

# The Bilge Pump

Vol. 03, No. 1 - January, 2015

*The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star*



From the Editors: Welcome to the start of our 3<sup>rd</sup> year of publication. We wish you the compliments of the season, and hope you all have a successful new year. We are attaching another pastiche written by Jack Brazos III titled "THOU SHALT NOT STEAL."

Don, Steve, & Walt

## February 1, 2015 Meeting

The next meeting (and future meetings) will be held on Sunday, February 1<sup>st</sup>, at **LA MADELEINE COUNTRY FRENCH CAFE**, in Addison. The restaurant is at 5290 Belt Line Rd #112, just east of the Tollway.

We will be reading "*The Yellow Face*." (see page 3). The quiz will cover the story. We will have a discussion on the history of inter-racial marriage in America.

Each monthly meeting will also include toasts as well as general business, introductions, and general fellowship.

## January 4, 2014 Meeting

Fourteen Sherlockians were present at La Madeleine for the January meeting. Tim gave a nicely done, impromptu toast concerning society itself. Brenda was able to take 1<sup>st</sup> prize in the monthly quiz, receiving a book on the BBC Sherlock series. The contest was based on the 2<sup>nd</sup> part of **The Valley of Fear**.

A discussion and presentation was conducted on the efforts of Douglas and the Pinkerton organization, as compared to the true facts of the time.

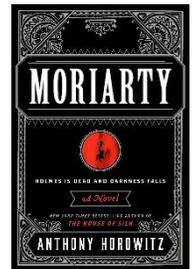
Jack recommended everyone read the recently published **Moriarty**, authored by Anthony Horowitz.

Tim provided a wonderful show and tell on two new Victorian games he has acquired, one based on the Pinkerton organization, the other a round the world game based on Jules Verne's book. Tim has also had his collection/passion covered in a German magazine.

Don discussed the idea of members traveling to Austin on January 17 for the Book and Paper fair.

The State of the Society was discussed. While our society has grown and remains robust, Steve suggested we should look at other avenues for us to share the Canon within the metroplex. Brandi suggested we look at participating in future comic book conventions to advertise our society and our work.

The toast was given by Steve from a passage of The Baker Street Journal (see page 2).



## PAINTING WITH A TWIST

For those of you in the DFW area, Pam has taken several of these classes, and really enjoys them. On January 17 at 3:00 pm, an art instructor will teach students how to paint the outside of 221b (see painting on right). Plus you get to socialize ! The cost is \$ 45 for a three hour session (this includes paint, canvas). If you are interested, go to <https://www.paintingwithatwist.com/events/viewevent.aspx?eventID=343650>.

Email Pam at [mamamason25@hotmail.com](mailto:mamamason25@hotmail.com) if you want to learn more about these classes.



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

You can follow us on Twitter at: @barquelonestar

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



## Who dunnit:



Third Mate  
Helmsman  
Spiritual Advisors

Secretaries

Webmaster

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Walter Pieper  
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The room in Baker Street in which Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson lived and had their being is as familiar to us, almost, as any of our own. Its windows look out through fog or rain or mellow sunshine on the houses in the street across the way, and within lie all the magic, cherished things our hearts have come to know and love.

There, on the farther wall, is the cheery fireplace with the sea-coals blazing on the hearth, and the easy chair with the coal-box by its side, and the Persian slipper close at hand.

There on the mantel is the correspondence transfixed by a jack-knife, and the dottles from the frequent pipes. The chemical-stained table, littered with papers and all sorts of odds and ends, stands in its accustomed place, and the pictures of General Gordon and Henry Ward Beecher lean against the wall.

The great index volumes and the commonplace books are crammed upon the shelves; the violin lies carelessly upon the sofa, and the deerstalker cap is hanging on a peg by the door, at the top of the seventeen steps, as if awaiting urgent call to

high adventure in some Limehouse alley or out upon the shivering moor.

And - crowning touch of all - there on a table in the corner, in all their simple dignity and grace, we see the gasogene and tantalus.

The fog swirls suddenly against the panes, and a four-wheeler rumbles heavily past the door. It is difficult, peering in at the window, to hear and see precisely what is going on within.

But there is no fog so thick as to shut out the picture of the gaunt figure stretched in the chair by the fireplace; there is no sound so loud as to drown out the wail of the violin now thrown carelessly across the bony knee.

A ring comes at the bell; a step is heard upon the stair. The drooping eyelids lift, and the nostrils quiver at the eager thrill of the chase.

"Come, Watson, come! The game is afoot!"

Hurry along! The game is afoot.

Step into 19th century Victorian London and become the detective in The International Exhibition of Sherlock Holmes! You'll experience the thrill of solving a mystery using the techniques of the legendary sleuth, Sherlock Holmes.

In this hands-on exhibition, you'll use forensic techniques and tools to collect and analyze evidence, record findings in your notebook and test your theory working alongside Holmes to investigate this baffling mystery! But be careful — there's nothing more deceptive than an obvious fact.

Sherlock Holmes is one of the most recognizable figures in literature. Beloved by generations of readers, the character has been renewed and reinterpreted countless times in popular culture, a testament to the enduring quality of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's stories and their unforgettable hero.



The tales of Sherlock Holmes go beyond mere storytelling. As a chemistry and forensics expert ahead of his time, Sherlock uses seemingly trivial observations to solve the most complex crimes.

His practices and techniques, created by doctor-turned author Conan Doyle, profoundly influenced the way police work was conducted at the turn of the 19th century. Many of Sherlock's methods still remain in practice today.

