

The Bilge Pump

Vol. 06, No. 05 - May, 2018
*The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the
Barque Lone Star*



PLEASE NOTE:

June 3rd Meeting NOTICE

The next meeting will be held on **Sunday, June 3rd**, at 1:00 pm. 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 Adventure of the Priory School."** Bridge. The quiz will cover this tale.

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

May 6th Meeting Summary

There were 15 people in attendance today. Steve Mason conducted the Opening Toast, "The Battered Tin Dispatch Box", originally written by Richard Kitts (see page 3).

We then proceeded to have a quiz on today's story, "The Problem of Thor Bridge." The winners of the quiz were Walter Pieper (1st) and Allen Osborne (2nd).

Steve Mason, gave a presentation on "Sherlock Holmes reminds me of..." based on one of his favorite fictional characters as a child.

Sandra Little, one of our favorite Deck Mates will be moving to Colorado, but will continue to be a member of our Society.

Liese Sherwood-Fabre suggested a sequel volume to A Grimm Holmes, also using the Brothers Grimm or nursery rhymes as inspiration (see page 5 for further details).

The Dallas Preston-Royal Library confirmed our event for Tuesday, November 13th. This will likely entail a children's mystery and two or three presentations.

The Closing Reading was given by Steve and was taken from the Baker Street Journal in 2001 (see page 4).

Tim Kline's birthday was recognized with the traditional "Happy Birthday" song.

Jim Webb took home the door prize drawing for this month.

Thanks to Brenda Hutchison, who took minutes for this meeting, which we can read in full on our website.



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

You can follow us on Twitter at: @barquelonestar

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

Who dunnit:



Third Mate
Helmsman
Spiritual Advisors

Secretaries
Historian
Webmaster

Steve Mason
Walter Pieper
Don Hobbs, BSI
Jim Webb
Cindy Brown, Brenda Hutchison
Pam Mason
Rusty Mason

mason.steve@epa.gov
waltpieper@att.net
221b@verizon.net
jimrwebb@ix.netcom.com
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Our Website: www.dfw-sherlock.org

Our Facebook Page:

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

The image is a collage of three distinct elements related to the Sherlock Holmes community:

- Top Left:** A parchment-style background with several quotes from Sherlock Holmes. Visible quotes include: "That will await him when he enters port," said he, chuckling. "It may give him a sleepless night. He will find it as sure a precursor of his fate as Openshaw did before him."; "And who is this Captain Calhoun?"; "The leader of the gang. I shall have the other"; "How did you trace it, then?"; "He took a large sheet of paper from his pocket"; "I have spent the whole day," said he, "over in January and February in '83. There were attracted my attention, since, although it was"; "Texas, I think."; "I was not and am not"; "What then?"; and "I remember the Doctor".
- Top Center:** A screenshot of the website www.dfw-sherlock.org. The site features a logo for "THE CREW OF THE BARQUE LONE STAR" (a star with a silhouette of a man), a search bar, and a navigation menu with items like Home Page, About, Crew Investitures and Awards, Newsletters, Crew Meeting Logs, & Society Pastiches, Papers, Many Faces of Sherlock Holmes, and Ephemera -- General. A featured article titled "THE MAY MEETING" is visible, accompanied by an illustration of a building labeled "Baker Street Elementary".
- Top Right:** A parchment-style background with a quote: "vessel which touched at Pondichery of these, one, the Lone Star, instantly of the states of the Union."
- Bottom Center:** A screenshot of the Facebook page for "The Crew of the Barque Lone Star" (@BarqueLoneStar). The page includes a profile picture, a cover photo for "A SHERLOCK HOLMES LITERARY SOCIETY" with details: "Monthly meetings every 1st Sunday @ 1pm La Madeleine Country French Café", and various interaction buttons like Like, Follow, Share, and Add a Button. It also shows a "You Have Unread Messages" notification and a "Page Tips" section.

A TOAST TO THE BATTERED TIN DISPATCH BOX

Richard Kitts, *The Serpentine Muse*, Volume 31, Number 4 - Fall 2015

I'm all about that box, 'bout that
box
To the tune All About that Bass

In THOR, Watson wrote:

"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 ."

But what if Watson wasn't Late
Indian Army and was, instead,
Late Bank Clerk?

He might not have had a tin
dispatch box.

He may have been forced to use
a cardboard box.

And then those papers might not
have survived.

Fortunately, Watson knew that
tin was used to prevent corrosion
and, thanks to the good doctor's
foresight, we have that
magnificent box today along with
all his writings.

Let us toast that Battered Tin
Dispatch Box.

"THE EDITOR'S GAS-LAMP"

BAKER STREET JOURNAL, STEVEN ROTHMAN, EDITOR - Winter, 2001

One of the most powerful things about reading is the way a particular book can crystallize a particular point in time.

Hand me a copy of *The Valley of Fear* and I am suddenly an 11-year-old boy huddled by the radiator on a very snowy Saturday afternoon.

All at once I am not only here and now, but also observing the Scowrers in the Pennsylvania coalfields and on the floor of the living room of my parents' old house.

