


THE CREW OF THE BARQUE LONE STAR



The Facts, Legend, and Lore of the Society's
Beginnings and 50-Year Legacy



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Society's Beginnings and 50-Year Legacy**

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***We dedicate this book to all the members,
past, present, & future, of the Crew of the
Barque Lone Star, who keep the memory green
and keep Sherlock Holmes alive.***

Acknowledgments

***The Crew is appreciative of the efforts of Tim
Johnson of the University of Minnesota and
Julie McKuras of the Norwegian Explorers for
their assistance in obtaining several of the
items in this book.***

Foreword

Holmes once said to his companion, “It may be that you are not yourself luminous, but that you are a conductor of light.” The current crew of the Barque Lone Star has been guided by the light of those who assembled more than fifty years ago at the Farmer’s Daughter steak house in Fort Worth. This small, dedicated group of Sherlockians chose to gather and celebrate a mutual interest in the great detective and planted a seed that would continue to thrive. The enthusiastic gathering from that first meeting has grown into a vibrant, virtual crowd that spans oceans and time zones. What has not changed is the interest and respect for the Game and its creator.

Scions have appeared, grown, and—in some cases—ceased, and The Barque Lone Star has had its own ups and downs. As the following documents show, however, the strong roots planted in November, 1970 have sustained it. They recognized neither gender nor creed beyond a belief in the Game, and no other scion can claim the auspicious recognition for being a force in the Texas Navy. In her thesis “A Study in Sherlock: Knowing to be Known,” (parts reprinted in these pages), Allana Wooley notes, “[F]rom my experiences over the past year ..., the epitome of a Sherlockian [is] [f]riendly, always willing to help a fellow Sherlockian further the study of Sherlockia, and generous with knowledge and belongings if it will go toward spreading the discipleship of Sherlock Holmes.”

As documented in these pages, members of the crew have made pilgrimages to such exotic locations as Sherlock, Texas; held local conferences to educate and spread knowledge of the great detective; penned pastiches, poems, songs, puzzles, cartoons, and scholarly works; and collected and then passed on their collections to be made available to an even greater audience. Now, the Crew will pass another milestone with its first international conference. With such a strong history and a growing membership, surely more lies ahead.

Let us celebrate the past but look forward to an even brighter future over the next fifty years for the Third Mate and the Deck Hands of the Barque Lone Star.

Note: All typos, errors, and inaccuracies were left from the original texts, articles, and stories on purpose.

The Crew of the Barque Lone Star would like to offer our sincere gratitude to all those Sherlockians, especially the Baker Street Irregular (BSI) Members, Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes (ASH) Members, and Crew Deck Mates, in this volume. Their contributions and participation have ensured the success of our Society for over 50 years and counting.

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Cindy Brown, BSI ("Sam Brown"), ASH ("An Emerald Snake Ring"), Deckmate
Jeff Decker, BSI ("Dr. Grimesby Roylott")
Donald Hobbs, BSI ("Inspector Lestrade"), ASH ("Inspector Lestrade"), Deckmate
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The Adventure of the Five Orange Pips

The founding and naming of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star is based on "The Adventure of the Five Orange Pips", written by Dr. John H. Watson, published in the Strand Magazine, under the authorship of Arthur Conan Doyle, friend and literary agent of Dr. Watson, in November 1891.

The events which occurred and recounted in "The Five Orange Pips", subsequently published in The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes, occurred in September 1887.

The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes

Adventure VII – “The Five Orange Pips”

When I glance over my notes and records of the Sherlock Holmes cases between the years '82 and '90, I am faced by so many which present strange and interesting features, that it is no easy matter to know which to choose and which to leave. Some, however, have already gained publicity through the papers, and others have not offered a field for those peculiar qualities which my friend possessed in so high a degree, and which it is the object of these papers to illustrate. Some, too, have baffled his analytical skill, and would be, as narratives, beginnings, without an ending, while others have been but partially cleared up, and have their explanations founded rather upon conjecture and surmise than on that absolute logical proof which was so dear to him. There is, however, one of these last which was so remarkable in its details and so startling in its results, that I am tempted to give some account of it, in spite of the fact that there are points in connection with it which never have been, and probably never will be, entirely cleared up.

The year '87 furnished us with a long series of cases of greater or less interest, of which I retain the records. Among my headings under this one twelve months, I find an account of the adventure of the Paradol Chamber, of the Amateur Mendicant Society, who held a luxurious club in the lower vault of a furniture warehouse, of the facts connected with the loss of the British barque *Sophy Anderson*, of the singular adventures of the Grice Patersons in the island of Uffa, and finally of the Camberwell poisoning case. In the latter, as may be remembered, Sherlock Holmes was able, by winding up the dead man's watch, to prove that it had been wound up two hours ago, and that therefore the deceased had gone to bed within that time - a deduction which was of the greatest importance in clearing up the case. All these I may sketch out at some future date, but none of them present such singular features as the strange train of circumstances which I have now taken up my pen to describe.

It was in the latter days of September, and the equinoctial gales had set in with exceptional violence. All day the wind had screamed and the rain had beaten against the windows, so that even here in the heart of great, hand-made London we were forced to raise our minds for the instant from the routine of life, and to recognize the presence of those great elemental forces which shriek at mankind through the bars of his civilization, like untamed beasts in a cage. As evening drew in the storm grew louder and louder, and the wind cried and sobbed like a child in the chimney. Sherlock Holmes sat moodily at one side of the fireplace cross-indexing his records of crime, whilst I at the other was deep in one of Clark Russell's fine sea stories, until the howl of the gale from without seemed to blend with the text, and the splash of the rain to lengthen out into the long swash of the sea waves. My wife was on a visit to her aunt's, and for a few days I was a dweller once more in my old quarters at Baker Street.

'Why,' said I, glancing up at my companion, 'that was surely the bell? Who could come tonight? Some friend of yours, perhaps?'

'Except yourself I have none,' he answered. 'I do not encourage visitors.'

'A client, then?'

'If so, it is a serious case. Nothing less would bring a man out on such a day, and at such an hour. But I take it that it is more likely to be some crony of the landlady's.'

Sherlock Holmes was wrong in his conjecture, however, for there came a step in the passage, and a tapping at the door. He stretched out his long arm to turn the lamp away from himself and towards the vacant chair upon which a newcomer must sit. 'Come in!' said he.

The man who entered was young, some two-and-twenty at the outside, well groomed and trimly clad, with something of refinement and delicacy in his bearing. The streaming umbrella which he held in

his hand, and his long shining waterproof told of the fierce weather through which he had come. He looked about him anxiously in the glare of the lamp, and I could see that his face was pale and his eyes heavy, like those of a man who is weighed down with some great anxiety.

'I owe you an apology,' he said, raising his golden pince-nez to his eyes. 'I trust that I am not intruding. I fear that I have brought some traces of the storm and the rain into your snug chamber.'

'Give me your coat and umbrella,' said Holmes. 'They may rest here on the hook, and will be dry presently. You have come up from the south-west, I see.'

'Yes, from Horsham.'

'That clay and chalk mixture which I see upon your toe-caps is quite distinctive:

'I have come for advice.'

'That is easily got.'

'And help.'

'That is not always so easy.'

'I have heard of you, Mr Holmes. I heard from Major Prendergast how you saved him in the Tankerville Club Scandal.'

'Ah, of course. He was wrongfully accused of cheating at cards.'

'He said that you could solve anything.'

'He said too much.'

'That you are never beaten.'

'I have been beaten four times - three times by men and once by a woman.'

'But what is that compared with the number of your successes?'

'It is true that I have been generally successful.'

'Then you may be so with me.'

'I beg that you will draw your chair up to the fire, and favour me with some details as to your case.'

'It is no ordinary one.'

'None of those which come to me are. I am the last court of appeal.'

'And yet I question, sir, whether, in all your experience, you have ever listened to a more mysterious and inexplicable chain of events than those which have happened in my own family.'

'You fill me with interest,' said Holmes. 'Pray give us the essential facts from the commencement, and I can afterwards question you as to those details which seem to me to be most important.'

The young man pulled his chair up, and pushed his wet feet out towards the blaze.

'My name,' said he, 'is John Openshaw, but my own affairs have, so far as I can understand it, little to do with this awful business. It is a hereditary matter, so in order to give you an idea of the facts, I must go back to the commencement of the affair.'

'You must know that my grandfather had two sons - my uncle Elias and my father Joseph. My father had a small factory at Coventry, which he enlarged at the time of the invention of bicycling. He was the patentee of the Openshaw unbreakable tyre, and his business met with such success that he was able to sell it, and to retire upon a handsome competence.'

'My uncle Elias emigrated to America when he was a young man, and became a planter in Florida, where he was reported to have done very well. At the time of the war he fought in Jackson's army, and afterwards under Hood, where he rose to be a colonel. When Lee laid down his arms my uncle returned to his plantation, where he remained for three or four years. About 1869 or 1870 he came back to Europe, and took a small estate in Sussex, near Horsham. He had made a very considerable fortune in the States, and his reason for leaving them was his aversion to the negroes, and his dislike of the Republican policy in extending the franchise to them. He was a singular man, fierce and quick-tempered, very foul-mouthed when he was angry, and of a most retiring disposition. During all the years that he lived at Horsham I doubt if ever he set foot in the town. He had a garden and two or three fields round his house, and there he would take his exercise, though very often for weeks on end he would never

leave his room. He drank a great deal of brandy, and smoked very heavily, but he would see no society, and did not want any friends, not even his own brother.

'He didn't mind me, in fact he took a fancy to me, for at the time when he saw me first I was a youngster of twelve or so. That would be in the year 1878, after he had been eight or nine years in England. He begged my father to let me live with him, and he was very kind to me in his way. When he was sober he used to be fond of playing backgammon and draughts with me, and he would make me his representative both with the servants and with the tradespeople, so that by the time that I was sixteen I was quite master of the house. I kept all the keys, and could go where I liked and do what I liked, so long as I did not disturb him in his privacy. There was one singular exception, however, for he had a single room, a lumber-room up among the attics, which was invariably locked, and which he would never permit either me or anyone else to enter. With a boy's curiosity I have peeped through the keyhole, but I was never able to see more than such a collection of old trunks and bundles as would be expected in such a room.

'One day - it was in March, 1883 - a letter with a foreign stamp lay upon the table in front of the Colonel's plate. It was not a common thing for him to receive letters, for his bills were all paid in ready money, and he had no friends of any sort. "From India!" said he, as he took it up, "Pondicherry post-mark! What can this be?" Opening it hurriedly, out there jumped five little dried orange pips, which pattered down upon his plate. I began to laugh at this, but the laugh was struck from my lips at the sight of his face. His lip had fallen, his eyes were protruding, his skin the colour of putty, and he glared at the envelope which he still held in his trembling hand. "K. K. K.," he shrieked, and then: "My God, my God, my sins have overtaken me."

""What is it, uncle!" I cried.

""Death," said he, and rising from the table he retired to his room, leaving me palpitating with horror. I took up the envelope, and saw scrawled in red ink upon the inner flap, just above the gum, the letter K three times repeated. There was nothing else save the five dried pips. What could be the reason of his overpowering terror? I left the breakfast-table, and as I ascended the stairs I met him coming down with an old rusty key, which must have belonged to the attic, in one hand, and a small brass box, like a cash box, in the other.

""They may do what they like, but I'll checkmate them still," said he, with an oath. "Tell Mary that I shall want a fire in my room today, and send down to Fordham, the Horsham lawyer."

'I did as he ordered, and when the lawyer arrived I was asked to step up to the room. The fire was burning brightly, and in the grate there was a mass of black, fluffy ashes, as of burned paper, while the brass box stood open and empty beside it. As I glanced at the box I noticed, with a start, that upon the lid were printed the treble K which I had read in the morning upon the envelope.

""I wish you, John," said my uncle, "to witness my will. I leave my estate, with all its advantages and all its disadvantages to my brother, your father, whence it will, no doubt, descend to you. If you can enjoy it in peace, well and good! If you find you cannot, take my advice, my boy, and leave it to your deadliest enemy. I am sorry to give you such a two-edged thing, but I can't say what turn things are going to take. Kindly sign the paper where Mr Fordham shows you."

'I signed the paper as directed, and the lawyer took it away with him. The singular incident made, as you may think, the deepest impression upon me, and I pondered over it, and turned it every way in my mind without being able to make anything of it. Yet I could not shake off the vague feeling of dread which it left behind it, though the sensation grew less keen as the weeks passed, and nothing happened to disturb the usual routine of our lives. I could see a change in my uncle, however. He drank more than ever, and he was less inclined for any sort of society. Most of his time he would spend in his room, with the door locked upon the inside, but sometimes he would emerge in a sort of drunken frenzy and would burst out of the house and tear about the garden with a revolver in his hand, screaming out that he was afraid of no man, and that he was not to be cooped up, like a sheep in a pen, by man or devil. When

these hot fits were over, however, he would rush tumultuously in at the door, and lock and bar it behind him, like a man who can brazen it out no longer against the terror which lies at the roots of his soul. At such times I have seen his face even on a cold day, glisten with moisture as though it were new raised from a basin.

'Well, to come to an end of the matter, Mr Holmes, and not to abuse your patience, there came a night when he made one of those drunken sallies from which he never came back. We found him, when we went to search for him, face downwards in a little green-scummed pool, which lay at the foot of the garden. There was no sign of any violence, and the water was but two feet deep, so that the jury, having regard to his known eccentricity, brought in a verdict of suicide. But I, who knew how he winced from the very thought of death, had much ado to persuade myself that he had gone out of his way to meet it. The matter passed, however, and my father entered into possession of the estate, and of some fourteen thousand pounds, which lay to his credit at the bank.'

'One moment,' Holmes interposed. 'Your statement is, I foresee, one of the most remarkable to which I have ever listened. Let me have the date of the reception by your uncle of the letter, and the date of his supposed suicide.'

'The letter arrived on March the 10th, 1883. His death was seven weeks later, upon the night of the 2nd of May.'

'Thank you. Pray proceed.'

'When my father took over the Horsham property, he, at my request, made a careful examination of the attic, which had been always locked up. We found the brass box there, although its contents had been destroyed. On the inside of the cover was a paper label, with the initials K. K. K. repeated upon it, and "Letters, memoranda, receipts and a register" written beneath. These, we presume, indicated the nature of the papers which had been destroyed by Colonel Openshaw. For the rest, there was nothing of much importance in the attic, save a great many scattered papers and notebooks bearing upon my uncle's life in America. Some of them were of the war time, and showed that he had done his duty well, and had borne the repute of being a brave soldier. Others were of a date during the reconstruction of the Southern States, and were mostly concerned with politics, for he had evidently taken a strong part in opposing the carpet-bag politicians who had been sent down from the North.

'Well, it was the beginning of '84, when my father came to live at Horsham, and all went as well as possible with us until the January of '85. On the fourth day after the New Year I heard my father give a sharp cry of surprise as we sat together at the breakfast-table. There he was, sitting with a newly opened envelope in one hand and five dried orange pips in the out-stretched palm of the other one. He had always laughed at what he called my cock-and-bull story about the Colonel, but he looked very puzzled and scared now that the same thing had come upon himself.

"Why, what on earth does this mean, John?" he stammered.

'My heart had turned to lead. "It is K. K. K.," said I.

'He looked inside the envelope. "So it is," he cried. "Here are the very letters. But what is this written above them?"

"Put the papers on the sun-dial," I read, peeping over his shoulder.

"What papers? What sun-dial?" he asked.

"The sun-dial in the garden. There is no other," said I; "but the papers must be those that are destroyed."

"Pooh!" said he, gripping hard at his courage. "We are in a civilized land here, and we can't have tomfoolery of this kind. Where does the thing come from?"

"From Dundee," I answered, glancing at the postmark.

"Some preposterous practical joke," said he. "What have I to do with sun-dials and papers? I shall take no notice of such nonsense."

"I should certainly speak to the police," I said.

""And be laughed at for my pains. Nothing of the sort." ""Then let me do so."

""No, I forbid you. I won't have a fuss made over such nonsense."

'It was in vain to argue with him, for he was a very obstinate man. I went about, however, with a heart which was full of forebodings.

'On the third day after the coming of the letter my father went from home to visit an old friend of his, Major Freebody, who is in command of one of the forts upon Portsdown Hill. I was glad that he should go, for it seemed to me that he was further from danger when he was away from home. In that, however, I was in error. Upon the second day of his absence I received a telegram from the Major, imploring me to come at once. My father had fallen over one of the deep chalk-pits which abound in the neighbourhood, and was lying senseless, with a shattered skull. I hurried to him, but he passed away without having ever recovered his consciousness. He had, as it appears, been returning from Fareham in the twilight, and as the country was unknown to him, and the chalk-pit unfenced, the jury had no hesitation in bringing in a verdict of "Death from accidental causes". Carefully as I examined every fact connected with his death, I was unable to find anything which could suggest the idea of murder. There were no signs of violence, no footmarks, no robbery, no record of strangers having been seen upon the roads. And yet I need not tell you that my mind was far from at ease, and that I was well-nigh certain that some foul plot had been woven round him.

'In this sinister way I came into my inheritance. You will ask me why I did not dispose of it? I answer because I was well convinced that our troubles were in some way dependent upon an incident in my uncle's life, and that the danger would be as pressing in one house as in another.

'It was in January, '85, that my poor father met his end, and two years and eight months have elapsed since then. During that time I have lived happily at Horsham, and I had begun to hope that this curse had passed away from the family, and that it had ended with the last generation. I had begun to take comfort too soon, however; yesterday morning the blow fell in the very shape in which it had come upon my father.'

The young man took from his waistcoat a crumpled envelope, and, turning to the table, he shook out upon it five little dried orange pips.

'This is the envelope,' he continued. 'The postmark is London - eastern division. Within are the very words which were upon my father's last message. "K. K. K."; and then "Put the papers on the sundial".'

'What have you done?' asked Holmes.

'Nothing.'

'Nothing?'

'To tell the truth' - he sank his face into his thin, white hands - 'I have felt helpless. I have felt like one of those poor rabbits when the snake is writhing towards it. I seem to be in the grasp of some resistless, inexorable evil, which no foresight and no precautions can guard against.'

'Tut! Tut!' cried Sherlock Holmes. 'You must act, man, or you are lost. Nothing but energy can save you. This is no time for despair.'

'I have seen the police.'

'Ah?'

'But they listened to my story with a smile. I am convinced that the inspector has formed the opinion that the letters are all practical jokes, and that the deaths of my relations were really accidents, as the jury stated, and were not to be connected with the warnings.'

Holmes shook his clenched hands in the air. 'Incredible imbecility!' he cried.

'They have, however, allowed me a policeman, who may remain in the house with me.'

'Has he come with you to-night?'

'No. His orders were to stay in the house.'

Again Holmes raved in the air.

'Why did you come to me?' he said; 'and, above all, why did you not come at once?'

'I did not know. It was only to-day that I spoke to Major Prendergast about my trouble, and was advised by him to come to you.'

'It is really two days since you had the letter. We should have acted before this. You have no further evidence, I suppose, than that which you have placed before us — no suggestive detail which might help us?'

'There is one thing,' said John Openshaw. He rummaged in his coat pocket, and drawing out a piece of discoloured, blue-tinted paper, he laid it out upon the table. 'I have some remembrance,' said he, 'that on the day when my uncle burned the papers I observed that the small, unburned margins which lay amid the ashes were of this particular colour. I found this single sheet upon the floor of his room, and I am inclined to think that it may be one of the papers which had, perhaps, fluttered out from among the others, and in that way escaped destruction. Beyond the mention of pips, I do not see that it helps us much. I think myself that it is a page from some private diary. The writing is undoubtedly my uncle's.'

Holmes moved the lamp, and we both bent over the sheet of paper, which showed by its ragged edge that it had indeed been torn from a book. It was headed 'March, 1869', and beneath were the following enigmatical notices:—

4th. Hudson came. Same old platform.

7th. Set the pips on McCauley, Paramore, and John Swain of St Augustine.

9th. McCauley cleared.

10th. John Swain cleared.

12th. Visited Paramore. All well.

'Thank you!' said Holmes, folding up the paper and returning it to our visitor. 'And now you must on no account lose another instant. We cannot spare time even to discuss what you have told me. You must get home instantly, and act.'

'What shall I do?'

'There is but one thing to do. It must be done at once. You must put this piece of paper which you have shown us into the brass box which you have described. You must also put in a note to say that all the other papers were burned by your uncle, and that this is the only one which remains. You must assert that in such words as will carry conviction with them. Having done this, you must at once put the box out upon the sun-dial, as directed. Do you understand?'

'Entirely.'

'Do not think of revenge, or anything of the sort, at present. I think that we may gain that by means of the law; but we have our web to weave, while theirs is already woven. The first consideration is to remove the pressing danger which threatens you. The second is to clear up the mystery, and to punish the guilty parties.'

'I thank you,' said the young man, rising, and pulling on his overcoat. 'You have given me fresh life and hope. I shall certainly do as you advise.'

'Do not lose an instant. And, above all, take care of yourself in the meanwhile, for I do not think that there can be a doubt that you are threatened by a very real and imminent danger. How do you go back?'

'By train from Waterloo.'

'It is not yet nine. The streets will be crowded, so I trust that you may be in safety. And yet you cannot guard yourself too closely.'

'I am armed.'

'That is well. To-morrow I shall set to work upon your case.'

'I shall see you at Horsham, then?'

'No, your secret lies in London. It is there that I shall seek it.'

'Then I shall call upon you in a day, or in two days, with news as to the box and the papers. I shall

take your advice in every particular.' He shook hands with us, and took his leave. Outside the wind still screamed, and the rain splashed and pattered against the windows. This strange, wild story seemed to have come to us from amid the mad elements — blown in upon us like a sheet of sea-weed in a gale - and now to have been re-absorbed by them once more.

v

Sherlock Holmes sat for some time in silence with his head sunk forward, and his eyes bent upon the red glow of the fire. Then he lit his pipe, and leaning back in his chair he watched the blue smoke rings as they chased each other up to the ceiling.

'I think, Watson,' he remarked at last, 'that of all our cases we have had none more fantastic than this.'

'Save, perhaps, the Sign of Four.'

'Well, yes. Save, perhaps, that. And yet this John Openshaw seems to me to be walking amid even greater perils than did the Sholtos.'

'But have you,' I asked, 'formed any definite conception as to what these perils are?'

'There can be no question as to their nature,' he answered.

'Then what are they? Who is this K.K.K., and why does he pursue this unhappy family?'

Sherlock Holmes closed his eyes, and placed his elbows upon the arms of his chair, with his fingertips together. 'The ideal reasoner,' he remarked, 'would, when he has once been shown a single fact in all its bearings, deduce from it not only all the chain of events which led up to it, but also all the results which would follow from it. As Cuvier could correctly describe a whole animal by the contemplation of a single bone, so the observer who has thoroughly understood one link in a series of incidents, should be able accurately to state all the other ones, both before and after. We have not yet grasped the results which the reason alone can attain to. Problems may be solved in the study which have baffled all those who have sought a solution by the aid of their senses. To carry the art, however, to its highest pitch, it is necessary that the reasoner should be able to utilize all the facts which have come to his knowledge, and this in itself implies, as you will readily see, a possession of all knowledge, which, even in these days of free education and encyclopedias, is a somewhat rare accomplishment. It is not so impossible, however, that a man should possess all knowledge which is likely to be useful to him in his work, and this I have endeavoured in my case to do. If I remember rightly, you on one occasion, in the early days of our friendship, defined my limits in a very precise fashion.'

'Yes,' I answered, laughing. 'It was a singular document. Philosophy, astronomy, and politics were marked at zero, I remember. Botany variable, geology profound as regards the mud-stains from any region within fifty miles of town, chemistry eccentric, anatomy unsystematic, sensational literature and crime records unique, violin player, boxer, swordsman, lawyer, and self-poisoner by cocaine and tobacco. Those, I think, were the main points of my analysis.'

Holmes grinned at the last item. 'Well,' he said, 'say now, as I said then, that a man should keep his little brain attic stocked with all the furniture that he is likely to use, and the rest he can put away in the lumber-room of his library, where he can get it if he wants it. Now, for such a case as the one which has been submitted to us tonight, we need certainly to muster all our resources. Kindly hand me down the letter K of the American Encyclopedia which stands upon the shelf beside you. Thank you. Now let us consider the situation, and see what may be deduced from it. In the first place, we may start with a strong presumption that Colonel Openshaw had some very strong reason for leaving America. Men at his time of life do not change all their habits, and exchange willingly the charming climate of Florida for the lonely life of an English provincial town. His extreme love of solitude in England suggests the idea that he was in fear of someone or something, which drove him from America. As to what it was he feared, we can only deduce that by considering the formidable letters which were received by himself and his successors. Did you remark the postmarks of those letters?'

'The first was from Pondicherry, the second from Dundee, and the third from London.'

'From East London. What do you deduce from that?'

'They are all sea-ports. That the writer was on board a ship.'

'Excellent. We have already a clue. There can be no doubt that the probability - the strong probability — is that the writer was on board of a ship. And now let us consider another point. In the case of Pondicherry seven weeks elapsed between the threat and its fulfilment, in Dundee it was only some three or four days. Does that suggest anything?'

'A greater distance to travel.'

'But the letter had also a greater distance to come.'

'Then I do not see the point.'

'There is at least a presumption that the vessel in which the man or men are is a sailing ship. It looks as if they always sent their singular warning or token before them when starting upon their mission. You see how quickly the deed followed the sign when it came from Dundee. If they had come from Pondicherry in a steamer they would have arrived almost as soon as their letter. But as a matter of fact seven weeks elapsed. I think that those seven weeks represented the difference between the mail boat which brought the letter, and the sailing vessel which brought the writer.'

It is possible.'

'More than that. It is probable. And now you see the deadly urgency of this new case, and why I urged young Openshaw to caution. The blow has always fallen at the end of the time which it would take the senders to travel the distance. But this one comes from London, and therefore we cannot count upon delay.'

'Good God!' I cried. 'What can it mean, this relentless persecution?'

'The papers which Openshaw carried are obviously of vital importance to the person or persons in the sailing ship. I think that it is quite clear that there must be more than one of them. A single man could not have carried out two deaths in such a way as to deceive a coroner's jury. There must have been several in it, and they must have been men of resource and determination. Their papers they mean to have, be the holder of them who it may. In this way you see K.K.K. ceases to be the initials of an individual, and becomes the badge of a society.'

'But of what society?'

'Have you never—' said Sherlock Holmes, bending forward and sinking his voice — 'have you never heard of the Ku Klux Klan?'

'I never have.'

Holmes turned over the leaves of the book upon his knee. 'Here it is,' said he presently, "Ku Klux Klan. A name derived from a fanciful resemblance to the sound produced by cocking a rifle. This terrible secret society was formed by some ex-Confederate soldiers in the Southern States after the Civil War, and it rapidly formed local branches in different parts of the country, notably in Tennessee, Louisiana, the Carolinas, Georgia, and Florida. Its power was used for political purposes, principally for the terrorizing of the negro voters, and the murdering or driving from the country of those who were opposed to its views. Its outrages were usually preceded by a warning sent to the marked man in some fantastic but generally recognized shape — a sprig of oak leaves in some parts, melon seeds or orange pips in others. On receiving this the victim might either openly abjure his former ways, or might fly from the country. If he braved the matter out, death would unfailingly come upon him, and usually in some strange and unforeseen manner. So perfect was the organization of the society, and so systematic its methods, that there is hardly a case upon record where any man succeeded in braving it with impunity, or in which any of its outrages were traced home to the perpetrators. For some years the organization flourished, in spite of the efforts of the United States Government, and of the better classes of the community in the South. Eventually, in the year 1869, the movement rather suddenly collapsed, although there have been sporadic outbreaks of the same sort since that date."

'You will observe,' said Holmes, laying down the volume, 'that the sudden breaking up of the society

was coincident with the disappearance of Openshaw from America with their papers. It may well have been cause and effect. It is no wonder that he and his family have some of the more implacable spirits upon their track. You can understand that this register and diary may implicate some of the first men in the South, and that there may be many who will not sleep easy at night until it is recovered.'

'Then the page which we have seen-'

'Is such as we might expect. It ran, if I remember right, "sent the pips to A, B, and C" - that is, sent the society's warning to them. Then there are successive entries that A and B cleared, or left the country, and finally that C was visited, with, I fear, a sinister result for C. Well, I think, Doctor, that we may let some light into this dark place, and I believe that the only chance young Openshaw has in the meantime is to do what I have told him. There is nothing more to be said or to be done tonight, so hand me over my violin and let us try to forget for half an hour the miserable weather, and the still more miserable ways of our fellow-men.'

It had cleared in the morning, and the sun was shining with a subdued brightness through the dim veil which hangs over the great city. Sherlock Holmes was already at breakfast when I came down.

'You will excuse me for not waiting for you,' said he; 'I have, I foresee, a very busy day before me in looking into this case of young Openshaw's.'

'What steps will you take?' I asked.

'It will very much depend upon the results of my first inquiries. I may have to go down to Horsham after all.'

'You will not go there first?'

'No, I shall commence with the City Just ring the bell, and the maid will bring up your coffee.'

As I waited, I lifted the unopened newspaper from the table and glanced my eye over it. It rested upon a heading which sent a chill to my heart.

'Holmes,' I cried, 'you are too late.'

'Ah!' said he, laying down his cup, 'I feared as much. How was it done?' He spoke calmly, but I could see that he was deeply moved.

'My eye caught the name of Openshaw, and the heading "Tragedy near Waterloo Bridge". Here is the account: "Between nine and ten last night Police Constable Cook, of the H Division, on duty near Waterloo Bridge, heard a cry for help and a splash in the water. The night, however, was extremely dark and stormy, so that, in spite of the help of several passers-by, it was quite impossible to effect a rescue. The alarm, however, was given, and by the aid of the water police, the body was eventually recovered. It proved to be that of a young gentleman whose name, as it appears from an envelope which was found in his pocket, was John Openshaw, and whose residence is near Horsham. It is conjectured that he may have been hurrying down to catch the last train from Waterloo station, and that in his haste and the extreme darkness, he missed his path and walked — over the edge of one of the small landing-places for river steamboats. The body exhibited no traces of violence, and there can be no doubt that the deceased had been the victim of an unfortunate accident, which should have the effect of calling the attention of the authorities to the condition of the riverside landing-stages.'"

We sat in silence for some minutes, Holmes more depressed and shaken than I had ever seen him.

'That hurts my pride, Watson,' he said at last. 'It is a petty feeling, no doubt, but it hurts my pride. It becomes a personal matter with me now, and, if God sends me health, I shall set my hand upon this gang. That he should come to me for help, and that I should send him away to his death-!' He sprang from his chair, and paced about the room - in uncontrollable agitation, with a flush upon his sallow cheeks, and a nervous clasping and unclasping of his long, thin hands.

'They must be cunning devils,' he exclaimed at last. 'How could they have decoyed him down there? The Embankment is not on the direct line to the station. The bridge, no doubt, was too crowded, even on such a night, for their purpose. Well, Watson, we shall see who will win in the long run. I am going out now!'

'To the police?'

'No; I shall be my own police. When I have spun the web they may take the flies, but not before.'

All day I was engaged in my professional work, and it was late in the evening before I returned to Baker Street. Sherlock Holmes had not come back yet. It was nearly ten o'clock before he entered, looking pale and worn. He walked up to the sideboard, and, tearing a piece from the loaf, he devoured it voraciously, washing it down with a long draught of water.

'You are hungry,' I remarked.

'Starving. It had escaped my memory. I have had nothing since breakfast.'

'Nothing?'

'Not a bite. I had no time to think of it.'

'And how have you succeeded?'

'Well.'

'You have a clue?'

'I have them in the hollow of my hand. Young Openshaw shall not remain long unavenged. Why, Watson, let us put their own devilish trade-mark upon them. It is well thought of!'

'What do you mean?'

He took an orange from the cupboard, and tearing it to pieces, he squeezed out the pips upon the table. Of these he took five, and thrust them into an envelope. On the inside of the flap he wrote, 'S.H. for J.O.' Then he sealed it and addressed it to 'Captain James Calhoun, Barque Lone Star, Savannah, Georgia.'

v

'That will await him when he enters port,' said he, chuckling. 'It may give him a sleepless night. He will find it as sure a precursor of his fate as Openshaw did before him.'

'And who is this Captain Calhoun?'

'The leader of the gang. I shall have the others, but he first.'

'How did you trace it, then?'

He took a large sheet of paper from his pocket, all covered with dates and names.

'I have spent the whole day,' said he, 'over Lloyd's registers and the files of old papers, following the future career of every vessel which touched at Pondicherry in January and in February in '83. There were thirty-six ships of fair tonnage which were reported there during those months. Of these, one, the Lone Star instantly attracted my attention, since, although it was reported as having cleared from London, the name is that which is given to one of the States of the Union.'

'Texas, I think.'

'I was not and am not sure which; but I knew that the ship must have an American origin.'

'What then?'

'I searched the Dundee records, and when I found that the barque Lone Star was there in January, '85, my suspicion became a certainty. I then inquired as to vessels which lay at present in the port of London.'

'Yes?'

'The Lone Star had arrived here last week. I went down to the Albert Dock, and found that she had been taken down the river by the early tide this morning, homeward bound to Savannah. I wired to Gravesend, and learned that she had passed some time ago, and as the wind is easterly, I have no doubt that she is now past the Goodwins, and not very far from the Isle of Wight.'

'What will you do, then?'

'Oh, I have my hand upon him. He and the two mates are, as I learn, the only native-born Americans in the ship. The others are Finns and Germans. I know also that they were all three away from the ship last night. I had it from the stevedore, who has been loading their cargo. By the time their sailing ship reaches Savannah the mail-boat will have carried this letter, and the cable will have informed the police

of Savannah that these three gentlemen are badly wanted here upon a charge of murder.'

There is ever a flaw, however, in the best laid of human plans, and the murderers of John Openshaw were never to receive the orange pips which would show them that another, as cunning and resolute as themselves, was upon their track. Very long and severe were the equinoctial gales of that year. We waited long for news of the Lone Star of Savannah, but none ever reached us. We did at last hear that somewhere far out in the Atlantic a shattered sternpost of a boat was seen swinging in the trough of a wave, with the letters 'L. S.' carved upon it, and that is all which we shall ever know of the fate of the Lone Star.

A Pip of an Idea

Early in the Spring of 2017, Cindy Brown and Steve Mason were asked to sort through the personal effects of one of the founding members of our Society, Bill Beeson. We discovered a previously unpublished manuscript from Dr. John H. Watson, which shed more light on the mystery of the Five Orange Pips. The document was provided to Mr. Beeson by a descendent of Dr. Watson, as Bill was the 3rd Mate of the Barque Lone Star at the time.

It is believed the manuscript was deliberately written in a more “American” style, as Dr. Watson and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle intended the sequel to “The Adventure of the Five Orange Pips” to be directed toward the descendants of the Barque Lone Star, all who resided in the United States.

"A Pip of an Idea"

by Cindy Brown and Steve Mason

PROLOGUE

For reasons which shall become apparent as readers work through this story, Holmes and I determined it was not prudent to place the final outcome of this case in the public eye until certain milestones had passed. As the reader will see, the last milestone occurred earlier in 1921. To ensure everyone who had direct involvement in this tragedy can no longer suffer the consequences, I am concealing the following until approximately fifty years have passed. I hope the ultimate recipient of this narrative will know how to proceed in its publication with compassion and sincerity.

Dr. J. Watson
September, 1921

It was just a week since the tragic events involving John Openshaw, the KKK, and the orange pips had unfolded unusually for this time of the year; I had no patients scheduled for the day, so I determined it would be considerate to check in on my friend to see how he was holding up. As I entered my old lodgings, I took a quick detour to the kitchen to give my best wishes to Mrs. Hudson. I did not expect the welcome I received.

"Dr. Watson, I am thrilled to see you. You simply must go upstairs and do what you can for that poor man. I have seen him in some miserable states, but the last few days are the worst I have witnessed."

A man without a war wound may have taken the steps two at a time, but I took my time, hitting each tread on my way to the sitting room. I found Holmes staring out the window onto the street below.

"Good to see you, Watson. Join me for an early pipe before Mrs. Hudson assaults us again with a massive breakfast."

Being of Scottish ancestry, cooking fabulous meals was never Mrs. Hudson's long suit, but her fare was constantly filling and acceptable. However, her scones were beyond compare. Whoever taught her to make such wonderful delights would have been pleased to see how my eyes lit up whenever she entered the room with her tray piled high.

"I assume our landlady has beseeched you to attempt to remove me from a foul mood. Before you say a word, you must know no entreaties on your part will help at this point. I will work through this on my own. As I said last week, this hurts my pride."

"Holmes, you have had a week to consider and reconsider the entire episode. What has this self-reflection and assumed self-incrimination exposed to you?"

"An interesting and innovative method of improving my mood, I must grant you. But I have concluded there was simply nothing I could have done to keep our client, Mr. Openshaw, from his demise on that rainy night. The forces behind the captain and his two cohorts would not rest until they had accomplished the deadly task of removing him from our plane. They could not allow an Openshaw, even one who may have been completely removed from this entire story, from surviving and possibly making public the punishment his father and uncle had received."

We paused to consume the victuals. I prefer adding syrup to the top of my scones, while Holmes prefers them plain. I may have bested my personal record, finishing off four of the biscuits. I justified my gluttony by not wanting the extra scones to be wasted, though Holmes quickly pointed out the dog downstairs might have enjoyed a morsel thrown his way.

After finishing the meal, Holmes returned to the window. I found my old chair next to the fireplace, which sat dormant on this mild autumn morning.

“While I fear justice may be slow in transpiring, I have faith the American justice system will take action once the trio returns to America.”

I sat for several minutes, trying to decide if I should say more, or simply allow things to settle where they seemingly had when he broke the silence himself.

“Hmm. this is interesting,”

He said suddenly.

“What is?”

“There is a gentleman across the street, most definitely of a nautical nature. He periodically glances at our residence while furtively looking to the right and left to ensure no one is watching him. Well, now he has made up his mind and is crossing. I expect we shall have a visitor. Maybe he would enjoy a scone or two.”

At this point, two sets of steps could be heard on the stairs, and Mrs. Hudson returned to our room, stating there was a male visitor for Mr. Holmes.

“Show him in. And please, Mrs. Hudson, would you be so kind as to refresh our tea unless our caller would appreciate something a little stronger, such as rum or other drink, appropriate for a sailor.”

“What led you to that conclusion,” our perplexed guest asked as soon as he joined us.

“It was simple enough to determine your trade from the tar stains on your hands which resulted from handling tarred rope. Other than that trifling observation, I have not set out to deduce any other items about you.”

“I’m duly impressed. My name is Franz Mueller. The landlady indicated I have found the residence of Mr. Holmes, whom I have been seeking since daybreak.”

“You have found him. And this is my esteemed friend and colleague, Dr. Watson. You can speak freely in his company. His knowledge, loyalty, and determination may prove an asset to your situation.”

