

# The Bilge Pump

Vol. 09, No. 07 - July, 2021

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



## PLEASE NOTE:

### August 01, Meeting NOTICE

We will be conducting our next monthly meeting on August 01 at 1:00 pm. **There will not be a July meeting.**

We plan on this being a hybrid meeting - those who want to start meeting again in person, we will return to Two Guys from Italy, but we shall also conduct the meeting on Zoom for our remote members.

**If you will be eating lunch at the restaurant, please try to be there by 12:15, so we can have the meal completed by the time the meeting starts at 1:00 - will make the Zoom logistics much easier.**

I will send out the link for the meeting the week before. The story for the month is "The Adventure of the Musgrave Ritual".

Our Special Guest Speakers will be **Nick Utechin, BSI**, who will present on "Playing the Game."

Thomas and Eleanor Hébert will conduct a discussion on Sherlock Holmes and autism.

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We will cover topic 12 on "The Life and Times of Arthur Conan Doyle: Covering the Boer War, World War I, and Knighthood - **Brenda Rossini**

## July Summary

We took the month off, as our regularly scheduled date would have been July 4<sup>th</sup>, Independence Day.

I have included a toast I gave to Mycroft Holmes at the Norwegian Explorer's Conference a few years ago (page 3).

And of course, we include our wonderful monthly addition by Liese Sherwood-Fabre on "The Life and Times of Sherlock Holmes", as well as another wonderful installment by Karen Murdock.



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

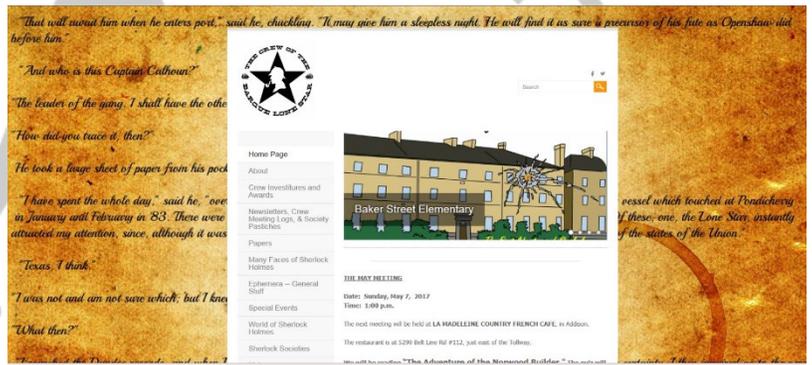
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### Our Website:

[www.dfw-sherlock.org](http://www.dfw-sherlock.org)



### Our Facebook Page:

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

# "A TOAST TO MYCROFT HOLMES"

Steve Mason, BSI

Originally given at University of Minnesota and the Norwegian Explorers Conference  
2013 Tri-Annual Conference: Sherlock Holmes Through Time and Space

Tonight, I rise to pay homage to one of the more honored figures from the Sacred Writings.

Though Lestrade, Mrs. Hudson and others may appear more often, I am sure everyone in this room has formed their own personal vision of Mycroft Holmes.

For many, he may be viewed as an overpaid (which is not supported by Watson's narrative), overweight (may we even employ the term "corpulent"), anti-social (reference his club membership, government employee.

Yes, occasionally he was considered the British Government.

And sadly, for others, the picture of him standing without clothing in front of Mary Watson in the latest cinema, will be forever burned onto their retinas and in their memories.

But I have a few visions I wish all of you to consider.

The first is of an older brother, seven years the elder to be precise, exploring the fields and

meadows of England, with Mycroft's stern instructions, "Sherlock, do not just see things, but truly observe them," as well as, "Sherlock, do not clutter your mind with useless trivia. Categorize and memorize those things which will be the tools for your future work."

While we accept Sherlock mastering these traits, please give credit to the person probably most responsible for planting and cultivating them at an early age.

Much later he would further instruct, "This is a matter of national importance. Grow up!"

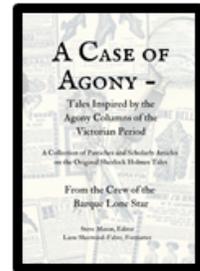
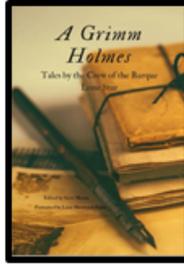
My other vision is for an elderly gentleman, acknowledged for his value to the throne, loyalty to his nation, and asked him to come forward, to receive on bended knee, the insignia and title of "Sir," bestowed by a grateful king.

Finally, if Mycroft were to stand before this assemblage, I believe he would say to himself, "My brother's memory is in good hands."

So I humbly ask you to raise your glass in honor of the other Holmes, Mycroft.



**The Crew of the  
Barque Lone Star  
Society is producing  
our 5<sup>th</sup> book as part of  
our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.**



For this year, we are asking for members to submit a short paper on what Sherlock Holmes means to them... This could involve many things: how you met Sherlock, what has kept you involved in this passion for years, how did Sherlock help you through the past year or so, etc. This could be very insightful if we get to relive your wild childhood reading or watching Sherlock.

1. You can use any format you feel most comfortable writing – such as, essay, pastiche, poem, limerick, radio play, or even artwork
2. Your paper should not exceed 1,500 words, so that our book does not have more pages than a dictionary... Obviously, a shorter paper is fine.
3. Feel free to include with your story a photo of you dressed as Sherlock Holmes or any artwork you may have done in the past...
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 (if you're getting this email) is welcome to submit a paper.
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 as a gift for those who submit a piece.

Our Society has a wonderful website, chocked full of Sherlockian items. Visit us at...  
[www.dfw-sherlock.org](http://www.dfw-sherlock.org)

If you would like to participate, you can email us at:  
[mason.steve8080@gmail.com](mailto:mason.steve8080@gmail.com)



# TAKING STOCK

Liese Sherwood-Fabre, PhD

Stock brokerage firms are mentioned in two different cases in the Canon. In addition to “The Adventure of the Stockbroker’s Clerk,” James Dodd in “The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier” worked as a stockbroker on Throgmorton Street. While stockbroking has existed for almost a thousand years, such firms did not become prominent in England until the 1800s.

