

The Bilge Pump

Vol. 07, No. 02 - February, 2019
*The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the
Barque Lone Star - founded April, 1970*



PLEASE NOTE:

March 3 Meeting

NOTICE

The next meeting will be held on Sunday, March 03, at 1:00 pm. At TWO GUYS FROM ITALY, in Dallas.

The restaurant is at 11637 Webb Chapel Road, Dallas, just south of LBJ Freeway

We will be reading "The Adventure of the Creeping Man." The quiz will cover this tale. Angela Rusk will tell us about 3-D printing.

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

February 03 Summary

There were 19 in attendance at the meeting. Dr. William Pervin opened the meeting with a toast to the Mazarin Stone (page 3).

The Crew then took a quiz on "The Mazarin Stone," which was won by Karen Olsen.

We then had a discussion on the story, including the 3rd person style and the play that preceded the story. Everyone present got a copy of the 1958 play The Crown Diamond, which was presented at the Baker Street Irregular's meeting that year.

We discussed the move to the new location, due to the closing of our residence over the past few years.

We then had a second quiz based on the colors described in the stories of the canon. This quiz was won by Cindy Brown.

The third mate encouraged everyone to write a limerick for the Crew's next publication. He also reminded people to ask at their local library about setting up a Sherlockian display at their location.

The Dallas Central Library has contacted Steve again for our Society to participate in their Book Fair in June, 2019. We have agreed to panel a discussion on 'Sherlock Holmes for students.'

Steve closed the meeting with a reading from the Winter 2006 Baker Street Journal, "Tell me More, Tell me More" (page 4).

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
Pam Mason
Rusty Mason

mason.steve@epa.gov
waltpieper@att.net
221b@verizon.net
jimrwebb@ix.netcom.com

myrkrid08@yahoo.com

Our Website: www.dfw-sherlock.org

Our Facebook Page:

The image is a collage of three distinct elements related to the Sherlock Holmes literary society. On the left, a vertical strip of aged parchment contains several quotes from the Sherlock Holmes stories, such as "That will await him when he enters port," and "And who is this Captain Calhoun?". In the center, a screenshot of the society's website is shown, featuring a circular logo with a star and the text "THE CREW OF THE BARQUE LONE STAR". The website has a navigation menu with items like "Home Page", "About", and "Crew Investitures and Awards", and a central image of a building labeled "Baker Street Elementary". On the right, another vertical strip of parchment contains a quote: "vessel which touched at Pondichery of these, one, the Lone Star, instantly of the states of the Union." Below these elements is a screenshot of the society's Facebook page. The page header includes "Page", "Messages", "Notifications", "Insights", and "Publishing Tools". A notification banner at the top says "You Have Unread Messages". The main content area features a large black and white graphic with the text "A SHERLOCK HOLMES LITERARY SOCIETY" and "Monthly meetings every 1st Sunday @ 1pm La Madeleine Country French Café". The page also shows a "Write something..." text box and a "Create Ad" button. On the far right, there are sections for "Organization" and "Page Tips".

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

THE ADVENTURE OF THE MAZARIN STONE

Dr. William Pervin

Today's story is "The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone" which is one of 12 Sherlock Holmes short stories by Dr. Watson's literary agent Sir Arthur Conan Doyle in *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes* first published in the October 1921 issue of *Strand Magazine*.

It is notable for being one of only two Arthur Conan Doyle Holmes stories, aside from a couple of humorous vignettes, to be written in third person (the other is "His Last Bow").

"The Mazarin Stone" was written this way because Doyle adapted it from his stage play, "*The Crown Diamond*," written in 1910, in which Watson hardly appeared.



Its adaptation from the theatre also explains why the action in this story is confined to one room.

The plot twist in which Holmes reveals he had been listening to the two criminals as they spoke freely would also not have been possible using a first-person narrative.

In the original play, the villain was Holmes's enemy Colonel Sebastian Moran of "The Adventure of the Empty House" infamy, not Count Negretto Sylvius.

Consider William Gillette: He was the first actor to be universally acclaimed for portraying Sherlock Holmes, having staged the first authorized play in 1899.

In one of his productions of Sherlock Holmes (in 1916), written by Gillette, he gave a young unknown actor that he had been impressed by the supporting role of Billy, the messenger boy.

The young man was given such good reviews that Gillette had him tour with him for over two years.

That actor was the later most famous comedian Charles Chaplin.

By the way, as a curtain raiser to the play was a short parody also written by William Gillette called "The Painful Predicament of Sherlock Holmes" in which a young woman fan is so thrilled at meeting the master detective that in her zeal she accidentally destroys several famous items including his trademark violin.



The young actress playing the role was Ethel Barrymore.

Let's raise our glasses in a toast to William Gillette.



Not just for being the well-known model for all later portrayals of the master, nor for being the writer and actor in plays that brought Sherlock Holmes to a wider audience, but for being the mentor of one of the greatest comedians in show business history: Charlie Chaplin.

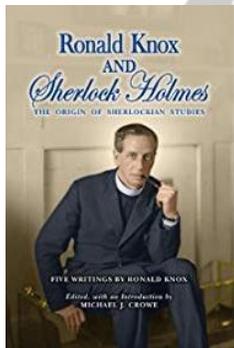
ON THE STREET WHERE YOU LIVE (EXTRACT)

Steven Rothman, Editor, BSJ, Winter, 2006, Vol 56, No. 4

Have you ever noticed the reaction you get when you tell a friend or acquaintance about your Sherlockian activities?

Sometimes it is condescension tinged with pity. But more often it is a hungry look accompanied by a very genuine request to know more.

That should be no surprise: Sherlock Holmes is a subject of fascination to many literate people.



After more than 75 years of playing the Game, the waters of knowledge have been so muddied that even well-read, well-informed people occasionally doubt their certainty about Holmes's existence (or non-existence).

Rather than remove their fog, all SHERLOCKIANS should constantly endeavor to increase their questioners' uncertainty, bemusement, and amusement.

