

The Bilge Pump

Vol. 07, No. 01 - January, 2019
*The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the
Barque Lone Star - founded April, 1970*



PLEASE NOTE:

February 3 Meeting NOTICE

The next meeting will be held on Sunday, February 03, 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 Mazarin Stone." The quiz will cover this tale.

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

January 6th Summary

There were 25 in attendance at the meeting. Ann Caddell opened the meeting with a toast to the greatest criminal, James Moriarty (page 4).

The Crew then took a quiz on "The Three Gables," which was won by Karen Olsen. Ann Caddell took second place.

Cindy Brown gave a presentation on the science of phrenology, which prompted a number of questions on the subject.

The Third Mate, Steve Mason, gave an update on the State of the Society.

The Crew published its second book in 2018, entitled "A Grimmer Holmes", which had Sherlock Holmes solving fairy tale mysteries. Liese Sherwood-Fabre was extremely helpful in getting the book formatted and published. She was also published in the Baker Street Journal as well as other fiction outlets in the past year.

The Crew conducted two symposiums in the Dallas area. Allen Osborne was instrumental in organizing the symposium at the Allen Public Library.

It was noted in the year's accomplishments that the Olson's were kind enough to host two Sherlock Holmes parties at their house, the Labor Day party, and the Christmas Tea.

It was noted that in April 2019, the club will be celebrating its 50th anniversary. And we recognized the three founding members (posthumously) Francis Smith, Bullet Lowry, and Bill Beason. Beason was apparently known for his ability to write limericks. Steve's next goal for the club is to write and publish a book of limericks for each of the Sherlock Holmes stories.

Cindy Brown has been asked to lead the Grants Committee of the Beacon Society for the BSI.

Steve closed the meeting with a reading from the Autumn 2006 Baker Street Journal, "On the Street Where You Live" (page 5).

Thanks to Cindy Brown, who took the minutes (full minutes can be found 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
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Our Website: www.dfw-sherlock.org

Our Facebook Page:

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

The image is a composite of two digital interfaces. The top portion shows a website for 'THE CREW OF THE BARQUE LONE STAR'. The website has a dark star logo with a white silhouette of a person's head and shoulders. Below the logo is a navigation menu with items: Home Page, About, Crew Investitures and Awards, Newsletters, Crew Meeting Logs, & Society Pastiches, Papers, Many Faces of Sherlock Holmes, and Ephemera -- General. A search bar is located in the top right. The main content area features an illustration of a multi-story building with a spiderweb in the foreground, labeled 'Baker Street Elementary'. Below the illustration is the text 'THE MAY MEETING'. The website is set against a background of aged parchment with various quotes in cursive script.

The bottom portion shows a Facebook page for 'The Crew of the Barque Lone Star' (@BarqueLoneStar). The profile picture is the same star logo. The cover photo is a black and white graphic of a man's profile (Sherlock Holmes) with a pipe, and text that reads: 'A SHERLOCK HOLMES LITERARY SOCIETY', 'Monthly meetings every 1st Sunday @ 1pm', and 'La Madeleine Country French Café'. The page includes a navigation bar with 'Page', 'Messages', 'Notifications', 'Insights', and 'Publishing Tools'. A notification banner says 'You Have Unread Messages'. Below the cover photo are buttons for 'Like', 'Follow', 'Share', and 'Add a Button'. At the bottom, there are four action buttons: 'Share a photo or video', 'Advertise your business', 'Get messages', and 'Create an event'. A 'Page Tips' section is visible on the right side.

A Toast to Professor Moriarty

Ann Caddell

It is an odd, and perhaps disturbing, quirk of human nature that we are more fascinated by villains and their evil doings than by the heroes who oppose them. We know more about Bonnie and Clyde, John Dillinger, and Jesse James than about most of the law-enforcement agents who risked their lives to bring them to justice.

In the Sherlock Holmes canon, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle gave the world one of its most enduring fictional villains with remarkably few strokes of his pen.

In *The Final Problem*, Doyle created Moriarty as merely a convenient instrument to do away with Holmes, while letting the great detective go out with a bang (or a splash, as the case may be). Doyle may have felt a twinge of guilt at disposing of Holmes at the height of his powers and popularity, so he let him end on a high note. As Holmes explains to Watson in *The Final Problem*, "I tell you, Watson, in all seriousness, that if I could beat that man, if I could free society of him, I should feel that my own career had reached its summit, and I should be prepared to turn to some more placid line of life."

But Doyle didn't trust Holmes to stay in retirement forever, so he had to send him, along with his newly-minted arch-nemesis, to a watery grave at the foot of the Reichenbach Falls.

Unlike Holmes, Moriarty stayed dead. Although he is mentioned in a few other stories, he makes his only other active appearance in *The Valley of Fear*, written after *The Final Problem* but set earlier. In this story, he gives Watson one of his few chances to make a joke at Holmes's expense, rather than the other way around:

Holmes: "You have heard me speak of Professor Moriarty?"

Watson: "The famous scientific criminal, as famous among crooks as ---"

Holmes: "My blushes, Watson!" Holmes murmured in a deprecating voice.

Watson: "I was about to say, as he is unknown to the public."

Holmes: "A touch! A distinct touch. You are developing a certain unexpected vein of pawky humour, Watson, against which I must learn to guard myself."

Conan Doyle's Moriarty may have been unknown to the public, but popular culture has since stepped in to fill the void. There seem to be as many plays, movies, TV shows, pastiches, and video games featuring Moriarty as there are featuring Holmes and Watson. In addition to countless appearances as a mortal man, he shows up as:

- A vampire
- A zombie
- A Tibetan mystic
- The head of British intelligence (called "M" of course)
- An elder god from the H.P. Lovecraft Cthulhu mythos
- And the list goes on

Whenever we think the evil-doer has been defeated for good, he returns to haunt us again. As Holmes remarks to Inspector MacDonald in *The Valley of Fear*: "Everything comes in circles, even Professor Moriarty ... The old wheel turns, and the same spoke comes up. It's all been done before, and will be again."

