

The Bilge Pump

Vol. 03, No. 4 - April, 2015

The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star



From the Editors: A compilation of various topics for you this month.

Don, Steve, & Walt

May 3rd, 2015 Meeting

The next meeting will be held on Sunday, May 3rd, 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."

The quiz will cover **CHAPTERS 6-9**. We will also discuss Holmes' relationship with Scotland Yard.

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

March 29, 2015 Meeting

Fifteen Sherlockians were present at La Madeleine for the March 29th meeting. Walter gave a special toast to a special woman (page 2).

Cindy and Sandra won the quiz this month, which was based on the first 5 chapters of *"The Sign of Four."* **Both received Sherlockian books for their efforts.**

Tim gave a wonderful presentation on the use of cocaine in the Canon, and how it is misperceived today. There are over a dozen references to the drug in the stories. And remember, the famous line, "Quick Watson, the needle..." is not in the Canon.

We will be displaying Sherlockian items again at the Perot Museum on April 2, during their mystery night. Additionally, we will be participating with the Museum on April 17 during their Murdery Mystery event, as well as their Mystery night on May 7th.

Sandra reported on the possibility of an on-line Sherlockian conference later in April, called "Unlocked" (see page 3)

Several society members attended the recent Sherlockian plays in the metroplex. Both were fun, with excellent acting.

Don, BSI, provided us with a summary and slide show of his recent trip to Japan, where he spoke to the Japan Sherlock Holmes Society, on foreign editions and the art of collecting.

Tim briefed us on the Ian McKellan movie release, as well as the BBC Special for this Christmas.

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

THE CREW MOVIE NIGHT

The next Crew movie night will be on Saturday, April 18, at the home of Walt and Linda. Thanks to our wonderful hosts.

We will be watching, "They Might Be Giants," which stars George C. Scott and Joanne Woodward... *In a Manhattan psychiatric hospital a man, convinced he is Sherlock Holmes, is treated by a female doctor who happens to be named Watson.*



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

You can follow us on Twitter at: [@barquelonestar](https://twitter.com/barquelonestar)

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

Who dunnit:



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A TOAST TO QUEEN VICTORIA

Walter Pieper

Ladies and Gentlemen please rise as I offer a toast to our Grand Sovereign Queen Victoria.

Much beloved by her people, she has added grace and beauty to our great land.

She was given the affectionate title The Grand Mother of Europe.

For she watches over her people as a mother watches over her children.

To her majesty Victoria, by the Grace of God of The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Queen defender of the faith, Empress of India.

The Queen!

THE ADVENTURES THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN

Baker Street Journal – April, 1956

It is instructive to speculate upon the unhappier fate that might have attended a number of very bloody criminals if only Sherlock Holmes had been invited, or permitted, to put himself upon their trail.

A wider and more intensive use of the remarkable powers the Great Detective possessed would, we must think, have made the air not only of London but of the whole wide world the sweeter for it.

In the cases of Jack the Ripper, as well as Lizzie Borden, it is reasonable to suppose that if Sherlock Holmes had been given a free hand the outcome - or the lack of outcome - would have been different.

By eliminating the impossible, he would probably have found the very axe with which the incredible deeds on Second Street were done.

And if the regular police force of London, in their inability to go everywhere, see everything, overhear everyone, could not lay Jack the Ripper by the heels, it is pleasant to believe that Mr. Holmes' irregular police force could easily have done so.

But these are only two cases out of the many that went unsolved and unrequited during the period of Holmes' active practice.

Any student of the grisly and the macabre can name offhand a dozen instances in which the swift, sure strokes that only the Master could deal would have brought retribution and justice where retribution and justice were due.

It is hard to believe that the man who had no more failures throughout his career than could he counted upon the fingers of a single hand should not have been summoned oftener by Scotland Yard to bring their own batting average up to a slightly higher level!

We are tempted, as we are on so many other occasions when things go amiss, to suspect the machinations of ex-Professor Moriarty.

But more likely, where this particular recalcitrance is concerned, we should point the finger of accusation at G. Lestrade and Tobias Gregson.

Got an extra £2995 plus airfare burning a hole in your Spenser Hart suit trousers? If so, head on over to the Official Sherlocked Convention in London (April 24-26), where you can purchase the VIP package which will buy you the opportunity to "have an intimate roundtable discussion with Steven Moffat and Mark Gatiss, go on a guided tour of the sets with Arwel Jones as your guide, and get priority seating at all events alongside a full suite of autographs, photo shoots and numerous other bonuses." (Hey, while you're at it, be sure to photobomb Benedict Cumberbatch for me!)

For those of us who can't quite afford that-- or even the £44 plus airfare for the cheap seats -- perhaps you'd like to join in on Unlocked -- the "unofficial free online Sherlock Convention and pajama party". Go to <http://unlockedcon.tumblr.com/> for more information on the on-line convention.

