



A Publication of the Pleasant Places of Florida

# Communication #204

New Series

July/August, 2000

Volume 4 Issue 8

## HOLMES!

A review by Howard Ostrom

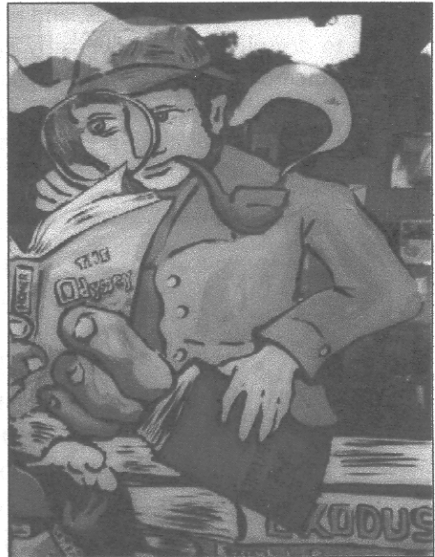
My daughters Shelby, 9, Macy, 6, and myself saw the production of *Holmes* last evening at the Disney Institute. I thought I'd share some insights and opinions with you. A lot can be learned about the production from it's website, <[www.holmesthemusical.com](http://www.holmesthemusical.com)>. The writer/lyricist of the play, Brett Nicholson said he has read the Holmes stories many times since his childhood. He is attempting in the *Holmes* script to write original material with characters everyone knows, with the addition of new characters. The two featured new characters in the production are Elizabeth Alder and Cricket. Elizabeth is Sherlock's University sweetheart whom after 6 months of courting, being science lab partners with, and giving her a heart locket which she still wears, he basically jilted for his life's calling. Cricket is Wiggins' of the Baker Street Irregulars tag-a-long.

Hans Vollrath, the composer, related that this hopefully would be the beginning of the end for *Holmes*. Meaning the show will now hopefully begin a push towards an off-Broadway venue.

Knowing the above facts, here is what the kids and I (cont.1 page 2)

Summer is coming to a close and soon school will be starting. Before we know it, the Fall Gathering will be here. Until then, we hope you enjoy this issue and that you will like the new roster soon to be sent out.

*The Papers on the Sundial*



## Wilson's BookWorld

2394 9th St. N  
St. Petersburg, FL. 33704  
(727) 896-3700  
e-mail: [gnostic@gte.net](mailto:gnostic@gte.net)

Jeff Morris Owner

· PRO AMOR EX LECTO·

Member Tom Takach sends along this "find." Wilson's BookWorld in St. Petersburg is currently sporting Sherlock in the window!

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### PROPOSED SCHEDULE 2000

*November 18*

*25th Annual Fall Gathering*

*Palm Harbor*

*Hosts: Carl & Sandie Heifetz*

*Case: The Adventure of the Missing*

*Three-Quarter*

Member Dennis France died on June 20. He was an attorney and although he hailed from Skokie, IL and was an energetic member and officer of many Chicago-area societies, he remained a stalwart companion of the Pleasant Places.

(cont. from page 1) thought about the show. I observed much lacking in the way of scenery. (i.e. no persian slipper, knife through correspondences, V.R., etc.). I concluded, however, that since this was not yet a major funded production as well as a work in progress, scenery would not be as important as songs or story line. Basically my feelings about the play are divided - my hardcore Sherlockian side tells me a play entitled *Holmes* and billed as - *one man can destroy London and only one man can save it* - has me expecting an action play with a heroic Holmes (cont. page 3)

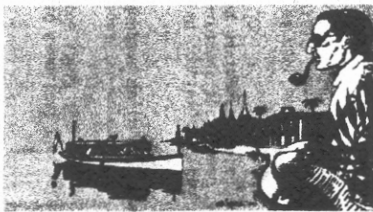
### Sherlock Holmes - The Last Act

a mini-review by Jeanette Pyle

This was an amazing and entertaining performance by Roger Llewellyn. Bare bones - tier of bleacher seats ising from the front edge of the stage, no separation and no curtain and no scene changes. The set was recognizable as 221B, and Holmes was the only actor. He delivered a riveting monologue through two acts, opening as he has just returned from Watson's funeral, and proceeds to reminisce and comment through the Canon. Although I didn't really like the "last act," I was quite enthralled. The show requires a strong actor, as Llewellyn was, and must have been exhausting, but after about a ten-minute break and chance to dry clothes, he cheerfully signed autographs on programs and playbills and chatted with audience members. I was most glad I had a chance to see the play.

