



2007

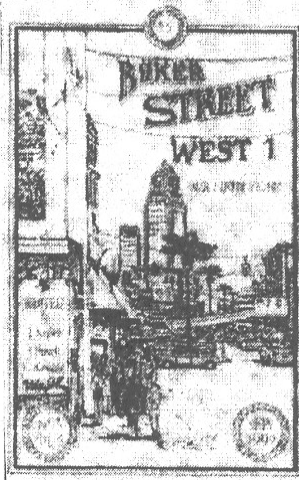
Communication No. 277

The Pleasant Places of Florida

Vol. 11 No.9

From the Papers on the Sundial:

We hope you and yours had a pleasant holiday season. The year will begin anew soon enough. This issue has been attacked by Moriarty's minions more than once, but finally we see it to press. We hope you enjoy Phil Jones' articles and pun-stealing. Anytime any other member wants to join



BAKER STREET WEST 1

In conjunction with
The Curious Collectors
Of Baker Street
PRESENT

The Very Irregular
Lost in New York with a
Bunch of Sherlockians

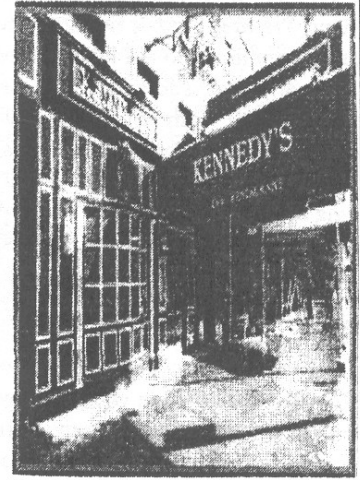
6PM, Saturday, January 12th, 2008

Kennedy's Irish Restaurant & Pub

327 W. 57th Street

Between 8th & 9th Avenues

Manhattan, NY (212)759-4242



Stranded in Manhattan on Saturday night with nothing to do, trying to stretch the BSI weekend to its fullest? Then join us in an evening of fun and frivolity in the name of the Master. We are planning to have more fun than a human ought to have, including a quiz, toasts to every canonical thing under the elm and some that aren't, and prizes, prizes, prizes!

\$39.00 per person, including tax & tip

For reservations or questions please phone: _____ or e-mail the Kegley's at _____
If you're planning on attending you may pay at the door but please contact us in advance in order that we have a head count to provide the restaurant.

We cordially request the pleasure of your company and that of your guests at the annual celebration of the birthday of Mr. Sherlock Holmes hosted by Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients, a scion society of the Baker Street Irregulars.

We are pleased to have Mr. Terry Feis as our Master of Ceremonies. Festivities will include a social hour prior to dinner followed by the usual frivolities, including: The Doctor's Oath and traditional (and perhaps some non-traditional) toasts and trivia contests. A silent auction of Sherlock Holmes memorabilia will be held during the Social Hour with the winners notified by Mr. William S. Dorn, B.S.I., after dinner.

Action, Intrigue and the Art of Baritsu: The highlight of the evening will be a live performance featuring the art of Baritsu (aka Baritsu). The Japanese system of wrestling used by Sherlock Holmes to defeat Professor Moriarty at Reichenbach Falls (q.v. The Adventure of the Empty House) (Cont. on page 5)



The Impatient Patient

Submitted by Phil Jones

Dr. Watson maintained an office several times during his association with Holmes, most notably during "The Great Hiatus," after Holmes disappeared at The Reichenbach Falls. Such an undertaking required major changes from the idyllic routine of a retired Army Surgeon. Office Hours had to be established and kept, patients had to be visited regularly and a staff had to be hired and paid. Of course a suitable suite of offices had also to be hired and maintained. This required at the very least, an Examining Room or two, an Office and a Patient Waiting Room, with a receptionist or, possibly, a Nurse-receptionist to aid in surgeries and other treatments.

In any case, such an establishment was needed to insulate the Doctor from new arrivals while treating and examining patients or counseling relatives, parents and care-givers. In addition, the Doctor was usually kept separate from the billing and payment aspects of the practice since such matters were not really a gentlemanly pursuit, and were best left up to the Doctor's office staff. Further, the presence of a female at examinations and treatments of the fairer sex was indispensable.

It was into just such a scene on one late autumn day in 1892 that a frantic man charged, saying "I am in terrible trouble. I must see the Doctor immediately!"