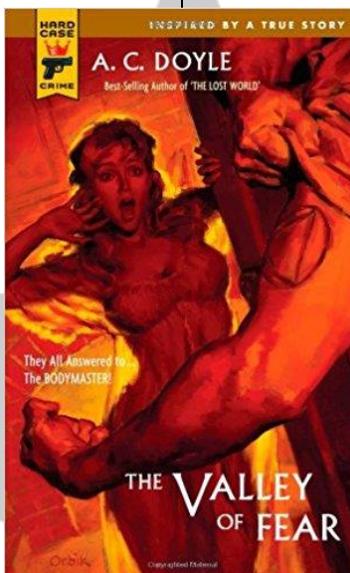
Indeed, this is one of the strongest draws of the Canon.

It is part of that small but powerful body of literature that can always draw its readers back—back to both where they were and who they were when they first encountered it.

It is a reason to rejoice that in this age books can still offer their readers a transport of joy to a land

far more powerful (in imaginative terms) than any entertainment on an Xbox.

Fear not for Holmes and Watson. They will weather the coming century as well as they have fared in the past.

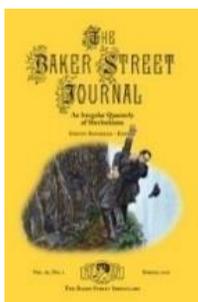


Indeed, as they are stripped of their protective copyright cocoon they may gain an even stronger hold on our corporate imagination.

They are no longer creations of one man's pen. They have stepped out of our minds and into our world.

They have joined Robin Hood, Zorro, the Scarlet Pimpernel, Beowulf, Captain Nemo, and a host of others who enrich our lives by offering us archetypes around which to pattern our hopes and expectations.

Holmes and Watson are a part of us and of our world. Our lives would not be the same without them and they would have no life without us.

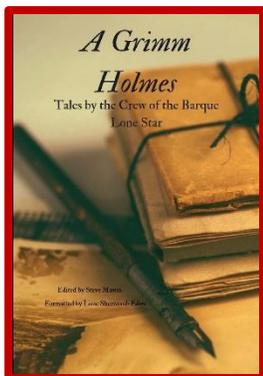


The Baker Street Journal continues to be the leading Sherlockian publication since its founding in 1946 by Edgar W. Smith. With both serious scholarship and articles that "play the game," the Journal is essential reading for anyone interested in Sherlock Holmes, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and a world where it is always 1895.

Got to: <http://www.bakerstreetjournal.com/itemsforsale/subscriptions.html> for subscription information.

THE SEQUEL

As you may be aware, we will be celebrating our 50th year of existence in a couple of years. Last year, several members participated in writing a pastiche where Holmes and Watson solve a Grimm's fairy tale (or nursery rhyme).



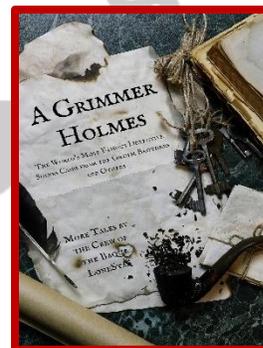
After discussions with several members, we have decided to repeat the process this year. The working title of the Anthology would be "Grimmer Holmes" or "A Grimmer Holmes."

Once again, members can write a pastiche (short story) involving Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, using a Grimm's Fairy Tale as the backdrop.

Some simple rules...

1. You can use any of the Grimm's Fairy Tales you want (most of us probably have a favorite). You may also use any nursery rhyme or other children's tale that you find appropriate. However, we would like to have each pastiche based on a single story, so please submit your tale's idea to Steve Mason, so we can ensure no one else uses the same tale.
2. Your story should be 3,000-5,000 words, which is average length for a short story. Obviously, a shorter story is fine.

3. Your story will be edited by one or two member volunteer editors, but only for grammar, typos... we will not edit the content of your story.
4. As our society and website is family-oriented, please keep your pastiche PG... I think all of our members can easily meet this criteria.
5. This project is not limited to just those members in the DFW area. Any member (if you're getting this email) is welcome to submit a pastiche.
6. We plan to finalize the anthology by the end of the calendar year, so we ask for members to submit their entry by September 30.



As we mentioned in the introduction to the first anthology, which was a big hit, much credit goes to Ms. Gayle Puhl, for the inspiration for this anthology... you can find her stories in "Sherlock Holmes and The Folk Tale Mysteries - Volume 1" and Volume 2...

The final product will be put together in book form and posted on our website and shared with all society members as a .pdf file. We plan on publishing copies of the book (as a Christmas present) for those who submit a pastiche in the anthology.

SEVENTEEN STEPS TO "THE PRIORY SCHOOL"

Brad Keefauver, Sherlock Peoria

Seventeen thoughts for further ponderance of "The Priory School" by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

DIRT FROM ALL THROUGH ENGLAND

Of Huxtable we are told, "Collar and shirt bore the grime of a long journey, and the hair bristled unkempt from the well-shaped head."

Thornycroft Huxtable had rushed to Baker Street from the north of England. How many chances on how many kinds of transportation did Huxtable have to get his collar and shirt grimey on the way South? Did his haste contribute to the filth? Is it a sign he was travelling economically, and he might have stayed a bit cleaner had he spent a little more, travelled a little slower?

THE ZENITH OF THE PRIORY SCHOOL

"The Priory is, without exception, the best and most select preparatory school in England. Lord Leverstoke, the Earl of Blackwater, Sir Cathcart Soames--they all have intrusted their sons to me. But I felt my school had reached its zenith when, three weeks ago, the Duke of Holderness sent James Wilder, his secretary, with the intimation young Lord Saltire, 10 years old, his only son and heir, was about to be committed to my charge."