Jeanette Pyle is also a member of *The Goose Club of the Alpha Inn* in Burlington, VT and was recently able to attend a Colloguium given by the Bimatallc Question in Montreal on June 2-4 this year. It was at the conclusion of this event that she was able to attend a matinee performance of the play, *Sherlock Holmes — the last act!*

### The Siam Question



Now, after one hundred years, the 'official' Whitehall report, commissioned by Mycroft Holmes and penned by Dr. Watson, is released to explain Sherlock Holmes' activities after his apparent death plunging into the Reichenbach Falls, and his mysterious re-

appearance in London some four years later.

The tale opens (and closes) in London. Dr. Watson is the principal narrator, using reports written up by a promising young French detective, M. Francois le Villard, who accompanies Holmes throughout his travels due to an arrangement between Mycroft and the French Foreign Ministry.

*The Siam Question* is a Sherlockian entertainment, with broad appeal to the general reading public. Above

all, it is a complex and tangled mystery in two parts, with subplots and red-herrings requiring individual and collective resolution by the genius and daring of Sherlock Holmes and his colleagues. The clues are there for the viewer to work out, but puzzling and complex enough to make it difficult.

*The Siam Question*, by Timothy Francis Sheil, is now available from Camden House and selected booksellers in a quality hardcover Collector's Edition of over 600 pages.

## He's Everywhere

The next "M" in the James Bond films will be Edward Woodward. You may recall that "M" in the past 3 Brosnan/Bond films was played by Judi Dench. Why are we reporting on Bond? Because Ms. Dench was Mrs. Hudson in the BBC Radio broadcast of HOUN and Mr. Woodward was Holmes in the TV film *Hands of a Murderer*. First the landlady finds employment elsewhere, then Holmes ... You can get *The Tankerville Club's* new lapel pin from Paul D. Herbert,

for \$11 postpaid ... *The League of Extraordinary Gentlemen*, a comic book mini-series, includes Holmes & Moriarty among its numbers. The fifth issue was released in June (\$2.95) and the series will end with the next issue. American's Best Comics, 7910 Ivanhoe #438, La Jolla, CA 92037 <wildstorm.com> ... *The Illustrious Clients of Indianapolis* has a new lapel pin available for non-members, \$10 postpaid from Yvonne De Tar, 1838 Portage Terrace #C, Indianapolis, IN 46227 ... *Pipes & Tobacco's* summer issue has a list of all the pipes mentioned in the Canon. SpecComm International, 3000 Highwoods Blvd #300, Raleigh, NC 27604 <www.pt-magazine.com> ... *The Sherlock Holmes Society of London* will have another Douglas West watercolor Christmas card this

year, picturing Holmes & Watson looking out across the Thames. \$13 postpaid for 10, payable to the Society c/o Cdr. G.S. Stavert,

England ... *Sherlock Homes The Detective Magazine* writes giving us subscription info: \$40(US) to PMH Publications, P.O. Box 100, Chichester, Sussex PO18 8HD, UK. They accept MC & Visa. You can email <admin@pmh.uk.com> .

