

The Bilge Pump

Vol. 03, No. 3 - March, 2015

The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star



From the Editors: A compilation of various topics for you this month. Marland has provided another of his wonderful pastiches, "THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOR'S WIFE."

Don, Steve, & Walt

MARCH 29, 2015 Meeting

PLEASE NOTE

Due to the Easter holidays, the next meeting will be held on Sunday, March 29th, 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 Sign of Four*." (see page 3). The quiz will cover **CHAPTERS 1-5**.

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

March 1, 2015 Meeting

Sixteen Sherlockians were present at La Madeleine for the January meeting. Steve gave a special toast to an iconic figure we lost last month (page 2).

One of our newest members, Sandra won the quiz this month, which was based on the "*The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter*." She chose a beautiful magnifying glass, donated by Cindy, as her prize for first place.

A discussion and presentation was conducted on how the prisoner met his fate, and almost offed Mr. Melas at the same time.

Steve presented Walter Pieper with his very-deserving investiture as a full member of the Crew.

Our display at the Perot Museum, in conjunction with the Sherlock Holmes Exhibition was a success, with many people coming by and showing interest in our Society. We will be setting up displays on March 5, and April 2.

There are three Sherlockian plays coming up in the DFW area. A group will be going next Saturday to the one in Frisco. Details on all three are on page 5.

Elections were held (required each two years), and Steve and Walt were elected to serve two more years as Third Mate and Helmsman.

The final reading was given from a passage of *The Baker Street Journal* (see page 2).

THE CREW MOVIE NIGHT



The Crew movie night was held on Saturday, February 21, at the home of Walt and Linda. Thanks to our wonderful hosts.

We watched two fine films of Christopher Plummer: *Silver Blaze*, issued in 1977 and *Murder by Decree*, issued in 1979. *Sherlock Holmes investigates London's most infamous case, Jack the Ripper. As he investigates, he finds that the Ripper has friends in high places.*



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:



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A TOAST TO A SPECIAL SHERLOCKIAN

Steve

At the Meeting of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star,
March 1, 2015

I met this man for the first time when I was 11 years ago.
And a fan for the rest of his life.

While his foray into the Sherlockian world may be small,
he will go down as portraying one of the most iconic characters
in history.

All of us know him as the beloved Mr. Spock of the
original series and movies, **Star Trek**.

And many of us know that in 1976 and 1977, Mr. Nimoy
played Sherlock Holmes in the Gillette play, "Sherlock
Holmes."

Quoting Mr. Nimoy: "I've always felt I should I should do
Holmes someday. I think my chemistry, my looks, my image all
are helpful in a playing that role.

"Besides, I understand Holmes. I guess the reason I
relate so strongly to characters like that has to do with my
feelings about myself, the way I perceive things. I've really
always considered myself an outsider, ever since i can
remember. It wasn't by choice, it just happened. I don't follow
trends a lot of people do. I'm not gregarious... I've never
enjoyed social chatter.

"And "the mystique's pretty easy to understand... He has
these powers of observation we all would like to think we could
develop, if we only knew how."

Nimoy also served as Sherlock Holmes in the fifteen
minute short, **The Universe and I**, an educational short film
about how planet earth is comprised.

In the 6th **Star Trek** movie, **The Undiscovered Country**,
Captain Spock states, "An ancestor of mine maintained that if
you eliminate the impossible, whatever remains – however
improbable – must be the truth."

One of Nimoy's last tweets, as he knew his days were
short, is wonderful...

"A life is like a garden. Perfect moments can be had, but
not preserved, except in memory."

So let us raise our glasses, and honor him in the most
appropriate manner...

"Live Long and Prosper..."

THE LEAST OF THESE

An excerpt from the Baker Street Journal, July, 1953

There is a considerable body of carefully researched and
recorded opinion as to which, of all the short tales, are the
best. Each of us has his own views, of course; but something
approaching a consensus does exist. Dr. Doyle expressed
himself to the point in connection with a contest run in the
Strand Magazine back in March, 1927: the Agent's elections, in
order of preference, were "The Speckled Band", "The Red-
Headed League", "The Dancing Men", "The Final Problem", "A
Scandal in Bohemia", "The Empty House", "The Five Orange
Pips", "The Second Stain", "The Devil's Foot", "The Priory
School", "The Musgrave Ritual", and "The Reigate Squires."

Then, in January, 1944, the B. S. J. polled its own
membership. The close correspondence of these lists is a
tribute to Dr. Doyle's detached discernment, and other checks
that have been made from time to time show the old favorites
hold their own quite consistently.

There are the stories that cluster in the middle ranges,
because, while not at the very top as stories, they possess
some aura of atmosphere or episode or characterization that
makes them well-remembered and frequently quoted or
discussed: such tales, shall we say, as *The Yellow Face*, "*The
Stockbroker's Clerk*", or "*The Man With the Twisted Lip*."

And there is another - the *Mazarin Stone* - which
possesses notoriety if not fame, because, as the feeble work of
the Agent himself, it totters on the very edge of the Canon.

It is not these tales about which we are thinking today -- it
is those others, however few, which might be described,
perhaps, as the "least significant" of the lot: the tales that are
rarely discussed or disputed; that come only occasionally to
the mind: the stars that are dimmed and paled, as it were, by
the brilliance of the total galaxy in which they are set. By the
very definition of the term, we must stop to think what tales
these are before we can name them. Perhaps "*The Crooked
Man*", "*The Abbey Grange*" and "*The Three Garridebs*" could
be so classified; but for our part we would put, at the bottom of
the list, the almost forgotten adventure of *The Three Gables*.

It would be interesting to learn what twelve tales stand
lowest in the esteem of the composite Sherlockian-- not the
"worst" of the lot, be it understood; for there are no worst: but
simply the least in their significance and import.

And suppose *The Three Gables* does show up poorly, as
we think it will. All, all is relative - for would we not still prefer to
read of Mrs. Maberley and the doings she had with Sherlock
Holmes than of any other person, anywhere, who had doings
with someone else than Sherlock Holmes?

SEVENTEEN STEPS TO THE SIGN OF FOUR

Brad Keefauver, BSI

WATSON'S FLAW

The Sign of the Four begins by showing us a major flaw in our hero's character, his cocaine usage. Watson, it would seem, does not make it through the tale without showing a flaw of his own:

"I could have struck the man across the face, so hot was I at this callous and offhand reference to so delicate a matter."