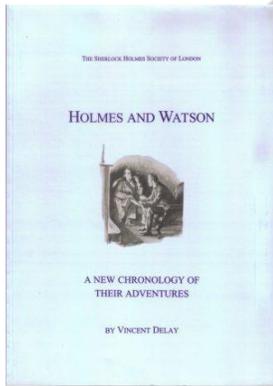
And so, ladies and gentlemen, please join me in raising a glass to the man who sits motionless like a spider in the center of its web - to the organizer of half that is evil and nearly all that is undetected in the great city of London - to the Napoleon of crime - to Professor Moriarty!

ON THE STREET WHERE YOU LIVE (EXTRACT)

Steven Rothman, Editor, *BSJ*, Autumn, 2006, Vol 56, No. 3

Sherlockian scholarship seems, like everything else in life, to have fads or cycles.

Today researchers are trying to fill in our understanding of Holmes's era as it recedes from living memory.



There was a time when chronologists ruled the page, and debates roared over what was the month and what the weather.

Hours of research and gallons of ink have gone into the argument over the location of Holmes's

rooms—accompanied by grim pictures of post-Blitz house fronts that may, or may not, have been the building.

No one is more associated with an address than Sherlock Holmes.

His Baker Street rooms resonate as the home of a seeker of truth, and sometimes justice.

His readers know just what the rooms look like, down to the deal table in the corner and the correspondence affixed by jack-knife to the mantle.

And this is odd because scholars cannot agree on the location of 221, can barely agree on which block of Baker Street that house should sit upon.

Sherlockians have no one place they can go on pilgrimage to pay tribute to the Master.

There is no 221B on Baker Street. No brick and mortar building can truly claim that address.

It sits in a place far more permanent than even the streets of London: It is central to our hearts.



THE 2019 BAKER STREET IRREGULARS WEEKEND

MANY OF OUR SOCIETY MEMBERS ATTENDED THIS YEAR'S EVENT IN NEW YORK CITY, INCLUDING JIM WEBB, DON HOBBS, SANDRA LITTLE, RUSTY MASON, CINDY BROWN, STU NELAN, JEN LIANG, DEAN CLARK, AND MANY OF OUR REMOTE MEMBERS.

A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL...

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEW BSI INVESTITURES...

Terry McCammon, Michael McSwiggin, Monica Schmidt, Ira Matetsky, Alexander Katz, Greg Ruby, Bridgette Latella, Michelle Lopez, John Knud-Hansen, and Ronald S. White. Photo by Will Walsh.



SEVENTEEN STEPS TO "Mazarin Stone"

Seventeen thoughts for further ponderance of "The Mazarin Stone" by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

BAKER STREET, THIRD PERSON

"He looked round him at the scientific charts upon the wall, the acid-charred bench of chemicals, the violin-case leaning in the corner, the coal-scuttle, which contained pipes and tobacco."

What sort of scientific charts might Holmes find useful enough to keep on the wall for years?

Is the coal-scuttle no longer holding pipes and tobacco?

IT'S JUST A DIAMOND!

"Why, we had the Prime Minister and the Home Secretary both sitting on that very sofa," Billy tells Watson.

Why would such high-level government folk be so concerned about a bauble?

If the Mazarin was a part of the Crown Jewels, why weren't more of them stolen?

What dire consequences might have come if the diamond was not recovered?



ALAS, POOR SHERLOCK! BILLY KNEW HIM WELL

"There was a facsimile of his old friend, dressing-gown and all, the face turned three-quarters towards the window and downward, as though reading an invisible book, while the body was sunk deep in an armchair.

Billy detached the head and held it in the air."

"We put it at different angles, so that it may seem more lifelike," Billy finally says.

Do wax replicas ever have adjustable heads, or is this a Holmes innovation?

MORE RESIDENTS FOR THE EMPTY HOUSE

"There are folk who watch us from over yonder. I can see a fellow now at the window," Billy says, drawing the curtains apart.

Were there more rooms available for snipers on Baker Street besides Camden House, or was this the same window Sebastian Moran would eventually use?

And why is Billy so carefree about opening the curtains?

For a man concerned about placing the boy in danger, Holmes would seem rather foolish not to mention the air-gun

business to the lad, wouldn't he?

Or was Billy just that impulsive?



THE NEW, HEN-PECKED DR. WATSON

"Is alcohol permitted?" Holmes asks his friend, then says, "You have not, I hope, learned to despise my pipe and my lamentable tobacco?"

Why would Watson not be permitted alcohol?

Why would he suddenly despise tobacco?

Is Watson sporting a new medical condition or a strict wife keeping him on a short leash?

Or could there be some third reason for Holmes's concerns?

THE MISS MANNERS SECTION OF ITALY

Holmes describes Count Sylvius picking up his parasol when the detective is disguised as an old woman: "'By your leave, madame,' said he--half-Italian, you know, and with the Southern graces of manner when in the mood, but a devil incarnate in the other mood."

What does Holmes mean by "Southern graces"?

Southern Italy, or Southern somewhere else?

Why are those folk so noted for their grace?

FIRST, YOU GET RID OF THE DIAMOND . . .

Holmes says of Sylvius, "I followed him to old Straubensee's workshop in the Minorities. Straubensee made the air-gun--a very pretty bit of work, as I understand, and I rather fancy it is in the opposite window at the present moment. Have you seen the dummy? Of course, Billy showed it to you. Well, it may get a bullet through its beautiful head at any moment."

Okay, suppose you steal one of the Crown jewels.

Wouldn't getting rid of the stone be your first priority?

Even if one British fence refuses to break it up for you, why

not get the thing over to Europe, especially if you're Italian and have every reason to visit the homeland?

Why would you waste time buying a specialized assassination weapon to kill any detectives handling the case?

PEST CONTROL IN ALGERIA

"You used to shoot lions in Algeria," Holmes says to the Count, later suggesting he does it to "free the country from a pest."

Count Sylvius agrees.