(cont. from page 2) at the ending. What I witnessed at the end was a Holmes (who didn't have a pipe or deerstalker on purpose as related to me afterwards by Mr. Nicholson) who failed miserably by sending Elizabeth out to her death at the hands of Moriarty. Also I had the feeling that this play was more about Cricket's courage and eventual acceptance by Wiggins, and about the lost love between Elizabeth and Holmes - with Moriarty representing Holmes' murdering of her love for him. The biggest heroes or should I say heroines in this production are Cricket (cont. page 6)

An excerpt from

### AN UNDERGROUND EDUCATION

THE UNAUTHORIZED AND OUTRAGEOUS SUPPLEMENT TO EVERYTHING YOU THOUGHT YOU KNEW ABOUT ART, SEX, BUSINESS, CRIME, SCIENCE, MEDICINE, AND OTHER FIELDS OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

by Richard Zacks

#### *The Real-Life Criminal Who Dued Sherlock Holmes*

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle patterned his great deviant mastermind, Professor Moriarty, after a real life criminal, Adam Worth, an erudite American Jew who was operating an international network of thieves from London, plotting heists as far away as Constantinople and Cape Town.

"He is the organizer of all that is evil and nearly all that is undetected in this great city," says Sherlock Holmes of Moriarty. "He is a genius, a philosopher, an abstract thinker. He has a brain of the first order. He sits motionless, like a spider in the center of its web, but that web has a thousand radiations, he knows well every quiver of each of them."

Worth - a la Moriarty - lived a life of exotic splendor, sometimes traveling from European port to port, from caper to caper, in his 110-foot steam yacht, *The Shamrock*, crewed by twenty and fitted out with an elegant casino. For a while, he operated a gentleman's club in Paris, the American Bar at 2 Rue Scribe, richly appointed with crystal chandeliers and impressive works of art. On the second floor, the wealthiest Americans abroad dropped thousands at his faro table.

If you had met Adam Worth during his heyday in London in the 1870s, you'd have encountered a Victorian gentleman dwelling on Piccadilly Circus, a few doors down from Prime Minister Gladstone. You'd have been introduced to "Henry J. Raymond," a name he borrowed with characteristic wit from the founder of the *New York Times*. A superintendent of Scotland Yard, who Worth delighted in baffling, called him "the Napoleon of Crime."

But it is one caper that cemented Worth's reputation in (cont. page 5)

### Caption "A"s

"Is that your *final answer*, Professor Moriarty?"

"Birthday or not, Mrs. Hudson, you *can't* go into **The Bar of Gold** with us."

"The cardboard *box*, eh? Nice try, Monty, but Watson and I will take what's behind door #1."

Watson: Holmes - why did you shoot the proprietor of **Simpsons**?

Holmes: Because he replaced Chef Andre' with Lunchlady Doris.

Watson: "Officer! I swear I wasn't going to touch her knocker!"

Holmes: "Go ahead, Watson! If you're that paranoid about theater-hopping, I'll cover you!"

Holmes: "Look out, Watson! He tells *you* he's a publisher's agent, but he's taking credit for *your* writing, I'm telling you!"

Thanks to contributors Tom Takach, Wanda Dow, & Culver Dow. Where were the rest of you?

### Caption "B"s

"It's another cryptic message from those mysterious tree-huggers, Watson. It says "*Win with Bush.*" "

"I deduce that the murderer walked with a limp, loved to eat shrimp, had short grey hair, and skin that was fair. Or not."

"I'll take one from column A and one from column B."

"It says, *See no evil, Speak no evil, Hear no evil, but the thousand other of us columns are going to have fun!*"

"Where's Laura Croft when you need her?"



### Write the Captions

Here are your humorous, pithy and poignant suggestions for Photo A above and/or Photo B below. We promised to publish the responses and we always try to keep our promises.



### Sherlockian Newsletters

Newsletters received since last publication are:

*Travels With Sherlock*, the new publication of the Merripit House Guests. This newsletter replaces the *Devon County Chronicle* which was published by the late Robert Hahn, BSI. You can contact the new editor, Ed Christenson at

The Winter 2000 issue reported on the BSI 2000 Dinner, as well as events held for MHG, The Criterion Bar Association, Hugo's Companions, The Torists and the STUD Dinner 2000.

