

The Bilge Pump

Vol. 08, No. 05 – May, 2020

*The Irregular Publication of the Crew of the
Barque Lone Star – founded April, 1970*



PLEASE NOTE:

June 07 Meeting NOTICE

It is unlikely we will be holding a face to face meeting in June, but let's plan on doing another virtual meeting through Zoom on June 7th at 1:00 pm. Will send out particulars in a week or two.

April 12 Summary

There were 23 in attendance at the virtual meeting. A tribute toast was given to honor Beth Austin (see page 3).

Ann Caddell then gave a presentation on "Romance in the Canon". You can view the presentation at:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDuREAVxU0g>

Next, we had a reading of her Joel Senter award-winning essay, by Eleanor Hébert. It was a fascinating discussion on the difference between Sherlock and Mycroft and whether they were influenced more by environment or heredity.

Steve Mason then gave an update on upcoming events the Society will be involved with, including:

- November 11 at the Allen Library on "The Science of Sherlock Holmes," (see page 4)
- SMU / Barque Lone Star Symposium on October 22-24, 2021 (see page 5)
- 2020 Barque Lone Star Compilation (see page 6)

Gregg Ruby from Baltimore gave information about the upcoming Scintillation of Scions, which will be held virtually on June 13.

Thanks to Cindy Brown for keeping the minutes, which you can find 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

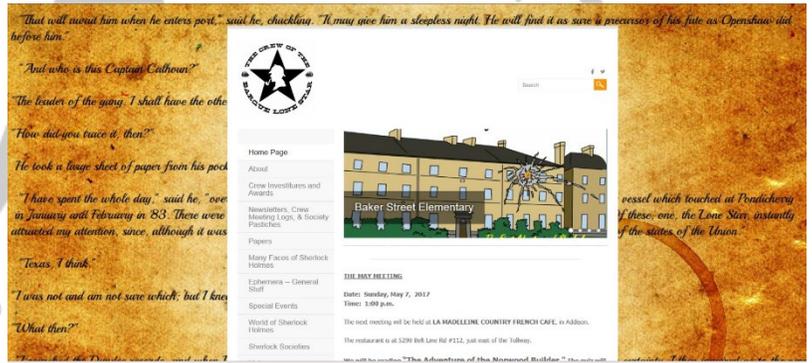
Steve Mason
Walter Pieper
Don Hobbs, BSI
Dr. Jim Webb, BSI
Cindy Brown, Brenda Hutchison
Pam Mason
Rusty Mason

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:

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

"A TRIBUTE TO BETH AUSTIN"

Developed by Jacqueline Best Morris

As if times aren't dark enough right now, one of the universe's brightest lights was dimmed on April 18th of this year.

Beth Austin, a member of Watson's Tin Box, the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes (ASH), and The Six Napoleons of Baltimore (only the fourth woman in that group's long history to be invited into membership), passed away after a brief but courageous battle with pancreatic cancer.

Beth was also a member of scion societies in Washington, DC, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.

Her Sherlockian background and her contributions to the community would take pages to list, but a few of her crowning achievements were her creation of "Irene's Cabinet," an annual publication of essays, art, and poetry, for her home scion, Watson's Tin Box.

She was also given the honor of taking on organizing the long-standing symposium, "Saturday with Sherlock Holmes," presented in Baltimore every November. For these, and for many other



accomplishments, Beth has been well-known in the Mid-Atlantic area for quite a few years.

But Beth was far more than her Sherlockian accomplishments. She was a dear friend, a brilliant woman with a wicked sense of humor, an unapologetic bibliophile whose thirst for knowledge was never sated, and she shared her delight in "every good thing," whether it be Sherlockian or from the works of Jane Austen, or just anything which struck her fancy. (One of the things that made her giggle was "I am Groot" from Marvel's Guardian of the Galaxy.)