Sherlock Holmes has inspired generations of thinkers to use deductive reasoning and apply it to modern sciences. Many forms of forensic sciences were influenced by Conan Doyle's work, including serology, fingerprinting, and firearm identification.

In the exhibit, students will be transported into Sherlock Holmes' London to solve a crime in a world that was being introduced to these ground-breaking methods for the first time.

Go to: <http://www.perotmuseum.org/explore-the-museum/traveling-exhibits/Sherlock/index.html> for more information.

Per[]t  
Museum of Nature and Science

# SEVENTEEN STEPS TO THE YELLOW FACE

Brad Keefauver, BSI

## THE STORY THAT COMES WITH A DISCLAIMER

The bracketed paragraph that introduces this story is an interesting commentary on what Watson thought of this story. The good doctor had published tales of Holmes failing before now ("A Scandal in Bohemia" and "Speckled Band" come quickly to mind), but with this one he feels he needs to warn the reader of Holmes's impending failure.

Why does Watson feel he needs to explain this one and not any before it?

If a story has "features of interest," as he says, shouldn't his readers be able to pick that up on their own? Was Watson showing signs he thought this was a poorer quality story over all?

## THE SHERLOCK HOLMES EXERCISE PLAN

In the beginning of this tale, Watson gives us a brief summary of Holmes's physical abilities (as strong as can be) and his training regimen (non-existent).

Are we to believe Holmes could perform feats of strength like bending fireplace poker, not due to training but due to sheer force of will by that mighty brain? Or was all Holmes's training and boxing practice done in his youth, giving him enough residual ability he didn't seem to need training during his time with Watson? Any theories?

## THE NEW WATSON -- SOFT ON DRUGS?

Earlier in the stories, in "The Sign of the Four," Watson shows a strong disdain for Holmes's drug use. Now the doctor is mentioning it with a much milder statement: "Save for the occasional use of cocaine, he had no vices, and he only turned to the drug as a protest against the monotony of existence when cases were scanty and the papers uninteresting."

Is this change due to the fact Watson thought Holmes was dead when he wrote this tale, softening up the more sordid aspects of Holmes so as not to speak ill of the dead? Or is this a more realistic view of Holmes's drug experimentation, not flavored with the irritation one harbors toward a room-mate's bad habits Watson may have felt while writing SIGN?

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## FREE CHESTNUTS?

Watson speaks of the chestnut leaves starting to emerge during their walk in the park.

When these trees eventually started producing chestnuts on public grounds, who collected said chestnuts for roasting?

Anyone who cared to?

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## HOLMES THE PIPE-LOVER

Sherlock Holmes's fondness for pipes is displayed clearly in YELL as he rambles on about Grant Munro's abandoned pipe: "A nice old brier with a good long stem of what the tobacconists call amber. I wonder how many real amber mouthpieces there are in London? Some people think a fly in it is a sign."

Before he even thinks of making deductions, he's wondering about real amber and speaking of its lore.

This time, instead of giving us data, he's giving us questions, too.

Just how many real amber mouthpieces might there have been in London at that time? And what exactly is a fly in the amber a sign of?

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## MUNRO THE PIPE-HATER

We are told Grant Munro cares enough for his old seven-shilling pipe to get it repaired time and again.

Yet he's in the habit of lighting it off of lamps and gas-jets, which chars the thing all along one side of the bowl.

Would a man who really cared about his pipe constantly hold it in a flame like that? How hard was it to carry matches or a lighter along in those days?

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## IS THERE SOMETHING GRANT'S NOT TELLING US?

"It seems dreadful to discuss the conduct of one's wife with two men whom I have never seen before," a disturbed Grant Munro tells us at the outset.

But as the story goes on, it gets harder and harder to see what he gets talking about. One of these "men" was surely the yellow-faced person he saw at the window, but who was the other?

Was the housekeeper's face that harsh and forbidding Munro thought of her as a man?

Or is there some other tale of Effie and a couple of totally different guys we never get to hear?

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## THE BURNING OF ATLANTA

"There was a great fire at Atlanta very shortly after his death, and all her papers were destroyed." Poor Effie Hebron.

First her husband dies of yellow fever, then all of her belongings are destroyed by fire. But was the fire just a story Effie used to cover all the belongings she left behind with her child?

Or was I merely a fireplace blaze, and she destroyed the papers herself? How much does this oh-so convenient fire damage her credibility on other matters?

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## CUTTING HERSELF OFF

"I cut myself off from my race in order to wed him," Effie says of John Hebron. But does she actually mean "my race" or "my family"?

The nationality and description of her child's nurse seems to indicate Effie hadn't cut herself off entirely from her race.

And who was it young Effie went to America with to begin with?

Was her own family part of what sickened her about America, leaving her to flee to a sympathetic aunt?

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## THE AGE OF ABANDONMENT

We meet Effie Munro's little girl at the end of the story, and she is described as just "a little girl."

How old was Effie's child, and how old was she three years ago when her mother left her behind?

Would she have been more likely to abandon an infant who could not yet speak than to have abandoned a child who was old enough to ask "why"?

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## MAY-DECEMBER MARRIAGES IN ATLANTA

"Her husband had left her comfortably off . . . she had a capital of about four thousand five hundred pounds."

Doing a quick calculation using Chris Redmond's web page equation of roughly \$100 in current U.S. funds to every Canonical pound, this means Effie's late husband was worth about \$450,000.

As Effie was only about 24 years old when John Hebron died, she could not have been much past twenty when she met him.

