



# Communication

#222

New Series

May/June, 2002

Volume 6 Issue 4

Welcome to the upcoming summer months! Within these pages are some of the presentations given at our recent Spring Gathering in St. Armand's Key. Our case was *Silver Blaze* and, as usual, our members came through in flying colors (red & black?) with terrific presentations and toasts. Mark your calendars for the Fall Gathering on November 2 and start now to study that case - you wouldn't want to get caught red-handed - or is that red-headed? We recently learned of an interesting event that took place up South Carolina way, so we're thinking about starting our own version of it here in Florida. Read below to find what out it's all about. The Papers are pretty solidly booked through June, so hold your calls and questions until July. That said, we hope you enjoy this issue and the one coming up (a special poetry issue) and have a great summer!

*The Papers on the Sundial*

## CORRUPTING YOUTH (IN A GOOD WAY)

As you know, The Pleasant Places of Florida began a special fund called the Marshall Wood Fund to pay for Sherlockian books to be donated to local libraries and schools, in the hopes to awaken interest of the Master in young minds. We have been purchasing the DK *Hound* book, which is geared towards youth, and have donated copies to every main branch library in Pinellas County. We are continuing these donations for branch libraries and local schools.

Recently, however, we have obtained information from *The Hansom Wheels* who sponsored a contest for middle school students in regards to *Hound*. The *Wheels* purchased copies of the Aladdin Classics edition which contained a foreword by Newberry author Bruce Brooks and included a reading group guide. These can be purchased at a discount by educators at many local book stores. Gifted classes agreed to read *Hound* as a class activity and to make projects concerning the story. These could be reports, artwork, dioramas, etc. The club then chose a winner who was invited along with their family to attend a dinner. All projects were displayed.

We would like to attempt a similar "competition" here. Please let us hear from those of you who might be interested in helping out with such a project between the PPOF and local schools. Letters will have to be written, schools contacted, contracts negotiated (with teachers and students) and to those who are interested, a club member should give an introduction to the class. Classes participating will obtain a speaker, books for the class and a donation of the DK *Hound* to their school.

Please contact Wanda Dow after June 30 if you are interested.

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### Sherlockian Calendar

**November 2**

27th Annual Fall Gathering

Host: Carl Heifetz

New Port Richey, FL

Case: *The Red-Headed League*

## HE'S EVERYWHERE

In *Time Capsule: 1951, The Year In Review*, we get a double dose of Doyle (say that five times really fast) in the Letters Section:

### More Collective Nouns

Sir:

Re the dither in the London *Times* over collective nouns for animals...: Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's 14th-Century romance *Sir Nigel* speaks of a cete of badgers, a singular of boars, a sounder of swine (when hunted), a nye of pheasants, a badling of ducks, a fall of woodcock, a wisp of snipe.

Modern prose might use new collectives for professional people and others. I suggest an ibid of historians, a ponder of scientists, a scathe of bureaucrats.

W.W. Woodside

Pittsburgh

### Memo from the Indian Ocean

Sir:

Having been out of contact with so-called civilization for nearly six months, we had the good fortune recently to obtain a copy of *Time*, March 19, from a passing schooner. May I rectify a small error in your reference to my father in that issue? You said that he commenced his psychic inquiries in 1919. Actually, he began his investigations in 1884; it was not until 1916 that he received evidence of survival after death of such irrefutable

quality as to finally satisfy even his Sherlock Holmes's brain.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the editors of *Time* upon the factual excellence of their information. To an expedition at work amid the uninhabited islets of the Indian Ocean, the chance arrival of a copy was as welcome as a visit from the Delphic Oracle. This letter may take some time to reach you, as it goes first by a native in a hollowed tree-trunk canoe, then in a dhow, then in a trading schooner, and finally in a plane—a kind of potted edition of travel through the ages!

Adrian M. Conan Doyle  
Schooner *Gloria Scott*,  
Indian Ocean

Another reference turns up in the May 6 issue of *Time*, in a movie review for the film, *Enigma*. "But there is something admirable in *Enigma's* Sherlock Holmesian insistence that ratiocination can be suspenseful, that the discovery of clues, both true and false, can have dramatic impact." .... The **Baker Street Dispatch** is calling all writers for book reviews, tidbits, Calendar of Events, poetry and analysis papers on the Canon. Send to BSD,

.... In a recent viewing of Disney Channel's *World of Winnie the Pooh*, Pooh

and Piglet visit Owl who mentions that he has just finished reading a mystery book about Hoot Owl Holmes by his favorite author, Sir Arthur Conan Owl. The three then don deerstalker caps to seek out Pooh's missing pot of honey... In *The Collected Stories of Arthur C. Clarke* (Tom Doherty Assoc. LTC, © 2000), Clarke himself writes in the Foreword "The writer of science fiction is faced with a problem which the writers of so-called main-stream fiction - devoted to a tiny sub-section of the *real* universe - don't have to worry about. They seldom need to spend pages setting the scene: sometimes one sentence will do the trick. When you read 'It was a foggy evening in Baker Street', you're there in a millisecond. The science fiction writer, constructing a totally alien environment, may need several volumes to do the job: the classic example is Frank Herbert's masterwork *Dune* and its sequels.....