*The Pipe Smoker's Ephemera*, a publication of The Universal Coterie of Pipe Smokers (T.U.C.O.P.S.) always has Sherlockian references, among them a listing of various publications received. It also has another installment of Henry Zecher's monumental piece on William Gillette, and a picture of one of our newer members, C. H. "Sarge" Stock! Contact editor Tom Dunn at

(cont. from page 3) Victorian England. On May 6, 1876, Christie's of London auctioned the *Duchess of Devonshire* - an acclaimed Thomas Gainsborough portrait of the mischievous Georgiana Spencer, whose affairs with both men and women had scandalized England a century earlier. The masterpiece - for connoisseurs were dazzled by her flirtatious yet almost mocking smile, her delicate hand clasping an ironic pink rosebud -

attracted £10,500, then a record for a painting sold at auction.

Crowds queued up for blocks to buy tickets to view it at the second-floor gallery of the new owner, William Agnew. American millionaire Junius Morgan started negotiations to buy it for his son, the financier, J. P. Morgan, but Adam Worth concocted other plans.

Worth, elegantly dressed in a Saville Row suit, strolled by Agnew's gallery that May 1876 with a newly arrived American "bankman," names Junks Phillips, described as "immensely stupid." Worth stood 5'5" tops, while Junka, a former wrestler who sometimes carried stubborn safes out of the bank, topped out at near 7 feet tall.

The unlikely pair viewed the painting, and it was then that Worth decided to steal it. "A man with brains has no right to carry firearms," he once told the famed U.S. detective William Pinkerton. And the modus operandi for this audacious crime - that wound up splattered in headlines worldwide - proved maddeningly simple. At midnight on a foggy May 25, Worth and Junka went to Agnew's; he climbed atop Junka's shoulders "and raised on his arms like a circus performer," later recalled Worth. He pried open the window, entered and sliced the Duchess from out the frame.

Worth had planned to use the painting as a bargaining chip to free his bungling brother then being held without bail, but

when Worth went to his brother's lawyer to explain the ploy, the barrister proudly reported that his brother had just been freed on a legal technicality. Worth now owned a white elephant, a stolen article too hot for even him to risk selling.

Despite a £1000 reward, the brazen theft of the Duchess remained unsolved for a quarter of a century. No one caught him, not even when Junka squealed to Scotland Yard. As legend goes, the Duchess became the diminutive dapper man's frequent traveling companion - sometimes rolled up in an umbrella case, even once in an emergency down his pants leg.

Worth a few years later voyaged by steamship to Philadelphia. He duly paid customs on the goods in the top of the false-bottomed trunk, and later squirreled the Duchess away in a warehouse in Brooklyn, where she lay tightly rolled for years.

Adam Worth was born in 1844 to well-to-do Jewish-German parents in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Clever and well-read, he committed his first crime by collecting *several times* the \$500 reward for enlisting in the Union Army. A package purloined from Adam's Express delivery service landed him in Sing Sing but he quickly escaped, catching a ride on a ferry boat headed South.

His criminal resume is far too long to recite, but a few highlights leap out.

Worth once rented a barbershop next to the Boyleston Bank in Boston, burrowed in and absconded with the then enormous sum of \$400,000. When the Pinkertons started closing in, he sailed off to England to start his international network.

His confederates passed forged bank notes in Constantinople; they robbed mail trains (cont. page 6)

(cont. from page 5) throughout Europe. Worth was intrigued by diamond shipments sent by regular mail from South Africa. He traveled to Cape Town, befriended the local postmaster, copied the vault key and made off with \$600,000 in uncut stones. He later - through a series of fronts - sold many of them to the London jeweler to whom they were originally being shipped.

Throughout, he lived like a potentate, with the toney London address, his stable of racehorses, his extensive art collection. Then it all suddenly crumbled when his lookout failed him during a simple mail train robbery in Liege, Belgium.