But how old was Hebron? While the couple's racial difference lies at the heart of this tale, what of the couple's age difference? How old would an Atlanta lawyer have to be to have a bankroll equivalent to a half million in modern American dollars? Was Hebron a \*much\* older man?

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#### **AND WHILE WE'RE ON HEBRON'S BANKROLL . . .**

Less than twenty years after the American Civil War, we find John Hebron, an African-American lawyer in Atlanta with a lot of money. While it was a time of change and dramatic change at that, could we expect any local in post-war Atlanta to rise so quickly?

Or is his wealth an indication Hebron came to America from somewhere in Europe or the Northern U.S. when the war was over, trying to either help out or take advantage of the situation?

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#### **WHERE DID ALL THAT MONEY GO?**

"I am a hop merchant myself, and as I have an income of seven or eight hundred, we found ourselves comfortably off and

took a nice eighty-pound-a-year villa at Norbury."

When you calculate the combined income of the Munros at well over a thousand pounds a year, they seem to have quite a bit of money to play with.

Their eighty-pounds-a-year villa almost seems economical when looked at next to their income. Were the Munros saving the lion's share of their income?

Given the money-wise part of Effie's first husband's character, would we expect anything less of her choice in a second husband?

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#### **AN HOUR AT THE CRYSTAL PALACE**

The distraught Grant Munro winds up walking to the Crystal Palace, and there spends an hour on the grounds.

What might he have done during that hour? Lunchtime was nearing, what might Munro have found to eat in that area if he hadn't lost his appetite?

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#### **THE YELLOW FACE ITSELF**

Holmes "peels" the yellow face mask off of the little Hebron girl.

Does this mean it was made of rubber, or some other material that would have kept it flexible and close to her face? Were masks at the time made of rubber, paper, paper mache, or another material?

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#### **HOW MUCH MONEY DID THE NURSE HAVE?**

Grant Munro is fairly specific about how much Effie was worth when he married her. But was a portion of Effie's money left with the nurse to care for her daughter? How did the child and the nurse get by?

Were the surviving members of John Hebron's family involved in that three year period?

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#### **WHY DID HOLMES TAKE THIS ONE SO HARD?**

Like Watson in his explanatory words at the case's beginning, Holmes seems greatly bothered by his performance in this case, telling his friend, "If it should ever strike you I am getting a little over-confident in my powers, or giving less pains to a case than it deserves, kindly whisper 'Norbury' in my ear, and I shall be infinitely obliged to you."

Would anyone accuse Holmes of giving this case less than it deserved?

Was there anything he could have done to have caused a happier outcome?

Or is he just unhappy he wasted his time with a case whose outcome he made little difference to, and he hated being an insignificant bit-player in this drama?

## **STREET DOGS: Learning from Sherlock Holmes**

BY MICHEL PIREU, Business Day Live

PATRICK O'Shaughnessy at Millennial Invest believes Sherlock Holmes would have been a great investor, so he went to look for advice from the great detective that may be useful to investors.

"Holmes believed in casting a wide intellectual net," says O'Shaughnessy.

"Considering many ideas over a wide range of disciplines give us perspective and help us consider the big picture or many aspects of an issue. Breadth of view ... is one of the essentials of our profession." — The Valley of Fear

Holmes was a fan of "inverted" thinking: working backwards to tackle hard problems: "(T)he grand thing is to be able to reason backward. That is a very useful accomplishment, and a very easy one, but people do not practise it much. In the everyday affairs of life it is more useful

to reason forward, and so the other comes to be neglected." — A Study in Scarlet.

Holmes believed in the power of probabilities: "While the individual man is an insoluble puzzle, in the aggregate he becomes a mathematical certainty. You can, for example, never foretell what any one man will do, but you can say with precision what an average number will be up to. Individuals vary, but percentages remain constant." — The Sign of the Four

And the power of a consistent approach: "The acquirement of method is more or less possible for us all.... It is only by adhering rigidly to a definite routine ... day after day, that a proper reflex can be obtained." — The Method of Zadiq

Finally, Holmes realised the power of learning from history: "The old wheel turns, and the same spoke comes up. It's all been done before, and will be again." — The Valley of Fear

It has been almost forty years since I presented a bit of Sherlockian scholarship at a meeting of The Sons of the Copper Beeches; the paper was published in *More Leaves from the Copper Beeches* (1976), and I hope that it might be of interest to the Hounds of the Internet as they consider "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle" in this Christmas season.

"The Matter Is a Perfectly Trivial One . . ." by Peter E. Blau

Certainly, there has been a great deal of argument about "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle" -- perhaps as much or more than about any other of the Sacred Writing.

Discussion of the case dates as far back as the early meetings of the Sherlock Holmes Society in pre-War London, and topics covered in the continuing debate include such points as the possibility of commuting a felony, whether it does any good to solder a grate, the apparent non-existence of white barred-tailed geese, the likelihood of finding geese for sale at the vegetable and flower market in Covent Garden, the alleged fact that geese do not have crops, the matter of Holmes' hearty noiseless laughter, and numerous attempts to identify the Blue Carbuncle as an actual gem.

It is the last of these questions which I wish to address, in hopes that a geologist may be able to shed a little light in the darkness.

Holmesian humor is also worthy of comment, as an adjunct to his hearty noiseless laughter, and it might not be amiss to make an attempt to clear up the problem of the goose's crop, in which Peterson's wife is supposed to have found the Blue Carbuncle.