The role of the English stockbroker and the place where they operated—the “exchange”—evolved over time. The first organized system began in France in the eleventh century as a means of regulating the buying and selling of agricultural debt. In the 1300s, commodity traders set up houses in major cities such as Amsterdam. (1) Traditionally, companies were owned by individuals or a small group. As business ventures

grew larger, however, they proved to be riskier as well as requiring greater funds.

Discovery voyages, overseas trading, and financing foreign military campaigns offered stock to a large number of investors who then left its management in the hands of the small group who originated the venture. The

Dutch East India Company became the first such publicly traded company in 1602. (2)

In England, joint stock companies were formed in the 1500s, but the sale of shares in such enterprises was limited and did not require a stockbroker. In the late 1600s, changes in banking regulations increased the number of joint stock companies tenfold in only six years, and the first stockbrokers—who bought and sold shares as an adjunct to another profession—appeared at that

time. Business was first conducted at the Royal Exchange, where other merchants also conducted business, but as the number of stockbrokers grew and displayed a rowdy behavior not acceptable to others in the marketplace, the government sought to regulate them. Rather than accept such interference, these men left to set up shop in the coffeehouses between Cornhill and Lombard streets—with one of the most prominent being Jonathan’s Coffeehouse on Exchange Alley. (3)

While most brokers in these exchanges were reputable, some followed less-than-acceptable practices. To have greater control over who they allowed into the exchange, some brokers left Jonathan’s and set up a new exchange—called “New Jonathan’s” or “The Stock Exchange.”

Transactions were still not regulated and any

broker who could pay the daily entry fee could conduct business. (4) Two specialists arose during this time—brokers and jobbers. Brokers represented clients or investors who desired to buy or sell a particular security within a certain price range. The broker’s counterpart, the jobber, offered to buy or sell

the desired security to the broker (but never directly to an investor). The broker worked on a commission charged to the client while the jobber made his on the “spread” between the bid and asked-for price (the notion of “buy low, sell high”). (5)

A tension developed between the owners of the new coffeehouse and the brokers. Those running the coffeehouse preferred allowing in more patrons because of the fee charged, while



the brokers were concerned about still dealing with their less reputable colleagues. In 1801, the brokers left again for a new establishment governed by written regulations for conducting business and the modern London Stock Exchange (LSE) was created. (6)

While the LSE was the United Kingdom's most important, the Industrial Revolution brought about a number of new companies as well as infrastructure projects that required large capital investments, prompting the creation of about twenty stock exchanges throughout the UK. (7)

New technologies were added to link both the English and international exchanges. In 1840, the telegraph provided trade information from the New York exchange in only 20 minutes (vs. sixteen days by mail). The ticker tape replaced the telegraph in 1872, and the telephone replaced it in 1880. (8)



"The Adventure of the Stockbroker's Clerk" provided an example of the variety of investments available. Beddington stole both American railway bonds as well as mining and other company scrip from the firm Mawson and Williams. Bonds are legal evidence of the provision of long-term debt (the holder to receive reimbursement plus interest when the loan was repaid). Scrip, on the other hand, indicated ownership of a portion (share) of a company. (9) As this theft indicated, stockbroker dealings could involve hundreds of thousands of pounds, but risk was also involved. Hall Pycroft lost his position with Coxon and Woodhouse when they folded after a bad investment. Thanks to a quick-thinking police officer and Holmes' assistance to the stockbroker's clerk in apprehending the culprits in this case, however, Mawson and Williams failed to suffer similar losses and disgrace.

- 1) <https://www.theclassroom.com/the-history-of-stock-brokerage-firms-13635698.html>
- 2) <https://www.encyclopedia.com/books/politics-and-business-magazines/london-stock-exchange-limited>
- 3) Edward Stringham, "The Emergence of the London Stock Exchange as a Self-Policing Club," *Journal of Private Enterprise*, January, 2002.
- 4) <https://www.londonstockexchange.com/discover/lseg/our-history>
- 5) <https://hsc.co.in/difference-between-jobber-and-broker/>
- 6) Randal Michie, *The London Stock Exchange: A History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- 7) <https://www.encyclopedia.com/books/politics-and-business-magazines/london-stock-exchange-limited>
- 8) <https://www.londonstockexchange.com/discover/lseg/our-history>
- 9) <https://wikidiff.com/bond/scrip>

Liese Sherwood-Fabre will be attending Bouchercon 2021 in New Orleans August 25-29. She will be appearing on a panel discussing "Suspense, Action, and Conflict" on Friday at 11 and participating in the small press/indie author book signing where she will have copies of her "Early Case Files of Sherlock Holmes" series available. She invites you to join her in letting the good times roll.

# THE GREAT SEASONS AND THE GREATER AND LESSER FEASTS AND FASTS OF THE SHERLOCKIAN YEAR

Karen Murdock

Originally published in *Canadian Holmes*, Volume 26, number 3, Spring 2003

The urge to set aside certain days of the year as special is a human universal. Any large and like-minded group will, if given enough time, develop its own holidays. The United States, for example, has been in existence, as an independent nation, for 226 years<sup>1</sup>. During that long period of time the nation has developed a slate of holidays, most of which are observed uniquely by Americans. Some of these holidays are always on the same day (e.g. Independence Day) and some of them vary in specific date but always occupy the same slot (e.g. Thanksgiving, which is always the fourth Thursday in November). The religious holidays of Christmas and Easter are important in, but are not limited to, the U.S.

## Major Holidays of the (secular) American Calendar

NAME OF HOLIDAY	DATE OF HOLIDAY	NAME OF HOLIDAY	DATE OF HOLIDAY
New Year's Day	January 1	Father's Day	third Sunday in June
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday in January	Independence Day	July 4
Valentine's Day	February 14	Labor Day	first Monday in September
Presidents' Day	third Monday in February	Halloween	October 31
St. Patrick's Day <sup>2</sup>	March 17	Thanksgiving	fourth Thursday in November
Mother's Day	second Sunday in May	New Year's Eve	December 31
Memorial Day	last Monday in May		

Other nations of the world have completely different sets of holidays. Japan, for example, celebrates several national holidays, but these are unique to the nation of Japan. The only holiday which the Japanese and the Americans share in common is New Year's Day (January 1<sup>st</sup>).