How much pest-control lion hunting went on in Victorian Africa?

Was it considered just a part of the march of civilization, the equivalent of killing coyotes to keep the chickens safe?

THE DUEL OF THREATENING GESTURES

"The Count sprang to his feet, and his hand involuntarily moved back to his hip-pocket," we read, and then later:

"The Count had risen from his chair, and his hand was behind his back. Holmes held something half protruding from the pocket of his dressing-gown."

There's a lot of reaching going on here, but is the Count reaching for a weapon on both occasions?

Different weapons for different occasions, even?

And if something was "half-protruding" from Holmes's dressing-gown, wouldn't anyone present have been able to see what it was?

THE DETECTIVE WHO CRIED WOLF

"You can't bluff me, Count Sylvius," Holmes says, and then proceeds to run his own bluff.

He pulls out a notebook and starts hinting at complete knowledge of Sylvius's past crimes, only to have the Count stop him:

"No; you're wrong there."

"Then I am right on the others!"

Holmes obviously didn't have all the details he claimed.

But then, he proceeds to claim he has a lot more knowledge:

"I have the cabman who took you to Whitehall and the cabman who brought you away. I have the commissionaire who saw you near the case. I have Ikey Sanders, who refused to cut it up for you. Ikey has peached, and the game is up."

Having told Sylvius this, Holmes makes an offer, "But if you hand it over . . . you can go free so long as you behave yourself in the future."

Since Sherlock Holmes opened his verbal duel with a bluff, why should Count Sylvius believe his subsequent "facts"?

Could Holmes have been lying on all counts?

Was the bluff early on a mistake on the detective's part?

AND TONIGHT HOLMES WILL BE PLAYING . . .

"I shall try over the Hoffman 'Barcarole' upon my violin," Holmes says as he leaves, and our narrator writes that "A few moments later the long-drawn, wailing notes of that most haunting of tunes came faintly through the closed door of the bedroom."

We later learn that the music comes from a gramophone.

Is it more likely that Holmes recorded his own violin concert, or purchased one with his gramophone?

THE BRAND-NAME DUMMY CRITIC

"Well, strike me! Madame Tussaud ain't in it. It's the living spit of him, gown and all," Sam Merton comments upon seeing the Holmes "dummy."

Is Sam saying that Madame Tussaud's waxworks aren't all that realistic?

Why is a lunkheaded boxer so down on those artisans of wax?

BACK TO THAT DIAMOND . . .

"The stone is here in my secret pocket. I take no chances leaving it about. It can be out of England tonight and cut into four pieces in Amsterdam before Sunday. He knows nothing of Van Seddar."

"I thought Van Seddar was going next week."

"He was. But now he must get off by the next boat. One or other of us must slip round with the stone to Lime Street and tell him."

"But the false bottom ain't ready."

Sylvius doesn't trust anyone with the diamond.

He already has it in his secret pocket.

Once again we must ask, why isn't he leaving the country?

What good's a "false bottom" going to do that a secret pocket can't, especially if Sylvius isn't letting anyone else have the diamond?

AW, C'MON NOW, COUNT!

Would this case be a little more interesting if the villains weren't complete idiots?

Bad enough they're making plans in the detective's sitting room.

But then we get:

"Come over to the window if you want to see the beauty properly. Now hold it to the light! Here!"

Holmes is playing the violin.

But what's to keep Billy or Mrs. Hudson or even a visiting Scotland Yard official from walking in and seeing these clowns holding the diamond up so prominently?

Can anyone find a case for Sylvius having anything in his head but bread pudding?

THE TIMING OF THE POLICE

Holmes snatches up the diamond and rings his electric bell, apparently of the sort used to summon servants.

A full thirty seconds (time the conversation yourself) or more

seem to elapse before the police are heard on the stairs.

What takes the London law so long to answer Holmes's summons?

For that matter, did Watson have enough time to get to Scotland Yard and back with Youghal in time for the capture?

Holmes planned his trap ahead -- might the cops who arrested Sylvius have been waiting in the kitchen even as Watson is sent off to the Yard?

THOSE OLD WHISKERS OF MUCH BLACKNESS

"The door opened to admit a thin, austere figure with a hatchet face and drooping mid-Victorian whiskers of a glossy blackness which hardly corresponded with

the rounded shoulders and feeble gait."

What style might "mid-Victorian whiskers" be?

And this "glossy blackness" -- how did the prominent elder statesman (who had seen "fifty years of official life") color his aging whiskers in those days?

THE SIZE OF THE MAZARIN STONE

A lot of playing around with the yellow Crown diamond goes on in this case, all seeming very visual and giving one the idea that this stone is the size of a walnut, or maybe an egg.

If it is truly the "king" of diamonds, the biggest of the big, how big would the Mazarin stone be?

SUPPLEMENTING THE BRAIN ATTIC

Liese Sherwood-Fabre, PhD

In In “The Adventure of the Three Students” and “The Adventure of the Red Circle,” Watson described Holmes’ use of scrapbooks as a resource in his investigations.

When he was first introduced in *A Study in Scarlet*, Sherlock shared how he kept clippings and extracts of different cases and other news items in scrapbooks. He had created a number of such albums because in “The Empty House,” Watson described the group as “formidable.”

In addition, their contents appeared to have contained compromising information on some individuals because Watson commented there were those who would have liked to have seen the volumes burned.

The first use of the term “scrapbook” (meaning a book with blank pages for pasting items onto them) was recorded in 1821. The verb “scrapbooking” first appeared in 1879 and was popularized by Mark Twain. Prior to the rise in preference for this term, a person would merely “scrap.” (1)

Even before the term “scrapbook” gained popularity, the practice existed. People recorded personal thoughts and experiences in blank-paged journals and diaries since the Middle Ages.

By the Renaissance period, “commonplace books” were used to record quotes and notes from different sources. The invention of the printing press provided more access to books and other printed materials, and keeping notes on all these ideas represented people’s response to this first “information overload.” (2)

By the 1800s, as newspapers and other daily or weekly publications flourished, information became much more transitory—changing with each edition of the paper or magazine.