Why is violence Watson's immediate reaction? True, he does not act upon the impulse this time, but were there other times he was not so restrained?

Had he previously struck anyone across the face for a remark that offended him?

This could give credence for the "bad temper" school of thought on his "bull pup."

THE DOC FROM DOWN UNDER

If Watson did have bad habits like smacking mouthy fellows across the face, it might indicate a childhood in some less civilized land, and SIGN gives us some handy evidence of that in his words:

"I have seen something of the sort on the side of a hill near Ballarat, where the prospectors had been at work."

Watson's Australian past is often overlooked by Sherlockians, and it is especially fascinating that he encounters some fellow citizens of good old Ballarat in "Reigate Squires."

Did Watson's family wind up coming to England in much the same way that Turner and McCarthy did? Might there even be a connection?

GOSSIP TIME:

Mrs. Bernstone, the housekeeper at Pondicherry Lodge, says:

"I have seen Mr. Bartholomew Sholto in joy and in sorrow for ten long years, but I never saw him with such a face on him as that."

Was the housekeeper having a romantic relationship with Bartholomew Sholto? Somehow it seems like she's seen a lot of emotion out of her employer.

ONE MORE PAYING CUSTOMER

"Don't trouble yourself about it, Mr. Sholto," said Holmes; "I think that I can engage to clear you of the charge."

Was Holmes going to charge Sholto? Was his full meaning "I can be engaged for a reasonable fee"?

Long before the ambulance-chasing lawyer, was Sherlock the Scotland Yard-chasing detective? It would seem that Athelney Jones alone could have made him quite a bit of money.

JUST WONDERING...

"I shall bring him then," said I. "It is one now. I ought to be back before three if I can get a fresh horse."

This is the only time in the Canon that I can remember Holmes or Watson showing concern for the common cab-horse.

In "Hound of the Baskervilles" we find a faux Sherlock Holmes renting a cab for the day, and never using a fresh horse. How far could the common cab horse go in a trip?

TONGA'S DEATH WARRANT

"I have my stick."

"It is just possible that we may need something of the sort if we get to their lair. Jonathan I shall leave to you, but if the other turns nasty I shall shoot him dead."

Holmes is very definite about his plans for Tonga.

Would he have felt the same about a normal British criminal, or was the fact that he was dealing with a "wild" pygmy frightening him into thinking of Tonga as a mad dog, less than human?

Is Holmes intending self-defense or an excuse for premeditated capital punishment?

UP, UP, AND AWAY!

"What the deuce is the matter with the dog?" growled Holmes. "They surely would not take a cab or go off in a balloon."

Balloon travel at time of SIGN... just how common was it?

Holmes almost makes it sound as common as cabbing in that line... or is he just "eliminating the impossible."

BRIBE THE RASCALS

"I'd like two shillin' better," the prodigy answered after some thought.

"Here you are, then! Catch!--A fine child, Mrs. Smith!"

"Lor' bless you, sir, he is that, and forward."

At this point in his life, we've only seen Sherlock Holmes deal with children one way: throw money at them.

Were shillings hard to come by around the Holmes household when he was a child? Or was money just the best calling card for anyone in the lower classes at the time?

ROWBOAT FOR HIRE

"There is a boatman here with a wherry, Watson. We shall take it and cross the river."

While we all remember the steamboat chase in SIGN, this little rowboat trip across the Thames often gets missed.

Were small boat ferrymen as common as cabs on the river? Would you yourself cross the Thames in a rowboat?

SLEEP, GIVE ME SLEEP!

At "between eight and nine o'clock" in the morning after running around all night, Watson describes himself as "limp and weary, befogged in mind and fatigued in body."

He has already protested earlier in the story that he still hasn't recovered from Afghanistan. But he takes a bath, changes clothes, comes down for breakfast and seems ready to go some more.

Now, be honest. At this point wouldn't you be saying, "You're the detective, I'm going to bed!?" What did Watson hope to contribute/accomplish?

And when Holmes does lull him into napping, Watson doesn't even go to his nearby bed... just sacking out on the couch. Oh, my aching back/war wound!

RUN FOR IT, WATSON!

"I think that we have had a close shave ourselves of being arrested for the crime."

"So do I. I wouldn't answer for our safety now if he should happen to have another of his attacks of energy."

At this moment there was a loud ring at the bell, and I could hear Mrs. Hudson, our landlady, raising her voice in a wail of expostulation and dismay.

"By heavens, Holmes," I said, half rising, "I believe that they are really after us."
What was Watson about to do? Make a break for it?

WITHOUT A MICROWAVE!

"Only that I insist upon your dining with us. It will be ready in half an hour. I have oysters and a brace of grouse, with something a little choice in white wines.

Watson, you have never yet recognized my merits as a housekeeper."

Perhaps one of our more grouse and oyster savvy Hounds can help me on this one:

I have problems whipping hot dogs and steamed veggies together in a half an hour, how can Holmes can cook oysters and grouse in that time?

IT'S IN THE OTHER SOUTH AMERICA

"We told him nothing; but we paid him well, and he was to get something handsome if we reached our vessel, the Esmeralda, at Gravesend, outward bound for the Brazils."

Someone aid my confusion on this one: was there more than one Brazil in the 1880s??

SHOW ME THE MONEY!
"Pray sit down and tell me all about it, Dr. Watson," said she.

Um, excuse me, Mary, but the man just brought a treasure chest in for you. Polite, I can understand, but I have to ask my fellow Hounds:

Isn't she taking polite a bit far here? Wouldn't you want to see what's in the box and THEN hear the story?

Ah, but they were better folk then, weren't they?

AND I HAVEN'T EVEN TOUCHED MINE

"I must borrow Mrs. Forrester's poker."

Fireplace pokers get a lot of use in the Canon. Watson opens a strongbox with one here, and later prepares to bash Steve Dixie with one.

As a murder weapon or a contest of strength, the simple poker gets a lot of mileage in the Canon. Any thoughts on why?

YOU CAN'T BRIBE THESE GUYS

"There goes the reward!" the nameless inspector says. "Where there is no money there is no pay. This night's

work would have been worth a tenner each to Sam Brown and me if the treasure had been there."