## Major Holidays of the Japanese Calendar<sup>3</sup>

NAME OF HOLIDAY	DATE OF HOLIDAY	NAME OF HOLIDAY	DATE OF HOLIDAY
New Year's Day	January 1	Marine Day	July 20
Coming-of-Age Day	second Monday of January	Respect-for-the-Aged Day	September 15
National Foundation Day	February 11	Autumnal Equinox	September 23 or 24
Vernal Equinox	around March 21	Sports Day	second Monday of October
Green Day	April 29	Culture Day	November 3
Constitution Day	May 3	Labor Thanksgiving Day	November 23
Children's Day	May 5	The Emperor's Birthday	December 23

India, which declared independence on January 26, 1950, now celebrates Republic Day (Basant Panchmi) each January 26<sup>th</sup>, with fairs, speeches, and parades. Sierra Leone and Togo both celebrate their Independence Day on April 27, Peru on July 28, Bolivia August 6, and so on throughout the year.<sup>4</sup> National holidays are unique to each nation.

Some holidays transcend national borders. New Year's Day is widely celebrated on January 1<sup>st</sup> in many countries, although not all holidays are scheduled according to the Gregorian calendar. (The Muslim, Hindu, and Jewish calendars are alternate means of timekeeping, and most of Asia adheres to a lunar calendar.) November 11, which commemorates the armistice which ended World War I, is celebrated as Veterans Day in the United States, as Remembrance Day in Canada and the United Kingdom. However, only Russia celebrates May 9 as Victory Day, a celebration of the victory over Nazi Germany in World War II. This is almost a sacred holiday in Russia, commemorating what Russians call the Great Patriotic War. Other nations which fought against Germany in World War II, but did not

suffer as much as Russia did, scarcely notice this day. Holidays, in short, are universal, but the particular holidays celebrated by groups of people or nations are specific to that group.

An excellent example of holidays which transcend national and ethnic boundaries are the religious holidays celebrated by the great faiths of humankind, whose adherents may live throughout the world but who are united in their devotions on certain days of the year. The very word “holiday” comes from the Middle English *holidai*, meaning holy day. In the sacred realm, as in the secular realm, people have developed special days commemorating events important to each particular faith. In Judaism, for example, none of the major holidays is given a fixed date upon the secular (Gregorian) calendar. The ancient Jewish calendar counted the appearance of the new moon each month as extremely important. The new moon of the seventh month of the year marked the Head of the Year (Hebrew “Rosh Hashanah”).<sup>5</sup> The current Jewish calendar is a very complicated one based on both the sun and the moon, with an extra month added during leap years.

### Major Holidays of the Jewish Calendar<sup>6</sup>

NAME OF HOLIDAY	DATE OF HOLIDAY (on Gregorian calendar)	NAME OF HOLIDAY	DATE OF HOLIDAY (on Gregorian calendar)
Rosh Hashanah (New Year)	early September to early October	Hanukkah (Festival of Lights)	early to late December
Yom Kippur (Day of Atonement)	nine days after Rosh Hashanah	Purim (Day of Lots)	February or March
Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles)	nine day celebration, five days after Yom Kippur, September or October	Passover (Pesah)	March or April
		Shavuot (Pentecost)	fifty days after Passover -- May or June

The Christian church has been around for two millennia and has, during that time, evolved an elaborate calendar of seasons, feasts, fasts, saints’ days, and other holidays. The length of the Christian “church year” coincides with the “calendar year,”<sup>7</sup> although the church year begins anew not on January 1<sup>st</sup>, but on the first Sunday of Advent, which is four Sundays before Christmas.<sup>8</sup> The seasons of the calendar year are Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall. The seasons of the Christian church year are Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost. The principal feast days of the Christian church are Easter, Ascension Day, Pentecost, Trinity Sunday, All Saints’ Day, Christmas, and Epiphany. Its principal fast days are Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.<sup>9</sup>

The followers of Sherlock Holmes have only been around for about a hundred years<sup>10</sup>, are not widely recognized as practicing a religion<sup>11</sup>, and have not yet developed a full calendar of seasons and holidays. However, I believe that holidays are important in forging a sense of group identity, not to mention being a lot of fun just for their own sake. So I would like to propose a formal calendar for devotees of Sherlock Holmes.

### The Great Seasons

For simplicity’s sake, I am basing my Sherlockian year on the calendar year, specifically on the Gregorian calendar. However, “New Year’s Day” for Sherlockians falls not on January 1<sup>st</sup> but on or near January 6<sup>th</sup>, purportedly the birthday of Sherlock Holmes<sup>12</sup>. As the Christian church recognizes six seasons of the church year, I propose six seasons for the Sherlockian year.

### The Great Seasons of the Sherlockian Year

NAME OF SEASON	DATES OF SEASON	NAME OF SEASON	DATES OF SEASON
Nativity	first through third Saturdays in January, inclusive	Shingle of Southsea <sup>13</sup>	June 6 through (American)Labor Day (first Monday in September)
Afoot <sup>14</sup>	third Sunday in January through first Friday in April	Hounding (Equinoctial Gales) <sup>15</sup>	first Tuesday in September through October 31
Reichenbach	first Saturday in April through June 5	Crowded Thoroughfare <sup>16</sup>	November 1 through first Friday in January

### Greater Feasts and Fasts of the Sherlockian Year

It must be noted that the fledgling Church Sherlockiana has, so far, not suffered from any great lack of feasts or a notable dearth of excuses for a party.<sup>17</sup> But we can always use more! I therefore propose a complete slate of major holidays for the followers of Sherlock Holmes to celebrate. One of these dates—January 6<sup>th</sup>—is already widely celebrated in the Sherlockian world. Blue Carbuncle Day, December 27<sup>th</sup>, is widely recognized, although not universally celebrated.<sup>18</sup> April 5 is Canonical. John Watson’s birthday was made up by William S. Baring-Gould, one of the greatest of Sherlockian scholars. Two of these holidays—the Feast Day of the Scions and All Sherlockians’ Day—I invented myself, mainly because I thought that Sherlockians needed new holidays around June and October.