I am still not sure the slight cough that emitted from my throat was not an involuntary choking back of my emotions.

Muller was a small but strong man, with bright eyes and wiry rusty colored hair. His skin, wind-worn and sun-scorched for many years, gave Mueller a much-aged appearance than his actual age.

“I am presently holding the position of ‘interim Captain’ on a sailing ship, but for years I was... and am... the Third Mate of the Barque Lone Star, with which I believe Mr. Holmes should be familiar,” Mueller said.

“That’s simply not possible,” I blurted out. “We were informed your ship had departed and is presently on course back to America.”

“Watson, I am genuinely as shocked as you are at this revelation, but I suggest we hold our thoughts until Captain, or Mister, Mueller has related his tale, Holmes interjected. I suspect he has much to tell us about what has actually happened since the death of John Openshaw.

“Mr. Holmes, random thoughts may sometimes escape my brain and spill out of my mouth before my brain has a chance to catch them. Such loose thoughts could possibly cause me harm in this case. It would be in my, and possibly your, best interests to choose my words most carefully.”

I poured a snifter of rum for our visitor. Holmes declined the offer for himself, and not being a fanatic for that strong of a spirit, I chose brandy from one of the three decanters in the tantalus on the sideboard. In my mind, I knew it was a little early for a drink, but I reminded myself somewhere in the world it was evening.

“Mr. Holmes, Mr. Watson, I have learned from a friend in the local shipping office you have done some investigating of this incident in the past, so I will not bore you with the nature and history of our ship. I will start from the point where you will get enough salient facts to determine the right course of action. “Just two days after the Lone Star left London, headed back to our homeland, following the death of John Openshaw, the Second Mate of the ship, a Mister Sutterman, became ripping drunk that night and admitted to me the true mission of the captain, the first mate, and the second mate of the

ship. As I believe you have discovered, these three men were not the regular officers of the ship, but had replaced the previous officers a few years ago, in the fall of 1884. They had laid their plan long in advance and were on a mission to carry it out no matter the outcome. They were absolutely ruthless, and determination was their driving force.

“After another sip of the rum, these officers were, in actuality, assigned the mission of retrieving documents held by Elias Openshaw, which were a record of the more heinous activities of the Ku Klux Klan, or as you may know it, the KKK, in the United States. The documents included the names and positions held by the highest members of the society. Their attempt at retrieving the records from Elias Openshaw met with disdain, as he responded tersely that he would never return the documents. He felt the documents were security from any actions that the organization might try to take against him.

“Thus, Captain Calhoun, in March 1887, directed an emissary in Pondicherry, India, to send Openshaw an envelope containing five orange pips. Thus, for Openshaw, his days were numbered. “The Pondicherry, India postmark was designed to give Openshaw a false sense he had much more time to take precautions to keep himself safe.

Elias Openshaw’s life was taken in just seven short weeks after the Lone Star reached port in Portsmouth, and the three officers had gone to Horsham in Sussex. The dastardly trio ensured the death appeared a suicide, or even accidental, as I believe was ultimately ruled. As you can guess, the society was cunning and not about to be thwarted.

At this point, Mueller took a long drink of the biting liquid before continuing his narrative. Not once did Holmes or I feel the need to stop him with a comment or question.

“The Lone Star then departed from England and made several cargo stops between the continent, Scotland, Ireland, and northern England. The captain and the first and second mates continued to lay their plans to retrieve the documents, no matter what the cost.

“In late December 1884, the ship landed in Dundee, Scotland. The three officers disembarked and headed south to Portsmouth. And, again, a letter was dispatched to Horsham a couple of days later from Dundee, asking for the relevant papers to be placed on the sundial of the Openshaw estate.

“Once the captain found Elias’ brother, Joseph Openshaw, had not complied with the directive, as no papers were found at the sundial. He and the other two officers pursued Mister Openshaw and ensured he also met his death in a seemingly accidental fashion. A careless footfall into a chalk pit had resulted in a smashed skull, and Joseph Openshaw had died, without uttering another word, in just a few short days.

“And the inheritance of this evil was now passed down to John Openshaw, the last surviving male heir.

“The Lone Star immediately departed and made runs between England, the Far East, and Africa for the next two and one-half years, and the three officers maintained a low and insignificant profile in every port they entered.

“In September 1887, the Lone Star once again arrived in London, and a letter was dispatched to young Mister Openshaw, again demanding the return of the papers. Openshaw, however, seems to have reacted to this mystery in a different manner than his uncle and his father. He took the ominous warning seriously.

“On September 28, the Lone Star arrived in Horsham, and the three officers were again frustrated to find no papers were left on the sundial.

“They followed John Openshaw to London on the following day, trailing him to this very front door. It was quickly determined it was the residence of a private detective, Sherlock Holmes. The trio decided they must take decisive action immediately and without recourse. They overtook Openshaw shortly after he left your home. Openshaw’s body was recovered from the river near the Waterloo Bridge within a few hours. Since there were no signs of violence, it was doubtful the police would pursue any conclusion other than death by misfortune.

“And here, Mr. Holmes, is where the story takes an unexpected turn. Before young Openshaw was thrown into the river, he claimed all the papers had been destroyed by his uncle, Elias, in the family residence’s fireplace. However, the lad was unaware of one crucial piece of information. Elias Openshaw had personally kept one list of names from being destroyed. He believed this single page would protect his family from further persecution and had hidden the list somewhere on the grounds of the estate. Mr. Sutterman did not disclose how this secret was obtained.

“After relating this tale of terror to me, the second mate had returned to his cabin and promptly passed out for the night. Knowing the captain and first mate were also dead drunk. I pulled together the rest of the crew and passed on the information I had gained from Sutterman. As you can imagine, the crew were horrified to learn their captain and his first and second mates were involved in such an undertaking. Though seamen have a reputation for not being saints, I can promise our crew is one of the most honorable. After much discussion, the crew voted unanimously to mutiny and took control of the ship from the captain. The three scoundrels were aroused from their slumber, and a speedy trial was held. They were found guilty of disgracing the Lone Star, as we felt we had no real authority to try them on the charge of murder. But we also recognized if the three were returned to the States, the powers that had placed them on our ship would ensure they never were held responsible for their actions in England. As a matter of fact, I believe if you were to check with the Georgia Registry of Ships, you would find no mention of our barque, as the name has been scrubbed from the lists. The captain actually laughed in my face when I told him we would return him to England for trial. We quickly recognized the only way to carry out any proper punishment would involve sailing out in the direction of the open sea. The decided penalty, though harsh, was to put the three offenders overboard, allowing Providence to determine their fate.

“We would have then proceeded homeward, but for one final item, which brings me to your door. While inebriated, Sutterman indicated there was one last family member to be dealt with. This individual would not receive the luxury of a warning or direction but would be killed so the captain could search the house for the final list with no impedance. I told Sutterman, just before I personally tossed him overboard, that our actions would at least save one innocent soul. Calhoun repeated his chuckling, boldly stating there was a confederate in England who had been given this final mission. So our actions aboard the ship would be for naught. Once the punishment was meted out, the crew voted to return to London, and I acceded to the task of warning you of the impending fate of the final family member.

I had to admit at this point, I was a little confused. “Who is this remaining family member. Another son or brother?”

“Neither Dr. Watson. John Openshaw left behind a widow and a small child. There are no other living relatives in England.”

It was evident from Holmes’s reaction this was news to him as well as myself.

“Mr. Holmes, what do we do next?”

“My course of action is apparent. I shall waste no time in departing for the rail station. Watson, will your practice allow you a day or two to accompany me? Good, then that is settled. Mr. Mueller, please return to your ship and immediately leave London. Follow your original plan to return to the United States. Land at Galveston under the name “The Lone Star.” By the time you arrive, I hope to be able to transmit news this issue has been successfully solved.”

“Thank you for that advice. We shall depart this afternoon. The crew will be grateful to finally return to their homeland – the Germans to the Central Texas area, and the Finns to the midwestern part of the States.”

“Come, Watson,” said Holmes, “we have no time to spare.”

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Not even taking time to pack any belongings, Holmes and I caught the first hansom cab we could flag down on Baker Street. Fortunately, the precipitation I had noted earlier in the morning had

dissipated entirely. A sovereign ensured record-setting time to Waterloo Station, splashing through numerous mud and water puddles along the way, where we caught the first train to Horsham. Our arrival before lunch was followed by a short, hired trap ride to the Openshaw household. A black mourning wreath greeted us at the front door of the two-story residence. One could forgive the beginning signs of neglect on the house and the surrounding ground.

A knock at the door was answered by a kindly, but saddened maid. We were then escorted to the study, where we awaited the mistress of the house. Mrs. Openshaw was a tall, fair woman with very kind eyes, although it was evident -- with her dress made of simple black bombazine and trimmed with crape, which I knew to be very coarse and scratchy -- she was in deep mourning.

Holmes proceeded to give Mrs. Openshaw a full account of all that had transpired, including what John Openshaw had said in the preceding week.

"Mr. Holmes, this is just so overwhelming. While my husband had discussed his beliefs on the deaths of his father and uncle, many of the details concerning the KKK, and my uncle's role, were left out."

"With the deaths of the captain and his two comrades, the threat to you may have subsided or completely dissipated. Maybe the confederate left behind will have second thoughts", I suggested.

"Dr. Watson, while I wish that were true, it would not explain what I received just a couple of hours ago by post."

Holmes sprang from his chair, took the cream-coloured envelope from her grasp, and moved to the window to examine it carefully.

"A Portsmouth postmark. No other identifying marks on the outside. Though I can presume, let's see what the interior contains. I believe this to be similar to what your husband and his relatives received. Yes, a message on the inner flap... 'Leave your house by midnight and never return unless you want harm to befall you and the child. This includes all staff. Do not solicit any assistance from outside forces. Take only what you need to survive, and leave all items belonging to the previous residents of the house.'"

Holmes turned the envelope over, and five orange pips settled onto his open hand.

"Mr. Holmes, what should I do at this point?"

"Ma'am, you are showing amazing resilience considering what you have endured to this point. From what I gathered from Mueller, the powers that be in the United States will not rest until they obtain the list of names for which they so desperately are searching. Our priority should be to focus on your family's safety and finding that list. Please search your memory. Is there anything your father-in-law or husband may have said, even in passing, that could lead us to the list?"

"I have no idea of such a list, or where my uncle would have hidden it. I know my late husband and father-in-law had found a brass box in the attic which may have contained the papers these creatures are searching for. My husband subsequently destroyed the other papers found in the attic over a year ago. I place the safety of my child in your hands."

"Take the next several hours to prepare for a departure by sunset, as directed in the missive. We will accompany you to London, where we will determine the best course once you have been removed from immediate danger. While you make your preparations, Watson and I will search the house to see if we may gain any insight into what garners so much attention."

Mrs. Openshaw left us to tell the two staff members left in the house of the impending plans.

"Watson, I believe we can discard any search of the outside of the house and surrounding grounds. I presume the trio has already picked over those to ensure nothing was secreted away in an outbuilding or other concealment. Fortunately, the house is not extremely large, with a minimum of rooms. A quick search of each room should be accomplished within a few hours.

Though the home, which was at least two hundred years old, had been on the Openshaw estate since the early 1700s, there were surprisingly few nooks and crannies where a one-page document

could be hidden. After two hours, our search had not produced any document.

As we stood on the stairwell leading to the upper floor, Holmes glanced at the framed photos and other documents hanging on the wall. As his gaze fell on one framed set of papers, he quickly scanned them and then moved on, only to return to the frame in question. After a minute or two, a small enigmatical smile crossed his countenance.

“Watson, early in our acquaintance you compared me to Dupin from Poe’s literary work. I believe I remarked Dupin to be a very inferior fellow at the time, though he did have some little analytical genius to support his work. While I still hold that opinion, I will give him one slight credit when he determined the perfect hiding place for an object may be to leave it in full open view for all to overlook.”

Holmes removed the frame from the wall and carried it to a desk.

I asked, “Holmes, do you recognize the document?”

“I do not. It is titled ‘The Cornerstone Address.’ Does that ring a bell for you, Watson?”

“As a matter of fact, it does. If I am not mistaken, that was a speech given by Alexander H. Stephens, Vice President of the Confederate States of America, in March 1861. The speech laid out the rationale for the secession of the southern states from the Union. I believe the speech was delivered extemporaneously a few weeks before the Civil War began, defending slavery and explaining the fundamental differences between the constitutions of the Confederate States and the United States, enumerating contrasts between Union and Confederate ideologies, and laying out the Confederacy’s rationale for seceding from the United States.”

Holmes removed a pad and pencil from the desk drawers and asked for an hour of quiet to focus on the words in the frame. He suggested I check on Mrs. Openshaw and ensure the two staff members were also progressing well in their efforts.

In just under an hour, Holmes called me and revealed a list with 32 names of men, all presumably in the United States and of some import.

“Once I recognized the importance of this speech to what we were searching for, it was fairly easy to produce the intended list. Take a look at the framed speech, and tell me what you can determine from it.”

I took the frame from Holmes, which held two sheets of tiny typed print. After a few minutes, I started to hand the document back to Holmes.

“I read through the entire speech, and I honestly did not discern any clues to which you have obviously found.”

“Let’s try it again. But this time, do not scan your eyes over the entire words of the text, as most routinely do, but as I have told you so many times, focus on the little things, such as the individual letters.”

Within a minute, I began to understand what Holmes had identified.

“Many of the letters are different from the others.”

“Correct. Let’s look at the first paragraph. You have noted several letters are of a different font than the rest of the letters in the paragraph.”

Thus the paragraph ran this way:

When perfect quiet is restored, I shall proceed. I cannot speak, so long as there is any noise or confusion. I shall take my time I feel quite prepared to spend the night with you if necessary.

“As you can see,” Holmes explained, “from just these first two lines, I have been able to pull out the letters that are different.”

PETERHALLDEHENRYMEIERPA

“Once I determined the underlined letters indicated the end of the word, it was easy to piece together the list of 32 names.

Peter Hall, DE
Henry Meier, PA

“I would find it extremely surprising and disappointing if this list does not represent persons in the States who hold significant positions without it being publicly known of their previous affiliations.”

“Holmes, while most of the names are found in six southern states, there is a handful from two northern states, including the first two. I thought the KKK was contained within the South.”

“From my research, it was, but after its sudden demise in 1869, many members left the South to begin again in the North, hoping their anonymity would shield them from their past sins.”

“Holmes, when this is over, I insist on absolute rest once we get back to Baker Street and ensure Mrs. Openshaw and her daughter’s safety. I am not convinced you have completely recovered your self-inflicted efforts to ‘kill yourself’ which resulted in the successful apprehension of Dr. Culverton Smith.

“Holmes, you have done brilliantly. Let me take the list, place it in a waterproof pouch, and place it on the sundial, ending this nightmare for the family once and for all.”

“I appreciate your willingness to do so, but I am not convinced releasing the list will remove the danger to Mrs. Openshaw or her daughter. Let me take a little more time to consume some tobacco and mull over the various options afforded to us, if any. In the meantime, I will replace the speech in its former place.

“We must not forget there is still someone who knows of the family and the details of their lives. Otherwise, how was the KKK still able to stay on their trail after so many years after Elias left the United States? Even after the deaths of all the male family members, they continue to pursue the surviving members. Why would they even care anymore, after so many years? It is obvious the powers behind all of this mayhem still fear her as a threat to them, and will continue to be such as long as she breathes. She may have even made several copies of the list for all they know before she deigned to return it to their dirty clutches. For now, let’s leave our little discovery to ourselves.”

While Holmes was hanging the frame in question, I proceeded upstairs to retrieve Mrs. Openshaw, lying quietly by her daughter in the little girl’s bed. Even though exhausted, I could see her eyes were wide open, repeatedly glancing at the small bedroom window. We were soon seated with Holmes at the worktable in the warm cozy kitchen. She showed herself to be a very strong person, not easily frightened, and with good judgment. Holmes, I could see, was genuinely touched by her complete trust in his protection, thus possibly relieving him a little of the guilt for his perceived failure to protect her husband.

Our discussion was interrupted by the maid, who announced the arrival of another gentleman.

“Oh my goodness, I am so sorry Mr. Fordham, with all that has occurred this morning, I completely forgot your intended visit. Mr. Holmes, Dr. Watson, this is the family’s solicitor, Mr. Fordham. He has been helping me settle my husband’s will and the potential sale of the house and land.”

“Mr. Holmes, it is indeed a pleasure to meet you and your partner, though I wish they could have been under better circumstances. May I ask what brings you to Horsham and to the home of Mrs. Openshaw?”

Holmes gave a very brief summary of our involvement to this point, including the visit earlier this morning by Mueller, as well as the delivery of the envelope and directive to the Openshaw residence this morning.

“This is distressing news. However, I cannot but admire the actions of the crew. Their actions may indeed help bring this entire story to a conclusion.”

“Indeed, sir. It was brought to my attention that you received a visit from the murderous trio the

very afternoon of John Openshaw's death."

"I did. They were very straightforward, telling me they knew I had connections to the family, and what did I know concerning any remaining papers Elias Openshaw may have kept. I initially was not going to yield any such information. Still, it was pointed out that while I did not have any close relatives here in England, family members back in the United States may suffer consequences if I did not relent. Fortunately, all I knew was Elias had kept a list of names and locations of some very powerful people in the States, and he had never revealed to me the location of the list. The trio seemed to accept this and left, after binding me with a promise to not discuss the matter with anyone and to take no action to dissuade their course. Severe repercussions would result in a violation of this pledge. I felt the death of John Openshaw, which I read about a few days later, would be the end of this tragedy. I am so sorry, Mrs. Openshaw. It appears the web has entangled you into its threads."

The four of us discussed our next moves, which involved Holmes and I taking Mrs. Openshaw and her daughter to London, where we would secure her in a hotel for the night before secreting the two out of town. Once the estate was sold, and all transactions finalized with the support of Mr. Fordham, the funds would be used to permanently relocate the surviving members of the Openshaw family onto the continent where they could start life afresh.

"Watson, the mother, daughter, and I will leave at sunset. The two staff members will have the house completely closed up, their personal effects packed, and able to leave by no later than eight o'clock. This should appease our unknown 'confederate.'"

"Should we alert the local constabulary of what is occurring?" interjected Fordham.

"No, the note was very clear on this point. I do not want to jeopardize the safety of our charges by violating the provisions of the demand. Mrs. Openshaw, after we leave this place, remove it from your mind, never consider revenge on those who have caused such injustice to your family – as I advised your husband, and raise your daughter to believe the deaths were accidental, and nothing more."

"Mr. Holmes, those are words of wisdom," replied Fordham. "Ma'am, I will do everything within my power to ensure you stay protected, your needs are met, and you can find a place to raise your daughter safely. Mr. Holmes, I will contact you the day after tomorrow to pass on the details of the will and potential buyers."

"Before you leave, may I look at the will left by John Openshaw, which I assume you have in the pouch you are carrying. It may be useful for me to understand the basics of the provisions of the will."

Fordham pulled out the document and handed it over to Holmes.

"His handwriting seems very clear... it does not appear he was under any undue stress at the time he wrote it. Oh, I see it was dated a few weeks before his death."

"Actually, he asked me to write out the will, as his handwriting skills were, in his own words, 'abysmal.' That is his signature at the bottom, as well as the signatures of witnesses who he had brought to my office. It is all in order, and we should have no problem finalizing its resolution."

"Oh, I agree. It is all in perfect order. It should help resolve this mystery sooner than later."

"How so?" I asked. "Oh never mind, just a slight rambling on my part. Pay no heed."

Once Fordham had tucked the document back into the pouch, he took his leave to return to his office. Holmes then proceeded to call in the maid to discuss what was transpiring and the next steps to be taken. It was apparent she was totally loyal to her mistress and was willing to follow what instructions Holmes could provide.

I need not provide too many details on our departure from the house, but just before sunset, the four of us were on the road back to Horsham. We arrived at the train station just as the first stars appeared in the darkening sky. I obtained tickets for a private car for the first train to depart the station while Holmes busied himself dispatching at least two telegrams.

Once Mrs. Openshaw and her daughter were safely seated, Holmes turned to me and gave me another surprise, not the first of the day.

“Watson, our job is not completed here. Mrs. Openshaw, I must apologize, but we will be secreting ourselves off the train, in case anyone is watching. I have wired my landlady, who will have a hansom cab waiting for you at the station in London. The cabbie will have instructions to deliver you safely to a hotel, where you and your daughter will stay the night. Do not worry about expenses, all that has been taken care of. We will meet you in time for lunch or dinner tomorrow at the hotel. I believe this incident will be resolved by that time.”

“Holmes, how can we ensure they will be safe at the hotel.”

“I have made provisions to ensure the front and back doors of the hotel will be watched at all times, as well as two sets of eyes watching their room throughout the night and the next day. Trust me, the Irregulars will ensure a very rough go of it for anyone trying to reach them.”

With that, we made our way to the back of the train and exited to the side opposite the station. With darkness now enveloping the entire area, no one could have espied our departure.

“Watson, forgive me, but I believe we must go by foot at this point. Attempting to secure any type of conveyance could jeopardize my plans. I know you have been a trooper to this point, forgoing both lunch and dinner. I hope Mrs. Watson’s scones are still sustaining you. I vow to make up your lack of nourishment tomorrow.”

Fortunately, it was only approximately three miles to the house from the station, and so in less than one hour we were crouching behind a set of hedges near the driveway. A few lights could still be seen in the lower windows. A manned dog-cart sat just outside the front door.

“Good, we have arrived before the staff have left. Once they have secured the house and left, we shall proceed.”

“Proceed to what?”

“Probably wait for a few hours, but be prepared to snare our ‘unknown confederate.’”

True enough, the last light was extinguished just before eight o'clock, and I could barely make out the maid and cook leaving from the front door. Two or three small valises were loaded, the passengers climbed aboard, and the cart made its way down the driveway to the main road, disappearing from sight.

“Quickly, Watson, let’s make our way to the rear of the house, where we should be able to gain access.”

Using the hedges as cover, we proceeded to secret ourselves to the back.

“I assume you shall do a little lockpicking again, as you have done in the past?”

“No, this time it only took a whisper to the maid.”

Holmes opened the door, which had been left unlocked for us to gain quick entrance to the premises. Once inside, we moved to the sitting room near the stairway.

“I do not believe we will have long to wait, but I shall ask we stay fairly quiet and out of sight behind these items of furniture. Holmes had brought a dark lantern, which he closed once we gained position and would be able to be reopened when needed.

As always, Holmes’s assumption was correct, and within approximately 30 minutes I could hear a key being used on the front door. Once the door was opened and closed, a small light (I assumed a small lantern) gave off sufficient light for our visitor to locate and light a few table lamps.

The intruder headed directly to the staircase and proceeded to remove the frame and speech from its place. As his focus was on the prize he had worked so hard to obtain, he did not notice Holmes quietly walk up from behind with a pistol drawn from his coat pocket.

“Mr. Fordham, this simply will not do. Slowly place the frame on the stairs, put your hands up, and back into the sitting room. No, do not try to run or bull-rush us! Fine, now take a seat. We have a few minutes to ourselves.”

“How could you possibly know my involvement? You have no evidence to support any half-baked theories you may have.”

“Simplicity itself. Your name is on the list. I suspected you would take whatever action necessary to retrieve the list to protect yourself and your compatriots. Look at paragraph 2, and look closely at the letters, as I suggested to Watson here earlier today.”

Seven **States** **have** within the last three months thrown **off** an **old** government and formed a new. This revolution **has** been signally **marked**, up to this time, by the **fact** of its having been accomplished...

STEVEN FORDHAM FL

From his puzzled expression, it was easy to see Fordham couldn't imagine how anyone could possibly have known all this. With his mind racing on how to escape from this trap, he did not even take the time to wonder how Holmes knew his name was on the list.

“This proves nothing. Just because my name is somehow marked into a speech given years ago. As a solicitor, I can tell you your evidence is flimsy at best.”

“You may be correct. However, you have provided us with the best evidence yourself. Watson will tell you I have developed a small monograph on the use of handwriting in determining a guilty party. Though a more thorough examination could prove it, I am sure, but a quick perusal of the will today, which you admitted, was in your own hand. It was extremely similar to the writing on the envelope received by Mrs. Openshaw this morning. I assume you traveled down to Portsmouth to post the letter in the past day or two. This was extremely sloppy work on your part, but after assisting in three previous failed attempts, I am sure the people you are working for in the U.S. are becoming slightly impatient with no successful results.

“Watson, if you will open the front door, I believe representatives of the local force have arrived to take Mr. Fordham into custody. We may be too late to catch a train back to London tonight, but I believe we can be back in time to keep our appointment for lunch with our clients.”

v

After the constable took our prisoner into custody. Holmes gave him a brief outline of the actions of Mr. Fordham, suggesting he be held for now on a charge of breaking and entry. Not once did Fordham open his mouth, choosing to stay quiet and hoping to secure his freedom through legal maneuvers in the near future.

Later that evening, Holmes and I sat down to a very late supper at a small tavern and inn in Horsham.

“Alright, Holmes, you must now share with me how you knew what was transpiring today, and who was involved?”

“I hate to disappoint you, dear friend, but this case will not involve any ‘tricks up my sleeve,’ slick deductions, or mystical surprises. I was just as much in the dark as you were until we discovered the speech and the list embedded within the text. Once I discovered Fordham's name was included, it simply made sense he was our ‘unknown confederate.’ I believe not only had Elias Openshaw told Fordham of the list, but where to find it. Notice how he went directly to it once he entered the house this evening, though we had not told him of its secrets.

“Once I had determined Fordham's name was indeed on the list and was from the same state Elias had immigrated from, I suspected he would not allow much time to elapse before trying to retrieve it. A few years ago, I had mused, ‘...When a doctor does go wrong, he is the first of the criminals. He has nerve, and he has knowledge.’ I append it to suggest that when a solicitor becomes crooked, he is the second of criminals. He has the trust of his clients and can harm them for life.”

The following midday found us at the small restaurant within the hotel Holmes had chosen for the Openshaws. The young daughter was at 221b Baker Street, enjoying Mrs. Hudson's kitchen treats.

Holmes had assured Mrs. Openshaw they were now safe, and the child and Mrs. Hudson were under the watchful eyes of several Irregulars.

As lunch progressed, the three of us spoke about finding the list and the actions of the British government since the list's discovery. Mrs. Openshaw expressed disappointment over the involvement of her husband's uncle in such a degrading society as the KKK and was happy to see this list might yet assist in putting an end to this type of activity in the United States.

"I must admit I am surprised at finding out who the mysterious man was. Mr. Fordham had been such a long-time family friend and solicitor for the family. I should have been suspicious of his strong interest in our family affairs, especially those concerning the house, since John's death. He constantly called on me and asked questions I felt were somewhat inappropriate and intrusive, even for a family solicitor and friend. I am much relieved to hear he will no longer be bothering my family."

"Mrs. Openshaw, unless I have completely lost my ability to determine the outcome of certain actions, I believe your worries should be over in all manner regarding this mysterious document.

I visited an associate within the Foreign Ministry early this morning, who was able to bring the matter to the attention of the Foreign Minister. That very powerful individual is reaching out to counterparts in the United States via telegram. Both countries agree the matter should have their utmost and immediate attention. I have been assured a proposed solution will be forthcoming and acceptable to both nations.

"As I had surmised the night we found the list hidden within the infamous speech, the 32 names on the list represented men who held positions of power from a local district attorney to a lieutenant governor. Why were they on the list? Each was a KKK member but only secretly and had never publicly announced an affiliation with the organization.

"Almost all men were in areas where such a revelation would not be favorable for their careers, especially since the South had failed to secede from the Union. The nation continues to attempt to heal from the wounds of bigotry and inequality.

"I have assurances each of the 32 men will be receiving a letter from an appropriately high-level person within the U.S. government, suggesting a certain list is now securely in the hands of the British government, where it will stay safely locked away, providing a few conditions are met.

"First, Mrs. Openshaw and her daughter are to be released from all concerns of further persecution, and sufficient compensation afforded them for the misery they have suffered as a result of the actions of those in the United States.

"Second, each of the 32 men must accept unconditionally that all other papers held by Elias Openshaw have been destroyed, so no other efforts should be initiated to retrieve such papers.

"Third, all crew of the Barque Lone Star are allowed to return to the United States to their respective homes, with no threat of reprisals, and with sufficient compensation to return to a normal life.

"If any of these conditions are breached in the future, all agreements are voided, and the list will be made available to those in the United States with the power and authority to deal with the matter promptly and severely."

The one condition Holmes did not discuss in front of Mrs. Openshaw was regarding Mr. Fordham. He had been such a scoundrel with the matters at hand and had placed Mrs. Openshaw and Victoria's life in danger a number of times; Holmes wanted to be sure he was dealt with sufficiently. Holmes had made arrangements for Fordham to return to the United States under guard. But once he reached Galveston, he would disembark a free man. However, Holmes also made sure his confederates within the States knew precisely where Fordham would be disembarking and at what time. Holmes was sure they would not be pleased with Fordham's performance, being the final person to let them down by not delivering the list, and was in a very small part responsible for the ultimate crumbling and demise of their society's power over certain parts of the South. Holmes indicated they could do with Fordham what they saw fit. I

do not believe Holmes ever felt any pangs of guilt for being instrumental in ensuring this last condition was met swiftly and permanently.

Epilogue

I must provide a few closing items to this narrative.

First, months after the conclusion, Holmes was informed by the State of Georgia that all mentions of the *Lone Star* had been mysteriously redacted or removed from all shipping registries within the state.

It was not until several years later Holmes revealed to me the identity of his source in the government who assisted Holmes after we had retrieved the coded names and the capture of Fordham. It was none other than his older brother, Mycroft Holmes, who had brought the entire matter to the attention of the Home Secretary, where it then received full attention from the highest level of government on both sides of the Atlantic.

The Seed is Planted

Early in 1970, at the University of Texas at Arlington, a young lady working as the reference librarian, discovered a trifling monograph on German settlements in Texas in the rare archives section. The pamphlet, enclosed in a bound leather satchel, had been tucked behind several other books, almost as if done on purpose.

Francine Morris took the monograph back to her desk within the library to see what little nuggets she might find within its pages. And what a nugget she found contained in the satchel, along with the monograph.

Tucked between two pages was a rumpled and stained letter, obviously written by an elderly person. You can only imagine how Francine's eyes grew as she read through the missive, written 50 years earlier, which gave an account of the disappearance of the Barque Lone Star and its crew in 1887.

It should be noted in the records of the Cedar Cemetery, previously known as the Lewis Cemetery, in La Grange, Fayette County, Texas, is a grave marker for:

Mueller, Franz J.

Born: 8/5/1858

Died: 7/29/1921

Son of: Charles and Therese Mueller



To Whosoever May Find This:

As I lay here breathing what are most likely my last breaths, I find it essential that I set straight the story of my ship and her crew. I have placed this manuscript in this battered tin sea chest, one of my last remaining possessions. For you see, I am not a man of wealth, but I am man who must set the record straight.

I have read the adventures of the Great Detective, as they have been made available through the Strand Magazine and others. I have held an especially keen interest in these stories by the author John H. Watson, MD, as one I was a small part of one of the tales he sets forth.

The Barque Lone Star did not come to an end as told in the "Adventure of the Five Orange Pips."

He tells the story as the public generally believes it happened. My shipmates and I are the ones who spread that story, in the hopes that it would be generally regarded as the truth. With the publication of the good doctor's story, we were home free.

I have been reluctant to tell this story before, as it starts with mutiny on the high seas. A mutiny in which I was a part. But, it has preyed upon my conscious such that my dying breaths must reveal the truth.

It started with the Third Mate. He was tall, thin and had a profile like a bird of prey. What's more, he was good with his fists and was never known to back down from a fight.

This is important, because I am not sure exactly how it all began, being just a seaman myself. But the end result found Captain James Calhoun and his two mates killed during our mutiny.

The Third Mate brought the ship to the shores of Texas. He gathered a small crew of volunteers as a scuttling crew and set to sea the rest of the crew, we Germans and some Fins, ashore on the coast of Texas. He and the scuttling crew sailed the Barque into an ocean current that would carry the wreckage far away and scuttled it with explosives. The third mate and the scuttling crew made it back to Texas, and ever since, it has been the first duty of the Third Mate to find the lost members of the crew of the Barque Lone Star.

Written by my hand, on this day the seventh of January, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and twenty one.

Franz J. Mueller

Le Grange, Fayette County, Texas

An Idea Comes Together

As Sherlockians may only imagine, the letter stirred a passion in Francine Morris. With the assistance of John Bennett Shaw, one of the pre-eminent Sherlockians of his generation, Francine soon held an organizational meeting to discuss the possibility of creating a Society dedicated to the reuniting of the descendants of the crew of the Barque Lone Star.

Two other avid Sherlockians, Bill Beeson and Bullitt Lowry shared Francine's passion, and thus, the last wishes of Franz Mueller to reassemble the last crew members of the Barque Lone Star, became their mission.

Early in the Autumn of 1970, Francine Morris distributed an invitation to the first cruise of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star Society.

Fortunately, Francine typed almost all of her correspondence, so there is documentation of the contents of that invitation, although the list of invitees did not survive.



The bark LONE STAR, a barely organized scion of the Baker Street Irregulars, welcomes any and all admirers of Mr. Sherlock Holmes to join her crew for the fall cruise.

She will sail at two bells in the second dogwatch* from the Farmer's Daughter pier** in Fort Worth. Grog will be available for all hands***, and we will dine from the menu. Following dinner, we will have an illuminating address by John Bennett Shaw, BSI, on the cult and culture of Sherlock Holmes, and sign the ship's log.

Reservation by Guy Fawkes Day PLEASE !!!

* 6:30, dinner at 7:30

** 1536 S. University

*** cash bar

Francine

Margaret F. Morris, acting 2d mate

Library

Univ. of Texas at Arlington

Arlington, TX 76010

(817) 275-3211 or 261-8461 (direct Dallas Line)

That Ship Has Sailed

On Friday, November 6, 1970, the first cruise of the Barque Lone Star set sail in Fort Worth, Texas. The following is a letter sent by Francine Morris to John Bennett Shaw, summarizing the successful meeting.

There is also the notice sent by Francine Morris to the Baker Street Journal concerning the meeting.

Finally, an excerpt from a letter to an interested prospective member by Francine Morris on the Society's calling

11 November, 1970

Dear John,

Or maybe I should address you as "Shattered Stern-Post." Among other things, we decided that the speaker of the evening should be known as "Shattered Stern-Post". At any rate, we got the LONE STAR well and truly launched down the Trinity with a grand total of 13 at table (HORRO).

One was a guest, so I suppose we're safe. I conned Sandra Myres into reading your paper, which she did with much skill. You were accorded a standing toast in New York Burgundy – we were out of California, but by that time of the evening, the best some could manage was to raise a glass. This is one reason we dubbed Sandra "Very S. S-P". Seriously, you were missed.

I enclose a copy of the report I sent Dr. Wolff. The old guard will probably flip. Not only do we allow Females to be members, but we elected one as presiding officer... I had no choice, I was railroaded. We could have had better attendance, but I made a real howler. The SWLA dinner was Friday night instead of Saturday as stated in the program.

As a result, Mrs. Martin had to miss our sparkling company. Mr. Miracle didn't come down, and Mr. Fites only came for the preconference on automation. However, Austin was well represented by Stan McElderry, dean of LS, Mickey Boyvey, Kay Franklin, Jesse Shera, and a delightful gal whose name I do not remember at the moment who was at Atlantic City. I have it in the "Log of the Lone Star", but I'm writing this at school and the log is at home.

Naturally. Dale Walker wrote a nice note of regret, and included greetings from the Mexborough Lodgers. Ditto John Storck and the BeeKeepers of Lima.

As for the quiz, well, you were nearly hanged in absentia. The group chose to have a "group learning experience", e.g., work it together with a drink to whomever got it first, so no real winner emerged, although Shera put the young entry to shame.

We are talking a January meeting, the Birthday seems out because so many are academics, and that's in the middle of semester break.

Term paper time is upon us, and the natives are restless out there, so I'd better close.

Regards to all,

Francine

Attendees who signed the Ship's Log:

Kay Franklin

Frederica Kilgore

May Boyvey

Stan McElderry

Jesse Shera (from the Chips Off the Old Barque society of Austin)

Melvin Hammack

William Beeson

John (Sam) Lewis

Julian Friedmann

Majorie Lewis

Charles & Sandra Myres

Francine Morris

One person who remained anonymous

11 November 1970

Dr. Julian Wolff
33 Riverside Drive
New York, New York 1002

Dear Dr. Wolff:

The good ship LONE STAR (no resemblance to the LOLLYPOP), is well and truly launched. We met in the lush Victorian private dining room of the Farmer's Daughter, a Ft. Worth steak house, enjoyed scholarly conversation, and listed one of John Shaw's marvelous papers.

Unfortunately, at the next to last minute, John discovered that he to stay in Santa Fe, so I prevailed on one of the crew members to read his paper. I was delighted when five of the faithful turned up from Austin, even if they did commit a horrible pun in designating themselves "chips off the old barque".

Having named themselves, they will have to live with it or organize their own scion.

I enclose a report of our activities for the next issue of BSJ. I hope I am in time for the December issue.

Sincerely yours,

Francine

Margaret F. Morris

18 May, 1971

Mr. Jerry Clark
Syracuse, New York 13205

Dear Mr. Clark,

Thank you for your kind letter asking about the good ship *LONE STAR*. Since you like our name, I'll tell you a little more about us.

First of all, *LONE STAR* is a ghost ship. As you remember from "The Five Orange Pips", the master, 1st and 2d mates were "bad guys". We have ascertained that the Crew learned the AWFUL TRUTH about their officers and dumped 'em overboard in the horse latitudes (wherever that is).

Then they scuttled the ship (or faked a ship wreck, more research is needed here), and disappeared. You may have read at some time that for many years, in the old south and middle west, the letters GTT (for gone to Texas), on a door meant that a man and his family had cut loose from their troubles and headed for new country, leaving debts, the sheriff, or whatever behind them.

This is what the Crew did. Our officers include a Ship's Cook, the Marine in the Riggings; the Shattered Sternpost is the speaker of the evening (if we have one). Regular members are Able Seamen, new members are Apprentice Seamen, and corresponding members are Reservists.

Sincerely yours,

Francine

Third Mate, Barque *LONE STAR*

THE CREW OF THE BARQUE LONE STAR of North Central Texas

The fall cruise was held Friday, November 6, 1970, sailing from the Farmer's Daughter pier in Fort Worth. Crew members enjoyed a period of liquid fellowship while awaiting the Austin group (thereafter designated as "Chips off the Old Barque"). Quiz honors were taken by Dr. Jesse Shera, and then twelve members and a guest enjoyed a steak dinner during which toasts were offered by Sam Lewis and Emory Estes. Greetings from absent members and friends were read by Third Mate Morris.