Whether your dressing gown is blue silk or mouse-coloured, there is likely to be something of interest. Currently over 50 panels are being developed for the April 24-26 event, with everything from "ACD References You Might Have Missed", "Golden Triangles and Lighting From the Top: How Cinematography Enhances the Story", "Sherlock Holmes in Differing Adaptations" and "What Exactly Does an Army Doctor Do?" to more Tumblrish fare such as "Shipping" (creating romantic relationships amongst characters not clearly visible in canon, a trend recently examined in a rather respectable source-- The New York Times), and "Asexuality vs Celibacy in BBC Sherlock." Writers and artist will be participating in online challenges and readers will be discussing their favourite "fics".

Websites such as Archive of Our Own (AO3) and Fanfiction.net are excellent sources for fictional works. AO3 has almost 80,000 works of fiction by amateur and professional writers on Sherlock Holmes, fully sortable by which adaptation you are interested in and style of fiction.



There will also be a watch-along of all episodes of BBC Sherlock and places to just hang out virtually and talk Sherlock Holmes. Not comfortable with the world of online fandom? Check out The Giant Chat of Sumatra before the Con to get used to all online camaraderie has to offer at <http://holmes.dreamhosters.com/chat/>

The Giant Chat of Sumatra features discussion of a Sherlockian movie or show which participants stream on their own computers and discuss. April is dubbed "Awful April", and features adaptations generally thought to be horrible...such as Sherlock: Undercover Dog, Young Sherlock: The Mystery of the Manor House, George Anton's Sherlock Holmes, Sherlock Holmes and the Shadow Watchers, and The Asylum's Sherlock Holmes...discussions on Wednesdays at 8:30 pm EST. Stop by for a bit and see just what an online convention is all about. The stereotypical BBC Sherlock "Fangirl" is often also a noted academic, cultural analyst, film student, or literature professor in the "real world".

A TOUGH QUIZ

So you think the quizzes Jim Webb and I give out each month are tough, here are the questions for the 1953 "The Five Orange Pips" annual meeting.

1. Give the first names of the three Garridebs.
2. What Journal carried the announcement that the marriage of Baron Gruner and Violet de Merville would not take place?
3. Whose house did Holmes and Watson see from Crooksbury Hill?
4. Who was the journalist in the stand when it fell at the Doncaster Races?
5. Whom did Holmes say he had met at a garden party in Plymouth?
6. Who inherited an income of £ 1,000 from his wife?
7. In what story did Holmes and Watson stop at the Hereford Arms?
8. Whose father was a plumber in the Tooting Court Road?
9. Who was Josiah Amberley's partner?
10. What was the name of Edith Presbury's fiancee?

Answers on Page 12

COPYRIGHTS KEEPING YOUR HEAD SPINNING...

With all the discussions concerning copyrights, estates, and trademarks, it may be hard to try and keep it straight. Darlene Cypser has a wonderful ongoing essay on the in's and out's of the copyright laws that you can see at

<http://www.bardsandscribes.com/copyrights.html>

She provided the following list, which is the most simplified approach...

- Any work CREATED on or after January 1, 1978 is in copyright until at least 2073 (life plus 95 years).
 - Any work PUBLISHED before 1923 is in the public domain.
 - Any work CREATED before 1923 and NOT PUBLISHED before 2002 is in the public domain.
 - Any work CREATED before 1923 and PUBLISHED before 2002 is in copyright until 2047.
 - Any work CREATED on or after January 1, 1923 but PUBLISHED before December 31, 1977 without a proper copyright notice, is in the public domain.
 - Any work COPYRIGHTED on or after January 1, 1923 but before December 31, 1947 which failed to file a renewal of the copyright at the end of the first term is in the public domain.
 - Any work COPYRIGHTED on or after January 1, 1923 but before December 31, 1977 (and which was properly renewed if required prior to 1997) will have a copyright term of 95 years.
- Some works might fall into multiple categories, which makes things even more confusing.