It is our job to insert a little bit of scholarly humor into a world that has become far too grim. We are quite correct in asserting that Sherlock Holmes lives.

He has become the very spirit of rationality over a century during which the world seemed to have left the rational behind.

The early years of the twenty-first century have continued this flight into irrationality.

Arguments that would have been not only unseemly but unthinkable to those of Holmes's and Watson's generation are common currency in ours.

Sherlockians can both combat this irrational behavior and comfort themselves by finding some measure of peace and sanity in the Canon.

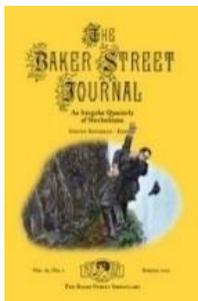
If the unfeeling give us odd looks, we can afford to be smug. Baker Street has offered us a safe haven from the rudeness of contemporary life—a chance to move forward while looking backwards.



So, when next you are approached by a curious friend or relation about just what you do with Sherlock Holmes, say that you study a man who embodied rationality by combating criminality.

Say that this study allows you to better understand your fellow man and woman and that you are the better for it. Offer to take them along to a meeting or lend them a BOOK OR JOURNAL.

It is only a small step from curiosity to happy involvement. Share the pleasure and sanity that Baker Street offers and help, in a very small way, to save rationality.



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.

SEVENTEEN STEPS TO "Creeping Man"

Brad Keefauver, Sherlock Peoria

Seventeen thoughts for further ponderance of "The Creeping Man" by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

VINDICATED BY MONKEY SERUM!

"Mr. Sherlock Holmes was always of opinion that I should publish the singular facts connected with Professor Presbury, if only to dispell once for all the ugly rumours which some twenty years ago agitated the university and were echoed in the learned societies of London."

As he has so many times, Watson gives us an introduction that leaves the repeat-reader wondering.

Given the facts of the case as Watson tells it, how much uglier could the university rumors have been?

As they certainly centered on Presbury, would the revelation that he was an accidental monkey-man be a better alternative to such rumors?

AH, FOR THE DIRECTOR'S CUT

Before telling the tale, Watson explains that "Even now a certain reticence and discretion have to be observed in laying the matter before the public."

In other words, he's holding back facts and leaving things out.

What sort of events might have Watson been leaving out of his public chronicle of the case?

Is he holding back for the public's sake, or some private individual involved in the story?

THE CLIENTS MUST EXPECT TO GET WATSON, TOO

"The relations between us in those latter days were peculiar.

He was a man of habits, narrow and concentrated habits, and I had become one of them."

The Bilge Pump 5 | Page



Watson makes it sound as if the pair did not get along any more, but only went on cases together out of habit.

Was this the reason for Holmes's brusque telegram, "Come at once if convenient -- if inconvenient come all the same."?

Had Watson made excuses one too many times? What might have caused the pair to have a falling out?

THE RETURN OF A CERTAIN BAD HABIT

"As an institution I was like the violin, the shag tobacco, the old black pipe, the index books, and others perhaps less excusable."

Watson is still speaking of Holmes's habits, and the first "less excusable" habit which comes to mind is the detective's earlier drug use.

Could Holmes have returned to cocaine after all this time? Or were his "less excusable" habits something else?

THE PUBLICATIONS OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

"I have serious thoughts of writing a small monograph upon the uses of dogs in the work of the detective."

Here is Holmes, near the end of his career, contemplating another monograph.

Were these an ongoing thread throughout his career, or were they previously concentrated at the beginning of his career, when clients were fewer?

PERHAPS CAMFORD WAS THE UNIVERSITY FOR HOGWARTS GRADS

Watson speaks early on in this case about dispelling rumors that agitated Camford University.

How can he be hoping to dispell rumors if "Camford" is a fictional composite of "Oxford" and "Cambridge"?

Or should the orthodox Sherlockian take Watson at his word, that Camford was Camford?

THE MAY/DECEMBER ROMANCE OF PRESBURY AND MORPHY

Professor Presbury is sixty-one years old.

Watson, ever the gentleman, doesn't give the lady's age, and we hear of her both as a "lady" and a "girl."

Given Father Morphy's approval, daughter Presbury's disapproval, and Miss Morphy's "I like him, but he's just so old!" attitude, can we make a guess as to the girl's age?

Just how scandalous would such a romance be?

FOR LADY'S MAN WATSON, SHE'S SAME OLD, SAME OLD

Watson calls Edith Presbury, "a bright, handsome girl of a conventional English type."

Why would an Englishman refer to an English girl as being of the "conventional English type"?

Does this show that Watson thinks of himself as other than English, or is it merely a sign of his "women on three continents" experiences and the categorizations thereof?

How might one recognize a conventional English girl if one were to encounter her elsewhere?



“WE’LL HAVE TWO KING-SIZED STONE PALLETS, PLEASE”

“Holmes made no allusion to the case until after we had deposited our suitcases at the ancient hostel of which he had spoken.”



As this takes place in a country where “old” is much older than the typical American is used to, roughly how old would an “ancient” hotel be?

THE AUTHOR OF MAZARIN STONE, PERHAPS?

“Mercer is since your time,” Holmes tells Watson. “He is my general utility man who looks up routine business.”

Holmes never seemed to use a “general utility man” while Watson was around -- did the doctor’s absence necessitate Mercer’s hiring?

Might Mercer have even been a replacement Watson?

ONE VERY BUSY MONKEY-MAN

Holmes remarks that Presbury’s knuckles are “thick and horny in a way which is quite new in my experience.”

As Holmes realizes this is an important clue, the indication would seem to be that Presbury got calloused knuckles from walking on them as an ape does.

How much knuckle-walking would a man have to do to get callouses there?

And if he was knuckle-walking “that” much, wouldn’t someone have seen him at it before Bennett?

THE HOUDINI OF WOLFHOUSES

“It was not the chain that broke, but it was the collar that slipped, for it had been made for a thick-necked Newfoundland.”

Considering Roy has been agitated and is straining to get

Professor Presbury, how could he slip out of his collar?