John Bennett Shaw, ever helpful to new Scions, was scheduled to speak, but was unable to be present. Sandra Myres very ably filled in by reading Mr. Shaw's enlightening paper, "The Cult and Culture of Sherlock Holmes." The crew then offered toasts to Mr. Shaw and Dr. Myres. After some discussion of a birthday dinner, the cruise ended with the ceremonial signing of the log.



Let's Start with a Bang

As mentioned in Francine Morris' letter to John Bennett Shaw, and her report to the Baker Street Journal, the first presentation was to be delivered by John Bennett Shaw, but at the last minute, Sandra Myres, from UTA, stepped in and gave the talk, "The Cult of Sherlock Holmes".

THE CULT OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

John Bennett Shaw

as presented by Sandra Myres, November 06, 1970

I. Brief Historical Summary

One cannot estimate how many literate people admire the Great Detective, nor how many read and re-read and re-read again the sixty stories of his adventures as written down by his close friend and roommate John H. Watson, M.D. We know and are amazed at the fact that one hundred twenty movies, five hundred radio scripts, fifty television programs, twenty plays, a musical, and a ballet have been based on his adventures.

As early as 1902, a serious, scholarly piece of investigation of aspects of the Canon, as the sixty stories are commonly called, written by Frank Sedgwick, appeared in a noted English magazine. Even before this, even there had been more than a dozen well-fashioned pastiches published. In 1912, "Studies in the Literature of Sherlock Holmes" by Ronald A. Knox appeared. This is still the most important single effort and the cornerstone of all Sherlockian research and explication.

Since the famous published address of Father Knox, it is estimated that some five thousand books, pamphlets, monographs, studies, essays, articles, parodies, pastiches, and poems have been written and published about Mr. Sherlock Holmes – many more than about any other literary figure. There have been games, crossword puzzles, songs, toys, and countless jokes about the Great Detective. This outpouring of whimsy and erudition never abates, in fact, it appears that more research is undertaken each year. As Christopher Morley said, "Never was so much written by so many for so few."

II. Societies

It was a natural thing that those on both sides of the Atlantic who were devoted to Sherlock Holmes when they met would discuss, debate, argue points of canonical fact, or just to lift a glass to the great man and the great days of his time. Further it was normal that groups decided to form organizations the better to keep his memory. The Baker Street Irregulars was the first and remains to this day the foremost organization dedicated to these high purposes.

It was originated by Christopher Morley and the first meeting was in 1934 in New York City. The name, Baker Street Irregulars, refers to the band of street urchins which from time to time were hired by Holmes to run errands, spy upon suspects and follow clues. The membership of the BSI is composed of devoted, serious scholars of the Canon from every part of the world and from every walk of life.

They have met annually every year since 1934, and continue to do so on the Friday nearest the 6th of January, Mr. Holmes' birthdate. At these meetings, the prescribed toasts are drunk (and sometimes others not so prescribed), dinner with lively and often brilliant table talk is enjoyed, and papers erudite, witty, sometimes maddening, are read and enjoyed by famous for many things – science, politics, literature, business, and the like.

The roster has included one President of the United States, a Nobel Peace Prize winner, many great persons, and many who were, in their quiet way, great students of the Canon. At present, the BSI numbers some 125 eager disciples: all men, incidentally, since no ladies are allowed (the example of the Master, no doubt). This society publishes a quarterly periodical, *The Baker Street Journal*, now in its twenty-second year. Naturally, membership in this society is the desired goal of every Sherlockian.

At this point, one must hasten to mention that the Sherlock Holmes Society of London is a separate, but equal, society. It began at about the same time as the American organization. However, the terrible

effects of the war on Britain caused a hiatus of several years, but in 1951 it was reformed and has met successfully three or four times a year ever since. This group also celebrates the noted natal day on or near January 6th each year. Their membership numbers about the same as the American and their procedure is similar though I suspect a bit more restrained. They too publish a most interesting periodical, *The Sherlock Holmes Journal*, which appears twice yearly and is in its sixteenth year.

There is a Sherlock Holmes Klubben I Danmark, and they too have a fine periodical issued thrice a year, and is now in its twelfth year. There is another Danish society called The King of Scandinavia's Own Sherlockians. They issue, from time to time, a Literary Letter.

Other societies flourish in Sweden, in the Netherlands, and in Japan.

The Irregular members came from many cities across the United States and Canada, from Europe, and Asia also. News of the success of this association and the great fun had by its members soon spread about the land. Within a few years, groups of vociferous and enthusiastic Sherlockians were organized into clubs and had formal meetings at stated intervals. One of the first of these groups, known as Scion Societies, was the Speckled Band in Boston. Since the formation of this distinguished Scion, the satellite groups adopted names based upon stories in the Canon.

Another of the pioneer Scions was, and is, the noted Hounds of the Baskerville (sic). This unusual name derives from the fact that this misspelling of the title was once used in pirating an edition of The Hound of the Baskervilles, published in Chicago. Other early Scions include the following still lively and creative: The Six Napoleons of Baltimore, The Illustrious Clients of Indianapolis, the Scowers of San Francisco and their ladies auxiliary, the Molly Maguires, The Amateur Mendicants of Detroit, the Copper Beeches of Philadelphia, and others.

Among those that are seemingly dormant but which have contributed much to the cult are: The Three Students of Long Island, the Scandalous Bohemians of Akron, The Five Orange Pips of Westchester County, New York, The Seventeen Steps of Los Angeles, The Pondicherry Lodge of Springfield, Illinois, The Wisteria Lodge of Confederates in North Carolina, The Canadian Baskervilles of Hamilton, Ontario, The Solitary Cyclist of Washington (a lady who was denied admittance to the Six Napoleons of Baltimore or the Red Circle of Washington, so she had her own group, meetings, toasts, and some fun), and others.

Scions like the Five Orange Pips, The Speckled Band, The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota (now latent), and The Illustrious Clients are some that have actually published anthologies of papers and accounts of research. In the past decade, even more of these societies have been formed and are active. These include: The Great Alkali Plainsman of the Kansas City area, The Old SOB's (Old Soldiers of Baker Street) of Detroit, The Maiwand Jezails of Omaha area, Sir Hugo's Companions of Chicago, The Pondicherry Lodge of Seattle-Portland, and a half dozen more.

Of even greater interest has been the formation and active participation of younger Sherlockians in such activities. At least three such groups, which include high school and college youths, are active. These are the Baker Street Pages of Kingston, Ontario, The Three Students Plus of Fulton, Missouri, and a talented group working from Pearl River, New York, who have a periodical entitled *Some Studies in Scarlet*, but have no Canonical name that I can detect.

There has been a most interesting rather anti-establishment young Scion group in San Francisco, The Murderous Ghazis, but I fear that the rigors of college has dimmed their bright, sharp fire. Another group, equally creative, is active in a girl's college in Connecticut. A high school group functions in the Chicago area, and has had a quarterly journal. Such junior activity is encouraged both for the intellectual development of the student and also to further the third generation of the Cult of the Great Detective.

III. Other Activities, Missionary, and Otherwise

Many Sherlockians, snug and secure in their avocation, attempt to spread the good word. Admirable zeal, this! One BSI has delivered in a twelve month period ten addresses in five states in which he

praises the Cult and fosters new interest – even attempts to help start new Scions. Others write on The Subject for secular periodicals or call to the attention of columnists and commentators information and memoranda of interest to devotees and to other literate people.

Several of the Scions as well as The Baker Street Irregulars itself sponsor horse races named after The Silver Blaze (one of the sixty stories). These are held annually in New York, Chicago, Toronto, England, and Denmark.

Some of the Scions urge the reshewing of the many Sherlock Holmes films, and some even rent the films and have private showings for their society or for a group of friends or for other organizations. Others stage elaborate and eye-catching exhibitions of Canonical and peripheral material, and thus create interest in the Cause. Others simply relax and enjoy the fecund outpouring of Sherlockian material.

Even more phenomenal is the recently constituted, well-organized Scion society based upon the character of Solar Pons – the longest and most successful of the hundreds of parodies, some 57 stories by August Derleth. The Pontine Society has membership cards, certificates of investiture with titles from the Pons stories, even a well-done journal. Its membership includes persons from all over the United States, Canada, and Europe. All this is sort of a shadow casting a shadow!

All in all, this is fun – intellectual, challenging, even demanding. The opportunity to develop strong friendships is great; the probabilities are that one will be greatly amused. Some thousands benefit intellectually and emotionally from this association of wits and good fellows. Take the word of one who knows that in the words of Vincent Starrett:

“Here, though the world explode, these two survive,
And it is always eighteen ninety-five!”

A Quiz Can Be a Capital Punishment

As mentioned in Francine Morris' letter to John Bennett Shaw, his quiz was delivered to the attendees of the first meeting. It was determined to do it as a group project once people saw how John designed his quizzes.

**THE CREW OF THE BARQUE LONE STAR -- "PUNS" ON AUTHORS AND / OR
BOOKS PROBABLY FOUND IN HOLMES' LIBRARY**

**"I am an omnivorous reader with a strange retentive memory for trifles"
(LION)**

1. While riding on a train a group of religious fundamentalists were heard to sing "Nearer My Guide to Thee". Of what title used by Holmes does this remind one?

2. One eats eats, drinks drink: does one read read? Holmes did read read and what author and which title did he recommend?

3. A person quite unfamiliar with Latin might read this title to mean that the twelve good mean true were in the can. What title?

4. Sherlock Holmes was an accomplished chemist and he would know that the process in which the rate of chemical reaction is increased by a substance is called a catalysis. He also read a poet whose name sounded like the name of this process.

5. In "The Red-Headed League", the Master Detective misquoted an author whose name might be transliterated to read 'faulty bruin'.

6. Holmes, no cricketer, probably couldn't bowl or pitch or throw a ball; but he quoted an axiom by an American whose name reminded of one who did these things.

7. On one occasion Holmes alluded to a volume the title of which could refer to the posteriors of several departing and unhappy mythical creatures.

8. It was another historical person who said “My Kingdom for a horse”. Holmes had no kingdom yet he quoted this poet twice.

9. Many detectives spy on their prey, often through a keyhole. But Holmes felt that there was more to the profession than that. Yet his book on the subject was entitled?

10. Watson quoted this post in an early tale and a volume of the works of this post was stolen from Old Acton – the clue is that it could be a baseball event.

Answers:

1. *Bradshaw’s Railway Guide*
2. The Martyrdom of Man
3. De Jure Inter Gentis
4. Catalus
5. Flau Bear
6. Thoreau
7. Grimm’s Fairy Tales
8. Horace
9. The Whole Art of Detection
10. Homer

It's Bedlam... We Need Rules

During the first year of the existence of the Barque Lone Star Society, it was determined a set of "Buoy Laws" should be accepted for the working of the Society. These rules are attached, including the Addenda added several years later.

THE SHIP'S ARTICLES

Original Buoy Laws

ARTICLE I

The name of this Society shall be The Crew of The Barque LONE STAR.

ARTICLE II

Its purpose shall be To Perpetuate the Legend that Sherlock Holmes is Not a Legend.

ARTICLE III

This Sherlockian Society shall strive to Earn and Maintain Recognition as A Scion of The Baker Street Irregulars.

ARTICLE IV

All persons of Good Will who are Interested in Sherlock Holmes, Wherever They may be, shall be Welcome to Join The Crew. There shall be No Tests or other Obstacles to Membership.

ARTICLE IV

The Barque shall Forever have but One Officer, a Third Mate. The Barque's Hallowed and Traditional "Not-It!" Ceremony shall be used to Formally Install, in his or her turn, each successive Third Mate. The duties of the Third Mate shall be those commonly performed by the Gasogene (President), the Tantalus (Secretary) and the Commissionaire (Everything Else).

BUOY-LAWS

1. The Crew shall embarque upon a Cruise on a Sunday near the End of each Month excepting the Holiday Months, November and December.
2. Each cruise shall include a Dutch-treat luncheon in the Barque's Grand Saloon. (For details, see ADDENDUM 2 below.) During the week before each Cruise, The Third Mate shall notify Each and Every Member of The Crew regarding the Programme and other Cruise Specifics.
3. The Third Mate shall, Without Fail, see to it that the One Groaning Board in the Barque's Grand Saloon is Always made sufficiently Spacious to comfortably accommodate Every Attending member of the Ship's Company, lest any persons be made to feel Marooned.
4. Unpleasantness shall Never be welcome aboard The Barque.
5. During each Cruise, the Barque's Sacred Scholarly Toasts shall be Offered as follows:
 - a. to the Queen!
 - b. to Sherlock Holmes!
 - c. to the Sovereign State of Texas: Confusion to Its Enemies!
 - d. to The Barque LONE STAR, Proud Ship-of-the-Line of the Texas Navy, and to All who Sail aboard Her.
 - e. to The Blessed Memory of this Society's Godfather, Midwife, and Friend, John Bennet Shaw, BSI, "The Hans Sloane of My Age".
6. After the Sacred Toasts, further toasts ad libitum shall be welcomed.
7. During each Cruise, one or more Clean-Tables shall be provided in the Grand Saloon for the Safe Display of Sherlockian Memorabilia. Neither food, nor drink, nor burning tobacco, nor chewing tobacco, not snuff shall ever be brought Near any Clean-Table.

8. The Sworn Duties of every member of The Crew shall be to “go everywhere, see everything, overhear everyone” in support of our Missions:
 - a. a. to Find the Lost Members of The Crew and restore their Names to the Ship’s Roster. (For this Mission, the Methods of the Press Gang, while Not Recommended, shall be Tolerated --in Moderation.)
 - b. to Notify the Third Mate of all local and distant Sherlockian events, whether or not instigated by The Crew, so that Landing Parties may be organized and put ashore to Support and Enjoy them.
9. As directed by a Unanimous Vote of The Ship’s Company, the Third Mate shall Forever Guard, with His or Her very Life, the Confidentiality of the Ship’s Roster and every Detail therein.
10. No Member of The Crew shall Ever be Drafted, Conscripted, or Elected to perform any Duty. Voluntary Efforts by Members of The Crew have kept the Wind in the Barque’s Sails for Decades, and The Crew shall continue to Support and Depend Upon its Volunteers.
11. No Dues or any other Fees shall Ever be Required of the Members of The Crew.
12. The Only Forum for Discussion of any Change to the “No-Dues” Policy shall be the Business Meeting.
13. There shall be no Business Meeting.

ADDENDA

1. About The Barque: Thanks to the Unremitting Persistence of the Ship’s Chaplain and the Gunner’s Mate, The Barque LONE STAR has been Proclaimed by the Texas Legislature to be a Ship-of-the-Line of the Texas Navy.
2. Cruise Details: Each Luncheon shall be Dutch-Treat, with Free Choice from the Menu and Separate Checks. To avoid Wearing Out our Welcome, it is our Inviolable Custom that Everyone who attends a Cruise shall buy a Meal (minimally, an Entree or a Sandwich or a Chef’s Salad). A 20% Gratuity shall be included in each Diner’s Check.
3. Recompense: During the Barque’s Decades at Sea, various Volunteers have generously invested Their Own Funds in Projects dedicated to the Enlightenment, Entertainment, and Moral Uplift of The Crew. (Example: the Rental and Shipping Charges for the Mostly-Canonical Jeremy Brett Magic Lantern Shows shown during Cruises, but not yet available from the Collections of Crew members.) Such Generosity deserves Remuneration. For Volunteers who may wish to launch such Worthy Projects, here are some Suggestions in accordance with this Society’s “No-Dues” Policy:
 - a. Keep your out-of-pocket Expenditures to a Minimum, because full (or even partial) Remuneration cannot ever be guaranteed.
 - b. Before spending, discuss your Project with the Third Mate. Free or less-expensive Means may be possible.
 - c. If you wish some Recompense for your Expenditures, indicate this to the Third Mate, and report the Amount you have spent.
 - d. During the next Cruise, the Third Mate shall
 - 1) place the Beggars’ Bowl (in remembrance of The Amateur Mendicants Society) upon the Groaning Board,
 - 2) describe or review your Project and its Benefits,
 - 3) tell How Much you spent, and
 - 4) encourage Generous Remuneration.
4. The Ship’s Mottoes (so far):
 - a. a. “Let the Third Mate do it!”
 - b. b. “We Strive, Regardless!”

A Word About Our Founders

William “Bill” Beeson

Bill was a computer programmer at Texas Instruments, a magician, and one of the founders of The Crew of The Barque Lone Star, an ardent Texan who delighted in parading in costume wearing a ten-gallon deerstalker. He also arranged for a supply of cloth saddlebags to hold the souvenirs distributed at annual dinners of The Baker Street Irregulars. He received his investiture in the Baker Street Irregulars in 1983 as “The Barque Lone Star.”

From Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press



Margaret Francine Morris Swift

Francine was proud to be a Texan, faithful to her corgis Prudence and Hatty, and devoted to her husband Wayne. Francine was a librarian when she joined the Sub-Librarians in the late 1960s, the primary founder of the Barque Lone In the late 1970s, Francine moved to Washington and met, and married, Wayne Swift. She was a member of the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes (as "Hatty Doran"), and many other Sherlockian societies; Francine was honored by the Baker Street Irregulars as *The* Woman in 1983, and received her BSI Investiture in 1994 as “The Wigmore Street Post Office”, for her prolific interest in the happenings of her friends and willingness to circulate information.

From Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press



Francis Bullitt Lowry

Bullitt was a professor of history at the University of North Texas, where he taught European, military and diplomatic history. Dedicated to the historic preservation of Denton, he helped create the Denton Historic Landmark Commission, serving as its first chair in 1980. He also chaired the Denton County Historical Commission and wrote several works on the history of the city. He received numerous awards from the Texas Historical Commission, including the John Ben Shepperd Award for the best chair of a Texas county historical commission in 1987. Bullitt worked with Bill and Francine to found the Crew of the Barque Lone Star Society.



A Very Nice Tribute to One of Our Founders

Margaret Francine Morris Swift was beloved by all Sherlockians who had met her. The following tribute shows that level of respect and friendship.

As originally published in The Serpentine Muse, Vol. 24, No. 1, Winter 2007

Stand Upon the Terrace

Adventuresses suffered a grievous loss with the unexpected death of Francine Morris Swift (Hatty Doran). Elsewhere in this issue Evy Herzog shares her memories of Francine.

As Contributions Editor, let me add a personal note. Francine was an incredibly thoughtful and caring woman, as well as a delightful companion. She and I shared a special bond as the number of Texans in ASH is quite small and--though we had both moved north—once a Texan, always a Texan. This week as I was reshelving our Sherlockian collection, I found memento after memento from Francine: Wodehousian clippings, the book written by Prudence Moran Swift (the corgi beloved by Francine and Wayne) and inscribed to our dogs Robo and Buddy and, most of all, the letters--warm, funny, personal, and now a little tear-stained.



Susan Z. Diamond
Serpentine Muse Editor

Francine Morris Swift (Hatty Doran / The Wigmore Street Post Office)

Francine Swift was Francine Morris when we first met back in the early 1970s. She was a recently-arrived resident of Washington, D.C., and an enthusiastic member of The Red Circle, a group I visited as often as possible. Francine was a university librarian, an experienced Sherlockian, an independent woman, and an acute raconteur with a deceptively mild Southern accent.

When ASH was reborn in the mid-70s, we signed her up as soon as possible, with the investiture "Hatty Doran." She was an Adventuress for more than thirty years. I can't possibly do justice to her whole life, so let me just sketch out some of the highlights of her career as an ASH.

Francine was one of the happy seventeen who attended the first planned ASH dinner in January 1976. She caused a sensation at the 1977 costumed birthday dinner when she attended as Hatty in rugged female prospector's garb and subsequently got into a mock-tussle with lady-of-the-evening Kitty Winter as portrayed by Kate Karlson. (A rock hammer beats a feather boa every time!) But Hatty Doran was a lady, too, with a fine needlewoman's accomplishments: That same 1977 January weekend, she had a featured piece in our "Quick, Watson, the Needle!" needlework exhibition--a magnificently-decorated chambray shirt she had embroidered with insignia from each of the Canonical tales.

Always reliable as a speaker, whether scheduled or extemporaneous, she for many years gave the toast to Queen Victoria at all ASH gatherings. Only in her absence did that honor pass to Bertie Pearson and then to Mickey Fromkin. Over the years Francine treated us to quizzes, sketches, and impromptu anecdotes. None raised greater hilarity than her account of her scientific culinary investigation of "the parsley in the butter" (SIXN). You can find it in **Serpentine Muse-ings**, Vol. 2, but

it's hard to convey in print the rising pitch and increasing outrage of Francine's voice as she detailed her frustrations in the quest. Francine also assisted as the narrator in the world-renowned Reverse Strip Tease performed at the January 1980 ASH dinner by Marina Stajic.

Once Francine and Wayne Swift married (one of the great Sherlockian romances), Wayne often became a collaborator in her contributions to the ASH dinners and the Muse. The themes of many of their shared avocations--including horseracing, their dogs, their travels with the London society, Gilbert & Sullivan, puns--all found their way into their writings and performances for us. Wayne had a drawing of Francine as Hatty Doran made into a card for her--note the crossed rock hammer and roses.

Already an Adventuress of long-standing, Francine became "The Woman" for the BSI in 1983, then, deservedly, a Baker Street Irregular in 1994--one of the few to achieve that "triple crown." Her BSI investiture, *The Wigmore Street Post Office*, was a wink at Francine's prolific interest in the happenings of her friends and willingness to circulate information.

Wayne's death in 2001 after twenty-four years of marriage but twenty years of fighting cancer was a blow from which Francine never really recovered, despite her strong Christian faith, her gallant spirit, and the support of her large circle of friends.

Her death now brings back to us the image of Francine in her prime--her erudition on so many topics, her enthusiasm in Sherlockian activities, her brilliance as an anecdotalist notwithstanding a pesky stutter, her generosity, her love of God and enjoyment of the minutiae of church worship, her cultivation of her friends throughout the world, her ability to alternate between a Southern lady's gentility and an outdoor woman's bluntness, and her rollicking humor.

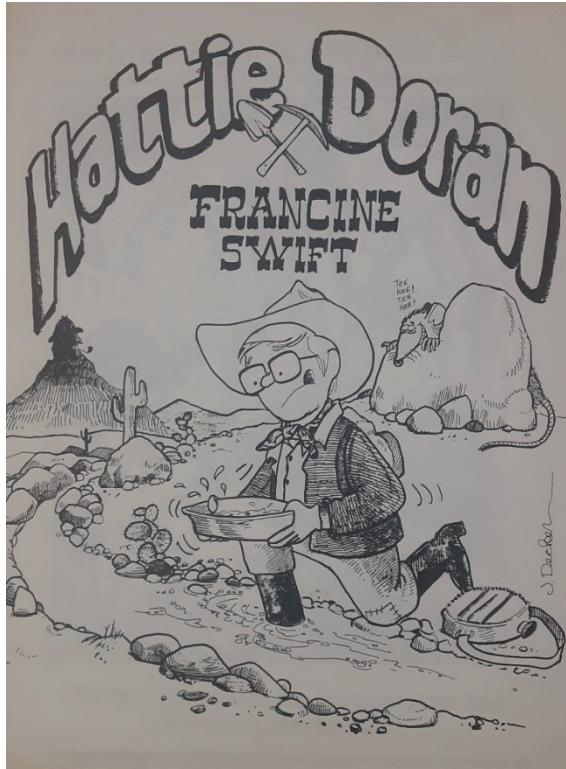
So, thank you, Francine: you gave us all a lot, most of all an example of how to be a good Sherlockian and a good woman.

So long, chum.

Capturing Her in Artwork

One of the founders of the Society, Margaret Francine Morris Swift became good friends with artist, Jeff Decker. Over the years, Jeff captured Francine in several ways.





In Search of a Founder

As originally published in The Serpentine Muse, Vol. 24, No. 1, Winter 2007

How We Spent Our Christmas Holiday or How Sherlockians find Sherlockians

By Don Hobb and Steve Mason

It was just over a year ago that the Dallas area Sherlock Holmes society, The Crew of the Barque LONE STAR, received a message from a prominent East Coast Sherlockian, inquiring about Bill Beeson, (“The *Barque Lone Star*”).

According to the message, emails sent to Bill started bouncing back to the sender without any reason attached to them. The inquirer kindly asked if we could follow-up and gather any information regarding his whereabouts. Steve Mason and Don Hobbs, BSI started Sherlocking the disappearance.

Bill’s last known mailing address was in Sherman, Texas. This is a small city about sixty miles north of Dallas. Starting there with our inquiries, we were told that Bill had been transferred to the Veteran’s Hospital in Bonham, Texas. Bonham is approximately ninety miles northeast of Dallas. So our investigation shifted to this spot on the map.

The most logical step in our journey was to follow the clues and call the Veteran’s Hospital in Bonham. This was to see if they had a patient or resident by the name of Bill Beeson. As an aside, we have all heard of the issues with the Veteran’s Administration over the past few years across the country.

Whatever the national situation is it did not seem to apply here in Texas. Through our journey, all the workers we dealt with were cordial, patient, and willing to assist.

The Veteran’s hospital let us know Bill had been a patient there in the past, but was not currently there. The hospital suggested we contact the Texas Veteran’s Home next to the hospital. Strangely, this center is administered by the Texas General Land Office who also responds to coastal oil spills.

A conversation with that facility revealed Bill had never resided within their residence. Possibly, he was located at the rehabilitation center, which brought us back to the Veteran’s Administration center.

The next call eliminated that possibility. Lastly, they suggested we contact the actual Veteran’s Administration Community Resident Center, which is also part of the V.A. system in Bonham. Not quite a red-circle but close enough that we felt a bit dizzy going around and around.

We are both aware of the constraints under the HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) recognized that talking to administrators over the telephone is a chancy proposition at best. But the conversations were actually entertaining.

We spoke to the Administrator of the Resident Center, who again was extremely friendly. This is a very short summary of the discussion:

STEVE: Hi, this will sound fairly strange, but I am trying to locate a potential resident, who is a member of a society in Dallas, which is a literary society based on Sherlock Holmes and Conan Doyle. It has been indicated to us that Bill may be living at your facility.

ADM: What is his full name?

STEVE: Willian B. Beeson, but he goes by Bill.

ADM: I can tell you that Bill was a resident at one time at the facility.

STEVE: Can you tell me if Bill is still there?

ADM: I can’t tell you that.

[Setback # 1]

STEVE: I understand the concerns. Since Bill has no family, we are just wanting to ensure

he is OK, and if he needs anything that we can provide.

ADM: That is very nice of you. What could you provide him?

STEVE: We could bring him periodicals from the Baker Street Irregulars for him to read, as well as "The Serpentine Muse" from the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes, and our society's monthly newsletter.

ADM: I am sure Bill would appreciate being able to receive those.

STEVE: So we should come up and bring him the journals?

ADM: I didn't say that... again, I cannot tell you whether Bill is here or not. Just that he was here at one time.

[Setback # 2]

STEVE: Let's try it this way. Would it be worth the effort to drive up to Bonham to visit Bill, or would we be wasting our time?

ADM: Nice try. I will tell you, if you bring the journals and if Bill is here, then we would give them to him. If he is not here, then we would not give them to him.

This circuitous discussion went on for over five minutes. We then decided the best bet was to actually take a trip to Bonham to see if we could discover the whereabouts of one Bill Beeson.

Since both of us have full time jobs and busy schedules, the trip to Bonham kept getting delayed and postponed. Finally, the week of Christmas, 2015, allowed both of us to be off of work at the same time, so we headed to Bonham. Our Hansom cab was actually Steve's Ford, but it made the journey without incident.

In the early 1970's Bill Beeson, Margaret Francine Morris, and Bullitt Lowry, founded The Crew of the Barque LONE STAR. According to which Sherlockian historian one reads, the Crew was either the first or the second Sherlockian society in the Dallas area.

Regardless of what place the Crew ranks, Bill was the first Dallas Sherlockian to receive an investiture into the Baker Street Irregulars. In 1983, he received his investiture as The *Barque Lone Star*.

Although many issues conspired to keep Bill from going to New York City for the birthday celebration weekend after 1987, he stayed very active in the Dallas area Sherlockian scene well into the new millennium.

Slowly, Bill faded from the Dallas Sherlockian activities and after moving to Sherman in 2006 ceased all communication with the Crew. Luckily, he remained in contact with that prominent East Coast Sherlockian.

Bill accomplished many amazing feats during his tenure and one that still survives to this day. In 1979, Bill approached a prominent Texas legislator, and persuaded the representative to introduce a resolution in the Texas House.

This resolution, HR 69, signed in May, 1979 by the Speaker of the House (who later became Governor of the State), lists the Barque Lone Star as a ship of the Texas Navy, and all crew members of the society be commissioned into the Texas Navy.

Of course, if the State of Texas ever follows through on its threat to secede from the United States, all of our society members may be drafted into active duty to protect the southern shore line. This is a task that some, more than others, would cherish dearly.

According to the irregular history of the Crew, the Third Mate is the society's leader due to fact that the Captain and the First and Second Mates of the Barque LONE STAR were part of the corruption laid forth in "The Adventure of the Five Orange Pips."

Through Bill's leadership as the Third Mate, membership peaked in the late seventies to over two-hundred members. From there the membership fluctuated up and down, but mostly down. The Crew would go into "dry-docks" and go long periods of time without meeting.

By the time the Granada Sherlock Holmes Series began airing on PBS, the membership was holding

steady around two-dozen faithful at each meeting. Under Bill's stewardship, new Third Mates were at the Crew's helm being groomed toward the Baker Street Irregulars. Some of them are still active in the Sherlockian world while other have been lost at sea.

Over the next twenty years, the Crew stabilized into a sea-worthy society, meeting every month with few members remembering those responsible for the society's origins.

By the time that the prominent East Coast Sherlockian called inquiring as to Bill's whereabouts, only a handful of members even remembered him. Deciding this needed to be rectified, we took it upon ourselves to find Bill.

A ninety-minute drive northeast took us to the Veteran's Administration Retirement Facility in Bonham. Upon our arrival, we explained to the administrator the reason for the visit. As stated earlier, since Bill has no family and because of HIPAA constraints, this was no easy task.

Eventually we were directed to the hospital across the parking lot and given the name of a social worker on the fourth floor. After another round of explaining the reasons for trying to locate Bill, the social worker wrote down the name of a facility in McKinney, Texas. McKinney is just north of Dallas. So retracing our initial journey, we found the location that was written on the slip of paper. Even better, we found Bill inside the facility.

Bill's health is not in top shape, and he had a little trouble focusing but he was genuinely pleased to be remembered. He was aware enough to give a few anecdotal stories from some of his New York City trips.

He asked about several Sherlockians and seemed sad when told certain ones had passed over the Reichenbach Falls. He was very happy knowing the prominent East Coast Sherlockian thought enough about him to instigate the search proceedings. He remembered Don's passion with foreign editions of the Canon, and asked how many languages his collection currently held.

It was his first meeting of Steve and he seemed pleased he was the current Third Mate of the Crew. It was obvious from the reaction of the staff members that entered Bill's room he did not have very many, if any, visitors. We vowed to let the Sherlockian world know he was still around.

Since that first visit, Steve has visited Bill several times, and has provided him with past issues of the Serpentine Muse, Baker Street Journal, our newsletter, and many other things for reading pleasure.

It was a fulfilling way to spend one day of the Christmas holiday and one that will have a lasting impression on both sides of the visit.

They Like Us, They Really Like Us

In October, 1970, Julian Wolff, Commissionaire of the Baker Street Irregulars (BSI) issued an investiture as a scion society to the Crew of the Barque Lone Star.

In 1996, the Baker Street Irregulars (BSI) reaffirmed the investiture as a scion society to the Crew of the Barque Lone Star.

October 15, 1970

Julian Wolff
Commissionaire
Baker Street Irregulars

Margaret F. Morris
472 Westview Terrace
Arlington, TX 76013

Dear Margaret,

This letter certifies that the Crew of the Barque Lone Star is recognized as a Scion Society of the Baker Street Irregulars (BSI) as of October 15, 1970.

Its members are entitled to all Irregular rights, and are privileged to "go everywhere, see everything, overhear everyone."

Sincerely,

Julian Wolff

The Baker Street Irregulars

This is to certify that the

The Crew of the Barque LONE STAR



IS RECOGNIZED AS AN

IRREGULAR SCION SOCIETY

Its members are entitled to all Irregular rights,
and are privileged to
“go everywhere, see everything,
overhear everyone.”

Signed this 18th day of October 1996

Walter L. Star, Jr.

Wiggins

And What Is the Definition of “Irregular Meetings”

From the first meeting in November, 1970, through 1975, Francine Morris sent in regular dispatches to the Baker Street Journal, summarizing our “irregularly scheduled meetings.” Summaries of other meetings which did not get published in the BSJ are included.

March, 1971

THE CREW OF THE BARQUE *LONE STAR*.
of North Central Texas
Correspondence: Miss Margaret F. Morris
472 Westview Terrace, Arlington, Texas 76013.

The fall cruise was held Friday, 6 November 1970, sailing from the Farmer's Daughter pier in Fort Worth. Crew members enjoyed a period of liquid fellowship while awaiting the Austin group (thereafter designated as "Chips off the Old Barque"). Quiz honours were taken by Dr. Jesse Shera, and then twelve members and a guest enjoyed a steak dinner during which toasts were offered by Sam Lewis and Emory Estes. Greetings from absent members and friends were read by Third Mate Morris. John Bennett Shaw ever helpful to new Scions, was scheduled to speak but was unable to be present. Sandra Myres very ably filled in by reading Mr. Shaw's enlightening paper, "The Cult and Culture of Sherlock Holmes." The crew then offered toasts to Mr. Shaw and Dr. Myres. After some discussion of a birthday dinner, the cruise ended with the ceremonial signing of the log.

September, 1971

CREW OF THE BARQUE *LONE STAR*
of North Central Texas
Correspondence: Margaret F. Morris
472 Westview Terrace, Arlington, Texas 76013.

The spring cruise was held 14 May with nine members aboard. The reading of communications from corresponding members and some routine matters took up the first leg of the cruise. Then the Crew quizzed itself on The Five Orange Pips; the honours went to Laverne Prewitt and Bill Beeson. After the members approved a joint meeting with the Fort North Corral of the Westerners, the cruise ended with the ceremonial signing of the ship's log.

December, 1971

CREW OF THE BARQUE *LONE STAR*
of North Central Texas
Correspondence: Margaret F. Morris
472 Westview Terrace, Arlington, Texas 76013.

The Barque took aboard the Sub-Librarians Scion of BSI in ALA for a luxurious summer cruise at high noon, 21, June, 1971. Other passengers included Bee—Keepers, Molly Macguires, Brothers from Moriarty, a trustee of the Garrideb Foundation, and friends. The 32nd floor of the LTV Tower became the crew's nest of the *Lone Star* as twenty-five Crewmen and guests all enjoyed a cold luncheon with chilled champagne and wine as a welcomed relief from the climate of Dallas in June.

Toasts were offered by Sub-Librarian Helen Quin, Chip off the Old Barque Jesse Shera, Able Seaman Laverne Prewitt, and Third Mate Morris. John Bennett Shaw, Chairman of the Sub-Librarians, presided as the papers were read by Jason Rouby, BSI (Resident Agent of the Arkansas Valley Investors), E.W. McDiarmid, BSI (Intrepid Leader, the Norwegian Explorers), and John N. Storck (Chief Drone, the Bee-keepers of Lima. Intrepid Leader McDiarmid was unable to be present, so his paper was read by Chairman Shaw.

As befits a joint cruise the gathering closed, with a double tradition; all stood while Chairman Shaw read Vincent Starrett's "221B Baker Street," and then all signed the Ship's Log.

September, 1972

THE CREW OF THE BARQUE *LONE STAR*
of North Central Texas
Correspondence: Margaret F. Morris
472 Westview Terrace, Arlington, Texas 76013.

On 11 April 1972 the Crew held an informal spring cruise at the home of the Third Mate. Twelve Crew members welcomed Stanton Garner (a "former Naval person") as expert for the Adventure of the Evening "The Bruce-Partington Plans." John Hudson took top honours in the quiz and to conclude the evening the crew repaired to the bar and spliced the main brace before signing the log.

At the Extraordinary Summer Cruise on 11 June, the Crew welcomed its most distinguished Reservist, John Bennett Shaw, and his charming wife Dorothy at a sumptuous dinner at the Steak and Ale restaurant in Ft Worth. Following modest libations, several toasts were offered. After dinner, Mr. Shaw enlightened the Crew about certain "Dark Doings in New Mexico, or Wherefore Art Thou, James?" an account of The Brothers Three, of Moriarty. He then offered an evilly inspired quiz at which honours were taken by the Third Mate. After the signing of the Ship's Log, Ione and Steven Stavron invited the Crew to their home for champagne and dessert.

September, 1973

THE CREW OF THE BARQUE *LONE STAR*
Correspondence: Margaret F. Morris, Third Mate,
472 Westview Terrace, Arlington, Texas 76013.

The long—awaited joint meeting of the Crew and the Fort Worth Corral of the Westerners was held on 25 April in the hospitality rooms of a local brewery. Thirty-five Crewmen and Westerners lapped up the host's product and a fine dinner before hearing the Third Mate present a survey of research topics of a Sherlockian nature for Western historians. Considerable interest was expressed by a number of bemused academicians who undertook to follow some of the questions raised and return the favour at our next joint dinner.

April, 1974

THE CREW OF THE BARQUE *LONE STAR*
Correspondence: Margaret F. Morris, Third Mate,
472 Westview Terrace, Arlington, Texas 76013.

The Spring cruise of the barque *Lone Star* was held 14 May, departing from the home of Ship's Cook Sandra Myres, and marine in the Rigging, Charles Myres. Nine crew members were aboard. Apprentice Seaman Jane and Bob Bolly and Dorothy and Emory Estes were welcomed aboard. Communications were read from the Reserve Crew (corresponding members), and the title of Villa Punster, 3d Class was bestowed (in absentia) on Reservist Steve Clarkson. The sense of a telephone message from the Chips off the Old Barque was relayed to the crew. Other routine matters took up the first leg of the cruise and a motto was adopted (Let the Mate do it!).

Following an issue of coffee and ship's biscuits (rum-soaked), the crew quizzed itself on the adventure of the evening, "The Five Orange Pips". Honours were taken by Able Seaman Laverne Prewitt and Bill Beeson. The latter proved an invaluable source on information on barques (he had a book). Several members announced that they would be attending a joint meeting with the Sub-Librarians in June. Ship's cook Myres suggested a joint meeting with the Ft. Worth Corral of the Westerners, with "Holmes and American West" as the topic of the evening. Since the Corral meets at a local brewery, the Crew was unanimous in its approval. The cruise ended with the ceremonial signing of the Ship's Log.