**RED, BLACK, &  
DOVE-  
COLOURED  
SILKS**



or

The Simpson/Derbyshire/Straker  
Trifecta in *Silver Blaze*

was a publication handed out at the last gathering by David McCallister. Contact him for copies or more info. Address on back page.

## 2022-2003 Calendar Sherlockiana

**June 14-16 -Bloody Words** will be held at the Delta Chelsea Hotel in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. GOH: Peter Robinson, Int'l Guest: Walter Mosley. Go to <www.bloody words.com> to find out more info.

**September 27-29 - Mid Atlantic Mystery 2002**, The Ninth Annual Mystery Book Fair & Convention is where you can meet outstanding mystery authors, fans, editors and even agents. Special guests are Jonathan Gash and Lisa Scottoline. \$140 pays for admission to facilities, panels (including a "How To Do It" seminar), private preview of book room, Friday night dinner & reception, Saturday breakfast & Sunday "wind-up." Send to MAM2002, c/o Society Hill Playhouse, 507 S. 8th St., Philadelphia, PA 19147

**October 17-20 - Bouchercon 33** will be at the Renaissance Austin Hotel in Austin, TX. GOH: Mary Willis Walker. Toastmaster: Sparkle Hayter. Fan GOH: Bill Crider. Contact 2002 Bouchercon,

**November 1-3 Sherlock Holmes Weekend** in Cape May, NJ with the mystery, *Sherlock Homes and the Eye of Venus* includes a tour of the town's Victorian homes. Contact Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts, Box 340, Cape May, NJ

08204 or call (800) 275-4278.

**November 2 - 27th Annual Fall Gathering of the Pleasant Places of Florida** at the home of Carl Heifetz, New Port Richey, FL. Case for study: *The Red-Headed League*. Contact Carl Heifetz,

**November 2 - Gasfitters Ball** (the ball where Holmes & Watson fraternize with the lower class) presented by the South Pasadena Woman's Club. Contact Jerry Kegley,

or call

**January, 2003 - A Sherlock Holmes Celebration** is being planned to take place at the Frank Lloyd Wight Civic Center Library in Marin County, CA. Contact Carol Russell by email at

They promise "an exciting variety of events and displays" mainly thanks to the efforts of volunteers from various societies (*The Scowers and Molly Maquires* to name two).

There once was a Duke from Balmoral  
Whose horse was an elegant sorrel  
The results we know  
Was his horse did show  
But his colors were quite allegorical

His stripes were yellow and black  
And he dreamed of leading the pack  
But that was absurd  
he only placed third  
With Blaze first and Desborough far  
back

**PUBLISHED PPOFERS**  
**Carl Heifetz - IN DEFENSE OF THE GREEK INTERPRETER** The Hounds Collection, Volume 7 2002, PP 4-5. (Originally posted via Hounds of the Internet E-Mail May 9, 1996, presented at the 21st Spring Gathering of the Pleasant Places of Florida on May 11, 1996 and published in condensed form in The "Accursed Jezail Bullet," the official publication of The Salon Pistols of Gainesville Florida (Issue 2, June, 1996.)

He was beaten by fire,  
And by a flower;  
By a black horse with a red-capped rider.  
Yellow sleeves blew by  
With hardly a sigh.  
He was pummed by an excellent fighter.

Purple and black  
Look good in the back,  
Which is where the horse stayed the whole race.  
Lord Singleford  
Exclaimed some choice words  
When his horse did not even place.

I give you, Rasper!

Now this horse wasn't bad, fair Iris  
And the Duke Balmoral still knew this  
So he met with Ross  
To arrange for his hoss  
To have a romantic equine trist

Now Desborough has gawn quite lazy  
And Iris and Blaze had some babies  
Holmes retired on his bet  
For the race had him set  
To study yellow and black striped bees.

To Iris!

Wanda Dow

**SHERLOCK HOLMES, SCIENTIFIC  
DETECTIVE: SOLVES THE SILVER BLAZE  
HORSE-NAPPING CASE**

By Carl L. Heifetz

Presented at the 27th Spring Gathering of the Pleasant Places of Florida "Watson's Pump," St. Armand's Circle, Sarasota, Florida May 4, 2002.