Scotland Yard working on commission?

Along with Lestrade being "retained" in "Boscombe Valley Mystery," this is one of the more puzzling aspects of the London police force. How easily hired were they?

UNBELIEVABLE SMALL

Jonathan Small scatters the Agra treasure over "five miles or so" of Thames riverbed.

He says he was "half mad" when he did it, but five miles is a long time for temporary insanity.

At 20 m.p.h., it would have taken him a whole fifteen minutes to empty the chest -- plenty of time for second thoughts.

Can you picture any criminal giving up that kind of money, when there was the slightest chance he might have been able to get it back somehow?

An added note: with Holmes's eye for detail and memory for location, might he not have been out the next day with a boatload of Irregulars for a little urban pearl-diving?

TO BE OR NOT TO BE...

On February 20, 2015, Walter Elliot, 80, found the 1,300-word tale starring the famous detective in a collection of short stories written for a local bazaar.

The wooden bridge in the Scottish town of Selkirk was destroyed by the great flood of 1902 and locals organised a three-day event to raise funds for a new one in 1904.

As part of the event, organizers sold a collection of short stories by locals called The Book o' the Brig.

The book is now on display at the Selkirk Pop Up Community Museum (SWNS).

Mr. Elliot has now unearthed a copy of the book and spotted his story "Sherlock Holmes: Discovering the Border Burghs and, by deduction, the Brig Bazaar."

Elliot was given the 48-page pamphlet more than 50 years ago by a friend, but forgot about it until recently when he looked in the attic.

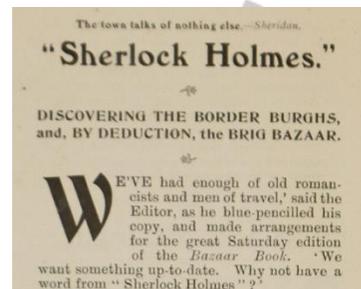
Thus the fun began.

Was the story written by Doyle, or by a local person ?

Several Sherlockian experts, including Lindsay Faye, have weighed in on the prospect of this being potential 61st story of the Canon or not.

You can read what has been written at I Hear of Sherlock Everywhere, at <http://www.ihearofsherlock.com/2015/02/a-stylistic-analysis-of-lost-sherlock.html> or <http://www.ihearofsherlock.com/2015/02/conan-doyle-didnt-write-lost-sherlock.html>

For now, attached to this newsletter, you will find the story itself, as it is a cute little read, no matter who was the original author.



UPCOMING PLAYS IN THE DFW AREA

The (Curious Case of the) Watson Intelligence, By Madeleine George

- February 19 through March 22, 2015

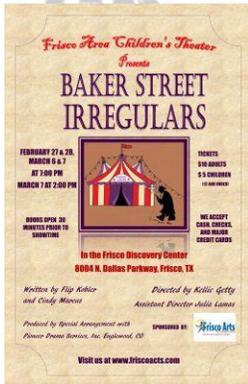
Friday March 6, 2015 8:00pm -- Saturday March 7, 2015 8:00pm -- Sunday March 8, 2015 3:00pm -- Thursday March 12, 2015 7:30pm -- Friday March 13, 2015 8:00pm -- Saturday March 14, 2015 8:00pm -- Sunday March 15, 2015 3:00pm -- Thursday March 19, 2015 7:30pm -- Friday March 20, 2015 8:00pm -- Saturday March 21, 2015 8:00pm -- Sunday March 22, 2015 3:00pm

Stage West Theatre -- 821/823 W Vickery Blvd, Fort Worth, Texas 76104

Watson: trusty sidekick to Sherlock Holmes; loyal engineer who built Bell's first telephone; unstoppable super-computer that became the reigning Jeopardy! champ; amiable techno-dweeb, just looking for love. These four faithful companions become one in this brilliant and witty, time jumping play. It's a loving tribute dedicated to the people -- and machines -- upon which we all depend, and to the strength of our connections to one another.

Tickets are approximately \$30.00 for adults, discounts for children and senior citizens.

For more information, please visit Stage West Theatre Website at <http://www.stagewest.org/season/curious-case-watson-intelligence>



Baker Street Irregulars

Written by Flip Kobler and Cindy Marcus

Frisco Discovery Center, 8004 North Dallas, Parkway, Frisco, TX

February 27 & 28 at 7:00pm -- March 6 & 7 at 7:00pm -- March 7 at 2:00pm

A group of kids who occasionally help Sherlock Holmes solve a murder at the Wainwright Circus and discover the reason behind Sherlock's sudden illness!

Tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children

For more information, please visit the Frisco Area Children's Theater Website at <http://friscoacts.com/>

Watson: The Last Great Tale of the Legendary Sherlock Holmes, By Jaime Robledo

March 6-28, 2015 -- Production will run Friday through Sunday, March 6 -- 28, 2015 with Thursday performances on March 5 and 12 at the Granville Arts Center, 300 North 5th Street in downtown Garland.

Thursday performances are at 7:30 PM, Friday and Saturday evenings are at 8:00 PM, and matinees (Sundays and Saturday, March 28) are at 2:30 PM.

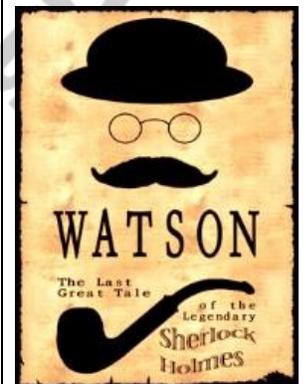
Tickets are \$22

Garland Civic Theatre, 108 N. 6th Street, Garland, Texas, 75040

A mystery. A legend. An enduring friendship. The story of a good man trapped in the shadow of a great man, WATSON is a funny, moving, and theatrically innovative take on Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's heroes and villains.

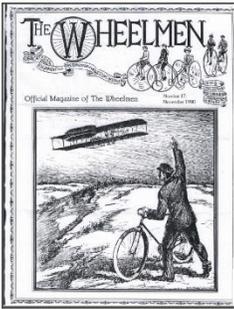
For more information, please visit the Garland Civic Theatre Website at

<http://www.garlandcivictheatre.org/news.html>



Sherlock Holmes, A. Conan Doyle and Cycling

by Irving A. Leonard, *The Wheelmen Magazine*, Number 17, November 17, 1980



ARE THE INFALLIBLE ever fallible?