To preserve items of interest, many read with “a pair of scissors in hand” like Louisa May Alcott; ready to “scissorize” and paste their “gleanings” into scrapbooks. In addition to popularizing a term, Mark Twain developed and patented a scrapbook with preinstalled gummed lines.

The scrapbooker would wet the lines to activate the paste to hold the item in place. The popularity of this hobby also affected newspaper production. Dailies would actually provide short articles of interest (sometimes from foreign papers as well as other publications) labeled “for your scrapbook.” (3)

Sherlock’s volumes would most certainly have included some of these pieces, particularly those related to criminal activity from around the world.

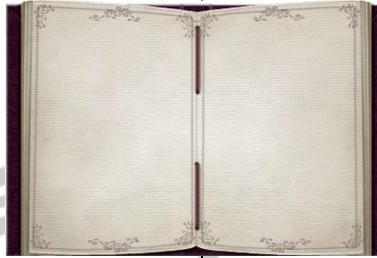
As well as papers and other informational materials, the printing industry also produced more personal items such as calling cards (provided to gain an invitation into a house), postcards, and greeting cards—all of which could be collected and preserved in albums.

The popularity of these items and special albums to preserve them shifted the hobby toward a more feminine pursuit. (4) From the early 1900s to 1980, scrapbooking might have involved some additional items, such as photos, but Marielen Christensen ushered in the modern age of



scrapbooking at the 1980 World Conference on Records.

At the invitation of organizers, she displayed 50 scrapbooks with her unique photographic and record-keeping system that resonated with participants. Of particular note was her use of plastic protectors for each page.



moved into the digital age and increased sharing among enthusiasts.

At the same time, holding a concrete bit of history has not completely faded away. When certain events occur, such as the election of Barak Obama, newspapers still sell out despite extra print runs. (6)

After the conference, she returned to Spanish Fork, Utah and opened the first store dedicated to scrapbooking, attracting visitors from around the country. (5) Scrapbooking became a way of preserving memories through photos, keepsakes, and other items in an organized fashion.

For Sherlock, scrapbooks served as an extension of his brain attic. If he needed some place to store information that might be of use, but not immediately, the albums preserved and organized information for use in some future adventure.

With the popularity of Pinterest and similar sites, the collection of memories and photos has

One wonders if one of these volumes contains a page or two devoted to the Copernican Theory and the composition of the solar system, ready for consultation when called upon.

(1) <https://www.scrapbook.com/articles/history-of-scrapbooking>

(2) Ibid

(3) <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/when-copy-and-paste-reigned-age-scrapbooking-180951844/?page=2>

(4) <https://www.scrapbook.com/articles/history-of-scrapbooking>

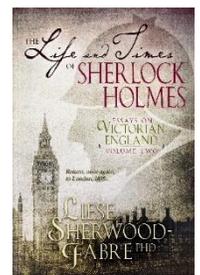
(5) Ibid

(6) <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/when-copy-and-paste-reigned-age-scrapbooking-180951844/?page=2>

All of Liese Sherwood-Fabre's eBooks are priced at 99 cents during December. You can pick up a copy wherever eBooks are sold. Paperback copies are also at all major online bookstores, including Walmart.com.

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

Dr. Sherwood-Fabre's book "The Life and Times of Sherlock Holmes" includes this and other essays on Victorian England and is now available on Amazon.



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>

CANON QUEERIES - THE THREE GABLES

RALPH EDWARDS, BSI 2s

Ralph Edwards was secretary of The Six Napoleons of Baltimore, responsible for sending meeting notices.

In 1972, he began attaching a set of questions to serve as stimulus for discussion at the meetings. This practice was continued by the other Baltimore scion society, The Carlton Club, which Ralph formed in 1976.

Thanks to Les Moskowitz Les221b@comcast.net, for making these available to us.

1. Why didn't Watson write this story?
2. How long had Watson (or Holmes) been away?
3. Are the scientific charts mentioned in any other adventure?
4. Had the Persian slipper worn out?
5. What were Billy's hours of work?
6. Did Holmes not have other locations for changing costumes?
7. What did Watson already know about Lord Cantlemere?
8. What was the arrangement of window curtains and blinds?
9. Had Holmes sent for Watson?
10. Does modern medicine agree that facilities become refined when starved?
11. Why "burden your memory" followed by "Write it down"?
12. What were Watson's other vices?
13. Why did Holmes drop the parasol?
14. Why do we not hear of air guns today?
15. Why did Holmes not look for Merton himself?
16. When was the waiting room added?
17. Was there a new second exit from the house?
18. What floor plan fits the situation?
19. Does "plate glass" suggest that inferior plain glass was prevalent?
20. Did Holmes invent the forged check to obtain an admission?
21. In what other cases does Holmes deceive the villain to attain his goal?
22. Were safe deposit boxes available to the public?
23. Was Scotland Yard so ineffectual that it did not need paddy wagons?
24. When could Billy dine?

THE THIRD PARADIGM OF SHERLOCKIAN ENDEAVOR

Brad Keefauver, Holmes and Watson Report, November, 2001

A Cure for "Watson versus the World" Syndrome

Trust Dr. Watson.

Those three words sound so natural together, don't they?

John H. Watson, M.D., is the very image of the loyal and trusted friend. Solid, honest ... a man of good English values, not given to whims or fanciful notions.

He's known hardship in his life, yet never backs down when called upon by a friend in need. And testimonials are not hard to find.

Ask anyone who knows much of the good doctor if they would trust John Watson, and you'll get a positive response every time.

Even people who don't entirely trust Holmes - the best at his profession, yet a man who would test psychoreactive drugs on his friends or appear to pocket a bribe or stolen gem - even people who don't trust Holmes trust Watson.

That is... until the research begins.

The minute Watson's admirers start digging into the doctor's oh-so-factual accounts of his adventures with Sherlock Holmes, that trust seems to evaporate like mist on a windy Dartmoor night.

