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2025 EXPLORERS • CHRISTMAS ANNUAL

HOLMES IN *MOTION*



EDITED BY RAY RIETHMEIER
AND PHILLIP BERGEM

...

**The two
of them were
destined to
travel together
round the
world**

...

• MINNEAPOLIS •
SAINT PAUL • DARLINGTON

NORWEGIAN EXPLORERS CHRISTMAS ANNUAL
TWENTY-FOURTH SEASON



HOLMES IN MOTION

EDITED BY

RAY RIETHMEIER

AND

PHILLIP BERGEM

*"You may have read of the remarkable explorations
of a Norwegian named Sigerson, but I am sure
that it never occurred to you that you were
receiving news of your friend."*

THE ADVENTURE OF THE EMPTY HOUSE

THE NORWEGIAN EXPLORERS OF MINNESOTA



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Note: Some articles make use of Jay Finley Christ’s four-letter abbreviations for references to Canonical tales. A key is found on page 86.

EDITORS' PREFACE

by RAY RIETHMEIER and PHILLIP BERGEM

*It was indeed like old times when, at that hour, I found
myself seated beside him in a hansom, my revolver in
my pocket and the thrill of adventure in my heart.*

— “The Adventure of the Empty House”

Holmes, Watson, and Sherlockians of all varieties keep in motion. For we modern devotees, it might be a trip to a conference, to New York for the Birthday weekend festivities, or venturing farther afield with a visit to London or other places found in the Canonical tales. Or, in these post-Covid times, it might be a virtual gathering with a Zoom meeting either nearby or in a distant locale.

We have chosen for this year's Annual the subject of “Holmes in Motion.” Transportation plays a significant role in the Sherlock Holmes stories. Travel by train to adventures away from London is an iconic scenario for our heroes, as are rides in hansom cabs, or going out for a stroll. The stories also involve a fair number of ships, bicycles, and even the Underground, which — though seldom mentioned — was readily available.

Contributions to this year's Annual include a puzzle, several pastiches, some poems, and essays on subjects ranging from hansom cabs to convicts being transported to Australia. We might suggest that “exploration” requires some form of motion, and we are grateful that so many of our fellow Explorers were moved to contribute such a wide variety of creative submissions this year.

We are pleased to present this twenty-fourth edition of the Norwegian Explorers' *Christmas Annual*. So, then, come take a trip with us as we explore motion in the Victorian era and in the Sherlockian world.





THE ADVENTURES AND THE HANSOM CAB

by MICHAEL V. ECKMAN

As we know from reading Sherlock Holmes's adventures, hansom cabs were ideal transportation for Holmes as he pursued criminals, visited clients, or investigated crime scenes. In general, hansom cabs were a popular mode of transportation, known for their convenience, speed, and maneuverability. Hansom cabs were often used by those who could afford the luxury, especially compared to the underground and omnibuses. Rather than a luxury, hansom cabs may have been considered a necessity by Holmes.

When we review the qualities of hansom cabs, we can see why Holmes would have preferred them to an omnibus, the underground, or other horse-drawn vehicles. Hansom cabs were lighter and faster than four-wheeled carriages, making them perfect for urgent pursuits. The cabs could maneuver the narrow London streets, and the cab driver — who was perched high — had excellent visibility. The cabs were also numerous.

In Holmes's day there were 7,000 to 8,000 cabs available in London. In FINA, Holmes is so sure of the availability of cabs that he instructs Watson, "In the morning you will send for a hansom, desiring your man to take neither the first nor the second which may present itself. Into this hansom you will jump, and you will drive to the Strand end of the Lowther Arcade, handing the address to the cabman upon a slip of paper, with a request that he will not throw it away."

In his "Canonical Horse-Drawn Vehicles," Harald Curjel cites events in Holmes's adventures that highlight the speed of the hansom cab.

Holmes "dashed up to the door" of 221B just before the denouement of *The Naval Treaty*. They "flew" down Baker Street en route to Brixton to save Lady Frances Carfax. Watson had "hardly glanced over the paragraph" before he had sprung into a hansom and was on his way to Baker Street (*The Illustrious*

Client). In *A Study in Scarlet* Holmes and Watson “drove furiously for the Brixton Road.” Hilton Cubitt “came straight from the station as fast as a hansom could bring him.” Watson “sped eastwards” on his way to Upper Swandam Lane. Mr. Godfrey Norton drove “like the devil” from Briony Lodge to Gross and Hankey’s in Regent Street.¹

The privacy of the cabs enabled Stapleton in HOUN to follow Sir Henry Baskerville and not be recognized. Holmes tells Watson, “When our friends left I at once followed them in the hopes of marking down their invisible attendant. So wily was he that he had not trusted himself upon foot, but he had availed himself of a cab so that he could loiter behind or dash past them and so escape their notice. His method had the additional advantage that if they were to take a cab he was all ready to follow them.”

The passenger compartment of a hansom cab was enclosed, providing privacy. In fact, the cabs provided so much privacy when combined with their speed that they initially had an unfavorable reputation. James C. Iraldi wrote, “Hansoms were at first patronized chiefly by ignoble bachelors and unillustrious clients, who liked them, among other reasons, because they were speedy and could keep moving in spite of traffic-jams, policemen and torn-up streets.”²

In her book about Fergus Hume’s novel “The Mystery of a Hansom Cab,” Lucy Sussex writes: “With the hansom the driver is outside, sitting high and behind the passengers. He cannot see into the cabin, and communicates with the passengers through a trapdoor in the roof. On a rough road, the rattle of the wheels on stones meant that it was impossible to hear anything from inside the cabin. Late at night, the cabin of a hansom cab offered both anonymity and privacy, a moveable crime scene.”³

The availability, speed, and privacy of the hansom cab also served as an insurance policy for cracksmen who wanted to carry the tools of their trade in secrecy and provide for a quick getaway from the scene of the crime. “The most common approach was to

¹ Curjel, Harald, “Canonical Horse-drawn Vehicles,” *Sherlock Holmes Journal* 14.1 (Spring 1979): 19.

² Iraldi, James C., “The Victorian Gondola,” *Baker Street Journal* 1.3 (July 1951): 100.

³ Sussex, Lucy, *Blockbuster!: Fergus Hume & The Mystery of a Hansom Cab* (Melbourne: Text Publishing Co., 2015), 85.

pay a cabbie a large sum for the night's services (and no questions asked) which included the precaution of using false number plates. He would then wait at some distance from the site of the break-in and drive up on a pre-arranged cue. The goods were then carried swiftly inside and conveyed to a fence."⁴ The privacy of the cabs allowed the passenger to carry arms or stolen goods.

Holmes had many experiences with hansom cab drivers both as a customer and a seeker of information. As a customer, Holmes is willing to tip for speed. When he seeks information, Holmes is willing to pay cabbies. Since the driver's work was often grueling, with long hours and exposure to the weather, the drivers were responsive to the additional pay.

In SCAN, Holmes observe Godfrey Norton as he boards a cab and says, "Drive like the devil first to Gross & Hankey's in Regent Street, and then to the Church of St. Monica in the Edgeware Road. Half a guinea if you do it in twenty minutes!" Not quite as generous as Norton, Holmes boards a cab and says, "The Church of St. Monica, and half a sovereign if you reach it in twenty minutes."

In HOUN, Holmes seeks out cab driver John Clayton and states, "I have half a sovereign for you if you will give me a clear answer to my questions." Holmes goes on to say: "Now, Clayton, tell me all about the fare who came and watched this house at ten o'clock this morning and afterwards followed the two gentlemen down Regent Street." The surprised Clayton exclaims, "Why, there's no good my telling you things, for you seem to know as much as I do already." Clayton continues with a description of his fare and the fact that he identified himself as Sherlock Holmes. Holmes closes with "Well, then, here is your half-sovereign. There's another one waiting for you if you can bring any more information." Since Holmes has impressed Clayton with his knowledge of Stapleton's ride, Clayton provides information even though Stapleton paid Clayton two guineas to do exactly what he wanted all day, ask no questions, and "say nothing about him to anyone."

Peter Calamai provides a great deal of information about the use of hansom cabs in the adventures in "Tallying Cab Costs in the Canon," explaining that "The hourly rental for a hansom inside or outside the four-mile circle [centered on Charing cross] was 2s

⁴ Jones, Kelvin, "Coiners and Cracksmen," *Sherlock Holmes Journal* 15.2 (Summer 1981): 40.

6d.”⁵ The Dictionary of Victorian London website shows a daily fare of 9s to 12s. Fares based on distance are calculated using the following formula:

6d. per mile, or part of a mile, for two persons, within a four miles radius of Charing Cross.

1s. per mile, or part of a mile, for every mile, or part of a mile, beyond four miles from Charing Cross.

For every additional adult carried, beyond two persons, 6d. extra for the whole distance. Two children, under ten years of age, are counted as one adult.⁶

The child discount is a nice benefit which Holmes is never recorded as having utilized. Calamai, however, states that the fare for an additional person is only 2d.

Assuming the distance from 221B Baker Street to the Lyceum Theatre is about 2.5 miles, the fare for Holmes, Watson, and Mary Morstan would be 18d for the distance and 2d to 6d for the third passenger. The total is 1s 8d to 2s, depending on the charge for Mary. The fare regulations noted that “The Hansom cabs are the most expeditious; but it is customary to reward their drivers with a trifle more than the legal fare.” In 2024 money, the 1 s 8d to 2s would be about £12.47 to £15.02 (£1 in 1888 equivalent to £150.20 in 2024), before any gratuity.⁷ This ride might have been one of the least expensive in the Canon. Using the Uber website, I found that the £12.47 to £15.02 hansom cab fare is lower than the current rideshare cost, especially if the booking is arranged in advance.

Despite the expense, Holmes valued the convenience, speed, and privacy of the hansom cab. Today, he would be pleased with the current rideshare technology that logs every trip, as the information would aid him in an investigation. On the other hand, it would be difficult to imagine Holmes being content with his data being collected by today’s ridesharing service, even if the costs were comparable to the hansom cab. Also, it is difficult to imagine Uber or Lyft allowing Watson to take “neither the first nor the second which may present itself” and waiting for the third rideshare vehicle.

⁵ Calamai, Peter, “Tallying Cab Costs in the Canon,” *Baker Street Journal* 59.4 (Winter 2009): 8.

⁶ www.victorianlondon.org/transport/cab-fares.htm

⁷ <https://measuringworth.com/calculators/ukcompare/>

ALTAMONT IN CHICAGO

by LINDA CROHN

In “His Last Bow,” Sherlock Holmes tells Watson that he “started his pilgrimage at Chicago.” But how did he get there? Where did he pick up his American accent? Where did he work? Watson doesn’t report any of this. Is it because Holmes never told him? Or is it because it involved secrets from World War I espionage that Watson was not allowed to tell, due to the Official Secrets Act of 1889? As with many stories, papers were found in a box in Watson’s home that were never published. Here is what his notes had to say about Altamont in Chicago.

In 1912 Sherlock Holmes had already retired and moved to Sussex to live the life of a hermit. There he concentrated his days and nights on watching the behavior of bees. He wrote the “Practical Handbook of Bee Culture, with Some Observations upon the Segregation of the Queen.” But his peaceful life was disrupted by a visit from the Foreign Minister. He was asked to help with what seemed the inevitability of war with Germany. While he was able to say no to the Foreign Minister, he could not say no to the Prime Minister.

The question was how they knew to approach Holmes with this request. Mycroft Holmes had retired. But as the most indispensable man in England and where on occasion he *was* the British government, he kept well informed. After all, he had been part of the British Intelligence Service now known as MI-6.¹ He still maintained his contacts and his interest in what was happening. He was also well aware that his brother was well equipped for the job. Mycroft knew of Sherlock’s involvement in various secret affairs and intelligence operations. Mycroft knew that “Sherlock would not have committed himself to a multi-year undercover effort involving military secrets without his brother’s

¹ Sharfman, Robert, “The Great Moriarty Deception,” *Baker Street Journal* 73.3 (Autumn 2023): 24.

knowledge and support.”² Therefore, it was he who told the Foreign Minister and Prime Minister where to find Holmes and how to make the request so that Sherlock could not refuse.

The first thing that needed to be done was to get Sherlock Holmes to America without anyone noticing. Here again, everyone relied on Mycroft and his contacts. Sherlock was put aboard the *Empress of Britain* steamship from Liverpool to Halifax. Holmes boarded the ship as a steward in full disguise. During the voyage he cleaned cabins, changed linens, cleaned boots, and looked after the passengers’ belongings. This was all done while the passengers were out on deck, which enabled Holmes to spend most of his time unseen (similar to the King in “Pursuit to Algiers”).³

He arrived at Halifax and went immediately to the Canadian Pacific Railway where he had a ticket to Chicago. It was in Detroit that William Pinkerton got on the train and introduced himself to Holmes. Pinkerton, the son of Allan Pinkerton of the Chicago Detective Agency, inherited the business.⁴ He had received a message from Mycroft as to what was required. Holmes needed to get the feel for America and become an American. Because Pinkerton was from Chicago, he would start to teach Holmes the Chicago accent (with its flat A) and the slang prevalent in Chicago neighborhoods. When they got to Chicago, he took Holmes to a men’s clothing store where he could shed his English garb and find the latest fashions. It was ironic that, in 1912, men’s fashion in Chicago was influenced by Edwardian styles.⁵ This included durable, dark and loose-fitting garments for freedom of movement.⁶

Pinkerton arranged an apartment for Holmes at 116 W. Erie Street⁷ under the name of Stephen Holmes. (Always better to use the same initials, and he would have responded to Holmes faster

² Rossini, Brenda, “Mycroft Holmes: Britannia’s Master Spy,” *Canon Law*, ed. William A. Walsh and Donny Zaldin (N.Y.: BSI Press, 2018): 135.

³ “Pursuit to Algiers” (Universal Pictures, 1945), starring Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce. They were to escort Prince Nikolas, now King Nikolas, back home to Rovenia.

⁴ <https://www.insp.com/heroes/william-a-pinkerton/>

⁵ http://vintagevictorian.com/costume_1912men.html

⁶ <https://vintagedancer.com/1900s/1910s-mens-working-class-clothing/>

⁷ Davis, Norman M., “The Adventure of the American Interlude,” *Baker Street Journal* 33.1 (March 1983): 12.

than any other name.) Pinkerton also was able to get him a job at the A & P (Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company) grocery store stocking shelves. For the next two months, when Holmes wasn't working, he walked or took streetcars to familiarize himself with the city. He found Chicago divided into neighborhoods based on ethnicity. This was after the Chicago Fire (1873), so the city was developed as a grid and easily manageable. He toured the Museum of Science and Industry which was still left from the "White City" at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. He went to the Art Institute where he saw exhibitions of avant-garde European painting and sculpture. And he went to nickelodeons where he saw movies such as "The Adventures of Kathlyn" and "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde."

Because A & P was a chain grocery store, Holmes was often sent to other stores to help. Many times, he was sent to the store in Bridgeport. This was a strong Irish neighborhood with many pubs. Holmes, along with workers from the neighborhood, congregated after work in the pubs and told stories of the day's work or what it was like in the old country. He paid attention to the language and the Irish accents. When he got home each night he would practice. He got so good that Von Bork, in talking to Baron Von Herling, said that you would not doubt that he was an Irish-American if you heard him talk.

As Holmes became more familiar with the men he worked with, they started inviting him to meetings with other friends. These meetings were in reality the beginning of the Irish gangs in Chicago. They started out in the basements of saloons. They were known for robbing, fighting, and terrorizing other groups in the city. They eventually became involved in politics and were instrumental in electing the candidates of their choice. Once again, Holmes paid close attention to what was going on to add to his credibility.

One night the group went to Shinnick's Pub. The night started out the same as previous nights. But there was a gentleman sitting at the bar sipping a beer and eyeing Holmes. Holmes decided to leave early that evening. But the moment he left, he looked for a place to hide and see whether the man was actually looking for him. He rounded the corner and found a dark alley. He didn't have to wait long. A man turned the corner into the alley and asked if he was Stephen Holmes. He held out his hand with a card in it for Holmes to take. It said the gentleman was Clifton Wooldridge,

a private detective.⁸ And on the other side, it had the name Altamont.

Wooldridge suggested they go somewhere quiet where they could talk. They walked about four blocks to an all-night diner where they sat with cups of coffee. Wooldridge first explained that he had been on the Chicago Police force from 1898 to 1907 and then opened his own office as a private detective. He had read numerous stories of Holmes's adventures written by Dr. Watson. He was truly impressed with the detective's means of detecting crime and had employed some of these same methods as a policeman and on his own. Wooldridge then explained that he had received a message from William Pinkerton, who in turn had received a message from Mycroft Holmes. He was asked to prepare Holmes for the next part of his journey.

Wooldridge knew that Holmes had used many disguises during his career. But he, too, was famous for his various impersonations. He proposed that Holmes grow a goatee. And perhaps grow his hair longer. He worked with Holmes to perfect his Irish accent. He suggested a change in wardrobe to more workingman's clothes.

Little by little Holmes made these changes. He was afraid of making too many changes too fast. He did not want his friends at work and in the pubs to wonder why the changes were occurring. At one point he told them he met a woman who was crazy about goatees and had bought him a couple of new shirts. He told everyone that he wanted to impress her, so he was willing to make these little changes.

In the meantime, Holmes continued to meet with Wooldridge alone and in quiet out-of-the-way places. Through Wooldridge he was given information from Mycroft to pass on to the Germans once his status as a spy was confirmed. Wooldridge also gave him information about the Clan na Gael, a secret society in Buffalo⁹ where Holmes was to go next. The secret society was one organization prepared to enter into alliances with any nation allied against the British. Once in Buffalo, Holmes would meet with the family and friends of his Chicago connections with the idea that one of them would lead him to the secret society.

⁸ Shimberg, Jonathan, "Was Clifton Wooldridge the First Chicago Sherlock Holmes?" *Torist Times* (December 2024).