To assert that the unerring detective, Sherlock Holmes or, rather, his creator, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, could ever err in his deductions, takes on the semblance of heresy. Yet he did make a mistake in at least one instance which, it is interesting to note, relates to bicycling as an element in an Holmesian adventure.

Doyle was a member of that brilliant generation of English fiction writers and intellectuals who were rising to fame in the 1880s, and who shared more or less simultaneously an enthusiasm for the new fad of cycling. Possibly the most conspicuous of these figures and the one whose devotion moved him to write the best and most amusing of all bicycle novels *Wheels of Chance*, was H. G. Wells (1866-1946), better known today for his science fiction (see *The Wheelmen*, Summer, 1974.) Of similar distinction was the Irish dramatist and critic, George Bernard Shaw (1865-1950), who enjoyed a briefer, more accident prone acquaintance with the two-wheeled vehicle (see *The Wheelmen* Dec. 1978). Still other and lesser writers of the same period succumbed to the lure of the new form of recreation. Conan Doyle (1859-1930), inventor of an enduring myth, was a large, broad shouldered, vigorous and robust man who delighted in outdoor sports. He was a rabid cricket-player, an enthusiast of tennis, soccer, boxing, fishing, hunting, golf, even ballooning, tricycling, and later bicycling, besides indoor pastimes such as bowling, billiards, and the like. But none of these interests dulled his creative imagination or slowed his tireless pen. In the early 1890s tricycling fascinated him and, "dressed in checked motoring cap, gray tweed Norfolk jacket, and riding boots," he often set out on thirty mile spins through Norwood and its vicinity, where he practiced medicine, while Mary, his ailing first wife, "bonneted and buttoned, looking quite plain, rather apprehensive, and not very well on the tandem before him."

These pleasant jaunts are, apparently, reflected in his forgotten novel *Beyond the City* in which a tandem tricycle is the vehicle of a courtship. Often, as he pedalled the awkward machine, ideas for his Sherlock Holmes episodes and other stories came to his mind which he presently elaborated. The first highly successful tales of Sherlock Holmes written in the early 1890s, and extremely popular with the readers of Strand Magazine, made no reference to bicycles as an element of the plot. Conan Doyle tended to consider these detective stories as "pot boilers," preferring to write superior historical novels. After winning monetary success and, weary of his detective hero who, he wrote, was "merely a calculating machine whose character admits of no light nor shade," he resolved to kill him off in a climatic fight with his arch foe, the great criminal, Professor Moriarty, at the Reichenbach Falls in Switzerland. This decision aroused a storm of protests by his devoted readers. Many, it is said, wore black armbands to signify their grief, and they showered the obdurate author with pleas to resurrect the great Sherlock Holmes, but without success. In 1903, however, Samuel S. McClure, the notorious founder of a muckracking magazine bearing his name, (McClure, incidentally, began his career as the editor of the first *Wheelman Magazine*) prevailed upon the reluctant Conan Doyle to resuscitate

his mythical hero for the then handsome sum of \$5,000 for six new stories. Later additions resulted in a collection published as *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*.

At the turn of the century Doyle had switched from his tandem tricycle to a bicycle, which fact may account for the presence of the two-wheeled vehicle as an element in a couple of episodes in the new Holmes series. One of these later tales "The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist" may be briefly summarized: An attractive young lady sought Holmes' help in a peculiar experience. She had met two men returned from South Africa who brought news of an uncle recently deceased in great poverty at Johannesburg. The older man was a widower with a ten year old daughter, and he had leased an estate with a housekeeper in rural Surrey. He offered the young lady a generous salary to teach music to his daughter, with the privilege of returning weekends to be with her family in London. She had accepted this attractive offer, but was soon aware, as she cycled the six miles to the railroad station for the trip home, that a strange man on a bicycle kept following her; he invariably maintained a certain distance from her; too far for identification. When she dismounted, he did likewise; when she stopped at a curve in the road, he failed to appear around it. Disturbed by these repeated experiences, the young lady had come to Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, who ultimately ascertained that her uncle in South Africa had really left her a substantial fortune.

The disagreeable companion of the widower had plotted to seize her and drag her from her bicycle into nearby woods where a defrocked minister was waiting to perform a marriage service. The timely arrival of Sherlock Holmes foiled this villainous attempt. The strange pursuer of the 'solitary cyclist' was the widower in disguise, who also had matrimonial designs upon her and wished to frustrate those of his companion. "The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist" is clearly not vintage Sherlock Holmes, lacking the atmospheric quality with which Conan Doyle so often infused his tales. Indeed, the editor of Strand Magazine, who had contracted for the story, had insisted that "The Solitary Cyclist" be completely reworked because Holmes had too little to do in it. The correspondence of editor and author reveals that it was extensively revised.

A much better tale with a more eerie atmosphere is "The Adventure of the Priory School." It is a story of abduction and murder in which bicycles or, rather, bicycle tracks, are important elements in the plot. The ten year old scion of a nobleman and large landholder of northern England disappeared one night from the nearby Priory School by climbing down the ivy covered wall of the dormitory.

A conscientious German master, Heidegger by name, immediately aware of the act, sought to pursue the lad on a bicycle with Palmer tires which left a track of longitudinal lines. Both boy and man had vanished with indications that their flight was through the woods and across a swampy moor behind the school. When Sherlock Holmes is called into the case, he clears up the mystery in due time, restores the boy unharmed to his wealthy father, identifies the hired kidnapper as a murderer, and demonstrates that the



instigator of the abduction was a member of the parental household. Holmes and Dr. Watson began their investigations by following the imprint of the Palmer tires, still visible in the spongy soil despite a maze of cattle tracks; suddenly they came upon the body of the brutally murdered German master and his blood spattered bicycle.

After this grisly discovery the keen eyed sleuth presently detected the track of another bicycle on a narrow path twisting through the morass of the moor, the wheels equipped with Dunlop tires. The latter provide the clue that leads to the identification of the person in the nobleman's household who had plotted the kidnapping.