He served five years in a Belgian prison under the name "Edouard Grau," come out to discover his empire had been looted. His health was now failing; his goeey cough probably signaled tuberculosis. Nonetheless, he still orchestrated the daring Gare du Nord robbery in Paris in 1898 that netted him a million francs in jewels and notes.

Worth - still going by "Henry Jarvis Raymond," a family name he passed to his son - was flush again, and the Duchess still gathering dust in America.

In a beau geste worthy of his artistic temperament, this ailing man started negotiations to return the Duchess. Through a notorious Midwest gambler named Pat Sheedy, he contacted William Pinkerton in Chicago. "I think the Lady should return home, don't you?" he told the detective. Worth held out for more than the £1000 reward and the deal broke down, but eventually they settled on terms.

Apparently - in addition to receiving money - Worth could now return to England without facing any harassment or prosecution. (Perhaps some of his

fortune is hidden there.)

On March 27, 1901, Morland Agnew, the dealer's son, opened a brown paper parcel in the Auditorium Hotel in Chicago. "He laid it carefully on the floor, opened the package and there the face of the famous painting came to light for the first time in twenty-six years." recalled William Pinkerton, who was in the room.

Agnew returned with his prize to London, and soon after sold it to J. P. Morgan for the then scrupulously undisclosed sum of \$150,000. "If the truth came out, I might be regarded as a candidate for a lunatic asylum," Morgan sheepishly admitted later. The Duchess assumed a place of honor over Morgan's mantel, a jewel in his world-class collection. (In 1994, the Morgan estate sold the painting for \$408,000 and the *Duchess of Devonshire* now hangs in Chatsworth House, the family manor of the current Duke of Devonshire.)

Commented an official Pinkerton report issued in 1903 about Adam Worth: "Of all the men the Pinkertons have known in a lifetime, this was the most remarkable criminal of them all."

Adam Worth died in London on January 7, 1902. His bumbling adversaries, the Pinkertons, claimed the criminal was penniless at this death; however, another report - probably more accurate - states that his probated will, under Henry J. Raymond of the *New York Times*, bequeathed to this son the then very large sum of £23,000.

And Sir Arthur Conan Doyle bequeathed to us Professor Moriarty. Submitted by member William J. Serow

(cont. from page 3) and Elizabeth. My softcore Sherlockian side (would that be considered my normal side?)

tells me that this production had a lot going for it. Good singing and fast pace being the obvious first things that come to mind. Good characterization i.e. - a Watson, whom despite being bald, was quite humorous without being bumbling or stupid. Cricket - sympathetic yet heroic plus a strong vocal performance! Moriarty - well-cast with villainous look, and he never even cracked a smile even after getting spit in the face for about the third time and coming out with one of the funniest lines of the show - "Perhaps I should purchase an umbrella!" - received LOL. The Baker Street Irregulars - who were a cross of the Artful Dodger and the Bowery Boys - poor but humorous and full of energy. Holmes was perhaps a bit under-acted but who wouldn't appear underacted after witnessing Jeremy Brett's over-acting in the part (which I loved by the way - but got to call it like I see it.) The storyline was good - although you are left hanging like Moriarty and Holmes were as to their final outcome. Accepted as the author meant it to be, a story with Holmes in it and not completely it - this is quite a good play. One I would recommend seeing if you get the chance. My daughters add the following - "we liked it!" Shelby says it "wasn't boring like the other Sherlock Holmes plays you took me to" (*Sherlock Holmes & Exit Sherlock Holmes* - two plays either too slow or too long for her tastes). She says she liked the singing and dancing and constant action. Some parts made her laugh - especially Moriarty constantly getting spit in the eye - a point which Macy agrees with her on (probably reminded (cont. page 7) (cont. from page 6) her of all those

## Calendar Sherlockiana

**September 7-10 - Bouchercon.**

Adam's Mark Hotel, Denver, Colorado. "High Crimes." The oldest and largest annual convention of mystery fans, authors, publishers, book dealers, agents and others. Named for the late author and *NY Times* critic Anthony Boucher. Three-track panel programming, special events, films, book dealers room, signings, reading, cocktail party. Attendees vote for the Anthony Awards, which are announced at the Anthony Banquet. Guest of Honor: Elmore Leonard; Lifetime Achievement: Jane Langton; Toastmaster: Val McDermid; Fan Guest of Honor: Steve Stilwell.

