiller Park, Illinois 60176, starting with social time at 6:30. The cost is $40 per person. First time attendees are only $35 each. Registration is done by sending a check payable to Torists International S.S. to 9003 Lincolnwood Drive Evanston IL 60203, or paying by paypal (friends and family) to toristintss@gmail.com. The cost goes up to $45 on March 20th.

Jonathan Shimberg
toristintss@gmail.com
Co-Chief Stewards

Linda Crohn
Evportia1121@aol.com

The Torists International S.S. presents

And it is always 1895

An exploration of the life and work of Vincent Starrett

Vincent Starrett, poet, mystery author, journalist, and bibliophile, is best known for his deep passion for detective fiction, especially the adventures of Sherlock Holmes. Starrett played a foundational role in the development of Sherlockian scholarship with his 1933 book *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*, a cornerstone of Holmesian literature, blending biography, literary criticism, and imaginative speculation about the Great Detective's world. A founding member of The Baker Street Irregulars and a towering figure in the Chicago Sherlockian scene, Starrett's lifelong devotion to Sherlock Holmes continues to influence generations of fans and scholars alike. *And it is Always 1895* will celebrate Starrett's life and work.

Where: Chicago, Illinois | **When:** October 23–24, 2026

Scan the QR code, or visit **www.anditisalways1895.org** to see the list of speakers. Questions? Please email **starrett1895@gmail.com**.

TO MRS. HUDSON

Shana Carter, BSI

The Baker Street Journal, (Editor: Edgar W. Smith)
Vol. 7, Num 4 – October 1957, Edited by Edgar Smith

We do not know who lodged in the prestigious rooms in Baker Street prior to that bright date in 1881 when Sherlock Holmes, with Dr. Watson close upon his heels, moved in. It was some middle-aged couple of sedentary
habit, perhaps, or another pair of bachelors whose respectability and decorum left nothing to be desired.

Or it may have been the widow and orphan of some retired general, or the retired general himself, or even a general who had not retired. Whoever it was, we can be sure that the landlady of the establishment, who is known to us only as Mrs. Hudson, was not greatly moved by their presence under her roof.

This estimable woman came closer than anyone else, save only Dr. Watson, to sharing the life and living of Sherlock Holmes. She did it from below-stairs, of course, but what a privilege it was and how she must have reveled in it!

For she bore without demur the clamor and the stenches that filled her house; the revolver practice and the irregular meal-hours and the comings and goings of all sorts of strange characters, from tidewaiters to prime ministers; from ragged street arabs to those dainty creatures with a touch of white at their throat and wrists who left a frou-frou of skirts behind them.

She did not complain, as far as the record tells, even when her house was set afire, and she risked exposure to the black Formosa corruption and an air-gun bullet with equal courage and insousiance. She was – and Holmes and Watson knew it - a pearl among women.

We are not told whether she owned the premises she rented out, or merely acted as a hired hand; we do not know her age, or the shade of her hair, or her marital status. We are in darkness even as to her given name - for it is sheer supposition based on inference to assert that it was she who was the dear old ruddy-faced "Martha" planted by the Master in Von Bark's hideaway on the Channel cliffs.

We do not know, when we come right down to it, the number of the house in Baker Street where she and Holmes and Watson lived: whether the designation that showed upon the door was, in fact, 221B or simply 221 with the "B" employed only colloquially to distinguish the first-floor flat that lay aloft the seventeen steps.

We do not know a modicum of what we would like to know about this remarkable lady, whose life, for so many years, was intimately intertwined with the lives of her famous lodgers.

But one thing we do know, despite Dr. Watson's reporting to the contrary: it was - it must have been - Mrs. Hudson herself, and no lesser person, who to Sherlock Holmes was always the woman.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2026 BSI INVESTITURE CLASS, WHICH INCLUDED 8 CREW MEMBERS…

MICHAEL BARTON, BSI

MATT HALL, BSI

RICK KRISCIUNAS, BSI

MAX MAGEE, BSI

RUSTY MASON, BSI

MADELINE QUIÑONES, BSI

GEORGE SCHEETZ, BSI

P.J. SULLIVAN, BSI

WATSON'S 1887 CHRISTMAS LETTER

Brad Keefauver, BSI

(Annotated edition)

Dear friends, We hope this holiday season finds you warm and well. Since we are still settling in to our new household and unable to visit you personally to wish you the compliments of the season, I wanted to write and catch you up on all that this year has brought to us.

As you know, I have been assisting Mr. Sherlock Holmes in his work as London's first consulting detective. My medical assistance was especially necessary in the early months of the year as he strained his health bringing the notorious Baron Maupertuis to justice. The enormity of the Baron's schemes were in all the papers, and just when one would expect Holmes was spending April in celebration of his triumph, the true sequel was much more mundane.

I owe much to our friend Colonel Hayter and his open invitations to spend time at his pleasant Reigate home. Our two evenings(1) in his well-appointed gun room were full of stories and lore of distant shores, and a tonic for the soul.

How Holmes and I soon after came to be in on a far off isle(2) in Scotland, and the treasure I brought home with me in the person of the new Mrs. Watson is a tale best told over dinner if you haven't heard it as yet, though breakfast(3) is the meal my Minnie(4) claims is her best work.

"Many's the puir sailor whose morning sausage was met with joy at my tabbel," she often says.(5)

Summer brought a return to medical practice, just as Holmes's successes brought him cases of greater and greater importance. I was glad to be reacquainted with my old schoolmate Percy Phelps, who now holds an important post in the Foreign Office.(6) Minnie and I were delighted to be invited to the wedding of Phelps and his new bride Annie.

One more bachelor off the market, but still enough of them in London that keeping bachelor quarters for one available in one's house comes in very handy, especially with a perpetually single friend like Mr. Sherlock Holmes.

Our neighbor, Dr. Jackson, has proved to be a good friend and fellow practitioner, able to take my practice as needed when my old agency is needed.(7) He is yet another of London's eligible bachelors and a fine looking fellow whose final capture by the fair sex we expect to hear of soon.