⁹ <https://irishstudies.sunygeneseoenglish.org/the-1916-rising-in-america-then-and-now/clan-na-gael-and-the-1916-rising/>

Wooldridge helped with the final preparations. He arranged for Holmes to become Altamont. He provided the IDs as well as a history of his time in Chicago and obliterated any reference to Stephen Holmes. He also arranged for Holmes to get messages from Mycroft in Buffalo. With everything in place, Holmes left Chicago in August, 1913.¹⁰ He headed east to Buffalo and then Ireland (because there was an east wind coming). And the rest, as they say, is history.



¹⁰ Davis, 15.

UNRAVELLING SHERLOCK'S TRAVELLING

A poem by JEFF FALKINGHAM

*Here's a ditty about Holmes in motion,
From down the street to across the ocean.
With boxing and cudgels, I'm not going to bother;
Just actions that take you one place to another.*

*A common mode was to "ride the shank's mare."
That's hoof it by foot, for those unaware.
If the destination was too far to hike,
Holmes wasn't averse to taking a bike.*

*In Sussex, he used a Ford automobile;
Not sure 'twas Watson or Holmes at the wheel?
In all their many tales of glory,
They surely hopped in the back of a lorry!*

*The most popular method employed, of course,
Was to ride in a vehicle drawn by a horse.
From a hansom cab to a landau carriage,
Wheels and ponies were the perfect marriage.*

*As Paget's famous sketch makes plain,
Our Great Detective loved taking a train,
Riding rails, above or Underground.
At Charing Cross, opportunities abound!*

*We also know Holmes travelled by boat:
J. Small on the Thames, Altamont's Atlantic float,
Or Bruce and Partington's planned machine.
Did Holmes ever travel by submarine?*

*To fly in an airplane — might've been too soon.
But what about taking a hot-air balloon?
A blimp, a Zeppelin, even a dirigible,
Could be handy for tracking a crook incorrigible.*

*At Reichenbach Falls, Sherlock's chance of surviving
Would gain from practice in the art of cliff diving!
And surely Holmes had learned how to swim.
At his Channel-side villa, it seemed natural to him.*

*A pair of skis must have been a great help
To escape by schussing his way down the Alps.
Dog sleds on his Nordic expedition?
Okay, I admit it: now, I'm just fishin'.*

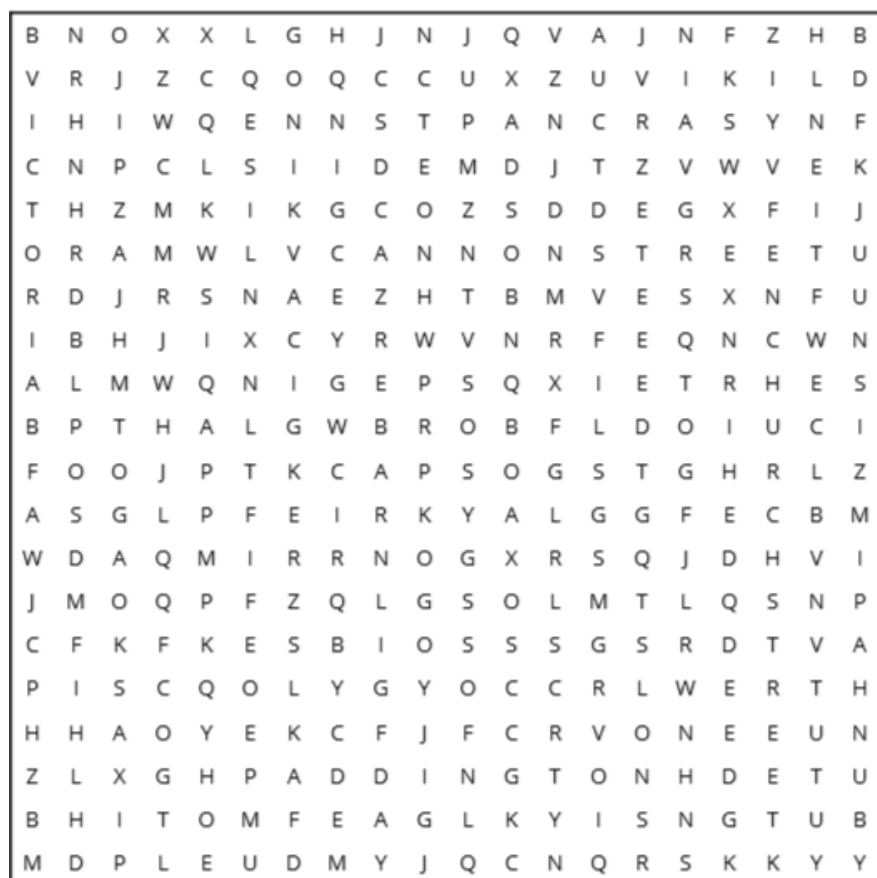
*When it comes to ways Sherlock used to travel,
The whole thing's a tough skein to unravel.
I'm sorry to leave you in the lurch;
I need to go do more research!*



“LOOK UP THE TRAINS, WATSON” A RAILWAY STATIONS WORD SCRAMBLE

by DR. MELISSA AHO

From “A Scandal in Bohemia” to “Silver Blaze,” train stations are mentioned in more than 30 Sherlock Holmes stories.



RAILWAY STATIONS WORD SCRAMBLE

With their trusty *Bradshaw's Railway Guide*, Holmes and Watson travelled all around London and other parts of the English countryside on the British railway system. How many of these train stations mentioned in the Canon can you find?

Cannon Street	London Bridge	Waterloo
Charing Cross	Paddington	Blackfriars
Kings Cross	St Pancras	Fenchurch Street
Liverpool Street	Victoria	Bricklayers Arms

The solution is on page 57.



THE HISTORY OF THIS TERRIBLE BUSINESS¹

by ROB NUNN

"The case might have been dealt leniently with, but the laws were more harshly administered thirty years ago than now, and on my twenty-third birthday I found myself chained as a felon with thirty-seven other convicts in 'tween-decks of the barque Gloria Scott, bound for Australia."



James Armitage was far from the first person to face penal transportation for crimes committed, but his story is one of great importance to Sherlockians. By 1855, when Armitage was unable to pay his debts, England had been shipping out its convicts for over 200 years. The punishment known as transportation was

¹ GLOR.

assigned for almost every crime conceivable, but the overwhelming majority of prisoners were transported for unpaid debts and small thefts (such as food and clothing). The terms of punishment were typically one of three versions: 7 years, 14 years, or life.

More than 40,000 prisoners were sent from England to the American colonies before the Revolutionary War, but once America became independent, Australia became the new destination for British convicts. The British government hoped that this new convict destination would deter crime, as it was a place that many considered to be the most remote place on Earth. The three- to four-month journey by ship it took to reach Australia helped lead to such opinions.

As Armitage said, “the old convict ships had been largely used as transports in the Black Sea” during the Crimean War. Armitage and company were lucky to have the *Gloria Scott* as their transport ship, as conditions on the average one were much harsher. Convicts were typically crammed four to a cell, and the security was much stricter than what the group aboard the *Gloria Scott* was able to overcome. The hatchway openings were wide enough for only one person to pass at a time, and each watch required ten soldiers with loaded guns. This is hardly the crew of men that were trying to affix bayonets to their muskets that Armitage’s group of prisoners rushed in their adventure.

Once transport ships arrived in Australia, most convicts built roads or worked for landowners as free labor Monday through Saturday, sunrise to sunset. If convicts were well-behaved during their terms, they could be issued a ticket-of-leave which allowed them freedom outside of their prescribed work hours each day. But any misbehavior was quickly met with flogging of up to 300 lashes.

When their terms ended, most convicts stayed in Australia and populated the country, as booking passage back to England was out of the question for almost all of the ex-cons. And when the British government offered them free land, seed, food, and other resources to populate the colony, it was an easy decision to remain in Australia for many of them.

By Armitage’s time, the use of transportation was beginning to slow. Prisons were being built in England, and the discovery of gold in Australia brought an influx of “respectable” citizens to the colony. By the time that the last transport ship unloaded her passengers in the Land Down Under in 1868, over 160,000

convicts had been transported to Australia for crimes ranging from murder to pickpocketing, creating such a nest of population that in 2015 20% of Australian citizens could trace their heritage to convict transportation.



Fans of Sherlock Holmes can trace the mutiny aboard the *Gloria Scott* as a sparking point for the Sherlockian Canon. If the mutiny had not happened, James Armitage would never have returned to England and sired his son, Victor Trevor, who became friends with Sherlock Holmes. And Sherlock Holmes never would have visited Trevor's home and shown off his "merest hobby" of observation to James Armitage, prompting the man to say the words that launched Sherlock Holmes on his destiny:

"[I]t seems to me that all the detectives of fact and of fancy would be children in your hands. That's your line of life, sir."

And we Sherlockians are better for it.



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Constitutional Rights Foundation: www.crf-usa.org/bill-of-rights-in-action/bria-11-2-a-beyond-the-seas-the-transportation-of-criminals-to-australia

National Museum of Australia: www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/convict-transportation-peaks

The Conversation: <https://theconversation.com/stain-or-badge-of-honour-convict-heritage-inspires-mixed-feelings-41097>



HOLMES MEETS VINCENT STARRETT (VICARIOUSLY, OF COURSE)

by DONALD B. IZBAN and PATRICIA N. IZBAN

Part One:

Retirement agreed with Sherlock Holmes and was pleasant for him. There is no doubt about that! He was busy — the bee farm, he maintained an active mind — reading and even writing his personal memoirs, which could clear up a lot of Canonical apocrypha. His close friends were always available for visits and interesting conversation — not so much Dr. Watson, but his Sussex Downs neighbors, Harold Stackhurst, a retired London banker, and a retired architect and now fellow beekeeper, Brian Maite.

Nevertheless, Holmes, after a while, felt cooped up and at a loss for London's unlimited merit; the city, he thought, was without bounds when it came to charm, ambiance, and the commonplace "hustle and bustle" — all of which he missed.

But Sherlock was not going to let self-deprivation interfere with his desired life style, nor was he about to be complacent. He *resolved to resolve* the problem quickly in his typical fashion. After all, he was Sherlock Holmes to whom the solution of a problem was not only customary, but imperative.

And so it was. He decided now to be known as the *Holmes in Motion*, and here is his outline of how he would accomplish such recognition:

First, resubscribe to the daily *Times*. In this way, by a daily read he would learn of the happenings in the city and which of those doings interested him; and, naturally, any plans made along those lines would include his friend, Dr. Watson, assuming the good doctor was equally interested.

Second, make at least one visit with Watson each month.

Third, the duration of the visits would be 1–2 days, depending on circumstances, scheduling, and mutual interests.

Fourth, and lastly, billeting (if necessary) would be at 221B Baker Street, Holmes's old haunts, assuming Dr. Watson is in agreement (which is expected).

Part Two:

Through the years, Sherlock Holmes religiously stuck to this plan, rarely failing to make the monthly visit. It was now December 1945, the war was over, and London was aglow and buzzing with activity; and, while Winston Churchill had lost his bid for re-election as Prime Minister, he continued his pontificating on British radio with characteristically remarkable epigrams (*e.g.*: "Diplomacy is the art of telling the truth without being offensive"; or "War is mainly a catalogue of blunders"; or "Criticism is easy, but achievement is difficult").

So, there was Holmes on a train departing from Sussex for a 5 P.M. arrival in London and its cosmopolitanisms he admired and loved.

"Hello there," said Holmes to Watson, who answered the doorbell's ring.

"Greetings, my friend. How are you feeling? The last time we talked over the telephone, you complained of some sort of stomach pains... if you still are having them, let me check you out and prescribe something that may help," said Watson.

"No, no. I'm fine. It was just a passing phase," countered Holmes. "You know, the part of the growing old syndrome related to these golden years that are not so golden."

Watson laughed and then said, "All right, then... we're off. Dinner as planned at Marcini's?"

"By all means. As you know, that's my favorite Italian restaurant in London," replied Holmes.

Watson hailed a taxi (now motor-driven — not too many horse-and-carriages left). The ride was short, not allowing for any meaningful dialogue, just some simple "small talk." However, as they were leaving the taxi, Holmes asked: "Watson, ol' chap, do you know anything about or have you heard anything about a newspaperman in the colonies — Chicago, I think — named Vincent Starrett?"

Watson replied: "Charles Vincent Emerson Starrett is his name, and...."

"Well, it sounds as though you know a lot about him," interrupted Holmes.

"Thank you," said Watson, sarcastically, "and Starrett is far more than a newspaperman! He's a genius, a genuine literatus, a bookman of long standing, an excellent writer, a columnist (for 30 years), an overseas reporter/correspondent worldwide (for 10 years), an author (over 50 books published). There are essays to his credit, biographies, introductions for books, reviews, and criticisms — collectively numbering in the hundreds. And yes, I know of him, about him, and most likely, anything else you'd be interested in learning about Vincent Starrett."

"All right, don't rub it in," said Holmes.

"Didn't mean to. Sorry. What's funny, too, is I don't think he's ever written a play.... Starrett's no playwright, if you're looking for something literary he hasn't done or achieved," said Watson.

With that, Holmes and Watson entered Marcini's and were greeted by the attractive, smiling Mary Beth Lavezzorio, hostess at the restaurant. She said, "Welcome to Marcini's," then showed them to their table at a window. Sherlock Holmes liked that because it permitted him to observe what was taking place outdoors while they dined, and observation was (it goes without saying) one of his strengths.

Shortly thereafter, the waiter approached their table saying: "Our hostess would like to treat both of you to an aperitif."

Said Holmes: "That's wonderful!"

Watson replied: "I'll have a glass of Montrachet."

Sherlock had the same and with that, he resumed the conversation about Starrett: "Tell me, Watson, is there anything special about Starrett, you know, something specific, personal — that sort of thing — you can tell me?"

Watson said: "Sure. Lots. In his 'Books Alive' column about five years ago, Starrett took on the detective story novelist, Rex Stout. As I'm to understand, Stout compiled a list of the *Top Ten Mysteries*, leaving out all sixty stories about your career, Holmes, and Starrett took Rex to the whipping post, and successfully, too. I say, Bravo!"

"Oh, come now," Holmes replied. "Any professional jealousy there on your part, Watson?"

Watson retorted: "Absolutely not. I'm not the envious type, as you know. Besides, Stout also left all of Edgar Allan Poe's work and Ellery Queen's work off the list. I'd say I'm in pretty good company!"

Then Holmes inquired, "There must be other real accomplishments on Starrett's part, and what about poetry — anything along those lines?"

"Yes, and again, lots," replied Dr. Watson. "In the '20s, I think it was, his book of essays, *Buried Caesars*, on Library Appreciation was published; it won national recognition as did Starrett's story, 'Recipe for Murder,' which was made into a movie; further, his Sherlock Holmes pastiche, 'The Unique Hamlet,' was considered by many as being outstanding."

"I'm really interested in any Starrett poetry. I know he wrote quite a bit," said Holmes.

"You can bet on it. He certainly did write superb poetry, really excellent stuff. There's a book out there by Starrett demonstrating his profound talent in that area. It's titled *Autolycus in Limbo*; and another with 64 of his published sonnets — it's one of my favorite books... I read it again and again, but I can't recall the title," said Watson.

Holmes said: "All right, I think we're getting somewhere now that Starrett's sonnets are up for discussion. That's really what I'm looking for, someone who's familiar with his sonnets... in particular, Starrett's '221B'... it's all about us, Watson — you and me. Have you read it?"

"Of course, I've read it. As a matter of fact, I've memorized it! A great sonnet, to be sure," said Watson.

"The greatest ever written in the English language, would you say?" asked Holmes.

Watson was puzzled. What was his friend attempting to find out? *What's his point?* He thought....

The conversation was interrupted by the waiter, who said, "Ready to order your dinners?"

In reply, Dr. Watson said: "Yes. We'll both have the same thing, your specialty — the bucatini with beef short ribs/marinara gravy, followed by, in true continental manner, two Caesar salads, *sans* the anchovies, please, and two black coffees."

To which the waiter asked: "Wine with dinner, sir? And how about desserts?"

Replied Watson, "Yes, wine — a bottle of decanted Barolo, served as close as you can get to room temperature. And no dessert for me... I'm on a diet."

“For dessert,” said Holmes, “I’ll have your mile-high gelato sugar cone to go. Thank you.”

Boy, thought the waiter, *these guys know how to eat.*

As soon as the waiter left the table, Holmes started up again about Starrett: “What I don’t understand is all the fuss some people make over ‘221B.’ To illustrate, I’ve heard that devotees of your stories about me, and the Baker Street Irregulars, and generally all Sherlockians here and worldwide, call ‘221B’ the ‘greatest sonnet in the English language’ or something like that. Watson, how can that be? How can such knowledgeable, erudite, educated personage say that? Because to make such a claim would presuppose collectively reading all the sonnets ever written in English, analyzing all of them, evaluating each, and then making a ranking. That’s impossible, dear friend, and you know it! Why, besides the Bard of Avon’s 200 sonnets, there are the sonnets by the others: the Scot, Robert Burns; George Byron; John Donne, the metaphysical; the U.S. favorite, Walt Whitman; and Keats, Browning, Coleridge, Tennyson, Kipling; *ad infinitum.*”

Watson was overwhelmed and recalled once writing that Holmes’s knowledge of literature was *nil*! Then Watson replied: “But, Holmes, you’ve lost it! Somehow along the way, you’ve overlooked the literary parts of speech in the English language, of which one is hyperbole — the license of exaggerating to establish one’s position. Writers, pseudo-writers, Fourth Estate members, and those types, use hyperbolic phraseology all the time... it is not to be taken verbatim. It is only used for emphasis: You, yourself, used a hyperbole tonight when you ordered that ‘mile-high sugar cone’ for dessert. Understand, now?”

“Of course, so when a Sherlockian says ‘221B’ is the greatest sonnet in the English language, he or she is simply exaggerating for effect. I get it now!” said Holmes.

Holmes then continued: “By the way, I’ve got a surprise for you to cap off the evening. The volatile Sir Thomas Beecham is conducting a special Christmas Concert at Covent Garden Theatre tonight, and I’ve got two reserved main floor tickets.”