The first statement known to have been published on this subject came in 1946, from Mildred Sammons: "Let me remind you that a goose has no crop."<sup>1</sup>

In practically instant comment the eminent Sherlockian scholar J. A. Finch retorted that: "Consultation of one ornithologist, two zoologists, and three poultry dressers, together with ocular demonstration, has made it abundantly clear that the lady is correct.

Holmes made an alimentary [sic] error, which the Baker Street Irregulars should have noted long ago."<sup>2</sup>

Debate raged for many years, and notable authorities on both sides of the Atlantic were quoted in support of each side of the argument.

Ernest Bloomfield Zeisler, an ardent believer in the presence of crops in geese, even went so far as to conduct an investigation of Mildred Sammons—an investigation, I should add, surpassed in thoroughness only by those conducted in recent years in our Nation's capital.

Zeisler discovered, based on correspondence with Vincent Starrett, that Mildred Sammons had aged forty years and died, all in the space of four months.

And, adding more fuel to the fires of suspicion, the address for the lady, relayed by Starrett, was fraudulent.

Persevering, Zeisler came tantalizingly close to uncovering and examining the correspondence of the late Miss Sammons, but his efforts failed in the end, leaving him exceedingly wary of the possibility of a hoax.

His report on his investigation concludes: "Of only two things can I be certain: the goose's crop and Vincent Starrett's inscrutability."<sup>3</sup>

It is unfortunate that so much time and effort has been devoted, by so many experts, to investigating ornithological anatomy.

Until now, the question has never received a definitive answer.

The reason, I submit, is that scholars have taken the wrong

approach, and that the matter of geese's crops is really beside the point.

The problem, after all, is easily solved if only we assume that the Blue Carbuncle was not found in the goose's crop at all, and that the long debate has actually centered on a printer's error, which substituted an "o" for Watson's "a".

Returning from the scatological to the geological, let us examine the Canonical references to the Blue Carbuncle:

Watson: "A brilliantly scintillating blue stone, rather smaller than a beam in size, but of such purity and radiance that it twinkled like an electric point in the dark hollow of his hand."

Peterson: "A diamond, sir! A precious stone. It curs into glass as though it were putty."

Holmes: "It's more than a precious stone. It is the precious stone."

Watson: "Not the Countess of Morcar's blue carbuncle?"

Holmes: "I ought to know its size and shape, seeing that I have read the advertisement about it in *The Times* every day lately. It is absolutely unique, and its value can only be conjectured, but the reward offered of £1,000 is certainly not within a twentieth part of the market price."

Holmes: "That is the reward, and I have reason to know that there are sentimental considerations in the background which would induce the Countess to part with half her fortune if she could but recover the gem."

Holmes: "It's a bonny thing. Just see how it glints and sparkles. Of course it is a nucleus and focus of crime. Every good stone is. They are the devil's pet baits. In the larger and older jewels every facet may stand for a bloody deed. This stone is not yet twenty years old. It was found in the banks of the Amoy River in southern China and is remarkable in having

every characteristic of the carbuncle, save that it is blue in shade instead of ruby red. In spite of its youth, it has already a sinister history. There have been two murders, a vitriol-throwing, a suicide, and several robberies brought about for the sake of this forty-grain weight of crystallized charcoal. Who would think that so pretty a toy would be a purveyor to the gallows and the prison?"

Holmes (of the goose): "It laid an egg after it was dead--the bonniest, brightest little blue egg that ever was seen."

Watson: "Holmes unlocked his strong-box, and held up the blue carbuncle, which shone out like a star, with a cold, brilliant, many-pointed radiance."

And, finally, Holmes: "You had heard, Ryder, of this blue stone of the Countess of Morcar's?"

Thus sayeth the Canon.

Plenty of evidence--enough, in fact, to have thoroughly confused the legions of Sherlockian scholars who have pursued the Blue Carbuncle.

For example: Jason Rouby has suggested that the Blue Carbuncle was not blue, but red--a red ruby, in fact--and that "Holmes was a congenital dichromatic deuteranope!"<sup>4</sup>

This rather obscene-sounding description of someone who is color-blind is hardly supported by the evidence, and both Nathan L. Bengis<sup>5</sup> and Thomas H. Dorwart<sup>6</sup> have refuted the hypothesis.

Not only does Watson describe the gem as blue, but there many instances elsewhere in the Canon that amply demonstrate that Holmes is not color-blind.

We can, I think dispose of Rouby's ruby.

Ralph Judson<sup>7</sup> has written that the Blue Carbuncle was a garnet, basing his suggestion on current usage, which defines a carbuncle as a red garnet, cut en cabochon ( with a domed unfaceted top).

Garnet is a silicate, and occurs in colors other than red.

The coloration of garnet, in fact covers a wide range, which unfortunately does not include blue.

A blue garnet would indeed be, in Holmes' words, absolutely unique, and it is hardly likely that such a famous gem would not be recorded anywhere in the archives of gemology.

Garnet, I fear, will not fill the bill.

In the judicious opinion of S. Tupper Bigelow<sup>8</sup>, the Blue Carbuncle was a blue diamond.

Others, including Philip Kasson<sup>9</sup> and D. A. Redmond<sup>10</sup>, make a specific identification with the Hope Diamond, and it would be pleasant indeed if this were true, as the gem has one other connection with Sherlock Holmes.

One of the many unlucky owners of the famous, or infamous, diamond was Abdul-Hamid II, Sultan of Turkey, usually referred to as Abdul the Damned. Abdul-Hamid called himself "Lord of Two Continents and Two Oceans", and Gladstone called him "The Great Assassin", but history's title is the most apt.