Wouldn’t he have to back out of it, when all his instincts surely had him pressing forward against it?

And if it was that loose, wouldn’t he have slipped it at many another non-attack-mode moment?

THE SURGEON GENERAL, HE’S NOT!

H. Lowenstein writes Presbury with the following warning about his wares: “I would none the less enjoin caution, as my results have shown that it is not without danger of a kind.”

Was Presbury supposed to guess at the danger? Why would Lowenstein make such a vague statement, then hint around about ape behaviours, without coming out and stating the observed side effects?

(What a TV commercial disclaimer that would make!)

THE NOT-SO SECRET INGREDIENT

Watson recalls, “Lowenstein with the wondrous strength-giving serum, tabooed by the profession because he refused to reveal its source.”

Why was Lowenstein suddenly revealing his serum’s source to Presbury, after his secrecy had already cost him so much?

And suppose Lowenstein had come right out and said, “It’s monkey glands, okay? It still works!”

Would the medical community have embraced it or shunned his serum due to its source?

THOSE HANDY HIMALAYAN APES DOWN THE STREET

Lowenstein writes, “It is possible that the serum of anthropoid would have been better. I have, as I explained to you, used black-faced langur because a specimen was accessible.”

Wouldn’t a Himalayan langur have been a much rarer species in European captivity than an anthropoid?

Why would Lowenstein have access to this type of ape and no other, when it was such an important factor in his serum?

THE COLOGNE THAT DRIVES ‘EM WILD! (DOGS, ANYWAY)

“The dog, of course, was aware of the change far more quickly than you. His smell would insure that.

It was the monkey, not the professor, whom Roy attacked.”

Regardless of how Presbury smelled, would a dog attack an ape simply because it smelled like an ape?

What common serum ingredients other than ape parts might have been making the Professor smell like a stranger to Roy?

THE IMMORTAL HOLMES SPEAKS ON IMMORTALITY

“Consider, Watson, that the material, the sensual, the worldly would all prolong their worthless lives.

The spiritual would not avoid the call to something higher.



It would be the survival of the least fit. What sort of cesspool may not our poor world become?”

Is Holmes on target about immortality here?

Or might the spiritual actually accept the call to something higher resulting from a prolonged life?

Wouldn’t the sensualists get bored quicker and want to end it all?

THE ECTASY OF AGONY

Liese Sherwood-Fabre, PhD

Despite describing the agony column—personal advertisements appearing in the newspapers—as “a chorus of groans, cries, and bleatings,” Holmes nonetheless perused that column as well as other advertisements religiously, even keeping them in special scrapbooks.

This habit was described in “The Copper Beeches,” “The Engineer’s Thumb,” and “The Valley of Fear,” and proved useful in “The Adventure of the Bruce-Partington Plans” and “The Adventure of the Red Circle,” where he was able to follow communications between those involved in the case, and an advertisement led to uncovering the true identity of John Garrideb.

He was also not above placing an advertisement himself to locate someone connected to a case, as in “A Study in Scarlet,” “The Sign of Four,” “The Naval Treaty,” “The Blue Carbuncle,” “The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax,” and “The Greek Interpreter”—the last actually placed by Mycroft.

The earliest reference to an agony column appeared in 1853, but personal advertisements had already been appearing in *The Times* of London. These usually sought missing relatives or friends or sent secret messages between lovers. (1)

For Holmes, these represented sources of data (as a means of monitoring criminal activity as well as bits of information that, when connected with other bits, provided a more complete picture of an event or individual) as well as a source of amusement, such as decoding the secret messages between lovers. (2)

So popular was the column and readers’ interest in deciphering and following these short missives, Alice Clay in 1881 provided instructions on how to decode the messages in her collection and analysis of some that appeared from 1800-1870.

She noted that the early announcements appeared to be directed at matrimonial requests and quite supported the romantic notion of “love at first sight.” (3)

Today’s puzzlers can try their hand at decoding using Jean Palmer’s 2008 collection *The Agony Column Codes & Ciphers*. (4)

Fair warning, this pastime could prove quite addictive, as Sherlock noted in “The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor” as one of only two parts of the paper he read. (5)

By the mid-20th century, the agony column had become an advice column overseen by an “agony aunt,” (6) although the roots of published letters from those seeking guidance could be traced back to John Dutton.

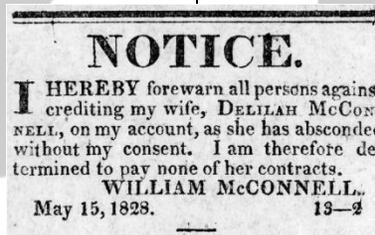
He allowed readers to seek guidance in letters which he published in his *Athenian Gazette*.

Often such correspondence sought advice on how to carry on an adulterous affair, (7) but also offered audience participation as others provided answers to the questions raised. (8)

After working for Dutton answering some of these requests, Daniel Defoe created his own publication, *Review*, and became its agony uncle in 1704.

Women entered the advice world in 1740 when Mrs. Eliza Haywood at the *Female Spectator* and Miss Frances Moore at the *Old Maid* added such columns to their publications, firmly establishing the column as advice from “agony aunts.” (9)

Despite the decline in newspaper readership in recent years, a need still exists for such advice, but requests now appear in blogs, online magazines, forums, Facebook, and other digital outlets.



Those responding to questions about monetary, relationship, family, or other personal problems note that writers pursue such anonymous advice due to a lack of trusted family or friends with whom sensitive information can be shared.

The agony aunt or uncle still sees their role as acknowledging the correspondent's story, provide feedback and sharing other sources of help, where needed. (10)

For those seeking companionship rather than advice, personal advertisements still exist. Often referred to as "lonely hearts columns," these provide an avenue for those seeking a relationship to provide a description of themselves as well as their preferences for a companion.

And given limited space with which to do so (often being charged by the character or line), a code has

developed—just as with the personal messages in the agony column—identifying relationship status (e.g. divorced or widowed), ethnicity or nationality, and gender.