“Excellent!” said Watson excitedly, “Beecham is the absolute best... he’s magnificent, a master at generating a responsive energy among all the sections of the orchestra. This will be a wonderful experience, I’m sure.”

Replied Sherlock Holmes: "I agree there is no one quite like him in that regard."

"My goodness, Holmes. We sound like two authoritative music critics," said Watson.

"But, Watson, we are actually that... most assuredly, we are," exclaimed Holmes.

Part Three:

After the concert, Holmes hastened to the train station to catch the 11:30 P.M. train back to the Downs.

While seated comfortably on the train, he began scribbling his own sonnet which read as follows:

WILL THE STORIES OF MY CAREER PERSEVERE?

Yes, indeed, those stories certainly will.
So let us do some serious thinking:
Watson's efforts proved to be works of skill;
These narratives served as a linking
To the times of the not-too-distant past
When Holmes, Watson, Lestrade, *et al.* did roam
And the fond memories did last,
As has Sherlock's Baker Street home.

Thus, we could and should, in truth, proudly say
With an enthusiastic loud proclaim:
"Cheers! Yeah, Yeah, Yeah, and Hip, Hip, Hip Hooray!"
What's about is our everlasting game!
Those mysteries will still be alive,
And further beyond 1945.

Then Sherlock wrote a note to Watson, saying:

Watson:

*Enclosed is my sonnet, obviously modeled after
Starrett's '221B.' What do you think of it?*

—Holmes

And, upon exiting the train, Holmes put the sonnet and note in an envelope, posting it to Watson.

Epilogue:

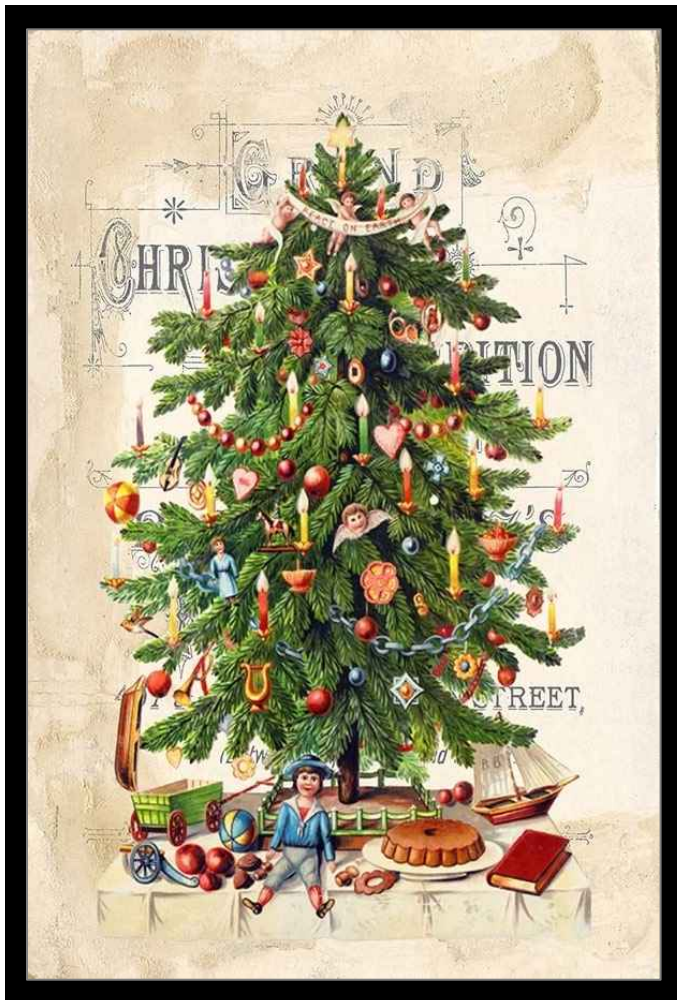
On Christmas Eve, Watson phoned Holmes and said: "Holmes, I've read your sonnet."

Holmes inquired: "The best in the English language, right?"

Said Watson, wisely: "I'd prefer not to get into that."

And then, they both laughed themselves off the telephone, but not before each wished the other a Merry Christmas.

And that's what friendship and the Christmas spirit are all about!

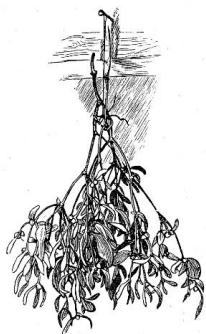


SHERLOCK HOLMES TELEGRAPHED

by DAVID FOREST HITCHCOCK

In "The Adventure of the Dancing Men," Sherlock, or at least his words, travelled to New York at a speed beyond anything imagined in earlier times. For in 1866 the first permanent successful transatlantic telegraph cable was laid on the Atlantic's ocean floor. So, Sherlock was able to send a cablegram to his friend Wilson Hargreave of the New York Police Bureau and a couple of days later learned in reply that Abe Slaney was a dangerous Chicago criminal. Yet even knowing this and receiving a troubling note from his client, Hilton Cubitt, Sherlock was forced to delay his train trip to North Walsham until the next morning because the last train that evening had already left.

The tragic events of that night, which resulted in the death of Hilton Cubitt and the serious injury of his wife and her damaged reputation, could have been averted. Understandably, Sherlock wanted personally to intervene in this crisis, but that decision led to unimaginable wreckage of a household. If he had thought to telegraph Hilton, Hilton could have prevented his wife from the ill-fated meeting with Slaney. Even though Sherlock ultimately saved the reputation of Hilton's wife and secured the arrest of Abe Slaney, the avoidable death of Hilton Cubitt marks Sherlock's greatest failure in averting a crime.



EARLY ENGLISH CHARTERS: HOLMES AND POLITICAL/ECONOMIC THEORY

by BOB SHARFMAN

“We were residing at the time in furnished lodgings close to a library where Sherlock Holmes was pursuing some laborious researches in Early English charters — researches which led to results so striking that they may be the subject of one of my future narratives.” (3STU)

Those words in the opening paragraph of “The Adventure of the Three Students” raised my curiosity enough to make further inquiry into the matter. My first effort was to contact Sherlock Holmes at his retirement cottage in Sussex. I needed to know where Cox and Co. was now located so I might try to recover Dr. Watson’s notes. Holmes was most cordial as you can see from his response attached as *Appendix A*.

From the information so generously provided, I did locate the present successor to Cox and Co., and with the help of a senior officer (to whom I promised complete anonymity), I was allowed to view and examine (see and observe as one might say) the good doctor’s notes. As much as I examined, and it took several days, I found no manuscript. I found only notes on English charters beginning in 1215 (not exactly last week) with... you guessed it... the Magna Carta. Now *that* was some English charter, but let us start at the beginning.

The doctor’s notes contained not only his passing thoughts, but also the Master’s copious notes on the nature of “charters.” In summary, Holmes’s notes indicated that charters (cartas) were public declarations or petitions and agreements aimed at addressing inequities, wrongs, or injustices.¹

Of course, the most famous English charter is the Magna Carta signed by King John at Runnymede in June 1215. The grievances

¹ www.britainexpress.com/History/victorian/chartism.htm

addressed were church rights, protection for the petitioning barons, and limitation on feudal payments to the Crown.²

This charter was modified in 1217 by the regency government of young Henry III. This great charter still forms an important symbol of liberty today and is held in great respect by the legal communities of all countries embracing the English common law. But wait, there is more!

In 1217 the Great Charter settled a war between England and France³ and dealt with the religious rights of the belligerents.

Another ancient charter affecting rights set out in the Magna Carta was signed by King Edward I in 1297. The 1297 document, the *Confirmatio Cartarum* (Confirmation of Charters) was issued in Norman French and confirmed the terms of the Magna Carta.⁴

There were other old English charters issued in 1300 (*Articuli Super Cartas* — the Articles upon the Charters) and even one by Pope Clement V in 1305. The fourteenth through eighteenth centuries saw minor revisions to these basic documents, and politicians and political scientists still refer to these basic documents (charters) when discussing current events. But I digress. Holmes did not comment on these more current references to the Magna Carta.

What I concluded after seeing all the notes on the basic English charters and his copious notes on another charter was that Holmes, while studying the ancient documents, was more interested in the charter movement of his day: Chartism or the Chartist Movement.

Scholars such as Baring-Gould and Morley have sided with the hypothesis that the accent in “Early English charters” should be on “Early.” My reading of the notes led me to the road less taken. Holmes did study the ancient (medieval) charters, but only to provide an historical significance to the events of the day.⁵

And just what were the events of the day that interested our Master to the end that he studied ancient charters as well as the more current Chartist Movement? See the following examples of Chartist philosophy:

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magna_Carta

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Baring-Gould, William S., *The Annotated Sherlock Holmes* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter Inc., 1967), 368–9, footnote 2.

“England with all her professions is but a despotism, and her industrious millions slaves. For men possessing the same natural capabilities, cast upon the same kindred spot, with the same wants and mutual obligations, who are constrained by the mandates and force of their fellows to labour to support them in idleness and extravagance, are *social slaves*; and all who oppose their emancipation from such a state are *political despots*....” (Emphasis supplied.)

“*Democracy*, in its must and most extensive sense, means the power of the people mentally, morally, and politically directed, in promoting the happiness of the whole human family, irrespective of their country, creed, or colour....” (Emphasis supplied.)

“[W]omen are the chief instructors of our children, whose virtues or vices will depend more on the education given them by their mothers than on that of any other teacher we can employ to instruct them. If a mother is deficient in knowledge and depraved in morals, the effects will be seen in all her domestic arrangements; and her prejudices, habits, and conduct will make the most lasting impression on her children, and often render nugatory all the efforts of the schoolmaster. If, on the contrary, she is so well informed as to appreciate and second his exertions, and strives to fix in the minds of her children habits of cleanliness, order, refinement of conduct, and purity of morals, the results will be evident in her wise and well-regulated household. But if, in addition to these qualities, she be richly stored with intellectual and moral treasures, and makes it her chief delight to impart them to her offspring, they will, by their lives and conduct, reflect her intelligence and virtues.”⁶

Historians may differ in assessing the causes of this movement, but suffice it to say “The Corn Laws” was paramount in Holmes’s notes.

Simply put, the English Corn Laws were a series of statutes enacted between 1815 and 1846 that kept prices high for corn (a term including *all* grains). Because these laws kept prices (artificially) high, landowners became wealthier and more influential. It should be noted that only landowning men could vote during this period. It should also be noted that those most

⁶ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chartism>

negatively affected by these laws were the urban-poor working-class people.⁷ The inevitable took place. The working class united, held strikes (not with violence) and meetings (some as large as 200,000 persons)⁸ and started (or forced) a movement.⁹

The leaders and political theorists during this time were many. John Frost, one of the first leaders (1839) led marches and was tried for treason. Karl Marx was noted and observed the scene, but the notes of Holmes seem to indicate that he felt that William Lovett was the most energizing and important leader of the movement. Who was he?

William Lovett was (as Holmes notes) a self-educated, leading, London-based citizen radical for his generation.¹⁰ His philosophy and belief was that political rights could best be achieved through political pressure and nonviolent agitation (Gandhi and King took notice) and should be founded on kindness and compassion.¹¹ He was born in 1800 and earned his way as a cabinet maker and carpenter. He became active in “labor politics” about 1831, heavily influenced (as Holmes noted) by Owenite socialism. He was a “natural” for the Chartist Movement (Holmes notes).

William Lovett was buried in London’s Highgate cemetery, joining Michael Faraday, George Eliot, Karl Marx, Christina Rossetti and many other notables who lie in that place. His last years were dogged by ill-health — in part attributable to his despicable treatment years earlier while imprisoned in Warwick Gaol¹² — and by poverty; “...it does, however, jar upon my feelings to think that, after all my struggles, all my industry, and, I may add, all my temperance and frugality, I cannot earn or live upon my own bread in my old age.”¹³

⁷ www.britainexpress.com/History/victorian/corn-laws.htm

⁸ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chartism>

⁹ “Peaceably if we may, forcibly if we must,” but the movement was essentially peaceful; this did not prevent the police and militias from using force.

www.britainexpress.com/History/victorian/chartism.htm

¹⁰ <https://minorvictorianwriters.org.uk/lovett/>

¹¹ The Chartist movement died out in the 1850s but is today’s Labour Party.

¹² www.britannica.com/biography/William-Lovett

¹³ <https://minorvictorianwriters.org.uk/lovett/>

The Charter movement proposal had six main points and was referred to as “The People’s Charter.” These points were:

1. A vote for every man aged twenty-one years and above, of sound mind and not undergoing punishment for a crime.
2. The secret ballot to protect the elector in the exercise of his vote.
3. No property qualifications for Members of Parliament to allow the constituencies to return the man of their choice.
4. Payment to Members to enable tradesmen, working men, or other persons of modest means to leave or interrupt their livelihood to attend to the interests of the nation.
5. Equal constituencies, securing the same amount of representation for the same number of electors, instead of allowing less populous constituencies to have as much or more weight than larger ones.
6. Annual Parliamentary elections, thus preventing the most effectual check to bribery and intimidation, since no purse could buy a constituency under of system of universal manhood suffrage in every twelve months.¹⁴

Holmes was busy looking at these demands — probably as they related to the demands for “justice” (as the barons saw it) 600 years before at Runnymede. It should be said that the Chartist Movement died out in the 1850s before any of the reforms became law.¹⁵ Did it have an effect on Sherlock Holmes’s notion of justice? Spoiler alert... I don’t know.

Much has been written on Holmes’s disregard of the law and/or legal punishment, CHAS and SOLI being only two examples.

Are these results a product of Holmes’s fascination with the social issues of his day being put forward by the Chartists and the need for “more” and “better” (author’s characterization) social justice in the Magna Carta and its progeny? I think it could have had a material effect. It shows man’s (that includes woman’s) universal need for and desire for fairness and an efficient rule-based environment.

The elephant in the room, as seen by the author, is the fact that in 1848, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels published *The Communist Manifesto*, and Marx’s *Das Kapital* was published in 1867. The good doctor’s reminiscences say Holmes was studying “Early

¹⁴ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chartism>

¹⁵ Ibid.

English charters” and that this research “led to results so striking that they may be the subject of one of my future narratives.” There is no evidence that Marx’s writings had any effect on Holmes or his political leanings.

In addition, I could find no evidence of any monograph or story dealing with the subject of English charters of any age, and the scattered notes are of no help. I cannot but wonder, though, if our favorite private consulting detective was becoming a supporter of social justice issues as raised by Lovett and the Chartists or even the economic justice suggested by Marx (and Engels).

Holmes was too entrepreneurial to be considered a communist (or socialist), and a very successful businessman representing royalty and landowners. However, when one looks at the democratic reforms espoused in the Magna Carta, its following ancient charters, the demands of the Chartists and the points raised by Marx and Engels in 1848, it can cause one to conclude that the Master was very progressive or, in England, Liberal.

Stephen Chahn Lee, in his very persuasive monograph, *Sherlock Holmes and the Silent Contest*, does a great service to our quest for insights into the Master’s (and his Boswell’s) actions. Lee discusses how the inventory of Holmes’s intellect in STUD was not intended to be accurate, but rather to mislead his principal adversary, Professor Moriarty, into possibly underestimating his pursuer/enemy.¹⁶

This well-done and thought-provoking monograph would justify one assuming that Watson’s evaluation, “Politics — Feeble,” was just camouflage for the benefit of deluding the Professor. (See also FIVE, in which politics was “marked at zero.”)

Whether Holmes was a Liberal or Tory is of no importance. The fact was he was interested in political history (early English charters) which, it is suggested here, was the predicate for his further study of the more current (in Victorian times) Chartist movement.¹⁷

¹⁶ Lee, Stephen Chahn, *Sherlock Holmes and the Silent Contest* (privately printed, 2022).

¹⁷ Our favorite literary agent did run for parliament twice (1900 and 1906) as a Liberal Unionist, a branch of the Liberal Party that wanted Ireland to be a part of the U.K. This party was merged into the Conservative Party in 1912. Rationalizing these facts is well beyond this author’s

Was his study of ancient (and current, *i.e.*, Victorian) charters to see the progression of rights history has provided or just to evaluate the political/economic theories set forth therein? Watson's statement "results so striking" seem to indicate the Master had more than a mere curiosity, but then we don't know.¹⁸ Maybe time for another missive to Sussex. What are your thoughts on this?



Many Thanks:

To Angela Koenig, my editor/typist, chief technical advisor (she knows how to use a computer), and — most important — friend. This doesn't happen without you. Thanks, from your obedient servant.

pay grade. What rational thinking person would assume the literary agent's political views would creep into our Boswell's stories? Not I.

¹⁸ *Caveat:* Any similarity between the Chartist movement of Victorian times and present-day movements are purely coincidental and not intended to inject local or current politics into a discussion of the Canon. After all, we Sherlockians — or Holmesians depending on location — are above (or is it below?) all that.

APPENDIX A:
A LETTER FROM SHERLOCK HOLMES

by BOB SHARFMAN

SUSSEX DOWNS
23 MARCH 2022

MR. ROBERT SHARFMAN
THE NORWEGIAN EXPLORERS
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Dear Robert,

In answer to your recent enquiry as to the whereabouts of my biographer's tin dispatch box, usually kept at his bank's office at Charing Cross, please consider the following as my report. Included in this tin box were many of the unpublished adventures of my friend John Watson and yours truly.

Wherever it was, I was determined to find it! I have not seen my Boswell for a century now; although I admit my 165-plus year-old mind is foggy at times, thus it could be a few years more or less. So what now?

Young Wiggins was unavailable, having saved his shillings and paid his tuition at a local commercial school and learned to keep accounts. After a short stint at a merchant bank, he joined a Yankee firm — Goldman something or other. He was promoted rapidly and soon, I am told, was the head of the firm's energy department. Last I heard, my favorite "street Arab" was an adviser to the Saudi Wealth Fund. My street Arab has turned into an Arab prince. I always felt he would rise to the top.