Sherlock Holmes was a trained scientist. He used the methods that research scientists use to solve many cases in his long and illustrious career.<sup>1</sup> As is typical of a trained researcher, he followed these:

- (1) Clearly state the **PROBLEM** in its simplest form.
- (2) Gather all of the **DATA** that you can find on the subject.
- (3) Be very diligent to **OBSERVE** everything no matter how unrelated it may appear at the time.
- (4) Read and master all of the available **KNOWLEDGE** on the subject to see what data has previously been reported.
- (5) Sift through all of the data, current and reported, and attempt to **DEDUCE A TENTATIVE HYPOTHESIS** and **WORKING MODEL** that reasonably fits all of the available information.
- (6) List further needed information, observations, and experiments that may refute or support your hypotheses. Seek **EXPERIMENTAL PROOF** and **ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS** and determine if the results fit or point to a reformulation of the hypothesis.

That Sherlock Holmes applied these is clear; his biographer, Dr. John H. Watson, provides many excellent examples into this scientific analysis in the adventure entitled "Silver Blaze".<sup>2</sup> There are too many examples to discuss thoroughly in the time allotted. Thus, I will restrict my focus on how Mr. Holmes' knowledge of animal behavior and the use of animals as experimental significantly enhanced his ability to deduce the solution to the problem of the missing horse and the dead trainer:

Animal behavior. Sherlock Holmes was forced to become a student of animal behavior in a very dramatic and painful way. When Victor Trevor's dog attached himself to Mr. Holmes' ankle he learned to study the behavior of canines very carefully before approaching them.<sup>3</sup> No doubt, from that time forward, he was alert to cues given to him by members of the canine species in which he came into contact.

This knowledge of animal behavior clearly stood Mr. Holmes in good stead when he investigated the interaction of Professor Presbury and Carlo the

wolfhound.<sup>4</sup> His interest in the department of animals is clearly delineated in the statement he made to Dr. Watson in the introduction to this case. Among other statements, Mr. Holmes remarked, "A dog reflects the family life." Thus, it was surprising that the dog attacked his master. Seeking an alternative hypothesis, Mr. Holmes reasoned that the dog attacked Prof. Presbury because his langur-like actions and scent made him a target of attack. Behavioral evaluation of the professor also indicated to Mr. Holmes that the scholar had made a monkey of himself with the serum of langur.

Another example of behavioral study is the dog that did nothing in the daytime in "The Adventure of Shoscombe Old Place."<sup>5</sup> Although the Shoscombe spaniel recognized the carriage that his mistress used for her daily rides, her dog did not recognize her presence. This indicated that she was not in the carriage, and had been replaced by an individual that the dog did not recognize.

This knowledge of animal behavior informed Sherlock Holmes that the person who sneaked into the barn and made off with Silver Blaze was a person that the dog knew very well. Hence, the well-known conversation between Inspector Gregory and Sherlock Holmes:

"Is there any point to which you would wish to draw my attention?"

"To the curious incident of the dog in the night-time."

"The dog did nothing in the night-time."

"That was the curious incident," remarked Sherlock Holmes.

Can there be any doubt that the solution to Silver Blaze was greatly assisted by Sherlock Holmes' appreciation of how animals act?

Animal Experimentation. Now let us turn our attention to how Mr. Holmes' knowledge of the experimental use of animals in research and teaching also facilitated the clearing up of this mystery. Let's first start with establishing that Sherlock Holmes was exposed to such procedures. We must acknowledge that Sherlock Holmes had an excellent scientific education. He matriculated at one or both of England's major universities, the exact one depending on whose theories you accept and where they were educated.<sup>3,6</sup> Then, Mr. Holmes went on to do post-graduate training at the St. Barts laboratory associated with the University College of London.<sup>7</sup>

There can be no doubt that Sherlock Holmes was

educated in the use of animals in research during his stay at that institution. In the curriculum for the Winter Session for 1894 is listed the following courses that would include the use of laboratory animals: General Course of Physiology, General Course of Practical Physiology, Advanced Course of Practical Physiology, and Laboratory, and Special Instruction for "persons who are desirous of conducting original investigations in Physiology or Histology ..."<sup>8</sup> One might ask, "Were animals used in experimentation and teaching of medical students in England in the 1890s?" The answer I received in response to my e-mailed query was, "Regarding your question, animals were certainly used in research and in the teaching of physiology and medicine in the UK, and the practice was widespread from the 1870s onward."<sup>9</sup>

Further, Mr. Holmes showed no compunction in the use of laboratory animals to determine whether sugar pills contained a deadly dose of poison.<sup>7</sup> Recall how he fed "the poor little devil of a terrier" the second of two to find that it contained a deadly poison? Mr. Holmes experimented with an animal in an attempt to drive a harpoon through a dead pig hanging from the ceiling.<sup>10</sup> Also, Mr. Holmes realized that the lame dog at the Ferguson residence was an experimental prelude to the attempted poisoning, by South American bird arrow, of the infant that so riled Mr. Ferguson's older son.