Mother Fullerton was treated to several visits from Mrs. Watson despite Uffa's distance, giving me time to occupy the old Baker Street rooms and participate in more investigations with Holmes. I suspect Jackson of wanting to read my upcoming writings about Holmes more than anyone, so eager is he to see me off with Holmes again. My literary agent was finally able to sell my first attempt to Ward, Lock and Company, as you well know if you've seen *Beeton's Christmas Annual* this year, and I am encouraged to document more of Holmes's cases, especially after circumstances put me back in Baker Street once more.(8)

Many an autumnal evening was spent listening to Holmes play his violin after a hearty supper from Mrs. Hudson's kitchen. Of course, many a day is also spent with Holmes assisting Scotland Yard and other members of the community with their little puzzles, and me helping Holmes when my practice allows me to get away. Mrs. Watson has surely given me enough freedom to do so as this year comes to a close.

Holmes has lately come to speak of an infamous scientific criminal whose work will soon be providing us with challenging work come the new year, and as I am now the official biographer of one who stands alone in his profession in all of Europe, you will one day be reading all about it.(9)

So until next we meet, compliments of the season to you and yours.

John H. Watson, M.D.

1) The night they arrived and the night after Holmes solved "The Reigate Squires" and 1 was ready to go back to London.
2) Uffa, later referred to in "The Five Orange Pips."
3) Holmes's remark about Mrs. Hudson's cooking in "The Naval Treaty," when he says, "Her 3 cuisine is a little limited, but she has as good an idea of breakfast as a Scotch-woman," is a direct reference to Watson's new wife. Holmes plainly saw no need for Watson to be living anywhere but Baker Street.
4) Plainly Minnie Fullarton of "My Midnight Visitor" which Watson's literary agent also had 4 published.
5) "You see, but you do not observe," Sherlock Holmes famously told Watson a few months after this letter was first sent out.
6) This, of course, refers to "The Naval Treaty" and Phelps coming to Holmes as a client.
7) The scholar Edmond Throatwhistle was said to have believed that Jackson was David to Watson's Uriah, as Sherlock Holmes hinted at in "The Crooked Man" that year.
8) Watson was very shocked when the typesetters at *Strand Magazine* left the word "ended" out of his chronicle of "The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor," which should have finished the line, "It was a few weeks before my own marriage ended, during the days when I was still sharing rooms with Holmes in Baker Street ..."
9) This would, of course, be a reference to *The Valley of Fear*, coming in January of 1888, and aligns with what was written therein, if not "The Final Problem."

DOYLE, HOLMES, AND BOXING

Franklin Saksena, M.D., BSI

The Cri Bar Crier, January 2026

The history of boxing goes back to Crete, Greece, and Rome. Fist fighting was introduced in 688 BC in the Greek Olympics. The fighters moved very little, employed no straight punches and slugged it out in one spot. It was all a matter of endurance and courage. There were no rounds and fighting continued until one fighter admitted defeat. Initially, there was some hand protection with soft thongs, but later the fighters used hand coverings studded with iron or brass. These were used to later deadly effect in the Roman arenas (3).

Prize fighting became popular in England in 18th century. A man would fight an opponent and win some money. At that time wrestling was permitted. A man could fall on his opponent when he was down and hit him. Broughton (1704-1789) introduced some rules of engagement: a round continued until the man was down, he could not hit a man who was down or grasp him below the waist. In 1790, Mendoza introduced a more systematic approach to boxing. He was quick on his feet and befuddled his opponents with his swift left jab (3).

The London Prize rules of 1853 had boxing carried out in a 24 square foot ring. Biting, kicking, gouging, butting of the head, and low blows were declared fouls (3). In 1867, the Marquis of Queensbury (1844-1900) rules were adopted: gloves were worn, 3min per round,1 min rest,15 rounds at most. If the man was knocked to the ground, he had to get up before 10 seconds had elapsed or be declared a loser (3). These rules are in effect today.

Doyle (1859-1930) was a keen boxer, and one of his first bouts was aboard a whaler at the age of 20 (1880). He defeated the Steward, a well-versed sportsman, and blooded his eye (4). He also taught boxing to some of the other crew members. He joined the London National Sports Club in 1891and was active in boxing and other sports (1). He was asked to referee a world championship fight in 1910 between Johnson and Jeffries in the U.S., but declined, as it would have been a long journey to the U.S. and he wanted to avoid facing a hostile crowd of supporters for the beaten man (1).

He wrote a boxing story "Rodney Stone," in 1895. The story is set in the early 19th century where bare knuckle fighting occurred. There he mentioned the famous boxers of the time, Cribb and Mendoza. Gambling on who was a winner was common (as it is now), with gangsters influencing the result. At that time the rules of Broughton were in effect. (3)

He wrote a semi- autobiographical book entitled the "Stark-Munro papers" in 1895, where he described a fight between Cullingworth (Budd) and Munro (Doyle). He regarded boxing as a manly event and encouraged young people to take up the sport, believing that it would embody sportsmanship, fair play, and respect for opponents (1).

Sherlock Holmes was also a boxer. He took boxing and fencing when at college (GLOR). He fought McMurdo in 1882 in Allison's rooms. McMurdo, a professional boxer, was impressed with Holmes's right cross punch (SIGN). This punch is delivered straight from the shoulder as the hips are pivoted, in order to deliver a more forceful blow. It is called a cross as the right arm passes above or below the opponents left arm to land the blow (Fig 1) (8).

Watson described Holmes as the finest boxer of his weight he had ever seen (YELL). Perhaps, he had seen Holmes in action at the London National Sports Club. In 3 other instances, boxing helped Holmes defeat his opponent. In the Solitary Cyclist story, Holmes received a vicious backhander from Jack Woodley, which he only partially avoided. Holmes then floored his opponent with a series of straight left punches (Fig 2). In "The Naval Treaty," Holmes is able to retrieve the stolen document from Harrison. Harrison, in his struggle to escape

Holmes, was only able to see out of one eye when Holmes had finished with him.