"No snake can climb a bell rope or hear a whistle!"

"Cambridge's rugby team doesn't play Oxford in February!"

"Carbuncles aren't blue!"

In every field of knowledge, from zoology to sports to chemistry, Watson seems to not only come up short, but actually spouts "facts" contrary to accepted knowledge.

Students of Watson's work are usually quite genteel about calling him a liar and an ignoramus.

Most would even deny they are doing so, even as they contradict his every statement. But I ask you: Is that trust? Is that respect?

To give proper answer to such questions, one must bellow like a comic book Asgardian and cry to the heavens, "I say thee nay!"

The heart knows what it wants to do: Trust Dr. Watson.

But, given the hard evidence of his contradictions, how is that possible?

Stepping outside Watson's writings for a reality check, it quickly becomes apparent that Watson is at odds with the world itself.

Perhaps one of the best demonstrations of this schism is Ernest Bloomfield Zeisler's *Baker Street Chronology*, a somewhat dry, data-filled tome that attempts to put historical dates on each of Watson's tales.

Again and again, Zeisler corrects dates Watson has clearly recorded, just because they don't meet conditions known to exist for the same period of time.

Take, for example, Zeisler's analysis of "The Adventure of the Golden Pince-nez."

Watson says that in 1894 there was "a wild, tempestuous night towards the close of November." Zeisler assures us that such a storm never occurred past November 14th.

Watson says that on a 6 a.m. train, "We saw the cold winter sun rise over the dreary marshes of the Thames." Zeisler retorts that the sunrises in November, 1894, were no earlier than 7:20 a.m.

And Watson was amazed when Holmes claimed to know nothing of Copernican theory! Watson, it seems, wasn't even sure if the sun was coming over the horizon or it was still night.

Working one's way through Zeisler's research, the anomalies soon start to pile up. Watson sees a full moon when the moon was only in a partial phase.

Watson says a certain day was Friday, when any perpetual calendar will tell you that day was Wednesday. Watson very quickly starts to appear as something of a madman.

Or maybe it's just that his admirers are a bit mad, trying to impose real history upon something that surely must be sheer fiction.

Watson's writings ... fiction? Some Sherlockians theatrically gasp at such a thought; some others roll their eyes and utter a

tired sigh (or curse like Black Peter himself).

However, such are the two paradigms currently existing for viewing the writings of John H. Watson: the historical paradigm and the fictional paradigm.

In the first, Watson's Afghan War experiences, Holmes's Vernet bloodline, the dinners at Simpson's, and the concerts by Norman-Neruda and Sarasate are all historical events that tie Holmes and Watson ever so firmly to our own past.

For our Sherlockian forefathers, the world of Holmes and Watson was the same world of their childhood and of their parents' lives.

Watson's descriptions were ties they could use to reach back to "the good old days." Later generations of Sherlockians would carry on their traditions, but the ties to the Victorian era started to become less direct.

As the Victorian era became less real, so, it seems, did the world of Holmes and Watson.

The second paradigm, that Holmes and Watson were fictions created by the hand of Arthur Conan Doyle, began to assert stronger influences on Sherlockians as the world closed on the year 2000.

It had always been there, among the mobs of casual readers and those special few who were already thinking of the Holmes tales as literature, but as time moved Conan Doyle from "popular writer" to "author of great literature," this view gained a firmer foothold in even the most diehard circles of Holmes fans.

Conan Doyle's life and influences soon became as valid a

study for Sherlockians as the study of Sherlock Holmes himself.

The problem with these two paradigms is that they seem, on the surface, to be mutually exclusive.

Either John H. Watson was history or Conan Doyle was history, both men having claims to writing up the adventures of Sherlock Holmes.

The evidence we've looked at, regarding the faults in Watson's facts, would seem to indicate that the Doyle historical paradigm is the correct one. Watson's world is not the same as our own, and therefore must be relegated to fictional status.

But as Sherlock Holmes himself said, "once you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth."

And if the existence of Watson's world of mismatched celestial occurrences, strange cryptozoology, and a calendar that doesn't always jibe with our own is truly impossible, it must be eliminated.

The thing is, you see, it's not truly impossible any more.

Times have changed since our forebears first came up with Sherlockian study and the "Game" that saw Conan Doyle as Watson's literary agent.

Our understanding of the universe has changed. Theoretical physics has changed. And so must our view of the historical Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson.

Just because they're history doesn't mean they're our history.

Our history doesn't have rope-climbing snakes and dawns in the six o'clock hour in late November 1894.

The history of Dr. Watson's universe quite obviously does.

In realizing the full-blown reality of Dr. Watson's universe, we must elevate Sir Arthur Conan Doyle from creator of the world's greatest detective to a new level: that of the first man to make contact with a parallel universe and exhibit evidence of its existence.

Conan Doyle's serious attempts to contact other realms, whether the spirit world or the fairy realm, are well documented.

His mind was open in a way not many minds of his intelligence were. In medical school, he encountered a man who was a close parallel of Sherlock Holmes in his powers of observation and deduction, and there are those who have drawn parallels between Doyle and Dr. Watson.

What could be more natural than for an open-minded man of this universe to reach out to the mind of a counterpart in a parallel universe and draw in that man's memories in a creative state akin to the automatic writing practiced by spiritualists?

In the spring of 1886, as Conan Doyle pondered his old teacher Joe Bell and Dr. Watson pondered his fellow lodger Sherlock Holmes, contact was made between this world and that other one, oh-so close to it in so many ways.

From that ongoing meeting of the minds, Arthur Conan Doyle would gain the material he needed for a series of wonderful detective tales, and John H. Watson would gain writing skills he otherwise showed no signs of having. (Ever wonder why Watson didn't write anything but Holmes's cases?)

Such things as mental contact with a parallel universe are quite tricky, however, and Doyle would even have occasion to make contact with still other Dr. Watsons in other parallel universes.