So says Huxtable, but if the Priory was truly the best prep school in England, why did it need Lord Saltire to attain its highest point? Might the Priory have been just another decent school, only chosen by the Duke because his marriage had problems and keeping the boy close to home was a display of his dominance to the wife? What do sources of that time say was the best school?

DIVORCE, RICH PEOPLE STYLE

"Duke's married life had not been a peaceful one, and the matter had ended in a separation by mutual consent, the Duchess taking up her

residence in the south of France. This had occurred very shortly before, and the boy's sympathies are known to have been strongly with his mother."

Would the Duke and Duchess ever dissolve their union, or was this separation the true end of the marriage for all concerned? Was the discrete taking of lovers following such a separation to be expected, or would the duo expect each other to remain faithful even as their lives moved apart?

FIFTEEN MINUTES TO WORTH WITH

"In a quarter of an hour, we shall be at your service. If you are telegraphing home, Mr. Huxtable, it would be well to allow the people in your neighbourhood to imagine the inquiry is still going on in Liverpool."

Was Holmes expecting the worn Huxtable to telegraph home in those fifteen minutes? And if he was, was there a telegraph office close enough to 221B for Huxtable to get there and back again in fifteen minutes?

TO BE DEMONIC, OR NOT TO BE DEMONIC?

"Perhaps the scent is not so cold but that two old hounds like Watson and myself may get a sniff of it."

While we usually take the name of our discussion group, the Hounds of the Internet, as a reference to HOUN, the Holmes quote above adds the pleasant thought that Holmes and Watson were Hounds themselves, of a non-demonic sort. Since we don't add "sic" the end of our group name like a certain elder Chicago society, and *The* Hound is singular, is there any chance we can start claiming this "hounds" as the inspiration for our group designation? Or do we like being hounds from Hell over hounds from 221B?

THE HARDEST-WORKING DUKE IN ENGLAND

"How many letters did your Grace write that day?"

"Twenty or thirty. I have a large correspondence."

"Large" is a pretty good description for it. If His Grace wrote 30 letters in a day, how many of them could have truly had thought, substance, and time spent on them? And if the remainder were brief notes of no real substance, who were they to and what were they about? Did the Duke have fan mail that had to be answered?

BREAKFAST OF PREPARATORY SCHOOL CHAMPIONS

"Now, Watson, there is cocoa ready in the next room. I must beg you to hurry, for we have a great day before us."

Did the adults at the Priory get coffee in the morning, or was cocoa the beverage that started the whole school's day? Would the lads have gotten something besides cocoa for breakfast, and Holmes just didn't bring any of the rest of the school breakfast back for Watson? Or was cocoa a special treat served only to guests, delivered to the detecting duo's quarters?

REPEATING HOLMES'S WORK

"I am familiar with forty-two different impressions left by tyres," Holmes says, and one would think that some enterprising Sherlockian somewhere has attempted to list all forty-two types of tires available at the time. Have they? Was Holmes speaking of just bicycle tires, or bicycle, auto, carriage, and all other varieties of tires available in the 1890's?

**THE ANATOMY OF BICYCLE TIRES,
PRE-1900**

"An impression like a fine bundle of telegraph wires ran down the centre of it. It was the Palmer tyres." Were bicycles of Victorian England designed primarily for urban use or paved roads? Why else would the tread design be straight lines as Watson describes? Wouldn't cross-country tires with a better tread for riding on dirt have been an early innovation, or did it have to wait until the mountain bikes of a hundred years later?

**ANOTHER GREATER BLEEDER OF THE
CANON**

"Holmes held up a crumpled branch of flowering gorse. To my horror I perceived that the yellow blossoms were all dabbled with crimson. On the path, too, and among the heather were dark stains of clotted blood." While Heidegger's head wound was an awful one, he still managed to get up and on his bike for a bit so he must have retained some brain integrity. Could he have been bleeding so freely from a head wound as to spackle the local foliage other than which he came in contact with?

**WHO WAS THE PEAT-CUTTER
FRIGHTENED OF?**

Watson writes, of the peat-cutter Holmes spotted, "I brought the peasant across, and Holmes dispatched the frightened man with a note to Dr. Huxtable."

Was the peasant scared more by the dead body, or the two city fellows who insisted on showing it to him before sending him off to Huxtable? In his enthusiasm for the chase, might Holmes have even failed to mention the police, leaving the poor peasant to wonder if the two strangers might not have killed the man?

**ADVANCEMENT IN THE COACHMAN
FIELD**

"I've less reason to wish the Dook well than most men," Reuben Hayes says, "for I was his head coachman once, and cruel bad he treated me. It was him that sacked me without a character on the word of a lying corn-chandler."

Hayes seems quite the mouthy lout to have once worked his way up to head coachman. How many coachmen might a man as wealthy as the Duke be expected to have on his staff? And how might one advance to head coachman? And what could a corn chandler say about such a ranking member of the household to get him fired on his word alone?

THE NAMING OF THE INN

"Yes, it is an interesting place, this Fighting Cock," Holmes says of the inn less than two miles from Holderness Hall. While an inn might be given a name for many a reason, could this one have been the site of actual cockfights? Did such things happen in England of the day?

**THE GREAT DETECTIVE, AFRAID OF
THIEVES?**

"I fancy that I see your Grace's check-book upon the table," Holmes tells the Duke. "I should be glad if you would make me out a check for six thousand pounds. It would be as well, perhaps, for you to cross it. The Capital and Counties Bank, Oxford Street branch are my agents."