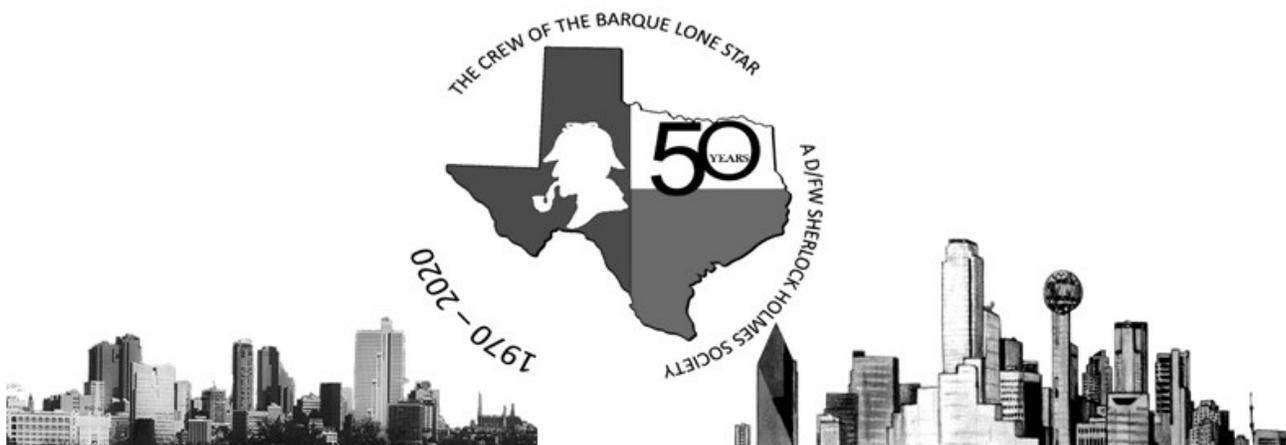
There is no good time to lose someone like Beth, but we lost her at the very worst time.

Everyone was well into self-quarantine when Beth's diagnosis was made, and visiting her (and putting her at further risk) was out of the question. No one knew how quickly she would be gone, so a few phone conversations and texts were all we had to say goodbye. Her family will hold a celebration of her life sometime later this year when it is safe to do so.

Her friends will hold her in their hearts forever.

Learn more about Sherlock Holmes and Science in a free program presented by The Crew of the Barque Lone Star. This group is a Sherlock Holmes literary society for the greater Dallas/Ft. Worth area, and a scion society of the Baker Street Irregulars.

Join us at **12:00 pm to 4:30 pm** on **Saturday, November 11** at the **Allen Public Library**, 300 N. Allen Drive, Allen Texas. The symposium will include: presentations on the science of Sherlock Holmes, interactive forensic activities, and a mystery for attendees to solve.



The Crew of the Barque Lone Star

For more information concerning our society, visit:

<http://www.dfw-Sherlock.org>

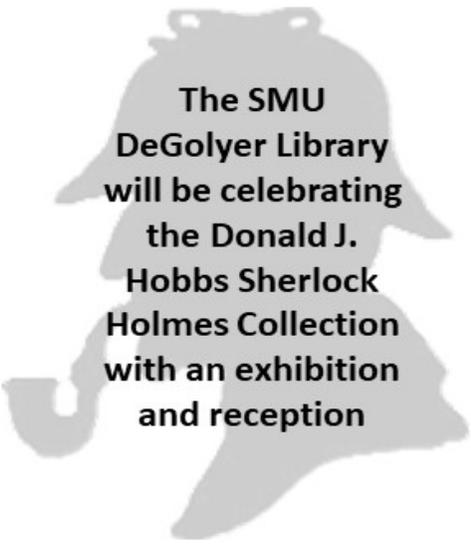
Please Join us at "The Collecting Mania"

A Symposium on all Things Sherlockian

What it takes to keep the Memory green and the Great Game alive

Tentative Speakers include:

Peter Blau, BSI
Lindsay Faye, BSI
Sonia Fetherson, BSI
Tim Greer, BSI
Robert Katz, BSI
Tim Kline
Bill Mason, BSI
Russell Merritt, BSI
Glenn Miranker, BSI
Howard Ostrom
Barbara Rusch, BSI



The SMU
DeGolyer Library
will be celebrating
the Donald J.
Hobbs Sherlock
Holmes Collection
with an exhibition
and reception

The Beeman Hotel, Dallas, Texas October 22-24, 2021

For more information, see our website
at: www.dfw-sherlock.org

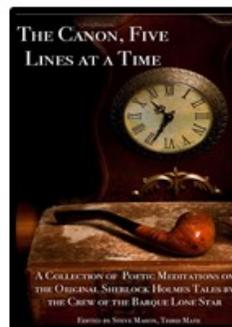
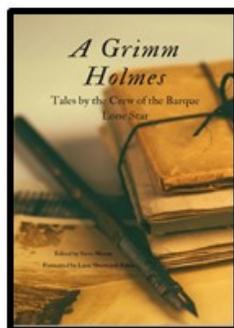
Co-hosted by Southern
Methodist University
DeGolyer Library and The
Crew of the Barque Lone
Star Society



SMU



**We are producing
our 4th book for our
50th Anniversary.**



For this year, members may submit an adventure involving Holmes and Watson solving a personal ad from one of the Victorian papers' Agony Columns.