In "The Final Problem," Holmes was on his way to see Watson when he was attacked by a rough with a bludgeon. He knocked the assailant down and had him placed in police custody.

Medical aspects: Boxing is an intermittent sport characterized by short duration and bursts of high activity. Boxing is estimated to be 80% anaerobic (muscle strength) and 20% aerobic (endurance, speed, reaction time, and range of motion). Boxers typically attain high levels of oxygen uptake and need to tolerate high lactate levels to ward off fatigue(5).

Prior to 1939 there was less medical supervision of bouts and this was associated with more Central Nervous System problems such as slurring dysarthria, ataxia and memory less. Less common was dementia. After World War II the incidence of these CNS issues diminished, because of better matching of boxers as to their weight and ability, the use of larger gloves, and the stopping of the fight sooner to minimize further injuries (2).

Muhammad Ali (1942-2016) was the world heavy weight champion in 1964-7 &1974-9. He had 61 fights. He retired in 1980 and was diagnosed as having Parkinsonism in 1984, presumably related to being repeatedly hit on the head (6,10). It is unclear whether elevated serum levels of S-100B protein levels in professional boxers would have prognostic value in detecting significant head injuries (7). Deaths have been reported in over 200 boxers either in the ring or in training between 1980-2007 and several medical associations have called for a ban on boxing (9).

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A MORE COMPREHENSIVE LOOK AT "THE ADVENTURE OF THE FIVE ORANGE PIPS"

1. Summary (The Diogenes Club)

About 1850, Elias Openshaw migrated to America and became a planter in Florida. He fought in the American Civil War with Jackson and Hood (for the Confederacy). After the war, he became deeply involved in the Ku Klux Klan but repented his activities. He returned to England in 1869 and brought back Clan records which implicated some very prominent Southerners. It is assumed that he planned to use these papers to blackmail clan members (if they did not cease their nefarious practices?).

Although he lived as a recluse, he was found by the clansmen who sent him five orange pips as a warning signal that he would be murdered if the papers were not returned. Instead of returning the papers, he burned them. He was murdered anyway.

Joseph inherited Elias' estate. He also got the orange pip warning and a demand to return the papers, which were of course nonexistent. He ignored the warning and was also killed.

John inherited the estate and received the pips. He went to the police who laughed at him. His father and uncles deaths had been cleverly disguised to look like accidents. He was referred to Holmes.

Holmes instructed John to put the empty chest on the sundial, along with a single sheet which had escaped the fire and a note saying all other papers had been burned. However, John was murdered on his way home by being thrown off Waterloo Bridge.

Holmes was furious with himself. "That he should come to me for help and that I should send him away to his death." By examining the time lags between the arrival of the pips and the murders, he deduced the men were traveling by sailing ship. He then pored over Lloyd's records and found that only the Lonestar of Savannah fit the bill. That very day the Lonestar had left to return to America. Holmes wired the Savannah police that Captain Calhoun and his mates were wanted in London for murder and sent five orange pips to Calhoun. "They will be waiting for him when he arrives."

However, the Lonestar was lost at sea, presumably with all hands..

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2. Story Info Sheet (McMurdo's Camp)

- First published in:
  The Strand Magazine, November 1891

- Time frame of story (known/surmised):
  Late September 1887 (stated)

- Holmes & Watson living arrangements:
  At 221B. Watson's wife was on a visit to her mother's, and so for a few days he was once more in his old quarters with Holmes.

- Opening scene:
  Holmes sat moodily cross-indexing his records of crime, while Watson was reading a fine sea-story by Clark Russell. A heavy rainstorm with high winds was raging outside. The bell rang unexpectedly, and it was a client, soaking wet, arriving without an appointment.

- Client:
  John Openshaw, a young man, some two-and-twenty at the outside, well-groomed and trimly clad, with something of refinement and delicacy in his bearing. His face was pale and his eyes heavy, like those of a man who is weighed down with some great anxiety. Client's uncle Elias, who had lived and prospered in America, got a letter with 5 orange seeds (pips) in it, and the letters KKK, and a request for some papers, which he then burned. He died in an odd drowning incident seven weeks later. Client's father inherited the estate. About a year later, he received a letter with the same pips and initials, and a week afterward, died in a mysterious accident. Client then inherited. Over 2 years passed, and then he also received a letter with pips, and instructions to leave the papers on the sundial. He contacted the police, who listened to the story with a smile, thinking the letters were practical jokes and the deaths accidental. So Openshaw went to see Holmes. After telling his tale, Holmes advised him to be careful. The client, unfortunately, was murdered on his way home.

- Villain:

Captain Calhoun, master of the bark, Lone Star, and two mates. Calhoun was an agent of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) a sinister American organization opposed to the outcome of the Civil War, seeking revenge. Its power was used for political purposes, principally for the terrorizing of the negro voters and the murdering and driving from the country those who were opposed to its views. Its outrages were usually preceded by a warning sent to the marked man in some fantastic shape such as the orange pips. Elias Openshaw was involved in the KKK at a high level, but left the organization and went back to England, taking many important and incriminating papers with him.

- Motive:

The Klan could not let Openshaw keep possession of the incriminating papers, which involved many prominent Americans. The KKK was not the type of organization that would allow turncoats to survive.

- Logic / clues used to solve:

From the timing and seaport origins of the letters, Holmes determined the perpetrator was on a sailing ship, and had sent the pips by mail packet (steamers – much faster). By examination of Lloyd's schedules of ships and their ports of call he deduced the only candidate was the American bark Lone Star.

- Policemen:

Police-Constable Cook, of the H Division, responded to a cry for help, but was unable to rescue the client who splashed into the water near Waterloo bridge.