### Greater Feasts and Fasts of the Sherlockian Year

DATE OF FEAST (OR FAST)	NAME OF FEAST (OR FAST)	DATE OF FEAST (OR FAST)	NAME OF FEAST (OR FAST)
January 6 *	The Master’s Birthday (The Nativity)	October 5	Death of Sherlock Holmes (major fast day) <sup>19</sup>
April 5 *	Resurrection Day <sup>20</sup>	October 10 *	All Sherlockians’ Day (Feast of the Saints) <sup>21</sup>
June 5 *	Feast Day of the Scions <sup>22</sup>	December 27	Blue Carbuncle Day
August 7 *	John H. Watson’s Birthday (Chroniclermas) <sup>23</sup>		

\* or closest Saturday thereto

### Lesser Feasts and Fasts

The secular American calendar recognizes such minor holidays as Groundhog Day, April Fool’s Day, Earth Day, Flag Day, Columbus Day, and Veterans Day. The Jewish faith recognizes lesser fasts and lesser festivals such as New Moon, Tisha B’av, the Seventeenth of Tammuz, the Ten Days of Penitence and so on. The Christian church has its Lesser Feasts and Fasts including the feast days of many saints. I propose the following Lesser Feasts and Fasts for the Sherlockian year:

### Lesser Feasts and Fasts of the Sherlockian Year

DATE OF HOLIDAY	NAME OF HOLIDAY	DATE OF HOLIDAY	NAME OF HOLIDAY
January 1	First Meeting (“St. Bart’s Lab Day”)	May 24	Queen Victoria’s Birthday
January 30	“He Who Is Gone” Day <sup>24</sup>	July 24	Sherlockian Thespian Day <sup>25</sup>
February 12	Mycroft Holmes’s Birthday <sup>26</sup>	July 27	Maiwand Day (minor fast day)
February 21	“2/21” Day <sup>27</sup>	August 24	Saint Bartholomew’s Day
March 25	Lady Day <sup>28</sup>	September 29	Michaelmas <sup>29</sup>
May 4	Reichenbach Day <sup>30</sup>	October 19	Slaying of the Hound
May 22	Literary Agent’s Birthday	October 31	Birthday of Professor James Moriarty <sup>31</sup>

We can always use another excuse to celebrate the Master. Above all, holidays affirm our identity and our traditions and remind us of the things we think are important in our particular pursuit. Although the specific holidays we celebrate in our sacred and our secular lives set us apart from other people, the celebration of any holiday affirms our connections with all other people who celebrate holidays, in whatever lands and for whatever purposes. Holidays are human. To celebrate them deepens our humanity.

<sup>1</sup> Dating from the nation's "birthday," July 4, 1776.

<sup>2</sup> Originally a religious holiday, but now almost entirely secular, at least in the United States.

<sup>3</sup> I am indebted to my friend Todd Henry, who spent five years in Japan in the 1990s, for providing me with information about this nation's holidays.

<sup>4</sup> Two very interesting books on this subject are Lavinia Dobler, *National Holidays Around the World* (New York: Fleet Press, 1968) and Anneli Rufus, *The World Holiday Book: Celebrations for Every Day of the Year* (San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1994).

<sup>5</sup> Samuel M. Silver, *Explaining Judaism to Jews and Christians* (New York: Arco Publishing, 1973).

<sup>6</sup> *The Jewish Tradition* (Niles, Illinois: Argus Communications, 1978) and Milton Sternberg, *Basic Judaism* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1947).

<sup>7</sup> i.e., the time it takes for the earth to make one full revolution about the sun.

<sup>8</sup> Advent is always four Sundays before Christmas, even if Christmas (which is always December 25) falls on a Sunday. Therefore, the length of the Advent season can vary by up to a week, depending upon which day of the week December 25<sup>th</sup> falls on.

<sup>9</sup> *The Book of Common Prayer (According to the use of The Episcopal Church)*, (New York: The Seabury Press, 1979), pp. 15-17.

<sup>10</sup> The earliest pieces collected by Edgar Smith in *The Incunabular Sherlock Holmes* (Morristown, New Jersey: The Baker Street Irregulars, 1958) date from 1902. These are "More Sherlock Holmes Theories" by Arthur Bartlett Maurice and "*The Hound of the Baskervilles* at Fault" by Frank Sidgwick.

<sup>11</sup> John Bennett Shaw once said, "Sam Rosenberg [. . .] maintained, after going as my guest to the Baker Street Irregulars dinner in New York and visiting with the Sherlockians, that we probably are the germ of the next great religion." (see Shaw, "The Cult of Sherlock Holmes," in *Cultivating Sherlock Holmes*, edited by Bryce L. Crawford Jr. and Joseph B. Connors [Published by the Sumac Press, La Crosse, Wisconsin for the Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota, 1978]). However, the followers of the Master have not yet developed into The Church Sherlockiana.

<sup>12</sup> Suspicions persist among Old Irregulars that Christopher Morley chose January 6<sup>th</sup> as The Master's birthday because it was the birthday of his younger brother Felix (born January 6, 1894). Felix's son, Tony, is a good friend of mine. (He is, oddly, *not* a Sherlockian.) I once asked Tony about the January 6<sup>th</sup> birthday tradition and he said, "Well, of course, I was brought up believing that January 6<sup>th</sup> was Sherlock Holmes's birthday." He was surprised when I told him that Canonical evidence for that date is, to say no more, slender.

<sup>13</sup> The reference is to Holmes's dramatic words to Watson at the start of "The Adventure of the Abbey Grange": "Come, Watson, come! The game is afoot." Major Canonical chronologists are universal in their agreement that the date for ABBE was January 1897, although all that Watson says about when the case commenced was that "It was on a bitterly cold and frosty morning, towards the end of the winter of '97." (Lucky are they for whom January is "towards the end of the winter"! ) In any case, "Afoot" designates the winter season for Sherlockians in the Northern Hemisphere.