September, 1975

THE CREW OF THE BARQUE *LONE STAR*
Correspondence: Margaret Francine Morris, Third Mate
472, Westview Terrace, Arlington, TX 76013

After some eighteen months in drydock, the crew of the barque held its spring cruise Monday, 7 April 1975. The Third Mate welcomed three new members and three guests before presenting Peter Blau of The Red Circle (and points west) to apprise the ship's company of "Dark Deeds in Denver and Fun in Fort Coffins," a suitably expurgated account of the Second Sherlockian Symposium lately held in Colorado. Able Seaman Bill Beeson presented a punning quiz during which the Master at Arms would have been called on to quell a mutiny had he not been detained in Fort Worth by high water. Honours were taken by Apprentice Seaman Margaret Petit. The meeting concluded with the Signing of the Log.

The Crew Is Commissioned

In 1979, two of the Crew founders, Bill Beeson, BSI, and Bullitt Lowry, showed off their pawkish sense of humor by asking a representative of the Texas House of Representatives, Tip Hall, Jr. of Denton, if he would be willing in assisting to gain recognition for the Crew of the Barque Lone Star.

Imagine every member's surprise when, not only did Mr. Hall assist, he was successful in gaining State-wide recognition of our Society and the members who belong to our Crew.

COMMITTEE ON RULES

PUBLIC HEARING/FORMAL MEETING

Capitol Building, House Floor

April 18, 1979

6:25 P.M.

Pursuant to a public notice posted on 4/13/79 at 10:30 A.M., and pursuant to the rules of the House, notice having been announced from the floor, the Chair, Mr. Florence, called the Rules Committee to order at 6:25 P.M.

The Clerk called the roll:

Present: Mr. Florence, Mr. Wieting, Mr. Blanton, Mr. Collazo, Mr. Waters (5)

Absent: Ms. Bode, Mr. Gibson, Mr. Harrison, Mr. Tejada (4)

A quorum was present.

The Chair laid out HR 69.

Mr. Wieting moved that HR 69 be reported favorably.

Mr. Blanton seconded the motion.

The Clerk called the roll:

Ayes: Mr. Florence, Mr. Weiting, Mr. Blanton, Mr. Collazo, Mr. Waters (5)

Nays: None (0)

The motion carried.

HOUSE JOURNAL

SIXTY-SIXTH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION

PROCEEDINGS

SIXTY-SECOND DAY (continued) FRIDAY, MAY 4, 1979
The House met at 8:30 a.m. and called to order by the Speaker.

The roll of the House was called and a quorum was announced present (Record No. 1, Appendix May 4).

By W.T. Hall

HR 69

WHEREAS, In 1887 the Crew of the Barque Lone Star found refuge in the great State of Texas, and the 203 current members have now rebuilt the vessel in the North Texas area; and

WHEREAS, The Crew was innocent of, and appalled by, the crimes committed by the captain and the first and second mates, which crimes are recounted by John H. Watson, M.D., in "The Five Orange Pips", a case printed in The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes; and

WHEREAS, The Crew of the Barque Lone Star is recognized collectively as a Scion Society of the Baker Street Irregulars; and

WHEREAS, This tall ship, the Barque Lone Star, has brought distinction to Texas by sailing to represent the state at such varied ports of call as Santa Fe, New Mexico; Moriarty, New Mexico; Tulsa, Oklahoma; and New York, New York; and

WHEREAS, It is appropriate that the Texas House of Representatives recognize the contributions of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the 66th Legislature, That the Barque Lone Star be listed as a ship-of-the-line of the Texas Navy, and that its ship's company be commissioned into the Navy of the Republic of Texas; and, be it further.

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for Bullitt Lowry of Denton, Texas, a representative of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star, as an expression of esteem from the members of the House of Representatives of the State of Texas.

This resolution was adopted without objection (Untermeyer – no).

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, In 1887 the Crew of the Barque Lone Star found refuge in the great State of Texas, and the 203 current members have now rebuilt the vessel in the North Texas area; and
WHEREAS, The Crew was innocent of, and appalled by, the crimes committed by the Captain and the first and second mates, which crimes are recounted by John H. Watson, M.D., in "The Five Orange Pips", a case printed in The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes; and
WHEREAS, The Crew of the Barque Lone Star is recognized collectively as a Scion Society of the Baker Street Irregulars; and
WHEREAS, This tall ship, the Barque Lone Star, has brought distinction to Texas by sailing to represent the state at such varied ports of call as Santa Fe, New Mexico; Moriarty, New Mexico; Tulsa, Oklahoma; and New York, New York; and
WHEREAS, It is appropriate that the Texas House of Representatives recognize the contributions of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star, now, therefore, be it
RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the 66th Legislature, That the Barque Lone Star be listed as a ship-of-the-line of the Texas Navy, and that its ship's company be commissioned into the Navy of the Republic of Texas; and, be it further.



H. R. No. 69

RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be prepared for Bullitt Lowry of Denton, Texas, a representative of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star, as an expression of esteem from the members of the House of Representatives of the State of Texas.

Speaker of the House

I certify that the H.R. No. 69 was adopted by the House on May 4, 1979

Betty Murray
Chief Clerk of the House

The Crew Is In Print

In December, 1987, the 3rd Mate of the Crew issued the 1st of a short-lived newsletter, Scuttlebutt, to better communicate with other crew members of the Barque, as well to document the activities of the Society.

SCUTTLEBUTT

from

THE CREW OF THE BARQUE

LONE STAR

A SCION SOCIETY OF THE BAKER STREET IRREGULARS

Scut-tle-butt *n*[*scuttle*] 1 a: a cask on shipboard to contain fresh water for a day's use; b: a drinking fountain on a ship or at a naval or marine installation 2: RUMOR, GOSSIP

Volume 1, Number 1 December 15, 1987

Copyright © 1987 by the Crew of the Barque *Lone Star*, a scion society of *The Baker Street Irregulars*
Correspondence concerning the Crew of the Barque *Lone Star* or **Scuttlebutt** may be addressed to:

The Crew of the Barque Lone Star
P.O. Box 830826
Richardson, TX 75083

News Bulletins:

"Compliments of the Season!"

Next monthly meeting scheduled for February 21, 1988

FROM THE THIRD MATE'S QUARTERS (below deck):

Here it is—the first issue of **Scuttlebutt** from the Crew of the Barque *Lone Star*. The name *Scuttlebutt* was suggested by former Third Mate, William B. Beeson, BSI, whose direction and assistance was invaluable in compiling this irregular publication. Major thrusts of this periodical will be to document the Crew's activities, provide a medium for Metroplex (Dallas/Ft. Worth) Sherlockian idea exchange and Holmesian information distribution.

As an avid collector of things Sherlockian, I have experience of dealers on three separate continents, and will be glad to help find items to fill voids in any of your collections (at no cost, of course). Please feel free to contact me concerning your wish list.

The rate at which new Holmesian products become available is astounding. John E. Stephenson of Littleton, Colorado, has graciously extended us the privilege of photocopying his outstanding monthly Sherlockian newsletter, *The Call of the Hunt*, for distribution to the Crew. As my first official act as Third Mate, his reward for generosity will be a commission in The Crew of the Barque *Lone Star*, as **Ship's Signalman**. Thank you notes and other correspondence may be sent to John at the following address:

John E. Stephenson, Esquire
535 West Easter Place, Littleton, Colorado 80120

PASSING THE TORCH CRUISE

The Crew of the Barque *Lone Star*, a scion society of *The Baler Street Irregulars*, met in the Grand Saloon of the Barque *Lone Star* (the fine Chinese restaurant, August Moon, Central Expressway, Plano, Texas) on Sunday, November 22nd. Primary purpose of the meeting was to inaugurate our new Third Mate, John Dennis.

There are rumors, still under investigation, that the Barque's original Third Mate may have been Sherlock Holmes. The second Third Mate, Margaret Francine Morris Swift, began reuniting the scattered crew of Finns and Germans in 1970. The third Third Mate, William B. Beeson, BSI, assumed the helm some years later because he was the last to shout "Not it!" during the election procedure. John R. Dennis assumed command in 1987 solemnly swearing to uphold the Ship's motto, "Let the Third Mate do it!"

'Adventure Hunt', a Dallas area clue hunt contest, entry blanks, *Datebook*, a magazine insert for the Dallas Times Herald with several Holmesian illustrations, a catalogue of the new Third Mate's Sherlockian collection, and photocopies of issue number 24 of *The Call of the Hunt*, John E. Stephenson's Sherlockian newsletter, were distributed to attending members.

William B. Beeson, BSI, with help from Bullitt (**Chief Gunner's Mate**) and Sharon Lowry (**Ship's Chaplain**), sang the rousing song *Hang from the Bell, Nellie!* with Crew members (the Barque *Lone Star* Chowder, Marching, and Philharmonic Choral Society) rendering the choruses. (It is Bill's contention that this song tells how the long arm of retribution finally caught up with handsome Jack Stapleton). Here are the lyrics:

Hang from the Bell, Nellie!

Verse 1:

*The scene was in the jailhouse, and if curfew rang that night
Nell's Dad, in number 13 cell, would go out like a light!
Now, she knew her dad was innocent, so plucky Little Nell,
She tied her tender torso, to the clapper of the bell!*

Chorus:

*Hang on the bell, Nellie! Hang from the bell!
Your poor Daddy's locked in a cold prison cell!
As you swing to the left, Nellie, Swing to the right,
Remember that Curfew bell Must never ring tonight!*

Verse 2:

*It all started when sweet Nellie said, "No! No!" to Handsome Jack,
As she struggled for her Virtue, There down by the railroad track!
Nell's dad came to her rescue – As the train roared down the line,
Jack fell back, across the track, And paid the Price of Crime*

Chorus:

*Hang on the bell, Nellie! Hang from the bell!
Your poor Daddy's locked in a cold prison cell!
As you swing to the left, Nellie, Swing to the right,
Remember that Curfew bell Must never ring tonight!*

Verse 3:

*Nell's Daddy, was arrested, And brought up before the Law
The sheriff said, "O! Handsome Jack ain't handsome anymore"
Poor Nell, she cried and pleaded, But the jury didn't care,
They didn't have a sofa, So they gave her Dad... The Chair!*

Chorus:

*Hang on the bell, Nellie! Hang from the bell!
Your poor Daddy's locked in a cold prison cell!
As you swing to the left, Nellie, Swing to the right,
Remember that Curfew bell Must never ring tonight!*

Verse 4:

*They pulled upon the bell rope, But there was no "ding-a-ling",
They could not get their foul deed done, For Curfew would not ring
To and fro, aloft swung Nell, While below they pulled and heaved,
When suddenly a voice cried "Stop! Her Daddy's been reprieved!"*

Verse 5:

*They cut her fair young body down, While she made protests weak
And as they laid her out upon the ground, She cried in girlish pique:
"Well, I saved my dear old Daddy; That's a Good and Noble Thing.
But still, while I was up there, man, I learned it's fun to swing"*

Chorus:

*Hang from the bell, Nellie! Hang from the bell!
Your poor Daddy's freed from his cold prison cell!
As you swing to the left, Nellie, Swing to the right,
Remember that Curfew bell Has never rung tonight!*

FUTURE CRUISES

We discussed the format of future Cruises and decided to divide them into an outbound leg (dinner, good conversation, toasts), and an inbound leg (more scholarly presentations).

The Crew then adopted Bullit Lowry's suggestion of six scheduled Cruises per year (February, March, April, September, October, and November) to avoid conflicts with major holidays and summer vacations, with additional meetings as Sherlockian circumstances demand.

NEXT CRUISE

The Barque's next Cruise is scheduled for Sunday, February 21st, 1988. All Crew members will be notified as to location and time as information becomes available. **Ship's Chaplain**, Sharon Lowry will doubtless continue her sterling crusade for the moral uplift and spiritual improvement of the Crew's souls with a few (?) words (??) before dinner. The Third Mate solicits (or will appoint) volunteers to present toasts to Holmes and Watson before dinner. Other toasts will be welcomed *ad libitum*.

During the more scholarly portion of the Cruise, Dennis J. Frailey will present a magic lantern (the scientific wonder of the age) show of his 1983 trip to England, including pictures of several Sherlockian places as well as an attempt to follow the route described in "The Empty House" to find 221b Baker Street. Dennis has also agreed to provide an outline of his Sherlockian book collecting methods. An extensive list of purveyors of things Sherlockian will be distributed.

Also, a Holmesian video commonplace book entitled "Sherlock Holmes, the Early Years" (VS54 in Video Specialists International catalogue, 182 Jackson, Street, Dallas, Pennsylvania 18612. (717) 675-0227) will be shown. This tape contains:

1. *Sherlock Holmes Baffled*, D5100a (actor unknown) 1900. The very first Holmes film.
2. *The Copper Beeches*, D5119a M. Georges Treville, 1912.
3. *The Man with the Twisted Lip*, D5127a-6, Eille Norwood, 1921.
4. *The Mystery of the Leaping Fish*, Douglas Fairbanks stars as Coke Ennyday in this silent Sherlockian parody, 1915.
5. *The Dying Detective*, D5127a-1, Eille Norwood, 1921.
6. *The Devil's Foot*, D5127a-2, Eille Norwood, 1921.
7. Interview with Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (he discusses Sherlock Holmes and his interest in psychic research), 1927.
8. Nigel Bruce's screen test where is trying to persuade a vehicle manufacturer to to buy his carberator, 1934.
9. *The Limejuice Mystery*, British marionette film, 1930.
10. Prevues of several Rathbone/Bruce episodes (Adventures, Spider, Claw, Pearl, House, Terror by Night, Dressed).
11. *The Case of the Streaming Bishop*, B&W cartoon with Combs and Godson, 1944.

AFTERWORD

"I never get your limits, Watson. There are unexplored possibilities about you" -- SUSS

I hope you've enjoyed this first edition of **Scuttlebutt** from the Crew of the Barque *Lone Star* and look forward to your comments. The direction of **Scuttlebutt** will be determined by our readers, Crew members, and contributors. Have you always wanted to write an Agony Column? Or any other kind of Sherlockian column? Have you written a trifling monograph which cries out to be published? Would you just like to write a Letter to the Editor? Sherlockian *scuttlebutt* of all kinds is eagerly solicited. Future issues will contain the 'real' history of the Crew according to Margaret Francine Morris Swift, original cartoons, and other exciting Ship's log entries.

I sincerely wish every Sherlockian a safe and happy holiday season!

Your faithfully,

John Dennis, Third Mate

Is a Barque a Dog Sound or Part of a Tree

In 1988, the Third Mate, John R. Dennis, determined it would be advisable to provide an overview of a barque for the Crew members of our Society.

Barque Intelligence

It has occurred to me that novice Crew members may not be familiar with shipboard terminology and the Barque in general. To begin the education, a diagram of The Barque Lone Star is provided.

(Note: The fore is the forward mast, main is the center mast, and mizzen the rear mast.) Square-rigged sail names from lowest to highest:

- [mast name]sail
- lower topsail
- [mast name] upper topsail
- [mast name]-topgallant sail
- [mast name] royal
- [mast name] skysail (if any - usually none on barques)

The *Lone Star* was of "an American origin" [1] "found in the Georgia register (owner-Johanssen Brothers of Savannah)." [2] The three-masted barque with fore and main mast square-rigged and mizzen mast with a gaff and boom sail was developed in the eighteenth century. A square-rigged mast is one divided by its supporting rigging into three distinct parts, a short lower mast, a topmast, and a top-gallant mast.

From each of these masts sails were set from yards which could only be trimmed on the fore side of the mast, so the wind always acted on the same surface of the sails, the after surface. The fore-and-aft rigged mast is in two parts, a long lower mast and the short topmast.

A gaff and boom sail that could be trimmed only abaft (to the rear of) the mast is set from the lower mast and a gaff topsail is set from the topmast. The gaff sail receives the wind on either side according to its direction, relative to the direction in which the vessel is sailing. For the greater part of Her Majesty Queen Victoria's reign the barque has been the most popular rig for medium-sized merchant vessels.

The Canon refers to our Barque *Lone Star* in "The Adventure of the Five Orange Pips":

"He took an orange from the cupboard, and tearing it to pieces, he squeezed out the pips upon the table. Of these he took five, and thrust them into an envelope. On the inside of the flap he wrote, 'S.H. for J.C.' Then he sealed it and addressed it to 'Captain James Calhoun, Barque *Lone Star*, Savannah, Georgia.'"

"He and the two mates are, as I learn, the only native-born Americans in the ship. The others are Finns and Germans."

"I have spent the whole day," said he, 'over Lloyd's registers and the files of old papers, following the future career of every vessel which touched at Pondicherry in January and February in '83. There were thirty-six ships of fair tonnage which were reported there during those months. Of these, the *Lone Star* instantly attracted my attention, since, although it was reported as having cleared from London, the name is that which is given to one of the States of the Union.'"

"**Texas**, I think." (emphasis my own)

"I was not and am not sure which; but I knew that the ship must have an American origin." "What then?"

"I searched the Dundee records, and when I found that the barque *Lone Star* was there in January, '85, my suspicion became a certainty. I then inquired as to vessels which lay at present in the port of London."

"Yes?"

"The *Lone Star* had arrived here last week.. ."

"Very long and severe were the equinoctial gales that year. We waited long for news of the *Lone Star* of Savannah, but none ever reached us. We did at last hear that somewhere far out in the Atlantic a shattered sternpost (see diagram item #23) of a boat that was seen swinging in the trough of a wave, with the letters "L.S." carved upon it, and that is all which we shall ever know of the fate of the *Lone Star*." [1]

stern•post [sturn'pɒst], n. *Naut.* the principal piece of timber or iron in the stern of a vessel, having its lower end fastened to the keel, and usually serving as a support for the rudder. See diagram item #23,

There were other barques mentioned in the Canon. "The year '87 furnished us with a long series of cases of greater or less interest, of which I retain the records. Among my headings under this one twelve months, I find the account of the adventure of the *Parado!* Chamber, of the Amateur Mendicant Society, who held a luxurious club in the lower vault of a furniture warehouse, of the facts connected with the loss of the British barque *Sophy Anderson*, of the singular adventures of the Grice Patersons in the island of Uffa, and finally of the Camberwell poisoning case." [1]

The Barque *Gloria Scott*, which "had been in the Chinese tea trade, but she was old-fashioned, heavy-bowed, broad-beamed craft, and the new clippers had cut her out. She was a 500-ton boat, and besides her eighteen soldiers, a captain, three *mates*, a doctor, a chaplain, and four warders." [3] (emphasis my own)

A shipboard day consists of six 4-hour watches (periods of standing duty). Officers and seamen have eight hours off duty after each watch. Watches change at 8 A.M., noon, 4 P.M., 8 P.M., midnight, and 4 A.M. A chime marks each half-hour. During a four-hour watch, the bell chimes once at the first half-hour, twice at the second, and so on up to eight times, when the next watch begins and the sequence starts again

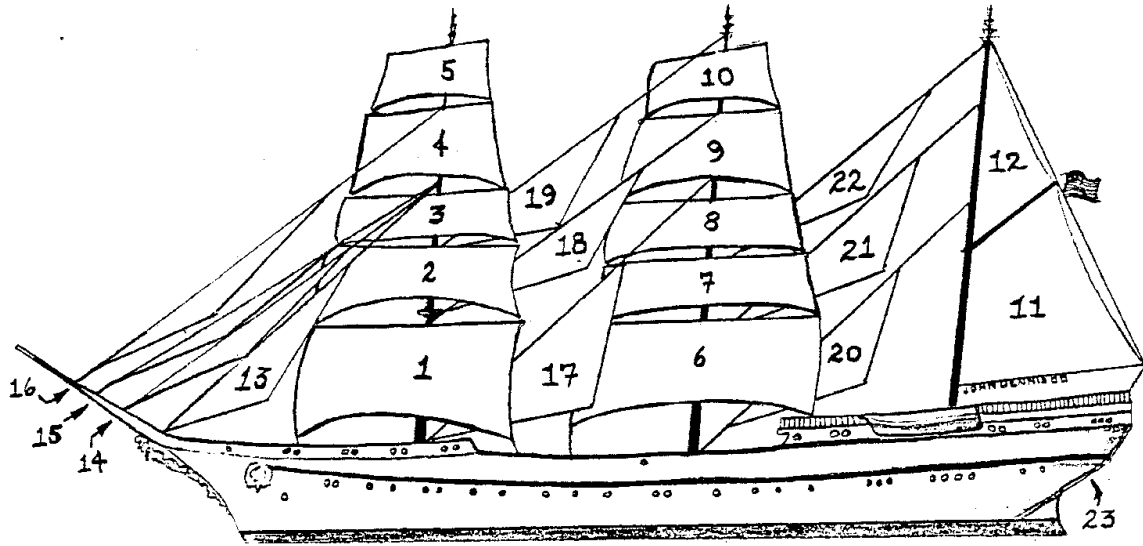
Ship's Bells			
Bells	Hour (A.M. or P.M.)		
1	12:30	4:30	8:30
2	1:00	5:00	9:00
3	1:30	5:30	9:30
4	2:00	6:00	10:00
5	2:30	6:30	10:30
6	3:00	7:00	11:00
7	3:30	7:30	11:30
8	4:00*	8:00*	12:00*

* (watch change)

[1] Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan, "The Adventure of the Five Orange Pips."

[2] Baring-Gould, William S., *The Annotated Sherlock Holmes*, with references to Mr. Richard W. Clarke's extensive research "On the Nomenclature of Watson's Ships."

[3] Doyle, Sir Arthur Conan, "The Adventure of the *Gloria Scott*."



1. Foresail
2. Fore lower topsail
3. Fore upper topsail
4. Fore-topgallant sail
5. Fore royal
6. Mainsail
7. Main lower topsail
8. Main upper topsail
9. Main-topgallant sail
10. Main royal
11. Mizzen gaff and boom sail
12. Mizzen gaff topsail
13. Fore-topmast staysail
14. Jib
15. Flying jib
16. Jib topsail
17. Main lower topmast staysail
18. Main-topgallant staysail
19. Main-royal staysail
20. Mizzen staysail
21. Mizzen lower topmast staysail
22. Mizzen-topmast studding sail
23. Sternpost

A Lesson for All of Us

In November, 1988, Dennis Frailey, one of the first crew members of the Society created a pastiche.

During the April 24th, 1988 Cruise, Frailey handed out copies of a previously unknown Sherlockian story, entitled "The Adventure of the Book Collector". The story explains how the Master himself helped Dennis learn the art of collecting Sherlockiana.

The Adventure of the Book Collector

Dennis Frailey, November, 1988, The Crew of the Barque Lone Star

One cold, blustery, Monday in October, Holmes and I sat reading in our retirement home on the Sussex Downs – he reviewing agony column of *The Times* and I reading a sea story. Suddenly, we heard footsteps coming up the walkway, followed by a polite and hesitant knock. I opened the door to a bespectacled gentleman with American-styled clothing and a professional air.

“Mr. Holmes?” he inquired.

“There, sir,” I replied, indicating my companion.

“Pray take a seat in the basket chair and tell me about your book collecting,” said Holmes.

“What? How could you know what I collect?” replied the astonished visitor, as he took a seat.

“The musty dust on your clothing is of a type found only in old book stores,” said Holmes. “I’ve written a monograph or two on the subject of dust.”

“You must really be Sherlock Holmes,” he replied with a combination of curiosity and chagrin.

“You have me at a disadvantage, sir. What is your name and what sort of problem brings you out on this foul afternoon?”

“My name is Dennis Frailey and my hobby is, indeed, book collecting, Mr. Holmes. But frustration is what brought me to seek you out.”

“Please continue.”

“As you surely know, Sherlockian books are widely sought after by Dr. Watson’s many readers.”

“‘Sherlockian,’ did you say? How extraordinary! Have you heard this adjective before, Watson?”

“Never!”, said I. “On second thought, I believe my agent, Dr. Doyle, mentioned something about an organization of admirers who use that term to describe themselves.”

“Yes”, interjected Mr. Frailey, “I am a member of the ‘Crew of the Barque *Lone Star*,’ a society of your admirers from Dallas, Texas. I’m visiting London on my vacation and have spent the past week searching London’s book stores while my wife shops at Harrod’s and Liberty’s.”

“Surely you jest, sir!” said I. “The *Lone Star* perished many years ago, bearing which her the wicked criminals from the affair of the five orange pips.”

“Yes, indeed, it did perish. But the third mate and the rest of the crew mutinied and left before she ran aground. We disliked those men as much you did, sir; and we have all settled down to normal lives in America after escaping that vessel of evil.”

“Pray, go on,” insisted Holmes.

“We gather together on occasion to celebrate our escape, and over the years we have all become avid followers of your adventures, as told by Dr. Watson. I, myself, have become a collector of books about you.”

“Are there many such books?” asked Holmes, with a strange look in his eye, as though he already knew the answer, but was embarrassed to admit it.

“Surely you must know of the many books in this category. At least I hope you do because I’ve come for advice and assistance.”

“Please explain your frustration, and how I might help.”

“Well, I want to collect Sherlockian books, but I’m not sure quite how to do it. There seems to be so many kinds, and many are very hard to find. Most book stores only carry the current best sellers, and by the time I learn about a book, it is no longer in print. Used book-stores occasionally have them, but mostly they feature romance novels, science, fiction, and serial adventures.”

“Rubbish, all,” I remarked.

“Don’t be so hasty Watson,” Holmes retorted. “The science fiction, at least, shows some imagination.”

“Too much, if you ask me. Rocket ships and distant planets and time travel! Give me a novel of the sea – something I can believe in.”

“Come now, Watson, haven’t the Americans landed a man on the moon?”

“But let us not neglect our visitor,” Holmes said as he turned to Frailey. “How long will you be staying in London?”

“I expect to be here another week, if our money holds out.”

“Splendid. Come by in three days. In the meantime, I suggest you take your wife on a tour of historical sights. They have infinitely more value and won’t dent your budget.”

“May I bring my wife back with me?”

“Normally, I would hesitate. After all, women are never to be entirely trusted. But if it will keep her out of the shops of Knightsbridge, I will consent to it.”

“Thank you Mr. Holmes. ‘Till Tuesday.”

As our visitor left, Holmes went to the corner, picked up his violin, and began to play. I knew this meant he needed time to think; but this time his thoughts seemed particularly troublesome, as though he were going through a struggle. Finally, he put down the instrument.

“It was inevitable,” he muttered under his breath.

“What was inevitable, Holmes?” I asked.

“Until now, modesty has prevented me from paying much attention to the subject of ‘Sherlockian’ literature. I had hoped to avoid it entirely. But I have lived too long. That editor of *The Times* refuses to prepare my obituary, so I am condemned to a life of keeping bees and receiving occasional visitors. Sooner or later, I knew a case would arise where I had to learn about these matters.”

For the next three days, Holmes’ comings and goings were as active as during our days in Baker Street. He sent and received countless telegrams (still avoiding the telephone), made several visits to the local library, and spent many hours working at his desk as though preparing for a chemical experiment. He was unwilling to let me participate in this activity, but I could see he was fascinated by the depth and breadth of the subject.

Finally, Thursday morning came. Holmes was cheerful, though tired, as our visitor arrived at about ten.

“I see your wife has chosen the shops of London over the Downs of Sussex,” Holmes remarked.

“‘Tis the sales that have done me in,” replied Frailey. “That and a newspaper coupon for 30% off at Burberry’s. But I am here and eager to learn what you can tell me.”

“Well, let us begin at the beginning,” commented Holmes as he settled into an overstuffed chair and offered tea our visitor from across the sea.

“The first step is to understand what is available. Sherlockian books can be categorized in many ways. I suggest we begin with the basic treatment used by the author, which gives us four categories: the Canon, the imitative writings, the scholarly studies, and the writings about the writings.

“The Canon, as you surely know consists of the sixty works published through Conan Doyle,” he continued.

“That ingrate!”, I remarked, as Holmes’ mention of Doyle opened up old wounds.

“There, there, Watson”, he soothed. You must admit although Doyle got the credit and half of the fees, we received the notoriety.”

“OK”, indicated Frailey, using a form of American slang I still find grating. “I know about the Canon – but what are these others?”

“The second category is what the literary world calls ‘imitative’ writings, of which there are over a thousand known to date. These are tales which purport to be about me or Watson or some other character from the Canon. Most are pure fictions, written by some of the world’s best – and some of its worst writers.”

“A few of them are genuine,” I remarked. But Holmes cut me short.

“Say no more, Watson. The world must never know which of those tales are authentic, and the only to assure that is to keep them hidden among the many that are fictional.”

“As I was saying,” he turned to Frailey, “the imitative writings can be further divided into four groups: the pastiches, the parodies, the science fictional imitations, and the others.

“Pastiche is serious imitations of Watson’s works, or other tales in which I, my associates, or events or associations from the Canon play a major role. Many of them claim to be long lost works of Watson that were accidentally found in a tin box in an attic. But that tin box has certainly travelled far and wide, if one were to believe all of these authors.

“Parodies, by contrast, are nonsensical works that make fun of me or otherwise distort reality in order to please the author. Science fictional imitations might be viewed as a special group of parodies, but I prefer to classify them separately because they are often serious treatments that bring futuristic elements, such as time or space travel, into the picture. They often feature Watson and me with such characters as Mr. Spock of the *Star Trek* television series. What intrigues me about these is that, if one could believe in time travel, some of them might even be true.

“Finally, there are the other imitative writings – an assortment of satires, cartoons, burlesques, travesties, and whatnot. They come in all forms and styles and seem to indicate an obsession with me or my methods. I hesitate to think what Watson’s tales have wrought upon the literary world.”

“What about the third primary category, serious scholarly efforts?” asked Frailey.

“These too come in many forms, but are intended as academic studies rather than entertainment. These I find the most satisfying on the whole. They alone treat the subject with seriousness, however misguided. Typically, they attempt to resolve certain inconsistencies in the Canon or to determine facts that were not clearly identified in Watson’s writings. For example, these authors seem to have great fun disputing the exact location of our rooms in Baker Street or the precise dates when the various adventures occurred. Some have even speculated on how many wives Watson had.”

“Naturally, we disguised these things to protect certain individuals,” I mentioned.

“Yes,” replied Holmes, “but you failed to do so in a consistent manner, Watson. The worst example, of course, is your wound, which is either in the leg or the arm, depending on what story one reads. But perhaps it is as well. This monumental lack of consistency has provided employment for many a scholar.”

“Yes, but don’t you think it has gotten out of hand?” I asked.

“Well, certainly there are ridiculous extremes, such as the works claim you are a woman, Watson.”

“Or those that claim you and I are lovers, or you are secretly married to Irene Adler!” said I.

“Let us continue with our categorization,” said Holmes, obviously nonplussed by my remark. “The final group is the writings about the writings. Much has been written about the previously mentioned works – much more, in fact, than was ever written in the first place. There are bibliographies, guides, analyses, reviews, and so on *ad nauseum*.”

“My favorites are the pastiches and, to a lesser extent, the parodies and science fictional tales,” Frailey remarked.

“Why so?” asked Holmes.

“Well, some of them are good stories in themselves. But regardless of their literary merit, they do tend to fill in the blanks. Almost every story mentioned by Watson as ‘unrecorded’ has shown up sooner or later – often several times by different authors – as a pastiche or parody. They also fill voids in time, telling of your early life or other periods that are not mentioned in the Canon.”

“Such as the three years after Reichenbach?” queried Holmes.

“Yes. Many authors have speculated on that period. Another favorite is the years since your retirement. And people remain curious about the void before you met Watson.”

“But, of course, you know most if not all of these are pure fiction.”

“Surely; but those of us who are curious like to imagine what the truth might have been – and as

you have hinted, some of them may in fact be true.”

“More likely fiction based on truth, as demonstrated by most of the work in the Canon,” said Holmes as he glanced at me with a twinkle in his eye. “Watson was not very interested in the more scientific and scholarly aspects of detection. He concentrated on making the stories sound romantic and exciting – no doubt to aid in sales.”

“My word, Holmes!” said I. “Surely, you are being too modest. The truth was, indeed, most exciting and, at times, romantic.”

“Speak for yourself, Watson. You got several wives out of it – I merely had an unfortunate run-in with The Woman.”

“Can we get back to the pastiches and parodies?” begged Frailey.

“Most surely,” Holmes replied. “After all, that is why you are here. Forgive the carping of two old men.”

“One of the most interesting aspects of the imitative writings is the care taken by many writers to avoid violations of copyright laws. Doyle’s heirs retain the literary rights and have been quite vigilant about protecting them, from time to time. To get around this, authors have often used distortions of my name, and Watson’s, even in serious pastiches. For example, among the better pastiches are August Derleth’s ‘Solar Pons’ series, and H.F. Heard’s ‘Mr. Mycroft’ stories. In the parody department, you’ll find the ‘Picklock Holes’ stories by R.C. Lehman, the ‘Shylock Homes’ tales of John Kendrick Bangs, Peter Todd’s ‘Herlock Sholmes’ stories and the more recent ‘Schlock Homes’ stories by Robert L. Fish.”

“Don’t forget the stories by Doyle’s son, Adrian, and that popular writer, J.D. Carr that use your true name and purport to be genuine cases,” I remarked.

“You refer to *The Exploits of Sherlock Holmes*,” responded Holmes. “The reason they could freely use my name is Adrian was one of the heirs – a member of the family.”

“The ones you’ve mentioned,” continued Frailey, “are all series in which many tales have been written. I understand many hundreds of others are single efforts.”

“Indeed,” Holmes replied, “everyone from Mark Twain to P.J. Farmer to O’Henry has gotten into the act at least once. Ellery Queen, himself a literary creation, has edited a collection of these other stories in *The Misadventures of Sherlock Holmes*.”

“That’s a book I’ve been hunting for many years,” said Frailey. “The only copy I’ve seen is autographed by Dannay and priced at over \$400 – too rich for my blood.”

“I predict you’ll find another,” Holmes confided. “And at a lower price. After all, Danny didn’t sign all of them. Just keep looking.”

“We’ve reviewed the categories. What comes next?” I asked.

“These works have taken every conceivable form from plays to novels to poems to television programs. But for a book collector, the question is the form in which they have been published,” Holmes continued. “Most have appeared as hardback books, and many appeared later as paperbacks, especially the pastiches. There are also many periodicals in which Sherlockian material has appeared. Some, indeed, are devoted exclusively to Sherlockiana.”

“Many of these are produced by scion societies of the Baker Street Irregulars,” Frailey noted.

“What a travesty of a good name! A bunch of drunken sots,” I remarked, having recently read of the goings on at the Irregulars’ annual meeting in New York.

“Now don’t get too redundant, my friend,” responded Holmes in a calming tone. “Despite their antics they do contribute in positive ways. They keep the spirit alive, and *The Baker Street Journal* is the original and the best of these Sherlockian publications. Of course, there are also many mystery magazines with occasional Sherlockian adventures. And there have been quite a few stories appearing in periodicals with no special claim to mystery or Sherlockian fare.”

“Why most of my works first appeared in magazines such as *Beeton’s*, *The Strand*, and *Colliers*,” I

pointed out.

"Yes, and in more recent times there have been Sherlockian stories in *Life, Sail, Fantasy and Science Fiction* and even *The Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History*," Frailey noted.

"Well, enough of this," said Holmes, obviously irritated at the direction the conversation was taking. "I think it is time to turn to your problem, Mr. Frailey – where and how to find these 'treasures'," he said, emphasizing the last word with poorly concealed disdain.

"That's why I am here," our visitor replied with relish.

"As you've surely learned by now, what makes this a worthy hunt is that there are numerous things available, but most in very limited editions. The public at large has virtually no interest in the subject, but the number of true enthusiasts still exceeds the press run of most items."

"You are too modest," I insisted. "The public has devoured your radio programs, films, and the Canon. Moreover, I hear very good things about an upcoming television series."

"They wouldn't keep writing them if nobody bought them," added Frailey.

"Yes, but that is only the 'tip of the iceberg,' as they say since that 'Titanic' disaster. The great preponderance of Sherlockian literature is hard to find. You'll never see anything in new book stores except perhaps the latest pastiche or two."

"That's why I've started looking at used book stores," replied Frailey. "But they are often located in the seediest parts of town, and so many of them seem to have nothing of interest."

"Bookselling is not a profitable business since radio and television have appeared," Holmes said with obvious sadness in his voice. "Large chains have taken over the new book business and they concentrate only on what is popular. You are correct in noting that your best opportunities lie with the used bookstores. But there are exceptions. Almost every city worth its name has at least one bookstore specializing in mystery fare. There, at least, you will have a fighting chance of finding the more recent Sherlockian material.

"But turning now to used book, the profit margin here is so low shop owners must love books in order to stay with it. This gives each shop its own unique flavor, despite the low rent facilities. In some ways, it takes one back to the 1800's when all shop-owners cared about their wares."

"That's all fine," said Frailey, "but how do I figure out which ones to shop in? They are all over the place and usually hard to find."

"What is worse, I'll bet you've found them to have inconvenient hours that change faster than you can keep up with them," responded Holmes.

"Either that, or else not keeping the hours they post. Why one time, when I had an evening free on a business trip, I drove an hour and a half to get to a bookstore in Pasadena, California, only to find that the shop had closed early for no given reason. On the way back, I got lost finding the Pasadena freeway in the dark, and ended up in the middle of a slum at night."

"Yes, the perils of used book shopping," said Holmes with an air of wearied experience. "But I think I can help you. I have collected books for many years. Do you travel a lot on business?"

"It varies, but from time to time, I find myself out of town with time to spare."

"An excellent opportunity to shop for books. I suggest you keep a list of bookstores in each city you visit, noting their character, fare, variety, hours, telephone number, and such. Your overall comments on the store would also be of help. On your next visit to the city, you will probably find some of the shops have gone out of business, but those that remain will tend to change little in their specialties."

"But how do I find the bookshops in a city I've never visited before?"

"I would first recommend getting a map on which to mark the locations of the shops. I would then learn the local transportation system. For example, in London a tourist like yourself can get a weekly pass for the underground and buses at a very low price."

"In America, I will often need an automobile, since our newer cities are so spread out.

Furthermore, renting a car for a day is much less expensive than taking a cab or public transportation," offered Frailey. "The rental companies can usually give you a city map, too. But how do I find the bookshops?"

"That depends on where you are. Most bookshop owners know their competition and will give you some help if you ask – especially if you are buying something. Some shops even band together and publish directories or maps to aid the shopper. However, the "new book" stores will seldom tell you about the "used" ones.

"Another excellent place to look is in the telephone boo. You Americans have this fabulous book called the 'yellow pages' that typically lists all bookstores in a city. Pay special interest to the listings under 'books – used and rare.' Many of the better stores will advertise their hours, specialties, and locations. But if you have the time, don't overlook those that have only an owner's name and address. Often, they are private collectors who specialize and who will only see you by appointment. Although the majority will be of no interest, if you find the right one it can be a charming experience."

"I suppose I need to telephone them all in advance to determine hours and such."

"Yes, for the most part. It can be irritating to find they are closed on the one day you can visit, but it is better to call than to go there and learn the hard way – as you did with that store in Pasadena. Booksellers are an independent lot, and you really must establish a relationship before some of them will treat you in a civil manner. And, by the way, be sure to ask for directions, since some of them are deucedly difficult to find. One store of my acquaintance in St. Louis doesn't even have a sign. It appears to have gone out of business – a ploy the owner uses to keep away the riff-raff.