1. You can use any personal ad available to you from a paper from the time of Holmes/Watson's career.
2. We have attached a list of personal ads researched and decoded by Liese and myself from various sources. You are welcome to use any of those in the enclosed list.
3. Your story should be 3,000 – 5,000 words, which is the average length for a short story. Obviously, a shorter story is fine.
4. Your story will be edited by one or two member volunteer editors, but only for grammar, typos... we will not edit the content of your story.
5. This project is not limited to just those members in the DFW area. Any member is welcome to submit a pastiche.
6. We plan to finalize the anthology by the end of the calendar year, so we ask for members to submit their entry by August 31.

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



TIME IN YOUR HANDS

Liese Sherwood-Fabre, PhD

In a number of the Canon cases, a character checked the time with his watch, and often kept important items—usually a key—on the attached chain.

In two adventures, Sherlock's study of a watch's characteristics provided information about its owner.

At the beginning of *The Sign of Four*, Watson shared his watch for Holmes to demonstrate what he can deduce about the owner's characteristics, and in "The Five Orange Pips," Watson mentioned how Sherlock used a watch to establish a victim's time of death.

For Sherlock, watches possessed a great individuality. (1)

The concept of time reflects man's observation of change—from day to night, for example—and is measured by motion as well as observed by motion. (2)



Early timepieces tracked the movement of the sun by a shadow cast by a stick in the ground (became the sundial over time).

To keep time when the sun was not visible, mechanical devices were created, including hourglasses and candles with the hours marked along its length. (3)

The 1300s marked the creation of mechanical clocks that used weights to move a clock's hands. In 1450, a coiled spring was introduced, making clocks smaller, and in 1657 Christiaan Huygens created the pendulum clock that greatly increased the timepiece's accuracy. (4)

These clocks depended on the pendulum invented by Galileo and lost only 15 seconds a day (vs. half an hour or more each day for other mechanical clocks). (5)

Personal timepieces were first developed by Peter Henlein, when he created the "Nuremberg egg," a portable clock using a spring mechanism in an oval enclosure at the beginning of the 16th century. (6)

Due to their costs, they were used primarily by the nobility. (7)

Additional innovations were developed, such as increasing resistance when winding the watch to indicate a well-wound spring and making the gears from copper.

Such improvements often required fine needlework and added to the watch's cost but made them accurate enough by 1762 to be used for navigation. (8)

The introduction of the waistcoat, popularized by Charles II, created a demand for "pocket watches" that would fit inside the "watch pocket." Given the amount of precious metal in the watch as well as their costs, such watches were considered "like a bank account," that could be sold or pawned in times of need (such as Watson's brother did). (9)

Wristwatches also gained in popularity in the late 1800s (although there are accounts of Queen Elizabeth I having one).

Primarily marketed to women as jewelry, they became much more important and popular among the military at the end of the 1800s, and manufacturers began marketing such timepieces to men. (10)

Mechanical watches involve a spring that as it unwinds, powers a balance wheel (weighted to move back and forth at a constant rate) that, in turn, allows other gears to move the hands forward incrementally.

At the center of the balance wheel and other friction points are the watch's "jewels," originally rubies or sapphires (replaced by synthetic ones today). (11)

Current watches have about 17 jewels, but higher amounts exist, indicating a more complicated mechanism.



When fully wound, mechanical watches will usually run between 24 and 36 hours, and should, therefore, be wound daily at the same time to maintain accuracy. (12)

While Watson did not provide many details of the "Camberwell poisoning case" in "The Five Orange Pips," Stillman Drake used what was provided to distill the essence of the case, including the un-named dead man. (13)

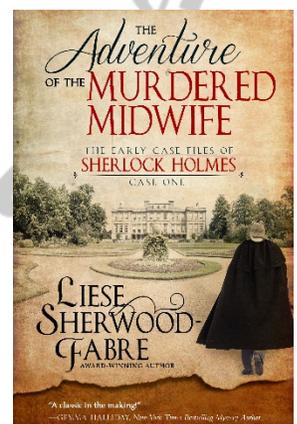
His deductions began with the fact that Holmes wound up a watch.