After purchasing the Hope Diamond in 1908, Abdul-Hamid owned the gem for only a few months before he was ousted by a revolt of young military officers--the Young Turks.

But Abdul-Hamid amply demonstrated his admiration for Sherlock Holmes when he spent his last night as Sultan listening to his Chamberlain read aloud a translation of the latest story about the Great Detective, from a copy of The Strand Magazine which had just arrived in Constantinople.

The Hope Diamond's long history has now brought it into the ownership of the people of the United States, and it is presently on display at the Smithsonian Institution's Museum of Natural History in Washington.

Even a hasty inspection demonstrates that the gem cannot be the Blue Carbuncle.

It is much too large to pass through any goose's digestive tract.

Further, with a history dating back to 1669, it certainly does not match

Holmes' description of the Blue Carbuncle being not yet twenty years old.

Indeed, there is no known blue diamond which meets the criteria of the history of the Blue Carbuncle.

Let us return to the definition of the carbuncle. In modern usage, the term refers to a red garnet.

In older times, however, the name was applied to any red gem, including the spinel and the ruby.

Spinel is a magnesium aluminum oxide, but, like the garnet, it does not occur in the color blue.

The ruby, however, does, and in that form is known as sapphire.

Both ruby and sapphire are gem varieties of the mineral corundum, and aluminum oxide perhaps best known for its extreme hardness, second only to that of diamond.

As a gem, corundum occurs both clear and in a wide range of colors; by today's usage, red corundum is called ruby, and all others are called sapphire.

Gem-quality corundum is also famous for the phenomenon known as asterism, resulting from inclusions of needle-like crystals of such minerals as rutile, and Doyle W. Beckemeyer<sup>11</sup> has suggested that the Blue Carbuncle was indeed a blue star sapphire.

Now--does a blue sapphire match the Canonical specifications?

Certainly, as far as color goes.

According to Peterson, the Blue Carbuncle cut into glass as though it were putty, and sapphire, with its extreme hardness, will do just that.

A fine sapphire will glint and sparkle, twinkle like an electric point, and even shine out like a star, with a cold, brilliant, many-pointed radiance.

How big would a forty-grain sapphire be?

Forty grains equal 2.592 grams, and at a specific gravity of 4.00 a sapphire of this weight would be a sphere with a diameter of 1.074 centimeters--just over four tenths of an inch.

This might be considered as rather smaller than a bean in size, but when Watson gave that description of the gem it was held in the dark hollow of Holmes' hand--not the best conditions for accurate observation.

Holmes tells us that the Blue Carbuncle was found in the banks of the Amoy River in southern China, and many scholars have remarked that neither garnets nor diamonds nor sapphires are found in China.

It is true that the most famous sources of gem corundum are Burma, Thailand, and Ceylon, but it is also found in Australia, Borneo, the United States (in Montana, Idaho, Colorado, and North Carolina), Colombia, Brazil, Rhodesia, Madagascar, Malawi, Tanzania, Norway, Finland, the U.S.S.R., Czechoslovakia, Romania, Afghanistan, India, and--near Canton, in China.

It has been claimed that there is no Amoy River in China, but the problem is one of linguistics, rather than geography.

The city of Amoy, designated as one of the five original treaty ports by the Treaty of Nanking in 1842, lies somewhat to the northeast of Canton, and is now known as Hsia-men.

And the river which flows by the city may be found on today's maps under the name of Chiu-lung Chiang.

The Chinese obviously discovered a placer deposit of rubies somewhere upstream from Amoy, and it is hardly surprising that one blue gem would receive special attention.

Nor is it surprising that an Englishman who purchased the stone in Amoy would call it, and the others, carbuncles.

The name of the Blue Carbuncle might well be retained by later owners, even though mineralogists and gemologists were by that time well

aware that rubies and sapphires were the same mineral; a name that is established for a specific gem is often retained, and the best example of this is perhaps the Black Prince's Ruby, now on display in the British Imperial State Crown in the Tower of London. The Black Prince's ruby is not a ruby but a spinel.

The uniqueness and the high value of the Blue Carbuncle, as described by Holmes, lie not in its characteristics as a sapphire alone, but also in its history and its sentimental considerations, also noted by Holmes.

The exact nature of those sentimental considerations, like the true value of the gem, can indeed only be conjectured.

There is one final point to be considered in our examination of a blue sapphire's qualifications to be the Blue Carbuncle--the one contradictory statement in the Canon.

Holmes refers to the gem as crystallized charcoal.

Corundum is aluminum oxide, and charcoal is essentially pure carbon.

The list of scholars who have used Holmes' statement to cast aspersions on his abilities as a chemist or mineralogist is long indeed, and it can only be regarded as unfortunate that these scholars have not considered the humorous aspects of their research.

It is to Remsen Ten Eyck Schenck<sup>12</sup> we are indebted for the discovery of an almost totally neglected point of humor in "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle"--not Holmes' hearty noiseless laughter, but a different kind of humor.

Let us examine the etymology of the word carbuncle : stemming from the Latin carbunculus , a little coal.

Holmes' reference to the Blue Carbuncle as crystallized charcoal was

nothing less than an example of a kind of humor seldom found in the Canon--a pun, and a scholarly one at that.

And, for those who like footnotes, here they are:

<sup>1</sup> Mildred Sammons, in "A Line o' Type or Two", Chicago Tribune, Dec. 26, 1946, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> J. A. Finch [pseud. of Jay Finley Christ], "Mystery of the Goose's Crop", Chicago Tribune, Dec. 27, 1946, p. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Ernest Bloomfield Zeisler, "A Pigment of the Imagination", SHJ, 5 (1961), 50-52.