He squirmed and wiggled and paced and complained. He kept insisting that his case was dire. The receptionist tried and tried to calm him, saying that the doctor was engaged with another patient, but the man kept insisting he was in dire straits. Finally, the girl had to give up and told him she would speak to the Doctor. At this the man subsided a bit, muttering about the serious nature of his affliction.

The receptionist consulted the Nurse who was bandaging a patient Dr. Watson had just treated and the Nurse agreed to speak to the patient. She went to the Waiting Room and asked the patient to describe his symptoms, but he would have none of her help and insisted on seeing the Doctor at once. Defeated, she returned to the Treatment rooms and gently knocked on the door to the room where the Doctor was examining another patient.

In a quiet conference, she explained the problem with the impatient patient to the Doctor who agreed to speak to the man in a moment. He went to the Waiting Room to speak to the patient, who immediately burst into full complaint form:

"Doctor, Doctor!" he cried. "I'm shrinking! I'm wasting away to nothing! My weight has dropped ten pounds since yesterday and I've lost a full two inches in height! What can I do?"

Dr. Watson said "Please calm yourself. You shall just have to be a little patient until I can get to you".

This was stolen from a mailing by Peter Blau. It was first published on the *Shamlockian's List* on November 25th, 2007.

The Star of India

Submitted by Phil Jones



In the first decade of the new Century, the venerable Alexander Holder of Holder & Stevenson of Threadneedle Street was approached in a private meeting by a portly figure he knew well. The new King had requested an "unofficial" appointment, which did not promise to be a welcome event to Mr. Holder.

The "unofficial" guest removed a folder from His jacket pocket and revealed an enormous blue sapphire. Mr. Holder instantly recognized it as the "Star of Agra," a gift to the Crown by a certain Rajah made shortly after the Sepoy Mutiny. It had never been put to any use among the Crown Jewels and was treated as an oddity rather than a functional piece of jewelry. In fact, the awkward setting, in which it appeared as a single, uncomplimented stone, had precluded Her Majesty, the Queen Empress, from making any use whatsoever of the piece.

When asked what amount of money he would be willing to lend with the stone as security, Mr. Holder replied "Twenty Thousand Pounds, Sir."

His Royal guest was astounded and made a number of comments, few of which were appropriate to the "First Gentleman of Europe." The general tenor seemed to be that such a priceless piece should merit more brass than a paltry twenty thousand quid.

Mr. Holder retained his equilibrium and took the opportunity to comment on the troubles he had encountered over the affair of the "Beryl Coronet." He explained that such transactions fell outside the Normal Banking Practices and that any larger sum would require approval by the Board of Trustees, a most unlikely occurrence. His personal discretionary limit on loans as a Bank Official was limited to the proposed Twenty Thousand.

Again, his Royal visitor demurred, at length, and in several variations. He finally asked if Mr. Holder was unaware of to Whom he was speaking.

Mr. Holder replied, "When you wish to pawn a Star, it makes no difference who you are." **This was stolen from a mailing by Peter Blau. It was first published on the *Shamlockian's List* on November 13th, 2007.**



The Chemical Adventures of Sherlock Holmes: The Case of Three (part 4)

Thomas R. Rybolt and Thomas G. Waddell

Chemistry for Everyone 448 Journal of Chemical Education Vol. 79 No. 4 April 2002 JChemEd.chem.wisc.edu

Holmes took three small pieces of the shiny, reddish copper metal from my hand. He dropped one piece in the hydrochloric acid and a second piece in the sulfuric acid. I peered at the clear, colorless liquids in each beaker. There was no change—no reaction. Again Holmes moved before the fireplace with a small beaker of nitric acid and dropped in the third piece of copper. As before with the silvery metal, a vigorous reaction commenced at once, and that fascinating brown gas was released. Only this time, the liquid began to turn green, growing darker until the reaction stopped. Whereas the reaction of the silvery metal in nitric acid had turned the acid the color of some diluted Irish Whiskey, this reaction turned the liquid to the color of the green fields of Ireland.

And now Holmes took small pieces of the gold from my hand and dropped one of them in each of the three acids.

I glanced at the three beakers and remarked to Holmes, "Why, nothing has happened this time."

Holmes waited quietly for about a minute and then looked at each beaker closely. "Are you sure, Watson?" he replied.