"Another reason for telephoning," he continued, "is to find out if they are still in business, or have moved to a new location. The 'yellow pages' are always at least a year out of date."

"But what about here in England?" queried our visitor. "You have no 'yellow pages.'"

"Aha," said I. "You don't know about the 'ABC'."

"The 'ABC'?"

"Yes, a privately published directory that is a 'must' for every Londoner, and a good idea for every tourist. It serves the same function as your 'yellow pages', but it isn't associated with the telephone company."

"I see," responded Frailey. "I'll be sure to get one."

Turning back to Holmes, our visitor asked, "must I search through every store in the 'phone book, pardon, the 'ABC'?"

"Certainly, at least once," was my colleague's reply. "That's part of the adventure. Not only do you learn where the good stores are to be found, but it also serves as an excellent introduction to the people of each section of the city. You know them by their reading tastes."

I decided to contribute my own thoughts, since I had done a bit of book collecting myself. "Eventually, you will learn where the literary and intellectual crowd hang out – usually not far from a college or university – and where the more mundane readers live as well. On your second trip, you can avoid the suburban shops full of housewives' fantasies"

"But never overlook an opportunity," Holmes interrupted. "You never know when some woman will clean out her attic and deposit in one of those suburban stores a priceless treasure left there by an uncle or a son gone off to seek his fortune. Some of my best 'finds' have come in this manner – although they are all too rare. The bonus is that the proprietor of such a store probably doesn't recognize the value of what he has and thus won't price it too high."

"Aren't there stores that specialize in Sherlockian fare?" asked Frailey.

"Yes, there certainly are. But beware of inflated prices. These proprietors know all too well what is rare and what is not. If you don't know your books, you can pay a lot more than you should."

"Are there alternatives to bookstores?"

"There are many organizations that do business by mail order. These include publishers who

specialize in Sherlockiana, such as Gaslight and Magico, many private collectors, and a number of both stores that also do business by mail. You can find their advertisements in *The Baker Street Journal* and other Sherlockian publications. Many of these specialize in a wider range of topics than Sherlockiana, such as mysteries or 18th century literature.

“So there you have it. Now you need to determine what to collect. I suggest you begin by browsing in a few of the specialist stores to get a better understanding of what is available and what you like. After this, you can go out on your own.”

“Thank you so much, Mr. Holmes.”

Our visitor rose to leave, and I persuaded him to write down his address for future correspondence. In turn, I gave him ours. Some months later, we received the following note, postmarked ‘Plano, TX’ – wherever that is...

Dear Mr. Holmes and Dr. Watson,

I have followed your advice and now have a working system for hunting books. I have a map of each major city I’ve visited with bookstores marked thereon. I’ve used my personal computer to make a list of the bookstores in each city, complete with hours, descriptions, etc. (You meet the most interesting people in bookstores!) I’ve also made a list of books I’m interested in acquiring. I mark them off each time I find one. (but the list of ‘wanted’ books seems to grow faster than the list of acquisitions. I guess my hobby will have a long duration.)

Just a few weeks ago, I found a copy of *The Misadventures of Sherlock Holmes* for only \$30. I learned about it through a shop owner in suburban Detroit. You were right, Mr. Holmes!

I’ve also expanded my interests to include more than Sherlockiana. That way, I’m disappointed less often, since it is easier to find general mystery stories than good Sherlockian fare.

My only regret is I forgot to ask for your autographs when in England. I don’t know if I could ever find you again.

Best regards, Dennis J. Frailey

“Why would he want our autographs, Watson?” inquired Holmes.

“I don’t understand Americans sometimes,” I replied. “Perhaps he’ll be satisfied with this account of his visit I’ve just finished writing down.”

The Great Whimsical Sherlockian Tour of Oklahoma and Texas ***By Don Hobbs, BSI***

One of the craziest ideas I concocted was in 2005 - The Great Whimsical Sherlockian Tour of Oklahoma and Texas, know by many as GWSTOT. Fellow Dean Clark and I were talking one day about past, present, and future Sherlockian adventures we had both experienced together and apart. I hit on the idea of a road trip, but to where? There was Watson, Oklahoma and Sherlock, Texas with Holmes Peak in between, thus hatched the idea for GWSTOT.

Members of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star, The Afghanistan Perceivers, and The Hansom of John Clayton piled into our Brougham carriage along with a professional videographer and headed NNE to Watson, Oklahoma, population 221 (Whimsical Tourist: Don Hobbs, Dean Clark, Herb Linder, Brad Keefauver, Bruce and Linda McCall. Videographer was Rick Gold). There we met a gentleman who had been around back in 1976.

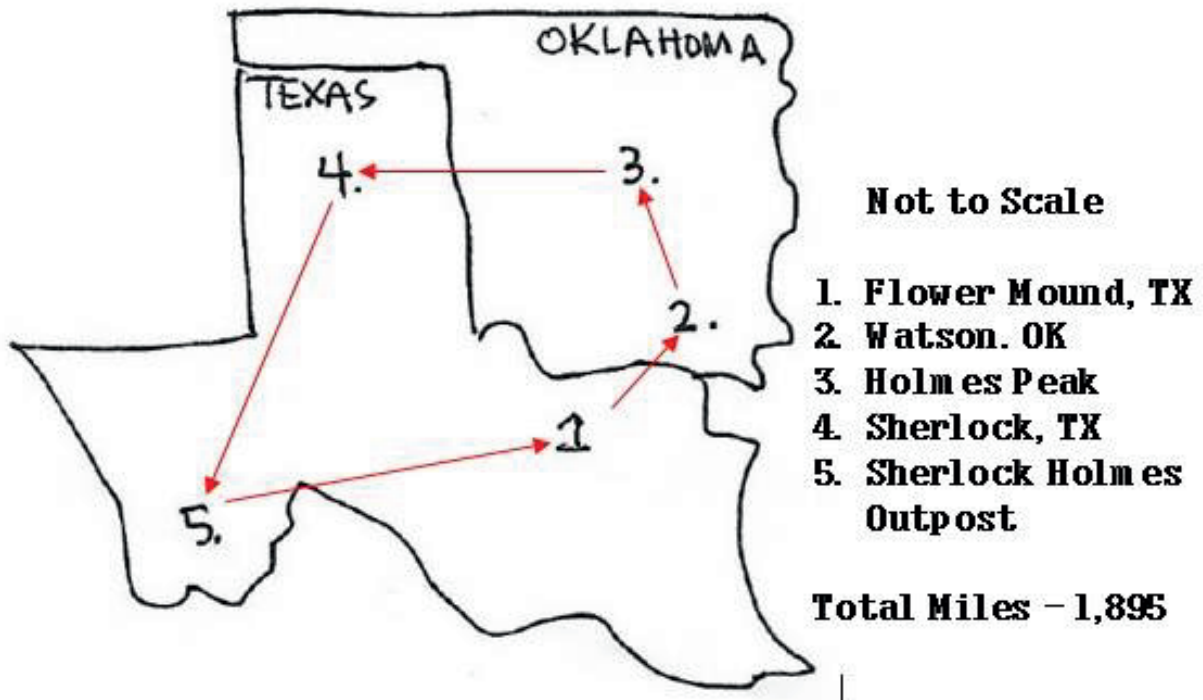
This was when The Afghanistan Perceivers presented the town with a Sherlock Holmes silhouette plaque, long since lost over the Reichenbach Falls. Our next stop was in Tulsa and an ascent of Holmes Peak. We met with Dick Warner in Tulsa and he told us the story of how the land was partially owned by the Catholic Church. He gave us a colorful description of his and John Bennett Shaw effort to get the peak named, Sherlock, TX is a wide spot in someone's cotton field.

The locals thought we were from a bowling league because we were all wearing matching GWSTOT shirts. Brad Keefauver had created a concrete marker with the date and reasoning (or the lack, thereof) behind our interest in his fields. This being August in the Texas Panhandle and located nearby was a 20,000 head pig barn, when the wind shifted ever so slightly, we were all ready to move on down the road. Amazingly there was cell phone service and I manage to phone Peter Blau boasting of our achievement.

The final stop on this four-day road trip was the Sherlock Holmes Outpost, located in the absolute middle of nowhere near Big Bend, TX. We shocked a few little blue-haired ladies at a Dairy Queen where we stopped for lunch. Once we explained we were making a Sherlock Holmes Mockumentary they warmed to the idea of being on camera. I believe they, too, thought we were a bowling team with our own videographer in tow.

Vincent Starrett had it right, it is always 1895. When we pulled back into my driveway in Flower Mound, TX we had traveled 1,895 miles. My wife likes to say everything is NOT about Sherlock Holmes but dear, it really is as we have the video to prove it!

The Great Whimsical Tour of 2005



Even Bad News Is Still News

Over the years, our Society and the member have been covered by the local newspapers...

Patsy Miller, *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*
Wednesday, February 17, 1971

FAMILY

Baker Street Irregulars Probe Mysteries

It's a mild sort of mania. Perfectly harmless except for the occasional sound of a hansom cab clip-clopping down a foggy London street ringing in your ear.

It's not contagious unless you consider the scores of people that can rattle off the names of Sherlock Holmes mysteries and their characters like pages from a family album.

And it's certainly not deadly, except for the occasional complications arising from a sharp thrusting tongue in cheek.

SUCH IS THE madness perpetuated by the Baker Street Irregulars, an assorted group of educators, scientists, professional people, blue collar workers, housewives, and others who just like mysteries and who meet to honor the master detective, Sherlock Holmes.

The Irregulars meet in local groups called scions, amusing themselves by concocting further mysteries embracing Holmes, searching for new or overlooked details of characterization, or making up plots that Arthur Conan Doyle never dreamed of.

"It's an intellectual game of one upmanship." In reality, it's a spoof of scholarly activity as members write a learned paper on some aspect of Sherlock Holmes, sometimes manufactured from whole cloth, but nevertheless fully documented, said Miss Margaret F. Morris, organizer of the Arlington scion, the *Bark Lone Star*.

Those papers deemed worthy enough are published in *The Baker Street Journal*, "an irregular quarterly of Sherlockiana."

THE BAKER Street Irregulars were founded in 1933 by Vincent Starrett, author of *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* and the late Christopher Morley, critic and author of *Kitty Foyle*. The idea for the organization came after a great response to a Sherlock Holmes acrostic printed in *The Saturday Review of Literature*.

The name, Baker Street Irregulars, comes from the street urchins which Holmes used as his messenger or intelligence service. It undoubtedly also refers to the basic unorganized nature of the group – again a tribute to Holmes' untidiness and love of clutter which endears him to his readers.

The parent group is located in New York City and other scions across the country take their names from titles of Holmesian mysteries or incidences therein. The group in Chicago calls themselves the Hounds of the Baskervilles. Another is the Five Orange Pips and of course, the Creeping Men of Cleveland.

BUT THE parallel group in London, The Sherlock Holmes Society, seems to go one better. They dress in the Victorian style of Sherlock and meet in the Sherlock Holmes pub at a hotel he frequented. And then there is the group called the Holmes' Companions who maintain Holmes isn't dead, just whimsically disappeared and operating somewhere in Argentina.

The Arlington group, according to Miss Morris, has its own claim of fame. For one thing it is totally integrated – they admit women – and as far as she knows, Miss Morris is the only female to lead a scion. In fact, a scion in the East refused a woman admittance, so she formed her own – the Solitary Cyclist.

Most of the members of the *Bark Lone Star* are like Miss Morris herself, teachers and staff at the University of Texas at Arlington. Miss Morris is head of the reference library and casual conversation with other librarians and university staff found a mutual interest in the master of detection.

It is this love of Holmes that has united former presidents, surgeons, president of the U.S. Lawn Tennis Association, and a retired mortician in the Baker Street Irregulars. A captured North Vietnamese

bunker was found to contain a translated version of a Holmes mystery.

THE LOCAL group, Bark *Lone Star*, (Named after a ship in “The Five Orange Pips”), set sail in November and has been treading water since. Like true BSI, they have frequent controversies among themselves, but actual organized meetings are mysteries in themselves.

Among the controversies surrounding Sherlock Holmes are his matrimonial state, shared in part by his partner in detection, Dr. Watson – who may or may not have had two wives – perhaps at the same time. And then there is the mystery of Dr. Watson’s middle name.

Perhaps one of the biggest mysteries is what happened to Sherlock Holmes during the three years when Arthur Conan Doyle attempted to do away with literary child. The doctor-writer never really considered his detective creations his most prestigious work, and tried to kill him off. But the public clamour for Sherlock was so great Sir Arthur had to bring him back. That three-year period is still unexplained and the topic of many BSI controversies.

WHY SUCH an interest in a fictional detective of Victorian times? As mentioned before, it is an intellectual game and for many an academician, an escape from the strict discipline of his own field. And adds Miss Morris, “the Victorian time was a settled world in many ways. It was a nostalgic time when everything was what it appeared to be.”

Members of the Bark *Lone Star* do not confine themselves to just Sherlock Holmes. They also enjoy detectives the likes of Nero Wolfe and Hercule Poirot. But the master is Sherlock Holmes, whom member Charles Myers describes in true Holmesian fashion. “An indefinite man whose life is full of the indefinite.”

The Fort Worth Star-Telegram

Friday, May 19, 1972

Barque *Lone Star* Schedules ‘Cruise’

Barque *Lone Star* of the Baker Street Irregulars will have their “summer cruise” at 7 p.m. June 11 at the Steak and Ale, 7107 Weatherford Hwy.

A steak dinner with wine will be served. John Bennett Shaw will be the speaker.

Miss Margaret Morris of 472 Westview Ter. in Arlington will take reservations until June 6.

John Anders, *Dallas Morning News*

Sunday, June 6, 1976

A Simple Deduction

THE CREW OF THE Barque *Lone Star* held a joint shakedown cruise with the Afghanistan Perceivers of Oklahoma last night in a Dallas restaurant.

A good time was held by all.

And if you are so cross as to ask just what these organizations are, well, it’s elementary, my dear Watson.

These are regional chapters of the national group called the Baker Street Irregulars – the followers of Sherlock Holmes. Don’t make the mistake I did, of asking any of these Sherlockians how they could so passionately pursue the footsteps of a fictional sleuth.

"Sherlock Holmes DID live," retorts Steven Stavron, a prominent Fort Worth devotee of Holmes. "You're not going to tell any us that he didn't live!" he adds with a fervent plea.

OBVIOUSLY SHERLOCK is alive and well, and undergoing a phenomenal resurrection. There is the Gene Wilder film, "Sherlock Holmes Smarter Brother." There was a recent Broadway hit called, "Sherlock Holmes." The series of 14 Sherlock films starring Basil Rathbone are being syndicated on television stations across the country. The hot Nicholas Meyer novel of last year, *The Seven Per Cent Solution* is being made into a film starring Alan Arkin, Laurence Olivier, and Nicol Williamson. And the Crew of the Barque *Lone Star* dropped in at Saturday night's performance at the Dallas Theater Center of "Sherlock Holmes and the Curse of the Sign of the Four."

All right, on to the explanation of that name. "In the Conan Doyle short story, "The Five Orange Pips," Stavron explains, "there is a reference to a clipper ship called a barque in the story, the captain, and first mate are real SOBs, so the highest and only officer in our order is the Second Mate. Our *Lone Star* crew has about 30 permanent members from all over the metroplex. And then we have a number of irregular reservists, people who live too far away to attend meetings."

THE OKLAHOMA clan at Saturday's cruise (We don't call them meetings), was named after something Holmes to Dr. Watson after he returned from the brush with death at Reichenbach Falls in Switzerland. "You remember (I didn't) Holmes and his nemesis, Dr. Moriarty, fought and fell into the falls, and it was believed Holmes was dead. Reichenbach Falls, because of this incident, is one of the leading tourist sites in Switzerland. Anyway, when Holmes reappeared after some time, and Watson asked him where he'd been, all Sherlock said was, "I have been to Afghanistan as a perceiver."

The cult of Sherlockians here and elsewhere approach their hero with great zeal, poring over the works of A. Conan Doyle as if they were Holy Script. The typical meeting agenda consists of dissecting a particular short story or novel. One of the members will theorize and argue, and ponder, and gnash their teeth. Frequently the group works on the problem of how Holmes might attack modern crimes. "Our meetings are very lively," says Stavron.

THERE ARE MORE than 5,000 members in the national organization which meets yearly in New York on what they believe to be Sherlock Holmes' birthday. Following the Sherlockian creed, only one woman is allowed at the banquet dinner, where she is toasted, then escorted to the door. "The woman represents Irene Adler, the only woman who outwitted Holmes and the closest thing he had to a love interest. I think she proves he was definitely heterosexual. He just didn't have time for romance."

The annual dinner affair has drawn the ire of many women's groups who once picketed the banquet of the Baker Street Irregulars.

But the members don't really mind. They're too busy trading memorabilia and selling collections of Holmes' artifacts. "My collection is worth \$1,000," say Stavron. "But it's considered a very small and modest collection. One collection of Holmes volumes worth \$300,000 was recently given to the Toronto Public Library. And it could sell for more than that. I know many collectors who have material worth \$15,000."

THE MEMBERS of the *Lone Star* chapter do about the same things as other Sherlockians (some call themselves Holmesians). They swap yarns, play trivia games, speculate on Sherlock's sex life, and even sing songs such as "While the Fog Rolled On" (to the tune of "While the Band Played On").

They wear ridiculous garb, smoke Greek cigarettes made in Egypt, and do whatever they can at their meetings to thoroughly immerse themselves in Sherlock's life style. With one exception. "Cocaine," says Steven Savron, "We don't use cocaine."

That makes a certain sense. Stavron is an assistant district attorney for Tarrant County.

Sherlock Holmes and His buddy, Beeson, Are Alive and Well

It takes careful planning

to walk to any particular corner in William Beeson's apartment in Richardson. Except for a few paths, the two-bedroom layout is filled with records, books, magazines, and even a collection of dictionaries.

Beeson, 46, is such an avid collector that he hasn't had much time for anything else. When he ran out of wall space, he simply constructed shelves, floor to ceiling, in the middle of the rooms. It makes sense when you don't need furniture, and Beeson never entertains. There's no room for guests.

But Bill Beeson, a 275-pound bachelor, is never lonely. His near-constant companion is Sherlock Holmes, unquestionably alive and well in the private world Beeson has constructed for himself. The fictional detective comes dramatically to life the moment the Beeson threshold is crossed.

It isn't easy to dwell with and on a character of fiction without getting a quizzical look, sometimes even from your friends. But Beeson manages and, besides, he's one of a growing coterie of those who read and listen to and collect everything they can about Sherlock Holmes and his aide and confidant, Dr. Watson.

There are at least two Holmes societies in the Dallas area, and many others scattered over the United States. Most have individual names, but all are lumped together in one grand fraternity dubbed the Baker Street Irregulars because that's the London street where Holmes lived and pondered the imponderables, sort of like a 19th century Batman.

Beeson is third mate of the Barque *Lone Star* and is also a member of V.R., so named because when Holmes got bored – which was often – he would use bullets to pepper the Queen's initials on his apartment walls. Holmes devotees would never overlook a memorable quirk like that. Elementary, dear reader.

When Beeson isn't collecting or reading books or stories or listening to records about Sherlock Holmes, he's pursuing his highly technical job at Texas Instruments – where he is a computer-programmer analyst in a data group in radar. He's been doing that since 1959, except for a 14-month hiatus.

A Sherlock Holmes collection means just the works themselves – right? Wrong. For Beeson, it also means the "sacred writings," or the writings about the writings, and these are an area of special concern for any Holmes collector, also called Holmesians. Then, too, there are the journals of the various Sherlock Holmes societies, magazines in which the tales have been published, parodies, and satires on the works themselves, the pastiches relevant to Holmes stories – efforts to capture a mood – phonograph records of readings and of the "sacred writings," records of old radio shows, reference books and bibliographies, a Holmes encyclopedia of characters and occurrences, plays and even a postage stamp from Nicaragua that depicts the famous sleuth.

Beeson embellishes his collection with a more personalized touch – the famed calabash pipes like Holmes used, the double-billed deerstalker cap, pewter figurines of Holmes and Watson, and even a Hawkshaw the Detective coloring book dating to 1905.

When the Dallas Theater Center offered a month-long engagement this summer of a Sherlock Holmes play, "Sherlock Holmes and the Curse of the Sign of Four," producers naturally contacted Beeson and other Holmes devotees. They wanted to be sure the settings and props and voices and mannerisms were accurate. Eminently successful, the play drew such acclaim the Theater Center will offer it again this fall.

Beeson grew up in small Fort Worth apartments where there was no room for collecting. In his teens, he had a newspaper route.

“We lived just one block from TCU, and so I had an early acquaintance with books,” Beeson said.

After graduating from the old Paschal High School in 1947, Beeson went to Texas A&M University for a year and then took a job running an elevator in the Texas & Pacific Terminal and Warehouse in Fort Worth. At the same time, he became a radio-speech major at TCU, then switched to physics and math, but this was interrupted by military service in the Air Force as a hospital technician, including one year in Korea.

“I guess I was a voracious reader from the year one. I even knew printing before I went to school,” Beeson recalled. “I remember I first read Sherlock Holmes in my early teens, but I didn’t start collecting until 14 or 15 years ago.”

Stacking more and more books and magazines and records into his apartment as the years go by might seem a major challenge in itself. But not to Bill B. Beeson. He’s also an amateur magician.

Mike Alexander, *Dallas Times Herald*
Monday, June 7, 1976

Sherlockians Gather to Celebrate Holmes

It was a situation that would have puzzled even Sherlock Holmes.

The crowded theater lobby was dotted with a number of "suspicious-looking characters." Many were dressed as the famous sleuth, while others posed as characters from the various stories detailing the adventures of the detective and his faithful colleague Dr. Watson.

Was some dastardly deed afoot? Elementary. It was a gathering of Sherlockians (fans of Sherlock Holmes) who assembled in Dallas Saturday afternoon to attend a performance of "Sherlock Holmes and the Curse of the Sign of Four", which is currently being staged at the Dallas Theater Center.

The group of 50 or 60 Sherlockians filled the theater lobby with a number sporting their best Holmes attire. The coordinator of the event, William Beeson, explained that the members had a choice of coming as either Holmes or as one of the characters from a Sherlock Holmes adventure. Beeson, for example, was dressed as the Third Mate of the Barque "Lone Star", a ship mentioned in the story the "Five Orange Pips."

The Crew of the Barque "Lone Star" was one of the two Sherlockian organizations participating in the event Saturday at the Theater Center. The second organization was the V.R., which stands for Victoria Regina. Beeson is the leader or Third Mate of the Barque "Lone Star," an organization which covers North Texas. The V.R. is Dallas-based and is led by Dr. Charles Petty, who is chief medical examiner for Dallas County.

"We celebrate Sherlock Holmes," said Beeson. "Some of us are interested in perpetuating the legend that Sherlock Holmes was not a legend."

The turnout included a number on non-Sherlockians, like two University of Texas students, Jim Feldman and Gary Dickerson. Dressed as Holmes and Dr. Watson, Feldman and Dickerson said that they were home from Austin for the summer vacation and that they decided to dress up and join the group because they both were longtime Sherlock Holmes fans.

Gary McKeithen, an engineering manager from Richardson, drew a great deal of attention with his all-white Baritsu costume. Baritsu is described in the story "The Empty House," as a Japanese form of wrestling which Holmes employed to defeat Professor Moriarty at Reichenbach Falls.

McKeithen came dressed as a Baritsu master but could not reveal how where he learned the art. All McKeithen would say was that he had traveled in the Orient.

Saturday's activities, called a "Shakedown Cruise," also included a dinner and meeting at the Steak & Ale on Valley View following the performance of the play.

Victor Dricks, *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*
Saturday, January 15, 1977

Metroscope

Sherlockian Holmes Fan Club

Loyal Followers have a lot to cheer about these days

Sherlock Holmes has come to Fort Worth. He is featured here in the movie, *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution* and will be the subject of a Casa Manana play next month. To a group of 125 loyal fans known collectively as “The Crew of the Barque *Lone Star*,” that is especially good news.

The timeless appeal of the world’s greatest detective has found a place in the hearts of these area businessmen, computer programmers, historians, doctors, lawyers, law enforcement officials, housewives, and salesmen who banded together six years ago and formed the group for the purpose of keeping Sherlock Holmes’ name alive.

They needn’t worry. Today, more than 85 years after Sir Arthur Conan Doyle wrote the first Sherlock Holmes story, *A Study in Scarlet*, Holmes and Watson are more popular and sleuthing about more actively at Baker Street than ever before.

Cases in point:

- Nicholas Meyer’s *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution*, a nationwide bestseller last year, is now selling millions of copies in paperback and has become a major motion picture now playing throughout the Metroplex.
- Casa Manana will produce a Sherlock Holmes play in early February, and audiences around the country are delighting to similar theatrical performances
- Dozens of books about Holmes, the most famous literary character in the world, are being printed each month. Bookstore browsers can find Sherlock Holmes’ cookbooks, Holmes pastiches, and of course, critical analyses which deal with everything from the color of the wallpaper at 221b Baker Street to Holmes’ family ancestry.

The Richardson-based group of Sherlockians derives its name from a ship which appears in the Holmes’ story, “The Five Orange Pips.” It is just one of more than 50 such “scion societies” nationwide with a collective membership numbering in the thousands.

“It was the only reference we could find to Texas in the writings,” said David Dunnett, one of the club’s officers, in describing the selection of the club’s name.

Almost 50 members of the group went to see the Dallas Theatre’s production of *Sherlock Holmes and the Curse of the Sign of the Four* last June, and astounded audiences there by appearing at the theatre one evening *en masse*, dressed as characters from the Holmes stories.

The members are planning similar devilry during *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution*, and the Great Detective’s birthday next month. They plan to travel to a Dallas movie house tonight to attend the movie.

The group also plans to travel to Hot Springs, Ark. March 12 to attend the Silver Blaze horse race they are jointly sponsoring with “The Afghanistan Perceivers,” a Tulsa Okla. Based group.

“Silver Blaze” is then name of an English racehorse which appears in one of the Holmes stories.

But it’s not all fun and games for the Sherlockians either. Two of its members are serving as technical advisors and set designers for the Casa Manana production, which opens Feb. 11.

“We’re helping design the sitting rooms of the 221b Baker Street and helping on the technical questions,” Dunnett said.

Dunnett, who is pursuing a masters degree in history at TCU, said the group meets about four times a year, usually at a restaurant for discussion of “the sacred writings” as the Holmes stories are called by Sherlockians.

William B. Beeson, 46, a Richardson computer programmer said he became a fan “after reading the Holmes stories when I was a kid.”

The fortunate kids, Beeson said, are those who never outgrew their love for Holmes.

“We’re primarily interested in attracting newcomers in the field,” Beeson said. “Many groups require a high degree of scholarship in matters Holmesian for membership. But the Barque *Lone Star* is

interested in attracting people with a strong interest in Holmes rather than in people who can recite the quotations from the stories.

Anyone interested in joining their group can contact Beeson by writing to him in Richardson.

At their meetings, the members have the four toasts required by their bylaws. The first toast is to Sherlock Holmes, the second to Dr. Watson, the third to the crew of the Barque *Lone Star*, and the fourth to the Republic of Texas.

Then they discuss Holmes and the meeting can become forums for acrimonious debate and heated discussion.

"I didn't like that book *Seven Percent*," Dunnett said in describing his reaction to Meyer's novel which paints a bleak but very human version of Holmes.

In the novel, supposedly related to Meyer by Dr. Watson, Holmes has become so dependent on cocaine that Watson cooks up an elaborate scheme to cure him. He sends him on a wild goose chase that leads him to Dr. Sigmund Freud in Vienna where he is cured of his drug addiction. The two then save Europe from destruction.

The novel however, also suggests Dr. James Moriarty, Holmes' arch-rival, was nothing more than a figment of the detective's cocaine-stirred imagination.

"Unthinkable!" says Dunnett and other hard-core Sherlockians who resent Meyer's liberal treatment of such sacred subjects.

"I really didn't like that at all. I didn't like the idea of Moriarty being a figment of Holmes' imagination," Dunnett said. "But I didn't get so upset as many other fans did when that novel appeared and as I think will when they see the film."

In fact, Meyer, who lives in Los Angeles, and has just had his second Holmes novel, *The West End Horror*, published, says many fans take the whole thing too seriously.

"In my mind there is an underestimation of the strength of Holmes. People who worry about Shakespeare being spoofed don't seem to understand that his work will be around long after all the spoofs have crumbled to dust. The same applies to Holmes."

Meyer said Holmes' addiction to cocaine adds the image of human frailty to the detective and, thus, gives him more credibility.

Basil Rathbone, the late actor who is credited by Sherlockians as having given one of the most definitive portrayals of Holmes in 14 movies which appeared between 1939 and 1945, said the same thing in describing the detective's timeless popularity.

Writing in an issue of the *Baker Street Journal*, a Holmesian publication for Sherlockian scholars, Rathbone said, "Holmes is a man, not a puppet. As a man he has many vulnerable spots, like us. He is vain; prejudiced; intolerant. He is a drug addict; he even plays the violin for diversion – one of the most deplorable outrages of self-indulgence. But he loves truth and justice more than he loves money or comfort or safety or pleasure. Such a man never lived, so Sherlock Holmes will never die."

Holmes, said Rathbone, is the embodiment of man's dearest and most stubborn born conceit: that he is a reasoning animal.

"Don Quixote, Hamlet and Cinderella are human, but Holmes is human aspiration. Our aspiration to put our reason in control of our instincts and emotions is so deep and intense we constantly pretend we are doing so. We almost never are, but Sherlock Holmes always is," Rathbone said.

Many Holmes fans are unable to describe what it is about the Great Detective they find so attractive. Some speak of the setting of the stories – Victorian England with its gaslit streets, hansom carriages, and swirling fogs.

Others speak of him in reverential tones.

"We call him The Master," Dunnett said. "The 56 short stories and four novels are referred to as the sacred writings or the canon, just as theologians refer to the Bible."

Meanwhile, as the debates rage within Holmesian circles, The Master remains, as always, aloof. As any fan will tell you, Sherlock Holmes long ago retired from practice, and now lives on the Sussex Downs in England where he keeps bees.

Doug Domeier, *Dallas Morning News*
Monday, April 11, 1977

It's Elementary for Holmes Fans

Crew of the Barque Lone Star toasts memory of famous sleuth

Four toasts are raised at each dinner meeting of the Crew of the Barque *Lone Star*, a Scion (descendant) Society of the Baker Street Irregulars.

The toasts honor Sherlock Holmes, Dr. John Watson, the State of Texas ("To the great State of Texas Confusion to its enemies!") and the Barque "*Lone Star*" and "all who sail aboard her."

If you attend the next dinner, the man or woman seated next to you may wear Victorian-style clothes and could be a housewife or an assistant district attorney.

The diverse group has a common bond – they are "Sherlockians," indefatigable fans of the most famous detective of fiction.

YOU WILL MEET a tall, cheerful gentleman named William B. Beeson, third mate (chief officer) of the Crew, who first read Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's stories as a child and has since lost track of the number of readings.

"Any Sherlockian worth his or her salt is willing to argue Holmes did exist, the stories were written by Dr. Watson, and Doyle was a friend of Watson's," Beeson said.

While members of the club may quiz each other on details of the 56 stories and four novels featuring Holmes, no one is an "expert," Beeson said.

"WE'RE IN IT TO have fun," he said. "It's not who can 'one-up' who."

Founded in November, 1970, by Margaret F. Morris, at that time an Arlington resident, the society is named for a ship in the Holmes story, "The Five Orange Pips." It is one of approximately 100 Holmes groups which are offspring of the Baker Street Irregulars, the parent club in New York City.

The Baker Street Irregulars refers to the band of ragged street urchins in Victorian London who were "sharp and alert" and helped Holmes solve mysteries, Beeson said.

Beeson, a computer programmer analyst and Richardson resident, said the Crew of the Barque *Lone Star* includes persons from ages 7 to the 60s.

MEMBERSHIP requirements are not difficult – an interest in Holmes-works, a personality of "good will" (no cranks, please) and "be willing to put in the pot more than you take out," Beeson said. There are no dues, contributions and work for the society are voluntary. Meetings are irregular (no pun intended).

The society also offers itself as an informal consultant on Holmes projects, as when the Dallas Theater Center staged "The Sign of the Four."

Beeson's private collection of Holmes material includes books filling 50 feet of shelves, games, pipes, hats, records, journals from other Holmes societies, even an old Baker Street sign (from Fort Worth).

THE SOCIETY PLANS a "black museum", Scotland Yard's terms for a collection of "weird and wondrous weapons," relics of Holmes cases, Beeson said.

What prompts this dedication to the Doyle works?

"The characters are prototypes," Beeson said. "You remember them as typical of whole bunches of

people. Holmes is human, arrogant, not much afraid of anything.

"The people seem like real people," he said, and the stories have a "richness" that gives them different meanings when people read them at different periods of their lives.

Those who want to join the more than 120 members of the Crew of the Barque *Lone Star* should write Beeson in Richardson, Texas.

Larry Powell, *The Dallas Morning News*
August 11, 1987

Sherlock Holmes Memorabilia Make Library's Case

If you walk into the Fretz Park Branch of the Dallas Public Library at 6990 Belt Line Road and carefully observe the surroundings, you'll immediately be able to deduce that something is afoot.

In the display case, for instance, is a representation of, outside of Elvis Presley, perhaps the world's most discussed entertainment character, Sherlock Holmes.

What brings Holmes to Fretz Park? Roger Carroll of the library staff offers a clue: Michael Lancaster.

Lancaster is a Holmes fan. His wife, Amy, and their kids, 7-year-old Emily and 5-year-old Aaron, helped him select from among his 500-piece collection the items on display through August at the library.

He says he walked past the display case one day "and it was sitting there with something else in it, and I asked Roger about it." The library and the lawyer cut a deal, and that's how Holmes, usually on the shelves, found his way, so to speak, to the case.

On display in this 100th anniversary year of the first Holmes story are some of the more colorful items, Lancaster says. They were chosen not by age or importance, but on ability to catch the eye. Peering into the case you can see, among other things, a *Colliers* magazine with a story by Arthur Conan Doyle's son, Adrian and comic books with Holmes as the hero. Lancaster says this reflects the attempt to appeal to a wide range of ages.

Lancaster says he didn't set out to collect Holmes memorabilia. "You find yourself inadvertently collecting little things along the way," he says. For instance, Mrs. Lancaster "bought me a humidior. It's a bust of Sherlock Holmes. The hat comes off and you put tobacco in it."

His pursuit of foreign language editions of Holmes has led him to diverse places ranging from "Martha Farrington's Murder by the Book mystery bookstore in Houston to San Francisco, where I walked into Chinese-language bookstores and asked for Holmes. They look at you like you're crazy."

That pursuit also has led his clients to diverse bookstores. "My clients have brought back editions from overseas -- I have one in Hebrew from Israel. I have a German edition... There are very few languages Sherlock Holmes is not in."

Lancaster started reading the stories while he was a student at South Garland High School in the late '60s; then when he was in law school, he read them to relax. Noting that there are organizations dedicated to Holmes, he says, "There are those who play that he was alive and a real person. And there are those who accept the fact that Conan Doyle wrote the stories. There are people who call Holmes "The Master." There are all ranges of people. I'm sort of in the middle somewhere."

Noting that Lancaster is a tax attorney, we were moved to ask, "While going over a client's problems with the IRS, have you ever been tempted to throw down your pencil, look up and exclaim, "Elementary!?"

Never he says.

Sherlockian Club Tracks Holmes Society toasts famed detective

If you put Bill Beeson on the witness and asked him if Sherlock Holmes was in fact alive, he would be hard pressed to give you an answer. The Richardson resident explains it this way: "Life is dull enough without making it worse by sticking to the facts.

"You can live in the real world or you can believe in Sherlock Holmes and have a lot more fun," he said.

According to Beeson, the famed detective turned 124 on his recent Jan. 6 birthday.

"Sherlock Holmes is alive and well and living in the Sussex Queens raising bees," he said matter-of-factly. "He has retired from the detective business."

ALTHOUGH IT IS generally known that Arthur Conan Doyle was the author of the many Sherlock Holmes mysteries, Beeson is quick to point out the popular misconception.

"There seems to be a curious belief – and it is indeed a curious belief – that Conan Doyle wrote the stories instead of John H. Watson, M.D.," he said. "Doyle was merely the literary agent for Watson."

Beeson is not alone in his belief in the existence and greatness of the detective and his sidekick, Watson. A Sherlock Holmes club in the area has about 175 members on its mailing list and meets on a regular basis to discuss "The Sacred Writings" as they are called, and toast Holmes.

The group calls itself the Crew of the Barque *Lone Star*, a name derived from the only mention of Texas in the Canonical writings which is found in the "Five Orange Pips." Beeson is the presiding officer but his title is the third mate, for in the story the captain and first two mates of the ship did not survive.

"We're strictly a sense of humor outfit – we're in it for the fun," said Beeson. "We play it for the laughs."

AND LAUGH they do at their jolly, roaring meetings.

Four toasts are offered at each meeting: to Sherlock Holmes, "the world's first private consulting detective – and of course the greatest;" to Dr. John H. Watson, M.D.; to the great state of Texas and "confusion to its enemies;" and to the Barque *Lone Star* "and all who sail aboard it."

The Sherlockians solve puzzles, discuss the sacred writings, listen to programs about the detective and generally have a good time at the meetings.

"**WE DON'T** demand that people wear Sherlockian costumes or bring some object of association to the meetings – but we encourage it," said Beeson. The group then tries to figure out who the person is portraying and from what story it comes.

The group "turned out in full regalia" for the opening of the Dallas Theater Center's "Curse of the Sign of Four." Beeson served as a resource person for the play, filling them in on Sherlockian details to make the play as realistic as possible. The play was a huge success for the theater and Beeson said they planned to revive it in the future. He estimates that he saw the production 16 times during its run.

The Crew of the Barque *Lone Star* formed a separate organization for the cast and crew of the play called the Order of the Immortal Spark. The name is taken from *The Sign of the Four* and the organization is "for people who have remarkably distinguished themselves as Sherlockians," said Beeson.

The club also appeared *en masse* at the opening of the recent movie, "The Seven Per Cent Solution."

They plan to attend a production of the “Curse of the Nine Angels,” a Holmes satire, at the Melodrama Theatre in Austin this month. Other events planned by the group for the spring are attending the Silver Blaze horse race in Hot Springs in March (last year’s winner was Man of Mystery) and joining a Sherlockian group in New Mexico for their Sherlock Hemlock party – in honor of the birthday of the Sesame Street muppet of the same name.

MEMBERSHIP IN the society is based on two requirements: interest and good will.