- Holmes' fees:

Unlikely any were received. The client was murdered by cunning devils who decoyed him off the artery leading to his destination and threw him into the water, leaving no-one to pay Holmes.

- Food:

The morning after the client's visit, Watson had a cup of coffee. After hearing of the client's death, Holmes tore a piece from the loaf and devoured it voraciously, washing it down with a long draught of water.

- Drink:

No mention, except for the water.

- Vices:

After the client left 221B, Holmes lit his pipe, and leaning back in his chair he watched the blue smoke-rings as they chased each other up to the ceiling.

- Other cases mentioned:

The Adventure of the Paradol Chamber, the Amateur Mendicant Society, who held a luxurious club in the lower vault of a furniture warehouse, the loss of the British bark Sophy Anderson, the singular adventures of the Grice Patersons in the island of Uffa, and the Camberwell poisoning case. In the latter, Sherlock Holmes was able, by winding up the dead man's watch, to prove that it had been wound up two hours before, and that therefore the deceased had gone to bed within that time — a deduction which was of the greatest importance in clearing up the case.

- Notable Quotables:

"Except yourself, I have (no friends)," Holmes said to Watson. "I do not encourage visitors."

"I am the last court of appeal." – Holmes

"As Cuvier (Georges Cuvier, a French zoologist and naturalist) could correctly describe a whole animal by the contemplation of a single bone, so the observer who has thoroughly understood one link in a series of incidents should be able to accurately state all the other ones, both before and after." – Holmes

"It is not impossible that a man should possess all knowledge which is likely to be useful to him in his work, and this I have endeavoured in my case to do." – Holmes

'I shall be my own police. When I have spun the web they may take the flies, but not before." – Holmes

- Other interestings:

Uncle Elias had an aversion to the negroes, and disliked the Republican policy of extending the franchise to them. He had been a Colonel in the Confederate Army, but it seemed the excesses of the KKK bothered him to the extent he gave up his life in Florida and returned to England. He may have planned to use his papers for blackmail, or to assure his safety. The plan failed.

If you ever wanted to read a fine sea story by Clark Russell, Google Project Gutenerg. Several public domain novels are available. Do author search, remembering that Clark Russell is really William Clark Russell.

- When all was said and done:

The first Openshaw, Elias, destroyed the papers, so the KKK's quest was futile In the end, the Lone Star departed for Savannah before the culprit(s) could be arrested. Holmes sent some pips by steamer, and wired the police, but the Lone Star didn't make it. It was lost at sea in the very long and severe equinoctial gales that year and not heard from. A piece of flotsam was found later verifying its demise.

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3. Selected Chronologies

a.	The Original Story by Arthur Conan Doyle	September, 1887
b.	William Baring-Gould	Thursday, September 29, 1887
c.	H.W. Bell	September, 1888
d.	Roger Butters	September, 1887
e.	Jay Finley Christ	Tuesday, September 24, 1889
f.	Jean-Pierre Crauser	Saturday, September 29, 1887
g.	D. Martin Dakin	Tuesday, September 24, 1889
h.	Bill Dorn	Tuesday, September 24, 1889
i.	Henry Folsom	September, 1889
j.	John Hall	Wednesday, September 21, 1887
k.	Craig Janasek	Thursday, September 29, 1887
l.	Brad Keefauver	Friday, September 16, 1887
m.	Toshio Suzuki	September, 1887
n.	June Thomson	Tuesday, September 24, 1889
o.	Ernest Bloomfield Zeisler	Tuesday, September 24, 1889

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4. Canonical Queeries (Ralph Edwards, BSI)

- Is the resolution of the case satisfactory?
- What would be the ramifications of a different relationship?
- Is "hand in hand" used to suggest the relationship between Holmes and Watson?
- Is truth really stranger than fiction?
- Why did Dundas hurl his teeth?
- Is there significance in royal gifts always being jewelry?
- Did Holmes always use "delicate" only to mean affairs de coeur?

- Was the reply about Mrs. Etherege significant?
- Did Holmes collect a fee for this case?
- Would a letter return from Bordeaux faster than a traveler?
- Was there a clue in the reference to Balzac?
- Why didn't Hosmer disguise his signature?
- Why didn't the employer tell Windibank of Holmes' inquiry?
- Did the employer's letter serve a purpose?
- Who paid for the four-wheeler and the minister?
- What proof would Holmes have had if Windibank had replied in longhand or by wire?
- Was Windibank correct about the locked door?
- Why didn't Holmes bring Mrs. Windibank into the case?

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5. 17 Steps (Brad Keefauver, BSI)

1. The Man With The Watch

We all love an untold tale, and this case gives us a few. Among them we find "the Camberwell poisoning case" in which, Watson tells us, "Sherlock Holmes was able, by winding up the dead man's watch, to prove that it had been wound up two hours before, and that therefore the deceased had gone to bed within that time--a deduction which was of the greatest importance in clearing up the case."

Okay, let me get this straight: the man was dead, undoubtedly poisoned as we are told this was a case of poisoning. How many times do we remember Sherlock Holmes getting to a murder scene within two hours of the death? As the man had gone to bed, he wouldn't have been discovered until morning, would he? And death by poison wouldn't immediately noticeable, would it? So how was it Sherlock Holmes was winding up a murder victim's watch only two hours after the man was still alive?

2. The Doom That Came To Openshaw By Dr. John H.(P. Lovecraft)

"... we were forced to raise our minds for the instant from the routine of life, and to recognize the presence of those great elemental forces which shriek at mankind through the bars of his civilization, like untamed beasts in a cage."

The secret cult, death by agents unseen, is this a horror story or what? Do those great elemental beasts Watson mentions early in the story foreshadow the deaths of Captain Calhoun and his boatload of Finns and Germans? Or is there a supernatural subtext to this story that's telling us the destruction of the Lone Star was not entirely due to natural causes? And might that detective moodily poring over his personal tomes be somehow involved?