But here the special interest of the discovery of the second bicycle track lies in an error of deduction by the infallible Holmes, whose usually sharp acumen failed him. Examining its traces in the soft soil, he professed to have determined the direction the bicycle with the patched Dunlop tires had taken. This detail evoked a series of objections by numerous readers-experienced bicyclists, no doubt.

"There is a serious mistake in 'The Priory School'" they wrote. "It is quite impossible for you, Holmes, to know in which direction the bicycle was heading simply by looking at his track on a damp moor."

The following passage in the narrative is probably the one that inspired the protests of these readers. Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson were making an early morning search in the moor for the track of the German tutor's bicycle, at first with little success. Then:

"... Hallo! hallo! hallo! What have we here?" We had come on a small black ribbon of pathway. In the middle of it, clearly marked on the sodden soil, was the track of a bicycle.

"Hurrah!" I cried, "We have it."

But Holmes was shaking his head and his face was puzzled and expectant rather than joyous.

"A bicycle, certainly, but not the bicycle," said he. I am familiar with forty two different impressions left by tyres. This, as you perceive, is a Dunlop, with a patch upon the outer cover. Heidegger's tyres were Palmers, leaving long, longitudinal stripes ... it is not Heidegger's track."

"The boy's, then?"

"Possibly, if we could prove a bicycle to have been in his possession. But this we have failed to do. This track, as you perceive, was made by a rider going from the direction of the school."

"Or towards it?"

"No, no, my dear Watson, the more deeply sunk impression is, the hind wheel, upon which the weight rests. You perceive several places where it has passed across and obliterated the more shallow mark of the front. It was heading away from the school..."

Sensitive about the reputation that his creation, Sherlock Holmes, enjoyed for infallibility of deductive powers, Conan Doyle took out his own bicycle to ride in a wet area. His biographer writes: "He was alarmed to discover that his correspondents were right. He had imagined that the track of the hind wheel over-laying the track of the front wheel when the machine was weaving in mud would indicate the direction."

Apparently, Conan Doyle's chagrin on making this corroboration deterred him from acknowledging his error to these sharp eyed readers, for it was not until many years later in 1924 when he published his autobiography with the title: *Memories and Adventures*, that he belatedly admitted his mistake publicly. There he wrote:

"There are some questions concerned with particular stories which turn up periodically from every quarter of the globe. In 'The Priory School' Holmes remarks in his offhand way that, by looking at a bicycle track on a damp moor one can say which way it was heading. I had so many remonstrances, varying from pity to anger, that I took out my bicycle and tried. I had imagined the observations of the way in which the track of the hind wheel overlaid the track of the front one wheel the machine was not running dead straight would show the direction. I found that my correspondents were right and I was wrong, for this would be the same whichever way the cycle was moving..."

In his *Memories and Adventures*, Conan Doyle admitted that now and then his "calculating machine," as he disparagingly referred to his famous creation, was guilty of a slight inaccuracy, but none seems to have disturbed him quite as much as the mistake in "The Adventure of the Priory School" relating to the humble bicycle.

An answer to the opening question of this sketch seems to be: The infallible can be fallible.

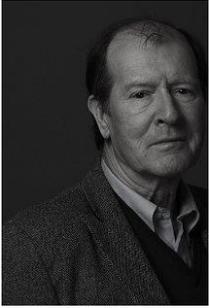
A Nice Stamp Sheet

From Thomas Drucker

For those who are not already on the mailing list from the Royal Mail, I can mention that the 150th anniversary customized sheet for Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is on sale from now until the 22nd of March. The item was originally issued to mark the 150th anniversary of Doyle's birth and is, not surprisingly, decorated with scenes from the Holmes stories.

The original price was 24 pounds and it's been marked down to 14.40. It was issued in a limited numbered edition of 1000. The same mailing from the Royal Mail also includes items connected with Lewis Carroll and the Titanic, to say nothing of Jane Austen and the University of Cambridge. You can purchase the sheet at: <http://shop.royalmail.com/customised-sheets/customised-sheet-sherlock-holmes-save-40/invt/20141186>

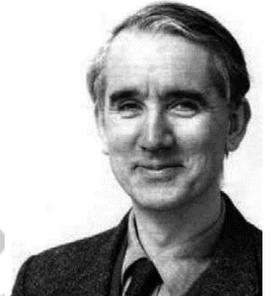




Alan Howard, nephew of actor Leslie Howard (“Ashley, Ashley”...aka Leslie Howard Steiner) and cousin of an earlier Sherlockian, Ronald Howard, died last week.

Classically trained actor, you might recall him as stiff aristocratic Duke of Holderness with Jeremy Brett, in the *Priory School*.

Alan was also well known for being the voice of the ring in the *Lord of the Rings*.



BAFTA-winning composer whose successes included a celebrated Sherlock Holmes series and Smiley's People, Patrick Gowers, who has died aged 78, wrote the music for the popular adaptation of the Sherlock Holmes stories that was produced by Granada Television and starred Jeremy Brett as Holmes.

Apart from Rosalie Williams, who played Mrs Hudson, and Brett himself, Gowers was the only person involved in all 41 episodes, and his music and skilful artistry did as much as Brett's remarkable performance to give the series its memorable quality.

In Search of Sherlock Holmes: The Life of a Country Squire

Liese Sherwood-Fabre, PhD

(Editor's Note: Liese just joined our Crew, and will be providing future articles on the Sherlockian World – Welcome Liese)

In the short story “The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter,” Sherlock Holmes tells Dr. Watson that his ancestors were “country squires.” And other than that bit of information, along with the note that his grandmother was the sister of the French portraitist Vernet, Doyle provided little with respect to his most famous character's origins.

Knowing his parents were country squires, however, provides insights into Holmes' social level and certain expectations common to those of his rank. A country squire would have owned enough land to rent to tenants and have lived in a manor house. While the squire's position was below a nobleman or large landowner,¹ but still ranked high in the local social structure.