“We don’t exclude people except for these two reasons,” said Beeson. “If they don’t enjoy Sherlock Holmes then they won’t enjoy us. And if they’re soreheads then we’re not going to enjoy them.”

The youngest member of the society is a five-year-old girl whose Sherlock Holmes T-shirt is her security blanket.

“We’re a society designed for the newcomer,” said Beeson of the Crew’s membership. “We’re not designed for the old established Sherlockian.”

Beeson would not put himself into that category probably, but he has an amazing knowledge of the Canonical writings and Sherlock trivia. He has constructed crossword puzzles and is now working on a book about Professor Moriarty, Holmes’ enemy.

John Anders, *The Dallas Morning News*
April 24, 1979

Barqueing Up the Wrong Tree

The local Sherlockians will be out in force Tuesday when two local Sherlock Holmes Society groups arrive in period costume for the Dallas premiere of the new Christopher Plummer, James Mason thriller, *Murder by Decree*, opening officially March 30 at the Esquire, Northwood and Northtown theaters.

Elston Brooks, *The Fort Worth Star-Telegram*
Friday, January 4, 1980

Holmes Festival Is Planned

Now we ask you, just who can have his 126th birthday celebrated with a cake AND his very own starring movie?

Elementary, my dear Watson, and after that clue – or clew – it doesn’t take a cinematic detective to come with the answer.

Sherlock Holmes, by the reckoning of those Holmes buffs who deduced the debatable date via assorted facts strewn through Arthur Conan Doyle’s books, would be 126 Sunday had he lived.

Which he never did in the first place, but that has never bothered the worldwide group known as the Baker Street Irregulars.

The Fort Worth-Dallas scion society of that group is known as The Crew of the Barque *Lone Star*. And they are staging a Sherlock Holmes Festival Saturday at the Fort Worth Public Library.

It begins at 3 p.m. Saturday in the library’s David Tandy Lecture Hall with a free showing of the 1939’s *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, starring Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce.

Afterward, there’ll be an audience discussion led by the Barque’s Bill Beeson, or Richardson, and David Dunnett, of Fort Worth, both appropriately costumed.

The library’s Patricia Chadwell will supply tapes of the old Holmes radio show.

Downstairs in the library will be a Holmes display, featuring Holmes books, both rare and unrare,

Holmes photographs, and a rag doll collection of Holmes, Watson, Mycroft, and Professor Moriarty hand-made by Patti Nead of Arlington.

The display will remain on view at the library throughout January.

The cake gets served Saturday at 6 p.m., when the group stages its first inaugural Sherlock Holmes Birthday Dinner at the Burgundy Tree Restaurant on University Drive. The public is invited, the only charge being the cost of dinner ordered from the menu.

Jim Marrs, *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*
Friday, January 4, 1980

Up Front

Holmes Dead? Then Where Is His Obituary?

Fans sure locked onto detectives' location

The word is out. The renowned detective, Sherlock Holmes, is alive and well and raising bees in Sussex, England.

At least, that is the conclusion of the crew of the barque *Lone Star*.

Crewman *Steve Stavron* explains that the *Lone Star* is actually the name of a group of local fans of the famous British sleuth.

Stavron said the ship is mentioned in the Sherlock Holmes short story "Five Orange Pips." A barque, or bark as it's spelled in the colonies, is a type of clipper ship.

"Since the ship's name was the *Lone Star*, we naturally assumed it was from Texas", said Stavron, a former assistant county legal advisor.

However, Stavron was quick to divorce himself and the rest of the crew from the ship's officers. "It was not a good ship," he said. "In fact, it was a bad ship – a ship used for nefarious purposes. Both the captain and the first and second mates were involved in bad business."

Nevertheless, the local crew is even now in the midst of a sort of a mutiny. Stavron said Tarrant County members have broken with Dallas County members and are in the process of forming a new group devoted to the study and veneration of Holmes.

The group's first official act will be to conduct a birthday party for Holmes, when they refer to as "the master," at 6 p.m. Saturday at the Burgundy Tree restaurant at 1015 University Drive.

The party is open to anyone wishing to join Holmes' celebration. Stavron requested that anyone wanting to attend, however, make reservations by calling at 336-3888.

Stavron said the just-forming Sherlockian group has not yet chosen a name. "We'll throw that open to the membership," he said.

However, all such groups, known as scion societies, are a part of a worldwide association of Holmes fans known as the Baker Street Irregulars. The original Irregulars was a group of street urchins whom Holmes counted for intelligence and occasional physical support.

At Saturday's birthday celebration, the main order of the day will be toasts. Toasts will be made not only to "the master," but also to his faithful associate, John H. Watson, M.D., and to others connected to the great detective, such as Dr. Moriarty and Sherlock's main love, singer Irene Adler.

In fact, Stavron has what is purported to be a letter from Watson dated Dec. 27, 1929, and postmarked, "Sussex, England."

"My dear friends," Watson writes. "As I am sure you know, Holmes and I welcome each year the news of world-wide celebrations of Holmes' birth. Such attention pleases Holmes insufferably, although

he feigns indifference and utter annoyance. I have been informed of such a festival in your area, and as Holmes' Boswell, have been asked to inform you of same and beg your attendance.

"I, alas, will be unable to attend..."

An accompanying broadside announced that, in addition to the birthday celebration Saturday night, there will be a Sherlock Holmes festival at the downtown Fort Worth Public Library. The library will exhibit numerous Holmes artifacts and present a reading of the children's story, "Basil of Baker Street" during the celebration, which is scheduled for 3 p.m. Saturday.

In addition to the many toasts, the Saturday night party will include the film "Hound of the Baskervilles," starring Basil Rathbone as Sherlock and Nigel Bruce as Watson. Also, anyone wishing to attend is asked to read the Holmes story "A Scandal in Bohemia" and to come prepared to ask one question based on the narrative. The person answering all questions most correctly will win a prize, Stavron said.

But just how do Stavron and other members of the local scion society know that the 114-year-old detective is alive?

According to Stavron, since no obituary has ever been published on Holmes, he therefore must still be alive.

"In the last Sherlock Holmes story written by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, entitled, "The Final Problem," Sherlock captures a German spy in 1916 during World War I. In the story it mentions that at time he plans to retire to Sussex and raise bees," Stavron said.

"And since whenever a world-famous person dies, a newspaper will run the obituary and since no one has ever published Holmes' obituary, he must still be alive.

"We have just put two and two together and used deductive reasoning. It's elementary."

Stavron, who has a collection of Holmes stories as well as a 1800s tweed suit complete with calabash pipe, said his mania for Sherlock Holmes is his hobby. "Everyone must have an active hobby," he said. And what better subject than "the master"!

"Other than the Bible, nothing has been more published than the stories of Sherlock Holmes, and in almost every human tongue," he said. "That's really something, isn't it?"

Stavron said that since Doyle's stories about the detective were first published in the late 1890s, the fame of Sherlock Holmes has spread around the world.

He said today there are Holmesian scion societies in at least 10 different countries, including the United States, Denmark, Argentina, and Japan.

"Probably our most famous Sherlockian was President Franklin D Roosevelt," Stavron said. "He even tried to develop two theories about Holmes. One was that Watson really was a woman and the other that Sherlock actually was an American."

Today, several Sherlockian societies are scattered through the United States, carrying such names as The Five Orange Pips of Westchester County, N.Y., and The Hounds of the Baskervilles of Chicago.

Stavron said there also is the V.R. group in Dallas, but said it is an exclusive society. "You have to be involved in some aspect of the forensic sciences to be a member of that group," he said.

V.R. by the way, stands for "Victoria Regina" or Queen Victoria, and were the initials Holmes occasionally blasted into the wall of his apartment with a revolver when he was bored and between cases.

The various societies keep in touch through a small publication, *The Baker Street Journal: An Irregular Quarterly of Sherlockiana*. In describing the journal, Stavron said that, "Never has so much been written by so few for so many.

"It's really incredible," Stavron said about the whole Holmes phenomenon. "Grown people can get up and talk for a weekend on this subject."

He also said movies and books are still appearing about Sherlock Holmes. "There have been three magnificent new Sherlock Holmes plays written right here in the Fort Worth-Dallas area," he added.

Stavron said most of the recent recounting of Holmes' adventures remain faithful to the Sherlock tradition, even though some recent publications have tied the detective to notable peers, such as Sigmund Freud, Tarzan, and even Dracula.

A raging debate still continues whether Moriarty, Holmes chief opponent, is a real person or perhaps only a figment of Holmes' twisted imagination.

"After all," Stavron said, "no one ever saw Moriarty and Holmes together at the same time and Holmes was a master of disguise. He could have committed the crimes and later come back to solve them. Sort of a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde."

But, controversies and celebrations aside, one thing seems elementary.
Sherlock Holmes is still very much alive, at least in the minds of his fans.

Joe Leydon, *The Dallas Morning News*
Sunday, April 19, 1981

Entertainment

Holmes Is Where His Heart Is It's Elementary!

LIKE SOME dedicated True Believer determined to spread his faith, William B. Beeson is likely to load you down with books, drawings, and pamphlets pertaining to his obsession.

Search all you want through the material, however, and you will find no mention of a deity, no partisan politics, and no bizarre diets for long life and prosperity. That's because Beeson, 51, is not a religious zealot, or a political activist, or a health food faddist. Beeson is something much rarer. Beeson is a dedicated Sherlockian.

"I ENJOY stacking people up with Sherlockian books," Beeson said backstage at the Dallas Theater Center as he piled tomes onto a reporter's outstretched arms. "About a fifth of my collection is constantly in circulation."

As Beeson will enthusiastically inform you, Sherlockians are those loyal souls dedicated to studying the life and lore of Sherlock Holmes, the greatest detective who ever lived – and, in their view, never died.

"We are devoted to promoting the legend – that Sherlock Holmes is not a legend," said Beeson, a soft-spoken fellow whose sturdy physique dissuades one from disputing his points. "If he is a legend, we feel he is a legend who deserves to be true."

A life-long resident of the Dallas-Fort Worth area, Beeson is leader – "Third Mate," actually – of a Sherlockian sect called the Crew of the Barque *Lone Star*. A similar sect, headquartered in Fort Worth, is called the 1st Bangalore Pioneers. Other Sherlockian sects in Texas include Some Freaks of Atavism of Denton, the Strange Old Book Collectors of San Antonio, and the Strollers on the Strand of Galveston.

THE CREW of the Barque *Lone Star* meets at irregular intervals "when we have enough interesting presentations to make a meeting worthwhile," Beeson said. Usually, these presentations involve discussions and debates over the finer points of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's tales.

Of course, all dedicated Sherlockians know Conan Doyle did not really *invent* the adventures of Holmes and his faithful companion, Dr. John H. Watson. "They feel," Beeson said, "that Dr. Watson wrote the Sacred Writings (the 56 short stories and four novels) and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was Watson's friend and literary agent, who saw to it the tales were published."

Beeson may well be right. Decades after the demise of Conan Doyle, “previously undiscovered” manuscripts by Dr. Watson have been turned up by writers. A couple of them – *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution* and *The West End Horror* – were found and “edited” by author Nicholas Meyer. Another story, *The Crucible of Blood*, was dramatized for Broadway a couple of years back.

Closer to home, *The Incredible Murder of Cardinal Tosca* has been unearthed and placed on stage of the Dallas Theater Center. Alden Nowland and Walter Learning are listed in the program as authors, but Beeson knows better – surely, he says, this is another tale told by the venerable Dr. Watson. Beeson should know best – he is technical advisor for the show.

BEESON – who squeezes Sherlockian and theatrical activity into his time away from “a pretty demanding job” for Texas Instruments – is no stranger to DTC. Four years ago, when the theater presented another Holmes melodrama, *The Curse of the Sign of the Four*, Beeson stepped from his accustomed position on the other side of the footlights.

“As soon as I heard they were going to do a Sherlock Holmes play,” Beeson said backstage at DTC, “I called and got the director and offered to loan him reference books and whatever else he might find useful. And he took me up on it – at one time, they had 30 or 40 of my books down here.”

He returned to offer additional technical advice for two other DTC productions: *Something’s Afoot*, a spoof of Agatha Christie stories, and *The Illusion*, a musical magic show. Beeson, a magician himself “for some 30-odd years” in his spare time, helped set up the legerdemain for *Illusion*, and gave tips on mystery novels to the cast of *Afoot*.

For *Incredible Murder of Cardinal Tosca*, Beeson has once again brought DTC selections from his “70 feet of books devoted to Sherlock Holmes.” In addition to steeping the cast in Sherlockian minutiae, Beeson volunteered for the small but showy role of Boris, henchman of the arch-villain Moriarty.

“It’s such an adventure – one, to be in a play; two, to be in a play at the Theater Center; three, to be in a Sherlock Holmes play; and four, to be a monster, however minor a monster.”

OFFSTAGE, Beeson is a decidedly gentler fellow than the imposing behemoth he enacts on the DTC stage. He has an air of carefree joviality and indulgent patience about him, even while talking about something as serious as Sherlock Holmes.

Pressed on the subject of post-Conan Doyle accounts of Holmes and Watson, Beeson diplomatically refrained from being overly harsh on any particular production or novel. Even while talking about a strikingly awful touring production of the play *Sherlock Holmes* – “I never saw anything quite so grotesque in all my life!” – Beeson quickly pointed out the show featured at least two impressive supporting performances.

“I like just about everything that has to do with Sherlock Holmes,” Beeson said. “I like the flamboyance of the characters. I like the fact that the stories are really more tales than stories. Everybody in them is a prototype: the brilliant detective; Watson, his loyal friend; Moriarty, the Napoleon of Crime. Everybody’s larger than life-size.”

“The parodies and the pastiches – if they’re well-written – are a particular delight. I don’t get too upset by the bad ones, because they’re going to die of their own volition pretty fast anyway. If I were Charlie Brown, I guess Lucy would call me wishy-washy. But I’m not wishy-washy – I just look for the things that I’m going to enjoy in these tales. I’m really a Sherlockian for the fun to be had. I’m fiercely devoted to the fun that’s to be had.”

ABOUT THE only interpretation of the Sherlockian legend that arouses Beeson’s ire is one that has displeased many Holmes buffs. Nigel Bruce played Dr. Watson opposite Basil Rathbone’s Sherlock Holmes in a series of 1940s thrillers. Despite the popularity of the films – or perhaps because of it – Bruce’s portrayal of Watson as a bumbling buffoon rather than a worthy companion for Holmes has long angered diehard fans.

“I really don’t like what Bruce did,” Beeson said, “because he created an image that’s stuck in so many people’s minds. Now people will see a well-done Watson, and they’ll say ‘Hey, this isn’t for real –

this isn't Nigel Bruce!"

Beeson thinks Robert Duvall has offered the best screen interpretation of Watson, in the film version of *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution*. (He hated Nicol Williamson's version of Holmes in the same film, however). Basil Rathbone remains his favorite Sherlock Holmes on celluloid, though he has kind word for Christopher Plummer's efforts in *Murder by Decree* and John Neville's performance in *A Study in Terror*.

As for stage performances, Beeson has high praise for the work of Randy Moore (as Holmes) and Russell Henderson (as Watson) in *The Incredible Murder of Cardinal Tosca*. The Sherlockian thinks Holmes himself would approve of the production – although Beeson conceded, the master sleuth of Baker Street doesn't get to the theater much these days.

"He's in his cottage in the Sussex Downs," Beeson said, "keeping bees, working on his magnum opus – *The Whole Art of Detection* – and enjoying his 127th year to the full.

"And he bids fair, as far as I'm concerned, to live forever."

James Masters, *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*
Wednesday, March 10, 1982

Resurrecting Sherlock Holmes' Myth

Who is the most fictional character in literature?

Elementary, say surveys: It's Sherlock Holmes. And No. 2? That distinction belongs to the ever-faithful Dr. John Watson, Holmes' confederate and biographer.

But the 1st Bangalore Pioneers won't buy that.

It's not Holmes' fame to which the group objects. In fact, that fame is the basis for their existence. *Fictional* is the censured word here.

"One of our purposes in existing is to perpetuate the legend that Sherlock Holmes is not a legend," said David Dunnett, acting colonel of the 1st Bangalore Pioneers, one of two Sherlockian organizations in Fort Worth and one of hundreds across the country.

No good Sherlockian will ever admit, even to himself, that Holmes and Watson weren't... well, weren't Holmes and Watson. Holmes solved cases and Watson wrote about them. Period. And Arthur Conan Doyle? History has improperly promoted him. He was merely a literary agent acting for Dr. Watson, say Sherlockians.

"The poor guy is basically ignored," said Dunnett. "He's always referred to as "the literary agent. His name never comes up."

That seems rather harsh treatment of the author non-Sherlockians credit with penning the 37 original Holmes' short stories and one novel, *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, published in *The Strand Magazine* between 1891 and 1905.

CONAN DOYLE cared as little for his famous sleuth as Sherlockians do for the eminent author. He thought his stories base and low-brow; they were keeping him from earning a reputation as a serious author. The solution seemed simple enough: Toss Holmes over the falls at Reichenbach along with his arch enemy Professor Moriarty in 1893's "The Adventure of the Final Problem."

But public outcry and an affection for pound sterling – the stories were great moneymakers – proved weightier than Conan Doyle's lack of affection for Holmes, and in "The Adventure of the Empty House," published in 1903, the world's most famous detective returned to Mrs. Hudson's rooms at 221B Baker St. And, revived to live again, Holmes is finding dying as onerous a problem as any he's faced.

“Sherlock Holmes is still alive because his obituary has never appeared in *The Times*. In England, you’re not dead until that happens, said Dunnett, stating a basic Sherlockian belief. “He’s still tending bees on the Sussex Downs.”

So the master lives on, in spirit if not in body.

Christopher Morley, a New York newspaperman and essayist, founded the Baker Street Irregulars, the first and most prestigious Holmes organization, in the 1930s. Sherlockian scions have since spread around the world.

The 1st Bengalore Pioneers was organized in January 1980 by a group of hard-core Fort Worth Sherlockians who had been associated with the Crew of the Barque *Lone Star* in Dallas.

The group, numbering about a dozen and not likely to get much larger, according to Dunnett, meets rarely, irregularly and at the whim of the acting colonel.

IN THE TRADITION of the Royal Navy, the Sherlockians sing *God Save the Queen* while seated, toast her majesty, Holmes and Watson and, last and not least, toast their patron villain, Colonel Sebastian Moran, former colonel of the 1st Bengalore Pioneers in India Professor Moriarty’s henchman, and of course, the second most dangerous man in London. (Moran left India under veiled circumstances, but is still “The Colonel” leaving Dunnett with his acting colonel title.)

Dunnett’s group delves into the scholarly aspects of the Holmes’ stories and presents extensively researched papers at its meetings.

One member turned astrology loose on Colonel Moran’s characteristics to calculate the villain’s birthday and found it to be April 5, 1840. Papers have turned up on Moran’s air gun – he was the best shot in the Eastern Empire – on Sherlockian influences on Gilbert and Sullivan, on Professor Moriarty’s career in India – established from the mention of a drunkard named Moriarty in a Kipling story – and on Dr. Watson’s two military careers.

“Our group pushed that kind of research,” says Dunnett. “We’re trying to put Texas on the Sherlock Holmes map.

“And there are other groups like ours around the country. But most are ‘meet and eat’ types.”

One that might fall into that category is Fort Worth’s Non-pareil Club, presided over by Fort Worth attorney David Greenlee.

The Non-pareil Club absorbed Greenlee’s original three-member Sherlockian organization, the Unslipped Persians early in 1980, and now claims 20-30 members.

THE NON-PAREIL Club members observe the obligatory toasts at their meetings and even have a quiz over the Holmes’ stories, but generally don’t put as much emphasis on scholarly pursuits as do their counterparts in the 1st Bengalore Pioneers.

“We do take ourselves seriously, but we don’t forget to have a good time, too,” said Greenlee.

“We have some serious Sherlockians, but we also have some just plain ol’ revelers.”

What possesses grown men to wear deer-stalker caps, smoke Calabash pipes and toast the Queen of England and a host of characters who lived only through words written almost a century ago?

Bullett Lowry, a history professor at North Texas State University and his wife, a member of the 1st Bengalore Pioneers, laugh at that question.

“First, you have to realize we very seriously don’t take it seriously,” he said.

Lowry then puts into words the thought most Holmes afficianodos seem to carry: the idea that the attraction is as much with the time period as it is with the master detective himself.

“Looking at that time, it’s an extremely attractive period. It’s emotionally attractive. It appeals to the nostalgic in us.”

Dunnett and Greenlee agree.

“A thread that runs through Sherlockians is that we’re all anglophiles, we all love England, particularly Victorian England,” said Greenlee.

SHERLOCKIANS SPEAK of that as a simpler time, a time when the world was quiet, when life was quality life, when the sun never set on the British Empire.

"Looking back from our perspective, it was a beautiful time to live, a time of high quality," said Greenlee. "It makes us appreciate quality now."

Fort Worth Sherlockians, as Lowry said, are very seriously not serious. Not one believes he's Holmes. None lurks through deserted nighttime streets in Sundance Square in search of Moriarty. None writes letters to 221B Baker St. asking the master for advice. And none startles visitors by deducing occupation, place of residence and extent of military wounds at first glance.

Sherlockians simply realize it's not difficult to keep a man of extraordinary talents and an age of extraordinary virtues alive, even if neither existed in the first place.

A poem by Vincent Starrett sums up the whole emotional, nostalgic, sentimental matter, said Greenlee, slipping back from pure Sherlockian into 20th Century lawyer, but probably still thinking about the fact that Holmes' whereabouts on April 15, 1912, the night the Titanic sank, are unknown, and Holmes supposedly was on his way to America near that time, and what if, maybe, just maybe...

221:B

*Here dwell together still two men of note
Who never lived and so can never die;
How very near they seem, yet how remote
That age before the world went all awry.
But still the game's afoot for those with ears
Attuned to catch the distant view – halloo;
England is England yet, for all our fears –
Only those things the heart believes are true.
A yellow fog swirls past the window-pane
As night descends upon this fabled street;
A lonely hansom splashes through the rain,
The ghastly gaslamps fall at twenty feet.
Here, though the world explode, these two survive,
And it is always eighteen ninety-five.*

Vincent Starrett

Bryan Woolley, *The Dallas Morning News*
Sunday, September 22, 1996

The Adventure of the Eccentric Sherlockians Their Devotion to the Famous (and Real, They Say) Detective Is More than Elementary)

Every day, Bill Beeson takes up a volume of The Sacred Writings and reads a story or two. "I've been studying them for 55 years," he says. "I always find new things. I never tire of them."

Don Hobbs owns editions of The Sacred Writings in 34 languages, "not including Braille, pig Latin and shorthand," he says. They're part of his collection of 3,000 books and 4,000 newspaper and magazine articles, journals, newsletters and other ephemera having to do with The Sacred Writings and The

Master.

Jim Webb recently returned from a pilgrimage to the Reichenbach Fall in Switzerland, where a century ago The Master and his diabolical archenemy locked in a life-and-death struggle and appeared to have plunged together into the watery abyss. And when Detective Don Casey is nosing about the city in search of skulduggery, the official Dallas Police Department business card that he gives to his contacts bears not only his name and a picture of his badge, but also, in the lower right-hand corner, a portrait of The Master.

The Master is Sherlock Holmes, of 221B Baker St., London, the self-styled "world's first consulting detective." He's famous because of the dozens of stage plays, movies and radio and television shows in which he has been portrayed over the years, and especially because of the stories on which those dramas are based -- the adventures recounted by Mr. Holmes' friend and sometime roommate, Dr. John H. Watson.

The British and American magazines that first published the 60 stories a century ago presented them as fiction and attributed them to a British author named A. Conan Doyle. Most of the world goes along with that. Some people, however, chuckle at such a suggestion. "Every true Sherlockian knows that Holmes and Watson were real!" says Mr. Beeson. "And the accounts of Holmes' cases were really written by Dr. Watson! A. Conan Doyle was merely his literary agent!"

Around the globe at any given moment, thousands of Sherlockians like Mr. Beeson are poring over The Sacred Writings, analyzing them, writing scholarly papers, debating points of fact and chronology, developing Holmesian computer programs, collecting Holmesian documents and artifacts, visiting the scenes of The Master's life, as if it's all supremely important.

"Of course we're serious about it!" says Mr. Beeson. "But it's all in fun." He smiles foxily. His friend Mr. Hobbs - a seemingly normal clinical systems analyst at Zale Lipshy University Hospital -- found himself unable to appease his collecting passion through the garage sales and used-book stores he haunts and the catalogs he studies. He suspected there were Sherlockian books and papers out there that he didn't yet own. So he established the Maniac Collector, the first international Sherlockian collectors society, whose members keep in touch via the Internet. "They're in France, Spain, India, Japan, Israel, Brazil, all the major places," he says with a chortle. "We trade Sherlockian things. I send them English-language editions of Sherlock Holmes, and they send me whatever I ask for from their countries."

The floor-to-ceiling bookshelves in Mr. Hobbs' home groan under editions of The Sacred Writings in Bengali, Catalan, Chinese, Korean, Icelandic, Dutch, Gaelic, Finnish, French, Malaysian, German, Hebrew, Hungarian, Spanish, Italian and Japanese, and dozens of English editions, all wrapped neatly in plastic. There are Sherlockian joke books, cookbooks, trivia books and children's books, even school literature textbooks containing only a single Holmes story. There are shelves of "pastiche" - stories written by later authors, but with Mr. Holmes and Dr. Watson as characters - bearing such titles as *Sherlock Holmes and Dracula* and *Sherlock Holmes and Tarzan*. There are pastiches starring Mr. Holmes' brilliant enemy, Professor James Moriarty, and novelized radio plays and facsimiles of Dr. Watson's handwritten manuscripts. There are Sherlockian salt-and-pepper shakers, Christmas-tree ornaments, nutcrackers, cologne bottles and nesting dolls.

"I love looking at it all," says Mr. Hobbs. "I love being surrounded by it. If only I could find a Vietnamese edition..."

Mr. Beeson, a retired Texas Instruments technician, also has a goal: To write 1,000 verses on the events and characters of The Canon, as The Sacred Writings also are called. "Every story will be represented," he says. "I'm up to verse 328 or 330 so far." An insomniac, he often awakes in the wee hours with a Sherlockian limerick or dactyl in his head. He jots it down and refines it later at his computer.

'Fore a fire to protect me from winter chills
I dreamt of The Canon's familiar thrills:
 Had a fine time except
 Before waking, I stepped
On the tail of the Hound of the Baskervilles.

He first picked up The Sacred Writings when he was 11, he says, and has seldom ignored them for a day since. "I want to pay back something," he says. "I want to contribute to the Sherlockian literature."

As he grappled with doomed Moriarty,
Holmes remarked, at their Reichenbach party,
 "I'll use my baritsu
 So the waterfall gits you,
You wicked old villainous smarty!"

Detective Casey, on the other hand, is a latecomer to the Sherlockian world. "Prior to the late 1980s," he says, "my knowledge of Sherlock Holmes probably was that of most normal people." But during nine trips to England to study the investigative techniques of Scotland Yard, he caught the Sherlockian bug. He visited the Holmes museum on Baker Street and the London set where English actor Jeremy Brett filmed 41 of the tales for television. He wound up a collector of 19th-century British nightsticks, police capes, lanterns and handcuffs, and a student of The Canon.

"I became interested in Sherlock through his connection with the Metropolitan Police in London," he says. "For me, Holmes came along at the right time in history. He didn't have to fool with automobiles and telephones and radios and computers. Nineteenth-century England has a romantic appeal to me. The hansom cabs, the clop of horses' hooves on the cobblestones, gaslight glowing through the fog, hearing Big Ben strike every quarter of the hour..."

During the Christmas season, Detective Casey dresses in the uniform of a London bobby of Queen Victoria's day and patrols Dickens on the Strand in Galveston, the city's yuletide extravaganza. Sherlockian though he be, he admits that, as a police officer, his sympathies lie with Inspector Lestrade and the other Scotland Yard detectives who often are made to look foolish by Mr. Holmes' unorthodox solutions to cases.

In the story called The Speckled Band, for instance, Dr. Watson is amazed by "the rapid deductions, as swift as intuitions, and yet always founded on a logical basis, with which he unraveled the problems which were submitted to him."

"Holmes does make intuitive leaps," Detective Casey concedes. "But he doesn't have to do the hard, grinding, nitty-gritty investigative work that Lestrade and the other Scotland Yard men must do. They weren't very well trained, of course. Britain didn't have any formal training for police detectives until 1907.

"Holmes takes a leap forward in investigative technique, but he's able to do it because he doesn't have the restrictions on him that Lestrade has.

"Besides," Detective Casey mutters unhappily, "in a number of the stories Holmes does some illegal things. And he lets a few bad guys go. Lestrade couldn't do that."

Jim Webb, an international business strategist who consults with corporations around the world, displays the Certificate of Holmesian Studies of the Franco-Midland Hardware Company on his wall. "I've just submitted my papers - six 2,000-word essays and one 5,000-word essay - for the Diploma, the next-to-last level," he says. "I hope someday to make Master, the highest level."

The Franco-Midland Hardware Company is a Sherlockian society in England, one of hundreds of such organizations around the world. Most are "scions," or affiliates of either the Sherlock Holmes Society of

London or the Baker Street Irregulars of New York, both of which held their first meeting on June 5, 1934. On that occasion, they exchanged greetings via the trans-Atlantic cable and have kept in touch with each other since.

Messrs. Beeson, Hobbs, Casey and Webb are members of the Dallas scion of the Baker Street Irregulars, called the Crew of the Barque *Lone Star*. The scion societies take their names from persons, places or things mentioned in The Sacred Writings. The barque Lone Star was a sailing ship that figured in the adventure called The Five Orange Pips. Mr. Beeson joined the Crew at its first meeting in 1970. He also is an invested member of the Baker Street Irregulars. In Sherlockian circles this entitles him to place the initials "BSI" after his name.

"It's an honorific," he says. "There are only about 300 invested members in the world."

Many Sherlockians belong to more than one society. Detective Casey is a member of both the Crew and a society in Illinois called the Scotland Yarders. Mr. Webb belongs to the Crew, the Franco-Midland Hardward Company in England, and is an honorary member of a Japanese Sherlockian society called the Black-Headed League. It was with the British group that he and his wife and two children journeyed to the Reichenbach Fall, where Mr. Holmes and Professor Moriarty met in combat.

"We followed the train route along which Moriarty pursued Holmes across Europe," Mr. Webb says. "On several occasions, we were required by the rules of the journey to dress in Victorian costumes, as characters from The Canon. "The Swiss looked at us strangely." He sniffs superciliously. "You would think they would be used to it."

Like all Sherlockian societies, the Crew of the Barque Lone Star gathers periodically to discuss The Sacred Writings, to inspect Holmesian books and artifacts that its members have acquired, to watch the old movies starring Basil Rathbone as Mr. Holmes, or the more recent British productions starring Mr. Brett. At a recent meeting, the Crew saw a cartoon starring Daffy Duck as Sherlock and Porky Pig as Dr. Watson.

"Some Sherlockian societies are very scholarly," Mr. Beeson says. "Some are not. The Crew of the Barque Lone Star is not. We're very eccentric. We don't charge any dues. We don't let the super-knowledgeable types take over. We don't tolerate stinkers. Stinkers somehow just don't get notified of the meetings anymore."

"Why are we Sherlockians?" asks Mr. Hobbs rhetorically. "Why do we do the things we do? I think everybody, deep down inside, wants to be like Sherlock Holmes, to be that smart, to be able to work out problems like he did."

"I've had people sneer at me, 'Why don't you get a life?' " adds Mr. Beeson, BSI. "I have a life. There's a big, heavy-duty fantasy component to it, but it's a life." He smiles shrewdly. "Would you rather live in a world peopled by the likes of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, or one peopled by the likes of Adolf Hitler and Richard Nixon?"

Chris Whitley, *The Dallas Morning News*
Saturday, December 19, 2009

Meet the Baker Street Gang

It takes some deduction to locate which part of the Londoner pub in Addison hosts the meeting of this Sherlock Holmes fan club. The Diogenes Club members do not wear tweed overcoats, smoke low-hanging pipes or hold magnifying glasses. A deerstalker hat sat in a chair unworn. Yet they love Sherlock Holmes. And given their near-religious affection for the character (the original Arthur Conan Doyle stories are referred to as "the canon,") you might expect some cries of heresy about the upcoming

Sherlock Holmes film.

Directed by Guy Ritchie, who has said, "I didn't want deerstalkers and pipes," the Christmas Day release features Robert Downey Jr. as a martial-arts action hero who wears (gasp!) a bowler. But you'll find few hard feelings among these club members.

And the reason is elementary. "If it does well, then more Sherlock Holmes stuff could pop up," says club president Jim Webb. "There's nothing on TV anymore that you can talk about. If we want new members, there's really nothing that would drive their interest to say, 'Gosh, you know, this is cool. Maybe there's a club.'"

How each member developed a passion for tales written more than a century ago differs with each person. Attorney Mary Helen Hellinghausen of McKinney read the stories as a child and was given them again years later by her son as she recuperated from the flu. She got hooked. Webb, by day the chief strategist for the Army and Air Force Exchange Service and a part-time instructor at Southern Methodist University, has loved the detective tales since junior high. He could only take one book of his own to West Point, so he chose a compilation of Holmes stories. As an adult, he kept poring through them, finding new wrinkles to the stories and the characters. "After a while, you go to look for other books and you go, 'I think I'll just reread those,'" he says. "Every time you reread something, you pick up something different."

Such shared feelings are what drew 14 members on a recent Sunday for their monthly meeting. The film was only one topic of conversation. A guest from Tulsa came with a script he had written of a Sherlock Holmes-style radio play. Webb passed out quizzes based on a section of a Holmes story assigned to the group for each meeting. Webb belongs to the Sherlock Holmes Society of London, has taken Holmes-themed vacations with his family through Europe and even traveled to Japan to speak to a Holmes society there. He says he might gauge the club's interest in a field trip to see the film, but he'll probably just go Christmas Day with his family. And he says he'll see the film just like he would any other movie. "If I go, 'I'm going to hate this because it's not going to follow the canon directly, then I'll walk in, and I'll be disappointed. But why pay money to do that to yourself?" he says. "So no, I'll be going in just to be entertained like everyone else."

Hellinghausen has some objections to Downey in the lead role, saying he "doesn't seem Sherlock Holmes-ish." Yet she looks forward to seeing it on the big screen, if anything to give the group something to talk about. "I'm sure the critique of the movie will last through several meetings," she says.

The Dallas Morning News

Monday, December 31, 2012

Diane Jennings

A Study in Sherlock

Call it an elementary deduction, but it's no mystery why Don Hobbs is a legend in the world of Sherlockians. The first clue: He has amassed more than 11,000 volumes of foreign-language editions of books and stories about Sherlock Holmes - the fictitious British detective - in languages he can't read. That was his ticket to being admitted earlier this year to the Baker Street Irregulars, an exclusive, invitation-only club of Sherlock scholars formed in 1934. Only about 300 members belong to the BSI worldwide. The group helped bolster Hobbs' Sherlockian cred by crowning him with a prestigious BSI name: Inspector Lestrade. The name comes from one of the characters in the "canon" of 60 Holmes short stories and books written by Britain's Sir Arthur Conan Doyle primarily during the Victorian and

Edwardian eras.

"It's a very big honor," Hobbs said, "because there are only two people in the canon of the Sherlock Holmes stories mentioned more, and those are Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson. "And those are never given out as names."

By day, the 60-year-old Hobbs is a husband and father who lives in Flower Mound and works for a software company. He's "just a normal person," he said, "who tries to lead a balanced life."

"It's not like I'm obsessed," he insisted. Heritage Auctions recently featured Hobbs and fellow Sherlockian Joe Fay, manager of rare books for Heritage, in a Sherlock Holmes discussion. The title: "The Maniac Collector." About 50 enthralled Sherlockians attended. Hobbs particularly prizes several items in his collection, including an Inuit (Eskimo) translation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles* that he picked up in Greenland. He's also fond of a Macedonian translation that took him more than four years to find. Many of the individual books are not extremely expensive, Hobbs said.

"You could find one for \$25 to \$75," he said. But he insures the entire collection, among the best in a tiny niche market, for \$250,000. The thrill of the hunt motivates him, he said. "It drives me crazy when I find a new translation or somebody tells me about a book I don't know about or I have never heard of," Hobbs said.

Doyle's books and stories have been translated into 98 languages. His collection includes 92 of them. He's still missing translations in Kazakh, Telugu, Sindhi, Tatar, Fijian and Kyrgyz. When Hobbs' worldwide web of book dealers and contacts recently located several stories translated into Uighur, Hobbs was thrilled. He also has a copy of a story translated into Choctaw by a friend.

"The first Native American language of Sherlock Holmes," he said proudly. "He [the friend] sent me the file and I self-published it." Hobbs became acquainted with Holmes as a boy. "I like the way he logically approaches problems, the ways he did deductive reasoning," he said. "It was a very methodical way of solving a crime I just enjoyed."

As he got older, he became fascinated by the myth around the character and decided to start collecting. After a few years of a "vacuum cleaner approach," he focused on foreign-language editions. Hobbs has been a guest at the annual BSI dinner off and on since the 1990s, but he didn't know if he would ever be accepted as a member. "The criteria for entry into the BSI ... depend on who's the head of the organization," said Fay, who described the organization as "the major leagues of Sherlock Holmes."

"He has his own criteria for who gets in and who doesn't, and no one knows what it is." When his name was called, Hobbs said, he "was totally speechless." Hobbs doesn't know how it was decided to give him the name Inspector Lestrade. But, he said, "Maybe it's because I'm always searching." Right now Hobbs, who carries a card with the inscriptions "BSI" and "Inspector Lestrade," is hot on the trail of a copy of *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* published in Kazakh in the 1960s.

"Ten years ago, the Kazakh national library had a copy of it in their collection," he said. "Since then, it's listed as missing." Who better to find it than Don Hobbs, a.k.a. Inspector Lestrade?

A Scholarly Look at the Crew

Allana Wooley developed her thesis at Texas Christian University looking at the organization and activities of the Crew. We include an extract from that thesis.