A Watson who was still working with Holmes in 1892, as in "The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge," might reach out on one occasion - quite different from the Watson who was still mourning Holmes's death at Reichenbach Falls the year before.

A Watson who first learned of Professor Moriarty in 1888 might come across on another instance, a totally separate entity from the Watson who first heard of the Professor in April of 1891.

Might the Watson who learned of Moriarty sooner have helped Holmes defeat Moriarty in a way that didn't end at Reichenbach, and thus be the same Watson who went to Wisteria Lodge with Holmes in 1892? The mind boggles at the possibilities.

Within Doyle's accounts is evidence of not just one parallel Earth, but many, all waiting for the keen-eyed observer to find and document them. And that's where things really get good.

This third paradigm - an alternate history Holmes and Watson - allows the complete acceptance of the words of Watson as a true history. At the same time, it allows for an appreciation of Conan Doyle and

his ability to put color and life into a narrative. And better still, it accepts that Sherlock Holmes has a future outside of the sixty-story base.

Suddenly, an alternate reality where a retired Sherlock Holmes meets an eighteen-year-old American girl on Sussex Downs, apprentices her, and then weds her . . . well, that premise doesn't seem nearly as threatening to one's cherished Holmes of "A Scandal in Bohemia" anymore.

It was a different guy. Much the same, true, but veering off on a new path at some later point in his life. A Holmes who practiced his trade in Minneapolis, Minnesota?

Not a problem, considering the millions of alternate-history dimensions that are possible. Every pastiche ever written, every Sherlockian perspective of Holmes the golfer or Holmes the Buddhist, all of it can now peacefully co-exist in a "United Federation of Sherlocks," so to speak.

And it doesn't stop there.

The alternate history paradigm allows for the fact that Sherlock Holmes could have looked like Basil Rathbone, Jeremy Brett, Ian Richardson, Tom Baker, Peter Cushing, Matt Frewer, and Peter Cook in seven different dimensions with *The Hound of the Baskervilles* playing out in slightly different ways than it does in the Doyle/Watson narrative.

Envision those seven realities and a thousand more, all different,

yet all Holmes versus the Hound, and you really begin to appreciate the full beauty of the alternate reality paradigm.

In realizing that these other Holmeses and Watsons are truly other Holmeses and Watsons, we can finally accept them for who they are without complaining that they aren't our Holmes and Watson.

This is an inclusive paradigm, not an exclusive one. It gives one a vantage point from which to accept all of the varied and wondrous bounty that Sherlockiana can offer, without walling oneself off with a close-clutched copy of the Doubleday *Complete* and mumbling, "Must ... keep ... Canon ... pure!" as one rocks back and forth.

This new third paradigm also plays to the active minds of a generation which grew up with Mr. Spock standing next to Sherlock Holmes as the role model for pure logic.

Sure, those entrenched in the traditional history paradigm will view alternate histories as too fantastical for consideration.

And those who won't leave the literary life of the fiction paradigm will always see this as another whimsical retread of the "grand old Game."

But for "Sherlockiana, The Next Generation," an alternate history view of the Canon should come as naturally as running a cursor with a mouse.

56 STORIES IN 56 DAYS - "THE THREE GABLES"

Posted on November 05, 2011 by barefootonbakerstreet (Charlotte Anne Walters)

This story really does save the best till last, writes Charlotte Anne Walters.

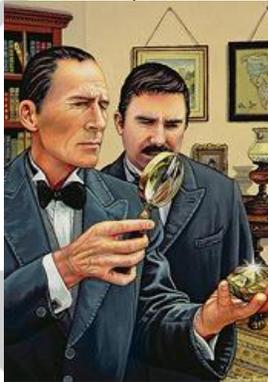
Written in the third person and detailing the disappearance of a valuable precious stone, this story gets off to a rather slow start and I miss Watson's narrative voice.

Maybe it was because I was reading at 5.30am, but I have to confess that I fell asleep half way through and woke up just in time to rush out of the house and get my train to work.

I'm sitting on it now, and must confess that despite the middle of the story sending me to sleep – the ending was great and got my full attention.

Count Sylvius, a typical upper-class wrong 'un, has stolen the stone and Holmes has all the evidence against him but still doesn't know where the gem has been hidden.

Knowing that the Count is pretty keen to see him dead, Holmes sets up a life-like dummy in the window of 221B in the hope that it will be this, and not he, which any bullets are directed towards. He then gets the Count to visit him and offers to let him go as long as he gives up the stone's location.



He calls up the count's associate who is standing guard in the street and allows them time to confer together.

He tells them that he will go into another room and play on his violin so as to not hear their conversation but actually uses a secret door to nip in behind the curtain and sit in place of the dummy.

A gramophone plays violin music to foil the pair and as Holmes listens to their conversation, the count reveals that he has the stone upon him.

Holmes suddenly springs out from hiding, takes the stone and facilitates their arrest. Hurrah!

Then the client is summoned and Holmes can't help having a little more sport.

Lord Cantlemere is very skeptical of Holmes' abilities and sneers when the detective suggests that he has not been able to find the stone.

He actually slips it into the Lord's pocket and happily toys with him before revealing the truth.

This is brilliant, great fun and, as always, it is most enjoyable to see Holmes get one over a difficult client or official.

This is also the story in which we meet Billy, the wise young page, who seems to have taken over some of Watson's role and 'Helped a little to fill up the gap of loneliness and isolation which surrounded the saturnine figure of the great detective'.

Watson does seem rather surplus to requirements in this one as his only role is to go for the police.

He doesn't even write up the story and therefore a strange air of chance seems to hang over proceedings – Watson is much older now, has a life of his own but Holmes' world has not changed leaving him rather lonely except for his young page.

It's hard for me to score this one as I didn't really think much of it until the concluding moments and though Billy is a spirited young man, he is no match for Watson.

I have to give it just 6 out of 10, especially as the dummy idea is hardly new – having featured so heavily in *The Empty House*.