In addition to running his estate and ensuring the welfare of those under his tenancy, the country squire also held the position of Justice of the Peace. In this capacity, the squire had both civil and legal duties. Within the local government, the justices supervised parish (or county) officials, in particular those in charge of the maintenance of roads and bridges and

the enforcement of the Poor Laws.² As a legal position, the Justice of the Peace served as a magistrate during the Quarter Sessions, where they and a jury heard and decided on serious crimes such as theft, highway robbery, assault, burglary, rioting, drunkenness, profane swearing, and a variety of crimes against property (poaching, cutting estate timber and the like). Between these sessions, the justices would hold petty sessions where the least serious crimes were reviewed and decisions made without a jury.³

Because the English system did not (and still does not) include a prosecutor, the preparation of a case rested with the constable, from collecting evidence to presenting it at trial. The justice of the peace supervised and worked closely with the village constable, issued warrants, and determined whether to move a case to trial and to which court.⁴

As a member of the gentry, Sherlock Holmes would have been in a position of privilege. With a father as a Justice of the Peace, he would have developed a familiarity with the criminal justice system and the law. For the consulting detective, the foundation for investigating and solving crimes would have come naturally to this son of a country squire.

By Liese Sherwood-Fabre, PhD. You can read more about this award-winning author's writing and sign up for her newsletter at www.liesesherwoodfabre.com

¹ Daniel Pool, *What Jane Austen Ate and Charles Dickens Knew* (New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1993), 46.

² Sally Mitchell, *Daily Life in Victorian England* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1996), 90.

³ “Victorian Crime and Punishment,” accessed February 16, 2015. <http://vcp.e2bn.org/>

⁴ J.J. Tobias, *Crime and Police in England: 1700-1900* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), 125.

Sherlockian Scholarship: A Bustle Outside the Door

BY MEL HUGHES

After reading Rosemary Michaud's brilliant "Victor Victorian," I was both impressed and dismayed. To have such a wonderful and long overdue examination of Canonical cross-dressing and then to leave out the main person guilty of it!

Or was "Mrs. Hudson's" disguise so good it fooled even the wily Ms. Michaud?

"What?" I hear you ask. "The stately landlady of Baker Street?"

Perhaps ... then again, perhaps not. Perhaps the landlord of Baker Street ... and perhaps more than that.

Let's just examine a few of the facts. How many times is Mrs. Hudson mentioned in the entire Canon? Well, she appears in about 20 stories. Yet never once is there a description of her. Watson goes to great lengths to describe every woman he sees, but Mrs. Hudson never rates a look.

Even the mousy Mary Sutherland was described right down to her fur muff - but we are never even told the color of Mrs. Hudson's hair. Why does Watson not see fit to tell us something of her?

Obviously because the fair sex was Watson's department - and Mrs. Hudson is in a different department. Too, we never hear of a Mr. Hudson. The consensus is that the landlady was widowed, but there's no proof of that. We do hear of her having many female friends, though - in fact, some of her "cronies" are of such a nature that Holmes expected them to show up even in the worst possible weather. (Witness "The Five Orange Pips" and Holmes's remark that nothing but the most serious case would bring out a man on such a night, therefore it must be a woman coming to visit "Mrs." Hudson. I have known many women to venture out on worse nights with the prospect of such a "visit.")

Incidentally, looking up "crony" in the dictionary does not reveal any relation to the word "crone." A "crony" is a close friend. How close? Close enough to come calling on stormy nights, at least. In fact, one special friend, calling herself "Mrs. Turner," must have been around so much that she was often relegated to helping out with meals, such as the tray of simple fare she brought in during "A Scandal in Bohemia."

"Mrs. Hudson" had, of course, prepared the meal. You'll notice that Mrs. Hudson's meals are generally a bit spare. Simple fare; "her cuisine is a little limited," commented Holmes during "The Naval Treaty." In fact, she ended up acquiring a cook, not that the cook was any better (recall how the cook could not even boil an egg properly in "The Problem of Thor Bridge"). Obviously the cook had other talents.

Do the mere facts that she has no physical female attributes to speak of, that a parade of women came in and out

"her" door at any hour of any given day or night, and that "she" can't cook worth a darn mean that Mrs. Hudson is in reality a man? Of course not. But I suspected her on my first reading of *A Study in Scarlet*.

The landlady is never mentioned by name in *STUD*, and yet something far more interesting can be learned about her. Recall Watson waiting up to find out the results of Holmes' investigations after the visit of the "Old Woman Be Damned." Hours passed as Watson sat in his chair, listlessly reading. At 10 o'clock he heard "the footsteps of the maid as she pattered off to bed. Eleven, and the more stately tread of the landlady passed my door, bound for the same destination.

Now just a darn minute here. What was Mrs. Hudson doing headed for the maid's bed?

Of course, if you're still in doubt, take a look at *Wisteria Lodge*, where a certain narrative is interrupted. "There was a bustle outside, and Mrs. Hudson was at the door."

Of course there was a bustle. Bustles were still fashionable in the 1890s, and besides, if you were a man, and anxious to conceal your gender, wouldn't you pad every part of your anatomy that you could.

The closest we ever get to anything approaching a description of Mrs. Hudson is listening to her speak, and has it ever seemed to you that she's always incredibly nervous? She chatters, she wails, she wrings her hands, she rambles on and on about worrying about "Mr. Holmes."

She overdoes the "silly Victorian female act," in my book.

Certainly she's not exactly the kind of landlady I'd picture as stately.

But then, Mrs. Hudson didn't have much reason to be stately.

She had every reason to be nervous; every reason to put up with Holmes's stinky chemical experiments, indoor target practice, and occasional cocaine binges, not to mention Dr. Watson's late-night pub rounds. Her tenants knew her little secret.

Of course, to get to the bottom of all this, we have to know just why the secret was so important. And we have to look at the real reason for Holmes's hasty departure from Victor Trevor's house in "The Gloria Scott."

Notice that in *GLOR*, the awkward incident with Victor Trevor's father occurs shortly after Holmes's arrival. Yet Holmes does not leave for some time afterward. In fact, he doesn't leave until the arrival of the mysterious and sinister "Hudson."

Obviously, Hudson has the goods on old Trevor and Mr. Beddoes... but just why is Sherlock Holmes so frightened of

him? Hudson had turned to the same trade that Charles Augustus Milverton would later perfect to an art form. He blackmailed people. Recall Holmes' utter hatred of Milverton, far worse than his loathing of Moriarty. Why?