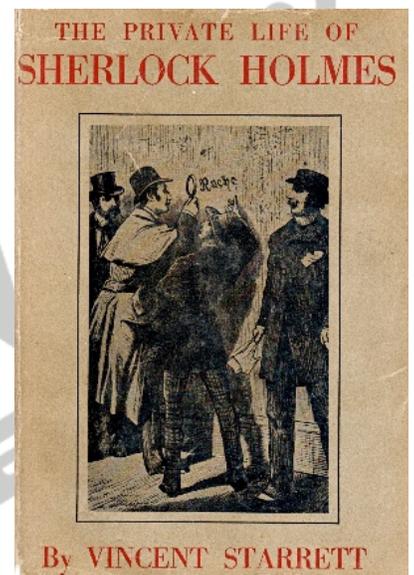
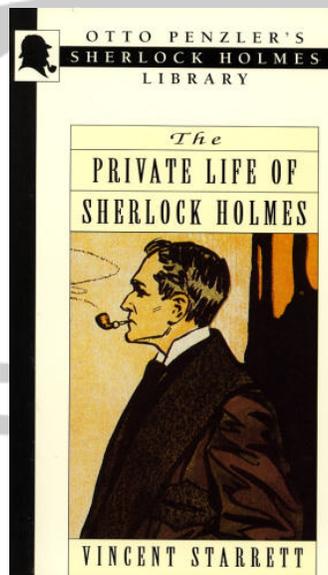
THE PRIVATE LIFE...

Carl & Sandie Heifetz

With the advent of interest in Sherlock Holmes among the youth, precipitated by the recent motion pictures and two TV series, there may be interest enough to justify a wonderful book that should enhance their reading of the original stories, or Canon as we reverently refer to them.

The book is "The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes" by Vincent Starrett. I'm now re-reading my copy of the volume originally published in 1960.

It lays out the total Sherlockian experience from a gifted writer who was enthralled with the stories and loved to write about them.



OH, THOSE PRANKSTERS...

Both of These Articles Ran on April 1...

Archive Discovery Proves Sherlock Holmes Was a Real Person -- Portsmouth, AroundMyArea.com

Museum experts in Portsmouth have found evidence Sherlock Holmes is not a literary creation but in fact a real detective from the city. Theories Doyle's tales were based on reality are ever-present, but now archivists have discovered documents including part of a birth certificate which proves Holmes existence. Along with a newspaper clipping announcing the birth it is one of a number of documents related to an Ernest William Sherlock Holmes who was born in the Portsea area of Portsmouth in 1854. Records also show he was briefly employed to work at Fratton Police Station in the city and played third violin for the Portsmouth Light Symphony Society.

The shock discovery was made by staff working on the Arthur Conan Doyle Lancelyn Green Bequest which saw 40,000 artefacts donated to Portsmouth City Council. The sheer number of documents involved means many have not been properly examined by historians until now. This newly discovered Holmes would have been in his early 30s when Conan Doyle wrote *A Study in Scarlet*, the first novel starring his detective creation, and experts believe the two could have crossed paths while the author was working as a doctor in the city.

Prof Lydia Olsa, Portsmouth Museums' director of historical studies, said: "We found a few different documents that seemed like coincidences but these latest discoveries pulls everything together. It's an amazing find and changes the way we think about the world's greatest detective.

"This Mr. Holmes appears to have been overlooked previously because Sherlock was a middle name. From what we can see he was somewhat of a maverick and so his police career was fairly short-lived. Once we have examined all the evidence I'm sure it will be elementary."

HAMPSHIRE EXAMINER, THURSDAY, APRIL 1, 1854

Births, Marriages and Deaths

BIRTH

ROMSEY.— Parish announcement of the birth of **Andrew Peter Richard Isaiah Lonsworth** to Mr and Mrs Frederick Oliver Oscar Lonsworth on Monday 6 March 1854, as recognised by the registrar of the realm.

PORTSEA—PORTSMOUTH.— In this city to the wife of Mr Roderick Edmund Holmes an infant son born **Ernest William Sherlock Holmes** on Tuesday, 14 March, 1854, at their family residence in Portsea, Portsmouth. This is the second son of the household.

Stunning Discovery Confirms Death Of Sherlock Holmes' Archenemy – CONTINUUM – News and Events from University Libraries

A mysterious box containing the skull of Professor James Moriarty — archenemy to renowned detective Sherlock Holmes — was delivered last month, anonymously, to Timothy Johnson at the University of Minnesota Libraries.

"I was stunned, somewhat delighted, and skeptical when I first opened the box," said Johnson, a well-known Sherlock Holmes expert and curator of Rare Books and the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota Libraries. "My immediate thought was it can't be Moriarty because the skull has less frontal development than I would have expected from a man of his intellect."

Johnson sent the skull to forensics experts in the University of Minnesota Medical School for DNA testing. On Monday, Johnson got the news that it is — indeed — Moriarty's skull.

Moriarty was a criminal mastermind of the late 19th century and Holmes' chief nemesis. Holmes often referred to Moriarty as the "Napoleon of crime." Nearly all law enforcement officials, historians, and Holmes aficionados concluded that Moriarty fell to his death following his epic 1891 struggle with Holmes atop Reichenbach Falls in Switzerland.

But until now, there was no physical proof of Moriarty's death. This stunning discovery at the University of Minnesota apparently puts this mystery to bed. Johnson said that grass, leaves, and mud found on the skull were linked to the Reichenbach Falls region, providing further evidence that the skull was recovered in the gorge beneath the falls.