Whatever the case, he was unavailable, so I had to rely upon my bankers, Lloyds and Co., a part of the Lloyds Banking Group.¹⁹ I did so very reluctantly, as I remember when that Spanish banker came for a visit to my rooms at 221 Baker Street. During our visit he informed me that my rooms — and indeed the entire structure

¹⁹ The Lloyds Banking Group was formed in 2009. It brought together many well-known brands, including Lloyds, Halifax, Bank of Scotland, and Scottish Widows. The combined history stretches back more than 300 years and encompasses a diverse range of businesses. Each company has its own story to tell. Together they present a truly extraordinary heritage (of which they are justifiably proud).

— were to be taken and occupied by another bank called Abbey National Building Society, which was later acquired by the Spanish Bank that employed my visitor.

The Spanish Bank had an impressive lineage dating from King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella (of the Inquisition and Columbus fame). It currently is a Sovereign Owned Bank, but given its formal current Charter in 1981 after Spain became a Republic in 1931. Or at least that is what my visitor told me.²⁰

So with this news, my search for Cox & Co. would have to wait until my relocation to Sussex Downs and the relocation of my beehives (ironically the first symbol of the Lloyds Bank in 1695) were behind me. More about that later.²¹

I felt a need for a good solicitor to help with the search and to act as an interpreter of the legal chants and incantations endemic to the breed.

My first thought was my friend John Dodd of the firm of Morrison, Morrison, and Dodd, whom I had met in the matter of the Sussex Vampire. Although the firm's practice revolved around machinery (no pun intended and none should be inferred), I learned that John Dodd had moved to Australia and had become a barrister and an active Rotarian. My Wiggins in this small search was my friend Chris Robinson, a solicitor who "took the silk" and became a judge, of no small reputation, and who still dispenses justice today. Wiggins would be proud to have Chris's name mentioned in the same sentence as his, and vice versa.

John Dodd (and Chris) being unavailable, I turned to a solicitor, John Hector McFarland, a bachelor, solicitor, a Freemason, but a

²⁰ The Spanish Bank is now known as Santander Group (or Banco Santander, S.A.), founded in 1851 but having roots back to the fifteenth century.

²¹ A close examination of Baker Street might reveal that immediately adjacent to Abbey National Building Society was another Building Society called Bolton Building Society. It was acquired by Cheltenham of Gloucester in 1988. A personal interview with Mr. Phillip Leigh, the managing director of Bolton, had him saying that if 221 was to be an address it would be above the door at Bolton, but that Abbey National was more willing to undergo the expenses of "maintaining" the offices or rooms of the Master. Mr. Leigh was only too happy with that arrangement, as his company was significantly smaller than Abbey National.

trifle asthmatic. Upon being contacted, John readily agreed to accept the representation and went energetically to work.

After several months, I received a rather long note from McFarland detailing what his search for the lineage of Cox & Co. had revealed. I was surprised and delighted with the results.

I will quote only from the relevant portions:

"In 1758, Lord Ligonier, Colonel of the 1st Foot Guards, appointed his secretary Richard Cox as regimental agent. As such, Cox was responsible for the payment of officers and men and also the provision of clothing and the marketing of officers' commissions. He operated from his house in Albemarle Street, London.

"The officers were moved to Craig's Court in Whitehall in 1765 and to Charing Cross in 1888.

"By 1888, Cox & Co. (also known as Cox and King's Army Agents as of 1922) had become agent to the entire Household Brigade, most of the Cavalry and Infantry Regiments, the Royal Artillery, and the Royal Wagon Train (later known as the Royal Army Service Corps).

"During World War I, Cox & Co. extended credit to many who could not repay their loans as agreed.²² By 1923, the bank was losing £1 million per year. Having capital (net worth) of £1 million, the bank was forced into a merger with Lloyds Bank with the Bank of England's guarantee of Cox & Co.'s delinquent and slowly paying loans.

"The Lloyds Bank has a long and interesting history of mergers and acquisitions dating from 1695, most recently with Halifax Bank of Scotland (Sir Walter Scott having been a principal) and Scottish Widows Mutual Savings Bank. These are some of the earliest known banks and the first mutual savings bank — organised in 1848.²³

²² However, the firm did more than just issue pay and manage officers' bank accounts. Its Insurance Department could arrange to insure an officer's kit; the Income Tax Department could deal with his tax returns; and the Standing Order Department would ensure that his tailor was paid regularly. Cox also sent a cashier with a supply of money to every hospital ship as it arrived to enable wounded officers to cash cheques.

²³ Mutual Banks and Insurance Companies were companies entirely owned by their customers. The profits and losses were shared by the depositions (policy holders). Mutual companies were common in

“Mr. Holmes,” McFarland continued, “if you wish me to go further, I will request documents from Lloyds Banking Group which are kept at the bank’s archives in London and Edinburgh. These archives include minute books, branch records, photographs, advertisements, staff registers, bank notes, and records of all the brands and companies acquired to date.”

I politely declined.

So now to reach out to the Lloyds branch at Charing Cross and obtain the tin box. Hope I can remember what that rat story was all about. No matter. When I do find that box, I am sure Watson has written the story better than I could or would. When located, I shall send it directly to you. Good luck with the contents.

Now where is that monograph I was working on about 120 uses of the cell phone? I can always call young Muller. I hear he is a good investigator. I wish Wiggins wasn’t so interested in money.

Best Regards,

Sherlock Holmes

Retired Consulting Detective and Beekeeper

Sources:

Bolton Building Society/The National Archives (2019)

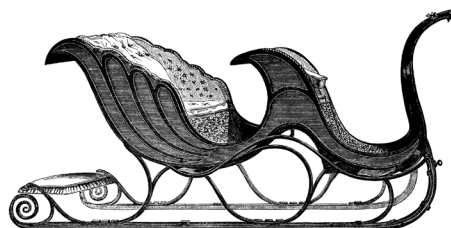
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insurance and banking and still exist today, but in much fewer numbers.

“SELDOM FOR ITS OWN SAKE”: MOVEMENT AND EXERCISE IN VICTORIAN CULTURE

by ERICA FAIR

One of the reasons that Sherlock Holmes remains such a fascinating character throughout history is that he is gifted both mentally and physically. Despite denigrating his body as a “mere appendix,” Holmes’s impressive physical skills feature in dozens of cases, whether he is climbing down a drainpipe, straightening a bent poker, fighting off attackers with his singlestick skills, or taking a brisk morning dip in the waters of the South Downs. In our stereotypes about the Victorian world, with its overwhelming emphasis on propriety and cleanliness, one imagines readers bristling with disdain at the idea of their hero undertaking such sweaty and uncouth physical work. But Victorian readers more likely would have admired Holmes’s athleticism with much the same awe that we feel today, as it happened in lockstep with a significant cultural revival toward the value of exercise.

During the Victorian era, the rise of industrialization sparked fears of a general weakening of the population, for two core reasons. First, during the Industrial Revolution, daily work for the masses shifted dramatically from outdoor field work and home trades toward specialized work in confined environments, such as mines and factories. Since epidemic disease remained uncontrolled, airborne diseases such as tuberculosis spread easily in tight quarters, and without any safety regulations, many industrial workers suffered unprecedented injuries and illnesses on the job, not to mention a number of tragic and preventable deaths. Many children were also employed at staggeringly young ages, and they experienced lifelong health problems from backbreaking and dangerous work. In particular, rickets, a bone-softening disease caused by lack of Vitamin D from sunlight, became a public health crisis. Since the cause was unknown until 1918, children growing up with rickets or other deformities rarely received adequate treatment, often becoming disabled adults, to their own misery as well as to the chagrin of their government.

Second, as machines took a broader role in everyday life, including transportation and labor-saving appliances, there was a growing cultural concern that people were becoming thin, weak, and lazy.¹ Poor health for the masses, combined with the apparent indulgences that machines created, were a source of embarrassment for the monarchy, and even a potential public safety hazard. Given that Victorian Europe was almost perpetually at war or expanding its empire, a weak and unhealthy citizenry jeopardized the appearance and effectiveness of the British military, and could make the nation a target for conquest by the rest of the world.

Because Victorian England did not yet have the tools and hindsight needed to correct these public health problems, they instead fostered popular interest in personal fitness, athletics, and the glory of exercise. While athleticism has always been admirable among the higher classes (Renaissance sports of leisure included tennis, golf, and equestrian sports like hunting and jousting), in the Victorian era this interest was spread to the masses in a way that had never before been attempted. Through the growing presence of public schools, children were taught the importance of sport and strength, and gymnasias began to open for adults who wished to cultivate fitness. Ultimately, exercise was encouraged for personal development on three fronts: physical, cultural, and spiritual.

The value of exercise for physical health requires little explanation. Both in today's world and in the Victorian era, the value of exercise was unquestionable, and entire fields of science today are dedicated to better understanding the relationship between exercise and health. Today, other than in the case of sedentary diseases, exercise alone is not generally prescribed as a cure. But the Victorians faced significantly more illnesses with a substantially smaller toolbox, and exercise was free and simple to perform. Although one shudders to think of being told to walk off a case of tuberculosis, particularly in a badly polluted city like London, arguably it was a better treatment than most alternatives at the time, such as bleeding or high doses of laudanum that left

¹ Stamford's exclamation to Watson that he is "thin as a lath" is not a compliment. Being underweight (correctly) suggested ill health, personal weakness, and often poverty.

the patient addicted and ashamed. Instead, exercise was a proactive way to invigorate the unwell and help strengthen the body to fight off infection in the absence of any effective medication.

Exercise was also understood to be a general preventative as well as cure-all. Holmes himself (perhaps sardonically) endorses "the value of exercise before breakfast," and on at least one occasion, Watson compels Holmes to take a constitutional to break him out of a nervous funk. Although "the most incurably lazy devil that ever stood in shoe leather" clearly did not appreciate forced diversions, his doctor was right to insist on fresh air and exercise, especially when Holmes's mental health was not ideal. Even today, exercise is an essential component to the treatment of depression, and taking a short walk can improve mood, productivity, and energy levels.

Beyond individual health, fitness was also promoted as a form of restoring cultural health and ideals. As its empire expanded, Victorian England experienced a sort of second Renaissance, with a strong cultural interest in returning to many Greco-Roman traditions, and this included the realm of fitness. Heroic depictions in classical art and sculpture were held up as representing the ideal male physique,² and the Olympic games were revived in 1896 as an intentional Hellenistic homage. The first European gyms since the fall of the Roman Empire opened in the 1820s, offering a designated spot for group exercise and instruction that had not previously existed, and it is no coincidence that they adopted the Greco-Roman word "gymnasium." In an era before television or internet, these gyms quickly became a popular option for recreation as well as health, and the spirit of industrialization led to the creation of exercise machines. In 1865, for example, Edinburgh's Royal Patent Gymnasium debuted the "Sea Serpent," a stationary boat that could seat up to 600 rowers at a time.³ Although Britain's harsh winters made outdoor gyms like these a challenging business venture, they were broadly advertised and

² For all our fretting today over airbrushed celebrities and photoshopped models, take heart that embracing unrealistic body standards is a basic human instinct that far predates modern advertising.

³ Less effectively, but no less entertaining, the gym also offered a giant seesaw that seated 200 riders, a pendulum swing, and the dubious-sounding "self-adjusting trapeze."

encouraged for all citizens as a way to improve not only health, but also morality and patriotism.⁴

Alongside classical culture, the ambitions of the British Empire also exposed them to new exercises and training standards from its places of conquest. Indian club swinging, for example, was a traditional strength and flexibility exercise for the upper body that was quickly adopted by the British military once the benefits were observed. The desire for a fit and strong population, both abroad and at home, led to similarly structured physical education being taught in schools, military camps, and even some workplaces. While the emphasis was typically on men to produce good soldiers and citizens, women were not immune, and gentler exercises were taught, including swimming, archery, tennis, and figure skating. Women were even allowed to participate in certain Olympic sports in 1900, just four years after the initial Olympics in 1896.

With this cultural revival in mind, exercise and training were also championed as a way to improve one's spiritual health and morality. The Ancient Greeks and Romans emphasized the balance between body and mind, promoting exercise as a means to improved discipline and intellect. The Victorians adopted the same core concept, but added a religious component. A popular movement at the time was "Muscular Christianity," the basic concept being that since God saw fit to grant you a body designed in His own image, you were morally obligated to strengthen and purify it, both to honor God directly and to aid you in serving Him. Muscular Christianity was not a separate denomination, but rather a philosophy that emphasized good health as a simple gateway to avoiding sin, promoting concepts like vegetarianism, sexual and chemical abstinence, and using exercise as the primary gateway to dispel sinful urges.⁵ Strength was prized as the basic platform from which one could serve God and others, and fitness and Church became closely entwined, leading to the creation of organizations such as London's first YMCA in 1844. Competitive sports were enticing to teens and younger adults, particularly men,

⁴ After all, a tired citizen has less energy to start a revolution or to engage with threatening ideas like communism.

⁵ To their credit, they're not wrong. Certainly, if we all lived with the singular goal of perfect health, there would be substantially less sin in the world, but where's the fun in that?

and the Church hoped that sports would help redirect male energy away from sexuality, aggression, and intemperance.

This renewed excitement about the value of exercise manifests throughout the Canon, depicting Holmes and Watson both as remarkably fit men. Holmes prefers individual sports such as fencing, boxing, and swimming, and his athleticism appears in his ability to run several miles, climb a variety of urban obstacles, and bicycle lengthy distances when needed. Watson remarks that Holmes disavows intentional exercise, but that he nonetheless “kept himself in training” with relative ease because he ate little and had few vices. While that is a good start to ensure a low body mass, it is improbable that Holmes would have maintained his brute strength and fighting prowess without some routine exertion. It is perhaps more realistic that he either took time for exercise while out of Baker Street without informing Watson, or else that he led a substantially more rough-and-tumble life than we are led to believe, with incidents like the Allardyce pig-stabbing taking place on a regular basis. Either one is entertaining to envision.

Watson appears to enjoy more social sports such as rugby, tennis, and billiards, and while he would have received basic physical training in the military, he makes little reference to other exercise. Throughout the 20th century, this has been ungenerously interpreted to suggest that Watson is overweight, out of shape, or incapable of athleticism. Certainly, his war injury and subsequent typhoid fever would have put a damper on any exercise initially, but by the time of the *Memoirs*, Watson is able to take a two hour walk without difficulty (YELL) and runs apace with Holmes for multiple miles when necessary (CHAS). Watson takes several opportunities to comment on Holmes’s surprising athleticism without ever discussing his own, but given Watson’s demonstrated fitness when called upon, we should conclude that this omission came from modesty, not lack of engagement.

Between them, Holmes and Watson form the ideal of a Victorian athlete — strong but humble, trained in multiple disciplines, free from the ill health that plagued the lower classes, and above all, a force for justice. Their physical skills would have been read as additional proof of their innate goodness and morality, whatever their other indiscretions.

To this day, we admire Holmes for his brute strength, his ability to physically improvise around his environment, and his

willingness to push himself to the limit whenever a case calls for it. Impressively, for all the new modern twists and takes on Holmes, so far this element of physicality has never changed. Perhaps that's not surprising. After all, a Holmes in motion tends to stay in motion (unless, of course, you're Mycroft).



BUGS BY NIGHT

by KAREN MURDOCK

Sherlockian references can be found everywhere to a burrowing Sherlockian scholar whose pen is ever raised, preparatory to scribbling a Sherlockian article.

Stephen Miller, in his book *How to Get Into the Bible*,¹ has an interesting sidebar about Bible translations:

Bizarre translations of key words spawned Bible nicknames. “The Bug Bible” (more respectfully known as Coverdale’s Bible, 1535) encouraged its readers not to be afraid of “bugs by night.” The King James Version later replaced “bugs” with “terror.”

The passage referenced is from Psalm 91 in the Hebrew Bible (known to Christians as the Old Testament):

4 He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler.
5 Thou shalt not be afraid for the *terror by night*; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; **6** Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday.
(King James Version)

What kind of an odd noun is it which can be translated into English as either “bugs” or “terror?”

The Hebrew word פָּחַד [Pachad] can be translated as “sudden alarm” or “a feared object,” or, more generally, as “anything bad.” Coverdale seems to have meant “bugs” in the sense of “bugaboo” or “bogie man” — in short, anything that might be frightening.

According to biblehub.com, the word “Pachad” occurs 25 times in the Old Testament, in Job, Proverbs, and Isaiah, among other books. Biblehub adds:

A striking feature of pāchad is its use for trembling that accompanies blessing. Isaiah 60:5 describes Zion’s heart that

¹ Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1998.

“will tremble and swell with joy” as nations stream to her. Jeremiah 33:9 foretells nations that “will tremble and fear because of all the good and all the peace” God bestows. Hosea 3:5 promises Israel will “come trembling to the Lord and to His goodness.” Reverent terror thus yields to astonished worship when grace is recognized.²



“Terror by Night” was the title of one of the Sherlock Holmes movies of the 1940s, starring Basil Rathbone as Holmes and Nigel Bruce as Watson.³ Sometimes the titles of those movies bore little relationship to what actually went on in the movie. “Terror by Night” was about a stolen diamond.

² <https://biblehub.com/hebrew/6342.htm>

³ Rathbone first appeared as Sherlock Holmes in the 1939 film “The Hound of the Baskervilles.” Nigel Bruce played Watson to Rathbone’s Holmes, as he would in many subsequent productions. Starting in 1942, Rathbone and Bruce starred in a series of 12 Holmes movies produced by Universal Pictures. Rathbone played Sherlock Holmes in a total of 16 films. “Terror by Night” was released in 1946. A colorized version is available free on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=boHaRLe06pQ>.

The “night” part was accurate. Most of “*Terror by Night*” takes place at night on a moving train, “*The Scotch Express*,” running from London to Edinburgh. (The theme of this year’s “*Christmas Annual*” is “*Holmes in Motion*,” and he is nowhere more in motion than in this movie.)