Crossing the check means the check must be deposited into Holmes's account in said bank, and that no one can simply cash it anywhere. Why was Holmes afraid he might lose it? Certainly robbery wasn't a fear, as Watson was carrying a gun. Or was Holmes simply indulging in a good habit that he practiced on all checks he collected?

**THE TRICKY MORALITY OF SHERLOCK
HOLMES**

"I must take the view, your Grace, that when a man embarks

upon a crime, he is morally guilty of any other crime which may spring from it."

So Holmes says, but his actions speak otherwise. If Holmes was going to let James Wilder escape the full force of the law in any case, why didn't he take the 12,000 pounds when offered, instead of the six? Refusing the extra money may have given him the lever to move the Duke into telling the full tale, but was hearing the full tale worth 6,000 pounds to him? Had Holmes taken the twelve, the lad would have been returned and the murderer captured all the same. If the first 6,000 was that important to Holmes, why was the second six so inconsequential, when he was going to do what the Duke wanted in any case?

**THE MATTER OF THE DUKE AND THE
INN**

"I could not go there by daylight without provoking comment, but as soon as night fell I hurried off to see my dear Arthur."

Who would have seen the Duke in daylight that couldn't have seen him come to the Fighting Cock at night, as Holmes did? And what sort of comments would have been provoked? Were there things going on at the Fighting Cock that Watson doesn't tell us about?

**MAKING REUBEN HAYES
UNDERSTAND**

"The gallows awaits him, and I would do nothing to save him from it. What he will divulge I cannot tell, but I have no doubt that your Grace could make him understand that it is to his interest to be silent."

If the gallows truly awaits Reuben Hayes, a man with a grudge against the Duke in any case, what possible argument could the Duke use to persuade him to be silent? Hayes's "best interest" seems to be a moot point with the noose awaiting him.

An Inquiry Into "The Priory School"

Murray, the Courageous Orderly (a.k.a. Alexander Braun), Hounds of the Internet

- "The Adventure of the Priory School" was first published in Collier's Weekly Magazine on January 30, 1904, and in The Strand Magazine in February 1904. It is part of The Return of Sherlock Holmes.
- The chronology for this case varies, depending on which Canon expert one consults. Estimates are as follows:
Canon: 1901 (or later)
Thursday, May 16; Baring-Gould: Thursday, May 16, 1901; Bell: Thursday, May 16, 1901; Blakeney: May 1901; Brend: May 1901; Christ: Thursday, May 16, 1901; Dakin: Monday, May 14, 1900; Folsom: Thursday, May 16, 1901; Hall: May 16, 1901; Keefauver, Thursday, May 16, 1901; Klingler: 1901; Zeisler: Thursday, May 17, 1901.
- If the case took place in 1901, as the majority of Canon chronologists state, then at the time Holmes is 47 years old and Watson 49.
- Notable Quotes:
"Perhaps the scent is not so cold but that two old hounds like Watson and myself may get a sniff of it."
"His Grace is not in the habit of posting letters himself."
"A criminal who was capable of such a thought is a man whom I should be proud to do business with."
- == The Princely Sum ==
According to Huxtable, the Duke of Holderness was prepared to pay a total of

£5,000 for the resolution of his son's kidnapping, plus an additional £1,000 for identifying the kidnapper. Considering that at the time you could buy a rather nice little manor for about £10,000 (Queen Victoria paid £30,000 for her Balmoral estate), it does amount to a truly princely sum.

In terms of today's devalued currency, £6,000 1901 pounds would be worth approximately \$2,250,000. Quite sufficient for an early—and rather comfortable—retirement!

- == Heidegger's Improbable Tracks ==
While in the matter of tracks Holmes would have beaten a Navajo at his own game, I must ponder just how clear Heidegger's tracks could have been. One must assume that since the Duke sent his heir to the Priory School, it had to be one of the Empire's very best institutions, which among other things would have meant there were well-cared for lawns. Even so, I just cannot believe that there would be much left of Heidegger's tracks the following morning.
I principally base this on Holmes' remark that the weather was dry, and on the fact that back then there were no such things as sprinkler systems. For such tracks to have been left, the man would have had to let himself down

hard enough to compact the ground, thus breaking both ankles.

Another factor to consider is that this is a boys' schools, and tracks of every size and description would have been everywhere.

- == Wilder's Culpability ==
When the duke attempts to bribe him to keep Wilder out of the affair, Holmes refuses, stating that "when a man embarks upon a crime he is morally guilty of any other crime which may spring from it." It seems to me that in this case, Holmes' knowledge of the law fails him.
Morality has nothing to do with any of this—among many other things, Wilder was unquestionably guilty of conspiracy and, if I recall correctly, English Common Law judges all members of a conspiracy equally guilty of whatever crimes are committed as a result of the conspiracy. By this standard, even the Duke himself could have found himself in a precarious situation because, unwittingly or not, he became a part of that conspiracy.
Then there is the implied bribing of Hayes by the Duke, to keep him quiet even as he stood on the gibbet.
What say you, Legal Beagles?
- == The Pot and the Kettle ==
"I am bound to tell you that you have placed yourself in a most serious position in

the eyes of the law. You have condoned a felony," states our detective in his most virtuous manner. However, the question arises as to how often have we seen him do the same thing? To my recollection, he confesses to it in HOUN, BLUE, 3GAB, and MAZA.