<sup>4</sup> Jason Rouby, "The Adventure of the Bluish Carbuncle", BSJ, NS 16 (1966), 70-73.

<sup>5</sup> Nathan Bengis, [letter], BSJ NS 16 (1966), 176.

<sup>6</sup> Thomas H. Dorwart, "Thoughts Concerning Certain Infamous Conclusions, Being a Reply to Mr. Jason Rouby", BSJ, NS 16 (1966), 216-218.

<sup>7</sup> Ralph Judson, "The Chemistry of 'The Blue Carbuncle'", BSJ, NS 9 (1959), 243-244.

<sup>8</sup> S. Tupper Bigelow, "The Blue Enigma", BSJ, NS 11 (1961), 203-214.

<sup>9</sup> Philip Kasson, "The True Blue: A Case of Identification", BSJ, NS 11 (1961), 200-202.

<sup>10</sup> D. A. Redmond, "Some Chemical Problems in the Canon", BSJ, NS 14 (1964), 150-151.

<sup>11</sup> Doyle W. Beckemeyer, "Valuable Sherlockian Hunting-Ground", in J. N. Williamson and H. B. Williams, eds., *Illustrious Client's Third Case- Book* (Indianapolis: The Illustrious Clients, 1953), pp. 135-140.

<sup>12</sup> Remsen Ten Eyck Schenck, "Baker Street Fables", BSJ, NS 2 (1952), 88-89.

# PLAY ABOUT SHERLOCK HOLMES PLANS TO HIT BROADWAY IN 2017

The Manila Bulletin

It's elementary, really. With all things Sherlock Holmes popular now, it's no wonder that he's coming to Broadway next.



Producers said Thursday that a play about the cunning detective will come to Broadway in 2017. Called "Sherlock Holmes," it will be written by the British writing team of Rachel Wagstaff and Duncan Abel. It is being billed as an original tale offering "a new and deeply theatrical exploration of the mind of the famous

detective, while remaining faithful to the mysterious world created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle."

"Our version of Sherlock Holmes will have all the elements that fans want and expect, but with new twists and turns and plenty of surprises, which will take these amazingly complex and beloved characters to places they've never been," said producer Antonio R. Marion in a statement. He's producing alongside Kimberly Much.

More details, including casting, the creative team and theater, will be announced later.

Doyle's creation is everywhere these days: There are two TV series — "Sherlock" starring Benedict Cumberbatch and "Elementary" with Jonny Lee Miller — and Ian McKellen has been announced as an elderly Holmes in the upcoming movie "A Slight Trick of the Mind." Robert Downey Jr. has also been playing the sleuth in a film franchise. The last time Holmes was front-and-center on Broadway was in 1974, when John Wood garnered a Tony nomination for the title role in the Royal Shakespeare Company's "Sherlock Holmes," a revival of the 1899 drama by Conan Doyle and William Gillette.



Wagstaff and Abel wrote the radio drama "When I Lost You" in Britain. Wagstaff has adapted Sebastian Faulks' bestselling novel "Birdsong" for the West End, while Abel's first novel was "The Way Home."

From the July 30, 1905 Los Angeles Herald... the Elliot Keene Sherlock Holmes Puzzle series.



## The Mystery of the Marks on the Wall

"I sent for you, Mr. Sherlock Holmes," said the lady, "to get your advice with regard to my missing sister. She was an ---"

"Pardon me," interrupted the nonchalant Holmes, "your sister was an actress, and a very good one, too. I see that from one of the clews on, the wall."

"Is It possible, Mr. Holmes, you can tell anything from these?"

"Yes, madam," replied Holmes; "the star there shows me she was a star, necessarily an actress and a good one. Moreover, I see by one of those five clews that she fortified herself with a meal before she left. Another clew tells me what meal it was. There is a clew that tells me what means she used for leaving, and the other clew tells me whom she has gone to meet, so you need not feel uneasy."

Do the clews in the picture tell you as much as they do Sherlock Holmes? The clews are right before your eyes. All that you need to do is to find what they mean.

# SHERLOCK HOLMES UMPIRES BASEBALL

Feb. 25, 1906, Seattle Post-Intelligencer



A bunch of old-time fans were sitting

in the rear of a downtown cigar stand the other day, talking over the good old times of the past, when baseball was the real goods and everybody would turn out to witness an exhibition of the national sport without too much regard to the quality of the article.

The discussion finally wandered into the umpire line when one old-timer that looked like a reproduction of the character of the fat man portrayed by Gibson in his famous cartoon "Three Strikes and Out" broke into the conversational game.

"Did any of you ever hear of the time Sherlock Holmes umpired a baseball game?"

No one had, and so he continued.

"I was playing on a nine in a small town in Iowa one summer and was mixed up in a way in the first and only exhibition ever given by Sherlock Holmes of the correct way to umpire.

"We were playing a series of games with another town about thirty miles distant, and the feeling between the two teams and their following was at a high pitch.

"Hardly a game passed without ending in a free-for-all fight or mobbing the umpire.

"There were two twins playing on our team that looked so much alike that even the players that worked with them every day were unable to tell them apart except by looking at their feet.

"One of the twins had a very slight deformity to his right foot; so slight that it would never be noticed by a casual observer.

"In order to keep the records straight on the batting order, we

named one of the twins 'Left-Foot' and the other 'Right-Foot.'

"Right-Foot had been batting like a fiend ever since the opening of the season, while Left-Foot was somewhat weak with the stick, but the best fielder on the team.