In the movie, Holmes has been engaged to guard a huge 423-carat diamond known as “*The Star of Rhodesia*,” currently owned by the elderly Lady Margaret Carstairs. The diamond, like all good movie gems, carries a curse (“all those who possessed it came to sudden and violent death”). Sure enough, not long after the train pulls out of Euston Station, Lady Margaret’s son, Roland, is found dead, murdered in his compartment. The gem has been stolen.



Given the very limited setting of the story, its small cast of characters, and the limited length of the short feature (just 59:36), it is surprising how many murders, near murders, and plot twists the film packs in. But there are no references to the Bible at all. Insects play no part in the plot. The most terrifying moment comes when Holmes is almost pushed off the moving train (he clings on, breaks a window, and climbs back aboard).

One is forced, reluctantly, to come to the conclusion that the writer of the screenplay of “*Terror by Night*” (Frank Gruber) and the movie’s director (Roy William Neill) knew nothing of Psalm 91 nor of any bugs by night.

YOU MAY HAVE READ OF THE REMARKABLE TRAVELS OF AN ENGLISHMAN NAMED BAKER

by MICHAEL V. ECKMAN

Thanks to the editorial work of Larry Millett, we know that Sherlock Holmes travelled to Minnesota several times, often using the pseudonym Mr. John Baker. Although Holmes and Watson faced many dangers in Minnesota, their visits may have extended Holmes's life.

Sherlock Holmes and the Red Demon (Viking, 1996)¹ tells the story of how Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson travelled to Minnesota to track a murderous arsonist, known as the Red Demon, who was threatening James J. Hill and his Great Northern Railway. The story is set within the events of the real Hinckley forest fire of 1894. Watson reports that he and Holmes travelled to "the New World" on the Cunard Line's *Lucania*, arriving in New York on August 21, 1894. Within twenty-four hours, they were in Chicago and immediately on to St. Paul, Minnesota, apparently arriving on August 22. (15–17)²

Watson records that "early on the morning of August 23, 1894, the date which marked the beginning of our extraordinary adventure in the Minnesota pineries," Holmes informs Watson that he will become Mr. Peter Smith while Holmes assumes the identity of "Mr. John Baker, of London, a traveling correspondent for *The Times*." (33–34)

Watson relates his and Holmes's actions on September 1, 1894, the first day of the fire. They move to safety in Duluth and leave for St. Paul on September 8, arriving by 6 P.M. After a dinner at Hill's house, Holmes tells how he solved the case. Holmes concludes with "Dr. Watson and I can still catch the late train to Chicago and points east. It is time for us to go home. And I hope

¹ Publisher and date of publication of the book.

² Page or pages of the book quoted.

that you will not take offense if I remark that it is my fervent hope that I shall never again set foot in Minnesota.” (293)

Despite Holmes’s hope to never visit Minnesota again, *Sherlock Holmes and the Ice Palace Mystery* (Viking, 1998) reports that he and Watson arrive in St. Paul at 9 A.M. on January 24, 1896. Holmes had earlier been summoned to Chicago on another case. Holmes solved the case quickly and was invited to stay in Chicago. He used the opportunity for a “week-long expedition to Chicago’s underbelly,” including “a tour of the house of horrors at Wallace and Sixty-third Streets where the monster Henry H. Holmes had gone about his gruesome business only a few years earlier.” (5)

Hill contacts Holmes in Chicago by letter concerning the disappearance of Jonathan Upton in St. Paul. (5–6) Holmes and Watson again assume the names Baker and Smith. As Holmes and Watson begin their investigation, they meet Shadwell Rafferty, whose business card reads “SHADWELL RAFFERTY, BARTENDING AND DISCREET INVESTIGATIONS, RYAN HOTEL, ST. PAUL.” (21–23) Rafferty knows who Baker and Smith really are, but uses the pseudonyms when talking to others. Holmes recognizes Rafferty’s knowledge and talents and is happy to work with him.

The missing person case becomes a murder case, and other murder victims appear. As Holmes, Watson, and Rafferty pursue leads with the help of Rafferty’s employee George Washington Thomas, the elements become a factor. A trap set by the trio goes wrong when fog descends and Holmes takes an unintended dip into the freezing cold Mississippi.

On February 1, 1896, Holmes explains the solutions to the crimes at a dinner in the Hill mansion. Later, Holmes acknowledges his debt to Rafferty for saving his life and the fine quality of Rafferty’s detection. Holmes and Watson depart St. Paul for Chicago on February 3.

Holmes’s next visit to Minnesota in *Sherlock Holmes and the Rune Stone Mystery* (Viking, 1999) begins with a request from the King of Sweden delivered by Professor Erik Ohman. Ohman explains to Watson that “Mr. Holmes and I once spent a most enjoyable fortnight in Uppland examining runes.” Holmes agrees and states, “I was at that time going under the name of Sigerson. Indeed, it was Professor Ohman who suggested that alias, which I used on my subsequent travels.” (7)

Ohman explains that King Oskar II wishes to buy the rune stone found in Minnesota as proof of the Norse discovery of North America predating Columbus's arrival. Holmes states that "the language of the inscription will always be controversial, given the debates which have long ranged over the runic alphabet and its proper interpretation." Ohman agrees and says, "What is needed is hard proof from the scene of discovery: proof that the stone was indeed found in the manner described by Olaf Wahlgren, proof that no one locally might have produced the inscription, proof that the chisel marks are not of recent manufacture — proof, in short, that the stone itself cannot under any circumstances be a modern forgery." (13)

Holmes accepts the case and arrives in St. Paul with Watson on March 29, 1899. (17) Holmes and Watson again travel under the names Baker and Smith and again have the assistance of James J. Hill and Shadwell Rafferty. Holmes, Watson, and Rafferty travel to Alexandria and Moorhead, Minnesota, in search of the stone and proof of its authenticity. Several murders are committed, and Holmes escapes a deadly trap on April 5.

On April 10, Holmes explains the solution to all the crimes and opines on the veracity of the stone. Watson does not give a departure date from Minnesota, but does write, "Upon our return to London, at the end of April 1899, Holmes at once became enmeshed in a series of difficult cases so sensitive in nature that I am not at liberty to present them to the world." (297) If "the end of April" indicates the last week of April, Holmes and Watson probably left Minnesota no later than April 15, 1899.

As *Sherlock Holmes and the Secret Alliance* (Viking, 2001) begins, Holmes and Watson are already in America. They arrived in New York on September 27, 1899. Holmes had been retained by John Jacob Astor to help with a case, according to Watson's notes, involving a "long-standing feud within [the] Astor family." (9–10) A murder in Minneapolis causes Rafferty to seek Holmes's help by telegram and letter. After Holmes and Astor have a disagreement, Holmes and Watson gladly leave to join Rafferty.

Holmes and Watson arrive in Minneapolis on October 6, only to find Rafferty in the hospital. Watson's notes record that "H, in cold fury, found a police captain & introduced himself as 'Lord Baker,' English financier & friend of SR who was in Mpls. doing business

with [James J.] Hill. H told captain in no uncertain terms what would happen unless we saw SR ‘immediately.’” (140) Holmes does get to see Rafferty, who is released from the hospital. Holmes and Rafferty embark on a whirlwind of activity ending on October 8 with Holmes, Watson, and Rafferty in mortal danger. All escape, and Rafferty tells Holmes and Watson to leave as he will handle the police. Once Holmes confirms that Rafferty will not be detained or charged by the police, he and Watson leave on October 9.

In *The Disappearance of Sherlock Holmes* (Viking, 2002), Holmes and Watson do not travel to Minnesota. Holmes does, however, enlist the help of Rafferty to rescue the kidnapped Elsie Cubitt. Holmes’s efforts to rescue Cubitt require his travel to New York and then on to Chicago, where Rafferty meets him. There are a few nods to Minnesota in that the ship in which Cubitt is taken to the United States is named the “St. Paul” and the kidnappers set a trap for Holmes by offering to free her for a ransom in an exchange to take place in St. Paul’s Chapel in New York on July 16, 1900. The book’s action takes place over a short period of time as Holmes and Watson are back in London by August 4, 1900.

Strongwood (University of Minnesota, 2014) is subtitled “A Crime Dossier” and gives the details of a murder trial using trial testimony, newspaper stories, the defendant Addie Strongwood’s account as published in the *Minneapolis Tribune*, the journal of her attorney J. Winston Phelps, and letters. A January 8, 1904, article in the *St. Paul Pioneer Press* reports that “Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John Watson passed through St. Paul last night on their way to Rochester to consult with Dr. Will Mayo, the famed surgeon.” (42) Watson requires medical care and a January 10, 1904, article in the *Rochester Daily Bulletin* notes that “The two Englishmen, traveling under pseudonyms in the vain hope of keeping their presence a secret, arrived last night by train from St. Paul....” (71) Holmes and Watson probably tried to use the names Baker and Smith but were unsuccessful.

Rafferty is retained by Addie Strongwood’s attorney. On January 17, 1904, Holmes writes to Rafferty that “I have found the matter of the Strongwood girl in Minneapolis to be of more than passing interest...” and “I am thinking now that I will come up to Minneapolis one day next week to observe the trial....” (105) Holmes does come to the trial and meets with both Addie and her

attorney. Holmes asks questions and provides some direction that eventually produce information about Addie. Holmes and Watson leave Minnesota “not long after the first of February” (181) and appear to have been gone when the verdict in Addie’s case was reached on February 5.

In *The Magic Bullet* (University of Minnesota, 2011), Holmes and Watson do not visit America at all, much less Minnesota. The October 1, 1917, locked room murder of Artemus Dodge prompts James J. Hill’s son and heir Louis Hill to call upon Rafferty to investigate the murder. At the end of the first day of investigation, Rafferty admits that he needs help. Even though transatlantic cables are expensive, “Rafferty thought it worth the price. If anyone could point the way to a solution to Dodge’s murder, it would be Holmes.” (104–105) Holmes, unable to travel to Minnesota because of the First World War, replies by cable the next day that he will look into the case.

According to Watson’s notes, Holmes’s replies to Rafferty point out certain characteristics of Dodge’s office layout and a suggestion that he look at the monograph “The Locked Room Mystery.” Watson also records that Holmes said, “I must ask Mr. Rafferty as soon as possible whether anyone in Mr. Dodge’s office, or for that matter Mrs. Dodge, recently visited Austria.” (246)

Using the results of his own investigation, Holmes’s observations, and the answer to Holmes’s question, Rafferty and Thomas devise a plan to trap the murderer. By Monday, October 8, *The Pioneer Press* has the story of Rafferty’s success in solving the murder.

In *Sherlock Holmes and the Eisendorf Enigma* (University of Minnesota, 2017), a bearded Holmes travels alone to the Mayo Clinic under the name Baker, hoping for help with his emphysema. Holmes arrives in St. Paul on September 3, 1920, visits with Rafferty, and is in Rochester on September 4. Holmes meets with Dr. Plummer on September 6, takes a battery of tests, and is told to give up smoking. Holmes replies, “you are asking me, Doctor, to abandon one of the great and necessary pleasures of my life because you have a theory.... I am not convinced.” (8)

Holmes begins to plan for his return to England when he receives a taunting note reminding him of one of his cases 28 years earlier in Munich and ending with an invitation to “Come and see

me in Eisendorf.” (1) Holmes decides to stay and visit Eisendorf, to drop his Baker pseudonym, and to give up smoking if it will improve his health enough to allow him to resolve the 28-year-old case.

The investigation in Eisendorf is long and taxing, and Holmes suffers a concussion severe enough that he is brought back to the Mayo Clinic. Dr. Plummer sends for Watson. Watson arrives on September 29, Holmes is released from the Clinic on September 30, and by October 3 the case is resolved. Watson reports that Holmes wrote up the story “ten days later, as we sailed on the *Mauretania* to England.” (211) Holmes and Watson probably left Minnesota on October 6, 1920.

According to Millett, Holmes’s last visit to Minnesota is recorded in *Rafferty’s Last Case* (University of Minnesota, 2022). On January 21, 1928, “Holmes delivered his third and final lecture on the ‘Art of Detection’ to a spellbound audience at the Auditorium in Chicago.” (17) Upon returning to the Palmer House, a telegram from George Washington Thomas informs them that Rafferty has been murdered and requests that Holmes and Watson come to St. Paul. Holmes and Watson arrive in St. Paul on January 22, meet with Thomas, and find that Rafferty was investigating the death of Daniel St. Albin, whom the police believe committed suicide.

Holmes and Watson work with Thomas to solve both murders, meeting constant opposition from the authorities. Holmes is not using a pseudonym, which leads to an exchange with a hotel clerk who refuses to release information, even to Sherlock Holmes, as “Everyone knows he’s a fictional character.” Holmes replies, “You may be right, sir, for I am indeed Dr. Watson’s creation, at least as far as the greater world is concerned.” (86)

During three weeks of effort, Holmes works out the solution and sets a trap for the murderer. After Holmes explains his solution, he announces that it is time to go home. Watson records that, as they made preparations to go home, “Holmes was in a pensive mood for much of the day, as was I, for we both know it was unlikely we would ever return to America, where we had experienced so many remarkable adventures.” (363) Holmes and Watson leave St. Paul on February 17, 1928.

The table below sums up Holmes’s time in Minnesota:

	Minnesota Visits			Baker	Baker
	<u>Arrive</u>	<u>Depart</u>	<u>Days</u>	<u>Through</u>	<u>Days</u>
Red Dem.	8/22/1884	9/8/1884	17	9/8/1884	17
Ice Palace	1/24/1896	2/3/1896	10	2/3/1896	10
R. Stone	3/29/1899	4/12/1899	14	4/12/1899	14
Secret All.	10/6/1899	10/9/1899	4	10/9/1899	4
Strong.	1/7/1904	2/2/1904	26	2/2/1904	3
Eis. Enig.	9/3/1920	10/6/1920	33	9/6/1920	3
<u>Last Case</u>	1/22/1928	2/17/1928	<u>26</u>		<u>0</u>
Totals:			130		51

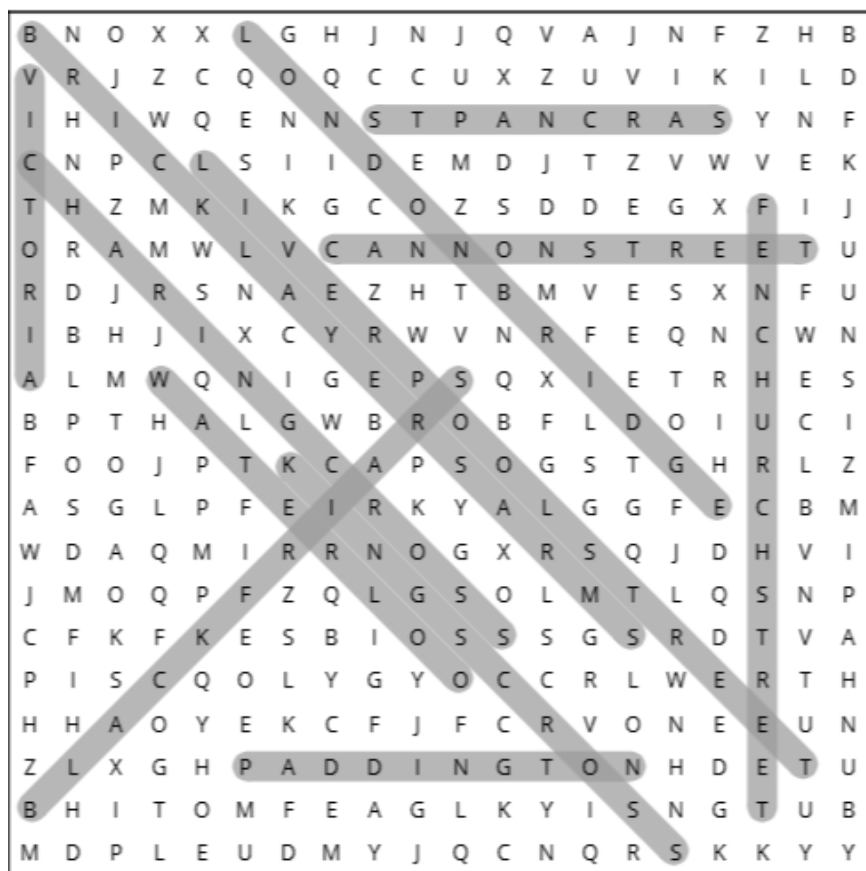
Holmes spent 130 days in Minnesota, 51 of them with the intention of being known as Baker. Despite the dangers that Holmes faced, the visits may have extended his life. As Watson writes, it was in Eisendorf that Holmes “finally came to terms with his illness by forsaking tobacco” and “To this day, Holmes maintains that the concussion he sustained helped him emerge from the state of quiet despair into which he had fallen.” (223)



“LOOK UP THE TRAINS” PUZZLE SOLUTION

by DR. MELISSA AHO

(Puzzle on page 16)



Cannon Street
Charing Cross
Kings Cross
Liverpool Street

London Bridge
Paddington
St Pancras
Victoria

Waterloo
Blackfriars
Fenchurch Street
Bricklayers Arms

IRISH ALTAMONT

by RUTH BERMAN

Sherlock Holmes's literal travels in "His Last Bow" must have included train travel in the United States and also included automobile travel in England, with Watson's assistance as his chauffeur in a "little Ford." They were nearly sideswiped by Baron Von Herder's flashy "100-horse-power Benz car." (Leslie Klinger points out a difference between the *Strand Magazine* text and the book, which eliminated Holmes's comment, "But for your excellent driving, Watson, we should have been the very type of Europe under the Prussian Juggernaut.")¹ Holmes travelled politically, as well, disguising himself as an Irish American named Altamont in order to act as a double agent, pretending to spy for Germany (LAST).

"Altamont," with its French-language roots, the equivalent of "high mountain," seems a surprising alias for a double agent posing as an Irish American. Donald Hayne, in a letter to Edgar W. Smith, included in "The Editor's Commonplace book," suggested that Holmes's choice of name was a geographical compliment to New York. Hayne assumed that Holmes would have entered the continent through a Canadian port, to avoid being spotted by the U.S. newspaper reporters, who kept a watchful eye out for newsworthy visitors from ships docking at New York City. From there "he could easily have been spirited over the border into New York state,"² and the village of Altamont, NY, would be a convenient and unobtrusive spot for him to lay up, to work on getting his American accent right,³ before joining the Irish-

¹ Klinger, Leslie, *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2005), Vol. 2, 1437.