- (1) William S. Baring-Gould, ed. *The Annotated Sherlock Holmes* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc, 1967), page 576.
- (2) <https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2005/04/050415115227.htm>
- (3) <https://physicsworld.com/a/a-brief-history-of-timekeeping/>
- (4) <http://www.localhistories.org/clocks.html>
- (5) <https://www.ripeinsurance.co.uk/valuables/blog/history-of-watches/>
- (6) <https://prisma.watch/history-of-watches/>
- (7) <https://www.ripeinsurance.co.uk/valuables/blog/history-of-watches/>
- (8) <https://prisma.watch/history-of-watches/>
- (9) <https://www.racked.com/2018/3/27/17126050/watch-history>
- (10) <https://www.oxbridgewatches.com/blogs/blogbook/the-history-of-watches>
- (11) <https://precisionwatches.com/how-does-a-mechanical-watch-work/>
- (12) <http://www.seconddtimearoundwatchco.com/vintageWatchGuide/>
- (13) <http://www.dandrake.com/porlock/camberwell.html>

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.

Liese Sherwood-Fabre is pleased to announce the launch the origin series: The Early Case Files of Sherlock Holmes. The first, *The Adventure of the Murdered Midwife*, is available at all major online bookstores. See her Website Liesesherwoodfabre.com for more details.

The second case from The Early Case Files of Sherlock Holmes, "The Adventure of the Murdered Gypsy," will be available for pre-order May 1



A non-Sherlockian adventure can be downloaded at: <http://www.liesesherwoodfabre.com/extras.html>

CARRION CROWS AND EAGLES

By Karen Murdock

Originally published in Beaten's Christmas Annual 2006, The Sound of the Baskervilles, Gig Harbor, Washington

Sherlock Holmes makes an odd avian metaphor in speculating on the actions of Sir Robert Norberton in "Shoscombe Old Place":

"Ah, yes, the crypt! Let us suppose, Watson — it is merely a scandalous supposition, a hypothesis put forward for argument's sake — that Sir Robert has done away with his sister."

"My dear Holmes, it is out of the question."

"Very possibly, Watson. Sir Robert is a man of an honourable stock. But you do occasionally find a carrion crow among the eagles."

Holmes here means something like, "You do occasionally find a few bad apples in the barrel."

The "honourable" eagles, presumably, are held up in contrast to the disreputable carrion crows.

It is a striking metaphor, but bad natural history.

The carrion crow is omnivorous, eating many things besides carrion.

The poor bird simply suffers from an unfortunate name. And, besides, eagles have often been known to eat carrion, too.

And eagles often indulge in the very DIShonorable practice of stealing prey from other birds.

The "carrion crow" in question is the common European crow, *Corvus corone corone*.

The unfortunately-named bird is actually an "opportunistic feeder," meaning it will eat whatever it comes across — not only carrion, but also insects, seeds, fruits, earthworms, young birds, small mammals, reptiles, fish, mollusks, household waste from humans, and eggs.

It is 48 to 52 centimeters (19-20 inches) in length, glossy black, with a green or purple sheen, and is very common throughout the British Isles (in Scotland, the bird goes by the name "corbie," a far better term than carrion crow!).

The Oxford English Dictionary traces the term back to 1528, in "Heresyes" by Henry More:

We fare as doo the rauens and the carein crowes y^t neuer medle with any quicke flesh.

Oliver Goldsmith in "A history of the earth and animated nature" (1774) observed wryly that "The Carrion Crow is less favored by mankind."

The "eagle" Holmes had in mind was probably not the bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), the national emblem of the United States.

The range of this bird is limited to North America (1).

The bird Holmes was thinking of was more likely the Eurasian Golden Eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos chrysaetos*). Its range in the British Isles is now confined to the Highlands of Scotland and a few breeding pairs in the English Lake District.

Adult Golden Eagles have an average length of 75-85 cm (30-34") and a wingspan of 175-200 cm (70-80").

They are, to be sure, more majestic in appearance than carrion crows.

They are raptors, birds of prey, eating small animals such as rabbits, mice, birds, martens, foxes, and young deer.