Registration: \$100 (will increase later) Information: Rebecca Bates, Bouchercon 2000, PO Box 17910, Boulder CO 80308-0910, 303-444-8410, [RWBates560@aol.com](mailto:RWBates560@aol.com) <http://www.bouchercon2000.com>

**October 13-15 - The Mid Atlantic Mystery Book Fair & Convention.** Wyndham Franklin Plaza, Philadelphia, PA. Registration fee is \$125. Friday night Dinner and Reception; a Book Room Private Preview and Sunday "Toast to a Special Guest" Lunch; panels and workshops. Those in the mystery community who would like to be a panel participant are invited to send picture, bio and any suggestions to: Deen Kogan, Mid Atlantic Mystery c/o

**October 28-29 - 18th Annual Autumn in Baker Street** will be held at the Tarrytown Hilton, Tarrytown, NY, announced to be the last in the series. Contact Paula Perry,

**November 18 - 25th Annual Fall Gathering of the Pleasant Places of Florida.** Contact Carl Heifetz,

**November 20 - 50th Anniversary Dinner of The Red Circle, at the National Press Club.** rsvp: Peter Blau,

### 2001 Events

**March 23-25 - Step Back in Time** conference (romance, history & crime) will include a workshop on criminology. Send a SASE to Virginia Romance Writers, 13 Woodlawn Terrace, Fredericksburg, VA 22405 <[www.geocities.com/SoHo/Museum/2164](http://www.geocities.com/SoHo/Museum/2164)>

**August - A 12-day cruise to the Baltic for The Sherlock Holmes Society of London Golden Jubilee.** Details available from Arena Travel, Freeport 1H 1037, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 7BR, England or <[holmes@arena-travel.com](mailto:holmes@arena-travel.com)>

**October 27 - 29 - Magna Cum Murder VII Weekend** at Ball

State University in Muncie, IN. Contact Kathryn Kennison, Ball State U., Muncie, IN 47306 for info on one of the midwest's finest mystery author conferences.

**November 1-4 - Bouchercon World Mystery Convention.** Hyatt Regency Crystal City Washington, D.C. The granddaddy of all mystery conventions, Bouchercon offers four days of varied programming including a pre-convention Halloween party, Nick and Nora Charles Martini Happy Hour, gala Anthony Awards Banquet and guided mystery tours of Washington, among other special events. Cost: \$135 (thru 9/1) <[bouchercon2001.com](http://bouchercon2001.com)> or Bouchercon 2001, P.O. Box 11700, Washington, DC 20008.

slimings on Nickelodeon). They liked the Cricket character a lot (probably because she came to sit on a step on front stage and was within touching distance) (or perhaps it was she was a female hero). Shelby says it is because she sang good and didn't feel a part of anything because Wiggins ignored her and she had nobody but she still helped Sherlock Holmes and through Elizabeth's friendship she realized she was somebody. (I think Shelby understood it better than I did. Listening to her, I'm learning!) Combining my feelings with my daughters, I must say it was an enjoyable experience attending this show.

**The Pleasant Places of Florida**

*Founded: 1972  
by Leslie Marshall (dec.)*

**Recorder Emeritus: Dr. Benton Wood**

For the record:

**THE LAST COURT OF APPEALS**

**David McCallister**, Master of the House,

**Jeff & Wanda Dow**, The Papers on the Sundial,

**Carl L. Heifetz**, Representative both with the Servants and with the Tradespeople,

**Mike Bryan**, The Unopened Newspaper,

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