² *Baker Street Journal* [o.s.] 1.2 (April 1946): 189–190.

³ It was perhaps more vocabulary than accent that would have concerned Holmes. The Irish accent he could have picked up from Irish people resident in London would continue to be appropriate for his pose as an Irishman resident in Chicago. He complained to Watson at the end of

American community in Chicago (but an Altamont, NY, accent would probably not have been right for a supposed Chicago-based Irish American). The village seems to have taken its name from the Helderberg Mountains (from the Dutch for “clear mountain”) overlooking it. Mrs. Crichton Sellars,⁴ in her poem, “Altamont” suggested instead that Holmes took the name as mischievously appropriate because it had been used as a villain’s alias in Thackeray’s *Pendennis* and Scott’s *The Pirate*. “No person called Altamont e’er had that name, / Or ever was rightly baptized with the same”).⁵

William S. Baring-Gould (and likewise Leslie Klinger) in addition to these two, cited in his annotations to “His Last Bow” Willis B. Wood’s suggestion (from *The Second Cab*, ed. James Keddie, Jr., 1947) that the name might refer to Altamont, Kansas, a station on the St. Louis and San Francisco Railway.⁶ In wandering about the United States, if Holmes was at some point in the southwest, he might have taken this train to Chicago and noted the station names along the way. There are no mountains near the Kansas Altamont, out on the prairie, but it was named after the Illinois Altamont, which in turn had been named by J. W. Conlogue (a superintendent with the St. Louis, Vandalia and Terre Haute Railroad, one of the lines that merged to become the St. Louis and San Francisco Railway). There weren’t any mountains in the vicinity, but Conlogue chose the Illinois name for a nearby rise — a mound, if not a mountain. The Illinois Altamont is perhaps the more likely as a station-name that Holmes might have seen *en route* to Chicago. Baring-Gould further pointed out that Doyle’s father’s

the story that his “well of English seem[ed] to be permanently defiled.” His phrasing was based on Spenser’s tribute to “Chaucer, well of English vndefyled,” (*The Faerie Queene*, Book 4, Canto 2, verse 32). Spenser, ironically, was an Englishman resident in Ireland. He loved the scenery, but hated the people. He kept trying to get an appointment to any job in England, but without success.

⁴ Sellars, the wife of architect Thomas Crichton Sellars, was born Irma Maduro Peixotto, according to Julie McKuras and Sonia Fetherston in the *Baker Street Journal 2022 Christmas Annual*: “A Lady Ventures into the Sacred Precincts: Women on the Periphery of the BSI, 1940–1960” (New York: Baker Street Irregulars, 2022).

⁵ *Baker Street Journal* [o.s.] 3.1 (January 1948): 59.

⁶ Baring-Gould, William S., *The Annotated Sherlock Holmes* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., 1967), 802, footnote 16.

middle name was Altamont (Charles Altamont Doyle — pace Mrs. Sellars, “rightly baptized!”).

But “Altamont” does, after all, have a more directly Irish root. Watching an old episode of “To Tell the Truth” on television, I was surprised to see as one of their guests, Jeremy Browne, the twelfth Earl of Altamont⁷ — the real one, along with a pair of imposters, as required by the show’s format. (Betty White correctly guessed the real Altamont.) This title in the Irish peerage takes its name from the Anglo-Norman name for what the Irish called Croagh Patrick, or with Irish spelling, Cruach Phádraig, meaning [Saint] Patrick’s stack, or rick. (Although a “stack” or “rick” refers to any orderly pile, and usually to piles smaller than mountains, such as chimney bricks or hay, each can also mean a mountain.) Croagh Patrick is an important site of pilgrimage in County Mayo, in the northwest of Ireland. “On Reek [Irish variant of “rick”] Sunday, the last Sunday in July, pilgrims climb Croagh Patrick. The pilgrimage is made in honor of Saint Patrick, who in legend is said to have spent forty days fasting on the mountain in the fifth century. The pilgrimage has been held yearly for at least 1,500 years. It is likely that it pre-dates Christianity and was originally a ritual associated with the festival of Lughnasadh” (Harbison, p. 70).⁸ Lugh, or

⁷ Upon the death of his father Denis Browne, the tenth Marquess of Sligo in 1991, Jeremy became the eleventh Marquess of Sligo. When Jeremy died in 2014, the Browne family’s estate of Westport — a Stately Home which supports the expenses of its upkeep as a prominent tourist attraction, and had remained in the Browne family for almost 300 years — for the first time in its history was separated from the inherited title. Jeremy’s children were daughters, who inherited Westport, while his cousin Sebastian Browne became the twelfth Marquess (and thirteenth Earl). Sebastian is a property consultant and real estate dealer, who lives in Victoria, Australia. According to the Westport House History website, Westport House had originally belonged to a family trust which designated the estate to go to the owner’s oldest son (or male heir), but “Jeremy succeeded in bringing the Altamont Act through the [Irish] Senate in 1992 allowing him to leave the estate to his daughters and break the trust.” In 2017, however, “the Browne family sold the house and estate to the local Hughes family who own neighbouring Hotel Westport and workwear provider, Portwest” and who hope to maintain Westport as a tourist attraction of historic interest.

⁸ Harbison, Peter, *Pilgrimage in Ireland: The Monuments and the People* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1995), 70.

Lugus, was a Celtic god worshipped widely in Europe (the cities of Carlisle in England, Lyons in France, and Louth in Ireland were all named in his honor). The harvest festival of the Lughnasadh (or English Lammas-tide) is traditionally held on August 1. With the date of “His Last Bow” set at August 2, 1914, a Sunday, Holmes was winding up his pretended spying for Von Bork one day after the Lughnasa, and one week after Reek Sunday, an appropriately ironic timing. On the same day, August 2, the German government had sent an ultimatum to Belgium. Two days later, on August 4, Belgium refused and Germany invaded Belgium. The news of the ultimatum was already known, and Von Bork was about to close down his countryside headquarters and move into the German embassy, where he could avoid arrest as a German and presumed (even if his spying activities were not already known) enemy alien. (The Norwegian Explorers, discussing “His Last Bow” recently, wondered why Holmes wrapped up his *Practical Handbook of Bee Culture* to give Von Bork, revealed himself as a double agent, and put him under arrest, instead of giving him a plausibly misleading mock-up of data and continuing to work for him as a supposed German supporter. The answer is evidently that as soon as Germany started trying to put to use in their military operations the data Holmes had supplied to them, his cover would be blown anyway, and meanwhile Von Bork would be free and perhaps able to continue to get information from his other agents.)

According to the Westport House website’s account,⁹ the first in the Browne family to win a title was John Browne in the adjoining territory of Connacht, created Baronet of The Neale in 1636. His elder son became the second Baronet of The Neale, and the seventh Baronet, also a Sir John Browne, was created Baron Kilmaine in 1789. Sir John (the first one) had a younger son, Colonel John Browne, in the service of the Irish Army of King James II. The Colonel’s wife was Maude Burke, a great-great granddaughter of Grace O’Malley,¹⁰ “the Pirate Queen of Ireland.” Grace had several

⁹ www.westporthouse.ie/history

¹⁰ Grace O’Malley, or, in Irish Gráinne (nicknamed Granuaile) Uí Mháille. Gráinne is pronounced in three syllables (approximately grawn-EE-ya), meaning grain, love, or perhaps sun. Granuaile is pronounced in three syllables (approximately GRAWN-yoo-AYL) or shortened to two (approximately GRAWN-yoo). (Pronunciations as supplied by Google pronouncing guides.) It means “Bald Gráinne,” so-called because

castles in the West of Ireland, strategically scattered along the west coast, as places of refuge, when the English, Scottish, Spanish, and even Irish ships she had plundered tried to pursue her.¹¹ The Irish clans had complicated, ever-shifting patterns of alliance and conflict, and Grace plundered freely Irish ships belonging to unfriendly clans. Maude inherited Grace's Westport castle. Part of Maude's castle is still there, but the Colonel constructed a new Westport House on the site, and his grandson in turn had it enlarged and rebuilt in the eighteenth century.

The Colonel's grandson, yet another John Browne (1709–July 4, 1776, an interesting date from the American point of view, although not significant to the Brownes!), was a politician who served in the Irish House of Commons. He was made a Baron, as Lord Mount Eagle, in 1760. Although there is a Mount Eagle in the southwest of Ireland, in County Kerry, "Eagle's Mountain" is an alternative name for Croagh Patrick.¹² Lord Mount Eagle became Viscount Westport in 1768, taking his new title from the family estate, and in 1771 he became the first Earl of Altamont. His son Peter became the second Earl of Altamont, and Peter's son John Denis Browne, the third Earl, became Marquess of Sligo in 1800 (just barely — on December 29). In 1806 he was also made Baron Monteagle, in the Peerage of the United Kingdom.

The Irish Parliament, modeled on the English Parliament, was a two-chamber House of Commons and House of Lords, from its installation in 1297 by the Anglo-Normans, who had invaded and conquered most of the land in the late twelfth century, until 1801, when the Acts of Union of 1800 merged Ireland as a part of Great Britain. After the merger, 28 Irish peers (elected by the Irish

according to legend she cut her hair short so it would not get in the way when she began making sea-voyages with her father to plunder ships unlucky enough to come in their range. She was not literally a queen, but rather the leader of the O'Malley clan, chosen by them to succeed her father in that office, passing over her brother, an unusual choice in a generally patriarchal society.

¹¹ Chambers, Anne, *Granuaile: Grace O'Malley: Grace O'Malley — Ireland's Pirate Queen, Grace O'Malley c. 1530–1603* (Dublin: Merlin Publishing, 2003), xii–xiii.

¹² Campbell, Noel, "Croagh Patrick, then and now," *Mayo Advertiser* (September 9, 2016): www.advertiser.ie/mayo/article/87171/croagh-patrick-then-and-now

peerage, which also elected replacements as seats became vacant) received seats in the British Parliament. When Ireland won independence, recognized by Britain in 1921, a single-chamber Irish Parliament was established, with all the seats filled by election. The Irish peerages continue to exist, but the peers do not have any inherited seats in the Irish government. After Ireland's independence was established, as the 28 seats for Irish peers in the British Parliament fell vacant, they were not replaced. However, the Marquess of Sligo, holding also the English title of Baron Monteagle, continued to hold a seat in the British Parliament until 1999, when most of the seats for hereditary peers were abolished. Since then, most of the seats in the House of Lords have belonged to "life peers," non-heritable titles awarded to politically prominent people.¹³

Holmes's alias of a last name of "Altamont," in spite of its French-language roots, was after all an appropriate Irish alias, either suggesting geographically that his family came from around the foot of the mountain, or socially that they had been adherents

¹³ From the point of view of Sherlockians, the most interesting Irish peer was the sixth Marquess of Donegall. Sir Arthur Chichester, who was Lord Deputy of Ireland from 1605 to 1616, was raised to the Peerage of Ireland as Baron Chichester in 1613. He died in 1625, without any sons to inherit, but the title was revived for his younger brother, Edward, who in addition to becoming the second Baron, was upgraded in title as Viscount Chichester. The third baron/second viscount was his son, another Arthur, who was a distinguished soldier, created Earl of Donegall in 1647. The fifth earl, yet another Arthur, was created Baron Fisherwick, in the Peerage of Great Britain, in 1790, and in 1791, one year later, he received a further earldom and an upgrade on his Donegall title, when he was made Earl of Belfast and Marquess of Donegall in the Peerage of Ireland. The sixth Marquess of Donegall was Edward Arthur Donald St George Hamilton Chichester (7 October 1903–24 May 1975), the enthusiastic and knowledgeable editor of the *Sherlock Holmes Journal* for many years, who succeeded to the marquessate on the death of his father in 1904, when he was only seven months old. Like the Marquesses of Sligo, the Marquesses of Donegall, holding also a British title, retained their seats in the British Parliament until the House of Lords Act of 1999. At that time, 92 peers were elected from among the 759 previously entitled by heredity to seats, and the rest (including Sligo/Monteagle and Donegal/Fisherwick) lost their seats. It is expected that the Labour government elected in 2024 will before long end the remaining 92 hereditary seats.

(perhaps tenants?) of the sixth Marquess of Sligo (1856–1935).¹⁴ George Ulick Browne had become the Marquess only recently, in 1913, on the death of his father, and before that had been the Earl of Altamont. He was still the Earl when Holmes left for his two years in Chicago. He was evidently sympathetic to the cause of Home Rule for Ireland, and therefore probably also at least somewhat sympathetic to the cause of Irish independence, attending the first meeting of the short-lived (two meetings only, in June and July 1921) of the Senate of Southern Ireland, a Home Rule legislature established by the British Government under the Government of Ireland Act of 1920. Due to the low turnout of members attending, the parliament was adjourned, and was officially disbanded by the Irish Free State Agreement Act of 1922. “Altamont, Altamont, what was thy shame? / Always an alias, never a name,” said Mrs. Sellars. But for Holmes it was an alias that brought no shame.

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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parliament_of_Southern_Ireland

¹⁴ Or, if “Altamont” was a supposed alias of the supposed anti-English spy, it implied a degree of reverence for Irish history and legend in general, no matter where in Ireland he came from. Arthur Conan Doyle’s paternal grandparents, John and Marianne Conan Doyle, came from Dublin, and the Doyles before that came from County Wexford, in the south of Ireland, not from County Mayo [Nordon, Pierre, *Conan Doyle, A Biography*, Francis Partridge, trans. (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1967), 4], so the choice of “Altamont” for their son Charles’s middle name was evidently the result of such general historical/mythic interest.

“LOOK UP THE TRAINS IN BRADSHAW, WATSON.”

A poem by PAUL REINERS

“Bradshaw’s Railway Guide”
Organized and logical
Routes to adventure.

*A detective's mind
Logical and organized
Scarlet threads to crime.*

[illegible]

(COM)MOTION AT THE 1962 BSI DINNER

by BRUCE HARRIS

“In what circumstances (or, in what story) did Holmes and Watson, in England, ride in a vehicle invented in America?” The question is not original. It was asked as one of the challenge questions on January 5, 1962, at the annual Baker Street Irregulars Dinner in New York City. Guesses? Give up? Here are three potential answers:

- (a) Ford automobile (LAST)
- (b) Police steam launch (SIGN)
- (c) Pullman train car (SILV)

Thanks to Samuel F. Howard,¹ we know the answer is (c), the Pullman car.

While the Ford was built in America, the automobile was not invented in the U.S.A. Howard explains that the first self-propelled vehicle (a three-wheeled steam-driven carriage) was invented in Paris, France, in 1769. Karl Benz of Germany was the first to create a vehicle powered by internal combustion in 1885. In 1891, Rens Panhad of France created the first automobile with modern day features. Incidentally, the Ford driven by Holmes and Watson in LAST was, according to Allen H. Cook,² a Model T Runabout, built between 1909–1911.

Those who selected (b), the steam launch, are also incorrect. According to Howard, Robert Fulton created the *Clermont* in America in 1807. However, four years earlier, Charlotte Dundas operated a launch in Scotland.

The answer, then, is the Pullman car, as seen in SILV. Despite the fact that train travel and/or train stations are mentioned in at

¹ Howard, Samuel F., “Letters to Baker Street,” *Baker Street Journal* 12.1 (March 1962): 49, 55.

² Cook, Allen H., “Sherlock Holmes and the Motorcar, A Closer Reading of ‘His Last Bow’ with some Observations Upon the Automotive Aspects,” *The Fourth Cab* (Boston: Stoke Moran Publishers, 1976), 59–62.

least 25 cases, the Pullman car is specified in only one instance. And it is not without its controversy. E.P. Greenwood, in “Some Random Thoughts on Railway Journeys by Holmes and Watson,” says, “In the story of ‘Silver Blaze,’ Holmes and Watson made a remarkable journey for they travelled by Pullman on the great Western Railway and Pullmans did not run on this line in those days and more remarkable still, on their return to London from Kings Pyland (again Pullman) Holmes remarked that they were passing through Clapham Junction and would be in Victoria in ten minutes!”³

B.D.J. Walsh conducted a thorough investigation into railway travel in the Canon, and he weighs in on SILV’s enigmatic Pullman car journey.⁴ Walsh agrees that Holmes’s “ten minutes to Victoria” comment is an impossibility. Despite SILV’s questionable chronology history,⁵ Walsh writes, “In April 1890, Pullman cars had in fact been reintroduced on some L.S.W.R. [London & South Western Railway] trains after an earlier unsuccessful experiment with them in the ’eighties, but the only up trains on which they were scheduled to run were two morning trains from Bournemouth to Waterloo.”⁶

Pullman cars, invented by George M. Pullman of Chicago, are known for their brown color. Four Browns appear in the Canon. Lieutenant Bromley Brown (SIGN) was in command of the native troops in the Andaman Island. Sam Brown, also in SIGN, was a Scotland Yard inspector on the police launch pursuing the *Aurora*. The third Brown appears in SIXN. Josiah Brown was one of the owners of a Napoleon bust. Finally, Silas Brown (SILV), who found and hid Silver Blaze, was described by Holmes as “A perfect compound of the bully, coward and sneak....”

³ Greenwood, E.P., “Some Random Thoughts on Railway Journeys by Holmes and Watson,” *Sherlock Holmes Journal* 1.3 (June 1953): 19–21.

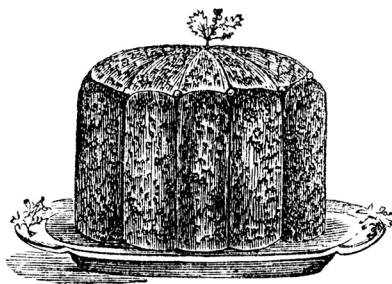
⁴ Walsh, B.D.J., “Sherlock Holmes and Railways,” *Sherlock Holmes Journal* 9.2 (Summer 1969): 40–48.