I bent over and examined each carefully. I could see no change in the hydrochloric or the sulfuric acid beaker. However, in the beaker containing nitric acid, I thought I saw a tiny spot of green appearing in the liquid near the metal. Holmes took this nitric acid beaker, and after he heated it, the liquid darkened and produced the now familiar brown gas. Bubbles formed rapidly at the surface of the solid and continued until the metal had completely disappeared.

Holmes grabbed another piece of the gold and, after laying his hands on a nearby geologist's hammer, brought the hammer down on the gold, shattering it into pieces. I jumped back in surprise, but he made no comment. Instead he busied himself for several minutes scribbling in his notebook. He consulted several reference books, scribbled more notes, and then turned to me.

"Could you hand me those papers you read earlier?" Holmes asked.

I pulled out Mr. Wickersham's sales agreements and proffered them to Holmes. He took the pages from me, whipped out his magnifying lens, and began a close examination of each page. He spread the pages out on his chemical table and motioned for me to look over his shoulder.

"Handwriting can tell you a great deal about a person, Watson. Handwriting can reveal character—nervous or calm, extroverted or quiet, and much more. But here we look for the obvious. Note the angle and slope of each signature. It is quite obvious that Mrs. Nellie Sigler and Dr. Harold McGinness are both left

handed, whereas Mr. Gilmore Gilreath is clearly right handed."

"Really, Holmes, shouldn't we go to the Hospital and see if Mr. Wickersham can tell us anything yet?" I asked.

"Metals have physical properties as well as chemical properties, so let us now turn our attention to that world for some answers," said Holmes.

I watched impatiently as Holmes arranged three small, finely marked graduated cylinders in a row and partially filled each with water. He then took care to read the exact levels of the liquid. He recorded these values in his notebook. I then assisted him in carefully determining the mass of a collection of pieces of the silvery metal. He recorded the mass in his notebook and then added the silvery pieces of metal to the first graduated cylinder. Together we observed the final volume of the water in the cylinder and calculated the change in the volume. Holmes recorded this value along with the metal's mass in his notebook. We then weighed pieces of the reddish metal and observed the volume displacement of these pieces in the second graduated cylinder. Finally, we repeated this process with pieces of the golden metal and the third cylinder.

"What do you make of that?" Holmes asked as he handed me his notebook.

"Why, I make nothing of it," I said. "First there was that series of strange reactions and now you sink various metals in water. I say it is a strange way to conduct a criminal investigation. We should be out questioning the suspects."

"Do you think so?" asked Holmes.

"Indeed I do," I replied.

"Well, we are no longer conducting an investigation," stated Holmes in a quick but matter-of-fact manner.

"But why not?" I sputtered. "I have never known you to give up on a case before."

"I have not given up on this case, Watson. I am no longer conducting an investigation because the investigation is over. I have the perpetrator. However, I fear the situation is more grave than I at first imagined. We must get to the hospital at once. You see the numbers in my table." He handed me his open notebook.

<u>Metal Color</u>	<u>Volume Change (cc)</u>	<u>mass (g)</u>
Silvery	4.0	28.4
Reddish Cooper	5.2	38.5
Gold	3.1	15.5

Suddenly, Holmes took back his notebook, grabbed his hat and coat from a chair near the fire place, and moved toward the door of our flat. I followed him as he ran down the stairs of 221B toward Baker Street. As he pushed onto the street, I continued behind him as he hailed a hansom cab.

"But who is it, Holmes?" I cried as I reached his side. "What have you deduced?"

"I'll explain on the way," he said. "There is no time to waste." As he spoke, he climbed into the carriage and I jumped in behind him. At a word from Holmes, the driver shook the reins he held tightly in his hands and snapped



his whip. I fell back against the seat as we took off. We clattered down Baker Street and rushed through the streets of London toward St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

Can You Solve the Mystery?

The mystery can be solved with a knowledge of the physical and chemical properties of metals. However, like Holmes, you may need to consult a reference book for additional information.

1. What did the chemical tests tell Holmes about the metals?
2. What did the physical tests tell Holmes about the identity of each metal?
3. Who tried to kill Mr. Wickersham and how did Holmes reach this conclusion?
4. Why does Holmes consider the situation to be more serious than he first imagined?

CONCLUSION ISSUE 279.