A STUDY IN SHERLOCK: KNOWING TO BE KNOWN

by Allana Wooley

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for Departmental Honors in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Texas Christian University, Fort Worth, Texas

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Abstract

This thesis explores the ways social communities are consciously, purposefully created and maintained so that they reinforce both individual identity and notions of personal value. Ethnographic research was conducted on a small Sherlockian community in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, The Crew of the Barque Lone Star: A Sherlock Holmes Literary Society. Through participant observation at the monthly meetings, attendance at a few of the extra 'outings' and lectures, and interviews with five members, participant interest in Sherlock Holmes, commitment to the fan community, and the identity politics of participating in the Holmes fandom were examined. Created communities, in which members self-select their level of commitment, revolve around shared interests, foci, and rules of belonging in order to remain functional and active. Members who choose high levels of commitment earn the respect of their peers, and the opportunity to elevate their societal engagement by demonstrating their knowledge of these interests, foci, and rules. iv

Acknowledgements

When you have been allowed to investigate a curiosity as deeply as I have over the past year, the people to thank quickly pile up. First, to my supervising professor, Dr. Lisa Vanderlinden, who agreed to pick me up as a mentee in a most inconvenient time during her own research. Thank you for being patient with me, my stress levels, and my attempts to redefine 'deadline.' Your encouragement, support, and understanding were invaluable. I must also thank Dr. David Aftandilian and Dr. Jason Helms for agreeing to be on my thesis committee, reading an obnoxiously long draft, and sending great articles for me to read and consider as I worked on this project. Finally, I must thank the subjects of this thesis. In Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's 1887 novel, *A Study in Scarlet*, Sherlock Holmes tells Watson that "there is nothing like first-hand evidence." Conducting this ethnographic research through participant observation and interviews has been one of my favorite academic pursuits ever and has colored my ideas of what I want to do with my future. The Crew of the Barque Lone Star welcomed an awkward, 20-year-old girl into their midst and allowed her to watch them, take notes on them, and write about them. Somewhere in the middle of doing all of that, they also became her friends. To Stu Nelan, Don Hobbs, Brenda Hutchinson, Cindy Brown, Steve Mason, and Les Klinger—thank you for sitting down with me and sharing intimate details about your perceptions of the Sherlock Holmes community and the relationships you have formed. v

Introduction

I peck at my food, nervous. I know what's coming, and I know that it will be a pivotal moment. Steve Mason, who put me up for the mini-speech I'm about to deliver, catches my eye. "All right, folks. Let's go and ahead and get started. Allana?"

Game time. I push my seat back. Unfold my page of notes. Blush a bit. Ignore the expectant faces turned my way. Dive in.

“As we all know, Sherlock Holmes is off enjoying his retirement at the moment. While undoubtedly a peaceful existence, this century-long isolation from the thrill and adventure of solving crimes no doubt grows wearisome—boring, even. This is why I have no doubt that every year on Halloween the great detective comes out of hiding, knowing this is the only time of the year he can pass among us, anonymous and unnoticed by his still active fans. Drawn by the slightly sinister element inherent in Halloween and the promise of camouflage crowds bring, as well as his demonstrated knowledge and appreciation of the Americas, Holmes’s favorite Halloween haunt must be the very streets of DFW—a place where Halloween celebrations are bigger, better, scarier, a little more immersive, and offer an opportunity to get away from his staid day-to-day life. As we well know, Holmes was a master at acting and disguise. A convincing enough dying man to fool Watson’s physician in “The Adventure of the Dying Detective,” an old man in an opium den in “The Man with the Twisted Lip,” a plumber, of all things, so method in his acting style that he becomes engaged to a housemaid in “The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton,” a book collector who shocks Watson after three years of supposed death in “The Adventure of the Empty House,” and a drunk stable hand in “A Scandal in Bohemia.” Clearly, Holmes’s repertoire of characters is extensive. Who can say which of these identities he used to walk among us this Halloween?

So, this toast is to Sherlock Holmes, for deceiving us and slipping under our noses unnoticed one more year. Next year, when a grown man knocks on your door and asks for something a little sweeter, a little stronger than a treat, and a little scarier, more complex than a simple trick, look twice—it may just be the master in disguise.”

The backroom of La Madeleine, French country diner and meeting place for the Crew of the Barque Lone Star (Crew), erupts with laughter and the clinking of glasses as their owners sip and set them back on the table. I flush, a little embarrassed by the attention, and sink into my seat. I’ve just delivered the toast for the Crew. It’s a minor task in the grand scheme of the day’s events, but it’s a ritual that has been around at least as long as Sherlock Holmes fan clubs. The tradition of the toast pays homage to the heavy drinking celebrated by many Sherlockians and opens meetings in a congenial, albeit official manner.

It’s the first Sunday of November 2014, which means the 15 to 20 or so self-identifying Sherlockians in the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolis have gathered to pay their respects to the great detective. Studying, via participant observation, the literary society since May, I have become one of the club’s handful of regulars. We surround two long tables, cheesy, carb-y crumbs sprinkled onto plates pushed aside now that ‘Mix and Mingle’ is over. The meeting agenda is laid like a placemat before me, and, optimistically, before every chair in the room. It lays out the various stages of the gathering ‘Mix and Mingle,’ ‘Toast,’ ‘Quiz,’ followed by the lecture for the week as well as any other orders of business.

Every meeting of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star is essentially the same.

The Crew of the Barque Lone Star follows a reading schedule long-accepted by the broader Sherlockian community, moving from short story to short story to novel and back to short story in the chronological order the now legendary Bill (William) Baring-Gould postulated.² Crew members (Or deck hands, if the member has been elevated in status with an investiture.) complete the assigned reading on their own time, and come to the meetings to dine and socialize, take a quiz testing the depth of their knowledge on the story of the week, and then hear announcements and a lecture on a Sherlockian, Doyleian, or Victorian topic related to the week’s reading. Closing with a discussion of the Crew’s upcoming activities as well as a classic reading from the Baker Street Journal, the Crew breaks for the month, planning to see each other in the interim if Sherlock Holmes-themed plays, movies, or exhibits are anywhere within an easy day’s travel.

Before any of this unfolds, meetings officially begin with the toast maker, a Crew member who either volunteers or is asked to stand and deliver a pre-written dedication on any Sherlockian topic of their choosing. Which brings us back to my toast.

Although the query to Crew members to volunteer for the toast came out monthly, I remained silent. To deliver a proper toast—and toasts are incredibly varied month to month—one has to demonstrate a command of Sherlock Holmes, the short story of the week, and the Sherlockian belief system. Even after six months, I didn't think I was ready—when I began attending meetings, the extent of my exposure were repeat viewings of the *Sherlock BBC series*, which, although much loved, takes considerable liberties with the source material.

My new Crew friends have been attending meetings for years and poring over the canon for more than half their life. They know Sherlock Holmes. Knowing Sherlock is crucial. To speak up in the meeting, you better know what you are talking about—if you are wrong about an element of the canon, you will be corrected and your next contribution to the discussion will be greeted with hesitancy and skepticism. I watched enough faces contort with dismissal in reaction to inaccurate statements that I was rightly wary about opening my own mouth. So I waited to volunteer for any public role, reluctant to risk even a minor mark on my as-yet-unproved reputation.

When the November reminder email landed in my inbox, however, I pounced on the Reply button. Third Mate Steve Mason had been promising a one-on-one interview for weeks, his schedule and mine constantly at odds. In the same place at the same time for the meeting, I wasn't going to let the interview opportunity slip away.

Hi Steve! I will be coming to the meeting! Also, would you be willing to do the Sherlock interview this week? I could come early and conduct it before the meeting gets started or stay after for about an hour? Just let me know! Thank you! Allana Wooley
(Wooley, email sent October 28, 2014)

Steve's reply:

Let's plan on doing it after the meeting... Would you like to do the opening toast this week... any subject, any character, and story is fine... Thanks Steve
(Mason, email sent October 29, 2014)

How's that for direction?

Lost and nervous, I hammered out a toast the night before. I drove the 50 minutes to La Madeleine the next morning with knots in my stomach. This would be the first time I would address the entire group. Admittedly, the stakes were not that high—the group would drink and go on about their meeting no matter what I said. But I would never again get this first opportunity to demonstrate my competency. If I bungled this toast, it would be harder to secure future opportunities to give lectures and make contributions to the society. I needed to deliver something simultaneously entertaining, informative, and clearly aligned with the group's particular brand of wit and ethos.

Clearly, my toast was well-received, leaving the Crew room to move onto more time-consuming matters like the lecture and quiz that had more significant impacts on member reputations than an introductory toast. My cheeks slowly return to their status quo pastiness as members of the Crew continue to giggle, thrilled to have recognized 'The Grand Game' and be 'in' on the inside joke. Third Mate Steve Mason asks if I wouldn't mind sending him a copy of the toast to put on the newly renovated website. He only half-jokingly offers me a permanent role as monthly toast maker.

An hour and a half later, after discussing Part One of Doyle's novel *The Valley of Fear*, Crew members make their way through scraping chairs and raise their voices above the growing chatter to

congratulate me again on a great toast. It's the first time I've spoken to a handful of them, but the Crew's members reward contributors. The toast, it seems, has done the trick. A two-minute speech doing more than half a year of steady attendance.

Such is the way of Sherlockia, though. To be identified and accepted by others as a Sherlockian, one has to demonstrate a depth of knowledge on the Sherlockian ways. My toast was successful because it hit upon exactly the elements that maintain Sherlockian societies: displays of knowledge and contribution as testaments to one's right to belong.

This is the crux of what it means to belong to community. At the same time that the group is welcoming to all visitors, a true affiliation with the group, true acceptance and true belonging, must be earned. To become a Sherlockian, the potential or new member must find ways to articulate their worth. Members have to continually engage in a process of proving their own intrinsic value—what do they know and what can they contribute that will further strengthen the community's legitimacy? One's perception of their own social value is the currency that drives their behaviors and the extent of their involvement within the community.

By making a toast, I had the opportunity to bolster my own perceptions of value with members of the Crew. By citing examples of Sherlock Holmes's forays into disguise from across the canon, I demonstrated a breadth of knowledge that only a true Sherlockian (or, in my case, a determined web searcher) could possess. To be able to pull together examples from the many cases and adventures of Sherlock Holmes, synthesize them, hone in on specific, yet revealing characteristics of the main character and his peers and his era is, in fact, one of the primary functions for nearly all recognized Sherlock Holmes literary societies today.

Including the digression on Holmes's current status and whereabouts proved that I am, unequivocally, one of the Sherlockians. 'The Grand Game' is played by Sherlockians everywhere—the continued breaths of Sherlock Holmes are community folklore, a fun story to entertain, especially after a few drinks. I belong to the group because I am adhering to the tenets of their belief system. While no one in the group actively believes in the continued life of Sherlock Holmes (at least no Sherlockian that I have yet met or heard of), proper adherence to the folklore in group settings is a core part of acceptance and membership. This folklore justifies Sherlockian scholarship and is one part of what distinguishes the true Sherlockian from those who don't qualify for the title—either because they don't understand the draw of the detective or because they care only about the high cheekbones of the actors who portray Holmes in the TV adaptation. Exclusion, then, becomes another way of reinforcing in-group membership. Members have put in the work to truly know the character and the stories and have dived into the heart of the canon and the society's activities. They are superior to out-of-group members, at least in the realm of literary (read: "historical" if playing The Game) devotion.

Sherlockians are invested in the spread of Sherlock Holmes. In that vein, they seek to volunteer within the community, collect Sherlockian items, produce work. The more you produce or gather, the more it boosts your status within the community. To take pains to create and to collect shows knowledge, dedication, and attests to the personal importance of belonging to Sherlockia in the creator's world.

THE CREW OF THE BARQUE LONE STAR

The Crew of the Barque Lone Star was founded in 1970. Since then, the Crew has gone through "several incarnations over the decades" under the direction of Joe Faye, Bill Beason, Jim Webb, and Steve Mason—all who served as Third Mates (About).

The Third Mate is "considered the leader of the Crew." This individual has the most power, a "similar rank and stature of the Captain of a fine sailing ship" (Buoy-Laws). The Third Mate is in charge of communications, organizing group activities, and setting the agenda for and facilitating the Crew's

monthly meetings. The Third Mate has enough power and influence to guide the Crew according to their interpretation of the society's mission: "The crew members of the Barque Lone Star are committed to spreading the words of Conan Doyle, John Watson and Sherlock Holmes to the Dallas/Fort Worth area and to the larger Sherlockian world both in the United States and around the world" (About). This position, like all others, is granted by election every two years during the March meeting. There is no term limit.

Below the Third Mate is the Helmsman, whose duties include providing unending loyalty to the Third Mate and carrying out all tasks handed his way. The Helmsman is also responsible for "forcing the Third mate to walk the plank" if a mutiny arises within membership of the Crew (Buoy-Laws). The Helmsman also coordinates the Crew's social media and web presence. Scribes record notes and keep minutes.

Rounding out the officers are the Honorary Spiritual Advisor(s). While these individuals have no official responsibilities, they are chosen based on their demonstrated commitment to the Crew as well as their reputation as good Sherlockians. The Spiritual Advisors "provide guidance and direction as needed to keep the Crew on an even keel and always pointed to the North Star" (Buoy-Laws).

Beyond these officer positions, there are both the deck crew and regular members. Regular membership is open to any participant interested in Sherlock Holmes and the society's mission who has attended at least one monthly meeting. The "deck crew" designation comes as a special investiture when a member has 1) donated at least two Sherlockian-themed books to an institution where books will be shared with the general public, 2) conducted a Sherlockian presentation to an outside organization, and 3) delivered at least one presentation at a regularly scheduled monthly meeting.

Each member is expected to "go everywhere, see everything, overhear everyone" in support of the society's Missions:

- a. to find the Lost Members of the Crew and restore their Names to the Ship's Roster. (For this Mission, strong-armed tactics, while not recommended, shall be tolerated—in Moderation.)
- b. to Notify the Third Mate and Helmsman of all local and distant Sherlockian events, whether or not instigated by the Crew. So that Landing Parties may be organized and put ashore to Support and Enjoy them. (Buoy-Laws)

Clearly, the Crew is a fun-loving group that does not take themselves too seriously. The cheeky tone reflected in the above samples from the Buoy-Laws are representative of the Crew's attitude in meetings. The only thing that is serious about this group is their allegiance to each other and to the pursuit of knowledge regarding Sherlock Holmes and his world.

The Crew is an official scion society of the Baker Street Irregulars (BSI), the leading international Sherlock Holmes society. Scion-hood is a point of pride for the Crew, since it means they are officially recognized by the most powerful and prestigious group of Sherlockians in the world. The Crew once lost its scion status during a dry spell, regaining it in 1996. The official certificate certifying "The Crew of the Barque Lone Star" as an "Irregular Scion Society" is prominently displayed on the organization's website, sporting a signature from one-time BSI president Tom Wiggins (About).

The Crew of the Barque Lone Star got their name from the Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's short story "The Adventures of the Five Orange Pips," notable for its inclusion of Ku Klux Klan activities. In the story, Holmes spends time tracking down the mysterious origin of five orange pips, or seeds. He eventually comes to the conclusion that the pips were sent by ship and the Barque Lone Star was the only ship to have made port in locations matching the postmarks on the letters containing the pips. Holmes sends the pips back to the captain of the Barque Lone Star and has the London police notify Savannah (the Lone Star's home port) that the Captain and first two mates are wanted for murder. However, the Barque Lone Star never arrived home, probably lost in the year's severe gales. "According to the secret archives of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star, Dallas's Sherlock Holmes Society, Holmes was actually on

board the barque, disguised as a seaman. He was responsible for convincing [sic] the Third mate of the captain's crimes and they commandeered Barque Lone Star, sailed her to Texas where she ran aground" (Maniac Collector). This is also the inspiration behind the official title of the Crew's leader—the Third Mate.

History and World of Sherlock Holmes

"These are the facts:

1. Effie went to America in her youth.
2. Her first husband was a lawyer in Atlanta.
3. He was also a light-skinned black man. (Effie is, presumably, white.)
4. Their daughter took after 'his kind.'
5. Both husband and child died from a Yellow Fever outbreak in the area.

These tenets are central to Arthur Conan Doyle's "The Adventure of Yellow Face," one of the 56 short stories revolving around the exploits and great deductive mind of consulting detective Sherlock Holmes." Steve Mason, Crew of the Barque Lone Star's Third Mate, is giving his monthly story-inspired lecture.

After Mason has given the room of Sherlockians the basic facts, he sets up his lecture. "While the story seems simple on the surface, there are many questions that arise from closer inspection." Mason pauses to look around the room. This is how most of his lectures begin. Start with the canon—what happened in the story, what did Arthur Conan Doyle's written text lay out as the events that transpired? Then move into the many, many, often convoluted layers of Sherlockian analysis and conjecture.

"Now, Sherlockians studying the chronology of the stories have deduced that this is one of the earlier cases where Watson and Holmes partnered up. Since *A Study in Scarlet* was set in 1881, it is likely that these events unfolded between 1882 and 1883. Working backwards, that means that, if Effie and Grant Monroe [a man who hired Sherlock to uncover why he felt distance between him and his beloved] were married for three years, they must have gotten engaged in 1879 or 1880. So she must have married Hebron [her first husband] around 1876. Now, remember, the time period we are talking about—the mid-1870s, is just 10 years removed from the Civil War. Some things to note here.

There was NO Yellow Fever epidemic anywhere in the South at the end of the 19th century. There was NO great fire in Atlanta, except for the one set by the unwelcome intruder Grant. And the general consensus among anthropologists and geneticists is that, if one parent was white and the other a light-skinned black individual, the child will not be darker. Monroe claims that he has seen Effie's first husband's death certificate. But Georgia didn't start issuing death certificates until 1914."

Mason has arrived at the crux of the problem. "Things just don't add up here. Which leaves us with a number of questions:

"Why did Effie invent Yellow Fever as the disease that killed her husband and child? And why didn't Holmes or Watson catch her on this? In the story, Effie claims that she is concerned about the health of her child. But she left her sick child in the states and left for England, just to get away from it all. Another unexplained aspect of the story is why Effie would voluntarily offer to sign over all of her money to Monroe."

Walter Pieper breaks into Mason's monologuing. Raising a hand, he addresses one of the raised concerns. "Well, on the most recent season of *Downton Abbey*, Cora Crawley signed away her money."

Cindy Brown nods, chimes in. "Yeah, and wasn't there a law that women weren't allowed to hold property or money at that time? Wouldn't it have automatically become the husband's property? So why would she have needed to sign it over at all?"

Tilting his head back and forth, Mason considers, mentally stirring around the suggestions. "Well, but there are instances in other Doyle stories—"The Speckled Band," "The Noble Bachelor"—other

Sherlock Holmes stories where women set aside money for themselves or their children, so that their husbands couldn't get at it unless they or their children died."

True. Heads nod up and down the tables, as connections between disparate stories in the Sherlock Holmes universe are forged.

Mason gets back on track. "Besides, there are still more questions. Why would Effie wear a locket if she told Monroe it wouldn't open? If Effie forged a death certificate for her husband, why wouldn't she also forge one for her daughter to make that death more believable? And how did she forge a death certificate for her husband? Plus, wouldn't a death certificate mention his race? Mention somewhere that he was black?"

Pausing to take a breath after piling the many disparities and logical incongruities from the story, Steve continues on, this time offering Sherlockian proposed hypotheses—solutions to explain Doyle's 'mistakes.'

"Now, having read a lot of the scholarship from Sherlockians who have studied this story intensely, I have come across a number of other ideas. For starters, nowhere in the story does Effie say that she lived in Atlanta, *Georgia*."

The Crew of the Barque Lone Star Sherlockians pause, their eyes floating up to the ceiling as they mentally roll the theory around. Mason doesn't wait for their acceptance, plowing through the rest of his research.

"There is an Atlanta, *New York*. This would explain her husband's position as a lawyer as well as the marriage, because there were black lawyers in the North, as early as the 1840s in some places. And while interracial marriage was surely not allowed in the South, there were a few states where it was not illegal—Connecticut, New York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts. There was also a small breakout of Yellow Fever in the Northeast at this time.

"A few scholars have suggested that it would be possible for the child to be darker than both Effie and her husband if Effie had some black ancestry. Then Effie would have a few recessive genes. There are even more arguments that the daughter was not her biological child. Perhaps her husband was married before her and had this child. After his wife died, he married Effie, who adopted the child. When he died too, Effie was the only parent the girl had. She may have presented the child as her own to her husband thinking that it would be more likely for him to accept the child if he saw it as her own offspring.

"Then there are Sherlockians who have put forth the theory that Hebron didn't die of Yellow Fever at all. Maybe he moved to the South and was killed for his success as a lawyer and his interracial marriage to a white woman. The fire Effie references was actually his house being torched.

"And maybe Effie left her daughter in the states because she believed the environmental conditions were better in America than the London smog where she was going.

"Using all that, you must ask yourself how Sherlock Holmes didn't see through this—if he had challenged Effie she likely would have broken and confessed. Some Sherlockians believe that Watson or his editor later took out this part for whatever reason."

With each new theory, the Crew of the Barque Lone Star has nodded or shrugged, tacitly accepting or challenging the occasionally logical and often far-fetched hypotheses that Sherlockians have proposed over the past 122 years as they tried to fit the story into a real-world historical context.

The time has come, finally, for Steve Mason to add his own theory to the milieu. "I submit," he begins, raising his voice. "I submit that Sherlock Holmes didn't delve further because he recognized Effie was merely telling the tales she told for the sake of her child and so he decided he would just let it lie."

It is a lovely portrait of the detective. A portrait of a caring, empathetic soul. A portrait that doesn't quite gel with Doyle's detective as written. For this, too, there is a reconciling theory.

“Some people believe that perhaps Sherlock Holmes and Mycroft were the products of a mixed relationship. At the time, a lot of English men were marrying Jewish women immigrants. So Sherlock Holmes may have been naturally more inclined to go along with Effie’s tale.”

Cindy Brown giggles. “Or it could have been an English parent and an extraterrestrial one, because both brothers are so odd.”

The Crew chortles.

“Bottom line?” Steve Mason wraps up the month’s lecture. “There is much more to this conversation than just what is written on the surface.”

“Or, maybe,” Walter Pieper slyly slips in his final thought. “Maybe Arthur Conan Doyle just didn’t do his homework.”

This. Pieper has hit the nail on the head, finding the most logical, albeit the least fun, answer to the story’s many inconsistencies. The group laughs.

“Maybe,” Mason hesitates. “Although, I did read an old article from the Baker Street Journal where the author—and he really took it to extremes—hypothesized that Effie was originally born in the South to mixed parentage, then moved to England for her childhood, then went back to the South as a young woman and...”

Knowledge

I have never won a quiz. Which is a very hard thing to stomach, me being the type of person I am. Worse yet, it's not just that I have never won a quiz, it's that I consistently score a 60, or 50, or even (God forbid) a 40 percent on the quiz! Failing. That's did-you-even-read abysmality.

I try to help myself as much as I can. I put off reading the monthly assigned story as late as possible for maximum information retention. Late Saturday night, early Sunday morning, I'm reading—and reading thoroughly. I try to pay attention to the minutiae that I think might crop up. With which hand did Sherlock pick up his magnifying glass? What pithy statement of unusual and often arbitrary insight did he share with Watson? What was the name of the street where the crime took place? The less mentioned the piece of information, the more likely it is that it will appear on the quiz. This tests our ability to read closely, to notice the small details Sherlock himself would have noticed.

Steve Mason passes out the quiz he wrote for the week. These are his quizzes. His questions. His evil at play. While we twiddle our pens over the page, trying to think back to that one sentence on that one page in this one whole story, he leans back, hands folded over his belly, surveying the damage he has wrought. This month, December, the quiz is over Part Two of *“The Valley of Fear.”* It's a relatively convoluted story, and one of my favorites since becoming a regular member at the Crew of the Barque Lone Star's monthly gatherings. Holmes and Watson are summoned to a castle, where a man has been stabbed. Average enough occurrence. But! The castle has a moat and a surrounding wall and all the servants were asleep and the wife was upstairs asleep. The question of who committed the dastardly crime, then, is unknown. Until Holmes pieces it together. Of course.

I can recall and write all that more than three months after reading the story for the first time. Less than twelve hours after my first read, however, I was unable to answer what color robe Holmes wore or what the occupation of the victim was or what the name of the maid who opened the door for the consulting detective was. Jack, to my left, giggles as he writes in every carefully studied answer, his right hand scribbling as his wrinkled left forefinger traces its way down his note-filled legal pad.

Stu Nelan, to my right, is reading over the questions, mentally answering in his head. He does not participate in the quizzes—on principal, he tells me. “I hate the quizzes. I figure if I’m going to do the quiz then I need to study the story and I don’t want to have to study the story. I want to study the story because I enjoy it not because I want to memorize the details of it or the minutiae of the story. I want to enjoy reading it and with a quiz facing me, I don’t enjoy reading it, so I don’t do the quizzes” (interview

with researcher, September 14, 2014). Nelan, from what I can tell, is the only one who does not participate.

The rest of us cringe each time Mason hands out his quiz sheets. Ten highly specific queries from the text, followed by three tie-breakers that deal with even more minutiae and sometimes even diverge from the world of Sherlock Holmes to ask about an element of Victorian society or culture or the London landscape mentioned in passing in the story. It is fun. But it is also difficult.

Mason watches, waiting until the Crew goes jittery and fidgety—a sign that our knowledge has been tapped out, for better or for worse. "Are we all done? Anybody still working?"

He begins to work his way through the quiz. "What time do the servants usually retire for the evening?" Pauses. A smattering of answers bounce back to him. "Well, if you can remember, it was actually between 10:30 and 11 at night because..." I mark a harsh, unforgiving 'X' over my answer. I take solace in the scratching sounds of Crew members doing the same. This little detail, though applicable to Sherlock's study of the case, was mentioned just once in the story. I don't have time to dwell on where it was mentioned or why I didn't remember because Mason has moved on. "Who did Holmes purchase the historical tract about the manor from?" "A local tobacconist." What?!

Mason continues down the line. Occasionally, there is a question no one knows. "What name did Douglas give while delirious during a hunting accident?" The pause doesn't rebound with an answer. "Nobody knows?" He seems surprised, though he clearly takes pleasure in the difficulty of his quizzes. "Body Master McGinney."

After all is said and done, Mason tallies up. "Anybody get a perfect score?" No hands shoot up. That's normal. In eight months, I've only ever seen four people take a perfect quiz. Keep in mind these are generally individuals who have been reading and talking about the Sherlock stories for a decade or more. "90 percent?" Jack Frey and Walter Pieper raise their hands.

"Okay," Steve Mason chuckles—he loves when his tie breaker questions are actually put to use. "What unusual circumstance probably kept Douglas from defending himself?" Jack wins, offering that the man's revolver was not in his pocket. He cackles again and accepts a honey jar embossed with Sherlock Holmes's profile and name, made by Steve Mason's wife, Pam.

Jack's win, albeit honest, is a little less impressive than the average month-to-month win. Where notes are needed, you aren't seen to be displaying true familiarity and intrinsic knowledge of the source text. The better the Sherlockian, it seems, the more they ought to be able to quote and reference at a moment's notice. The quiz is merely a check to prove you are a genuine Sherlockian and to offer a venue for local Sherlockians to win attention and recognition. The quiz—and the proof of knowledge in general—are vital parts of the Sherlockian gathering.

Where Sherlock is concerned, knowledge confers status, recognition, and respect. Knowledge is valuable; knowledge is power.

Knowing, and the ability to demonstrate how much one knows, are crucial talents for the Sherlockian society member. These serious Sherlockians seek each other out, looking for fellowship, a share of knowledge, and a validation of their interest in the great detective (see section on Belonging and Exclusion). The community of Sherlockia is created and perpetuated by its members—there is open access to all who demonstrate a viable interest, with next-level membership reserved for those who demonstrate an invested, researched knowledge-base on the great detective, his canon, and even the rules and norms of the community.

CONTRIBUTIONS

As already noted, part of my ethnographic research on the Crew of the Barque Lone Star involved interviewing five members. To elicit these interviews, I queried the group during a monthly meeting. "As most of you know, I am studying Sherlock Holmes and his continued impact more than a century after the canonical writings. I was wondering if I could interview a few of you—five, perhaps?"

The Crew members immediately began to throw out their suggestions for who my interview subjects ought to be—among the proposed names were Don Hobbs, resident BSI and world-renowned collector of foreign language translations of Sherlock Holmes’s adventures; Stuart Nelan, a quiet man who had been with the Crew for decades, longer than almost anybody but Hobbs; and Steve Mason, Third Mate and frequent topic presenter. Honestly, these suggestions were unneeded—had I tried, I very likely could have guessed who the suggested individuals would be. The names that were suggested were the people who comment during meetings the most frequently; who have been members through the club’s various ups and downs; whose names are listed, month after month, in the bulletin as leaders and “spiritual advisors” (Sykes 195:382; Anderson and Kilduff 2009:296). These men have earned respect and have long since proved their dedication, passion, and knowledge for all things Sherlockian.

My interviews back this up. Stuart Nelan spends 30 minutes showing me his extensive library. “You know, it’s not like Don Hobbs—his is insured for something like \$250,000, but mine might only be worth \$100,000—optimistically.” Nelan, unlike Hobbs, tries to read each new book that comes into his house. His shelves, crammed with books, magazines, and encyclopedic annotations, testify to the knowledge contained within his brain. Even more telling are his digressions—for as much as Nelan dislikes the quizzes for their focus on the minutiae and his reluctance to identify himself as a Sherlockian for his inability to recite canon word-for-word, he is very familiar with the history and people who have contributed to Sherlock Holmes’s legacy. Nelan knows the stories behind the Baker Street Irregulars launch and the writing of their bylaws, he knows the biographies of the earliest BSI members, he knows where the largest collections of Sherlock Holmes-related literature can be found, and he knows who all the early illustrators were and what their style consisted of.

Part of this knowledge comes from Nelan’s regular attendance at the annual BSI gatherings in New York City, an opportunity for him to attend lectures by distinguished Sherlockians and engage in conversation with fellow Sherlockians with varied backgrounds and specialties. But a large part of this knowledge comes from Nelan’s own carefully curated library and his fondness for reading at the end of his long, technical workdays as a software developer. In a spacious, tall room surrounded on three sides by gargantuan bookshelves, there is a wall of collector’s items—Christopher Morley’s letters to Jon Lillenger, William Fuller’s limited-run Christmas publications, copies of *The Strand Magazine*. Another wall is filled with pastiches and scholarship, and another with annotated bibliographies and collected volumes. Outside the library, however, is where Nelan keeps his treasures—he is, like a good Sherlockian collector, working on obtaining a set of John Bennet Shaw’s *One Hundred*.

Nelan’s search for these tomes has involved a good bit of detective work—hunting down catalogs, searching through bookstores, contacting potential sellers (although he does admit the search has grown much easier since the internet took off). It isn’t only in his hunt for books that Nelan sees himself emulating the best qualities of Sherlock Holmes. “I would like to think that my work in software development is somehow related to Sherlock Holmes too, you know, following the clues for why the program didn’t work or how to make it better or what’s going on with it,” Nelan says.

Don Hobbs is quite a bit different than Nelan, though he too has a (larger, more cramped) section of his house partitioned off for Sherlock Holmes books and artifacts and he, too, identifies with the detective. Even Hobbs’s grandchildren refer to him as “Holmes,” rather than any traditional grandfather-like title. The more a Sherlockian is able to behave like Sherlock Holmes (who happened to know a whole lot about a whole lot), the better their reputation will be within the society. Hobbs embraces his role as an expert, has plaques of awards and framed newspaper interviews hanging alongside movie posters and comics. Hobbs’s books are almost exclusively foreign translations of Sherlock Holmes canonical books and landmark scholarship. With over 12,000 books in his collection, Hobbs is no longer interested in getting his hands on any translation he can find—instead, his efforts are focused on the obscure things, the things he has heard rumor of but never actually found. For example, a 1968 Kazakhstan version is giving him particular grief (interview with researcher, September 28, 2014).

Though Hobbs doesn't read the actual stories he collects (he jokes that he can barely speak English), he demonstrates his knowledge in other ways. For one thing, collecting books from all over the globe, Hobbs has had to ferret out translations, finding them and locating them with a bit of detective work on his own—indirectly, perhaps, leading to his BSI name (Inspector Lestrade). While lacking the renown of Peter Blau or Leslie Klinger, Hobbs is also a Holmesian scholar. Holmes maintains a bibliography of Sherlock Holmes, updated monthly to accommodate the new finds he makes or reported to him on a regular basis. He calls this *The Galactic Sherlock Holmes*, so named because famed Sherlockian Ron DeWaal took the *World*, *International*, and *Universal Sherlock Holmes* titles for his bibliographies. Hobbs had to do one bigger, one better. With the largest collection of foreign translations in the world, Hobbs fits a unique spot in Sherlockia and is often invited on to podcasts and conferences to give presentations on his collection and the international spread of Sherlock Holmes. The collection has even led to opportunities to translate and edit *The BSI International Series*, a celebration of Sherlockian scholarship from across the globe that so far includes Italy and *Sherlock Holmes*, Australia and *Sherlock Holmes*, Scandinavia and *Sherlock Holmes*, Japan and *Sherlock Holmes*, and, with Hobbs's help, Spain and *Sherlock Holmes*.

Third Mate Steve Mason's knowledge is on display every month. He delivers presentations during each meeting that highlight or delve deeper into an issue from the assigned reading. Victorian era toys, the Pinkerton Detective Agency, moats and drawbridges, the historically verified inconsistencies of a particular story—the subject matter varies wildly, but all demonstrates a considerable amount of research to locate and bring to us the topics at hand. This, of course, is just his work for public presentations of knowledge. To bolster his personal knowledge of the canon, Mason reads far and wide—lately it is the biographies of Conan Doyle, picking them from a compiled list of about 90 entries he included in an issue of the newsletter.

"To me, the idea, when you say you want to study Sherlock Holmes—it's not just reading the stories, but also reading all the essays and criticisms that people have written about the stories themselves. And so, obviously, reading *The Baker Street Journal* every quarter, and reading—that's a great one because people have written a lot of great articles and essays about the stories themselves," Mason explains (interview with researcher, November 1, 2014).

Through all of Mason's activities—his Sherlock Holmes cross-stitching; the radio plays, comics, and in-progress Sherlock-themed novels he pens; the newsletters and puzzles he puts together; the research for his presentations; and personal reading—he estimates he spends two to three hours every day on Sherlock Holmes. It is almost as though Mason has been taking an intensive course in the detective and his era for nearly a decade.

All this and Mason, like Nelan, shies from the title of 'expert.' "I think I'm pretty knowledgeable. I'm not going to say I'm an expert. [Compared to the average Sherlockian] I'm in the middle to a little higher. Because I didn't study it, I just read them for years. I just started studying them seriously in the last eight or nine years, so I still have a lot of years to go to catch up to people that have been studying it all their lives."

Studying, and not just reading, is crucial to gaining the knowledge base required to actively participate in Sherlockian conversations. These men, who have been in the Crew for years, and especially Mason and Hobbs, who have published and produced and proven their Sherlock IQ many times over the years have the respect of the group because they most fully represent who a Sherlockian is. Hobbs, as an example, has written Sherlockian blogs, articles that have appeared in the BSI, and maintains and distributes his "*Galactic Sherlock Holmes*" bibliography, among other things. Mason researches, writes, and presents a topical lecture each month, as well as the *Bilge Pump* newsletter, a comic strip, and a radio play performed at the 40th anniversary of the *Afghanistan Perceivers*. A Sherlockian studies, reads, is knowledgeable and never satisfied with knowing just enough—they want to know everything. For newcomers, the requirements of study and scholarship quickly become

apparent and there is a tendency to (if one plans on sticking around seriously) ramp up the study, which ramps up the participation in the Sherlockian community—a feedback loop. Those who don't have the time or inclination to put in the work tend to drift away, evidenced by The Crew of the Barque Lone Star slow membership growth, though plenty of new faces will show for three or four meetings.

Cindy Brown and Brenda Hutchinson rounded out the Crew member interviews and are prime examples of the intensified Sherlockian activity inspired by membership in a community. Brown, a Certified Public Accountant (yet another detail-oriented profession), has been attending meetings for seven or eight years. When she first began attending, Brown had read perhaps a third of the Holmes stories. Assessing her command of the subject, Brown self-rates herself as a 7 on a scale 1-10. "There's people who know a lot more about it than me." Like Nelan and Mason, Brown is aware of all she doesn't know and the number of Sherlockians who do know it. She studies though, reading the stories, the Annotated Baring-Gould, listening to Sherlock-themed podcasts, and has attended Sherlock conventions big (Minneapolis) and small (Tulsa). Brown, who does identify as a Sherlockian, defines the designation as "someone who has read most of the canon, who likes to talk about it, in all forms, whether it's reading, movies, plays, exhibits. It's all about enjoying the Sherlockian mystery." Though not explicitly stated, Brown still makes it clear that one must be familiar with the world of Sherlock Holmes. To "talk about it" as a "serious fan" (as opposed to a casual fan) there is a base level of knowledge and understanding one must possess. Brown expressed interest in presenting a talk of her own—a fifteen minute biography on the life of Arthur Conan Doyle—a demonstration of her knowledge.

Brenda Hutchinson is one of the newest permanent additions to the Crew (see *Belonging and Exclusion*). She started attending meetings nearly two years ago. She came to the meetings having already read the complete canon several times, but has since sought out original Sherlock films, biographies, and has compiled her own chronology with inserted history. Hutchinson is even working on producing a murder mystery for an upcoming Crew event. Hutchinson, too, identifies as a Sherlockian, noting the importance of studying and gaining knowledge. "[To identify] I think you have to have a passion and excitement for it. I think you have to be interested in the intricacies and the stories and all the detail, studies of it."

Knowledge, once earned, must be demonstrated. By displaying knowledge, Sherlockians are proving they belong and have a right to speak and participate in meetings and discussions. Sherlockians view subject-related knowledge as one of the most valuable traits an individual can bring to the society and so use this value to pursue status (Anderson and Kilduff 2009:295). "The pursuit of status is thought to be pervasive in social groups," Hogan writes (Anderson and Kilduff 2009:295). The most consistent predictors of status within a group are competence and a strong commitment to the group (Anderson and Kilduff 2009:297). Competency is displayed when a member is able to speak thoroughly about a wide variety of Sherlockian topics, no matter when they come up (lectures and quizzes are common places, for example). Commitment to the group is evident where a member has dedicated "substantial number of hours" to the domain to become an expert that can best contribute, participate, and make presentations that further group knowledge (Ericsson et al. 1993).

There are a variety of ways to demonstrate acquired knowledge. A popular method employed often in Crew of the Barque Lone Star meetings is to simply insert one's own thoughts and trivia into the lectures and presentations. If Steve Mason has just presented on the Ku Klux Klan or turn of the century detective agency the Pinkerton Agency or the use of moats in nineteenth-century England, speaking up publicly supports the idea that you are a member who is in the know, who can contribute something worthwhile (Anderson and Kilduff 2009:295). This is the crux—Sherlockians strive to advance the study and appreciation of Sherlock Holmes externally and their place in the implied hierarchy internally. Without the proper background and amount of knowledge, one cannot fully contribute to the Sherlockian agenda. This is why the quizzes are important—though dealing in ultimately less-than-crucial details, they give members the opportunity to test their knowledge in a public forum. Members

compare themselves and their level of knowledge to Sherlockian community around them—this is how one proves competence and commitment. The quiz is a medium of value-building available to all members and somewhat attainable, with the right amount of study.

