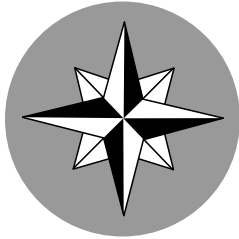




EXPLORATIONS



◆ 2009 ◆ AN ACTIVE YEAR IN REVIEW ◆



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

“My you live in interesting times.” Whether that quote is from Robert Kennedy in 1966, a 1950 science fiction story, or part of an ancient Chinese saying - December will be an interesting time to be a Sherlockian. The Warner Bros. movie, “Sherlock Holmes”, will be trying, and exciting, for those of us who love to play the game. Tie-ins include computer games, 7-Eleven Stores, and fashion magazines pushing grey-flannel capes. Love it or hate it, it is happening. The movie will stir up interest in Mr. Holmes and we need to find out how to reap some benefits.

Speaking of benefits, watch for our annual January Master's birthday celebration. Baker Street West is in the planning stages, so watch you mail boxes. Also, the Red-Throated League is planning

another great radio play reenactment for this Spring.”

The 2010 Conference Committee is hard at work putting together another spectacular Sherlock Holmes Conference here in Minnesota. We have had to move the Conference back one week, the new dates are: Friday, August 6 – Sunday, August 8, 2010. These tri-annual events have been very popular in the Sherlockian world and have had attendees from around the United States, as well as Canada, the United Kingdom and Japan. This is an opportunity for all Norwegian Explorers to have an enjoyable weekend and rub elbows with other Sherlockians. Please do not be shy, there will be no one testing your knowledge and it is a great way to experience a world-class conference with no travel expenses.

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FROM THE OUTGOING EDITOR'S DESK

Nearly every organization ponders the means to involve youth to ensure the succession of its mission. Sherlockians are no exception. In a recent editorial in *The Baker Street Journal*, Steve Rothman reflects on the upcoming *Sherlock Holmes* movie and its expected impact on the world of the Master Detective. While Robert Downey, Jr may introduce new followers to Baker Street, we Explorers are fortunate to have talent already at hand.

I am pleased to turn the editorship of *Explorations* over to Tim Reich. He will

bring a wonderful, energetic perspective to the newsletter. As the movie-going world discovers the action-packed version of Holmes, we can rest easy knowing that our own heroes are hard at work on our behalf.

My personal thanks to the many Explorers who have contributed to these pages, not only during my short tenure as editor, but since its inception. Keep up the dialogue and the game will remain nicely afoot!

~Pj Doyle



Illustration by
Frederic Dorr Steele



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK (Continued from page 1)

Here is the conference announcement:

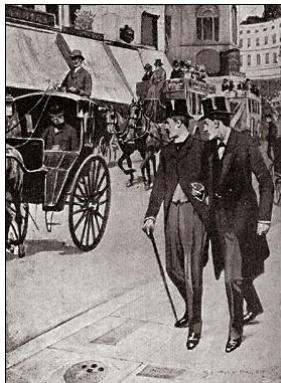


Illustration by Sidney Paget

The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota; The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections; and The University of Minnesota, Special Collections and Rare Books Present: The Spirits of Sherlock Holmes. The Conference will explore the many meanings of the word "Spirits" and how they relate to Sherlock Holmes, Arthur Conan Doyle, and the Victorian Era. The conference will be held at the Elmer L. Andersen Library at the University of Minnesota, the site of the 2004 and 2007 Conferences. It will begin early afternoon on Friday, August 6, 2010. A Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections Meeting will be held late Friday afternoon and Friday evening will be open for your personal dining choice.

Presentations will return on Saturday morning, August 7th and a luncheon and banquet will be held that day. The conference will conclude mid-day on Sunday, August 8th. Space for dealer's tables will be available in the conference room. More details and registration information will be available soon. To be placed on the mailing list for the conference, send your name, postal address and email address to:

NorwegianExplorers@gmail.com.

"No ghosts need apply."

Just some of the benefits of belonging to the Norwegian Explorers in 2010, do not forget to send in your renewal notice.

~Gary Thaden

"Your statement is most interesting," said Sherlock Holmes." - The Sign of Four



**"members of the
Norwegian
Explorers can look
back on another
very active year."**

FROM THE INCOMING EDITOR'S DESK (PART I)

My sincere thanks goes to Pj Doyle for her work as outgoing editor and her guidance during the transition of the *Explorations* editorship.

As the year 2009 comes to a close, members of the Norwegian Explorers can look back on another very active year. Our study groups and film nights were well attended. Explorers continue to represent our group well with published scholarship through our own publications and in the journals of other Sherlockian societies. Members were active in attending Sherlockian related events both local and distant. On April 18th many of us attended the Red-Throated League's radio play dramatization at the Pavek Museum. It was a wonderful performance. As members stay active, we are grateful that many of them take time to report on their activities and submit them to *Explorations* for us to enjoy.

This issue of *Explorations* contains a variety of articles submitted by your fellow Explorers. For those members who collect originals for their library, one of Phil Bergem's trio of articles explains the history of the *Beeton's Christmas Annuals* and how you may be the proud owner of one someday. Karen Murdock delights us with another piece on "Figures of Speech in the Canon" coupled with her quiz to get you investigating on your own. There are study group reviews by John Ward, Linda Schacher, and yours truly. The film nights are reported by Bob Brusica and Ray Riethmeier. Phil and Bob also provide us glimpses into Sherlockian related books they have recently read. I've rounded out this issue with my review of Larry Millett's presentation on his Sherlock Holmes mysteries.