⁵ Chronologists date SILV between 1881–1891. In a follow-up letter to Howard, Morris Rosenblum states SILV occurred “subsequent to 1887.” See Rosenblum, Morris, “Letters to Baker Street,” *Baker Street Journal* 12.2 (June 1962): 114. Note: This author dates SILV September 25, 1890. See Harris, Bruce, *It’s Not Always 1895* (privately printed, 2022).

⁶ Walsh, 44.

In his seminal work, *Sherlock Holmes, A Study in Sources*, Donald A. Redmond attempts tracing the origins of only Bromley and Josiah Brown. Of the former, Redmond says, “it is impossible to trace a Brown among the hundreds [of Browns].”⁷ Yet that is exactly what Redmond does for Josiah Brown. “His name was originally... John Thomas Brown, a Yorkshire batsman who died of heart trouble at 36 in 1904, though there was another J. Brown who had been a Sussex cricketer in the ’nineties and did not die until 1916.”⁸

Strangely, Redmond ignores both Sam Brown and Silas Brown. Admittedly, Sam is a minor character. Silas Brown is anything but. No attempt here will be made to identify the source for Silas, but it is curious the surname Brown appears in the only story referencing a Pullman car. This leads to a chicken or egg 2025 Sherlockian challenge question: When writing *SILV*, which came first, Silas *Brown*, or the Pullman car?



⁷ Redmond, Donald A., *Sherlock Holmes, A Study in Sources* (Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press, 1982), 267.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 150.

THE CRYSTAL PALACE ADVENTURE

by JULIE MCKURAS

The early months of 1897 were relatively quiet for Sherlock Holmes with only two cases of interest during that period. There were several minor situations which he solved for the benefit of his wallet but were so mundane that his notes were quickly relegated to my tin-box as he feared their appearance in print would lead the reading public to assume his talents were best put to deciding which housemaid broke a vase.

Winter eventually gave way to spring. Leaves were emerging, flowers were blooming, and young ladies sauntered down Baker Street in their spring frocks. Despite this, day after day Holmes read the agony column and agonized over the absence of any questionable occurrences. His enemy, boredom, had set in.

"Watson, do think watching those young ladies in their new dresses is the best way for you to spend the day?"

"I'm observing the weather. What would you suggest I do? Pick up the newspapers you've thrown on the floor?"

Fortunately, before he could suggest what I should do, Mrs. Hudson knocked on our door and entered. She held a card, closing the door behind her.

"Gentlemen, there's a lady here, Norwegian I think, at least she sounds like those Norwegian sailors one hears near the fish stalls at the docks."

Holmes took the card, reading the name silently.

"Please show in Astrid Karlsdotter."

When Mrs. Hudson opened the door, it was apparent that our visitor had been listening through the keyhole; she had to catch herself before falling. When she entered, a smile crossed Holmes's face. "Welcome! Am I addressing a Norwegian named Astrid Karlsdotter, or Miss Throgmorton, perhaps Madame Vivienne the seer?"

The name Adelaide Throgmorton instantly brought to mind “The Problem of the Vanished Husband.”¹ Although I recalled her hair was red when we first met, her hair, now blonde, was pulled back from her freckled face, and she carried a hat with a blue ribbon matching her eyes, her umbrella, and her dress.

“Mr. Holmes, Dr. Watson, it’s good of you to see me. To my agent’s chagrin, I’ve bid farewell to Madame Vivienne who looked into the future.” She waved her hand and, with a Swedish accent, said, “Gentlemen, I’m Astrid Karlsdotter, who left my native Sweden to pursue success on the London stages.”

“Astrid. Doesn’t that mean divinely beautiful?”

She dropped the Swedish accent. “My blushes, Mr. Holmes, it does. It’s yet another name far removed from the Bethnal Green of my youth.”

“And Madame Vivienne is no more?”

“Never say never, Mr. Holmes. Perhaps she’s on an extended hiatus, inspired by Dr. Watson’s account of your own?” She moved toward me, and as she removed her gloves, I caught the slight scent of her perfume. To my surprise, she pulled an ace of diamonds from behind my ear. Bowing slightly, she said, “Magic isn’t far removed from my previous act. I met several illusionists at Piccadilly’s Egyptian Hall and other theatres who introduced me to their magic tricks.”

Her statement surprised me. “I didn’t think magicians shared their illusions.”

She smiled. “You’re correct, but they’re more forthcoming if they believe they have a new assistant, or a silly young lady who appears completely besotted with them. With their help, intentional or not, and a careful study of Professor Hoffman’s book, *More Magic*, I’ve performed in several theaters and have accepted an invitation to entertain at the Crystal Palace.”

It struck me that we’d forgotten our manners, so I asked her to take a seat. Holmes and I followed as she made herself comfortable.

“Hasn’t the Crystal Palace fallen on a bit of hard times in the last few years?”

¹ “The Problem of the Vanished Husband” appeared in the Norwegian Explorers’ 2020 *Christmas Annual*. We met Adelaide Throgmorton from Bethnal Green, who performed as the French Madame Vivienne in her stage act.

“From the looks of it, Mr. Holmes, yes, but one area has been restored to its former glory for this occasion. The Football Association final will be played tomorrow at the Crystal Palace grounds. The next evening a dinner will be held in the new dining room for both teams as well as many notables. Former Prime Minister Lord Rosebery, who will be presenting the cup and medals, will be present.”

“If you’re asking me to be your assistant, I must say I’m not available.” Holmes had a tight-lipped smile, obviously in good humor.

“Oddly enough, that’s not what I was about to say. I don’t perform elaborate illusions, but I’ve mastered tricks using sleight of hand or misdirection. A wink of the eye, a flutter of eyelashes, a glimpse of an ankle or perhaps décolletage, not to mention a small hand mirror and some wax on a fingernail help with the rest. I sing a Swedish song or two, but I’m nervous to entertain such an important audience, especially Lord Rosebery. I’ve visited the British Library’s newspaper collection to see what I could learn about him so I could include him in an illusion.”

Holmes asked, “And what did you learn?”

“Among other things, he has a fondness for the Eton Boating Song, which I’ve added to my Swedish songbook as a surprise for him. But something at the library unnerved me. I’ve gone there every morning for the past week, and each day, a man sat near me, looking over my shoulder more than once. When you and I first met, I told you that my father said reading a person was like reading a book, and I didn’t like what I was reading. To put it simply, I’ve caught him staring at me, and he seems creepy. Two days ago, I left the reading room and when I returned, the article I was reading had been ripped out of the newspaper still on my table. This man carries a notebook, and I swear the newspaper article was sticking out of it. Yesterday I went to the library dressed as an older cleaning lady, who no one pays attention to. Sitting at another table while ostensibly reading *The Strand Magazine*, I kept a close eye on him. The minute he left the room, I moved to look at his notebook. The torn article was there, announcing the Crystal Park dinner guests, with several pages of notes about Lord Rosebery, the entertainers, and the new Football Club trophy. I barely made it back to my seat when he returned.”

Holmes sat forward, hands clasped. “As I recall, the original trophy was stolen from a Birmingham shoe shop window a few years ago and never found. Was there anything else?”

“There were photos and papers about the Crystal Park Station, but there wasn’t time for me to examine them.”

“Holmes,” I asked, “do you suppose this ne’er-do-well plans on harming or kidnapping someone at the game or dinner? Stealing something valuable? A Bolshevik who wants to blow up the building?”

“It could be any one of those, but kidnapping seems slightly less probable with such a large crowd.” Turning to our guest, he inquired, “Can you describe this man?”

Our visitor closed her eyes, as if visualizing him. “Early 30s, pale, thin, mustachioed, and not very tall. He’s got dark hair that’s thinning, and wears thick spectacles.”

“Very good. We’ve little time until the game and dinner to look into this.” He turned to our new client, inspecting her calling card. “If we find anything concerning, we’ll leave messages with your agent. We’ll be at both events.”

“And we should inspect the Crystal Palace Subway.² Miss Karlsdotter said he had photos of it.”

“Absolutely right, Watson.” He stood, and I followed suit.

Miss Karlsdotter donned her gloves and shook our hands before moving to the door. She paused and, turning to us, said, “I feel much better knowing you’ll be there.” With that, she left. Holmes watched as she crossed the street and was soon out of sight.

“She’s remarkable, isn’t she?” Holmes looked surprised as he was usually the one who read my train of thought, and didn’t expect me to turn the tables.

“Yes, she certainly follows her father’s teachings about observation.” He turned from the window. “Shall we visit Lestrade?”

We arrived at Scotland Yard and were escorted to Inspector Lestrade’s office. Looking up from a pile of folders, Lestrade straightened his tie. “Mr. Holmes, Doctor, what brings you here today? Something I can help you with?”

² The Subway was an ornate connecting tunnel leading from the Crystal Palace High Level Station into the Palace itself, running beneath the front access road.

"We came to discuss security for the Football Final and the celebratory dinner the following evening."

Lestrade stood up, placing both hands on his desk. "What do you know that I don't?"

Holmes obviously restrained himself from telling Lestrade just exactly how much more he knew about any number of subjects. "A dinner entertainer came to us with concerns about a man who seems to be watching her while she's at the British Library. Judging from his papers she's seen, he seems fixated on her, the game, the dinner, the rail station, or possibly Lord Rosebery." He went on to explain the papers and photos she'd seen and gave him a description of the man in question.

Lestrade's dark eyes tightened as he considered what Holmes had just said. "Doesn't narrow things down, does it? The Crystal Palace Police have their own force of soldiers and pensioned police officers, and on special occasions like this we work together. It's probably some football hooligan up to no good, but we can't risk endangering anyone. I'll send them a telegram to advise them something may be up."

Holmes looked at the telephone on his desk. "You can't call them?"

"The telephones work within the building but don't connect to other stations. Rest assured that we're on the alert."

Letting him know we'd be at the game and the dinner, we thanked him, and as we turned to leave, Holmes stopped. "Is the kitchen restored, or is someone catering the dinner?"

Lestrade looked at his papers. "Payne & Gunter Caterers."

We were soon outside the Yard, somewhat surprised by how cooperative and prepared Lestrade had been. Holmes said, "I suggest we visit the caterers to see if they have anyone in their employ who resembles our gentleman. That is one of the few ways to enter the dinner without an invitation." I hailed a cab, and while on our way to Payne & Gunter, Holmes continued, "Tomorrow morning, please visit the library to see if this gentleman is there, then we'll be off to the Crystal Palace grounds for the game and inspection of the dining room."

We arrived at the headquarters of Payne & Guntner. The enticing aromas of cooking and baking greeted us, as did Mr. Thomas Bonner, the manager on duty. After our introductions he said, "I've read about your cases. How may I help?"

Holmes briefly explained that there were potential safety concerns for the Crystal Palace dinner guests. “Is there anyone new in your employ who is short, early 30s, pale, thin, mustachioed, with dark, thinning hair who wears thick spectacles?”

“I know my staff, Mr. Holmes, and no one working the dinner has been with us for less than two years. Several have one or two of those characteristics, but no one has all of them.”

“Mr. Bonner, please keep this information between us. We will be at the dinner and will need to move about the room without drawing attention. Is it possible we can fit in with your staff?”

“We would be honored to be of assistance. I’ll tell my staff you’re from another office. They won’t question that.” He left, and soon returned with two sets of clothing.

“Mr. Holmes, the steward’s uniform should fit someone of your height and build. Doctor, I have a chef’s uniform that should work for you. We always have one or two chefs attend big events even though the food is already prepared. I will be attending as well.”

We thanked Mr. Bonner, then returned to our lodgings. Mrs. Hudson had prepared a light dinner, and after finalizing the next day’s plans, I readied myself for bed. I was unsure if it was Holmes’s pacing or the challenge of preparing for the unknown that kept me awake, but I eventually dozed off.

City noises awakened me, and I was pleased to see the skies were clear for the football final. When I entered the sitting room, I saw that Holmes had left. My trip to the British Library was fruitless; there were no signs of the man whom we were seeking. Upon my return to Baker Street, I found Holmes waiting for me. He was rather vague, saying only that he’d visited a former criminal with knowledge of illicit activity. “He knew nothing about plans to disrupt the Crystal Palace events, but I think he may eventually prove a valuable source of information about the London criminal world.”

It was a short walk to the Baker Street Station for our journey which involved several line changes and a walk from one station to another. We finally arrived at the Crystal Palace Station and, upon exiting the train, saw guards on duty as families alighted, excited for a day including picnics and football. We took the opportunity to walk around the upper level station as well as the ornate lower

subway. The tiled columns reminded me of umbrellas blown inside out by a strong wind.

As we neared the site for the day's final, a familiar voice called out to us. "Gentlemen, I see you've joined us." Lestrade approached us, waving his arm toward the field. "As you can see, the full force is out today."

"So I see. I have one request. May we inspect the dining room?"

Lestrade nodded his agreement and took us to the room where the celebratory dinner would be held. A great deal of preliminary work had been done. There was a long head table with many smaller tables around the room. The walls had white curtains hung from ceiling to floor which hid the shoddy exterior from the guests. There were 2 doors at one end of the room and the larger door through which we'd entered at the other end.

Lestrade responded to Holmes's question about those doors. "The right side is for food delivery and set up, and the other one is a small storage room."

We walked around the area, looking into each room, until Holmes seemed satisfied with the layout. "There's an exterior door into the delivery room."

"Which will be guarded and unlocked only for the food arrival," Lestrade assured us. "I must return to the game. Would you like to join me?" It was quite an experience to watch the final, standing with the police who kept a close eye on the crowd. The noise from the crowd was overwhelming, and I later read that there were approximately 45,000 people in attendance. In the end, Aston Villa were the victors, winning the game 3-2. With cheers from the stands, Lord Rosebery presented the ornate cup along with medals for the players.

"Well, Watson, was it as exciting as cricket? Or rugby?"

"I thought it was thrilling! Such physical endurance and speed especially for such a long game."

"Let us hope that it's the only exciting thing we encounter. Lestrade, thank you for inviting us. We plan on arriving at the dinner site mid-afternoon so we can inspect the room. You'll see us a bit later in our working clothes."

After the crowd awaiting the train thinned, we returned to Baker Street.

"Holmes, are you relieved there were no problems today, other than a few drunken football fans?"

“It’s another set of worries for tomorrow. Get some rest, we may need it.”

In the early afternoon we packed our uniforms and repeated the journey from the previous day, arriving at a much quieter Crystal Park station which was still guarded. By the time we entered, the Payne & Guntner staff were draping white tablecloths, setting out napkins, crystal, and silverware, and completing each table with candles and a flower arrangement. I noticed Lestrade was standing near the entrance where the large Football Association Cup was on display. Mr. Bonner introduced us to his staff as Mr. Carter and Chef Walker and advised them that we would be assisting with the large crowd. He pulled us aside. “Mr. Holmes, in order to fit in as one of the stewards, please keep an eye on tables and wait staff. Doctor, you will stand by the door into the kitchen and watch as the meals come out, and noticing if any diner is unhappy with their dinner.”

It wasn’t long before the entertainers arrived to set up their equipment. Miss Karlsdotter gave us only a quick glance but proceeded with her preparations. The noise from inside quieted as the guests, dressed in their finest, began to enter the dining room. Stewards, including Holmes, showed them to their assigned tables where the flickering candles reflected the jewels adorning many of the ladies. After they were all seated, Lord Rosebery entered, was greeted by applause, and took his seat at the middle of the long table, next to a clergyman who stood and led the group in prayer. At its conclusion, the doors opened and the wait staff began serving.

The diners enjoyed their consommé, lobster Newburg, and rib roast with several vegetables. The tables were cleared, and, as the wait staff brought out the conservative pudding and refreshed the drinks, the first entertainer took the stage. Madame Florence, a mezzo-soprano, sang a short selection of songs from “The Marriage of Figaro.” As the cheese and fruit course was placed on the tables, Miss Karlsdotter was introduced. She smiled and bowed to the diners when suddenly she stopped and, looking at Holmes, pointed to the nearby serving door. High-pitched hisses and squeaks became even louder as the door to the serving area opened and a smiling waiter entered the dining area. “It’s him!” Astrid yelled, while at least 100 rats ran toward the tables. In what can only be described as utter chaos, men, women, and staff screamed, ran

toward the exit, or stood on their chairs. At least one woman fainted, rats climbed up on guests' clothing, and one man jumped on a table while the rats did the same thing in order to reach the food.

Lestrade led Lord Rosebery from the dining room. The smiling waiter was heading toward the unguarded trophy on display while Holmes was struggling to make his way across the room. I turned and saw a large empty serving tray. Grabbing it with both hands, and turning to my side, I threw it with all of the leverage I could muster, hitting the waiter on his lower legs. He fell, which gave us enough time to apprehend him.

Holmes looked at me. "Rats. Why'd it have to be rats?" It wasn't long before the police took the cuffed waiter away, but not before Holmes grabbed the waiter's toupee.

The evening had quite the unexpected turn. While the police worked on getting the rats out of the room, we spoke to Miss Karlsdotter.

"I knew it was him the minute I saw him. His hair was different, and he didn't have his spectacles or mustache, but it was him."

"He wore a fake mustache while at the library. But enough for tonight."

The next day Lestrade called upon us. "It turns out that Mr. Robert Lewis is quite the thief. He was a good waiter who took the opportunity at high society events to pick out women wearing expensive jewelry which he later proceeded to steal."

"But why did he want the trophy?"

"He wanted to add it to his collection. He's the man who stole the original trophy."

This ended our encounter with a Swedish magician, football players, and dinner with an ex-prime minister at the Crystal Palace, but as Sherlock Holmes always remembered it, with rats.



THE GLORIA SCOTT

back-cover art by PHILIP H. SWIGGUM

The title of the painting is “The *Gloria Scott*.” In the GLOR adventure, Holmes states that it is the first detective case of his career. Much of the story involves a mutiny at sea and related events in a letter from father to son revealed after the father’s death. Conan Doyle’s skill at storytelling lets the reader’s imagination fill in all of the details.