The skull and note that said simply "Professor Moriarty" was addressed to Johnson. It had no return address. Johnson said the skull will become part of the Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota, which, in fact — no fooling — is the largest collection of Sherlock Holmes material in the world.



10 Things You Can Learn From Sherlock Holmes

Morgan House, The Motley Fool

I read A Few Lessons from Sherlock Holmes by Peter Bevlin. It's a really fun read, a collection of quotes from Holmes stories with life lessons that are full of wisdom. Here are ten things I learned (all direct quotes from the book).

- **Approach problems with a blank mind:**

We approached the case... with an absolutely blank mind, which is always an advantage. We had formed no theories.

We were there simply to observe and to draw inferences from our observations... I have not all my facts yet, but I do not think there are any insuperable difficulties.

Still, it is an error to argue in front of your data. You find yourself insensibly twisting them round to fit your theories. ...

It is a capital mistake to theorize before one has data.

Insensibly one begins to twist facts to suit theories, instead of theories to suit facts.

- **Take a multidisciplinary approach to learning:**

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 interplay of ideas and the oblique uses of knowledge are often of extraordinary interest... One's ideas must be as broad as Nature if they are to interpret Nature. All other men are specialists, but his specialism is omniscience.

- **Be selective about what you believe:**

I consider that a man's brain originally is like a little empty attic, and you have to stock it with such furniture as you choose. A fool takes in all the lumber of every sort he comes across, so that the knowledge which might be useful to him gets crowded out, or at best is jumbled up with a lot of other things so that he has a difficulty in laying his hands upon it. ...

Now the skillful workman is very careful indeed as to what he takes into his brain-attic. He will have nothing but the tools which may help him in doing his work, but of these he has a large assortment, and all in the most perfect order.

It is a mistake to think the little room has elastic walls and can distend to any extent. Depend upon it, there comes a time when for every addition of knowledge you forget something you knew before. It is of the highest importance, therefore, not to have useless facts elbowing out the useful ones.

- **It is so tempting to fool yourself:**

The greatest sign of an ill-regulated mind is to believe things because you wish them to be so.

- **Ensure you aren't blinded by your discoveries:**

But some of us are too much attracted by the thought of rare things and forget the law of averages in diagnosis.

There is a man who is very proud of having diagnosed a rare abdominal disease on several occasions.

But as for some years he made this diagnosis in every obscure abdominal condition, of course being nearly always wrong one cannot feel that he deserves much credit.

- **Knowledge and education can backfire:**

Perhaps, when a man has special knowledge and special powers like my own, it rather encourages him to seek a complex explanation when a simpler one is at hand.

- **You have to tame and filter your own ideas:**

Nothing can be done without preconceived ideas; only there must be the wisdom not to accept their deductions beyond what experiments confirm.

- **Simple problems can be the hardest to solve:**

Paradoxically the strange crime is often easier to solve than the common one. I have already explained to you what is out of the common is usually a guide rather than a hindrance... It is only the colourless, uneventful case which is hopeless... It seems, from what I gather, to be the simple cases which are so extremely difficult. That sounds a little paradoxical. But it is profoundly true. Singularity is almost invariably a clue. The more featureless and commonplace a crime is, the more difficult it is to bring it home.

- **Data can increase confidence faster than ability:**

More information isn't necessarily better information but it may falsely increase our confidence. What is not worth knowing is not worth knowing. A wise man sees as much as he ought, not as much as he can.

- **There's still so much important stuff out there we don't know:**

The world is full of obvious things which nobody by any chance ever observes.



SHERLOCK HOLMES' FRENCH CONNECTION

Liese Sherwood-Fabre

In *The Greek Interpreter*, Sherlock Holmes gives two clues of his past. In addition to noting his ancestors were country squires, he also shares that art was in his blood, given his grandmother was the sister of Vernet, the French artist.

Some speculation exists as to which Vernet. Three generations of Vernets garnered patronage from both the French monarchy and Napoleon: Claude-Joseph Vernet (1714 – 1789); Antoine Charles Horace Vernet, known as Carle Vernet (1758 – 1836); and Émile Jean-Horace Vernet, known as Horace Vernet (1789 – 1863)¹.



Simple mathematics suggests the most logical choice would be the youngest Vernet. For Sherlock and Mycroft's mother to be between twenty and twenty-five at marriage, she would have to have been born between 1821-1826.

Taking another twenty to twenty-five years or so for Sherlock's grandmother to be born, means a birth date of about 1795 - 1800 or earlier, clearly putting her as a contemporary of Horace.