STORY INFO PAGES FOR "THE MAZARIN STONE"

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

- **First published in:** The Strand Magazine, October 1921, and Hearst's International Magazine, November 1921. Note: This story was first written as a stage play by A. C. Doyle, and called "The Crown Diamond". The story is told in the third person, not by Watson.
- **Time frame of story (known/surmised):** In the summer. No clue as to the year. Maybe 1903, maybe 1894, maybe not.
- **Holmes and Watson living arrangements:** "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." Sounds like he was visiting, not residing there. Billy the page is on the job.
- **Opening scene:** Being a play, the entire story takes place in the rooms at 221B. About 1/3 into the story, Watson is sent off on an errand and does not return.
- **Client:** The Prime Minister and the Home Secretary. Also Lord Cantlemere, who was skeptical of Holmes' abilities, but came around at the end.
- **Crime or concern:** A £100,000 burglary, of the great yellow Mazarin stone, the missing Crown jewel. (There is no mention in this story of the circumstances regarding the actual crime, only that it had occurred.)
- **Villain:** Count Negretto Sylvius, a big, swarthy fellow, with a formidable dark moustache shading a cruel mouth, surmounted by a long, curved nose like the beak of an eagle. He had a brilliant necktie, shining pin, and glittering rings which were flamboyant in their effect. Not only that, but he had dark, hairy hands.
- **Motive:** £££ (\$\$\$ to Americans)
- **Logic used to solve:** Sylvius demands to know why Holmes's agents have been following him. Holmes explains first that it was him in disguise, and then likens his crimefighting activities to the Count's own lion-hunting activities in Algeria – the danger is exhilarating, and it rids the country of a pest. Holmes then proceeds to make his own purpose plain and tells the count that he wants to know where the Mazarin Stone is. Holmes even boasts that the count will tell him. At first, the count denies that he even knows, but Holmes tricks him into revealing that he does. He also outlines all the evidence that he has against the count for this theft, and other crimes.
- **Policemen:** Youghal of the C. I. D., to whom Holmes instructed Watson to deliver a few lines scribbled in a notebook.
- **Holmes' fees:** No mention, but given the illustrious clients, probably pretty decent.
- **Transport:** None. This was a stationary adventure.
- **Food and drink:** no mention
- **Vices:** Holmes says he hopes that Watson has not learned to despise his pipe and lamentable tobacco.
- **Other cases mentioned:** Old Baron Dowson, who said of Holmes, "What the law has gained, the stage has lost."

Old Mrs. Harold. She left Count Sylvius the Blymar estate. The count quickly gambled it away.

Miss Minnie Warrender, who was done in by the count.

- **Notable Quotables:** “The faculties become refined when you starve them. Why, surely, as a doctor, my dear Watson, you must admit that what your digestion gains in the way of blood supply is so much lost to the brain. I am a brain, Watson. The rest of me is a mere appendix. Therefore, it is the brain I must consider.” – SH
- **Other interestings:** The etymology of “Negretto Sylvius”. We understand that the Latin word or name “Silva” or “Silvi” means forest, or woods, and we believe that “ius” is a suffix meaning pertaining to, or something similar. “Negro” in various languages and forms means black, and the Italian word for “black” is “nero” which is close but not right on. “Etto” is an Italian suffix that represents small, or feminine,

and Count Negretto Sylvius was half Italian, for what that’s worth.

The name Blackwood does not appear in the Canon, but it was the name of a British magazine that was a competitor to The Strand Magazine, publisher of many of the Holmes stories. The new movie about Sherlock Holmes, interestingly titled “Sherlock Holmes” was released in December 2009, and has a villain named “Blackwood”.

A wax bust and an air gun, and a technological miracle, the gramophone. all make their appearance.

- **When all was said and done:** Once he recovered the diamond, Holmes slipped it into the pocket of Lord Cantlemere, then told him, “Your pleasure in telling of this successful result in the exalted circle to which you return will be some small atonement for my practical joke. Billy, you will show his Lordship out, and tell Mrs. Hudson that I should be glad if she would send up dinner for two as soon as possible.”

AN INQUIRY INTO *THE ADVENTURE OF THE MAZARIN STONE.*

Murray, the Courageous Orderly (a.k.a., Alexander E. Braun)

"The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone" was first published in "The Strand Magazine," on October 1921.

According to Baring-Gould's chronology, as set down in *The Annotated Sherlock Holmes,* Second Edition, 1974, the case takes place over the period of one day during the summer of 1903.

At the time Holmes is 49 years old and Watson 51.

Notable Quotes:

- "Mr. Holmes always knows whatever there is to know."
- "I am a brain, Watson. The rest of me is a mere appendix."
- "Your morals don't improve, Watson. You have added fibbing to your other vices."

== Third Person ==

This is another adventure authored in the third person, throwing doubts upon Watson's authorship.

The case, as written, appears incomplete and seems to have been hurriedly written.

It does not at all reflect Watson's usual careful and descriptive writing.

== Billy, the Page, and Holmes ==

Watson states that Billy the page "helped a little to fill up the gap of loneliness and isolation

which surrounded the saturnine figure of the great detective."

One wishes our Biographer had been a little bit more thorough here.

How did Billy fill that gap?

Was it as Holmes' surrogate son?

Or was he helping Holmes with his cases?

Because even by Edwardian standards, someone 49 years of age was not considered old, I find it unlikely that our sleuth felt crushed by the weight of his years and was looking for someone to pass on his detecting wisdom to.

In any case, any such attachment by Holmes would have been completely atypical, again throwing suspicion upon the author's identity.

== Billy, Who's Got the Billy? ==

Like the merry wives of Watson, *this* Billy--going by B-G's chronology--is certainly not the original, 1888, Billy.

So, who is he, and is his name a mere coincidence?

And is he the same Billy in THOR?

== The Royal Burglary ==

"What--the hundred-thousand-pound burglary?"

Here Watson seems surprised at Holmes' involvement in such an important case.

Even if this indicated that he and the Great Detective had been

out of touch for a considerable time, why would Watson be surprised that the top investigator in the Realm would be involved in a matter of such importance to the Crown?