3. Knowledge Of Nautical Novels -- Nil?

Okay, Hounds, tough question: It's 1887. John H. Watson is reading a sea story by W. Clark Russell, the man the Army and Navy Register called "the Fenimore Cooper and Captain Marryatt of his time rolled into one." Watson tells us merely that "the howl of the gale from without seemed to blend with the text, and the splash of the rain to lengthen out into the long swash of the sea waves."

Based on that limited description and the year involved, can we make any sort of reasonable estimation of what exactly Watson was reading? Did his calling it a story, rather than a book or novel, indicate short fiction from a magazine? (And did Russell have any in any magazines in 1887?) Certainly Watson would have mentioned a classic Russell novel like "The Wreck of the Grosvenor" by name, wouldn't he? Might this indicate a lesser known Russell work, like "The Lady Maud," "An Ocean Free Lance," or "The Copsford Mystery"?

4. Another Age-Old Question . . .

"My wife was on a visit to her mother's ..." Watson says in this tale.

"My mother was dead ..." Mary Morstan said in SIGN.

So what's the deal? While we might attribute dates to Watson's carelessness, married men tend to be very (and sometimes painfully) aware of their mother-in-law's status. Does sheer logic dictate that the wife Watson speaks of was *not* Mary Morstan? And why is Mary Morstan's name never mentioned in the same tale where Watson's wife is mentioned?

5. It's All In The Presentation

"Who is this K. K. K.?" Watson asks.

A simple question. But watch Holmes in the paragraphs that follow:

"Sherlock Holmes closed his eyes and placed his elbows upon the arms of his chair, with his finger-tips together. 'The ideal reasoner,' he remarked, 'would, when he had once been shown a single fact in all its bearings, deduce from it ...'" And on and on it goes. Holmes refers to Cuvier, he speaks of art and how he has honed his skills to their highest degree, he refers to Watson's earlier analysis of the detective's knowledge, talks about what a great place Florida is, and mentions brain-attics and lumber room libraries. And when all is said and done, what does he do?

He takes down the encyclopedia and looks up K.K.K.

For a case where Holmes fails miserably, he's certainly showboating. Is this a matter of pride going before a fall? Or did Watson beef up this tale with Holmes lectures from elsewhere to make Holmes look better (or feel better when he read it)?

6. And He Was Complaining About The Criminals Post-Moriarty!

"A single man could not have carried out two deaths in such a way as to deceive a coroner's jury," Holmes says in this tale, as his reason for suspecting multiple perpetrators (aside from the fact that "K.K.K." the name of a *society* was on the letters). Is Holmes still pumping up the case for Watson's benefit? Or do the Hounds honestly think a single man could not have killed two men in such a sneaky fashion?

7. Oh, Stop It Holmes!!!

As if the previous two bits weren't enough:

"Have you never--" said Sherlock Holmes, bending forward and sinking his voice--"have you never heard of the Ku Klux Klan?"

Is this more melodramatics, or is Holmes actually afraid of the Ku Klux Klan? And does that fear totally come from his readings about the Klan? Or is there any reason to think Holmes actually had some disastrous previous encounter with the secret society?

8. The Head Bones Connected To The . . .

That Cuvier reference: "As Cuvier could correctly describe a whole animal by the contemplation of a single bone, so the observer who has thoroughly understood one link in a series of incidents should be able to accurately state all the other ones, both before and after."

Since Holmes seemed to concentrate on studies that would help him in his work, what could we think he gained from the French naturalist's work?

9. Strong Reasons For Leaving America

Colonel Openshaw's departure from America after the Civil War seems to be taken as unusual by Holmes, who attributes it to fear of someone. Anyone who has done much reading on the fortunes of plantation owners after the war, however, quickly realizes that there were a great many reasons for a former Confederate citizen with money to get out of the South during the Reconstruction, especially a man like the Colonel, who had roots back in England.

Does Holmes's lack of knowledge about America hurt him in this case? He seems to ignore young Openshaw's remarks about the Colonel leaving due to Republican policies. Might he have been too eager to assign this all to the mysterious and foreign Klan?

10. Burning Crosses On Shipboard?

And while we're on the subject of motivations, what's the story behind Captain James Calhoun? A sea captain commanding a ship full of men from countries different from him seems like the sort of fellow whose entire life has been at sea. He's familiar with different cultures, and must has some sympathy for all the Finns and Germans he spends his every waking moment with. So how are we supposed to think that this fellow became a devoted member of the Ku Klux Klan, a group of land-bound ethnocentrists? Was Calhoun an innocent man, who might have eventually returned to London to see what Holmes was sending him orange seeds for, had he lived?

11. Savannah Sheriff Gets Telegram, Laughs

One of the more astounding actions by Sherlock Holmes in this tale is his sending a telegram to the Savannah, Georgia police department, a telegram which tells them that the three Americans aboard the Lone Star are wanted for murder in England. Holmes's charges are based on the most circumstantial of evidence, and he seems to lump all three men together for no other reason than that they are shipmates and countrymen. Just what actions would the Savannah police be expected to take based on an accusation from an English private detective? Something as ambitious as extradition, or just keeping a close eye on the three in case they pulled anything in Savannah?

12. Three Down, Several More To Go

You just can't get away from the wild statements Holmes seems to be making in this case. Holmes speaks of the Ku Klux Klan as a gang, and Calhoun as their leader, then says "I shall have the others, but he is the first." What others? And how was Holmes

expecting to find them, when he barely found Calhoun and his mates by ship's records?

13. The Colonel's Chess Game

"I'll checkmate them still," Elias Openshaw says, and does two things. First, he burns the papers that the Florida Klansmen seem to be after. Second, he leaves his worldly goods to his brother. How does this checkmate the Klan? If they were seeking the papers for fear of blackmail or criminal arrest, Elias was doing their job for them. And what good would a will do? Who would the estate have gone to without a will? Surely the only person who might claim a man's estate before his brother would be a wife or offspring . . . was Elias being stalked by in-laws he left behind in Florida? Might the "Paramore" of March 1869 been a "paramour"?