Another set of abbreviations provides additional information, such as LTR for "long term relationship" or NSA for "no strings attached." (11)

With the advent of very private digital communications, the agony column as a means for not-so-secret messaging between lovers has gone by the wayside.

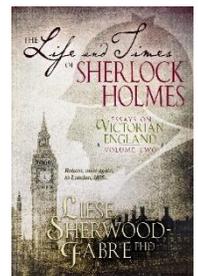
As recent agony aunts note, however, the need for advice still exists as does a means for meeting others. Sherlock would most likely find such columns even more full of "groans, cries, and bleatings" than in 1902, (12) but still a means to keep a finger on society's pulse.

- (1) <https://wordhistories.net/2017/01/27/agony-column/>
- (2) Keaghan Turner, "Sherlock Holmes and the 'Agony Column': A Study in Convergent Media," *English Literature in Transition, 1880-1920*, 61: 4, 2018, page 435.
- (3) Alice Clay (editor). *The Agony Column of the "Times": 1800-1870*. London: Chatto and Windus, 1881. Page vi.
- (4) Jean Palmer, *Agony Column Codes and Ciphers*, England: Authors OnLine, 2005.
- (5) Turner, page 441.
- (6) <https://wordhistories.net/2017/01/27/agony-column/>
- (7) <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2009/nov/13/agony-aunts>
- (8) Robin Kent, *Aunt Agony Advises*. London, W.H.Allen, 1979. Page 1.
- (9) <https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2009/nov/13/agony-aunts>
- (10) Petra Monica Boynton, "Agony, Misery, Woe: A New Role For Media Advice Columns" in *The Lancet/Psychiatry*. Volume 2. March, 2015, page 203.
- (11) <https://www.revolvy.com/page/Personal-advertisement>
- (12) <https://fourthgarrideb.com/2018/09/03/data-data-data-the-red-circle/>

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 - Volume 2" 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 CREEPING MAN

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. Starting with a desire for publicity, is this the Holmes we have known for so long?
2. What obstacles could not be avoided by changing the scene and the characters?
3. Wouldn't permission depend on a review of the manuscript?
4. Are the standards of discretion and reticence the same today?
5. What less excusable habits would fit Holmes?
6. Why didn't Holmes use Watson as a whetstone immediately?
7. Was telephone the medium of communication within 24 hours?
8. Can the Copper Beeches reference fit Watson's account?
9. Is it reasonable that Bennett would know of Holmes, but not of Watson?
10. Why, as in earlier days, didn't Holmes have Bennett "go over the ground in clear order?"
11. Is there significance in the use of the word "European" instead of "international"?
12. What options did Alice have after becoming engaged?
13. Why didn't Bennett mention the packets?
14. Was the Continental tour only to Prague and points en route?
15. Why was Presbury's laboratory at home and not at the university?
16. Were dear affectionate Roy and most other house dogs primarily kept as watchdogs?
17. What Canonical references suggest that Holmes, unlike Watson, was mathematically inclined?
18. Except with exercise or modern drugs, how could Presbury have become stronger?
19. Was Bennett named Trevor, Jack, or J. Trevor?
20. Should Holmes have had a better excuse than just a second person?
21. Had Holmes given up on the use of disguises?
22. Were water-pipes outside a house normal construction?
23. Was Macphail's silence beforehand in keeping with class distinction?
24. Wouldn't a physiologist have known that aging was irreversible?
25. Was sexuality rather than longevity the basic consideration in this case?
26. Are the dates mentioned in this case consistent?



LEADING WITH THE CHIN - Careful Considerations Concerning Canonical Chins

Bill Mason, Holmes and Watson Report, November, 2001

Sherlock Holmes is described in detail throughout the Canon, but his chin, though frequently mentioned, is described only sparingly.

He was, by habit, clean shaven, since he kept his chin "smooth," whether in Baker Street or upon the desolate moor (HOUN, Chapter 12). More



notably, Watson observed that Holmes's chin "had the prominence and squareness which mark the man of determination" (STUD, Chapter 2).

The idea that physical characteristics reflect personality traits was a common thread in the Sherlockian saga. For instance, Holmes himself believed that intelligence was nothing more than "a question of cubic capacity" (BLUE).

Such a notion is not well-accepted these days. Most of us in the 21st century accept the argument that physical characteristics are the product of genetics, while psychological and/or behavioral factors are the result of social and environmental influences.

An educated person would be hard-pressed to agree with an assertion that someone with eyes set close together is probably either stupid or a criminal.

Dr. Watson, however, was free of 21st-century ideas. For

him, Holmes had a chin which exposed him as a "man of determination."

Specifically, his chin was prominent and square. Chin-wise, only one other character is described in these terms. Birdy Edwards had "a remarkable face," which featured "a square projecting chin" (VALL, Chapter 7).

That such an admirable and heroic a person as Edwards had the canonical chin most like Holmes's should come as no surprise.



But what of Jonathan Small - conspirator, murderer, thief, fugitive - who possessed "a singular prominence about his bearded chin which marked a man who was not easily turned from his purpose" (SIGN, Chapter 11).

Small, then, was also a "man of determination," but he was certainly no Sherlock Holmes or Birdy Edwards. He was on the other side of the law - he was a bad guy. Why didn't his chin make the difference?

Well, Small's chin was prominent, but apparently not square. Perhaps, had his chin possessed squareness as well as prominence, he might have taken a different path in life; he might have been able to outwit the Sikhs at the Agra fort; he might even have had enough sense not to

swim with crocodiles in the Ganges.

Alas, his chin met only one of the two standards-of-excellence-for-chins in the Sherlockian Canon. The chin of Jonathan Small was only half good enough.

Others possessed chins that spoke volumes about their owners' character. The King of Bohemia is particularly notable.

He had "a long straight chin suggestive of resolution pushed to the length of obstinacy" (SCAN). Jonathan Small, already mentioned, had an "aggressive chin."

Such a description, on one hand, begs explanation. But it also conjures up a vision of the man wagging his beard in the face of a startled merchant or barrister as he bellowed his indignation or pressed his demands.