- == Of Visages and Holderness's Secret Son ==
Holmes really stepped on the banana peel on this one! After all, is he not capable of tracing a man's ancestors by merely glancing at an ancient painting (HOUN)? How could he not observe a family resemblance between the Duke and Wilder? For shame, sir!
- == The Fabulous Fee ==
Finally, there is the question of the Great Detective's fee—was it £6,000 or £12,000? Watson appears somewhat nebulous about the amount. My own suspicion—unfounded, perhaps—is that it was the latter.
- What else happened in 1901:
- EMPIRE
Queen Victoria dies at 6.30 a.m. on January 22, aged 82. She lived through many changes and died much loved by her people. By the end of

her reign London's population had reached 6.6 million. Edward VII succeeds her as King-Emperor.

Northern Nigeria becomes British protectorate.

Creation of North Western Frontier Province in India.

Uganda railway reaches Lake Victoria.

Robert Falcon Scott commands the Discovery on Antarctic expedition.

- BRITAIN
Wigmore Hall opens.
First electric trams from Shepherd's Bush to Acton and Kew Bridge.
First British submarine launched at Barrow-in-Furness.
Boxing is recognized as a legal sport in England.
Taff Vale case: Trade unions in Britain liable for actions of tort, stimulates Trade Union Congress to create the Labour Party.
- WORLD
Peace Protocol with China after Boxer Rebellion.
U.S. President McKinley assassinated; succeeded by Theodore Roosevelt.
Law of Associations: gives French Roman Catholics the right to form associations, if neither secret nor illegal.

Labor Councils in France to settle disputes between masters and men.

Franco-Italian agreement defines spheres of interest in the Mediterranean.

Compulsory military service established in Sweden and Norway.

New constitution in Serbia issued by Alexander.

U.S. Steel Corporation organized under J.P. Morgan and Company, bankers.

Opening of Trans-Siberian railway.

Hay-Pauncefort Treaty gives U.S. power to build and police the Panama Canal if it remains open to shipping in peace or war.

- ART
Kipling writes Kim.
Frank Norris, U.S., writes The Octopus.
- SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
Marconi transmits Morse wireless signals from Poldhu, Cornwall to St. John's, Newfoundland.
Becquerel discovers dangerous effects of radioactivity on humans.
First isolation of the hormone adrenalin.
Peter Cooper-Hewitt produces mercury vapor lamp; invented by Arons in 1892.

MAKING SENSE OF THE MESSAGE

Liese Sherwood-Fabre, PhD

Ciphers or codes are used in six of the stories in the Canon, of which four Holmes must crack to solve a case. He notes in "The Adventure of the Dancing Men" he has analyzed one hundred-sixty ciphers and does come across different ones in each of these stories.

In *The Valley of Fear*, Holmes uses an almanac to locate the words specified by a series of numbers and letters. In "The Adventure of the Gloria Scott," Holmes determines that every third word in a nonsensical message is a warning to the recipient.

In "The Adventure of the Dancing Men," Holmes must use his knowledge of substitution codes (more about that later) to read a series of messages sent through a string of stick figure drawings. He uses a code he sees in the personal columns to contact Emilia Luccia in "The Adventure of the Red Circle." The other two stories ("The Adventure of the Second Stain" and "His Last Bow") mention a code but neither requires Holmes's deciphering skills.

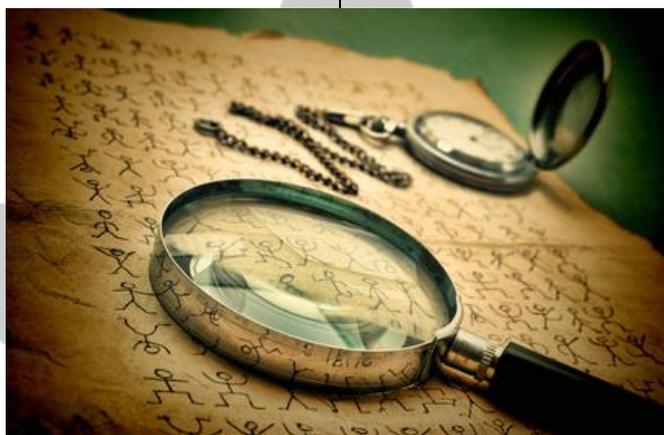
Cryptography, or the art of writing or solving codes, has a history going back to ancient Egypt where a text rearranged the letters in a stone carving to keep the message secret.

In a time before the Internet or telephone, such messages had uses from lovers sending secret messages to political and religious intrigue to warfare. (1)

Letters could be stolen and used for blackmail, as in "The Adventure of the Second Stain."

The 1800s, however, saw a surge in the practice, related in part to Edgar Allan Poe's essays and efforts to solve coded messages as well as Charles Babbage's solving of more complicated ciphers during the British Crimean War. (2)

Poe's fascination with cryptography was quite apparent in a series of essays "A Few Words on Secret Writing" where he discussed the use of substitution codes, which he used in his short story "The Gold Bug" and challenged his readers to submit messages for him to decipher.



Substitution codes involve using a 26-word phrase (or a series of 26 symbols) where the alphabet is written underneath, and

the message is then rewritten using the new letters or symbols.