(Continued on page 2)

CONAN AND DOYLE GAS FIELDS FOR EXPLORATION

It has come to our attention that there is a Conan Doyle connection located in the East Irish Sea. In 2007 Serica Energy plc, headquartered at 87-89 Baker Street in London (!), was awarded a license to develop two natural gas fields located about 25 miles (40 km.) off the west coast of England between Barrow-in-Furnace and the Isle of Man. The two blocks, numbered 113/26b and 113/27c have been named Conan and Doyle. Serica is evaluating plans to start drilling at Conan this year

and the potential of that resource could be as much as one trillion cubic feet of gas.

A map of the location can be found at:

<http://www.serica-energy.com/operations-unitedkingdom-block113.php#ukMap8>

By coincidence, the second map on the page shows another gas field located to the south named Hodder. This was the name of the preparatory school for Stonyhurst that Doyle attended when he was young.

~Phil Bergem



“We will always have Watson’s chronicled fifty-six short stories and four novels to comfort us with an authentic Holmes.”

FROM THE INCOMING EDITOR’S DESK (PART II)

As new editor of *Explorations* I plan to continue on the path laid by those before me and provide additional opportunities for members who want to explore their literary ideas for Sherlockian and Doylean scholarship. I want to thank the contributors to this issue for their fine work and I look forward to all the articles yet to appear in *Explorations*. Feel free to let me know what article ideas you have and what you’d like to see in future issues. If you are a new member and this is your first issue of *Explorations*, I hope you find enjoyment in our newsletter.

Issue #60 is coming in early 2010. You can look forward to a mystery challenge within the issue to celebrate this significant number in the Sherlockian world.

My thoughts on the new movie:

Although it is not Canonically accurate, I look forward to the *Sherlock Holmes* movie opening December 25, 2009. As with Gary’s comments, I may cringe if I see a distorted Holmes on the front of a cereal box next year. (I’d still put a couple boxes in my cart though!) The broad range of advertizing tie-ins that is possible if the movie is a hit may seem endless. From what I know of the late Sherlockian, John Bennett Shaw, if were he were still alive this coming Spring, I think he would revel with delight in where his “completist” style of collecting might take him.

I was not yet a full Sherlockian in the 1970’s so I missed the wave of interest that movies and publicity brought to our life of keeping the memory green. I came to the game later and I’m glad now that I am fully immersed in the Sherlockian world to participate in this new attention placed on the world’s first “consulting detective.” I hope you will keep an open mind as well. We will always have Watson’s chronicled fifty-six short stories and four novels to comfort us with an authentic Holmes. Nothing can take away the opening cozies, the brilliant deductions, and case revelations of our own Holmes of the printed page.

Your thoughts on the new movie?

After the new movie is released in theaters, if you would like to share your thoughts with the readers of *Explorations* please feel free to submit them. Brief comments or reactions from a handful Norwegian Explorers might make for entertaining reading!

~Tim Reich, Editor



Request for Submissions

As always, submissions for *Explorations* are welcome. Email them directly to Tim Reich in plain text or in Word format to: twinsfan1@earthlink.net

BOOK REVIEW: A COUPLE EXCELLENT SELECTIONS

On the Trail of Arthur Conan Doyle and *Bertram Fletcher Robinson*

There were two books released last year that have not received much attention, which may be appropriate as they deal with a relationship of Arthur Conan Doyle's that also has not received too much attention. This is ACD's relationship with Bertram Fletcher Robinson. Although this has been covered quite a bit on the surface, these books comprise the most comprehensive look at Robinson's life and relationship with Doyle that I have seen.

The first of the books will be of great interest to people curious about the background to *The Hound of the Baskervilles* or thinking of a trip to the southwest area of England. The book is *On the Trail of Arthur Conan Doyle* by Brian Pugh and Paul Spiring. It consists of a chapter summarizing Conan Doyle's life, with many details I have not come across before, chapters dealing with George Turnavine Budd and Bertram Fletcher Robinson, and a self-guided tour of the Plymouth/Dartmoor area where Doyle interacted with the two gentlemen.

Illustration by Sidney Paget



Budd was a University friend of Doyle's with whom he briefly worked when freshly out of school. In his autobiography Doyle mentions his experiences with Budd, who was obviously a significant element of his early life, but declined to give his true name or provide many specific details. The proof of Budd's significance is shown in the fact that Doyle wrote several stories and books based on Budd's outrageous personality. The chapter dealing with Budd provides details Doyle covered up and which have not been seen before. The chapter on Robinson provides a

summary of his life and deals specifically with the events surrounding the writing of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.

The final section of the book is the "Arthur Conan Doyle Devon Tour," a must for anyone planning a trip to the area. I have been to the region twice and wish it would have been available for me to use. It starts in Plymouth, where Doyle lived and worked with Budd for a short time in 1882, and continues through other locations in Devon relevant to Doyle, Budd and Robinson. The tour is easily followed for anyone visiting the area by car, or a using map and their imagination. It does not play "The Game" so any references to Holmes is in the context of the writing of the book, but there are enough other resources for anyone who wishes to walk directly in the footsteps of Holmes and Watson.

The second book is *Bertram Fletcher Robinson: A Footnote to the Hound of the Baskervilles* also written by Pugh and Spiring. This is the only biography of Robinson available and although we only know of him due to his association with Doyle, the book shows his full life without the filter of Conan Doyle. The book is a bit disjointed due to the fact that many details of Robinson's life are still unknown, but it is astounding how much Spiring and Pugh did find and they present what they uncovered as best as possible. The material presented includes an interesting article Robinson wrote about Grimspound on Dartmoor and a full bibliography of his work. He was much more prolific than anyone had given him credit for previously, an omission the authors are working to correct.

Both books are very well written and easily read. They consist of a great deal of research and the effort put into the book by Brian and Paul shows through. While neither of these books is intended for the general public, they should be of interest to those of us passionate about the subject of Sherlock Holmes and his creator (or literary agent). They are both available through Amazon.com and I highly recommend them.