The Feminine Chin

The faces of women, too, featured chins which reflected personality, usually favorably.

The noblewoman who revenged herself upon Charles Augustus Milverton made a positive impression upon Dr.

Watson: "I looked at that delicately curved nose, at the marked eyebrows, at the straight mouth, and the strong little chin beneath it" (CHAS). And



a strong character she was indeed -- strong enough to pump "bullet after bullet into Milverton's shrinking body."



Sherlock Holmes was successful in producing an extremely accurate description of Anna Coram through deduction (GOLD),

but he did not predict her "long and obstinate chin."

Despite a long list of Anna's unattractive characteristics, Watson detected "a gallantry in the defiant chin and in the upraised head, which compelled something of respect and determination."

Finally, Eugenia Ronder kept most of her face covered by a thick dark veil, "but it was cut off close at her upper lip and disclosed a perfectly shaped mouth and a delicately rounded chin.

I could conceive that she had indeed been a very remarkable woman" (VEIL). Apparently, then, when all else failed, the right kind of chin could redeem an otherwise hopeless character.

The Three Little Pigs

As we all know, the Big Bad Wolf wanted to eat up the Three Little Pigs. There were other tasty creatures about, of course, and they might have been easier to get than pigs who were clever enough to build houses.

But, no, the wolf wanted pigs; and the reason for that is found in this classic exchange:

"Little pig, little pig, let me come in."

"No, not by the hair of my chinny, chin, chin."

The pigs, you see, were fat -- good eating for voracious wolves in fairy tale forests. They were so fat, in fact, that they had three chins each -- thus the "chinny, chin, chin" rather than just "chin."

Holmes and Watson encountered characters with multiple chins as well -- and it just so happens that these corpulent personages number exactly three.

The "Three Little Pigs" of the



Sherlockian tales were not so little, really, but they were all noteworthy because of their chins.

Take the loathsome Jephro Rucastle, for example. He was "a prodigiously stout man with a very smiling face, and a great heavy chin which rolled down in fold upon fold over his throat" (COPP).

Violent Hunter described him as "genial" and very funny, the only stand-up comic in the Canon, and the very picture of the stereotypical fat man who also must be jolly. Rucastle calls to mind the fat fellows who entertained Julius Caesar.

"Let me have men about me that are fat!" demanded Caesar (at least according to Shakespeare), and he might have liked jolly old Jephro very much -- although it's hard to imagine that Rucastle would not have joined in the bloodletting on that ancient Ides of March.

Then there is the case of Culverton Smith, a man who murdered his own nephew and tried to do the same to Sherlock Holmes (DYIN).

He possessed "a great yellow face, coarse-grained and greasy, with heavy, double-chin." He could be pleasant, though certainly not jolly, but this double-chinned fellow was just as odious as Rucastle.



The last of the canonical porkers is Dr. Thomycraft Huxtable (PRIO). Watson recalled the "sudden and startling" entrance of Dr. Huxtable into the Baker Street rooms, his collapse, and his recovery (due in part to milk and biscuits).

Then follows a truly remarkable paragraph, quoting Holmes:

"And now, Dr. Huxtable, when you have consumed that milk, you will kindly tell me what has happened, when it happened, how it happened, and, finally, what Dr. Thomeycraft Huxtable, of the Priory School, near Mackleton, has to do with the matter, and why he comes three days after an event -- the state of your chin gives the date -- to ask for my humble services."

Now, there is much to comment upon here; but the most interesting aspect of this statement is the observation by Holmes on the state of Huxtable's chin.

Holmes, merely by looking at Huxtable, infers a span of three days since the occurrence of whatever terrible event drove him, eventually, to Holmes's door. Watson himself had noticed that "the rolling chins were unshaven" -- another fat, many-chinned character -- but Holmes not only noticed that fact (as he would, of course, in an instant), he also

determined that Huxtable had not shaved for three days.

Not "about" three days, nor "approximately" three days, nor "three days or so" - exactly three days.

Watson often wanted to know just how Holmes seemed to "know" things, and this is one instance where an explanation would be welcome.

Different people have different patterns of beard growth. A dark, heavily bearded man might look unshaven by nightfall, while another might have a very slow growth of the beard and days may go by before it is noticeable.

All of this has something to do with hormones, and stress, and natural beard heaviness, and (ultimately) genetics, and perhaps even the humidity and altitude.

Perhaps beard growth was one of Holmes's fields of "out-of-the-way knowledge which would astonish his professors" (STUD, Chapter 1), and he knew exactly how those numerous chins would appear three days after the last good shave.

Keeping Chins Handy

Chins, unlike hands, are difficult to maneuver. What, after all, can you do with a chin? Hands are different. What mother has not demanded of her child, "Get your hands out of your mouth!" - especially if nail-biting is involved.

Fathers understand, if they cannot condone, the overuse of hands by sons passing through the portals of pubescence.

The strumming of fingers is annoying; the picking of noses is disgusting; and everyone knows where bumbling bureaucrats keep their thumbs most of the time.

Yes, one has to be careful about where hands are kept. But there is one place for hands that is almost always safe, and rarely, if ever, offensive - the chin.

Ask an actor to strike a "thoughtful" pose, and he is most likely to grasp chin between finger and thumb and assume a look of deepest concentration. No wonder, then, that chins are found in hands throughout the Canon.

There was even one collective chin-holding, when Holmes, Watson and Mary Morstan called on Thaddeus Sholto: "We sat all three in a semi-circle, with our heads advanced and our chins upon our hands" (SIGN, Chapter 4).



On many other occasions, Holmes proved to be an accomplished chin-holder. This was, quite apparently, tremendously beneficial to concentration and deep thinking.

Once, Watson described how "Holmes sat down on a boulder and rested his chin in his hands. I smoked two cigarettes before he moved" (PRIO). At another time, Holmes "sat silent now for some time, with his chin upon his hand, lost in thought" (YELL).

But his best use of chin holding was during his visit to Devonshire: "Holmes took the bag, and descending into the hollow, he pushed the matting into a more central position.