For example, using the Latin phrase "Sauviter in modo, fortiter in re" ("Gentle in manner, firm in deed"), the new, coded, alphabet would be:

**Sauviterinmodofortiterinre
Abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz**

"Sherlock Holmes" becomes "irioum rfodis." (3)

As Holmes describes in "The Adventure of the Dancing Men," decoding such messages involved knowledge of the most frequently occurring letters in English and using those, through trial and error, to deduce the words until the message made sense.

In an essay in 1841, he announced after two years of cracking all he had received, he failed at two submitted by W.B. Tyler.

The second cipher was not solved until 2000 by a Canadian software engineer. (4)

The messages Tyler submitted was not the substitution code Poe had requested.

The first involved a more complex cipher requiring a key.

The second employed more than one code used for each letter of the alphabet.

While some speculation suggests that the Tyler was Poe, an analysis by John Hodgson in 1993 indicates these were not the type of messages Poe would have used as a basis for the message. (5)

The invention of a machine to produce and decipher coded messages occurred in 1917, and during the two world wars, cryptography became even more complex.

For Holmes, however, the only computer needed to resolve the puzzles in the Canon was his brain.

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- 1) 1) <http://baltimorepostexaminer.com/edgar-allan-poe-and-cryptography-are-there-hidden-messages-in-eureka/2013/04/27>
 - 2) 2) <https://sherpasoftware.com/blog/the-evolution-of-cryptography/>
 - 3) 3) <http://baltimorepostexaminer.com/edgar-allan-poe-and-cryptography-are-there-hidden-messages-in-eureka/2013/04/27>
 - 4) 4) <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-cipher-from-poe-solved/>
 - 5) 5) John Hodgson, "Decoding Poe? Poe, W.B. Tyler, and Cryptography" in *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*. Vol 92, No. 4 (Oct. 1993), page 533

You can check out more of Liese Sherwood-Fabre's writings at www.liesesherwoodfabre.com.

The first 24 of Liese Sherwood-Fabre's essays are now available in *The Life and Times of Sherlock Holmes*, both paperback and ebook. Retailers are listed on her Webpage (www.liesesherwoodfabre.com).

By Liese Sherwood-Fabre, PhD. You can read more about this award-winning author's writing (as well as her previous articles in the *Bilge Pump*) and sign up for her newsletter at www.liesesherwoodfabre.com. A non-Sherlockian adventure can be downloaded at: <http://www.liesesherwoodfabre.com/extras.html>

SHERLOCK HOLMES CROSSES A THOR BRIDGE TO SCIENTIFIC INSPIRATION

Carl L. Heifetz, Holmes and Watson Report, September, 1999

The 20th century has been characterized by virtually boundless scientific advances.

From obtaining an enhanced understanding of subatomic particles to a study of the vast reaches of space, scientists have used the methods so diligently developed during the Victorian era to methodically answer mankind's deepest quest for knowledge of our universe.

Biologists and chemists have applied these principles to systematically decipher the genetic code and develop newer and better drugs to fight the ever expanding spectrum of infectious diseases.

There can be no doubt that these approaches were utilized by Sherlock Holmes when he developed the "Sherlock Holmes test" for specifically identifying human blood (STUD)

And there is ample evidence that Mr. Holmes also applied these very same precepts of scientific investigation to solve many of the cases that have been previously explored in this light. 1

The steps that make up the "method of scientists" may be summarized as follows:

- (a) Clearly state the PROBLEM in its simplest form.
- (b) Gather all of the DATA that you can find on the subject.
- (c) Be very diligent to OBSERVE everything no matter how unrelated it may appear at the time.
- (d) Read and master all of the available KNOWLEDGE on the subject to see what data has previously been reported.
- (e) Sift through all of the data, current and reported, and attempt to DEDUCE A TENTATIVE HYPOTHESIS and WORKING MODEL that reasonably fits all of the available information.

- (f) List further needed information, observations, and experiments that may refute or support your hypotheses. Seek EXPERIMENTAL PROOF and ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS and determine if the results fit or point to a reformulation of the hypothesis.
- (g) With all data in hand, PUBLISH your observations, results, hypotheses, and conclusions in an appropriate format for others to read, challenge, and confirm.

Another important aspect that experienced scientists bring to bear on their researches is a healthy dose of skepticism.

An excellent example of this attribute may be found in the annals of Arthur Conan Doyle, M.D., the physician who has been credited by some as the author of several of the accounts of Sherlock Holmes's adventures.

However, you may feel about this, it is worthy to note that Dr. Doyle deserves credit as one of the few people that were rightly skeptical of the tuberculosis cure proposed by the eminent German physician Robert Koch.2

Occasionally, by a fortuitous coupling of experience and imagination, an especially inspired researcher has been capable of astounding his colleagues by leaping beyond the limits of the available evidence to reach new levels of understanding.

This was very likely the situation that led to Prof. Moriarty's ability to fathom the "Dynamics of an Asteroid," and his struggles with the scientific establishment that led him away from the halls of academe to turn his genius to a life of crime (VALL).

Similarly, it was clearly this ability that led Prof. Dr. Paul Ehrlich to devise the specific receptor theory of biochemical interactions - combining his knowledge of antigen-antibody interaction with his interest in the

specific coloration of biological cells by a variety of coal tar derivatives.³

Sherlock Holmes demonstrated his propensities in both of these areas - skepticism and creative genius - in the investigation published by Dr. John H. Watson, M.D., as "The Problem of Thor Bridge."

The case appeared to be cut and dried. The evidence against Miss Dunbar, as a murderess, fulfilled the trite mantra of means, motive, and opportunity that continuously repeat themselves in fictional crime accounts.