14. The Partnership Stays Firm

As much as poet Vincent Starrett liked the year 1895 as a classic year of Canonical lore, I don't think it will ever surpass 1887 in my mind. It's a year at the very heart of the early half of the partnership, and full of many great moments. As Watson says in FIVE, "The year '87 furnished us with a long series of cases of greater or less interest, of which I retain the records."

Note the use of the word "us" in that sentence. Despite the fact that he's married and carrying on a full medical practice in this tale, he is still very much a part of the detective team. Is this a touch of egotism on Watson's part, something he might have wrote after Holmes's demise but not while the detective was living? Have we seen much evidence of a partnership before now?

15. The Small Estate In Sussex

Elias leaves his estate to Joseph. Joseph leaves his estate to John. John dies with no known heir. Elias seemed to think that passing on his estate could be passing on a sort of curse. Sherlock Holmes swore to follow up on the Openshaw case, and one would think that he travelled down to Horsham after the events of the story to do exactly that. Did the Openshaw curse pass on to the next residents of that Sussex estate? Would Holmes have warned the next residents of possible trouble heading their way? Or checked those occupants out to see if they were involved in the wholesale extermination of Openshaws?

16. Major Prendergast Strikes!

"I spoke to Major Prendergast about my troubles and was advised by him to come to you," John Openshaw tells Holmes. The only other Prendergast we hear of in the Canon is Jack Prendergast of "The Gloria Scott," an ingenious criminal schemer of good family who may or may not have been killed on a prison ship in 1855. Now Holmes supposedly cleared the Major of a card cheating scandal at the Tankerville Club. The only other mention we hear of the Tankerville Club is in "The Adventure of the Empty House," where we learn Colonel Sebastian Moran, known card cheat, is a member. Might both Prendergasts and Moran be one in the same, and this whole Openshaw business be a set-up designed to test a still-naive Holmes by one Professor Moriarty? Or is all this just a series of amazing coincidences?

17. The Maid Brings Up The Coffee

This, we would guess, is the same maid at 221B whose footsteps Watson heard pattering off to bed in "A Study in Scarlet." Might she also be the Mrs. Turner of "A Scandal in Bohemia"? Would a live-in maid have been a married woman or possibly a young widow?

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6. View Halloas (Rosemary Michaud)

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7. Delicate Questions (Chris Redmond, BSI)

In this case Holmes encounters a secret society, and comes off distinctly second best.

Do other cases also suggest that his forte is investigation of the isolated incident rather than trying to work single-handed against an organization?

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8. Additional Thoughts (Steve Clarkson)

Brace yourselves, Oh Ye True Believers! Our next Adventure can only be classified as one in which Sherlock Holmes was unsuccessful. Why?

Because he didn't solve the puzzle John Openshaw presented to him? No, Holmes had the answer in the palm of his hand before Mr. Openshaw went back out into the wild, rainy night. It is this which makes the outcome of FIVE even more unpalatable, for Holmes not only neglected to take precautions to safeguard his client's life, he ultimately was not able to bring Openshaw's murderers before the bar of justice.

The Five Orange Pips is an Adventure which leaves many questions unanswered. To be sure, Holmes knew what was afoot once he heard John Openshaw's strange narrative. His closing advice to young Openshaw was on target, if inadequate given the danger that threatened. Nonetheless, there remain questions that beg to be discussed.

John Openshaw describes his uncle Elias as being "…fierce and quick-tempered…and of a most retiring disposition. During all the years that he lived at Horsham, I doubt if ever he set foot in the town." He later said of his uncle, "…he would see no society and did not want any friends, even his own brother." How, then, did Elias know of a lawyer named Fordham when he wanted a will drawn up? Would Fordham have been a barrister or a solicitor?

One of the more difficult ways for a person to commit suicide is by drowning himself. Elias Openshaw had a revolver with him when he went out on his drunken forays; why did he not shoot himself if suicide was his intention? Was a verdict of "suicide" indicated under the circumstances described, or would a finding of "accidental death" have been more likely and appropriate?

How did Elias come into possession of the all-important papers? They appear to have been nothing less than the clandestine acts of the murderous Ku Klux Klan, based on the one surviving sample of the contents of the brass box. How would the destruction of such records "checkmate" his enemies? And his estate of £14,000 was a considerable amount of money in those days, roughly equal to $70,000 in 1893 and worth close to $1,400,000 in 1990. Although Elias Openshaw owned a Florida plantation, he no doubt got less than top money for it, if he got anything at all, when he rather abruptly moved back to England. How did he accumulate so sizeable a fortune in a wrecked economy?

In describing the residue of his uncle's estate, John Openshaw said that some of the papers found in the locked lumber-room "…were of a date during the reconstruction of the Southern states, and were mostly concerned with politics, for he had evidently taken a strong part in opposing the carpet-bag politicians who had been sent down from the North." It was always my impression that the vast majority of the voters in the Confederate states had been disenfranchised by a vengeful Congress, and that Northern opportunists came to the South to run for office and thus take advantage of the helpless people. Was it the case that "carpet-baggers" were deliberately sent to the South for that purpose and, if so, by whom?

Odds and Ends: We can imagine what an Amateur Mendicant Society might be (with Hugh Boone as a prominent member), but what might be a Paradol Chamber? Ken and Barbie in a room? Also, the message from the KKK was always the same: "Put the papers on the sundial." But although Elias Openshaw could have been expected to know which papers were wanted, how could the KKK expect either of the remaining Openshaws to know which of all the many papers in the lumber-room were the ones desired?

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9. Questions & Comments (Sonia Fetherston, BSI)

"If we could change just one variable in a story, would that story still work? Or would the outcome change? How? And does changing one variable inevitably lead to changes in other variables?"