A quick, back-of-the-envelope calculation shows that today the value of the Crown diamond would be approximately \$32,500,000.

If this appears excessive, it is only because one does not take into consideration the value of the rest of the Crown Jewels.

Assessors, insurance companies, and accounting firms have estimated the value of these jewels at between \$20 to \$50M.

However, others have put this at the \$5- to \$8-billion mark.

The latter estimate takes into account the individual value of some of the more legendary items, such as the Star of Africa (Cullinan I) diamond, which sparkles from the royal scepter.

This single jewel is tagged at a mere \$400,000,000.

== New Digs? ==

At least two references in the story seem to indicate that Holmes is no longer living at 221B, or some rather extensive alterations must have been made to that picturesque pile.

== Peculiar Forbearance ==

As with John Clay, the murderer, thief, smasher, and

forger (REDH), Holmes has kept close track of Silvius' felonious life--a life which appears to have included murder, but seemingly done little about it.

Why would he show such forbearance towards such a nasty customer?

It would seem that our detective should have caught and turned him long before this, for his a richly deserved reward at the hands of Dame Justice?

== Lord Cantlemere ==

His Lordship has always struck me as being an afterthought--by whoever recorded this case--someone created for the sole purpose of giving Holmes someone whose nose he could tweak at the case's end.

== Foreign Criminality in the Canon ==

The felonious Count Silvius is part of that 19% of European foreign criminality represented in the Canon.

Of all his other colleagues, 9% are American, 5% South American, 3.5% Australian, 3.5% Asian or African, and 60% British--Britannia still ruled, even amongst the criminal classes!

== Overview ==

I look upon this case as one of the Canon's disappointing stories. Short of being a fully fleshed out story, it reads like an overblown outline.

For the BBC version, fellow Barker Bert Coules, had to do considerable padding before it could air.

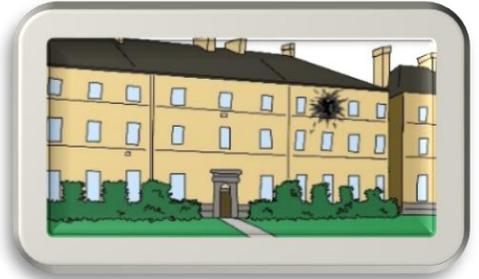
The only parts that hold any interest are those with Watson, but he still appears as little more than a bystander rather than the old campaigner always ready to face any peril by the Great Detective's side.

His grand contribution--fetching the police--is something that anyone could have done--Mrs. Hudson, Billy, the one-legged newspaper vendor in the street.

The only thing this story has to set it apart from all the rest in the Sacred Writings is that it is the only one that takes place completely at 221B, a fact often taken advantage by a number of playwrights of indifferent talent.

Baker Street Elementary

Created by: Joe Fay, Rusty & Steve Mason
The First Adventures of Sherlock Holmes and John Watson



Baker Street Elementary
Number 198 - 01/13/2019

Fay, Mason, & Mason

SO HOLMES, DID YOU ENJOY YOUR BIRTHDAY?

FOR THE MOST PART, BUT ITS STILL A WORK IN PROGRESS.



A WORK IN PROGRESS ?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN ?

OH, I DECIDED TO GIVE MYSELF MY OWN PRESENT THIS YEAR.



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PLEASE TELL ME YOU ARE NOT BURNING ANYTHING UP AGAIN...

I WILL NOT HAVE DIRECT CONTACT IN THE MATTER, MY DEAR WATSON. HOWEVER, THE USE OF FLAMES IS INVOLVED. JUST LOOK OVER THERE.



I SEE IGNATIUS PRACTICING CRICKET

WARM

LESTRADE AND GREGSON SHAKING DOWN SOME YOUNGINS'

WARMER

THERE... THERE... IS... OH...



UM, I SEE AN OPEN FLAME WITH STAMFORD STANDING NEXT TO IT, POKING SOMETHING.

HE IS POKING AT COAL IN THE FIRE. SADLY, OUR POOR FRIEND RECEIVED A BLACK GEM FOR CHRISTMAS AND LOOKED LIKE HE NEEDED SOME CHEERING.



I INFORMED HIM COAL IS JUST ANOTHER FORM OF CARBON, AND DIAMONDS ARE JUST CARBON PUT UNDER EXTREME HEAT AND PRESSURE. SO OUR LITTLE GEMOLOGIST IS SWEATING OVER THE FIRE, ABOUT TO START HAMMERING AWAY FOR HIS OWN DIAMOND.



SO, SOMEHOW YOU CONVINCED STAMFORD HE COULD MAKE HIS OWN DIAMOND ?

WITH A LITTLE STRETCH OF THE TRUTH, YES...



SO WHAT DID YOU GET HIM TO APPLY THE PRESSURE ?

I FOUND AN OLD POST MAUL.

IS THAT NOT OVERDOING IT ?

I WANTED TO BE SURE IT WAS DONE IN ONE BIG STRIKE.



ONE STRIKE FOR WHAT ?

MY BIRTHDAY PRESENT...

I THOUGHT THE DIAMOND ITSELF WAS THE PRESENT FOR YOU.

NOT AT ALL, JUST WAIT



STRIKE !!!

BOOM !!!



IT... IT EXPLODED... WHAT HAPPENED ?

I TUCKED SOME COAL DUST IN THE MAUL HEAD... WHEN IT STRUCK THE BURNING COAL, IT CREATED MY BIRTHDAY PRESENT.

WHAT, A FIRE ?

NO. FIREWORKS, OR IN THIS CASE, ONE BIG ONE.



I NEED TO MAKE SURE STAMFORD IS OKAY...

HE IS. JUST ENOUGH FOR A BIG FLASH... JUST A FEW BURNT HAIRS... BUT I SHOULD INFORM THE NURSE, ALL THE SAME...

PLEASE DO NOT DO ANYTHING FOR MY BIRTHDAY !!

HMMM... YOU MIGHT GRAB SOME AMMONIA...