He had some personal experience with being blackmailed. By whom? Hudson. Hudson, "the devil." Hudson, who smiled in a loose-lipped sort of way. The old seaman who'd had enough of being out to sea with only males for company, and was anxious to make up for lost time with a constant parade of maids, cooks, and Mrs. Turners, at Baker Street.

What did Hudson know about Holmes? We'll probably never know. But whatever Hudson had, it was enough to keep

Holmes at Baker Street for many years, making absolutely princely payments to his "landlady." And of course Holmes had plenty on Hudson too - enough to keep him in line most of the time.

And as for Watson, you 'll notice he got married and out of there just as fast as he could, as often as he could.

They still live with their old servants, who probably know so much of Rucastle s past life that he finds it difficult to part from them...

"The Copper Beeches"

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 any two people in a maximum of six steps. Last month, we connected Burgess Penguin) with Basil Rathbone. This month, let's connect Frank Gorshin (The Rathbone.



be made to connect Meredith (The Riddler) with Basil

This Month: Frank Riddler



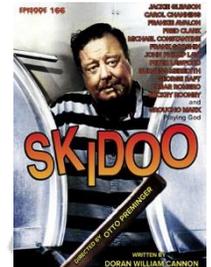
Gorshin (1907-

1997) as the

Appeared in 21 episodes as the Penguin
Over 175 TV and movie credits



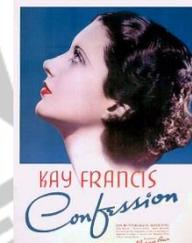
Frank Gorshin appeared as "The Man" in "Skidoo" (1968)



Jeffery Sayre also appeared as the Senator in "Skidoo"



Jeffery Sayre appeared as an unnamed actor in (1937)



"Confession"

Basil Rathbone also appeared as Michael Michailow in "Confession" (1937)

PHOTOS FROM THE SHERLOCK HOLMES INTERNATIONAL EXHIBITION



The First Line Quiz Answers

Try to match the first line of each Story, with the Story itself... ANSWERS will be posted in next month's newsletter...

	Abbrev.	Line
1.	LADY	"BUT why Turkish?" asked Mr. Sherlock Holmes, gazing fixedly at my boots.
2.	NORW	"FROM the point of view of the criminal expert," said Mr. Sherlock Holmes, "London has become a singularly uninteresting city since the death of the late lamented Professor Moriarty."
3.	BERY	"HOLMES," said I as I stood one morning in our bow-window looking down the street, "here is a madman coming along."
4.	SILV	"I AM afraid, Watson, that I shall have to go," said Holmes as we sat down together to our breakfast one morning.
5.	VALL	"I AM inclined to think--" said I. "I should do so," Sherlock Holmes remarked impatiently.
6.	GLOR	"I HAVE some papers here," said my friend Sherlock Holmes as we sat one winter's night on either side of the fire, "which I really think, Watson, that it would be worth your while to glance over."
7.	ILLU	"IT CAN'T hurt now," was Holmes's comment when, for the 10 th time in as many years, I asked his leave to reveal the following narrative.
8.	IDEN	"MY DEAR fellow," said Sherlock Holmes as we sat on either side of the fire in his lodgings at Baker Street, "life is infinitely stranger than anything which the mind of man could invent."
9.	COPP	"TO THE man who loves art for its own sake," remarked Sherlock Holmes, tossing aside the advertisement sheet of the Daily Telegraph, "it is frequently in its least important and lowliest manifestations that the keenest pleasure is to be derived."
10.	REDC	"WELL, Mrs. Warren, I cannot see that you have any particular cause for uneasiness, nor do I understand why I, whose time is of some value, should interfere in the matter."
11.	MUSG	AN ANOMALY which often struck me in the character of my friend Sherlock Holmes was that, although in his methods of thought he was the neatest and most methodical of mankind, and although also he affected a certain quiet primness of dress, he was none the less in his personal habits one of the most untidy men that ever drove a fellow-lodger to distraction.
12.	GREE	DURING my long and intimate acquaintance with Mr. Sherlock Holmes I had never heard him refer to his relations, and hardly ever to his own early life.
13.	SOLI	FROM the years 1894 to 1901 inclusive, Mr. Sherlock Holmes was a very busy man.
14.	DANC	HOLMES had been seated for some hours in silence with his long, thin back curved over a chemical vessel in which he was brewing a particularly malodorous product.
15.	SUSS	HOLMES had read carefully a note which the last post had brought him.
16.	3GAB	I DON'T think that any of my adventures with Mr. Sherlock Holmes opened quite so abruptly, or so dramatically, as that which I associate with The Three Gables.
17.	WIST	I FIND it recorded in my notebook that it was a bleak and windy day towards the end of March in the year 1892.
18.	BLUE	I HAD called upon my friend Sherlock Holmes upon the second morning after Christmas, with the intention of wishing him the compliments of the season.
19.	REDH	I HAD called upon my friend, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, one day in the autumn of last year and found him in deep conversation with a very stout, florid-faced, elderly gentleman with fiery red hair.
20.	SECO	I HAD intended "The Adventure of the Abbey Grange" to be the last of those exploits of my friend, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, which I should ever communicate to the public.
21.	BLAC	I HAVE never known my friend to be in better form, both mental and physical, than in the year '95.
22.	CARD	IN CHOOSING a few typical cases which illustrate the remarkable mental qualities of my friend, Sherlock Holmes, I have endeavoured, as far as possible, to select those which presented the minimum of sensationalism, while offering a fair field for his talents.
23.	RESI	IN GLANCING over the somewhat incoherent series of Memoirs with which I have endeavoured to illustrate a few of the mental peculiarities of my friend Mr. Sherlock Holmes, I have been struck by the difficulty which I have experienced in picking out examples which shall in every way answer my purpose.
24.	YELL	In publishing these short sketches based upon the numerous cases in which my companion's singular gifts have made us the listeners to, and eventually the actors in, some strange drama, it is only natural that I should dwell rather upon his successes than upon his failures.
25.	DEVI	IN RECORDING from time to time some of the curious experiences and interesting recollections which I associate with my long and intimate friendship with Mr. Sherlock Holmes, I have continually been faced by difficulties caused by his own aversion to publicity.
26.	BRUC	IN THE third week of November, in the year 1895, a dense yellow fog settled down upon London.
27.	STUD	IN THE YEAR 1878 I took my degree of Doctor of Medicine of the University of London, and proceeded to Netley to go through the course prescribed for surgeons in the Army.
28.	TWIS	ISA WHITNEY, brother of the late Elias Whitney, Principal of the Theological College of St. George's, was much addicted to opium.
29.	LION	IT IS a most singular thing that a problem which was certainly as abstruse and unusual as any which I have faced in my long professional career should have come to me after my retirement, and be brought, as it were, to my very door.
30.	FINA	IT IS with a heavy heart that I take up my pen to write these the last words in which I shall ever record the singular gifts by which my friend Mr. Sherlock Holmes was distinguished.