Contributions come in a variety of knowledge-exposing forms. Examples include research-filled presentations during meetings (requires an understanding of the unique style of Sherlockian scholarship), pastiche writing (demanding a comfortable familiarity with the characters and the culture of the Sherlockian community), and outside-of-genre tie-ins (spreading Holmes's good name as well as imitating his wide ranging fields of expertise). These pursuits demand time and are yet another proof that one's participation in the community is serious. Crew member Marland Henderson, for example, writes a new, seven to eight page pastiche each month. Crew member Dean Clark writes and publishes widely, recently publishing a textbook using Sherlock Holmes to guide readers through major historic scientific milestones. Hutchinson has her chronology and her scrapbooks; Hobbs draws Sherlockian sketches and pairs them with quotes from the canon; Mason is working on a novel, recently started a comic strip series, and has written plays in the past; and Brown is expanding her repertoire of Sherlockian presentations.

Rusty Mason is Steve Mason's son, coerced into the Crew for his computer coding skills. The younger Mason is combining both the importance of collecting and contributing onto a newly designed Crew of the Barque Lone Star website and digital library ("About"). As (Bieber 2002:20) et al. require, the "digital library repository" gives "access to all of its community's documents: books, journal articles, conference papers, audio tapes, videos, still pictures, course syllabi, and so on." In addition to traditional materials, including all canonical stories (less the ten still waiting to enter the free domain) and freely available media portrayals, the website is filled with "artifacts of smartness" (Hatt and Otto 2007:509) produced by the Crew members themselves. Crew-written pastiches, plays, toasts, lectures and more are loaded onto the site for any web-savvy Sherlockian to stumble upon. If "smartness is culturally produced" through a community's requisite texts, as Hatt and Otto argue, then the website is an exhibit proudly displaying the "smartness" of its members. Just as the members interact with each other within in-club status hierarchies, the Crew interacts with other clubs (and presents itself and its members) as part of the hierarchy of local Sherlockian communities.

Belonging and Exclusion

It started with a random Half-Price books table in the late 1980s. In an effort to push an overabundance of Sherlock Holmes-related tomes out the door, a stand had been filled with the works and writings on the works and placed near the front door. It was this stand that captured Don Hobbs's attention.

"How much is that?" Hobbs addressed an old friend of his, the owner and founder of Half-Price books. After selling his Stephen King book collection, Hobbs had \$10,000 to spend and was looking for a new literary obsession.

"That?" The 'that' in question was a table set up with selections from the world of Sherlock Holmes. A copy of *The Misadventures of Sherlock Holmes*, a world bibliography of Sherlock Holmes, and a couple of Baker Street Journals, among other items, ended up coming home with Hobbs for the low, low price of \$250. The bibliography in particular fascinated Hobbs, an amateur book collector. "I had no idea there was that much on Sherlock Holmes," Hobbs says.

Today, Hobbs has perhaps the world's largest collection of foreign language editions of Sherlock Holmes. He has an insurance policy on his collection and had to build extra supports into his house to hold up the second floor library. A Sherlockian celebrity in his own right, Hobbs knows fanatics across the globe and enlists them in his hunt for ever more obscure translations. He also participates on Sherlockian podcasts, Sherlockian panels, and is regularly interviewed by Sherlockian publications. And, for the last three years, Hobbs has been an invested member of the Baker Street Irregulars. However,

getting to this point took him more than 20 years of hard work, determination, and frequent rejection.
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Hobbs knew nothing about the Sherlockian world when he dropped the money on the Sherlock display. One of the things on the display of books was a copy of a publication called *Wheel Writings*, edited by Bob Burr. Impressed by the fascinating yet “scholarly” papers, Hobbs wrote Bob Burr. He was immediately made a member of the Sherlockian society in Peoria, the Hanson’s of John Clayton, and met Sherlockian Peter Blau, a well-connected man with his finger on the pulse of the Sherlockian world, who told Hobbs about his local, DFW Sherlockian club, The Crew of the Barque Lone Star.

Within a year, influential Sherlockian John Bennet Shaw, alerted to the new guy on the collecting scene by the Crew’s then-president, Bill Beason, invited Hobbs to come to the annual Unhappy Birthday, You Bastard, Professor Moriarty party in Moriarty, New Mexico. “It was held at the frontier saloon in downtown Moriarty, they had the potluck dinner and they had the Sherlock Holmes get-together. The first one I went to, a guy named John Farrell had written all fifty governors, all 100 senators, the President and the Vice President, asking for contributions [for his presentation],” Hobbs remembers.

At the end of the Unhappy Birthday, You Bastard, Professor Moriarty celebration, the gathered Sherlockians trekked out to the parking lot for a manure-fueled bonfire and a rousing rendition of the “Unhappy Birthday” song. “So [Farrell] had written all these letters and asked for contributions to the manure pile and [received some] really funny responses. So he was reading these at the meeting.” Hobbs laughs. “I thought, these are my type of people—they’re sick puppies! I want to be part of these people.”

Luckily for Hobbs, several Sherlockians took him under their wing and connected him with the individuals who would later be crucial to his networking efforts. John Bennet Shaw, Ron DeWaal these men guided him around the room, introducing him to individuals from librarians to physicists and engineers who worked on the Manhattan Project. The one defining factor uniting the room of interesting individuals was an interest in Sherlock Holmes. Everybody was a dedicated Sherlockian. “That was the day,” Hobbs says about his first total immersion Sherlockian experience, “That’s the day [November 7, 1999, he remembers] I became a weird Sherlockian.”

CHARACTERS

Although the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolis is the fourth largest in the country, only fifteen to twenty individuals filter into the back room of La Madeleine on the first Sunday of each month. Perhaps fifteen are regulars, attending every single month, with a handful of rotating, albeit familiar, faces filling out the rest of the attendance sheet each month. Third Mate Steve Mason doesn’t seem to mind too much, though, repeatedly expressing through the months and in his January “State of the Society” presentation that his focus is not on growing the chapter, but growing the Crew’s community involvement—which, of course, grows the Crew’s visibility. Although Mason expresses an acceptance of the small number of members, he still routinely encourages Crew members to spread the word to their coworkers and friends, pass out the business cards advertising the Crew, and speak up at Sherlockian-themed plays and movies members attend.

As it is, the Crew is comprised of its fifteen or so steadily attending members. The mailing list has roughly 80 individuals. The majority of the Crew are older men, generally older than 50 and either retired or nearing retirement. Women (including myself) typically make up about a third of the meeting members, and are also generally older than their mid-40s. Young people (35 and under) constitute perhaps three attendees each month (including myself).

The Crew’s demographics mirror the makeup of the Sherlockian community found at the national level, as evidenced by BSI member demographics. Collectively, the Sherlockian community is diffuse, found all over the world, and passionate, with most Sherlockians indulging their habit until death or illness intervenes. Mason’s own experiences with the Crew over the better part of a decade reinforce

this sentiment: “This, to me it’s kind of like a lifetime thing, you know. I mean, obviously as people get too old to come to the meetings, they’ll drop off and I know one of these days I’ll probably get that same way. But, pretty much the same group of people. We’ve added a few people obviously, like yourself and Brenda. But the core group have been together anywhere from ten to twenty years now. That’s kind of neat, to form a friendship around a fictional character and know that you may have these friends for life, basically. Only in extraordinarily large cities, such as New York City or London, or at special conventions and gatherings will a significant number of Sherlockians ever gather together. The ability to attend one of these gatherings enhances feelings of belonging within the community, because they focus on spreading knowledge and plugging Sherlockians into a network of avid fans. For those unable to attend the gatherings or conventions, the meetings become “inaccessible environments” that are another way to differentiate member rankings (Kitchin 1999:49).

People find the Sherlockian community through a variety of means—many read the books as children and never lose their sense of awe over the skillful reasoning employed by the great detective. As adults, others discovered a love for the Victorian era or a penchant for mystery novels and followed them back to one of the genre originators. With the internet, it is only a matter of time before idle Googlers and serious researchers alike come across a scion society’s website, read about them in a newspaper, hear about them at a local Sherlock-themed play, or meet a recruiting-minded member. Typically, though, membership spikes when a popular adaptation hits the public market. Klinger (interview with author, September 20, 2014) described these spikes as “waves of interest in Sherlock Holmes,” grounded in a few iconic Holmes portrayals—William Gillette contemporary to Doyle’s writing of the stories, Arthur Wontener in the 1930s, Basil Rathbone in the 1950s and 1960s, and, most recently, Benedict Cumberbatch.

Before the current wave, ignited by Guy Richie’s Sherlock films and peaking with the release of the critically acclaimed BBC show Sherlock, the last significant popular contributions to the Sherlock world came with Nicholas Meyer’s *The Seven Per-Cent Solution*, in the late 1970s. This helps explain the older-skewing demographics. The last huge surge in Holmes’ popularity was more than 40 years ago. With the new iterations and opportunities for constant engagement offered through Tumblr and Twitter, a younger generation is beginning to show more interest in the great detective. Many viewers who began watching the show with little real knowledge of Sherlock Holmes have taken reading the canon and looking for non-digital ways to immerse themselves deeper in the subject.

Stu Nelan, Crew member for about two decades, has been attending the BSI weekend in New York City for several years and has noticed a definite uptick in the number of young people showing up. “The BSI weekend—back eight or five years ago when I started going it was mainly older guys, older women involved with Sherlock Holmes. Now there is a very large community of young women, primarily, involved with Sherlock Holmes. I think due to the Sherlock Holmes series, the Benedict Cumberbatch [from BBC’s Sherlock], exactly, exactly...they’re a very much more involved with Sherlock Holmes, they go to the meetings and dress up.” That the majority of the newly interested are women is another shift for the Sherlockian community.

MEMBERSHIP

“And now I have a special announcement,” Steve Mason says. We’re in the middle of the January meeting, running through need-to-know information during the post-lecture wrap-up period. We’ve just finished a feel-good reminiscence about the movie night held at Walter’s house in December—designed to make every non-attendee feel as though they were missing some inside joke. Now Mason stands up and delivers a speech about what it takes to be a deck hand—the requirements and responsibilities of the title.

“So I am proud to present this investiture to Marland Henderson.” The older gentleman beside me cracks a grin and waves away the claps echoing throughout the room on his behalf. I just met Marland

this month. During the designated Meet and Greet before the toast kicked us off, he had shared his love of pastiche writing with me. He writes a new one every month and is often working on multi-part series. When he found out I was a writing major, he grew earnest. "Please take a look at my stories, please give me honest feedback, I'm always looking for more feedback. Cindy Brown reads my stories and she gives me great feedback, great comments."

The same exuberance on Marland's face when talking about his writing comes over his face as he stands to accept the certificate from Mason. "Thank you, thank you! This really means a lot." Perhaps Marland will file the certificate away for safekeeping, perhaps he will toss it on a dining room table and forget about it, or perhaps he will frame it and hang it (as Brenda Hutchinson did) where he stores the rest of his Sherlock Holmes memorabilia. Whatever he does, this is a significant moment for him, his participation with the Crew, and his final and full stamp of belonging within the local scion society.

Being investitured (made a deck mate) signals a recognition and respect of one's contributions to the society and an acceptance of the individual into the inner circle (Romano 2000:106-107). These are the Crew members who have been attending the longest, who know Sherlock the best, who are seen as authorities and crucial elements to the functioning of the Crew. While being a deck hand doesn't confer any official status, the endorsement to membership (regular members are simply 'in,' without any formal process), means "you have been taken in, accepted into the group" (Romano 2000:108). If membership fosters a "sense of belonging," then proof of membership, in front of fellow members, is a reminder to the newly initiated as well as the old of their commitment to the group and each other.

For Brenda Hutchinson, who treasures her investiture, becoming a deck hand marked a significant shift in how she perceived her treatment from others in the Crew. According to Hutchinson, her first months were hard. "I will say, they were cautious at first. For anybody new coming in—they don't pass around phone numbers or addresses...so it was a while before people warmed up. But, once that little bump is over, you're accepted, no matter what level of knowledge you have about it. It just seems like you're well accepted, which is a really nice feeling."

Hutchison became a deck hand (a step up from a regular member) of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star on February 4, 2014, after nearly two years of meetings and involvement with the Crew. She has since continued to participate in the Crew by attending meetings and volunteering for administrative tasks and society projects—things she did even before she received her investiture.

An investiture does not necessarily grant the deck mate with specialized access or privileges—regular Crew members can volunteer for the same activities as deck mates and all members of the Crew are invited to all official group events. Still, the implied status and abilities of an investiture does confer significance in terms of how status, hierarchy, and perceptions of expertise play into belonging and the desire to join communities in the first place (Alavi et al. 2005/2006).

Anybody can become a Crew member and all are welcome to. Based on ethnographic observations of Crew activities and behaviors, however, speaking up, giving presentations, distributing self-made historical chronologies, are activities generally performed by deck hands. While anybody can make a presentation, it is rare for a non-deck hand to volunteer unless they are gunning for an improvement in status or have highly specialized knowledge. This could be chalked down to an intimidation factor (Do I know enough? Older members probably know better than I.) as well as a subconscious internalization of the enacted society hierarchy. In my time attending Crew meetings, non-deck hands have been involved in toasts (informal and brief speaking opportunities), a young(er) couple gave a Victorian fencing presentation (highly specialized knowledge that does not directly imply Sherlockian mastery), and Marland Henderson has distributed his pastiches (and subsequently enjoyed an increase in status to the designation of deck hand).

This is not to say that presentations are not given simply for the joy of sharing knowledge, pastiches aren't written for the joy of writing, and toasts aren't made in celebration of fellowship. There does seem to be a status distinction enacted between members of the Crew and designated deck hand

members of the Crew. It could be, of course, that deck hands are simply those members who have attended the longest and shown their dedication and knowledge and so are logically the most vocal and involved members within the society. They hold the rank they hold because they have earned it and participate in more discussions because they have invested more time in Sherlock Holmes. Sykes (1951) describes this chicken and egg relationship—community knowledge comes both as a by-product of striving for belonging and position but also provides the means by which such goals can be achieved.

Above the rank of deck hands are the officers. Officer names are printed in the monthly agenda alongside their titles—Steve Mason, Third Mate; Walter Pieper, Helmsman; Cindy Brown and Pam Mason, Secretary; Jim Webb and Don Hobbs, Spiritual Advisors. If, as Simmel (1950) proposed, “society is an event, something that individuals do,” then these are the individuals who do the most and do it best. Printing these names confers a special recognition to the positioned members. New attendees automatically associate these names with people who know Sherlock Holmes and are clued in to the ways of the Crew. Furthermore, these positions come with duties and expectations—their holders must contribute concrete, established behaviors to the maintenance of the Crew. The added responsibility increases identification with the Crew and differentially distributes purpose and power.

Save for the permanent designations for Spiritual Advisors Don Hobbs and Jim Webb, the positions are voted on every two years, with no term limits. To keep officer position beyond a single term and to maintain the closer relationships and greater responsibilities typically enjoyed with the deck hand position, then, members cannot slack off after their initiation and expect to enjoy the same level of belonging. Rather belonging is something members have “to keep achieving through an active process” (May 2011:372). Members must continue attending the monthly meetings, continue reading and studying the canon, continue volunteering to help the Crew and showing up to Crew social functions.

POLITICS

Like most organizations of substantial size and age, the Crew has a somewhat storied history. The website (www.dfw-sherlock.org/) tells the history thus: “The Crew of the Barque Lone Star is a proud scion society of the Baker Street Irregulars. It was originally founded in 1972, and has had several incarnations over the decades. Keeping with the tradition of being irregular, the Barque has gone into radio silence a couple of times, only to resurface again to focus on the study of Sherlock Holmes, his world, and the world of those who also love him, his faithful chronicler, and Victorian England.”

“When we rewrote the bylaws,” Mason says, “I put in there at the end that the mission of this society or the meetings was, to me, if people come to the meetings and they have fun and they enjoy themselves and, secondly, if they walk out of the meeting knowing something they didn’t know when they walked in, then I’m accomplishing my goal.”

Only Hobbs was happy to oblige to freely talk to me about the various schisms and mergers and restarts and mutinies. Don’s willingness to chat comes from, one, his naturally chatty personality, but two, his identity not being tied to the Crew. Hobbs is the only crew member I spoke with who carries membership in the BSI—a point of pride for both him and the society. This membership is larger, more prestigious, and trumps his membership with the Crew, even though he attends Crew meetings more regularly (once a month, as opposed to once a year). Because Hobbs’s identity is less associated with the Crew, there is less at stake when the Crew is painted in a bad light. At the same time, Hobbs has played a key role in both schisms—talking to me about them was yet another way to prove the depth of his knowledge and the length of time he has put into this hobby as well as the power he wields within the group.

Hobbs’s experience with the BSI story is evidence enough of the politics embedded in every level of Sherlockia. One never escapes scrutiny or the pressure to prove oneself as a worthy and valuable member of the group to which one most closely identifies. Access to “hierarchical positions might be the critical factor in the process of status attainment” (Lin 1999:470). The more a Sherlockian associates

with higher status members, the more their own status will improve, as they are led to the best resources and plugged in to the best networks. Reputation improves as social contacts improve. With greater reputation, members have greater sway in influencing decisions and the direction of the society (Gamson 1966:123; Gould 1989:532).

For all the political games of trying to position oneself as most prominent, respected, and influential within the community (Smith 1965:39), the society, at its core, is interested in inclusion. Jim Webb, as an example, attended the February meeting of the Crew, his first meeting since the Diogenes Club dissolved. Webb had earned his PhD in December, had more free time on his hands, and had enough time between the dissolution and the present to put pride aside and attend. The world of Sherlockians, though deep and wide, is not yet large enough for Sherlockians to easily plug into communities (Victoria Gill). The Crew is the only Sherlockian community in the DFW area, with its closest peer groups found in Tulsa, Oklahoma and Austin, Texas. While there was a group that met in Fort Worth for a period of time over a decade ago, the difficulty in gathering a large enough group of dedicated enough members to fill the ranks eventually led to its demise. Maintaining a sub-cultural society over the course of a few decades requires political scaffolding, as with any group.

When Jim Webb walked into the back room of La Madeleine in early February, the group acted no different than they would with any other member. His name was shouted and a few jokes were made at his expense (“Glad you could finally make it”), but then he sat down at the table and was just another Crew member excited to learn a little more about Sherlock Holmes amongst friends.

RELATIONSHIPS

In the State of the Society speech Mason gave at the January 2015 meeting, he made it clear that the goal of the Crew was not to grow in size. It had maintained 15 to 25 steady members, with dozens more on the mailing list. Mason was pleased with this. What he did want, however, was for the group to continue their outreach efforts to find other Sherlockians, or potential Sherlockians, in the area who might not yet know of the group.

Mason wanted the younger members of the group (myself [21] and two others around 30 years old) to brainstorm methods of outreach. He encouraged the group to speak up at plays and movies with a Sherlockian bent. He detailed his vision for the group going to nursing homes with Sherlock-themed radio plays to act out. Essentially, Mason wanted to make sure the society was accessible to anybody who wanted to attend. It may take a lifetime of work to enter the upper echelons of the national and international Sherlockian community, but the local scion societies are accessible to virtually anybody with an interest (IHOSE).

While it may take some time to grow a friendship, scion societies allow for person-to-person relationships in codependent groups that members have chosen to belong to (Thomas 1987:218; Tuan 2002). By choosing to become a member of a group, the friendships that develop over time can be viewed as intentional choices as well (Bleiszner and Adams 1992). Only where members have equally intimate and frequent access to high-status Sherlockians outside of the Crew do they not readily identify fellow members as friends.

“Do I consider these people my friends? Hmm.” Don Hobbs wrestles with the question. He knows his answer, but he’s trying to arrange his words. We’re about halfway through a nearly two-hour interview, and this is the first question that has slowed him down. Hobbs hesitates, repeats my question, chews on his thoughts.

“Yeah. Some of them, I mean some of them are friends. I mean, like Don Casey, I’ve known Don forever, we go way back, we go pub crawling. And Steve Mason. I mean, my, I mean, I don’t, that’s a good question. Friends as in—friends, that’s a broad stroke of the brush calling someone your friend. As a member of the Baker Street Irregulars, it is my responsibility, part of my responsibility of being a BSI is to mentor and promote Sherlock Holmes in any way I can. So I have this library and anybody in the club

or anyone who wants to use it for research purposes or to do anything, I'm glad to help. I travel so much, it's hard for me to make close new friends."

It's a political answer, a calculated roundabout.

The other Crew members on my interview slate, whose involvement with Sherlock Holmes is largely contained to the Dallas meeting, are less discriminating about whom they call 'friend.' Since both of his kids graduated high school, the Crew is Steve Mason's primary social sphere outside of work and his family. "To me, a friend is somebody that you get together with because you have common interests So these are my Sherlockian friends that I like to get together and talk about Sherlockian stuff and do Sherlockian things together." Mason's enthusiasm for Sherlock Holmes has even led him to merge social circles, recruiting work colleague Cindy Brown seven years ago. For Brown, the Crew gives her an opportunity to stay sharp and stay active. With a husband living and working in another state and retirement on the horizon, the friendships she makes with the Crew are growing increasingly important. "Marland and I email a lot.... He sends me his pastiches to edit, so that's kind of fun. Pam and I email some. I'm becoming pretty good friends with some of these people." Brenda Hutchinson's involvement is also a lifeline of social engagement—divorced and with adult children, the Crew gives Hutchinson friends and purpose. "Being a single woman, I don't feel comfortable running off to a play or activity by myself. This is my chance to meet with other people and to have adult conversation, rather than talking baby talk to my dog. It gives me purpose because of the activities I'm involved with." For Stu Nelan, the Crew is a comfortable, steady aspect of his life. None of his family members share the same enthusiasm he has for Sherlock Holmes, so the relationships he has developed over the years with other Sherlockians are his opportunity to indulge a passion without risk of being mocked or derided. "It's a way to meet people interested in Sherlock Holmes that you wouldn't normally meet. I've met a lot of people there that are just very interesting people."

In addition to the monthly meetings, there are regular movie nights hosted by a member of the Crew, outings to plays and movies, museum visits and arrangements to attend local and far-away conventions, such as the one in Tulsa. When a member of the Crew falls ill, an exhortation is made to the group to send Sherlockian-themed cards. It is a gesture of well-wishes but also a reminder to the receiver of the community he belongs to. As political as the inner-rankings are, once accepted to the group and in, there is also a tremendous amount of support and encouragement, especially amongst those members whose involvement will likely never extend beyond the local realm.

Friendships are important for more than just social purposes. Relationships also contribute to what makes a Crew member a valuable Crew member, since they facilitate collaboration between members. Collaboration leads to contribution which increases the social stock of the collaborators. In the Crew, collaboration occurs on actual writing projects—Don Hobbs asking for editing help from the group for the Spanish essays and Marland Henderson asking for peer reviewers for his pastiches. For the coming of the International Exhibit of Sherlock Holmes, the Perot Museum in Dallas asked the Crew to, essentially, host the evening. The Crew needed to come up with interactive ways to engage a few thousand people with a murder mystery. Although their involvement with the event did not come to pass, the Crew dedicated large chunks of each month's meeting to brainstorming story ideas, logistics, and interactive activities. Collaboration was made possible because of genuine affection for each other, but benefited each involved member by giving them the opportunity to take on added responsibility by volunteering to research the practicality of an idea. By collaborating, involved members were more effectively and actively living out the missive of the Crew—to spread enthusiasm and scholarship on Sherlock Holmes—than they would have been able to do on their own.

Sherlock Holmes is certainly important to Sherlockian societies. The societies would not exist without their literary hero/mascot (Gill 2014). However, it is the friendships and relationships initiated by the existence of the societies that maintain the Crew and other Sherlockian societies. The relationships are what lead people to return, meeting after meeting, and what encourage them to

collaborate, volunteer for tasks, and dedicate often substantial amounts of their free time to building deep wells of topical knowledge on the great detective. The desire to belong and be included are incentivized by the promise of camaraderie with other people who share the same enthusiasms, likes, interests. This is also why the “Grand Game” is so important. The whole thing plays like an inside joke shared amongst friends, a continually evolving and growing entity to laugh about, contribute to, and experience collectively. Sherlockian societies “should not be viewed as something separate from the relationships that constitute [them]” (Elias 2001). The Crew is only as strong as the interpersonal relationships that hold it together and the feelings of belonging imbued by membership.

Conclusion

Finishing up this research, I was struck with the realization of just how unlikely it would be for Sherlock Holmes to actually be a member of a Sherlockian society. Preferring to work alone or with a select few partners (such as Dr. Watson), Sherlock would have eschewed the socially-oriented meetings, seen quizzes as immaterial, and The Game as a folly with no logical function. This has not stopped Sherlockians from their devoted study and idolization of the detective.

There are Sherlockians for whom Sherlock Holmes societies are merely a side venture, a casual hobby. For many devotees, however, participation is far more meaningful, granting a unique identity, a purpose, and a community of like-minded individuals. Sherlockian communities, such as the Crew of the Barque Lone Star, provide a location for individuals to define who they are, gain status and respect, and make lasting and meaningful contributions to a community. Maintaining an active membership and good standing in these communities is seen by Sherlockians as a valuable commodity because the community itself is a valuable part of the participant’s social life and perceptions of self-worth.

The most salient characteristic of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star (which also fits what I researched of larger Sherlockia) is the desire to accrue knowledge and garner respect in the effort to become an invaluable member of the society. The more a Sherlockian entrenched themselves in studying the canon, collecting Sherlockian-themed products, and writing and producing their own Sherlockian-themed artifacts, the more important the ‘Sherlockian’ designation became to their personal identity. As one’s identity with the group grew, so did their commitment to sticking with the group and supporting the Sherlockian agenda. One begat the other begat the other in a feedback loop of increasing feelings of affinity.

This project, for all its implications, was based off an ethnographic study of one local club, meeting once a month, and comprised of just fifteen to twenty regular members. Naturally, there are limitations in my findings. Other Sherlockian groups could behave in entirely discordant ways (although this is unlikely) to the Crew of the Barque Lone Star. Were I given a year or more and funding to continue this project, I would make an effort to travel and visit groups across the country in their regular meetings, as well as attend major conventions such as the BSI weekend that occurs every January.

On my first interview for this thesis, I found myself sitting on a couch in the middle of Stu Nelan’s library. We had just completed the set of interview questions I had brought and were now chatting about the BSI weekend in January that Nelan attended each year, what it takes to be a book collector, and where Nelan hopes his collection ends up after he is gone. As I piled my papers together and shoved them back into my bag, stopping the phone recording, the gray, affable Nelan stood up and walked to one of us intimidatingly tall bookcases.

“I’ve got a gift for you too, since I know you’re a Sherlockian,” he told me. “In the past I’ve tried to get people to read a book—this is something I’ve enjoyed and this is something I know you would enjoy too—but in general that hasn’t worked out since the books I like, nobody else has liked.”

Nelan slides a thin book off the shelf and hands it to me. It has a navy hardcover, with wear on the corners from past readings and yellowed pages from age. “Thank you,” I am genuinely touched by the gesture.

“Since you’re a Sherlockian, I know you’ll like a Sherlock Holmes book. “The Blue Carbuncle” is my favorite book. So start your collection with that book and grow it big and big and big.”

This, from my experiences over the past year, is the epitome of a Sherlockian. Friendly, always willing to help a fellow Sherlockian further the study of Sherlockia, and generous with knowledge and belongings if it will go toward spreading the discipleship of Sherlock Holmes. The Blue Carbuncle was the first book I received from a Sherlockian, but it was not the last. I also personally received chronologies, puzzles, and bibliographies, which does not include any of the materials that were distributed to the group at large.

When I began this research, I was merely interested in the dynamics of niche communities and was not, in fact, a Sherlockian at all. A year later, and I have been converted, affected by the same feedback loop I describe earlier in this conclusion. There is a certain satisfaction that comes with having your words applauded (as mine were, with the toast that I opened this thesis with) and receiving recognition from fellow members for good ideas and opinions on the canon. The more I am exposed to the Crew of the Lone Star, the more I find myself liking and truly enjoying their company and wanting to be recognized as a Sherlockian as well.

As I’ve already covered, a crucial step to building recognition and respect is putting together and presenting research on a Sherlockian character, story, or feature of the time period. Which is where this project comes full-circle: in a meta turn of events, I will soon present this research about Sherlockians to the Crew of the Barque Lone Star Sherlockians in my effort to be taken seriously as a Sherlockian. In doing so, I will demonstrate the knowledge, the contribution, and the understanding of belonging that are essential to deep identification.

Allana’s full thesis can be read at:

[http://www.beaconsociety.com/uploads/3/7/3/8/37380505/wooley_allana -- a study in sherlock --
_knowing to be known.pdf](http://www.beaconsociety.com/uploads/3/7/3/8/37380505/wooley_allana_-_a_study_in_sherlock_-_knowing_to_be_known.pdf)

Which Way Did They Go, George, Which They Did They Go?

Since the inception of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star Society in November, 1970, the crew members have been under the able hands of the 3rd Mate.

And why the 3rd Mate ?

As one may recall from "The Adventure of the Five Orange Pips," the Captain, 1st, and 2nd Mates were "bad guys", so the presiding officer of the descendants of the Crew is logically the 3rd Mate.

3rd Mates of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star

Sherlock Holmes (honorary)

Margaret Francine Morris (Swift)

John Dennis

William B. Beeson

Donald Hobbs

James Webb

Joe Fay

Steve Mason

Value Those Who Serve

Since the inception of the Deckmate investiture process began in May, 2013, over sixty crewmembers have been invested (elevated) to the position of Deckmate for their efforts to better the Society and its members.

The Crew is extremely proud to have each of these Sherlockians as part of our Society.

Invested Deckmates of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star as of May 1, 2023

Mark Alberstat, BSI -- May, 2021
Dan Andriacco, BSI -- December, 2022
William "Bill" Beeson, BSI -- February, 2016
Cynthia Brown, BSI, ASH -- November, 2013
Tom Brydges -- April, 2023
Ann Caddell -- November, 2019
Carole Nelson Douglas -- November, 2015
Steven Doyle, BSI -- October, 2020
Joe Eckrich, BSI -- December, 2022
Joe Fay -- April, 2014
Lawrence Fischman -- November, 2017
Hal Glazier -- October, 2021
David Harnois -- September, 2016
Jim Hawkins, BSI -- December, 2022
Marland Henderson -- October, 2014
Eleanor Hebert -- October, 2020
Thomas Hebert -- October, 2020
Don Hobbs, ASH, BSI -- May, 2013
Nancy Holder, ASH, BSI -- June, 2021
Brenda Hutchison -- April, 2014
Deborah Ingersoll -- July, 2022
Roger Johnson, ASH, BSI -- December, 2021
Timothy Johnson, BSI -- April, 2022
Mark Jones -- May, 2021
Robert Katz, ASH, BSI -- November, 2020
Olivia Kirkendall -- March, 2019
Richard Krisciunas, ASH -- October, 2020
Tim Kline -- June, 2016
David Leal, ASH -- December, 2021
Herb Linder -- November, 2016
Sandra Little -- April, 2017
Bullitt Lowry -- April, 2017
Sharon Lowry -- May, 2016
Angela Lusk -- June, 2019
Bonnie MacBird, ASH, BSI -- November, 2019

Danna Mancini – March, 2023
Pam Mason -- August, 2015
Rusty Mason -- June, 2017
Steve Mason, ASH, BSI -- July, 2014
Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI -- November, 2019
Michael McSwiggin, BSI -- November, 2020
Russell Merritt, BSI -- October, 2020
Les Moskowitz -- December, 2020
Karen Murdock, ASH -- December, 2020
Rob Nunn -- February, 2021
Charles Olson -- September, 2016
Karen Olson -- June, 2018
Allen Osborne -- October, 2017
William Pervin -- January, 2016
Charles Peters -- April, 2021
Walter Pieper -- March, 2015
Edith Pounden -- January, 2021
Jack Pugh -- May, 2013
James Robinson -- October, 2020
Brenda Rossini -- July, 2021
Greg Ruby, ASH, BSI -- June, 2016
Monica Schmidt, ASH, BSI -- October, 2020
Liese Sherwood-Fabre -- October, 2020
Bob Stek, BSI – February, 2023
Regina Stinson, BSI – July, 2022
Francine Morris Swift, ASH, BSI -- April, 2017
Utechin, Nicholas, BSI -- July, 2021
Jim Webb, BSI -- December, 2013
Adriana Zayia -- October, 2020

Your Logos Are Showing

Since the inception of the Crew in 1970, we have used several logos to distinguish the Society.



The Crew of the Barque Lone Star
A Sherlock Holmes Scion Society
www.dfw-sherlock.org



Decade of Change or “Where We Came from and Where We are Going”

In 2013, the Crew of the Barque Lone Star entered a new period with new officers, by-laws, and mission. Cindy Brown captures that decade and what is in store for the Crew in the future.

In 1970, who could have imagined that we would still be here talking about Sherlock Holmes Dr. Watson and Arthur Conan Doyle, with friends from around the world.

In Autumn of 1970, Francine Morris distributed an invitation to the first cruise of the Crew of the Barque Lone Star Society.

Thus, the Grand Game begins.

Since then, the Crew has gone through “several incarnations over the decades” under the direction of Joe Faye, Bill Beason, Jim Webb, and Steve Mason, and others, all who served as Third Mates, or the leader of the society.

The crew members of the Barque Lone Star are committed to spreading the words of Conan Doyle, John Watson and Sherlock Holmes to the Dallas/Fort Worth area and to the larger Sherlockian world both in the United States and around the world.

The Crew’s first Buoy Laws were written after the creation of the society in the 1970s. It included the usual items of attending monthly meetings, of which unpleasantness will not be welcome, as well as having scholarly toasts to Sherlock Holmes, the Queen, and others.

During each Cruise of the Barque Lone Star (meeting), one or more Clean-Tables shall be provided in the Grand Saloon for the Safe Display of Sherlockian Memorabilia. Neither food, nor drink, nor burning tobacco, nor chewing tobacco, nor snuff shall ever be brought Near any Clean-Table.

Highlights of those original buoy laws included:

- The Sworn Duties of every member of The Crew shall be to “go everywhere, see everything, overhear everyone” in support of our Mission, including to Find the Lost Members of The Crew and restore their Names to the Ship’s Roster.
- No Dues or any other Fees shall Ever be Required of the Members of The Crew. The Only Forum for Discussion of any Change to the “No-Dues” Policy shall be the Business Meeting. There shall be no Business Meeting.

In 2013, the Crew of the Barque Lone Star “re-booted”, with a new slate of officers, new meeting locations, and several initiatives to share with crew members. This included the establishment of *The Bilge Pump*, a monthly newsletter for all crew members. In addition, for the last 8 years the Crew has issued the Baker Street Elementary comic strip. The comic strip features Holmes, Watson, Stamford, and a cast of other members of the Canon, as well living members of the Baker Street Irregulars.

Deckmate Liese Sherwood-Fabre has written over 100 essays on the *Life and Times of Sherlock Holmes* which have been included in each of the installments of *The Bilge Pump*.

Crew members have developed and carried out a number of Symposiums at the Allen Public Library, featuring such topics as *Sherlock Holmes in the Movies*, (September 2017), *The Women in the Canon* (November 2016), and *Sherlock Holmes in Popular Culture* (November 2015).

In late 2015 we decided it would be fun to have a Christmas card exchange which has since had great results and brought out the creative talent in many of us. (Some not so creative, but still fun!) Cards are expected to be designed by each member with a Sherlockian or Victorian theme. Or as a last resort, can be purchased but are still expected to have a Sherlockian or Victorian slant.

When the International Exhibition of Sherlock Holmes began touring the United States, the second location to be selected to show the items, was the Perot Children’s Museum in Dallas, beginning in February, 2015.. The museum turned to the Crew of the Barque Lone Star to help roll out the presentation of items owned by the Conan Doyle Estate, the University of Minnesota, and other patrons. Members of the Crew provided support to the museum, including displays, a family based murder mystery, and presentations on Sherlock Holmes and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. The exhibition was in Dallas for nearly 6 months and enjoyed by thousands of people.

The Crew has taken their camaraderie beyond just the monthly meeting. We initiated Movie Nights hosted by the Pieper's since February 2016. And have now added a friendly dinner night once a quarter at Two Guys from Italy, a local restaurant.

We continue to have library display projects, including the Allen Library, Denton Library, numerous Dallas Public Libraries, and the Cleburne Library.

Meetings and gathering of any sort have been more challenging since the pandemic has forced us to live in a virtual world. But the obstacle was overcome easily by the Crew of the Barque Lone Star. In April 2020, we started meeting virtually, and while it was a technical challenge initially, we soon got the hang of it. Our virtual meetings are often the highest attended virtual meetings in the United States, with sometimes more than seven countries in attendance. And we now have over 275 members worldwide. I have to say, the secret to this success lies squarely on the shoulders of our current Third Mate.

Our 50th Anniversary Celebration (held in 2022) two years late, due to the pandemic, was attended by Sherlockians from around the country. And even included a Ukrainian violinist for our enjoyment.

In addition, the Crew has now published 6 books with articles written by our members. The books, to date are:

A Grimm Holmes

A Grimmer Holmes

A Case of Agony

The Canon in Five Lines at a Time

Holmes and Me

The Rest of the Story

We already have our next book in the works, which will deal with Holmes solving a crime that actually happened in a crewmember's local hometown or area, in the late 1800's or early 1900's.

Members of the Crew have come from all walks of life, including doctors, attorneys, engineers, CPA's, computer specialists, professional writers, health care specialist, artists, officers of the law, espionage specialists, bagpipe players, teachers, sword experts, FBI men, professors, newspaper editors, and many, many more. This just goes to show, that Sherlock Holmes belongs to everyone.

He sparks the imagination like few characters have ever done. And once the seed is planted, who knows where it will take us.

The purpose of our Society for over 50 years has been, and shall continue, "To Perpetuate the Legend that Sherlock Holmes is Not a Legend."

To that end, our motto for the Society continues to ring true:

"Let the Third Mate do it!"

"We Strive, regardless!"

The Crew of the Barque Lone Star Toast **Richard Krisciunas**

Since 1970, deep in the heart of Texas
Friends have gathered from near and far
to study stories of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson.
We're the Crew of the Barque Lone Star.

Bullet Lowry, Francine Morris and Bill Beason
launched our group with a warm spirit that still survives
of kinship, community, and scholarship
about three men who lived back in 1895.

Arthur Conan Doyle, a doctor and author.
Sherlock Holmes, detective, son of a country squire.
Dr. John Watson, trusted biographer.
This famous trio gives us so much to admire.

They've taken us along on their many adventures.
We've ridden in hansom cabs, dog carts, and trains.
We've warmed ourselves by the fire inside their
lodgings While outside, fog grows, the winds blow, and
it rains.

We Deck Mates welcome all those who visit,
and are most cordial and inviting hosts,
Known for cartoons and informative meetings
With presentations, quizzes, and toasts.

Please raise your glasses one more time
and toast all the special friends we've made,
To Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson
and to the game that we've all played.
Until we meet again.



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