Then stretching himself upon his face and leaning his chin upon his hands, he made a careful study of the trampled mud in front of him" (SILV).

This chin-in-hand business must have been the exclusive province of investigators.

Inspector Alec MacDonald "sat with his chin in his hands" when consulting Sherlock Holmes (VALL, Chapter 2); and Inspector Bardle of Sussex "rubbed his chin" as he considered the facts in the death of Fitzroy McPherson (LION). Chin-holding in Victorian times was good, clean fun.



Get It Off Your Chest

For all his chin-grasping, which is common enough even today, Holmes had another chin-related practice. He would, from time to time, place it "upon his breast."

Sherlock Holmes was a topflight thinker, and breast-resting the chin apparently was the next step up on the pondering scale. There are four examples of this unusual phenomenon, all involving a different degree of associated activity, from lethargic to highly energetic.

Interestingly, in three of these four examples, Holmes's hands were kept in his pockets - thus removing that temptation from the equation.

To get the highest possible level of concentration, the chin was kept tightly on the chest and distractions were kept at a minimum.

"Holmes sat motionless by the fire, his hands buried deep in his trouser pockets, his chin sunk upon his breast, his eyes fixed upon the glowing embers" (CHAS). Another low-energy example occurred when "Holmes stood by

the table with his hands deep in his trouser pockets and his chin upon his breast" (STOC).

Such languid approaches were not always appropriate, however. "For a whole day my companion had rambled about the room with his chin upon his chest and his brows knitted, charging and recharging his pipe with the strongest black tobacco, and absolutely deaf to any of my questions or remarks" (SILV).

Holmes clearly was able to be in constant motion and in deepest thought simultaneously -- but the chin had to be deeply implanted in the chest to make it work.

The last example of this method demands attention. "We found Holmes," says Watson, "pacing up and down in the field, his chin sunk upon his breast, and his hands thrust into his trousers pockets" (REIG).

Now, Holmes walking around in his own apartment holding his chin down on his chest might be possible (see the previous example), since he knew the layout of the place intimately and could be expected not to fall over



the footstool a la Dick Van Dyke. But out in a field?

I tried this in my backyard, and you can be sure that "pacing up and down" is pretty difficult if your chin is down on your breast.

While I managed not to pace my way into the creek, I also discovered a hole in the ground, nearly fell over a tough clump of

grass, found my dog's latest contribution to the fertilization cycle, and otherwise scared myself.

Pacing will work, and butting the chin on the chest will work, but both at the same time? Well, we know Holmes could do it, but lesser mortals would have a more challenging time.

The Chin Grotesque

Not all chins in the world of Sherlock Holmes were fun to observe.

Hugh Boone, the alter ego of Neville St. Clair, took pains to make himself ugly. He possessed



"a bulldog chin," and his disguise included "an old scar ... from eye to chin" (TWIS).

Sometimes, the chins could take on a ghastly aspect. Watson described the scene in an opium den on Upper Swandam Lane: "Through Uie gloom one could dimly catch a glimpse of bodies lying in strange fantastic poses, bowed shoulders, bent knees, heads thrown back, and chins pointing upward" (TWIS).

The chins of the opium addicts apparently were like tulips in a Dutch garden, straining upward and ready to be plucked.

Even more macabre is the scene in the "haunted crypt" at Shoscombe Old Place, when Holmes confronted Sir Robert Norberton.

"He turned and tore open the coffin-lid behind him. In the glare

of the lantern I saw a body swathed in a sheet from head to foot, with dreadful, witch-like features, all nose and chin, projecting at one end, the dim, glazed eyes staring from a discolored and crumbling face" (SHOS). Here, the chin was a distinguishing figure of a truly frightening visage.



Consider the terrifying spectacles of vitriol "eating into" the face of Baron Gruner "and dripping from the ears and the chin" (ILLU) or of "blood dripping down" the chin of Fitzroy



McPherson who had "bitten through his lower lip in the paroxysm of his agony" (LION).

Truly, the chin in its normal state is most unremarkable, but unusual circumstances could produce an unusual effect.

For such a usually nondescript feature, the chin enjoyed a varied existence in the Sherlockian stories. Canonical chins could reflect admirable characteristics or add to the virtues of women.

They could be handled or hidden or held in unnatural poses. And they could be offensive or even horrible. But, like many other aspects of the Sherlockian saga, they were really never dull.

56 STORIES IN 56 DAYS - "THE CREEPING MAN"

Posted on November 10, 2011 by barefootonbakerstreet (Charlotte Anne Walters)

Love can make us do stupid things and that is certainly true in the case of poor old Professor Presbury, writes Charlotte Anne Walters.

This is one of the most unbelievable of all the stories in my opinion but I do rather like it all the same.

The poor old professor has fallen madly in love with a young girl and starts taking a dangerous elixir which is meant to restore his youth.

Instead, it makes him creep around dragging his knuckles along the floor and climb up walls like a monkey.

The potion contained extracts from a Himalayan climbing monkey which is what caused his alarming symptoms.

The story is so fantastical but yet somehow, as you read it, you do find yourself believing every word and getting completely drawn-in. It's memorable too, unlike many of the stories which are so similar to others and

formulaic that it is difficult to separate them in your memory.

And with the modern boom in rejuvenating procedures such as Botox, face-lifts, Liposuction, fillers, and even a recent discovery of injecting sheep extracts into the face to plump it up, perhaps there was something rather prophetic about Doyle's idea.

Thinking about it, it doesn't actually seem very fantastical at all compared to modern ideas – but I

do think a monkey elixir would have caused far more serious, possibly fatal, effects, not just a bit of moodiness, creeping and climbing.

We are told by Watson that this is one of Holmes' last cases before retirement. This is sad really, being

reminded that it all comes to an end and, like with us all, Holmes must grow old.

Watson also gives a description of the state of their friendship at that time. He has become an institution, a habit, like the violin and shag tobacco.

The relations between the two men are described as 'Peculiar' due to their strangely utilitarian nature. It is, as always, a friendship but Watson is a friend-with-benefits (though not in that way of course).