<sup>14</sup> The name "Shingle of Southsea" was chosen for its alliterative value, and also because The Literary Agent once practiced medicine in Southsea. Canonically, "Glades of the New Forest" would have been equally appropriate as a name for the season, because Watson says, in CARD, "I yearned for the glades of the New Forest or the shingle of Southsea." But "Shingle of Southsea" *sounds* better. So it gets the nod. During this three-month season, Sherlockians are allowed to take time off from their devotion to The Cause. From June 6<sup>th</sup> to September 6<sup>th</sup>, you do not have to read a single Sherlockian story or think a single Sherlockian thought.

<sup>15</sup> I just could not decide upon a name for the fall season. It is the time of year when *Hound* happened, so "Hounding" seemed like a good name. It has that hard, Anglo-Saxon directness. But, then, the Autumnal Equinox occurs around September 23<sup>rd</sup>, and, as Watson writes in FIVE, "the equinoctial gales had set in with exceptional violence" and, later, "Very long and very severe were the equinoctial gales that year." The word "equinoctial" is such a luscious one that I thought that "Equinoctial Gales" was maybe even a better name for the season than "Hounding." I just couldn't decide. So I put them both in.

<sup>16</sup> The title comes from *The Sign of the Four* in the description Watson gives of the crowds outside the Lyceum Theatre. "The yellow glare from the shop-windows streamed out into the steamy, vaporous air, and threw a murky, shifting radiance across the crowded thoroughfare." The traditional "holiday season," loosely tied to the holidays of Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas, and the New Year, is always a busy time, with many get-togethers both sacred and secular. This seems like a good time for Sherlockians to throng together, too.

<sup>17</sup> And, just in case it had, Joel and Carolyn Senter came out, in 1999, with their little book entitled *366 Excuses for a Sherlockian Party* (Cincinnati: Classic Specialties Books, 1999). This lists at least one event of Sherlockian importance for each and every day of the year, including Leap Day. In case even *that* might not have been enough, George Vanderburgh is busily beaver away at updating Svend Petersen's *Sherlock Holmes Almanac* (privately printed, 1956). The soon-to-be-published update (Petersen et al., *A Sherlock Holmes Almanac*, Shelburne, Ontario: The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box, 2003) will include hundreds of listings, by date, of Sherlockian and vaguely Sherlockian events to commemorate all year long.

<sup>18</sup> On December 27<sup>th</sup>, Watson came 'round to 221B Baker Street in "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle" to wish Sherlock Holmes "the compliments of the season." Sherlockian stalwart Edgar W. Smith purportedly took this literally and sent out his Christmas cards each year on December 27<sup>th</sup>.

<sup>19</sup> The day that Holmes returned (in "The Adventure of the Empty House") and revealed himself to Watson as *not* having died at the Reichenbach. Major feast day for Sherlockians.

<sup>20</sup> The Feast Day of the Scions could be celebrated on any of dozens of different days of the year, the founding dates of various Sherlockian societies. I have chosen June 5<sup>th</sup> to be The Feast Day of the Scions because that was the date (in 1934) of the first dinner meeting of the Baker Street Irregulars,

because the Sherlockian calendar needs a major holiday around this time of the year, and because it is my birthday and I think it is just a *swell* idea to have a major Sherlockian holiday on my birthday.

<sup>21</sup> William S. Baring-Gould, "The Chronological Holmes," Appendix I to *Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street: A Life of the World's First Consulting Detective* (1962).

<sup>22</sup> It may come as a shock to some followers of The Master to realize that Sherlock Holmes is dead. However, this fact has been officially attested to by an agency of the United States government, and that some time ago now. On October 5, 1984, the U.S. Board on Geographic Names gave its approval to designate a hill just northwest of Tulsa, Oklahoma as "Holmes Peak." It is the policy of this Board that, if a feature is to be named for a person, that person must have been dead for at least a year. Therefore, Sherlock Holmes must have died no later than October 5, 1983. See "The Naming of Holmes Peak" by Richard S. Warner (*Baker Street Journal*, Vol. 35, No. 1 (March 1985)). I am afraid that, as a trained geographer, I must accept the ruling of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names in this matter.

<sup>23</sup> The day was selected in part to honor John Bennett Shaw (October 10, 1913—October 2, 1994), who was a very great Sherlockian and a man who enjoyed a good feast. However, the main reason I chose his birthday as a major Sherlockian holiday is because we needed one around this time of the year.

<sup>24</sup> The day the unfortunate monarch Charles I got his head lopped off. It is still commemorated in some places in Great Britain. See Charles Kightly, *The Customs and Ceremonies of Britain: An Encyclopaedia of Living Traditions* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1986).

<sup>25</sup> Baring-Gould, "The Chronological Holmes."

<sup>26</sup> The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota, for one scion, have several times held meetings on February 21<sup>st</sup> to celebrate "2/21" day. However, most people outside of the United States write the day before the month, so that February 21<sup>st</sup> becomes "21/2," which is not Canonical at all.

<sup>27</sup> Lady Day is mentioned in "The Resident Patient" as being the day Dr. Percy Trevelyan moved into his house. In the Christian calendar, Lady Day is also called The Feast of the Annunciation and the "Lady" in question is Mary, the mother of Jesus. I propose that Sherlockians expand the definition from one woman to all women and make Lady Day a salute to all Sherlockian women.

<sup>28</sup> The day Sherlock Holmes vanquished Professor Moriarty and disappeared from sight on his three year Great Hiatus. I have not yet decided if this should be a feast or a fast day or whether it is a major or a minor feast or fast.

<sup>29</sup> The day is set to honor William Gillette (July 24, 1853—April 29, 1937), one of the greatest actors ever to portray Sherlock Holmes. This would be a good day for followers of The Master to go see a Sherlockian play or watch a Sherlockian videotape or DVD.

<sup>30</sup> From *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. "One Michaelmas, this Hugo, with five or six of his idle and wicked companions, stole down upon the farm and carried off the maiden." Carrying off maidens against their will is severely frowned upon nowadays, but Michaelmas is still a good day for "a long carouse, as was their nightly custom." Maidens who desire, of their own free will, to join the carouse, are encouraged to do so.