~Phil Bergem



"they should be of interest to those of us passionate about the subject of Sherlock Holmes"

A Little Look at Alliteration

Rhetors—teachers of rhetoric—can count on students knowing very few figures of speech in these days of the early 21st century. Shakespeare knew (and used) some 200 different figures, but the subject has been in decline in the schoolroom ever since. Similes, metaphors, the rhetorical question . . . perhaps antithesis and hyperbole—these are still part of the common heritage of educated people. To this very short list can be added alliteration, the repetition of similar sounds, especially repetition of initial consonants in words next to or near one another.

By some definitions any repetition of nearby sounds can be called “alliteration.” Other definitions limit the sense of this figure to consonants at the beginnings of words. Alliteration thus is sometimes called “head rhyme” or “initial rhyme.”

The effect of alliteration is to emphasize words and to make a line flow more smoothly. It is common in poetry:

I sing of brooks, of blossoms, birds and
bowers

—Robert Herrick, “The Argument of
His Book”

With beaded bubbles winking at the brim
—John Keats, “Ode to a Nightingale”

On scrolls of silver snowy sentences
—Hart Crane, “Voyages”

Five miles meandering in a mazy motion
—Samuel Taylor Coleridge, “Kubla
Khan”

Landscape-lover, lord of language
—Alfred, Lord Tennyson, “To Virgil”

Alliteration is also common in speeches:

In the United States today we have more
than our share of the nattering nabobs of
negativism.

—Spiro Agnew, address at San Diego,
11 September 1970 (speech written by
William Safire)

Fifty-four Forty, or fight!

— U.S. Senator William Allen of Ohio,
1844

Overuse of alliteration can be comical:

“Step forward, Tin Man. You dare to
come to me for a heart, do you? You
clinking, clanking, clattering collection of
caliginous junk! [. . .] And you,
Scarecrow, have the effrontery to ask for
a brain! You billowing bale of bovine
fodder!”

—delivered by Frank Morgan (The
Wizard of Oz in the 1939 movie of that
name)

However, moderate use of alliteration
makes a line flow smoothly and gives a
pleasing sound. In fact, since any language
has but a limited number of sounds, some
alliteration is almost inevitable, even if an
author is not striving for it—as in these
Sherlockian examples:

a worn stone staircase (3STU, 598)

“Put your pistol in your pocket” (STUD, 38)

he put his hand over his heart (STUD, 18)

met us at the garden gate (GOLD, 613)

Monday morning (CREE, 1076)

flickering flames (STUD, 17)

“it made me mad” (IDEN, 193)

banking business (BERY, 302)

the printing press (VALL, 839)

Alliteration is by far the most common
figure in the Canon. It occurs in every story,
on nearly every page:

“a wonder-woman in every way.” (ILLU, 986)

upon a soft sea of sound (SIGN, 128)

“this crazy boob of a bug-hunter” (3GAR,
1054)

the motion of winch or of windlass (VALL,
818)

“among your bees and books” (LAST, 978)

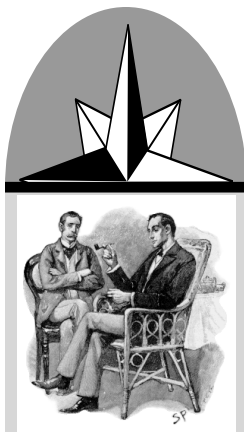
“a battered billycock” (BLUE, 245)

“a first folio of Shakespeare” (3GAB, 1027)

“the very foundation of revealed
religion” (GOLD, 616)

“the merest moonshine” (BOSC, 211)

(continued on page 11)



**“Alliteration
thus is
sometimes
called “head
rhyme” or
“initial rhyme.”**

“A Study of” COPPER BEACHES

Study Group Review

On January 17th, the Study Group dove into the mystery of the *Cooper Beeches*. Led by the musings and insights of Karen Murdock the discussion went in a variety of directions. Some parts of the discussion were focused on the details of the story and some points raised the question of possible hidden diabolical twists.

Karen began with a description of the Copper Beech trees she climbed on in Massachusetts. She described it as a wonderful climbing tree which was taller than a house. It had copper bark and leaves were of a silver grey. Since it is such a big tree, the description in the story of a “clump to Copper Beeches” would not be a good use of that particular tree as they probably could not grow in tight groups. Apparently, the *Minneapolis Journal* published the story as “Copper Breaches”.

The discussion of the title reached a conclusion when the group reached a consensus that “Copper Beeches” was only the place name of the home much a Wisteria Lodge. In reality, Copper Beeches had no role in the story. This tale could have just as easily been titled “The Daughter in the Attic”.

Mr. Rucastle asked Violet Hunter to put on a dress of a specific color. The use of the color ‘electric blue’ was interesting because not many people in that time period had electricity. A couple of comments were made regarding the color. One alluded to the fact that it involved identifying anodyne dye. The other comment was that ‘Electric Blue’ is a trade name. In addition, further insight into wardrobe colors was offered when the comment was made that in Victorian times all clothing was dyed black at the time of mourning even though bright colors were fashionable.

Violet Hunter was considered by the group to be a woman of courage and very clever. The bulk of the story is about Violet. Klinger’s reference said that Holmes reported Violet Hunter’s marriage, but it did not happen. Many theories about Violet Hunter’s designs on Holmes were put forth. Violet seemed capable of handling her own situation without Holmes help. In addition there was a question about Watson’s interest in Miss Hunter in spite of the fact that his wife was ill. Was a relationship established between Violet and Watson because of her ability to write clear and interesting discussions?