In sheep-raising areas, they often feed on young lambs.

Eagles have been used by many nations as a national symbol, including the armies of ancient Rome, the

Austrian Empire, the Holy Roman Empire, the Ottoman Turks, and Napoleon Bonaparte.

The eagle is found on the flag of such disparate nations and groups as the Free and Hanseatic City of Lübeck, Guadalcanal Province in the Solomon Islands, the county of Värmland in Sweden, Mexico, the Hitler Youth, the county of Connacht in Ireland, the Air Defense Command in Japan, the Russian Postal Service, and the Austrian Olympic Committee.

No nation or group holds up the carrion crow as its symbol.

Nonetheless, the carrion crow is a very common bird in Great Britain, while the golden eagle is rare in those islands.

The crow is very adaptable to various habitats from craggy mountains to bleak moorlands to urban refuse dumps to dense woodlands to coastal cliffs.

One British birder notes that the carrion crow “will often prey on injured quarry much larger than itself, usually with mate or with more numerous accomplices.” (2)

In other words, the carrion crow makes up in numbers and cunning what it lacks in sheer size and muscle.

Sir Robert Norberton was, indeed, much more like a carrion crow than an eagle.

In appearance he is eagle-like:

He was a terrible figure, huge in stature and fierce in manner. A large stable-lantern which

he held in front of him shone upward upon a strong, heavily moustached face and angry eyes

However, in his actions he is much more like the carrion crow.

Sir Robert hides a piece of “carrion” — the body of his dead sister. (He defends his action, telling Holmes, “It seemed to me that it would be no unworthy resting-place if we put her for the time in one of the coffins of her husband’s ancestors lying in what is still consecrated ground.”)

His plot to hide Lady Beatrice from sight is a cunning one, much more crow-like than eagle-like.

He even uses a bird simile of his own when confronted by Sherlock Holmes: “if my sister were to die my creditors would be on to my estate like a flock of vultures.” (In North America, by the way, the term “carrion crow” is applied to the black vulture, *Coragyps atratus*, a vulture smaller than the turkey buzzard and distinguished by a black, bald head and black plumage.)

All ends well for Sir Robert.

“It is generally known now that this singular episode ended upon a happier note than Sir Robert’s actions deserved,” reports Watson.

Shoscombe Prince wins the Derby, Sir Robert’s creditors are paid off, and “the lucky owner got away scatheless from this strange incident in a career which has now outlived its shadows and promises to end in an honoured old age.”

The carrion crow, that wily and ever-adaptable bird, triumphs in the end.

- 1 See the website of the Cornell University Lab of Ornithology: http://www.birds.cornell.edu/AllAboutBirds/BirdGuide/Bald_Eagle_dtl.html
- 2 W.D. Campbell, *Birds of Town and Village* (London: Country Life Limited, 1965).

WATSON AS BOSWELL

by David Richardson, *The Holmes and Watson Report*, January, 2004

The MPR (Minnesota Public Radio) *Writers Almanac* for October 29th, the birthday of James Boswell, had this to say, in part, about the birthday boy:

[Boswell I began keeping a journal in London and developed a style that made him one of the greatest diarists in English literature. Instead of describing his thoughts and feelings about things, he wrote down scenes from his life as though they were fiction. He described his friends as though they were characters and recorded long stretches of dialogue.

This description could well characterize Holmes's own "Boswell," and illustrates nicely what I wish to say about Dr. Watson as a writer.

Watson chose to present his writings about Sherlock Holmes in the guise of fiction (which was what Holmes was really objecting to when he chided Watson for "romanticizing" them).

I had often wondered why he chose to do this, but then reflected: who is the most famous "character" in fiction?

Why, Sherlock Holmes, of course: Watson quite ingenuously sensed this was the best way to secure his friend's immortality -- and he was right, of course! Think about it.

Who but a history buff remembers Melbourne -- a man who was,

after all, Prime Minister of England.

But who doesn't remember Sherlock Holmes? Watson, in a brilliant insight, realized he could secure the memory of his very real friend by turning him into -- in the eyes of the public -- a fictional character.

There is a moral here, and it is that, as the old bards knew, we remember stories much better than unadorned facts.

An anecdote trumps a dry recital of fact every time (which is the despair of medical researchers trying to stamp out ineffective "alternative" medicines).