<sup>31</sup> Baring-Gould asserts that the Professor was born October 31, 1846 "at a yet-unidentified town in the West of England."

# WATSON HAD ONE WIFE (OR MAYBE TWO?)

David Richardson, The Holmes – Watson Report, November, 2002

The answer to the vexing question of how many wives Watson had is usually confined to the lower digits, but a recent entry into the sweepstakes posits no fewer than six wives, leaving one to wonder when the man had time to write the Canon at all. As I tend to find all numbers over two excessive, this latest proposal would seem to require some response.

The possibility of multiple wives usually arises in connection with investigations into the chronology of the cases presented in the Canon (was the wife who went to visit her mother Mary Watson nee Morstan or nee something else?). Logical problems arise, however, because a relevant piece of evidence in dating a case is often whether or not Watson is married, but then one has to decide "married to whom?", introducing a certain circularity into the proceedings. I believe that this problem can be met (and a satisfactory solution can emerge) by eschewing any hypothetical chronology of the cases and relying instead only on the more mundane, but more certain, chronology of their publication.

In *A Study in Scarlet*, we are given a capsule summary of Watson's career up until he found himself in London contemplating how to reduce his living expenses. There is no mention of a wife, either past or current, and indeed his summary seems to leave no time in which he might have met and wedded someone. His characterization of himself as "without kith or kin in England" seems to stress his solitary status and makes quite understandable his slightly excessive joy at seeing the familiar face of "young Stamford."

By the time of *The Sign of Four*, in which Watson does meet and become engaged to marry Mary Morstan, there has been sufficient time to insert a harem full of wives and mistresses, but Watson's behavior (and the inner thoughts which he shares with us) does not accord with such activities. We could, of course, assume that he was deliberately concealing this aspect of his life (and in the Victorian era, one might very well wish to), but what we would then be faced with would be not simple concealment but positive deception. Such behavior would be so at variance with the character of the man that we have now twice met that we would have to conclude that Watson had created for purposes of these narrations a fictional surrogate, and that we neither meet nor come to know the

real Watson at all. This, I submit, is intolerable, for if we cannot trust the man Sherlock Holmes once characterized as eminently fitted to represent a British jury to depict himself with some fidelity, what in any of these narratives can we trust at all?

This is of some importance when we come to examine the details of Watson's wooing, for I would maintain that they show a man inexperienced in interacting with the fair sex, leading us (well, me) to the conclusion that Mary is, if not the first woman he has ever wooed, certainly the first one where this effort was successful. Accepting this conclusion does rely on our taking at their face value such details as the firing of a double-barreled tiger cub and the recommended use of strychnine as a sedative, and so we must place some trust in Watson's veracity as a self-deprecating reporter of his own activities.

Clearly, I do place that trust, and I think that STUD and SIGN, taken together, establish that Mary Morstan became his first wife. This means, to return to chronological problems for a moment, that whatever date we assign to SIGN, Watson could not have been married prior to that time. Thus, if in a case which seems to have occurred in that time frame it appears that Watson was married, we need to see if it is plausible that either the case really did not happen then or Watson has made a misstatement from which we inferred the presence of a wife. This is a subjective matter (but then, what about the interpretation of the Canon is not?) and must be investigated on a case by case basis. As our "case by case" order is the order of publication, kindly allow me to leave any such questions to one side for now and proceed to Watson's next publication, "A Scandal in Bohemia."

In the opening paragraphs of this report, Watson reveals that he had "seen little of Holmes since the singular chain of events which I have already narrated ... under the heading of *The Sign of Four*." He immediately goes on to say, "My marriage had, as he had foretold, drifted us away from each other." Watson does not name the bride at this marriage, but we can hardly assume that it was anyone other than Mary Morstan. As a consequence, we must conclude that whatever dates we come to assign them, the first three published cases did occur in the order in which they were published.

The next two cases on the publications docket ("The Red-Headed League" and "A Case of Identity") have introductions which mark them as occurring after the events of SCAN, although close examination reveals that the publisher has reversed them, for "The Redheaded League" refers to the case of Mary Sutherland, which was "A Case of Identity," and additionally is given a date in 1890, some two years after the 1888 date quoted for SCAN. In IDEN, Holmes remarks that he has not seen Watson "for some weeks," leaving unspecified since when, but as the occasion for the remark is a snuffbox he has received from the King of Bohemia we can reasonably conclude that the events of SCAN are not far distant in the past. Unfortunately for our purposes, however, neither case mentions Watson's wife, although in both he is clearly residing in his own home. I think it fair to presume that had a wife been mentioned in IDEN, she would have been the recently-wedded Mary.

To forestall a somewhat tedious case-by-case examination, I shall, as they say, "cut to the chase." The last story published before the Great Hiatus is, of course, "The Final Problem." In it Watson reminds us "after my marriage, and my subsequent start in private practice ... " I think it beyond doubt that this is a reference to his marriage to Mary Morstan, for he is clearly alluding to the resumption of medical practice mentioned in SCAN. What this means, of course, is that, unless he has divorced and remarried Mary, he has had only one wife during the relatively short time (about 3 years) between SCAN and FINA. This still leaves us the problem of resolving questions raised by the odd remark in the other cases of *The Adventures* and *The Memoirs*, but does rather suggest that "Aha! Another wife!" will not be an admissible answer.

Passing on to the remainder of the stories published after the Great Hiatus, we find Watson strangely silent on the subject of wives. Indeed, he never again mentions being married, even when it would appear that he must have been. This is the case with *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, which is dated 1889, when Watson must have been living with (and married to) Mary Morstan.

A possible reason for this silence is given in "The Empty House," where we learn that Watson has suffered a "sad bereavement." The only reasonable possibility for this must be the death of his wife. It would seem to have resolved him to exclude all future mention of her when he came to start publishing Holmes cases again - a delay, let us note, of some seven years - and even to recast events, if necessary, to avoid even the implication of her existence.