The discussion group’s interest was aroused when a revolutionary theory was put forth. Could Violet Hunter have been a minion of Moriarity? Did she lure Holmes out of London so he could carry out some dastardly crime? Was Rucastle also in the great villains employ? Why was Violet Hunter allowed to be seen in town if she was a surrogate for the daughter? How come



Illustration by Sidney Paget

Rucastle and his wife went out to dinner on short notice when they did not usually leave the house? Was that part of the plot? Wouldn’t the boyfriend notice the ruse? The answer to that last question was that maybe he only visited on weekends or nights.

It was determined that families were responsible for their members who suffered from mental illnesses often locked them in rooms in the house as was done in this case. Severely disturbed family members were locked in homes as recently as 50 years ago. Of course in this situation it was determined that Rucastle’s motive was the control of his daughter’s inheritance.

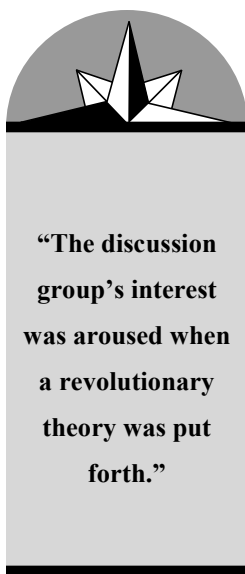
What about Mrs. Rucastle? Was she of a lower class than the first Mrs. Rucastle? We don’t know much about Mrs. Rucastle except that she came back with the surgeon for some vague reason at the end of the story.

Rucastle’s daughter and Mr. Fowler escaped her dysfunctional family when Fowler was assigned a government post in Mauritius. Karen Murdock brought up Mauritius as the home of the Dodo. The history of its place in French and English history was also discussed.

Phil Bergem brought an original copy of the *1905 Bradshaw’s Railroad Guide*. He also had a reproduction for us to handle. After looking at the minute size of the print in the book, it was noted that magnifying glasses would have been a necessary tool to follow this schedule.

There was a discussion of *Copper Beeches* as a part of the cannon. Holmes makes reference to his detective work as an ‘art’ rather than science. In the beginning of this story other adventures are mentioned which led to the speculation that this story was done in part as public relations. Comments were made that this may have actually been the last story in the cannon. The fact that no police were called led to a discussion of the lack of police involvement in many of the stories. Detectives made money from rewards and there were indications that Holmes earned money from cases not recorded. Many times the situation was handled outside the law. In addition, there appears to be as much crime in the countryside as in the city. The conclusion was reached that Doyle has the narrative ability to bring you into the picture.

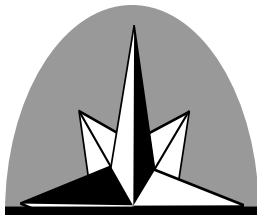
~John Ward



“The discussion group’s interest was aroused when a revolutionary theory was put forth.”

AT THE MOVIES WITH SHERLOCK HOLMES

Film Night I: The Lost World



“While primitive by today’s standards, the battles of allosaurus, brontosaurus, stegosaurus, triceratops, and the flying pterodactyl were quite impressive.”

Many observers are familiar with adaptations of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, the most media-reproduced work by Arthur Conan Doyle. Patently, second place for a Doyle adaptation goes to *The Lost World*. This story, which introduced Professor Challenger, has been filmed no less than four times and has spawned at least one radio series, two television series, and a number of filmed sequels.

During the evening of February 2, 2009, when the temperature outside was well below zero, about twenty-five hardy souls warmed themselves in Andersen Library by viewing a modern restoration of *The Lost World*, originally filmed in 1925. Wallace Beery starred as Professor Challenger with boisterous mien and shaggy mane. Lewis Stone nobly portrayed the long suffering Sir John Roxton. Bessie Love played the sweet and vulnerable Paula White, while Lloyd Hughes took the role of the stalwart and impetuous Edward Malone.

The original plot of Doyle’s novel was noticeably altered in the movie. For example, the book was concerned with an ongoing struggle between a tribe of human-like creatures and a belligerent race of ape-like creatures. In the film only one snaggletoothed apeman grimaces and raises havoc with the expedition on the remote plateau. In addition to the simmering romance between Paula and Edward, much is made of the struggle among many not-so-extinct dinosaurs (the discovery of which, after all, is the object of Challenger’s trek into the wilds of South America).

While primitive by today’s standards, the battles of allosaurus, brontosaurus, stegosaurus, triceratops, and the flying pterodactyl were quite impressive. These beings and their beastly carnage were the product of intricate stop motion photography by Willis O’Brien. The effects included bloody contests, voracious leaf chomping, and tense interaction with the human characters.

Late in the movie, when a brontosaurus falls from the steep palisade into a

sucking pool of mud, the beast’s heaving breathing is impressively registered as he thrashes in the muck. Later, miraculously saved and transported to London, this prehistoric saurian monster goes on a rampage not unlike King Kong in New York some years later. (Notably, it was Willis who did the stop action photography for that film as well.)

The version of *The Lost World* that we saw was a miracle of restoration. The original print no longer existed in full and many partial prints had been radically altered. Over several years the restorers, Film Preservation Associates, located and pieced together eight separate prints and remastered them into a smooth and seamless whole. Throughout the film the voice of Ray Pilot supplied helpful commentary, including insights about Doyle, Challenger, and how beings thought dead for five million years were brought to life.

While munching on popcorn, the audience reveled in the story of beauty and the beasts and the dangerous expedition to parts unknown. Viewers saw how the mocking crowds in the film came to believe and witness Challenger’s claims of discovery. Happily, they also saw London saved, though unfortunately the road bed of London Bridge collapsed under immense brontosaurian weight, It seemed a relatively small price to pay for the city’s safety, as the wild creature was swept away in the irresistible current of the Thames.