In reality, Horace Vernet had one sister: Camille Françoise Joséphine (1788-1858) who married the French painter Hippolyte Lecomte (1781-1857) and whose son, Charles Emile Hippolyte Lecomte-Vernet, was also a painter².

Obviously, Doyle could not have selected a better family than the Vernet dynasty to provide Sherlock his inherited artistic tendencies.

Claude-Joseph was known for his landscapes and seascapes³; Carle for his realistic horses, based on his own

knowledge as an expert horseman⁴; and Horace for portraits and realistic battle scenes⁵.

A little research also supplies some interesting facts for additional color in Sherlock's



"ancestry." Horace Vernet was born in the Louvre, and his father, fleeing with his wife and children, barely escaped being shot during the French Revolution.

Horace was also known for having an incredible memory, able to sketch a scene or face seen only once with total recall⁶.

The Vernet family had an English connection as well. Claude-Joseph married an English woman, Virginia Parker, during his time in Italy, and British visitors on the Grand Tour were his most loyal patrons⁷.

It might have this British link that provided the basis for selecting the Vernet family for Sherlock's artistic inheritance, but his great-uncle's ability to remember a location years later seems quite Holmesian as well.

¹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claude_Joseph_Vernet

² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hippolyte_Lecomte

³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Claude_Joseph_Vernet

⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Carle_Vernet

⁵ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Horace_Vernet

⁶ David Bartlet, *Paris with Pen and Pencil*

⁷ <http://www.philamuseum.org/collections/biography/16017.html>

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

DOYLE MANUSCRIPTS SOLD

Randall Stock

Swann Galleries sold three Conan Doyle manuscripts and some of his letters at auction on Thursday. All the Conan Doyle material sold and went for well above the pre-sale high estimates.

The most expensive manuscript, for "The Nightmare Room," sold for more than double its high estimate and realized \$11,250. You can get the details on each manuscript, along with photos and sale prices, at my web page on the Swann sale at:

<http://www.bestofsherlock.com/ref/doyle-mss-swann-2015.htm>

GONE TO TEXAS

From Karen Murdock

An excerpt of an article by Will Pavia in "The Times" (London) 9 March under the headline "Gone to Texas: how Britain's literary history was sold page by page: Ian McEwan is the latest British author whose personal archive has been shipped to a US library. Pavia went to Austin to find out why:

A British visitor to the Harry Ransom Center in Austin, Texas, feels much like a Greek tourist in the British Museum, staring at the Elgin Marbles and wondering, a little peevishly, what they are doing so far from home.

Here in a colossal white stone building lie the papers and manuscripts of most of the greatest British writers of the last century. Gathered up from sheds and garages in damp English towns, often under the noses of a horrified British literary establishment, they have been shipped to this white fortress that turns pink each evening in the desert sun.

In not quite six decades, thanks to its hard-charging directors and vast reserves of cash, the Harry Ransom Center has become the most successful acquisitions library in the world. Such has been its success in the rare book trade that dealers and despairing managers of British libraries refer to the flow of literary treasures to Austin by GTT: Gone To Texas.

The most recent manuscripts to suffer that fate are those of Ian McEwan: the men from Harry Ransom made him an offer he could not refuse. His papers are being sorted when I arrive at the library and descend into a cavernous, softly lit cellar. Here in cardboard boxes, on rows of moveable shelves, lie the papers of Keats, Byron and Shelley. Here lie Shaw, Lawrence and Graham Greene, beside their still living counterparts, Tom Stoppard, Penelope Lively and Julian Barnes.

A librarian shows me neat handwritten drafts of Sherlock Holmes stories and in an upstairs room I see the yellowing sooty shirt Arthur Conan Doyle was wearing the day his house caught fire and he dashed about in the smoke to salvage books and papers (his wife saved the garment for posterity).

[. . .]

Why is it all here? What is it doing in this city of hippies, alt-rock and excellent pork rib barbecue? The director of the Harry Ransom Center answers in the time-honoured manner of so many officials at the British Museum.

"What's most important is that materials end up where they can be properly appreciated and cared for and that is a very expensive undertaking," says Stephen Enniss, sitting in his book-lined office on the third floor.

"What grieves me is when I visit the local historical society of some kind just down the road from the birthplace [of an author] and the manuscripts are sitting in a case near a window totally faded out because the light is streaming in and there are no staff to conserve that material." In other words, we bought them and you weren't taking care of them anyway.

[. . .]

"They are extremely generous and helpful in the way they let scholars see what's in their archive," says Andrew Motion, the former poet laureate, who has been one of the loudest opponents of sales to US libraries, "but I have a sort of primitive feeling about the appropriateness of things belonging where they are made.

[. . .]