All would be well (at least for my argument), and we could safely conclude that Watson had only one wife, were it not for "The Blanched Soldier," a case which Sherlock Holmes himself narrates. In introducing the story, Holmes remarks that he was alone, as "Watson had at that time deserted me for a wife." Watson had, by his own admission, at that time moved out to rooms in Queen Anne Street, but he said nothing about remarrying. (In fact, he gave no reason at all for the move, merely remarking that it had occurred.) We might be inclined to suppose that a remarriage might be the cause of the departure from 221B were it not for the strange remark that Holmes appended to his desertion assertion: "...only selfish action," he went on to say, "that I can recall in our association." This is a most puzzling statement, since Holmes's reaction to Watson's announcement of his betrothal to Mary Morstan was to say "I really cannot congratulate you," which certainly sounds like he regarded that as a selfish action. It seems most unlikely that Holmes had forgotten that the earlier marriage had transpired, and so what are we to make of it?

Two possibilities suggest themselves, neither terribly attractive. Holmes may have meant to refer to the move to Queen Anne Street and his thoughts may have strayed to the earlier departure, so that he wrote "wife" when no such person existed. Alternatively, this might be a deliberate cheyving of Watson, harking back to the first marriage, as he is clearly responding to Watson's challenge to "do it yourself" by writing the case in the first place. The obvious weakness of these caveats means that we must leave it as an active possibility that Watson did in fact remarry, although beyond that we cannot speak, and must remain silent.

# HERLOCK SHOLMES - The Case of the Pipeclay Department!

Charles Hamilton (Peter Todd), February 5, 1916, *The Greyfriars Herald*

Another Grand Story dealing with the Amazing Adventures of Herlock Sholmes, Detective.

## Chapter 1

Even Herlock Sholmes looked a little impressed when the Duke of Hookeywalker was shown into our apartment at Shaker Street. His Grace, Percy Augustus, second Duke of Hookeywalker, Earl of Bassbeer, Viscount Fourhalf, Knight of the Shoebuckle, Grand Chamberlain of the Backstairs, Lord Warden of the Royal Gluepot, A.S.S., P.O.T.T.Y., etc., had been one of the greatest figures in politics before the war. His rare gifts of debate, his telling speeches in which the keenest of reporters could discover no meaning, had naturally marked him out for a great place when war broke out. He had become the head of the Pipeclay Department, a position he filled with brilliance.

That this great and famous personage should require the services of Herlock Sholmes was a flattering tribute to my amazing friend. Sholmes placed a chair for the distinguished visitor, and pushed a decanter of cocaine across the table. His Grace

declined it, however, with a wave of his hand.

"Mr. Sholmes, I trust you will be able to help us. I may say that the result of the war with" — his Grace referred to a notebook — "with Germany may depend upon the result of your efforts."

"I am entirely at your Grace's service. Pray give me a few details. You may speak quite freely before my friend, Dr. Jotson."

"It is a curious affair, Mr. Sholmes. You are aware that I am the Secretary for the Pipeclay Department — the most important of Government Departments in time of war. Under my influence, a re form has been instituted in this Department. Usually the scene of peaceful slumber, it has changed its character entirely — until lately. You are, perhaps, aware of the regulations in the Pipeclay Department?"

Sholmes shook his head.

"I will be more explicit. The usual routine was this. The officials arrived at eleven in the morning, and dozed gently in well-padded armchairs till lunch-time. Three hours were taken for lunch, but the whole body of officials were expected to return to their bureaux by four o'clock. They slumbered peacefully until five, when they left for their homes. This arrangement, excellent in peace time, was not, I felt, wholly adequate at a time when the British Empire was at grips with her mortal foe. Loath as I was to interfere with the honourable traditions of the Department, I felt that a change was necessary, at least during the period of the war with" — the Duke glanced at his notebook again — "with Germany. You are aware, Mr. Sholmes, that this country is at war with Germany?"

"I have seen it in the papers," assented Sholmes.



"Ah, I never read the papers! I was, however, officially informed of the fact, and there was no mistake about it. Having decided upon drastic reforms in the Pipeclay Department, I adopted the use of a very ingenious invention. Regarding it as imperative that the officials of my Department should remain awake at least one hour daily. I had this invention installed. It is an electrical apparatus, by means of which every official, on falling asleep in his chair, receives a slight shock, which awakens him in a few minutes. There is also a gramophone attachment to the apparatus, which repeats in a loud voice every half hour the sentence: 'WE ARE AT WAR!' This is a very useful reminder to the Department, the fact constantly escaping their memory."

"Excellent!" said Sholmes. "I no longer wonder at the distinction your Department has achieved during the war. This invention might be utilised with advantage in other Departments."

The Duke bowed.

"Unfortunately, Mr. Sholmes, some unscrupulous hand has been at work, and the apparatus has ceased to act. That is why I require your assistance. Every morning for the past week the apparatus has been deliberately disconnected, and has not worked. The result has been deplorable. The days

have passed in peaceful slumber, as in pre-war times. Despatches have accumulated on the tables. Telegrams have remained unanswered. Armies despatched to distant corners of the earth have been forgotten, and have been cut up by the enemy. I felt that this could not be allowed to continue, Mr. Sholmes, and, as my social engagements have, fortunately, left me one half-hour free to-day, I determined to call upon you."

"I thank your Grace," said Herlock Sholmes. "I shall be glad to be of assistance. Evidently an emissary of Germany has been at work."

"I fear so, Mr. Sholmes. Spies have informed the plotters in Berlin of the existence of the electric awakener, and they have determined to cripple the efforts of this country by putting it out of action."

"Are any Germans employed in the Pipeclay Department?"

The Duke smiled slightly.

"Naturally!" he replied.

"You do not suspect——"

"My dear Mr. Sholmes, it is a maxim in the Pipeclay Department that Germans are above suspicion. We leave that kind of thing to the halfpenny papers."

"Is it possible for a stranger to penetrate into the Department?"

"Quite. The doorkeeper has received strict injunctions to remain awake at his post, but it is possible, or course, that these injunctions are neglected, owing to the general soporific atmosphere of the place."

Herlock Sholmes looked thoughtful.

"I had better make my investigations upon the spot," he said, rising. "Come, Jotson."

In a few minutes, the Duke's car was bearing us to Whitehall, where we were shown at once into the Pipeclay Office.