True love prevailed in the worlds that were both lost and found: on the plateau in South America and in the streets of London. The film commentator informed us that in 1925 Conan Doyle saw and liked this film adaptation of lost world exploration. Eighty-four years later, in icy Minneapolis, a different group of explorers watched, enjoyed, and even cheered as Professor Challenger challenged beastly odds. He won the day and gained the admiration of all who accompanied him to the lost world and back.

~Robert Brusic



AT THE MOVIES CONTINUES...

Film Night II: A Double Feature

On Monday, November 2, the Norwegian Explorers convened in the Andersen Library at the University of Minnesota for the group's latest movie night. On the bill this time was a double feature of programs, each originally designed to fill an hour of television. John Bergquist introduced the selections with a brief history of each one. The first was the pilot for the 1965 BBC series, *Sherlock Holmes*, an engaging dramatization of "The Speckled Band." The first set of episodes for this series starred Douglas Wilmer as Sherlock



Illustration by Sidney Paget

Holmes, although he was replaced in a second series by Peter Cushing. Because of the relative obscurity of this program, particularly to American audiences, Wilmer might now be remembered best by

Sherlockians for his appearance as the Great Detective in Gene Wilder's 1975 movie, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes's Smarter Brother*. Joining both Holmeses throughout the series run was Nigel Stock, who portrayed a refreshingly capable Watson.

The second feature was a presentation from A&E's *Biography* program, 1995's "Sherlock Holmes: The Great Detective." Presented as an authentic biography of the man -- with only occasional lapses to suggest anything less than historical accuracy -- the highlight of this program was footage from a Sherlock Holmes Society of London dinner at which David Burke reprised his role of Doctor Watson and regaled his dinner companions with stories of his years with Sherlock Holmes.

It is always a pleasure to convene for a movie night. The evening's intermission provided opportunity to partake in the snacks and beverages between programs, and we were thus afforded an additional occasion for pleasant conversation with our fellow Sherlock Holmes enthusiasts.

~Ray Riethmeier



LARRY MILLETT AND *THE MIRACLE MURDER*

On Sunday, October 18, 2009 an intimate group of Holmes and mystery aficionados gathered in the third floor Magazine Room of the St. Paul Central Public Library. The title of the 2:00 p.m. presentation was, "Larry Millett presents: The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes in Minnesota."

Larry Millett gave the background on how he brought the great London detective to Minnesota to solve the mysteries in Millett's five mainstream Holmes books, beginning with *Sherlock Holmes and the Red Demon*. He also talked about life as a writer and the challenges in today's fiction marketplace.

During the second half of his presentation, he spoke about his new book that he is currently shopping to publishers. His book's title is *The Miracle Murder* and is

a classic locked-room mystery similar in style to John Dickson Carr's great mysteries. Larry shared a sneak-peek with us when he read from the preface of *The Miracle Murder*. The drama occurs in the year 1917 in St. Paul, Minnesota, and this is a case for the saloonkeeper and private investigator, Shadwell Rafferty. Sherlock Holmes is expected to assist in the case through correspondence.

Larry Millett has been a friend of many Norwegian Explorers over the years and it was a delight to hear him deliver his presentation and answer questions from his audience. I look forward to reading *The Miracle Murder*. I hope it hits bookstore shelves in 2010.

~Tim Reich



"David Burke reprised his role of Doctor Watson and regaled his dinner companions with stories of his years with Sherlock Holmes."

OWNING AN ORIGINAL *BEETON'S CHRISTMAS ANNUAL*

I am now the proud owner of an original *Beeton's Christmas Annual*. It is in very good condition, with full front and back covers and all adverts. The only thing that would make it better is if it was from 1887 instead of 1873. This one cost me about \$40 instead of the \$40,000 or more that an 1887 edition (containing *A Study in Scarlet*) can cost.

The fact that a *Beeton's* from the mid 1870s is readily available, and those from so many other years are not, makes for an interesting story. Samuel Orchart Beeton (1831 – 1877) was a London publisher who started the *Englishwoman's Domestic Magazine (EDM)* in 1852. He placed his name on a great variety of books and 'Beeton' soon became a household name. This was literally true of the collection of articles from *EDM*, written by his wife Isabella, the famed Mrs. Beeton, and published as *Beeton's Household Management* (1861). Other books with the Beeton's imprint included *Beeton's Dictionary of Useful Information* (1859), *Beeton's Book of Birds* (1864), *Beeton's Book of Chemistry* (1865), *Beeton's Book of Jokes and Jest*s (1865), *Beeton's Book of Fact and Fiction* (1870), *Beeton's Dictionary of Natural History* (1871), *Beeton's All About Gardening* (1871) and many others.

In 1860 Samuel Beeton published the first *Beeton's Christmas Annual*, which in 1887 would have the first appearance of Sherlock Holmes. By 1887, though, Sam was long gone from the picture. The annual consisted of a mixture of stories, games, jokes, puzzles and poems all intended to entertain at the holiday season. For the first decade or so there was nothing too remarkable or memorable about the issues. In fact, they are very hard to find and information about them is quite scarce. However, for a few years starting in 1872, they became controversial and therefore more popular and memorable.

In May of 1866 the lending house of Overend, Gurney and Company failed, creating a financial crisis for the City of London and bankrupted thousands of people and over 250 companies. Among its many

victims was Samuel Beeton. To avoid full bankruptcy, Samuel Beeton was forced to sell off his assets. He also sold the copyright on his publications to another publishing house, Ward, Lock and Tyler. Beeton was retained as a literary advisor to run the business he formerly owned, and the *Beeton's* books and magazines continued to be printed. The terms were quite decent for Beeton with him eventually receiving one quarter of the company profits. One condition was that the Beeton brand of books and publications remain with Ward, Lock and Tyler.