Watson sensed this, and so made of his friend the most recognizable character in all of English fiction.

If we are to pierce the fictional veil of Watson's stories so as to behold the true greatness of the very real "Sherlock Holmes," we must teach ourselves to recognize Watson's fictional devices, and his use of them to present his friend to the world.

If we do, we can, I believe, come one step closer to appreciating the true greatness of the man the world came to know as Holmes.

The first, and most obvious, device Watson employed is not likely to be thought of as a "device" at all.

I refer to the fact Holmes's cases are presented as near-

contemporaneous narratives in which Watson seems to know no more than he would have at the time. While he sometimes speaks to the reader (usually at the beginning) in what might be called the reader's time, he always reverts to "case time" when telling us about it.

That this was not the only way he could have related Holmes's investigations is evidenced by Holmes's expressed opinion that he should have presented "a series of demonstrations."

Can you imagine what would have happened to Holmes's memory had Watson actually written those "demonstrations"?

"The case began when client X called upon us on ...The particulars which he/she related to us were ... The first thing Holmes undertook to do was ... "

Bleat, unmitigated bleat.

Indeed, when Holmes came to attempt his own reporting of cases, he acknowledged the correctness of Watson's judgment by following -- if somewhat clumsily -- the pattern Watson had chosen. Another "device" which Watson employed was what Christopher Morley called the "cozy interiors" which begin our most favorite stories.

These cement for us both the friendship of Holmes and Watson and the deductive skills of Holmes himself.

The exhibition (and this is where those "demonstrations" actually take place) of those skills, in circumstances where their correctness can be immediately verified, prime us to accept those other exhibitions in the case to follow, when we must often rely on Holmes's abilities to certify their correctness.

Watson -- to somewhat repeat myself -- knew we would need this, and seized upon this device to give us that necessary assurance.

That these introductions often were not the actual events preceding the initiation of the case should be fairly obvious from the fact that Watson was able to move one from one case to another without causing any sense of disjunction. (I refer, of course, to the mind-reading episode which migrated from "The Cardboard Box" to "The Resident Patient" without causing any sense of inappropriateness.)

Indeed, if one stops to think of it, why would Watson -- who took such notes as he could on Holmes's cases -- bother to record what he and Holmes were doing just prior to when a client called? (Unless, of course, it bore some direct relation to the case, as when Mrs. Hudson was knocked up because Helen Stoner had called at an early hour.)

Another somewhat clearly fictional device in the stories is the great fuss made about Holmes's

abhorrence of publicity - which has prevented Watson from publishing his reports, etc., etc.

If a man whose hotel room can be ankle-deep in congratulatory telegrams seeks to prevent his actions being reported, he has missed something somewhere.

Holmes was, quite obviously, a famous man in his time, and if Watson seeks to present him to us as a man who shunned the limelight, it is the better to fix him in our minds as someone dedicated to his cause.

His cause.

Holmes "retired" quite early (by our terms) from his detective work -- before he was fifty if the deductions of Sherlockians are to be accepted.

For a man who, up until that retirement, showed no great interest in the natural world to retire to farm bees quite boggles the mind.

My own suspicion is that had Von Bork opened that slim volume Holmes presented to him he would have seen blank pages.

It is entirely probable that it took the combined presence of the Foreign Secretary and the Prime Minister to get Holmes to go to America and begin his infiltration of the Bork spy ring, but I beg leave to say that that meeting almost certainly did not take place in a cottage on the South Downs.

What did Holmes do after he "retired?"

My guess -- and I have to admit that it is no more than a guess -- is that he went to work for his brother, who had need of his energies in the increasingly complex world of the early twentieth century.

Watson turned what may have been the first of these investigations into the amusingly clever tale of "The Bruce-Partington Plans."

He has, if not romanticized it, then dramatized it, in his own pawky way (I cannot think that Mycroft liked the comparison of himself to a tram-car).

Holmes, in his career, clearly moved from investigating small cases brought to him to undertaking many which involved and affected the course of history in Europe in what proved to be the run-up to the First World War.

Watson would seem to have observed a silence about, until, after the war had begun (and was, by the way, not going well for the Allies), he felt compelled to explain that his friend had done the best he could to prevent it.

He did so and, 'abandoning his own unique voice, gave us one of the most graceful of all *ave atque vales* we shall ever read.

Stand with me upon the terrace ...

Baker Street Elementary

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