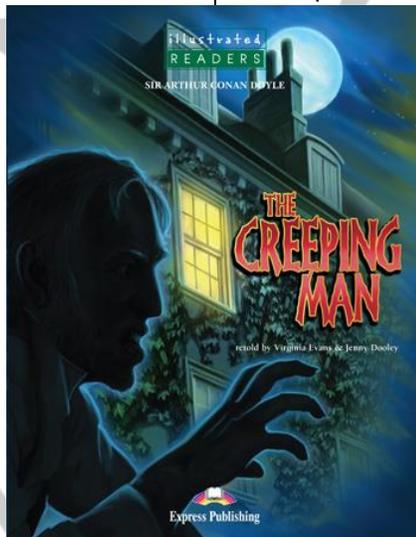
Watson is a 'Whetstone for his mind' and a comrade, 'Upon whose nerve he could place some reliance'.

Friendship is tinged with usefulness, and a comfortable, familiarity now characterises their relationship. They can each be themselves and appreciate these traits, these points of difference, in one another.

Indeed, Holmes summons Watson with a message saying – 'Come at once if convenient-if inconvenient come all the same.' Is this disrespectful or just being yourself?

Is it Holmes exercising his superiority or acknowledging how much he needs his friend's help? This is the problem with trying to analyse Holmes, that duality at the core of his personality shifting between kindness and emotion, then coldness and arrogance.

A great story with interesting observations from Watson about the autumn days of their friendship. 8 out of 10.



STORY INFO PAGES FOR "THE CREEPING MAN"

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

- **First published in:** The Strand Magazine, and in Hearst's International Magazine, March 1923. Some twenty years passed between the events and Watson's writing the story, but even then a certain reticence and discretion had to be observed in laying the matter before the public.
- **Time frame of story (known/surmised):** Sunday, September 6, 1903, clearly given. This was one of the very last cases handled by Holmes before his retirement from practice.
- **H&W living arrangements:** Living separately. Watson was dramatically summoned to 221B with a laconic message from Holmes.
- **Opening scene:** Watson arrived at Baker Street and found Holmes huddled in his armchair with updrawn knees, in the throes of a vexatious problem.
- **Client:** Trevor Bennett, professional assistant and personal secretary to Prof. Presbury, the famous Camford University physiologist, a man of European reputation whose life had been entirely academic. Bennett himself was a tall, handsome youth about thirty, well dressed and elegant, but with something in his bearing which suggested the shyness of the student rather than the self-possession of the man of the world. He was engaged to the professor's daughter Edith, a bright, handsome girl of a conventional English type.

The professor himself was a man of European reputation. His life had been academic, with never a breath of scandal. He was a widower with one daughter, Edith, and a man of very virile and positive character.
- **Crime or concern:** The professor went away to Prague for two weeks and upon returning, a curious change had come over him. He became furtive, sly, and sinister, and under some shadow which darkened his higher qualities. His intellect was not affected; his lectures were as brilliant as ever. Then Bennett spotted him, in the middle of the night, creeping down the hallway in a curious simian fashion. The professor spat out some atrocious word at Bennett and kept going. Then later, Edith saw her father's face looking in through her window one night. Her room was on the third floor (second floor in England). He was also inexplicably twice attacked by Roy, his otherwise dear, affectionate dog.
- **Villain:** The professor himself, who was a portly, large-featured man, grave, tall, and frock-coated, with the dignity of bearing which a lecturer needs. His eyes were his most remarkable feature, keen, observant, and clever to the verge of cunning. Not only that, but he had shaggy brows and large horn glasses. He had been taking drugs which altered his mind and body. The serum was derived from black-faced Langur monkeys of the Himalayan slopes, the biggest and most human of the climbing monkeys. The drug was furnished by an old colleague, an obscure scientist, Lowenstein of Prague. Lowenstein had developed the wondrous strength-giving serum, but was tabooed by the profession because he refused to reveal the source.
- **Motive:** The 61-year old professor had married a woman 40 years his junior, and wanted to experience rejuvenescence and the elixir of life.

- **Logic used to solve:** SH noticed the professor's episodes were evenly spaced, every 9 days, which was beyond coincidence.

- **Policemen:** None

- **Holmes' fees:** No mention.

- **Transport:** H&W travelled twice by train up to the famous university town of Camford, and stayed at an inn called the Chequers. In Camford, a smart hansom swept them past a row of ancient colleges and on to the Professor's home.

- **Food:** At the conclusion of the case H&W took tea at the Chequers before returning to London.

- **Drink:** At the Chequers, the port was above mediocrity (and the linen above reproach). After meeting the Professor, H&W discussed events with a bottle of the famous vintage (port) on the table between them.

- **Vices:** SH smoked his pipe while introducing the concerns to Watson.

- **Other cases mentioned:** COPP, regarding which SH speculated to Watson about the moods of dogs reflecting the family life.

- **Notable Quotables:** Story opened with a message from Holmes to Watson: "Come at once if convenient — if inconvenient come all the same. S. H."

SH – "The same old Watson! You never learn that the gravest issues may depend upon the smallest things."

SH on making observations: "Always look at the hands first, Watson. Then cuffs, trouser-knees, and boots."

SH – "When one tries to rise above Nature one is liable to fall below it."

Watson – "If I irritated (Holmes) by a certain methodical slowness in my mentality, that irritation served only to make his own flame-like intuitions and impressions flash up the more vividly and swiftly. Such was my humble role in our alliance."

- **Other interestings:** SH had a general utility man, Mercer, who looked up routine business. Holmes told Watson that Mercer is "since your time."

- **When all was said and done:** Professor Presbury learned to take the drug while he was in Prague, and it was later supplied by a Bohemian intermediary in London, Dorak, a curious Slavonic name.

This story was sort of a "Science Fiction" episode. Various Holmes fans view this as one of the weaker stories, written later in Doyle's career, and abandoning many of the classic attributes.

The idea of a drug altering a man's physical and mental characteristics was part of a story written by another Scottish author, Robert Louis Stevenson, in 1886, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*.