Beeton's Household Management (1861)

In 1872 Beeton turned the Christmas Annual to anti-monarchical political satire with an issue titled *The Coming King*-----'. The reason for this is unclear. It may have been a reaction to Queen Victoria's continued withdrawal from public life following the death of Prince Albert in 1861. It might have been a reaction to the ongoing and increasingly scandalous behavior of the Prince of Wales, heir to the throne. Whatever the reason, the issue of *Beeton's Christmas Annual* released in November 1872 was a satirical attack on the Prince written in a style that parodied Tennyson's 'Idylls of the King.'

The satire was repeated with the 1873 issue titled *The Siliad*, expanding its reach to cover members of the Court and various politicians. The scandalous nature of this issue resulted in a large number of sales. In July 1874, Ward and Lock let Beeton know that the next issue must be less controversial. He ignored their request and started preparing

(Continued on Page 10)



**"You too can
own an original
Beeton's
Christmas
Annual."**

-Phil Bergem

ON OWNING A *BEETON'S* (continued from page 9)

another satirical issue for release by another publisher. In the meantime Ward and Lock worked on preparing their own issue of *Beeton's Christmas Annual* without Beeton.

Ward & Lock's issue was called *The Fijiad: English Nights Entertainments* while Beeton's rival annual was called *Jon Duan*, a play on Byron's poem "Don Juan." *Jon Duan* was a huge success with over 250,000 copies sold in just three weeks. On November 24, 1874, shortly after release of both annuals, Ward, Lock and Tyler filed suit against Samuel Beeton. Sam eventually lost the suit and was released from his employment with Ward, Lock & Tyler.

For Christmas 1875 the *Beeton's Christmas Annual* released by Ward, Lock and Tyler was called *Faust and 'Phisto*, another tale presented in verse and having nothing to do with politics. Beeton did not release a rival issue as he was suffering from poor health and traveling abroad for much of the year. He did return the next year assisting his partners with an annual for 1876 called *Edward VII: A Play on the Past and Present Times with a View to the Future*. This was a parody done in the style of Shakespeare which looked at the "vices and follies of the age" and presented the situation where Queen Victoria abdicated in favor of the Prince of Wales. Once again, due to the subject matter, it was very popular and caused a great deal of commentary in the press. The official *Beeton's Annual* was an uninspired release called *The Mystery*.

Sam Beeton died on June 6, 1877 of tuberculosis. Kathryn Hughes, in her book *The Short Life and Long Times of Mrs. Beeton*, makes the argument that he actually died from syphilis. She proposes that brain damage resulting from advanced syphilis also explains some of the decisions he made in the later years of his life.

Beginning with the 1877 *Beeton's Christmas Annual*, Ward, Lock and Tyler changed the format significantly. That issue had a number of short stories by various authors including three pieces by Mark Twain. The revised format continued with future issues having short or book-length stories, poems and

plays devised for in-home presentation or dramatic reading. This format continued with the 1887 issue that contained the first appearance of Sherlock Holmes in *A Study in Scarlet* and on through to the final issue in 1898.

In spite of this change in style, issues from most years are not to be found except in some select library collections. This changed for the issue made available for Christmas 1887 containing *A Study in Scarlet*. Due to the popularity of Sherlock Holmes, more copies of this issue were saved and handed down than for most other years. While that issue is considered very rare, there are 31 copies that are known to be in public institutions or private hands.

Ironically, in spite of the limited number of 1887 *Beeton's Christmas Annuals* in existence, there are more known of from that year than from most other years. An exception to this general scarcity are the issues from 1872 – 1876. Due to a peculiarity of human nature, the controversial content of those issues meant that they were more popular and were more likely to be saved.

So, you too can own an original *Beeton's Christmas Annual*. Just don't expect it to be from 1887 unless you have very deep pockets.

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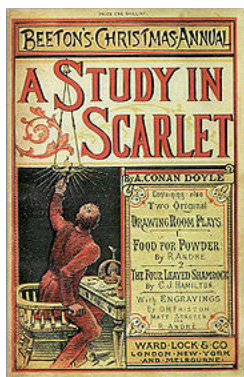
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~Phil Bergem



"Once again, due to the subject matter, it was very popular and caused a great deal of commentary in the press."



The *Beeton's Christmas Annual* from 1887

A Little Look at Alliteration

(continued from page 5)

and sometimes several times in a single sentence:

“If your heart is as big as your body, and your soul as fine as your face” (VALL, 827)

“So say the Serpentine-mews, to a man.” (SCAN, 168)

the rifts of racing clouds [. . .] the long low curve of the melancholy moor (HOUN, 703)

a dense drizzly fog lay low upon the great city (SIGN 98)

“clutching at her treasure trove and flying wildly up the winding stair” (MUSG, 396)

Even some characters in the Canon have alliterative names (Miss Mary Morstan, the Duchess of Devonshire, Horace Harker, Laura Lyons, Professor Presbury).

7. he sat up with his gun and kept watch and ward

8. “Never mind your usual petty puzzles of the police-court.”

9. “I find myself placed in such a position through your continual persecution that I am in positive danger of losing my liberty”

10. a hand appeared, a white, almost womanly hand

11. “My poor parish is devil-ridden!”

12. “a mixture of the modern and the mediaeval”

13. “I feel as if my name and my misfortune must be in every man’s mouth”

Choose your answers from these 13 tales.
(No tale is used more than once.)

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FINA HOUN IDEN

LADY NORW REDH

SHOS SPEC STUD

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~Karen Murdock

“Even some characters in the Canon have alliterative names”

Alliteration Quiz

(answers on page 12)

From the thousands of examples of alliteration in the Sherlock Holmes stories, I have chosen a baker’s dozen. See if you can name the story in which these examples occur:

1. “His particular specialty is the beguiling of lonely ladies”

2. “I am a dangerous man to fall foul of!”

3. “Well, have you solved it?” I asked as I entered.

“Yes. It was the bisulphate of baryta.”