"Left-Foot played center field and Right-Foot covered the right garden.

"Whenever it looked as if we were in a pinch it was the custom to ring in Right-Foot in place of Left-Foot occasionally to even up matters.

"He was always good in a pinch, and many a time had won the game by taking the place of Left-Foot at the bat.

"We called our team the Knockers and the other bunch with which we were playing the series answered to the name of the Pickle-Eaters.

"The Pickle-Eaters had grown suspicious that we were working a smooth game on the batting order and were getting very particular about the selection of an umpire.

"We had a game scheduled at home one Sunday afternoon and were looking for a large bunch of trouble when the Pickle-Eaters entered a protest against the regular umpire acting and refused to start the game until someone else was selected.

"Just as the controversy had reached the stage when it looked as if it would be necessary to dish back the money to the crowd, a tall, cadaverous-looking man, leading a dog that looked like a cross between a bloodhound and an Irish setter, stepped from the bleachers and volunteered to take charge of the ceremonies.

"Without even waiting for an answer, the tall stranger walked out to the position back of the pitcher's box and called the game.

"The assurance of the man won the point, and both teams went into the game without further argument.

"Talk about science in umpiring a ball game, that guy certainly had everything skinned that ever came over the pike.

"He could outrun any man on either team and was always at the spot when it looked as if the decision would be close.

"There was no disputing his decision, because he was always in the proper position to hand out the right dope.

"It was in the last inning that the real sensational decision of the game occurred, which marked the stranger as the greatest exponent of the baseball umpiring art and assisted in revealing his identity.

"We were up for the last crack at the ball, with the Pickle-Eaters two runs in the lead.

"There were two out and all of the bases full when the scorer called Left-Foot to the bat.

"It was a tight hole and the captain decided to take a chance on ringing in Right-Foot.

"He gave the signal and the chief willow swisher went to the plate.

"He swatted the first one that came over squarely on the nose and landed it over the center-field fence, and went trailing around the bases, bringing in all of the men ahead of him.

"Almost as soon as Right-Foot landed on the ball, the head guy of the Pickle-Eaters was out with the big protest, claiming that it was the wrong man up.

"The lanky one listened to his tale of woe and was at the bench to meet Right-Foot when he wandered in from his little canter.

"Before the startled player had time to draw his breath, the umpire had grabbed his foot with one hand and sliced a piece off the heel of his shoe with a sharp knife that he was carrying in the other hand.

“He performed a similar operation on Left-Foot, and then started for the outfield like a shot.

“When he reached the spot where Right-Foot was accustomed to stand in the right garden, he went down on his knees and examined the ground for several minutes with a microscope, then made for the center pasture, where he repeated the performance.

“Without saying a word he rushed back to the bleachers’ stand, where his dog was fastened and, after releasing the queer-looking animal, rubbed the piece of leather that he had clipped from Right-Foot’s shoe over his nose and ordered the dog to ‘go find him.’

“The hound went around the bases at a modest canter, almost perfectly imitating the gait of Right-Foot, and wound up at the players’ bench by taking a firm hold on the surplus bottom of Right-Foot’s trousers.

“Right-Foot out for batting out of his turn,’ shouted the umpire. ‘Side out and the Pickle-Eaters win.’

“Not even a protest was entered to the decision.

“All was all done so quick and in such an amazing manner that no one thought of disputing the decision.

“The players gathered in a crowd to discuss the strange proceedings.

but when they looked for the stranger, both he and the dog had disappeared.

“No one had noticed them leave the grounds, and just how he got away is a mystery that is still being discussed by the old-timers back in the little village.

“We were asking each other who the man could possibly be when the town constable came forward and volunteered the information that the erstwhile umpire was Sherlock Holmes, who had been investigating a strange murder case in an adjoining hamlet.”

## Second Sons

LINDA J. SCHACHER

Sherlockian Scholarship – The Holmes / Watson Report, May, 1997

In somewhat less enlightened times, it was a burden to be born a second son. Love, high expectations, and most, if not all, of the family fortune were the birthright of the eldest son.

Second sons, depending on their relationship with the family, often had to make due with whatever prospects presented themselves. If those prospects went against the family grain, estrangement or even banishment might be the order of the day. Sherlock Holmes, John H. Watson, and Professor Moriarty were linked in their birth order.

How being born a second son affected each of these men is pure speculation, but interesting nonetheless.

If Watson was amazed to hear of Sherlock having a brother, an older and even more brilliant version of his friend, then Holmes must surely be awarded the Master of Restraint certificate. In a matter of minutes he not only finds out about Watson's brother but deduces that unfortunate man's life from

a family heirloom in the form of a watch. So estranged was Watson from his family that he did not attend the funeral. Indeed, the watch was forwarded to him.

When we are first introduced to Watson, he sets the scene by telling us that he had no kith or kin in England.

All he had to live on was his wound pension.

"Free as air."

Some yeah later, up pops the information of the one-time existence of Henry Watson.



Of course, from what Holmes deduces from the watch, Henry, at that stage in his life, may not have been in any financial condition to help his brother.

John might have joined the army after college in order to provide himself with a means of livelihood.

What family business did Watson walk away from?

It is interesting to note that there is a Henry Watson Pottery in Suffolk. It was established in 1800.

Henry Watson might have been the grandfather, and the business passed down through generations.

I do not think it too far off base to speculate that the middle initial in Watson's name stands for Henry.

By the doctor's time his brother's dissolute ways may have put the family business in serious straits. He may have even lost it. Easy enough for the new owners to just keep a well-known name.