A note in the hand of the victim, the murdered wife of the "Gold King" Neil Gibson, clearly indicated that Miss Dunbar lured her to the murder site where she was shot in the temple.

There was no pistol at that location, but a likely murder weapon was found hidden in Miss Dunbar's wardrobe.

And, after all, here was a beautiful young woman living with a wealthy man who was obviously tired of his wife and attendant to her.

This seemed good enough for the official police, as well, and also loomed as a possibility to Sherlock Holmes on first glance.

However, the ever skeptical scientific detective was not satisfied.

He smelled a rat and suspected a frame-up.

The convenient location of the "murder weapon" in Miss Dunbar's wardrobe and the incriminating note clutched in the hand of the victim seemed too pat.

Sherlock Holmes insisted, as usual, on a very careful evaluation of the crime scene.

There he made a remarkable discovery.

There was a fresh chip mark on the ledge of the bridge, one that had not been seen prior to the fatal event, and one that took a great deal of force to produce.

This was a fact that only a genius like Sherlock Holmes could insert into the chain of events leading to the death of Mrs. Gibson.

As with all great discoveries, the whole thing seemed obviously simple once Mr. Holmes made his demonstration, showing that the rapid flight of a heavy revolver, assisted by a rope attached to a rock, would make a similar chip when hitting the same ledge on its way into the water.

Finding the original revolver, rope, and rock in the water below the bridge was evidence enough of how the death of Mrs. Dunbar took place, as a well-planned suicide by a very jealous woman who intended to take revenge on the young lady who had attracted the attention of her husband.

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56 STORIES IN 56 DAYS - "THE PRIORY SCHOOL"

Posted on October 17, 2011 by barefootonbakerstreet

Ok, perhaps Reginald Musgrave wasn't the best client name after all, now that Thorneycroft Huxtable has stepped into the frame, writes Charlotte Anne Walters.

The big man turns up at 221B and promptly faints with the stress of the situation he is bringing to Holmes.

This is followed by a great line from Watson – 'We stared in silent amazement at this ponderous piece of wreckage, which told of some sudden and fatal storm far out on the ocean of life'.

This is then followed by another clever line as Watson takes the man's pulse – 'With my finger on the thready pulse, where the stream of life trickled thin and small'.

Once again, Conan Doyle reminds us what a skilful wordsmith he was and how such lines elevate the stories to a more literary level, beyond that of simple crime drama.

Mr Huxtable regains his senses and asks not for a brandy or a smoke to calm his nerves, but a glass of milk and a biscuit.

What a great choice, clearly a man after my own heart.

There's not much in life that can't be made a little better with the enjoyment of a nice biscuit.

Preferably a custard cream in my opinion.



I had an assistant one Christmas at the office who realised that the best way to get me back on track after a staffing calamity, usually a temp not turning up for work and an angry client calling to demand a replacement, was to push a tray of biscuits under my nose and let me munch my way through.

She brought in a selection every morning for that very purpose.

Unusually in this story, Holmes is prompted into action by the promise of a reward of six thousand pounds if he can find the missing only son of the Duke of Holderness, the ten-

year old Lord Saltire who has disappeared from the Priory prep school where Mr. Huxtable is the principal.

He is reluctant to act until a reward is mentioned.

Taking Watson with him, Holmes travels to Mackleton to try and unravel the mystery.

This mainly involves some clever analysis of bicycle tracks and a revelation that Holmes is an expert on tire treads (42 different impressions to be exact) as well as the tobacco and footprints which we already know about.

Holmes energetically bounces around the local countryside following tracks and clues and eventually finds the boy concealed at a local inn.

It is no surprise to me that the somewhat shady private secretary of the Duke's is behind the matter and this is another of those rare occasions when I could guess 'whodunit' ahead of Holmes.

What I didn't work out was why and that is where the story does become a bit unbelievable for me.

The private secretary is actually the Duke's illegitimate son and he has arranged for the boy to be taken so that he can blackmail the Duke into making him the sole heir instead.

All well and good except for the fact that the Duke has already discovered this three days prior to Holmes' arrival and agrees to leave his young son with the captors for reasons I don't fully understand and to save the skin of his illegitimate boy.

Holmes makes sure the Duke writes out the cheque for the

reward money before revealing that he knows the truth and is clearly very happy to have taken such a sum.

This is unusual behaviour from Holmes, but then as the client is such a rich man, who can blame him for taking the spoils?

And that really was a massive amount of money back then, considering that a good yearly wage was a hundred pounds.

As Watson isn't working at this time, Holmes is the only bread-

winner and I'm sure this 'bread' will easily settle their rent for many years to come.

It's always enjoyable to read of Holmes being so on form and the story does not disappoint in this sense at all, though I do have some issues with the plot regarding the actions of the father towards his vulnerable ten-year-old son and the cruelty of the elder son towards his little half-brother – surely he didn't think he could get away with that in the end?

7 out of 10.