4. “Did you ever hear a bittern booming?”

5. “He locked the door lest the ladies should surprise him”

6. “Watson and I are famous fishermen—are we not, Watson?”

SHERLOCK HOLMES ON THE PRINTED PAGE

The Baker Street Letters

by Michael Robertson. Minotaur Books: New York, 2009.

A Review of sorts...

It's been said that you can't tell a book by its cover. It is just as true to acknowledge that you cannot divine the contents of a book by its title on the cover. That is certainly true of Michael Robertson's novel, *The Baker Street Letters*, which also pictures on the cover a red post box topped with a silhouette of Sherlock Holmes. Thinking I might be getting a pastiche involving the great detective in some intriguing, perhaps nefarious, correspondence, I persuaded the library to reserve a copy for me.

After settling into the story, however, I found that, while a letter or two written to Holmes feature in the narrative, the detective and the doctor do not appear; in fact, they are barely mentioned. The eponymous letters are merely a foil (the McGuffin, so to speak) for a story featuring a modern day British attorney, Reggie Heath. The correspondence eventually involves Heath in a dangerous cat and mouse game. Reggie rents a property on Baker Street. He is obliged, as part of his lease, to answer any correspondence addressed to Sherlock Holmes. But he neglects this task, which sets off an involved – and deadly – series of incidents. Reggie's brother, Nigel, who attends to the correspondence, finds a twenty year old letter sent to Holmes – as well as a more recent missive.

This discovery leads to sinister doings, for the correspondence concerns a proposed subway route in Los Angeles. And, as we know, where there is a lucrative subway contract there are also graft, corruption, and murder. Two murders, in fact, one on each side of the Atlantic. The murders are mistakenly blamed on Nigel, the free spirited brother, which causes Reggie to try to prove his brother's innocence. The lawyer investigator sleuths in a manner more appropriate to Philip Marlowe than Sherlock Holmes: he flies to Los Angeles with its dark alleys, mean streets, shots in the night, and underground corruption.

The book is not unrewarding. It reads well, so long as the reader does not expect more Holmes than the story delivers. In considering the pleasures of pastiche, I once made a distinction between pastiche, parody,

and extensions of that body of fiction that has sprung from Holmes' loins. This book, with its mere swiping of the legend, inspires me to suggest a new category, the *tangential*. That is, Holmes is referenced but never really present. In short he is connected to the story line, but only tangentially.

Still, one moment in the book makes a tiny, tinkling connection (an echo if you will) with the canon. We are all familiar with one of Holmes' famous dicta as articulated in *The Sign of the Four*. Pointedly revealing a core conviction, Holmes says to Watson: "How often have I said to you that when you have eliminated the impossible, whatever remains, *however improbable*, must be the truth?" At one point in his ham-fisted investigation (on page 161), Reggie Heath speaks to his lady friend, Laura, trying to find a way to demonstrate the innocence of his wrongly-accused brother. In so doing, their exchange mirrors Holmes' prime directive.

"Why don't you just tell them the truth?"
(Laura asked).

"That (Nigel) read a letter written by a child to Sherlock Holmes nearly twenty years ago and was so concerned by it that he felt he had to come here himself? I did tell them. They consider it improbable, to say the least."

"If the the truth is improbable," said Laura, "I suppose we have to prove that the police theory is impossible."

More Holmes is present in that exchange than in the rest of the book. Nevertheless, for Holmes lovers this novel is pleasurable and worth reading, even if Holmes is only a shadow in the background. I might, in defense of this kind of book, offer a proposition: any connection with Holmes, no matter how tangential, is probably, indeed possibly, worth reading.

~Robert Brusic



ANSWERS TO QUIZ (see page 11)

(page numbers from Doubleday)

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. LADY, 947 | 7. STUD, 67 |
| 2. SPEC, 265 | 8. BRUC, 916 |
| 3. IDEN, 198 | 9. FINA, 472 |
| 4. HOUN, 708 | 10. REDH, 188 |
| 5. EMPT, 495 | 11. DEVI, 963 |
| 6. SHOS, 1107 | 12. SUSS, 1033 |
| | 13. NORW, 497 |



**"Nevertheless,
for Holmes lovers
this novel is
pleasurable and
worth reading"**

On February 21, 2009 our study group members and guests met to discuss and/or listen to others share their enjoyment of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *The Lost World*.



“It is always so fascinating to listen to a group of people who not only read a book but research the story pulling out interesting tidbits.”

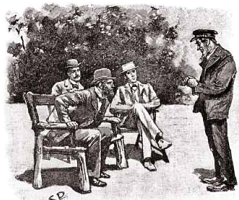


Illustration by
Sidney Paget

The Lost World

St Anthony Park Library

I admit, I have not read this book, nor did I see the original 1925 silent film adaptation or any of the other 9 various movies or TV shows it has spawned.

Accordingly many modern authors of science fiction owe a debt of gratitude to Conan Doyle who paved the way in pitting humans against dinosaurs. The most notable name which comes to mind is the late Michael Chrichton.

Doyle became interested in prehistory when some fossilized footprints were found in a quarry near his home Sussex. Doyle had cultivated the friendship of E Ray Lankester, the 3rd director of the Natural History Museum. He would have provided Doyle with the realism he needed in describing the dinosaurs, as Lankester was the author *Extinct Animals*. For setting the proper landscape in his story Doyle used travelogues of the day.

As with Holmes, Doyle created a memorable character in the guise of Professor Challenger. He is Doyle's second most notable hero. Like the detective, Doyle enjoyed walking around in the disguise of Challenger. He may not have matched him in height but Challenger sounds a bit like the villain Dr Grimsby Royaltt.

Who was Challenger besides the flamboyant discoverer of this lost world? There had been speculation Doyle had based Challenger on his friend Lankester but Doyle himself settled the issue by naming a Professor Rutherford from his days at the University of Edinburgh.