Since Watson was so upset over what Holmes was able to deduce, was he afraid his friend would be able to tell him how his brother died? Was his death a suicide?

Was it easier for John to bear if it was thought his brother drank himself to death?

There is not much difference in the long run.

What an agony for such a loyal and kind man to have kept his brother's life a secret. It is not to be wondered why he was so worried over Holmes's lifestyle.

He could not save his brother's fall, but he would move heaven and earth to save the man he admired above all.

It almost defies logic to know of someone who was even more brilliant than Sherlock Holmes.

Someone who was also a tad more comfortable with his ego. So laid back was Mycroft, he did not even care if he was proved right or wrong by his observations and deductions.

We all know what a slave to flattery Sherlock was, he could not even resist a game of one-upmanship for Watson's benefit.

What we know of Mycroft is scanty. Sherlock paints his profession with a rather broad, obtuse brushstroke.

"He was occasionally the British Government."

Need he say more?

As lazy in his habits as Sherlock would have us believe Mycroft was, he would not have risen to such a position of power if he did not have something on the ball.

As narrow as his life was, what with his job and his club and his lodgings all within walking distance of each other, it was orderly. Sherlock did not like the mundane.



His temperament was not suited to the usual 9 to 5 routine.

He would easily be known as a loose cannon. His drug habit alone would make him a high security risk.

Good old Mycroft was somewhat boring if gainfully employed.

At least Papa Holmes could have one son to be proud of Mycroft was in government service.

Sherlock was out sniffing around the pack. So fiddle-footed was he, he left the university without taking a degree. Perhaps he felt there was nothing anyone could teach him anymore.

He felt his best chance of success was in applying himself to methods which would be useful in his career choice. Sherlock came up to London and took rooms near the British Museum.

He may not have been well off financially, but he did not starve in a garret either. Mycroft not only may have passed on a few crowns to keep the wolf at bay, he may even have helped his brother get started in business.

Mycroft was in the perfect position to hear all kinds of rumors and odd bits of gossip.

Some things need to be kept quiet with no official involvement, to avoid the risk of major scandal.

Hence, Sherlock commenced making himself useful and all the while word of mouth was building.

The most shadowy figure is that of Colonel James Moriarty. His mention is even more fleeting than Henry Watson's.

His actual existence might even be questioned.

Because of some letters the colonel wrote defending the memory of his brother, Watson is forced to tell the true story of the final problem between Holmes and the Professor.

Was the letter writer actually Colonel James Moriarty, or was it a ruse by Colonel Moran to force Watson's hand in the hope he'd reveal the whereabouts of his friend and, even more importantly, how much he really knew about the inner workings of the Moriarty gang?

Sherlock Holmes would not be the only person to realize the value of using the press for certain purposes. On the surmise Colonel Moriarty did exist, what role did he play in the life of his brother? He was not a major player because Holmes took no notice of him.

If he had a purpose at all, I would suggest he was the one responsible for bringing his brilliant brother together with the cunning and brawn of Sebastian Moran. Mathematics professors and tiger hunters do not generally run in the same crowd. It would make more sense for the ubiquitous colonels to have been cronies.

A little gambling, a little drinking, some unsavory dealings, an indecent proposal. The perfect combination was about to be born. Brains combined with muscle.

There is nothing like a marksman at your back when you need to make a point or set a few examples.

As Mycroft did for Sherlock, James and Sebastian would have driven a few cases the Professor's way. They needed capital to get started, and some blackmail and strong-arm methods would have filled the coffers until bigger fish came along. Be it gambling in numerous clubs or visiting houses of ill-repute, there were plenty of marks and plenty of victims willing to pay handsomely for silence and perhaps a few names to add to the hit list.

Whether Colonel James Moriarty was a player or not, he did not leave a lasting impression on anyone.

He was not even rounded up.

He might have even turned in his friends to save his own hide. He simply disappeared and left nothing but a bag of questions.



## Just for the Fun of it... 6 Degrees of Separation

Six degrees of separation is the theory that everyone and everything is six or fewer steps away, by way of introduction, from any other person in the world, so that a chain of "a friend of a friend" statements can be made to connect any two people in a maximum of six steps.

Recently, I have entertained my inner child by watching the 1960's Batman TV series, starring Adam West and Burt Ward. But more interesting is the amazing array of stars they were able to convince to portray the villains each week.

Such personalities as Van Johnson, Liberace, Burgess Meredith, Ida Lupino, Vincent Price, Eartha Kitt, and Cliff Robertson (many, many more), each had their chance to defeat the *Caped Crusader* and the *Boy Wonder*.

So each month, I will link one of the villains from the 1960's Batman series, to one of the best Sherlock Holmes, Basil Rathbone.

### This Month: Cesar Romero (1907-1994) as the Joker



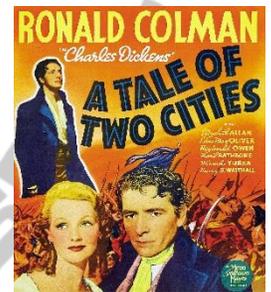
Appeared in 22 episodes as the Joker  
Over 200 TV and movie credits

Cesar Romero appeared as Boris in  
"Strange Wives" (1934)



Claude Gillingwater also appeared as  
Guggins in "Strange Wives" (1934)

Claude Gillingwater appeared as  
Jarvis Lorry in "A Tale of Two  
Cities" (1935)



AND, Basil Rathbone appeared as Marquis  
St. Evremonde in "A Tale of Two Cities" (1935)