STORY INFO PAGES FOR "PRIOR SCHOOL"

McMurdo's Camp, <https://mcmurdoscamp.wordpress.com/>

- **First published in:** The Strand Magazine, February 1904, Collier's, January 30, 1904
- **Time frame of story (known/surmised):** Date stated, year easily deduced. Thursday, May 16, 1901
- **Holmes and Watson living arrangements:** Holmes and Watson sharing quarters at 221B.
- **Opening scene:** Thorneycroft Huxtable, master of the exclusive Priory School, made a dramatic entrance to Holmes and Watson's quarters. He was dirty and disheveled, exhausted and sorely stricken. He collapsed, but was revived with the universal palliative (brandy) and then requested milk and biscuits (cookies, in modern American lingo).
- **Client:** Huxtable hired Holmes because he was worried for Lord Saltire, the Duke of Holderness's 10 year-old son and heir, and also for the reputation of his school. Later the Duke signed on as the client, although he was initially hesitant to bring in an outsider.
- **Crime or concern:** Disappearance and likely kidnapping of Lord Saltire. Later discovery that Saltire had sneaked out of the school at night, and been followed by Heidegger, the German master, who got his head bashed in out on the moor.
- **Villain:** The Duke's secretary and illegitimate son, James Wilder. Also the Duke of Holderness himself who was a little too protective of Wilder and covered up for him. Wilder was assisted by Reuben Hayes, garrulous landlord of the Fighting Cock Inn, a former coachman for the Duke who had been fired.
- **Motive:** Wilder was intensely jealous of the legitimate heir, and wanted him out of the way, or at least to extort the Duke into including Wilder in some claim to the estate.
- **Logic used to solve:** Holmes made correct deductions about the flight of Lord Saltire and the German master. Found lots of cow tracks, but no cows, even tracks of a remarkable cow which walked, cantered, and galloped. Found a horse at the inn that had a recent shoeing, but with old shoes and new nails. Later found special horseshoes in the Duke's museum. Reuben Hayes shod his horses with these shoes which counterfeited the tracks of cows. These strange shoes had last been used by marauding Barons of Holderness in the Middle Ages.
- **Policemen:** A county constable was on duty at a nearby crossroads from midnight until six, conveniently showing no-one had fled in that direction.
- **Holmes' fees:** £6000. For this sum, the Duke not only got his son back and the mystery solved, but he benefited from Holmes' silence about the matter.
- **Transport:** After being consulted and hearing about the reward, Holmes and Watson and took a four-wheeler to the station and a train to Euston, in the cold, bracing atmosphere of the Peak country, arriving after dark.

Food: Their first morning on the case, Holmes and Watson had cocoa at breakfast. In the evening they ate at the Fighting Cock.

Drink: no mention

Vices: While looking at a map of the area, SH began to smoke over it, and occasionally pointing out objects of interest with the reeking amber of his pipe.

Other cases mentioned: The case of the Ferrers Documents, and the Abergavenny murder which was coming up for trial.

Notable Quotables: "Perhaps the scent is not so cold but that two old hounds like Watson and myself may get a sniff of it." – SH, upon taking up the case.

"I must take the view that when a man embarks upon a

crime, he is morally guilty of any other crime which may spring from it." – SH, admonishing the Duke, once he had the upper hand.

Other interestings: The location of this story, Mackleton, is a fictional name. It is believed the name is a combination of two real places, Matlock and Castleton. Conan Doyle had spent some time in this part of Derbyshire, and the following link contains an interesting article regarding many locations in the story.

Holmes makes a faulty conclusion regarding bicycle tracks. He states "The more deeply sunk impression is, of course, 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 one. It was undoubtedly heading away from the school. It may or may

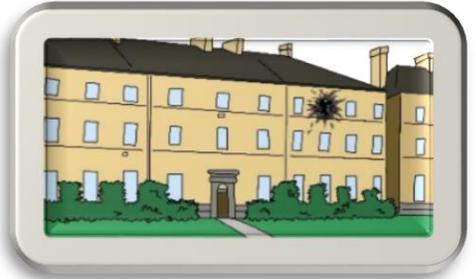
not be connected with our inquiry, but we will follow it backwards before we go any farther." Think it over for a minute. The rear wheel track will cover the front wheel track no matter what is the direction of travel. Holmes' correct deduction that the bicycle was heading away from the school was just luck or instinct. Either a northbound bike or a southbound bike would demonstrate the same thing.

When all was said and done: Holmes got the enormous reward. The Duke kept the scandal quiet. It was settled right off that Wilder would leave forever, and go to seek his fortune in Australia. The Duke most likely got his Duchess back. She had been in the South of France as a result of the friction in the household caused by Wilder. The Duke immediately wrote her after whole business was resolved.

Baker Street Elementary

Created by: Joe Fay, Rusty & Steve Mason

The First Adventures of Sherlock Holmes and John Watson



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Fay, Mason, & Mason

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BIRDS ARE FLYING, FLOWERS ARE BLOOMING AND GRASS IS GREENING... YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS?

YES MASTER BLAU... MY NOSE IS RUNNING LIKE A STEAM ENGINE... THE POLLEN IS KILLING ME...

NO SILLY, IT IS TIME FOR OUR ANNUAL SPRING PLAY... THIS YEAR WE WILL BE DOING THE CLASSIC, "ROMEO AND JULIET"

I HAVE SELECTED YOU FOR THE LEAD.

GREAT... AT LEAST I CAN HONE MY SMOOCHING SKILLS ON WHICHEVER GIRL YOU SELECT AS 'JULIET' FROM THE OTHER SCHOOL...

BAD NEWS, MY YOUNG 'LOTHARIO'... I HAVE DECIDED TO STAGE AN AUTHENTIC 'SHAKESPEAREAN PERFORMANCE...' MEANS AN ALL-MALE CAST.