From various references in the canon, Doyle had an obvious interest in adventure stories and larger than life characters. From Australia, Africa, India, and even South America, Doyle brought in exotic locations and men not bound by the norms of civilization.

This was the perfect time for *The Lost World*. A new century, a new era of discovery in the field of paleontology and zoology Machu Picchu was yet to be discovered. But when it was in 1911 it caused a sensation. This was also the era of *Journey to the Center of the Earth* by Jules Verne and *She* by Henry Rider Haggard.

Not only was this a lively discussion there were models of dinosaurs to examine and the Annotated *Lost World* to consult. Like *War of the Worlds*, when *The Lost World* was published many people believed it to be true. A university even sent an exhibition to Central America to see if the famous plateau in the book could be discovered. Imagine the impact the 1925 movie had on the public with its near life like rendition of dinosaurs.

It is always so fascinating to listen to a group of people who not only read a book but research the story pulling out interesting tidbits and finding answers to puzzling questions.

~Linda Schacher

A Halloween Hostess and the Gloria Scott

Explorer Karen Ellery has entertained us on stage as a cast-member of the Red-Throated League and she can now add *fantastic study group hostess* to her repertoire. On Saturday, October 17, 2009 our Study Group members arrived at her house in Northeast Minneapolis to discuss “The Adventure of the Gloria Scott.” We were treated to not only a variety of tea and scones, but an extravaganza of Halloween decoration. The light atmosphere contributed to an excellent discussion of Sherlock Holmes' first case.



Many of the Study Group Members at Karen's House
(Photo contributed by Ray Riethmeier)

Discussion leader for the day, Karen Murdock helped us cover the details of this tale of action and danger on board a convict ship bound for Australia. A young Holmes comes upon this story through his college friend Victor Trevor. Trevor's father, as it turns out, has a colorful past under the name James Armitage.

Our group discussed the nature of life on board a prisoner ship. We also talked about where the destruction of the *Gloria Scott* might have occurred and the probability of the survivors being rescued by a ship en route to Sydney. After covering many other aspects of this case, our meeting concluded with a drawing for door prizes and attendees went home with more items that they came with.

Thanks again to Karen for allowing us the pleasure to analyze the *Gloria Scott* in her home.

~Tim Reich





Save the Date!

August 6-8, 2010

The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota; The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections; and The University of Minnesota, Special Collections and Rare Books Present:



The Spirits of Sherlock Holmes



The Conference will explore the many meanings of the word “Spirits” and how they relate to Sherlock Holmes, Arthur Conan Doyle, and the Victorian Era.

The conference will be held at the Elmer L. Andersen Library at the University of Minnesota, the site of the 2004 and 2007 Conferences. It will begin early afternoon on Friday, August 6, 2010. A Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections Meeting will be held late Friday afternoon and Friday evening will be open for your personal dining choice.

Presentations will return on Saturday morning, August 7th and a luncheon and banquet will be held that day. The conference will conclude mid-day on Sunday, August 8th.

Space for dealer’s tables will be available in the conference room.

More details and registration information will be available soon.

To be placed on the mailing list for the conference, send your name, postal address and email address to:

NorwegianExplorers@gmail.com.



“No ghosts need apply”



**2010 MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL NOTICE
AND DIRECTORY LISTING**

UPCOMING EVENTS



“Check out the
upcoming
events!”

Dear Explorers,

Our scion society has always followed the dictum of the Master and adheres to a single annual charge for expenses. For 2010 single membership is \$15.00, and family membership is \$20.00. This membership fee entitles you to all meetings and a subscription to Explorations, the newsletter of The Norwegian Explorers.

The Norwegian Explorers is a non-profit organization incorporated under Minnesota’s Non-Profit Corporation Act Chapter 317. Thus, dues and contributions may be tax deductible. Please make your check payable to “The Norwegian Explorers” and return it with this form (or a copy of this form), by December 31, 2009, to this address:

Gary Thaden
2301 Aldrich Ave. So.
Minneapolis, MN 55405
Please join us for another interesting year.
Canonically Yours,
Gary Thaden, President,
The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota

_____ Single Membership - \$15.00
_____ Family Membership - \$20.00
_____ Additional Contribution

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City / State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone _____ Home or Business

Sherlockian Expertise:

Email address:

Are you interested in joining or remaining in the monthly study group? Yes ___ No ___

Can this information be included in a future directory for members? Yes ___ No ___



“My professional charges are upon a fixed scale. I do not vary them save when I remit them altogether.”

Norwegian Explorers Annual Dinner

Thursday, December 3, 2009

Please see the flyer sent from Gary Thaden for details.

Norwegian Explorers Study Group

Saturday, December 12, 2009 at 2:00 p.m.

University Club, 420 Summit Ave., St. Paul

The Story is *The Reigate Squires* from *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*.

New York City Birthday Weekend

January 14 through 17, 2010

Many Norwegian Explorers enjoy this extended weekend of events as a way to stay in touch with other Sherlockians from around the world and pay tribute to the Master.

The *Baker Street Journal* website has a helpful link for the schedule of activities:

<http://www.bakerstreetjournal.com/bsiweekend/schedule.html>

Baker Street West

The Norwegian Explorers annually celebrate Sherlock Holmes January birthday during the last half of the month. Watch your mail box (U.S. and email) for the notice.



The Norwegian Explorers

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“ YOU MAY HAVE
READ OF THE
REMARKABLE
EXPLORATIONS
OF A NORWEGIAN
NAMED
SIGERSON, BUT
I AM SURE IT
NEVER
OCCURRED TO
YOU THAT YOU
WERE RECEIVING
NEWS OF YOUR
FRIEND. ”