Let us return to "Silver Blaze." When Mr. Holmes learned of lame sheep in Colonel Ross's paddock, he knew that they were used by Mr. Straker to practice for his dastardly attempt to cripple Silver Blaze.<sup>2</sup>

Can there then be any doubt of the value of Mr. Holmes' training and experience, with both animal behavior and animal experimentation, in leading to his ability to resolve the events that took place in Silver Blaze's horse-napping and the death of Mr. Straker.

1 Heifetz, C. L. 1997. *Staying Focused. Communication* (a publication of the Pleasant Places of Florida), No. 173 New Series, Volume 1, Issue 5, pages 3-4; Heifetz, C.L. 1998. *The Scientific Detective Solves the Sign of Four. The Wigmore Street Post Office, Issue Number 11, Spring 1998*, p 3-9; Heifetz, C.L. 1998. *A Study in Scarlet Yields to the Methods of Sherlock Holmes, Scientist. The Wigmore Street Post Office, Issue Number 12, Summer 1998*, p 18-21,24; Heifetz, C. L. *Sherlock Holmes Crosses a Thor Bridge to Scientific Inspiration. Holmes & Watson Report, Vol.3, No. 4, September 1999*, p 13-5; Heifetz, C. L. A "Second Stain" Saves the Day. *Holmes & Watson Report, Vol.3, No. 6, January 2000*, p 36-9. 2 Doyle, A. C. "Silver Blaze" In: *The Complete Sherlock Holmes by Arthur Conan Doyle, with a preface by Christopher Morley, Doubleday and Company, Garden City, New York, single volume, 1988,*

p335-350. 3 Doyle, A. C. "The Gloria Scott" In: *The Complete Sherlock Holmes by Arthur Conan Doyle, with a preface by Christopher Morley, Doubleday and Company, Garden City, New York, single volume, 1988, p373-385.* 4 Doyle, A. C. "The Adventure of the Creeping Man" In: *The Complete Sherlock Holmes by Arthur Conan Doyle, with a preface by Christopher Morley, Doubleday and Company, Garden City, New York, single volume, 1988, p1070-1083.* 5 Doyle, A. C. "The Adventure of Shoscombe Old Place" In: *The Complete Sherlock Holmes by Arthur Conan Doyle, with a preface by Christopher Morley, Doubleday and Company, Garden City, New York, single volume, 1988, p1102-1112.* 6 Doyle, A. C. "The Musgrave Ritual" In: *The Complete Sherlock Holmes by Arthur Conan Doyle, with a preface by Christopher Morley, Doubleday and Company, Garden City, New York, single volume, 1988, p386-397.* 7 Doyle, A. C. "Study in Scarlet" In: *The Complete Sherlock Holmes by Arthur Conan Doyle, with a preface by Christopher Morley, Doubleday and Company, Garden City, New York, single volume, 1988, p15-86.* 8 "Courses of Instruction in the College. I. Winter Session from 1st of October to 27th of March." Photocopied 1894 schedule kindly sent through the courtesy of Keith Austin, Assistant Archivist, University of London Library. 9 Personal communication via e-mail from Barbara Davies, Communications Director, RDS: Understanding Animal Research in Medicine. 10 Doyle, A. C. "The Adventure of Black Peter" In: *The Complete Sherlock Holmes by Arthur Conan Doyle, with a preface by Christopher Morley, Doubleday and Company, Garden City, New York, single volume, 1988, p1033-1044.*

Lord Backwater is known as the person who referred Lord Robert St. Simon to Sherlock Holmes in *The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor*. Also a man of the turf, he owned Desborough, who trained at Capleton on Dartmoor and was second choice for the Wessex Cup. It is not unlikely that Desborough got his name from his probably sire, the good stallion Desmond. Is it coincidence that Desmond was a son of the greatest race horse of the 19th Century, the mighty St. Simon? In any case, the only horseman on the course that day known to Holmes personally, besides Col. Ross, was Lord Backwater. So the calculation is a simple one: the tip that enabled Holmes "to stand to win a little on the next race" must have come from Lord Backwater.

Here's to Lord Backwater and his horse Desborough!