31.	CHAS	IT IS years since the incidents of which I speak took place, and yet it is with diffidence that I allude to them.
32.	3GARR	IT MAY have been a comedy, or it may have been a tragedy. It cost one man his reason, it cost me a blood-letting, and it cost yet another man the penalties of the law.
33.	EMPT	IT WAS in the spring of the year 1894 that all London was interested, and the fashionable world dismayed, by the murder of the Honourable Ronald Adair under most unusual and inexplicable circumstances.
34.	3STU	IT WAS in the year '95 that a combination of events, into which I need not enter, caused Mr. Sherlock Holmes and myself to spend some weeks in one of our great university towns, and it was during this time that the small but instructive adventure which I am about to relate befell us.
35.	LAST	IT WAS nine o'clock at night upon the second of August—the most terrible August in the history of the world.
36.	SIXN	IT WAS no very unusual thing for Mr. Lestrade, of Scotland Yard, to look in upon us of an evening, and his visits were welcome to Sherlock Holmes, for they enabled him to keep in touch with all that was going on at the police headquarters.
37.	ABBE	IT WAS on a bitterly cold night and frosty morning, towards the end of the winter of '97, that I was awakened by a tugging at my shoulder.
38.	MAZA	IT WAS pleasant to Dr. Watson to find himself once more in the untidy room of the first floor in Baker Street which had been the starting-point of so many remarkable adventures.
39.	REIG	IT WAS some time before the health of my friend Mr. Sherlock Holmes recovered from the strain caused by his immense exertions in the spring of '87.
40.	CREE	MR. SHERLOCK HOLMES was always of opinion that I should publish the singular facts connected with Professor Presbury, if only to dispel once for all the ugly rumours which some twenty years ago agitated the university and were echoed in the learned societies of London.
41.	HOUN	MR. SHERLOCK HOLMES, who was usually very late in the mornings, save upon those not infrequent occasions when he was up all night, was seated at the breakfast table.
42.	DYIN	MRS. HUDSON, the landlady of Sherlock Holmes, was a long-suffering woman.
43.	ENGR	OF ALL the problems which have been submitted to my friend, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, for solution during the years of our intimacy, there were only two which I was the means of introducing to his notice—that of Mr. Hatherley's thumb, and that of Colonel Warburton's madness.
44.	SPEC	ON GLANCING over my notes of the seventy odd cases in which I have during the last eight years studied the methods of my friend Sherlock Holmes, I find many tragic, some comic, a large number merely strange, but none commonplace: for, working as he did rather for the love of his art than for the acquirement of wealth, he refused to associate himself with any...
45.	CROO	ONE summer night, a few months after my marriage, I was seated by my own hearth smoking a last pipe and nodding over a novel, for my day's work had been an exhausting one.
46.	SHOS	SHERLOCK HOLMES had been bending for a long time over a low-power microscope.
47.	SIGN	SHERLOCK HOLMES took his bottle from the corner of the mantelpiece, and his hypodermic syringe from its neat morocco case.
48.	RETI	SHERLOCK HOLMES was in a melancholy and philosophic mood that morning.
49.	STOC	SHORTLY after my marriage I had bought a connection in the Paddington district.
50.	THOR	SOMEWHERE in the vaults of the bank of Cox and Co., at Charing Cross, there is a travel-worn and battered tin dispatch-box with my name, John H. Watson, M.D., Late Indian Army, painted upon the lid.
51.	BLAN	THE ideas of my friend Watson, though limited, are exceedingly pertinacious.
52.	NAVA	THE JULY which immediately succeeded my marriage was made memorable by three cases of interest, in which I had the privilege of being associated with Sherlock Holmes and of studying his methods.
53.	NOBL	THE LORD ST. SIMON marriage, and its curious termination, have long ceased to be a subject of interest in those exalted circles in which the unfortunate bridegroom moves.
54.	SCAN	TO SHERLOCK HOLMES she is always the woman.
55.	PRIO	WE HAVE had some dramatic entrances and exits upon our small stage at Baker Street, but I cannot recollect anything more sudden and startling than the first appearance of Thorneycroft Huxtable, M.A., Ph.D., etc.
56.	MISS	WE WERE fairly accustomed to receive weird telegrams at Baker Street, but I have a particular recollection of one which reached us on a gloomy February morning, some seven or eight years ago, and gave Mr. Sherlock Holmes a puzzled quarter of an hour.
57.	BOSC	WE WERE seated at breakfast one morning, my wife and I, when the maid brought in a telegram.
58.	FIVE	WHEN I glance over my notes and records of the Sherlock Holmes cases between the years '82 and '90, I am faced by so many which present strange and interesting features that it is no easy matter to know which to choose and which to leave.
59.	GOLD	WHEN I look at the three massive manuscript volumes which contain our work for the year 1894, I confess that it is very difficult for me, out of such a wealth of material, to select the cases which are most interesting in themselves, and at the same time most conducive to a display of those peculiar powers for which my friend was famous.
60.	VEIL	WHEN one considers that Mr. Sherlock Holmes was in active practice for twenty-three years, and that during seventeen of these I was allowed to cooperate with him and to keep notes of his doings, it will be clear that I have a mass of material at my command.

So what horror are you inflicting on us today?

Oh, ye of little faith... I have been trying to determine the flash point of this particular liquid...

Uh, does the teacher know you are conducting this experiment...?

Fog, Mason, & Moran

You will learn one of my strongest tenets... "Sometimes it is more expedient and convenient to request forgiveness for a particular activity than it is to seek permission, which may unnecessarily delay implementation..."

I probably should start evacuating the building...