No fewer than 6 unchronicled cases are mentioned at the beginning of The Five Orange Pips. They are the adventure of the Paradol Chamber, the Amateur Mendicant Society, the loss of the British bark Sophy Anderson, the singular adventures of the Grice Patersons, the Camberwell poisoning case, and the Tankerville Club scandal. These are all success stories for Holmes.

Delete them!

Don't they serve only to bolster SH's sagging performance in FIVE? Without them, doesn't Holmes look even worse in FIVE? Do these unchronicled cases serve any other purpose than to reassure readers that Holmes does often succeed? Finally, without these and other tantalizing unchronicled cases, would we have that mixed blessing: the Sherlockian pastiche?

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10. 56 Stories in 56 Days (Charlotte Anne Walters)

The story starts with a very literary description of a storm, writes Charlotte Anne Walters.

It sees Sir Arthur Conan Doyle reminding us of what a skillful writer he was – not just in terms of narrative but also description, sentence structure and the way he could intersperse short, choppy stories with moments of higher literary form, for example:

'It was in the latter days of September, and the equinoctial gales had set in with exceptional violence. All day the wind had screamed and the rain had beaten against the windows, so that even here in the heart of great, hand-made London we were forced to raise our minds for the instant from the routine of life, and to recognize the presence of those great elemental forces which shriek

at mankind through the bars of his civilization, like untamed beasts in a cage. As evening drew in the storm grew louder and louder, the wind cried and sobbed like a child in the chimney.'

Early on in 'the pips' Holmes confirms that Watson is his only friend in response to Watson's question about whether it is a friend who has come to call in such bad weather. I suppose we all knew Holmes to be otherwise friendless but it is surprisingly poignant to hear him say it.

John Openshaw braves the storm and comes to visit Holmes to relate his unusual tale. He sits in the warm, safe, comforting sitting room at 221b and tells Holmes and Watson about the five orange pips delivered to his uncle and father prior to their deaths. As he has now received the ominous pips himself with the sinister KKK written on the envelope he is rightly afraid and motivated to seek help.

But this is where the story rather departs from the usual Holmes formula. Instead of Holmes being the hero and saving the day, he sends the young man away to his death. This does give us an opportunity to see Holmes full of emotion as he feels regret and sadness upon hearing the news – 'It becomes a personal matter with me now', adding, 'that he should come to me for help, and that I should send him away to his death – !' As with the way he felt compelled by his emotions to threaten Mr Windibank the wicked stepfather in A Case of Identity, here again Holmes displays great emotion and caring towards a client. This is very contrary to our usual image of Holmes as the cold, unemotional thinker who could always control his emotions. He was clearly capable of feeling deep sentiments, and from a personal point of view this does make plausible incidents which happen in my own novel.

The ending of 'the pips' is also rather unusual as the perpetrators are not caught or even aware that the detective is on their trail as they die at sea. That's it. The end. Very disappointing if you ask me.

Yes the story does contain some great examples of Holmes' deduction skills, though not the observing-at-the-scene kind which I personally prefer, but impressive none-the-less. The ending is just too sudden and unsatisfying for me.

A great start, a ponderous middle, unsatisfactory ending – 5/10.

Sorry Sir Arthur, but I did love your storm..

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11. Observance of Trifles (Brian Keith Snell)

The Case of the K.K.K. Took My Baby Away!!

The Five Orange Pips is a story that has never really been adapted to the screen.

A 1945 movie was partly based upon some aspects of the tale, kinda sorta; one of the episodes of **BBC's Sherlock** made a pun about the title, without including any of the actual story. And that's about it.

There are two reasons, I think, for the lack of adaptations. The first is (and this is purely my uninformed opinion) that many potential adapters have been scared away by the *potential controversy* over doing a story featuring the **Ku Klux Klan** as the villain, especially one that focuses on their making rich white Englishman their victims, while largely ignoring their crime against African-Americans. Who needs the agita, when there are 59 other stories that won't get your production embroiled in a potential **The Birth Of A Nation**-style uproar?

The second, and more important, reason is that, sad to say, The Five Orange Pips is just *not a very good story.*

Despite the fact that **Sir Arthur Conan Doyle** picked it as one of his top ten favorite **Holmes** stories, this is easily the most *disappointing* story so far in the **Canon**:

-- The mystery isn't much of one. Granted, perhaps it just seems that way to me, because a 21st century American reader is much more familiar with the Ku Klux Klan, and the obvious meaning of K.K.K, than a nineteenth century British reader might have been.

But we can't forget what we know, and the Klan involvement is *painfully* obvious early on. And once again, it's a case that Holmes has mostly solved before the client even finishes his story, which doesn't make for the best mystery.

-- There is little to no "*action*" in the piece. We don't go to any of the scenes of the crime; Holmes doesn't wear any disguises or interact with any suspects; he spends the "whole day" at the library (OK, **Lloyd's,** but you know what I mean). *Everything* significant happens "off screen," as it were.

-- We never even meet the killer(s). Holmes deduces who they must be, but he has been wrong before. To have him rail so much against the killers, and then *never* so much as see them, is frustrating. Add to the fact that their final fate is in no way due to Holmes' actions. They die (?) off screen, in an apparent storm. Because of this, they are by far the *weakest* villains in the Canon, all shadows and no substance whatsoever.

-- Watson writes that "*there are points in connection with [the case] which never have been, and probably never will be, entirely cleared up*." He may be right, but on a meta-level, that's the author's duty to fill in the missing information. We don't know for sure that **Captain James Calhoun** and company are the killers; we don't know *how* they accomplished their murders in ways to fool the

authorities; we don't know why the were so eager for the **Openshaw's** papers, and why they resorted to cryptic threats instead of merely burglarizing the home; we don't know for sure that they are perished. In fact, there is nothing that we actually know for sure beyond the facts that young John Openshaw lays out for us.

We certainly can't know why Doyle chose such a thinly-plotted and lazily sketched in story as one of his favorites; perhaps he thought the gimmick of the mysterious messages and orange seeds were sufficiently unique and cool to make blind us to the lack of the most basic tenets of a mystery's requirements.