CALENDAR SHERLOCKIANA

2008

January 12 - Do we even need to remind you?

January 25 - Sherlock Holmes birthday celebration given by *Dr. Watson's Neglected Patients*. Denver, CO. (see invitation on page 1)

February 16 - *The 18th Annual Wessex Cup* at Tampa Bay Downs. Contact David McCallister, or email

March 7-9 - *Sherlock Holmes/Arthur Conan Doyle Symposium*, Holiday Inn, Miamisburg, OH.

March 29 - Tentative Date for Sherlockian Film Festival, Seminole Library. Pleasant Places of Florida. More info to follow.

April 11 - 13 - Tentative date for the fifth annual *Gathering of Southern Sherlockians*. Contact Kent Ross at

April 11 - 13 - *STUD/Watsonian Weekend* Friday - Dinner, Sheraton Four Points, Schiller Park, IL; Saturday - The 49th Annual Running of the Chicago Silver Blaze at Hawthorne Race Course; Pizza Party that evening; Sunday - The Fortescue Honours Brunch at the Sheraton. For further info, please contact Susan Diamond at

July 6-8—*Victorian Secrets and Edwardian Enigmas: A Sherlock Holmes Conference* begins early Friday afternoon with presentations throughout the weekend, luncheon & banquet Saturday. Registration is \$95 for all presentations, the Norwegian Explorer Omnibus & keepsakes. Luncheon & banquet prices separate. Get on the mailing list by contacting

(Sponsored by The Norwegian Explorers of MN, Friends of Sherlock Holmes Collections & the U of MN's Special Collections & Rare Books.)

October 9-12 - *Bouchercon 39 Charmed to Death* in Baltimore, MD at the Wyndham (410-385-6605). Guests of Honor Laura Lippman & John Harvey with Toastmaster Mark Billingham. See bouchercon2008.blog.spot.com

AUTUMN IN BAKER STREET

By Donna Vaurio

Dorothy Stix and I recently traveled to Baker Street to visit with Sherlock Holmes and his devotees. In actuality we were in Norwalk, CT at a seminar of Sherlockians. In case you are uninitiated in the ways of the Sherlockians, let me explain that they are not a bunch of crackpots sitting around spinning yarns. Well, maybe a little cracked! *The Baker Street Irregulars* was the initial society started by author Christopher Morley, founder of the *Saturday Review of Literature*. Over time it's membership has included such illustrious personages as Ellery Queen, Rex Stout, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Harry Truman, and Tom Stix, Jr., to name just a few. Don't know Tom Stix, Jr.? He was very important to the growth of the BSI and very important to one, Dorothy Stix. Over the years, many scion societies formed all over the world. We have members right here in Heritage Springs, FL of the scion called 'The Pleasant Places of Florida'. Besides Dorothy and me, there's Carl Heifetz and Linda Luckenbach. Past members have included Rich Terio and Brenda Zalon also. The premise of the societies is that Sherlock Holmes was a real detective during Victorian times, Dr. Watson his chronicler and Arthur Conan Doyle the literary agent. When we meet it is, as said in the Vincent Starrett poem, 221-B; "Here, though the world explode, these two survive, and it is always eighteen ninety-five."

Don't be fooled by the fun aspects of these groups. They do a lot of research into Victorian times and are responsible for many contributions to libraries and museums throughout the world. While attending *Autumn in Baker Street*, we were treated to talks such as David Houles persuasive case that Professor Moriarity was actually known previously as Jesse James. Jesse's body was never found and many thought they had seen him after his supposed killing. We were also treated to a presentation on Medical and Forensic Science in Victorian times. That evening we had a wonderful dinner and a presentation by actors Paul Singleton and Elyse Locurto as the Houdini's and their quest to find out if there were spirits after death.

The next day Margaret Fleesak gave a talk about William Gillette, the famous actor who portrayed Sherlock Holmes so well. And finally, we had a wonderful scholarly look at how the sinking of the Titanic heralded the end of the Victorian age. If anyone is interested in learning more about the Sherlockians, contact Dorothy Stix at She knows everything and everyone there is to know and will gladly point you in the right direction.