They don't only acquire British and Irish writers. They have the great American writers and big names from South America. They recently bought the papers of Gabriel Garcia Marquez; then it was the Colombians who got upset. The collection "wasn't in Colombia", says Enniss, offering an apparently well-rehearsed argument. "It was in Mexico and had been for a long, long time."

The reason the British section is so large has much to do with how the library was founded in 1957. Ransom was a professor of English who proposed that Texas needed its own *bibliothèque nationale*. Politicians and businessmen stumped up cash and the university, which owns oil-rich estates, allowed oil revenues to be channelled into manuscripts.

"Harry Ransom knew that the University of Texas was never going to establish a rare book collection that would rival that of Harvard, for example," says Enniss. So he looked to living poets and novelists. Many of the prominent writers whose papers were becoming available were British and they were naturally delighted to discover an American willing to offer mountains of green dollars for their piles of yellowing notebooks. In a postcard to his brother in 1965, Evelyn Waugh declared that most British authors now "hope to support their declining years by sales to Texas".

[. . .]

As Byatt dramatised the flight of cultural assets to American universities in her 1990 novel *Possession*. It contains an unscrupulous grave-robbing library director named Mortimer Cropper, who roams the English countryside with a fat chequebook, shipping manuscripts back to his archive, "a white temple shining in the desert sun". Cropper is rumoured to be loosely based on Tom Staley, the maverick collector who ran the Harry Ransom Center from 1988 until 2011.

EVIDENTLY, FLOWER MOUND RESIDENT IS AN EXPERT ON SHERLOCK HOLMES

Dallas Morning News, March 13, 2015

No one can say definitively why the stories of Sherlock Holmes have been popular for well over a century. But Don Hobbs has a clue.

"Deep down, everybody would like to be as smart as Holmes, that's what it is," said Hobbs, 63, a Flower Mound resident who is one the world's leading Sherlockians, as they're known.

Hobbs has 12,000 Holmes-related publications in a spare room of his house, with samples of all but two — Kazakh and Sindhi — of the 108 languages into which the detective stories



have been translated. His job with a radiology software company allows him to travel the world to speak to fellow Holmes aficionados, including an upcoming speech in Japan.

And he was recently inducted into the Baker Street

Irregulars, an invitation-only society of 300 Holmes experts worldwide. The organization is named after the band of street urchins who sometimes did surveillance for Holmes.

Hobbs displayed his familiarity with Holmes and the detective's creator, Arthur Conan Doyle, as he strolled recently through the Sherlock Holmes exhibition at the Perot Museum.

"There are only 36 or 37 of these in the world," he said, tapping the glass over an 1886 copy of Beeton's Christmas Annual, which featured "A Study in Scarlet," Doyle's first Sherlock Holmes story. "He got paid 25 pounds for it. Not bad."

He recalled that the idea for one of Doyle's best-known stories grew out of carriage rides with a friend through the Devon countryside, where they discussed the legend of a large hound that terrorized the desolate Dartmoor. Driving the coach was a 17-year-old boy named Harry Baskerville.

"I've been to his gravesite," Hobbs said, of the inspiration for Doyle's *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.

When Hobbs toured the Perot exhibition before it opened last month, the museum staff was understandably nervous.

"We didn't know if he might be critical, but he wasn't," said Krista Moore, museum spokeswoman.

"He said, 'I'm like a kid in a candy store.'"

Hobbs' immersion in Holmes began 30 years ago. He had sold his collection of Stephen King's works, some of which he had bought for 50 cents and sold for \$200. He went to Half Price Books and used \$250 of a \$10,000 profit to buy every Holmes book on the shelves. "I started with the vacuum cleaner philosophy. I bought everything related to Sherlock

Holmes I could find," he said. "When you have the collector gene, you want more and more."

He considers himself more of a collector than a fan.

"I think Doyle was a solid writer; I don't think he was the greatest writer. He probably was not even the best mystery writer," Hobbs said. Doyle's accomplishment was to create a universally intriguing character in Holmes. And a surprisingly believable one, he said. Moore agrees.



"We've had visitors tell us that they didn't realize Sherlock Holmes wasn't a real person," she said.

Hobbs said Doyle eventually became uneasy with the popularity of the stories. "He considered himself a serious writer and was surprised when Holmes took on a life of his own," Hobbs said. "He tried to kill him off in one story, but the demand was so great, he had to bring him back again."

Part of the detective's enduring appeal has been his adaptability. Movies during World War II showed him hunting Nazis; those in the 1970s played up his addiction to cocaine. More recent renditions depict him as an action hero.

He has been played by a variety of celebrated actors, from William Gillette on Broadway in the 19th century to Benedict Cumberbatch in the current PBS *Masterpiece Theater* series. The most famous performances were Basil Rathbone's in the mid-20th century. The Perot's program notes for the exhibition praise Rathbone's "sharp, elegant performance," but the series of 14 movies is not Hobbs' favorite.