## Chapter 2

The palatial department was buried in silent slumber.

From the various bureaux came only the soft sound of peaceful breathing.

Outside the newspapers were crying the latest news: "Magnificent Retreat!" "Heroic Retirement!" But their raucous voices did not penetrate into the peaceful depths of the Pipeclay Department.

There all was peace.

The Duke glanced at Herlock Sholmes.

"You see, Mr. Sholmes," he remarked, "the apparatus is out of action at this moment. Otherwise, instead of the sound of peaceful breathing, the whole building would throb with yawns."

Sholmes nodded.

"I must see it," he observed.

We were led into the Duke's private cabinet. It was there that the apparatus was installed. By the simple device of a switch in the wall, the electric awakener would be set in motion.

"Every morning," said the Duke, "I turn on the switch at eleven o'clock. Then I leave the Department, my daily labours ended. Observe!"

He pressed down the switch.

Immediately, from the adjoining apartments, came a sound of loud yawning. The awakener was at work. From the gramophone attachment a deep voice came, repeating the sentence: 'WE ARE AT WAR!' Thus reminded of the fact that had escaped their memory, the whole body of officials rubbed their eyes and set to work. I could scarcely repress an exclamation of admiration for this great invention, the installation of which in the

Pipeclay Office proved that we are very little, if at all, behind the Germans in real efficiency.

The Duke turned off the switch again. The yawning died away, and once more the peaceful sound of deep breathing was heard. The Pipeclay Office had sunk one more into somnolence.

"You see," said the Duke, "how terribly we are handicapped in this war by the apparatus being tampered with. I look to you, Mr. Sholmes, to discover the villain who tampers with it!"

"I will do my best," said Herlock Sholmes. "Pray turn on the switch again! Exactly! Now retire behind this screen!"

We stepped behind the screen, and waited. Loud yawning was heard from various directions, showing that the awakener was in full action, and that the labours of the Department were proceeding. Important letters, neatly tied with red tape, were carefully stacked into pigeon-holes. Busy pens traced out "Observations upon the Remarks of the Forty-fourth Report of the Seventh Committee of Inquiry into the Alleged Lack of Waistcoat-buttons in the Patagonian Expeditionary Force." The Pipeclay Department was in full swing!

We waited in silence. Herlock Sholmes' face was inscrutable.

The Duke had sunk into an easy-chair, and his eyes had closed. But, in spite of the slumberous influence around, I did not think of sleep. I watched the inscrutable face of Herlock Sholmes.

There was a soft step upon the rich, thick carpet. We peered from behind the screen.

A fat and florid man, with a blonde spiked moustache, had entered the cabinet, and with a grin of fiendish cunning upon his face, was creeping towards the switch of the electric awakener.

His fat and podgy finger pressed the switch.

The inevitable result followed.

In a few moments the Pipeclay Office was buried in slumber. The awakener had ceased to act!

With a crash, the screen toppled over, and Herlock Sholmes sprang upon the traitor. There was a startled cry from the discovered villain, and he turned to flee. His feet, however, were entangled in Sholmes' dressing-gown, and he fell heavily to the floor. Before he could rise the handcuffs were on his wrists.

The Duke, awakened by the crash of the screen, started to his feet. Startled suddenly from slumber, he did not realise where he was.

"My Lords," he said, "I beg to assure your lordships that the prosecution of the war is proceeding as well as can be expected. The general average of wakefulness in my Department exceeds—"

His Grace evidently fancied for the moment that he had awakened from a nap in an "Exalted Place."

"Bless my soul!" he exclaimed. "What has happened, Mr. Sholmes?"

Herlock Sholmes smiled.

"There is the villain who turned off the switch, your Grace!"

The Duke stared at the handcuffed traitor in amazement.

"But — but he is a German!" he exclaimed. "One of my most faithful employees! Is it possible that I have been deceived in him? Call the police! Villain, imprisonment for a week awaits you for this treachery, and I shall consider very seriously whether to employ you again in the Pipeclay Department!"

### Chapter 3

"Success again, Sholmes!" I remarked, as we walked homeward to Shaker Street. "But how did you know that the traitor would come—"

He smiled.

"I reasoned it out, Jotson. The rascal had turned off the electric awakener, and fancied that the Pipeclay Department was put of

action for the day. But turning it on again, I drew him into the snare. Finding the officials awake at their desks, he would guess that someone had entered the Duke's private cabinet, and turned on the apparatus. He came at once to stop it, and plunge the Department into its usual slumber. Then we had him! I am glad, Jotson, that the Duke called me. With the electrical awakener in full action, it appears probably that the Patagonian Expeditionary Force will, in due time, receive the full supply of waistcoat-buttons—and, perhaps, even ammunition. Who knows? I think I have fairly earned the Duke's handsome cheque; and we will have kippers for tea, Jotson!"

THE END

# Baker Street Elementary

Created by: Joe Fay, Rusty & Steve Mason



Baker Street Elementary  
Number 346 – 07/11/2021

Fay, Mason & Mason

... COULDN'T PUT HUMPTY TOGETHER  
AGAIN... ANY QUESTIONS ?

I HAVE SEVERAL...



THE FIRST ADVENTURES OF HOLMES AND WATSON

WHAT KIND OF  
EGG WAS HUMPTY  
DUMPTY ?

THE NURSERY  
RHYME DOES  
NOT SAY...



I AM GOING WITH A GOOSE EGG...

HE WAS PRETTY LARGE...  
I WOULD WAGER HE WAS  
FROM AN OSTRICH...



**I BELIEVE HE WAS FROM THE CHICKEN WHO CROSSED THE ROAD...**



**BOTH OF THEM ARE ALWAYS SEEKING THRILLS, AND HAVE A PENCHANT FOR DANGEROUS SITUATIONS...**



**I HOPE HE HAD A GOOD ATTORNEY... THAT WALL SOUNDS VERY DANGEROUS...**



**I BELIEVE WE WILL SKIP 'LITTLE MISS MUFFET' TOMORROW...**

**EVEN MORE QUESTIONS FOR THAT ONE...**