Sherlock Holmes and the Watson Pastiche

Type of material: Trade Paperback Publisher: The Battered Silicon Dispatch Box Year: 2005 Author: Karl Showler, writing as Scianceny Wawr Price: Not Stated

This is a collection of tales, mostly featuring Dr. Watson along with Sherlock Holmes in his retirement. The first three were published in *The Wye?* a community magazine for Hay-on-Wye, Breconshire, Wales, U.K. The tales are mostly ‘country,’ both in setting and in attitude. They take place after Holmes has retired to bee-keeping and concern themselves, in general, with country adventures and themes. It takes a while to accustom oneself to the different outlook, but the tales grow on the reader over time.

In addition, of course, the author is ‘having us on’ as country folk always have with citified sophisticates. There is much sly humor and more than a bit of ‘leg pulling’ being done. On the other hand, the Master himself observed that evil can be as much resident in the country side as in the foulest dens in the Metropolis and the author leads us into some of those realities.

Most of the tales are short, without the complete resolution and explanation that we have come to expect in tales from the good doctor’s pen. However, these are not completed tales that Dr. Watson has sent to his publishing agent, but rather they are mostly notes taken at the time and made to recall for later publication. They are, as we expect from Watson, full of interesting characters and strange situations.

The later pieces are from the pen of Dr. Watson’s son, Sherlock Watson, and they take place later in the lives of the famous pair. They also give us a view of Watson and Holmes that is unique and refreshing.

Taken all-in-all, this is an interesting and amusing collection, that bears both reading and re-reading.

Reviewed by: Philip K. Jones, September, 2007.



The Unusual Sherlock Holmes

Type of material: Trade Paperback Publisher: Infinity Publishing.com Year: 2007 Author: Jerry ‘B-P’ Riggs

This book is a collection of three tales that Mr. Riggs has been telling and re-telling to boy scouts for years. They are aimed at a sub-teen audience of boys and are further intended to stress the elements of ‘scouting’ as prescribed by the founder of scouting, Lord Baden-Powel of Boer War fame. There is no pretense that these stories are anything else, no claim to psychological insight or historical accuracy and associations. Just rousing adventure tales.

For Sherlockians, there are details to pick at, but

(cont. from page 1) by the *Asgard Entertainment Stunt Team.*

When: Saturday, January 26, 2008

Doors open: 5:45 p.m.

Social Hour: 6:00 p.m. (Cash bar, cheese & crackers, vegetable platter)

Dinner: 7:00 p.m. (menu & registration can be downloaded from <http://www.dwnfp.com/>)

DWNP Dinner 2008.pdf

Where: The Colorado Room at the Holiday Inn Select in Cherry Creek, 455 S. Colorado Blvd., Denver. Map available at www.cherrycreekhotel.com/map/map/http

Attire: Victorian or Edwardian is encouraged but not required.

RSVP: Your response is requested by January 17, 2008.

Darlene Cyfser

scribe@foolscap-quill.com

the author has done his work and has tried to attend to the Canon. There are many details incorporated that are dear to the heart of Canonists and efforts to fit these stories into the framework of the Canonical facts are apparent throughout. On the other hand, these are adventure tales designed for youngsters, so ‘good guys’ and ‘bad guys’ abound and women are either sweet and true or scheming and conniving and villains are always nasty.

The scientific content and historical accuracy are also kept at a 12-year old level, plausible but unable to stand more than casual scrutiny. The themes of the three stories fall into the same category, with stolen rifles for Afghan rebels, an Arthurian round table re-enactment and a clandestine moon voyager and would-be world conqueror as central subject matter.

If you have an adventure-minded sub-teen on your gift list, this book will be sure to please. It may also please older children who retain that spirit of adventure and delight in life’s mysteries and romances. Don’t buy it for curmudgeons or literalists; it won’t be accepted without that “willing suspension of disbelief” peculiar to the young at heart.

Reviewed by: Philip K. Jones; August, 2007

For the Record: **THE LAST COURT OF APPEALS**
David McCallister, Master of the House,
 Ceremonies at most gatherings, host of the annual Wessex Cup)
Wanda & Jeff Dow, The Papers on the Sundial,
 (Communications and Bookkeeping)

(Master of

Please make note of the issue number on your mailing label. This is the final issue number of your club membership. You will not receive further Communications after this number unless you renew. Renewals should be sent, with any updates, to Wanda Dow. Make all checks payable to Wanda Dow. US\$12.00 (US/CAN) or US\$13.00 (INTL)