"The first two were pretty good, if you can get over the fact that Watson comes off as a buffoon. After that, RKO Pictures took it over and the movies were just over-the-top," he said.

Not that Holmes fans are afraid of going over the top.

Hobbs attended an annual birthday party in Moriarty, N.M., for Holmes' nemesis, Professor Moriarty, where the detective's fans dishonored the villain's memory by burning a pile of manure imported from all 50 states.

"One of the attractions for me is that I found early on that Sherlockians are among the most interesting people," he said.

He makes an effort to meet fellow experts whenever he travels, sometimes to the exasperation of his wife, who is — at best — ambivalent about devoting a room in their house to Holmes books.

"My wife is a total non-Sherlockian," he said. "She once said to me, 'The world doesn't revolve around Sherlock Holmes, you know.' I told her, 'Yes, it does.'"



From the August 06, 1905 Los Angeles Herald... the Elliot Keene Sherlock Holmes Puzzle series.

The Mystery of the Lost Playthings

Here is a marvelous mystery.

It is the mystery of the missing playthings.

That is, they were playthings to some persons.

To others they are very serious things, indeed.

When the stolen objects disappeared it was all so mysterious that there was only one thing to do, so they did it.

They sent for Sherlock Holmes.

When that wonderful man got there he wasted no time.

"There are four clues to this mystery," he said at once. "I see what the missing playthings were, how many persons stole them, of what sex the thieves were and in what they were disguised."

See if you are as clever as Sherlock Holmes and can tell what the four clues were.

SHERLOCKIAN SCHOLARSHIP: CANDLE POWER

by Rosemary Michaud, Holmes & Watson Report, May, 1997

I lit a candle the other day, and suddenly I remembered my high school chemistry class, that particular brand of torture known as the Chern Study approach.

Let me explain. (If you are familiar with Chern Study and don't want to awaken painful memories, skip the next 3 paragraphs and go right to the Sherlock Holmes stuff.) When I was growing up, the U.S. was still lagging behind the Soviet Union in the space race to the moon, and there was great pressure on the schools to train our generation so that we could keep up with -- or get ahead of -- the Russians.

Chern Study, the scientific first cousin of the New Math, was designed to be a Challenging Class that would help develop us into the Scientists of the Future. The course kicked off with a simple earth-bound laboratory exercise. A lighted candle was placed in front of each one of us, and we were instructed to describe the candle.

No word limit, no further explanation, no hints. Simply: Describe the candle. The Bible tells us it is better to light one candle than to curse the darkness, but in this instance, most of us cursed the candle, wrote three or four brief sentences about it, and turned in our lab papers with a sense of doom.

That sense was well founded. The next day, after our woefully inadequate papers were returned to us with humbling grades, the teacher whipped out a six-page treatise on "The Candle," written by some guy with a lot of B.S. and a couple of Ph.Ds.

He covered everything from the chemical composition of the wax to the exact temperatures at the different regions within the flame. None of us could hold a candle to his description, though many of us wished we could have put a match to it.

To this day, I refuse to be ashamed of my inability to see the candle in a purely analytical way. Candlelight speaks to the imagination and the spirit; it seems almost a shame to treat such a thing as if it were just another inanimate object.

Look at the role of candles in the adventures of Sherlock Holmes, for instance. Considering that there were gas lamps, oil lamps, lanterns, and even a few electric lights in Holmes's day, a sizable proportion of Canonical events occurred by candlelight.

Here are a few highlights, each one enhanced by the candle's gleam:

- Barrymore signals out onto the moors from a window in Baskerville Hall
- Watson and Sir Henry get their first glimpse of the bestial feature of Seldon the convict
- Silver Blaze lashes out at John Straker
- Holmes catches Joseph Harrison in the act of removing the Naval Treaty from under the floorboards
- Jefferson Hope forces Enoch Drebber to choose between life and death
- Gennaro Lucca sends a desperate warning to his wife
- The sleepless Reginald Musgrave disturbs Brunton in his study of the Musgrave Ritual
- Birdy Edwards gets the better of Ted Baldwin one last time
- Grant Munro discovers his wife's secret. Hey, don't knock this as a great Canonical moment! If nothing else, it meant the story was nearly over!

Granted, the people in these scenes probably were not thinking much about the candle's magical atmosphere. Candles were prevalent because they were inexpensive and convenient to use.

If you didn't have enough money to have gas "laid on" in your house, or if your house happened to be in the country, far from the gas mains, you would find yourself using candles quite a bit. Even if you lived your everyday life surrounded by gas jets, the stump of a candle was still a very handy thing to carry in your pocket, especially if you had some secret and possibly dishonest activity planned for the evening.