AN INQUIRY INTO "THE ADVENTURE OF THE CREEPING MAN"

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

"The Adventure of the Creeping Man" was first published in "The Strand Magazine," on March 1923.

According to Baring-Gould's chronology, as set down in "The Annotated Sherlock Holmes," Second Edition, 1974, the case takes place from Sunday, September 6, 14, and 22, 1903.

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

Notable Quotes:

"Come at once if convenient--if inconvenient come all the same."

"The same old Watson! You never learn that the gravest issues may depend upon the smallest things."

"Dr. Watson is the very soul of discretion."

"Always look at the hands first, Watson. Then cuffs, trouser-knees, and boots."

"The highest type of man may revert to the animal if he leaves the straight road of destiny."

"There is danger there--a very real danger to humanity. Consider, Watson, that the material, the sensual, the worldly would all prolong their worthless lives. The spiritual would not avoid the call to something higher. It would be

the survival of the least fit. What sort of cesspool may not our poor world become?"

== The Watsonian Institution ==

As the story opens, when he is summoned by Holmes, Watson observes that he had become a habit for the Great Detective:

"As an institution, I was like the violin, the shag tobacco, the old black pipe, the index books, and others perhaps less excusable."

This comment always surprises me; especially when one considers that our Biographer wrote this towards the end of their years' long association.

It puzzles me that he would identify himself as a habit--almost as a "bad" habit--of Holmes. Let us recall that on more than one occasion the Good Doctor had indications of our sleuth's friendship and deep regard.

Let me quote Holmes in 3GAR, when Evans shot Watson:

"You're not hurt, Watson? For God's sake, say that you are not hurt!"

And then to the shooter:

"By the Lord, it is as well for you. If you had killed Watson, you would not have got out of this room alive."

Watson then writes that "It was worth a wound--it was worth many wounds--to know the depth of loyalty and love which lay behind that cold mask.

The clear, hard eyes were dimmed for a moment, and the firm lips were shaking.

For the one and only time I caught a glimpse of a great heart as well as of a great brain.

All my years of humble but single-minded service culminated in that moment of revelation."

Why, then would Watson have referred to himself in such a deprecating fashion?

Could it be that perhaps most of the peculiarities in the relationship were on Watson's, instead of Holmes' side?

What say you, Barkers?

== The Conventional Girl ==

Watson, a man deeply appreciative of the lure and mystery of the fair sex, whose descriptions of ladies at times has even included the "frou-frou" of their skirts, limits himself in this case to describing Miss Presbury as "a bright, handsome girl of a conventional English type."

I tend to think that the lady was a few yards short of being an English rose. Hounds?

== The Organization ==

Holmes telegraphs someone named Mercer to get information about Dorak.. He refers to this individual as his "general utility man," What does this mean?

Is he partner, employee, or simply part of that "small but very

efficient organization," mentioned in LADY and LAST?

== Creeping to Conclusions? ==

Consulting an almanac would have dispelled in short order any idea of Professor Presbury being a lunatic (in the sense of the belief that phases of the Moon could induce madness).

In this case, Holmes' theory that Presbury was periodically indulging in some sort of unknown drug of hideous effects every nine days appears to have been formed upon insufficient data.

Upon what did he base this conclusion?

During a time when just every known drug was available over the counter or easily obtainable through other means, why would he posit that it had to be some specific potion being sent to him from Bohemia?

Did Watson not reveal to us some facets of the investigation?

== The Second-Class Surgeon ==

As they used to say when I wore a younger man's clothes, Watson appears to have been on a real downer when he wrote down this case.

Here he is, a doctor with a "not inconsiderable" practice, trained as an Army surgeon--with combat surgery experience--who, after treating Professor Presbury's throat injury, says that he ought to be seen by "a first-class surgeon."

Why would he volunteer a comment that reflected so poorly upon his own medical abilities?

== Presbury's Rejuvenation ==

Endocrine treatments had a period of great popularity during the 1920s. Whenever we revisit this story I am reminded of my father telling me of an acquaintance who underwent such a treatment.

According to the "Pater", the man felt so rejuvenated that he took on a mistress and began keeping all sorts of ungodly hours.

He finally was killed by a fall when he skipped down the front staircase of a large public building two steps at a time, as he used to when young, slipped, and cracked his skull on the steps.

Obviously, it had been faith in the treatment, not the treatment itself that resulted in the hoped-for effect.

Much like today's testosterone-enhancing ads on television in which the user immediately develops Olympic musculature and an appetite for Eros worthy of a 16-year-old.

Although a great many people behave so without the benefit of the elixir, such a gland extract wouldn't make you smell or act like a monkey.

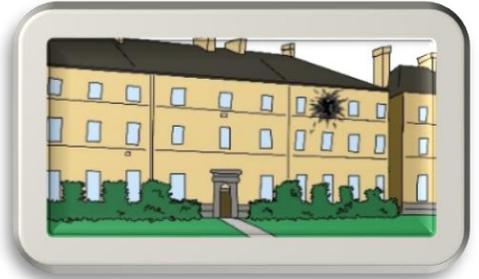
== Watson's Authorship ==

Some Sherlockians and Holmesians perennially debate whether this story was written by Watson or the Literary Agent.

Others, like me, point out the resemblance to the Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde storyline.

Baker Street Elementary

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



Baker Street Elementary
Number 202 - 02/10/2019

Fog, Moon, & Moon

Copyright 2019, Rev. Mason, Mason

QUICK, NAME UNIQUE ITEMS THAT EVERY ONE IS DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHERS...



FINGERPRINTS ?

MY SCHOOL TEST SCORES...



SNOWFLAKES...

REASONS MY MOTHER PUNISHES ME...



EARLOBES...

EARLOBES ?

TRUST ME ON THAT ONE ...



ZEBRA STRIPES...

WAYS TO EARN DETENTION...



YOU KNOW, STAMFORD, THERE SEEMS TO BE A GENERAL THEME IN YOUR ANSWERS...