(We were handed this at the gathering with no name on it and can't remember who did the toast. Step forward & be recognised!)

### Bayard's Confession

Wanda Dow

Damn that Holmes! Holmes, the meddler. Holmes, the great interferer!

I should have run in the Wessex Cup. But no! Your interference had me scratched! Scratched! I, who everyone knew, could give S.B. a hundred yards in five furlongs! But was *I* guarded? Was anyone afraid of harm coming to *me*? No! It's always been *Silver Blaze* this and *Silver Blaze* that. Why, take that blaze off his smirking face and dirty up that foot and no one would notice him from any other nag in the yard – that was proved! Take two talented equines and give one a distinguishable mark and see who the stupid humans favor!

So I was unguarded that night. I watched as Simpson came and went. Now he, at least, could appreciate talent! I watched the stable boy take his snooze and the faithful pup wag his tail as Straker came to lead S.B. out. So I followed. Oh, I've been able to open up my stall for a long time now, but why bother?

I followed them to the moor and saw the gleam of the knife. *Aha!* I thought. *At last I'll have a chance to show my stuff.* But the Blaze, he somehow figured something wasn't right. Lord knows, how, with that pea-brain of his. So he bolts and knocks down Straker, who cuts his own leg.

Then it comes to me: If I can get S.B. proven to be a murderer, a wild horse no one can trust, then I'm home free! So I goes over and gives Straker what for – SMACK! Right in the head.

I look around and S.B.'s gone. I figure he's headed back home. How was I to know that he was too stupid to find his way back? I slink back quietly and slide into my stall - no one's the wiser. If he's found, they'll say he's gone wild and I'm number One. If he's not found, then he's food for the swamp and I'm still sitting pretty.

But no! Holmes shows up! Holmes, the Meddler! Holmes, the great interferer. Well here's news for you, Colonel. Put me on the market now 'cause I ain't wasting my time with your unappreciative likes any more. How about selling me to that mathematical professor guy? He seemed to be the type to appreciate my talents. Yeah!

The Dow Family players performed a short skit on *Silver Blaze*, in which the horse proved to be a criminal. It ended with the following song:

*(to the tune of the theme to Mr. Ed)*

A case is a case  
It's such a waste.  
If he doesn't solve it,  
He will lose face.  
He'll deduce the solutions that you'll embrace.  
The famous Sherlock Holmes.

People come and bend his ears.  
It's simply noise pollution.  
'Cause Sherlock Holmes is way ahead  
And is onto a new solution.

A horse is a horse  
Without remorse.  
His life of crime  
Is a constant source  
Of irritation to the sleuthing force.  
The famous Silver Blaze.

His escapades in Edinburgh  
Are very legend'ry  
And Silver Blaze still weaves his web:  
The king of crime is he.

A bee is a bee,  
And Holmes can see  
His error is letting  
The horse go free.  
He took his lumps without his tea.  
The saddened Sherlock Holmes.

A crime is a crime,  
No trial, no time.  
He is pure evil,  
He is pure slime.  
You've never heard of a crim'nal slime?  
Well, listen to this:  
"I am Silver Blaze."



Gianluca Salvatori (aka mycroft@versilia.toscan a.it) sent the above picture with this explanation: *These are the pictures of the bronze bust modelled by the Italian maestro, Giancarlo Buratti from Pietrasanta, and unveiled the 24th of March 2002 (Sunday) in Sesto Fiorentino, Florence (Italy). Under it there's a plaque that reads: (rough English translation) Escaped from the ambush set by the Napoleon of Crime, Sherlock Holmes, heading for Florence, here stopped in May,*



*1891. For the first centenary of The Hound of the Baskervilles, the City of Sesto Fiorentino and the Society Uno Studio in Holmes placed this memory.*

This Society recently organized a 3-day convention to coincide with the centenary of the publication of the first book edition of *Hound*. Besides the bust, they published two monographs. One is a catalogue of an exhibition of Houndian rarities from the extensive collection of Dr. Gabriele Mazzoni, which comes with a poster with reproduces the covers of more than 60 editions of *Hound*. The other is a coloured facsimile of a letter and envelope sent by Doyle to Gillette, postmarked 26 March 1902, with an analysis of the content and the significance of the letter. The first is US\$15 and the second US\$10 with a \$5 post & packing fee per monograph. Send orders to Gianluca Salvatori, PO Box 140-55042 Forte dei Marmi (Lucca) Italy. Use an International Money Order or send cash in a Registered Letter. No credit cards.

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**The Pleasant Places of Florida**

*Founded: 1972  
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**Recorder Emeritus: Dr. Benton Wood**

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

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