And because a candle was the light nearly everyone used to show the way to bed once the other lamps had been extinguished for the night, its tiny flame was often witness to the more intimate and confidential moments between those who shared the same roof. It was with his bedroom candle in hand that Sherlock Holmes asked Doctor Watson to caution him with the occasional "Norbury."

It was again by candlelight that Holmes confessed he had been so wide of the mark in the Birlstone affair that he feared he was "an idiot whose mind has lost its grip."

And my favorite, perhaps because Sidney Paget illustrated the scene so well, is the moment when Holmes roused Watson in the early hours of morning with the deathless exhortation, "The game's afoot!"

Of course there is a scientific side to candlelight as well. Candles provided evidence for Holmes' deductions. Sometimes these were small matters, such as the length of time that Dr. Trevelyan had to wait in the Baker Street sitting room. But far greater matters turned on the evidence of candles in the "The Dancing Men" and *The Valley of Fear*.

Even more so than gaslight, candlelight seems to me the perfect medium in which to see Holmes' "own flame-like intuitions and impressions flare up."

And, oh, would I like to have seen Sherlock Holmes in my Chern Study class with a candle in front of him!

Is there any doubt that the Master would have produced a candle essay that would have sent our previous B.S./Ph.D. back to school?

Not only would Holmes have written all there was to know about the candle itself, but he would probably have gone on to deduce what the chemistry teacher had for breakfast,

what kind of car he drove to work, and whether he was getting along with his wife. While he was at it, I hope Holmes would have given his opinion of the Space Race, too, on behalf of all of us who always knew that our lives would not revolve around the study of the solar system.

I'm not saying there wasn't a very good point to be made in that Chern Study candle assignment. There was.

But I am sure we would have learned the lesson for more effectively if the teacher had given us a copy of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* along with the candle. After all, Holmes had already summarized the whole exercise for us in just seven words: "You see, but you did not observe."

Got a match?

A TOUGH QUIZ (answers)

1. Give the first names of the three Garridebs.
John, Nathan, Howard ("The Adventure of the Three Garridebs")
2. What Journal carried the announcement that the marriage of Baron Gruner and Violet de Merville would not take place?
The Morning Post ("The Adventure of the Illustrious Client")
3. Whose house did Holmes and Watson see from Crooksbury Hill?
Chiltern Grange ("The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist")
4. Who was the journalist in the stand when it fell at the Doncaster Races?
Horace Harker, of the Central Press Syndicate ("The Adventure of the Six Napoleons")
5. Whom did Holmes say he had met at a garden party in Plymouth?
Mrs. Straker ("The Adventure of Silver Blaze")
6. Who inherited an income of £ 1,000 per year from his wife?
Dr. Grimesby Roylott ("The Adventure of the Speckled Band")
7. In what story did Holmes and Watson stop at the Hereford Arms?
The Boscombe Valley Mystery
8. Whose father was a plumber in the Tottenham Court Road?
Miss Mary Sutherland ("A Case of Identity")
9. Who was Josiah Amberley's partner?
Brickfall ("The Adventure of the Retired Colourman")
10. What was the name of Edith Presbury's fiancee?
Mr. Trevor Bennett ("The Adventure of the Creeping Man")

THE BRILLIANT MIND OF EDISON LEE: SHERLOCK HOLMES COMIC STRIP

The Brilliant Mind of Edison Lee is a comic strip created by John Hambrock and distributed by King Features Syndicate.

For the past 9 years, Edison Lee, a boy genius, goes through life, with his rat friend Joules. Last month, he was able to take on the persona of Sherlock Holmes.

Attached to this newsletter is those strips.

To see more of this wonderfully inventive strip, go to <http://www.edisonleecomix.com/>



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. Last month, we connected Frank Gorshin (The Riddler) with Basil Rathbone. This month, let's connect Julie Newmar (The Catwoman) with Basil Rathbone.



This Month: Julie Newmar (1933 --) as the Catwoman

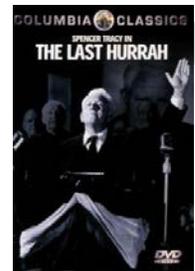
Appeared in 13 episodes as the Catwoman
Over 72 TV and movie credits

Julie Newmar starred as a salon model in "*The Band Wagon*" (1953)



Stuart Holmes also appeared as an investor in "*The Band Wagon*"

Stuart Holmes appeared in "*The Last Hurrah*" (1958)



Basil Rathbone also appeared as Norman Cass in "*The Last Hurrah*" (1958)

Baker Street Elementary

Created by Joe Fay,
Rusty & Steve Mason



Baker Street Elementary

Fay, Mason, & Mason

...Watson must now search for the
new chemistry lab, using only his
wits... As he wanders through the
school...