It is particularly ironic, in that in this tale, Doyle has **Watson** confess that "*it is no easy matter to know which*" of Holmes many cases to publish. Watson then gives a list of criteria which would make for a poor story (in his view):

> *Some, however, have already gained publicity through the papers, and others have not offered a field for those peculiar qualities which my friend possessed in so high a degree, and which it is the object of these papers to illustrate. Some, too, have baffled his analytical skill, and would be, as narratives, beginnings without an ending, while others have been but partially cleared up, and have their explanations founded rather upon conjecture and surmise than on that absolute logical proof which was so dear to him.*

He then proceeds to give us a tale which he admits fails those criteria, because it was "so remarkable in its details and so startling in its results." Eh, sorry, *not really*, Doctor.

OTHER TRIFLES AND OBSERVATIONS:

** Some commentators describe this case as a failure for Holmes, as his client dies before Holmes takes any action. Perhaps this is a bit of a *harsh* assessment, as the critics never seem to state what Holmes should have done differently. Young Openshaw had *already* gone to the police, and been dismissed. It is unclear that Holmes would have been able to convince them differently, given that Scotland Yard's usual initial reaction is to dismiss his "theories" (not to mention it would require them to admit they may have been wrong about the earlier deaths).

So no protective custody. What then? Accompany him back to **Horsham**? But the information Holmes needed to crack the case was in London. Have him stay at **Baker Street**? Perhaps. But the ninja-like ability of the Klansmen might mean they would not be afraid to strike there, and perhaps harm Watson and **Mrs. Hudson**.

Openshaw was alert to the danger, armed, and supposedly traveling among crowds the whole way. The killers had only struck in lonely, rural areas. Hindsight, of course, says sending him back alone was a mistake. But I think it's a mistake to blame Sherlock for Openshaw's death.

** Openshaw's father declares, '"*Pooh! We are in a civilised land here, and we can't have tomfoolery of this kind*."

But of course, he's wrong. In Doyle's universe, England is *the seething crucible* in which foreign disputes are settled. Of the 7 published stories published to this point, ***5*** involved quarrels/disputes that began in far away lands...and *all 4* of the murder cases Watson has chronicled came as the vengeful resolution of feuds started in Australia, America, India...

England may have been a "*civilised*" land, but it is also the place where people from uncivilized lands come to settle their scores.

** This story is an all-you-can-eat buffet of references to unpublished cases.

Just from the year 1887, for example, we have:

The Adventure Of The Paradol Chamber

The Amateur Mendicant Society (who held a luxurious club in the lower vault of a furniture warehouse)

The loss of the British ship **Sophy Anderson**

The singular adventures of the **Grice Patersons** in the island of **Uffa**

The Camberwell Poisoning Case, in which Sherlock Holmes was able, by winding up the dead man's watch, to prove that it had been wound up two hours before, and that therefore the deceased had gone to bed within that time

And from an unknown year we have the **Tankerville Club** scandal, in which **Major Prendegast** was wrongfully accused of cheating at cards (shades of **Moonraker**!).

Busy, busy detective. Watson said that he "may" sketch these out at some future date, but of course he didn't (unless someone has one of those trunks of Watson's lost writings in their attic).

** Watson was staying at Baker Street while his wife was "*on a visit to her mother's.*" But of course, **Mary Morstan's** mother was long dead; and The Sign Of The Four is mentioned in this story, and she and Watson became engaged at the end of that story!

This is the type of things that drives players of **The Great Game** mad. Good luck sorting out those dates and wives...

** If I were a large and powerful terror organization, I'd like to think that I could find *better* agents to enact my schemes than a few sailors who only dock in England every other year. The killings occurred in 1883, 1885 and 1887, the years **The Lone Star** was docked in England, yet there was no Klan activity directed at the Openshaws during the intervening years.

If it was so urgent that the papers be recovered, you'd think that someone could be sent on a *more timely basis*. Unless, of course, this was purely a personal mission for Captain James Calhoun and cohorts.

Some people have suggested (as they always do) that **Moriarty** was ultimately responsible for these crimes. *Again with the*

Moriarty! And this is pretty transparently false, in my opinion. If Moriarty **had** been hired to kill Colonel Openshaw (and get his papers), do we really believe that the **Napoleon Of Crime** would have to rely on assassins who only show up on a bi-annual basis, and are unable to burglarize a house themselves? (Unless you want to posit that Moriarty was *framing* the Klan, and his crimes were for some other nefarious purpose, which strains credulity. And makes Holmes look ever more foolish)

** The Baker Street **NSA** at work: Holmes spends rainy nights "*cross-indexing his records of crime*."

** Sherlock: "*Except for [Watson], I have [no friends].*" Awwwww....

** This is the second story in a row in which we have seen coroners and inquest juries reach incorrect results. As I discussed last week, in a pre-forensics time period, we can't be too surprised.

Still, to insist that two brothers, who each received the same obscure threatening letter, and each died not long afterwards, is just *coincidence*...? That is, as Holmes declared, "*incredible imbecility*!" And, as others have noted, for a jury to conclude suicide when a man clearly in fear for his life is found drowned in a two-foot deep pond is insane.

** That being said, this was a lost opportunity for Watson to display his medical knowledge to good use again, as he did in the **Boscombe Valley Mystery**. How about going over the coroners' reports, to see if he can ascertain any signs of violence or poison on these victims?

Then, perhaps, we could know how the assassins killed these men and made it look like suicide and accidents.

But as I said above, Doyle seemed satisfied with the orange seeds gimmick, and didn't bother to develop the story any more after that.

** Holmes opines that "*even in these days of free education and encyclopaedias*," possession of all knowledge is "somewhat rare." Somewhat?

One can only wonder what Holmes would make of our era, when the internet gives us access to almost infinite knowledge, yet we still seem as dumb as ever, as a species...