The sailing ship is a barque named *Gloria Scott* transporting prisoners to Australia in 1855. A barque has the third mast’s sail rigged parallel to the ship. The *Gloria Scott* was not a dedicated convict ship. The convict ships had been repurposed in support of the Crimean War. Instead, the *Gloria Scott* was a heavy, slow vessel previously used in the Chinese tea trade. It was probably built in the early 1800s.

This painting is for sale. The dimensions are 36 inches by 48 inches. The medium is acrylic paint on a stretched canvas frame. A portion of the proceeds will be donated to the John Bennett Shaw fund at the University of Minnesota to support the Sherlock Holmes Collections. Phil can be reached at philipswiggum@live.com.



THE PARTICIPANTS

MELISSA AHO was born, raised, and currently resides in Minnesota, but she has also lived in Wisconsin and Honduras and has spent various amounts of time in 15 other countries. These days she is mostly a librarian and an adjunct college instructor, and sometimes a writer and entrepreneur. Even after graduating with her PhD, she is still not sure what she wants to be when she grows up, but consulting detective is looking better and better. You can find her online at www.melissaaho.com or on Instagram at www.instagram.com/melissakaho.

PHILLIP BERGEM, BSI (“Birdy Edwards”), is soon to retire from his job with the Minnesota Department of Transportation to take up a life of reading and travel. His fascination with the Canon and Arthur Conan Doyle began in the late 1980s with Jeremy Brett and the Granada series. He has a great interest in researching the minutiae of the Canon and in gathering details about the *Beeton’s Christmas Annuals*. He is presently editor of the *Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections Newsletter* and provides the transcription and annotations for the popular Baker Street Irregulars Manuscript Series.

RUTH BERMAN is a long-time member of the Norwegian Explorers who has had pieces published in *The Baker Street Journal* and several other venues. A formidable contestant in Sherlockian quizzes, she is a noted expert on Lewis Carroll and the Oz books of Frank L. Baum. Ruth’s novel, *Bradamant’s Quest*, was published in 2011 by FTL Publications of Minnetonka. Another, *The Broken Lute*, is forthcoming in 2026 from FTL. She had two books of translations of French fantasy published in 2015: two fairytales by little-known 18th century writer Louise Cavelier Levesque (*The Prince of the Aquamarines/The Invisible Prince*, Aqueduct Press), and a selection of the fantasy stories of Charles Nodier, one of the leaders of French Romanticism (*Trilby/The Crumb Fairy*, Black

Coat Press); and 2023 brought a translation of the fairy tales of Charles Deulin (*Tales of King Cambrinus*, Black Coat Press).

LINDA CROHN is a Co-Chief Steward of Torists International S.S. She has been published in *The Baker Street Journal* (2024) and also in *Mr. Holmes's Neighborhood*, published by The Crew of the Barque Lone Star (2024). She currently edits the *Torists Times Newsletter*.

MICHAEL V. ECKMAN is a member of the Explorers' board of directors and the board of the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, serving as Secretary for both. He has contributed to numerous Norwegian Explorers publications (including every *Christmas Annual*), *The Baker Street Journal*, and other publications. Mike also enjoys travelling and has visited all seven continents.

ERICA FAIR is an attorney and an amateur medical historian. She has a B.A. in History and English from the University of Minnesota, where she wrote her undergraduate thesis on film portrayals of Watson over the 20th century. Erica attends and presents at Convergence each year in Minneapolis on a variety of topics, including detective fiction, medical history, true crime, British comedy, and the history of exploration. This is her fifth submission to the *Christmas Annual*.

JEFF FALKINGHAM is a regular contributor to the *Christmas Annual*, having contributed articles for eight straight years. A longtime member of the Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota (his native state), Jeff recently retired to Colorado where he participates in the Denver study group known fondly as Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients. His Sherlock Holmes pastiches have been aptly described as "Minnesota history disguised as a murder mystery." He also writes Sherlockian quizzes, dinner toasts, limericks, and the occasional essay — twenty of which (including six of his Sigerson award winners) can be found in the 2nd Edition of a collection titled *Focusing the Lens on Doyle and Holmes* (2024).

BRUCE HARRIS, ASH ("Mr. Harris, of Bermondsey"), **BSI** ("Harris"), serves as Jabez Wilson of The Red-Headed League of Jersey. He is also a member of the Sherlockian Chronologist Guild and the

author of two chronology books: *It's Not Always 1895* (2022) and *The Duration Debate* (2023).

DAVID FOREST HITCHCOCK is an active member of the Mycroft Holmes Society of Syracuse, New York, sharing Sherlockian papers and poems with its members. One of his essays appeared in *The Canadian Holmes*. Three of his non-Sherlockian poems have been finalists in international competitions. An actor in community theatre, he has yet to appear in a production of a Sherlockian play because, alas, none has been produced locally.

DONALD B. IZBAN, BSI ("Market Street"), and **PATRICIA N. IZBAN** (*The Woman*, 2018), are happily married for over twenty-three years and enjoying retirement. They reside in the Chicago suburb of Park Ridge, where they have assembled a functional collection of Sherlockiana.

JULIE MCKURAS, ASH ("The Compliments of the Season"), **BSI** ("The Duchess of Devonshire"), is a past president of the Norwegian Explorers and serves on the board of the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections. She contributes to *Explorations* and was a contributor to and editor of the Friends newsletter from 1999 to 2022. Julie has been published in many Sherlockian journals and has contributed to a number of Sherlockian books, among them *About Sixty*, *A Three-Pipe Christmas*, and *The MX Book of New Sherlock Holmes Stories (Part V: Christmas Adventures; Part VI: 2017 Annual; and An Investees' Anthology)*. She also has contributed to *A West Wind* and *Stimulating Medicine* published by the BSI Press. She is a co-editor of the 2017, 2019, and 2022 *Baker Street Journal Christmas Annuals*, and is the co-editor, with Susan Vzoskie, of *Sherlockian Heresies. Irregular Chronicles of the Early 'Fifties*, covering the history of the Baker Street Irregulars from 1951 to 1955, will be available in early 2026.

KAREN MURDOCK is a prolific Sherlockian scholar, having published over a hundred pieces in many different Sherlockian journals, many of them affiliated with The Norwegian Explorers, of which she has been a member since her Sherlockian conversion in 1999. She is a retired geography teacher and lives near the beautiful gorge of the Mississippi River in Minneapolis.

ROB NUNN, ASH (“Your Old School Fellow”), **BSI** (“Elementary”), is the Gasogene of The Parallel Case of St. Louis and Headlight of The Beacon Society. He is a fifth-grade teacher in Edwardsville, IL. Rob is the co-editor of *On the Shoulders of Giants*, *The Finest Assorted Collection*, and *Canonical Cornerstones* with Peter Eckrich, and his own Sherlockian writings have been collected in two volumes of *The Common-Place Book*.

PAUL REINERS was given his first Sherlock Holmes book, *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, when he was 11. He then saved for months for the Doubleday edition of *The Complete Sherlock Holmes*. Paul lives in the East Harriet neighborhood of Minneapolis, is a retired computer programmer, and is an amateur pianist.

RAY RIETHMEIER, BSI (“Morrison, Morrison, and Dodd”), **PSI, RSI**, is a nitpicker for fun and profit. He has worked for the last thirty years as an attorney editor for Thomson Reuters, but he also edits new and classic pulp fiction for a variety of publishers. Ray has contributed to several titles for The BSI Press and serves as co-editor of the *Norwegian Explorers Christmas Annual*. Ray’s most recent projects for Belanger Books were editing *The Consultations of Sherlock Holmes*, which emphasizes the Great Detective’s role as a consultant, and Kel Richards’ *Sherlock Holmes: 5-Minute Mysteries*, a collection blending reason and faith into the solutions of 50 brisk you-solve-it puzzlers of the fair-play tradition.

BOB SHARFMAN, BSI (“Killer Evans”), is a retired Chicago attorney. He has been an active Sherlockian for over fifty years, during which time he has become a member of The Norwegian Explorers, Hugo’s Companions, The Hounds of the Baskerville (sic), and many other scion societies. He has had the honor of meeting and knowing some of the greats of the Sherlockian world, including Vincent Starrett, John Bennett Shaw, Eli Liebow, Bob Mangler, John Nieminiski, Bob Hahn, and Bill Goodrich, *et al.* Vincent Starrett signed his certificate of membership in the Hounds. His enthusiasm for our hobby far exceeds his knowledge, but he is working every day to narrow that gap.

THE PARTICIPANTS

PHILIP H. SWIGGUM is a retired University of Minnesota graduate. Phil visited Vincent Starrett's grave at Graceland Cemetery in Chicago this year. He is also reading Vincent Starrett novels. His favorite so far is *Murder in Peking*.



2024 SIGERSON AWARD WINNERS

*"It is wonderful!" I cried. "Your merits
should be publicly recognized."*

A STUDY IN SCARLET

Contributors to last year's *Christmas Annual* received the following awards:

AMANDA DOWNS (artwork) – "Reichenbach Falls: It is, indeed, a fearful place": The "Oasis of Art" Award (SIGN)

MICHAEL V. ECKMAN – "Collecting and Speculecting with Some Examples from the Canon": "The Mere Feeling of Possession" Award (SIGN)

JEFF FALKINGHAM – "Five Orange Chips": "The Discovery of the Criminal" Award (ABBE)

BOB SHARFMAN – "Final Problem/Empty House: What Really Happened?": The "High Matters of State" Award (BRUC)

ELAINE COPPOLA – "A Feline Fixation": The "Narrow and Concentrated Habits" Award (CREE)

MELISSA AHO (puzzle) – "Show me the Books: Sherlock Holmes Collections!": The "Distinct Success" Award (REIG)

ART HOGENSON (poem) – "The Collection Mania of Sherlock": The "Very Clever Man" Award (MUSG)

RUTH BERMAN – "Three Postscripts: Hornung/Doyle, Eliminating the Impossible, and Casing the Identity": The "Keen Observance of Detail" Award (RESI)

MICHAEL V. ECKMAN – "My Collection of Friends is a Useful One": "The Sight of a Friendly Face" Award (STUD)

CHRISTOPHER ATKINSON – "The Caiman Treasure": "The Clue Which Would Lead Me to the Truth" Award (MUSG)

LUCY, ROBERT, AND ADAM BRUSIC – “The Riven Bards and the Story of the Red Throated League”: “The Great and Sombre Stage” Award (BRUC)

BRENDA ROSSINI – “In Mint Condition”: The “Here was a Case of Ancient Coins” Award (3GAR)

DONALD AND PATRICIA IZBAN – “A Nightmare for Sherlockiana Collectors”: “The Absolute Truth of the Matter” Award (FINA)

BRUCE HARRIS – “Collecting T.S. Blakeney’s Sherlock Holmes: Fact or Fiction”: The “Little Interests in Life” Award (3GAR)

MICHAEL V. ECKMAN – “Trivial Collections”: The “What an Extraordinary Assortment” Award (REIG)

MAX MAGEE (poem) – “221bizarro:d1SS”: The “Comic Resignation” Award (REIG)

JULIE MCKURAS – “The Case of the Missing Curator”: The “Puzzled Many an Expert” Award (STUD)

ERICA FAIR – “‘Drug Mania’: Addiction and Narcotics in the Canon”: The “Its Influence is Physically a Bad One” Award (SIGN)

ROB NUNN – “Here in My Museum”: “The Nucleus of a National Collection” Award (3GAR)

PAUL REINERS – “The Adventure of the First Folio”: The “Collector of Obscure Volumes” Award (FINA)

DAVID FOREST HITCHCOCK (poem) – “Sherlock Holmes, The Collection”: The “Close and Confidential Friends” Award (WIST)

ANDREW MALEC – “Sidelights on Collecting Frederic Dorr Steele”: The “Art in the Blood” Award, (GREE)

PHILIP H. SWIGGUM (artwork) – “Twilight at the Copper Beeches”: The “Such a Hound as Mortal Eyes Have Ever Seen” Award (HOUN)

Award titles are all quotes from the Canon, creatively selected by Julie McKuras.

ABBREVIATIONS OF THE SHERLOCK HOLMES TALES

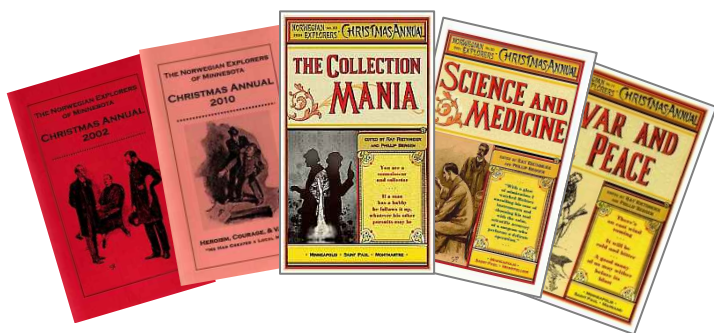
by JAY FINLEY CHRIST

ABBE	Abbey Grange	MUSG	Musgrave Ritual
BERY	Beryl Coronet	NAVA	Naval Treaty
BLAC	Black Peter	NOBL	Noble Bachelor
BLAN	Blanché Soldier	NORW	Norwood Builder
BLUE	Blue Carbuncle	PRIO	Priory School
BOSC	Boscombe Valley Mystery	REDC	Red Circle
BRUC	Bruce-Partington Plans	REDH	Red-Headed League
CARD	Cardboard Box	REIG	Reigate Squires
CHAS	Charles Augustus Milverton	RESI	Resident Patient
COPP	Copper Beeches	RETI	Retired Colourman
CREE	Creeping Man	SCAN	Scandal in Bohemia
CROO	Crooked Man	SECO	Second Stain
DANC	Dancing Men	SHOS	Shoscombe Old Place
DEVI	Devil's Foot	SIGN	Sign of the Four
DYIN	Dying Detective	SILV	Silver Blaze
EMPT	Empty House	SIXN	Six Napoleons
ENGR	Engineer's Thumb	SOLI	Solitary Cyclist
FINA	Final Problem	SPEC	Speckled Band
FIVE	Five Orange Pips	STOC	Stockbroker's Clerk
GLOR	Gloria Scott	STUD	Study in Scarlet
GOLD	Golden Pince-Nez	SUSS	Sussex Vampire
GREE	Greek Interpreter	THOR	Thor Bridge
HOUN	Hound of the Baskervilles	3GAB	Three Gables
IDEN	Case of Identity	3GAR	Three Garridebs
ILLU	Illustrious Client	3STU	Three Students
LADY	Lady Frances Carfax	TWIS	Man with the Twisted Lip
LAST	His Last Bow	VALL	Valley of Fear
LION	Lion's Mane	VEIL	Veiled Lodger
MAZA	Mazarin Stone	WIST	Wisteria Lodge
MISS	Missing Three-Quarter	YELL	Yellow Face

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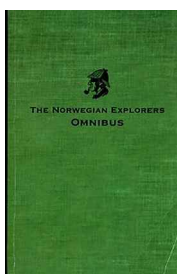
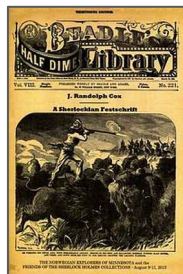
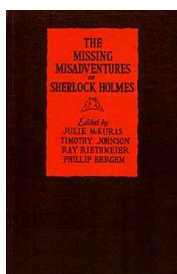
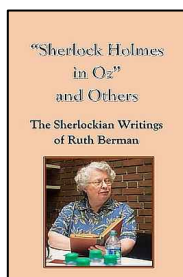


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(Limited availability)

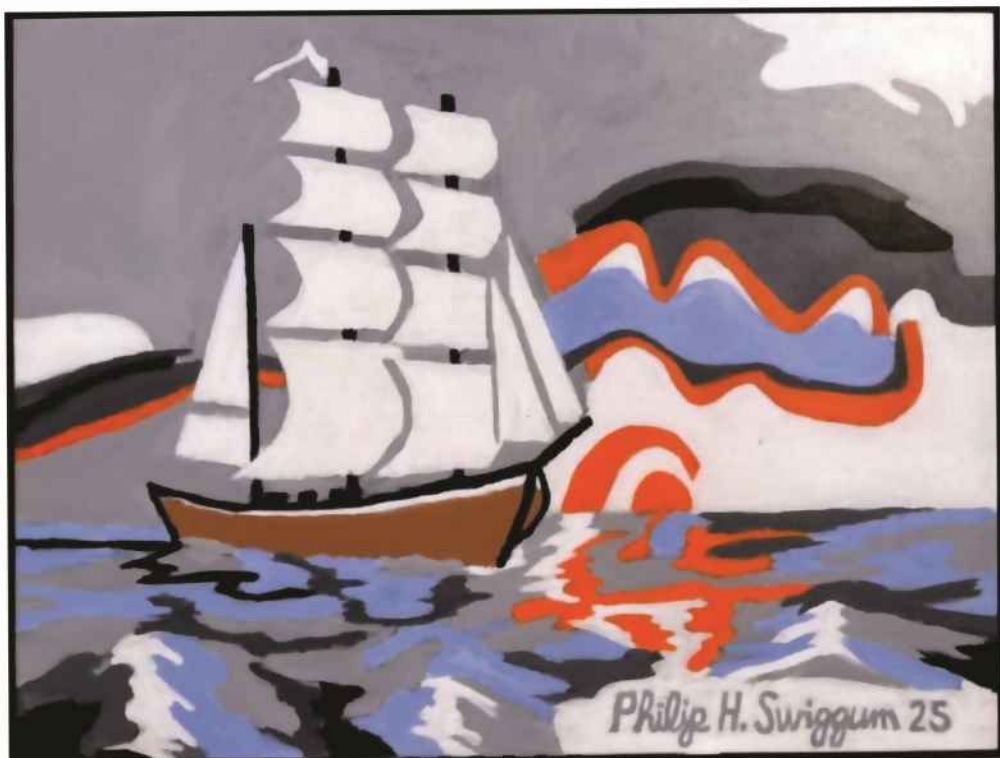


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"THE GLORIA SCOTT"
BY PHILIP H. SWIGGUM



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