



2012

Communication No. 310

The Pleasant Places of Florida

The Yukon in Peril

Softcover book iUniverse, Bloomington INb 2011 **Editor:** R. McIntyre Cooke

This is a straight-forward adventure novel posing as a Sherlockian mystery. Sherlock and Dr. Watson are commissioned by the Prime Minister to prevent an upset of US - UK relations over a border dispute between Alaska and Canada. An active Irish terrorist has taken an interest in the growing problems caused by the Gold Rush in the Yukon Territory and Her Majesty's Government fear this may trigger a disagreement between the British Government edging into war with South Africa and the expansionist United States Government and their just-completed war with Spain.

Actually, the situation is well-chosen and the strife and conflict are matters of historical fact. The true problem involved is to identify the terrorist and to prevent whatever scheme he is pursuing from disrupting relations between the two countries. Canada is feeling its own identity and a Commonwealth nation and the Gold Rush population of Alaska is overwhelming the public services of the neighboring Yukon Territory. Tempers are high, patriotism is being invoked on all sides and many persons have an interest in fostering unrest for money, for political power and out of general nastiness.

Holmes and Watson journey to the Yukon under pseudonyms and try their hands at forestalling International Intrigue. The trip is well-described and many interesting characters are encountered along the way. The entire premise sounds fantastic, but it is actually typical of the type of back-door diplomacy that was used in late Victorian and Edwardian times. One gets the feeling of senior politicians hanging onto a careening train for dear life while events flash by on either side. The final efforts fizzled out in the summer of 1914 as Europe marched firmly into a war that no one wanted.

The author seems to have found an excellent editor and the very few errors I found were more disagreements than actual errors. The characters presented were well-drawn and plausible, with lots of research being evident in their creation and/or depiction. The book reads like an adventure novel, but it is well-constructed and historically hard to argue with. It describes a little-known time of conflict between the US and its northern neighbor very well.

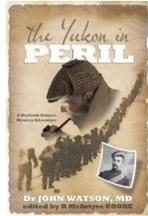
Reviewed by: Philip K. Jones, March, 2012



Sherlock Holmes: Consulting Detective Volume Two

Softcover, Cornerstone Book Publishers, 2010
Editor: Ron Fortier

This is a collection of five, well-written novels. It is the second collection in a series by this Publishing House and it will soon be followed by a third volume. There seems to be no overall theme set for this collection of tales, but



Find out why these two deserve to be tied up on page five "He's Everywhere..."

the book does not suffer from the lack. All of the tales are readable and interesting, even entertaining. One can ask little more of a Sherlockian anthology and this one delivers quite effectively.

"The Affair of the Wretched Flesh," by Joshua Reynolds begins with Sherlock in a characteristic 'blue funk.' Thankfully, Inspector Lestrade arrives before Holmes turns to the needle and the pair are off on a new adventure. This case is solved, but that is about all. The cost of the solution in lives and treasure is daunting and the villain seems to have escaped to cause more trouble.

"The Affair of the Western Mail," by I. A. Watson calls Holmes and Watson to deal with an impossible robbery of a payroll carried on an express train with numerous safety features in place. The case is complex and the solution finally comes through the odd actions of a con man well known to Holmes.

"The Case of the Missing Engine," by Bernadette Johnson, brings Holmes and Watson to Trinity College, Cambridge to look into the theft of a reconstruction of Charles Babbage's "Analytical Engine." The investigation is complex and the villain is not really villainous, but murder has been done and a solution is needed.

"The Last Deposit," by I. A. Watson, is depressing. It is well thought out, but inevitably sad and depressing. The body of a murdered young woman is found in a safe deposit box at a prestigious bank, something every one claims is impossible. Yet, there she is. The investigation is depressing and the true villain escapes justice, except, perhaps, in his dreams.

The final tale, "The Adventure of the Phantom Raiders," by Andrew Salmon, brings together two unlikely comrades. HMS Victory, rotting at anchor is paired with the RN's newest acquisition, Submarine A1. The Eighteenth Century super weapon, the flagship of Nelson at Trafalgar is sent into battle alongside the Naval wonder weapon of the Twentieth Century, the torpedo-armed submarine.

This is an interesting book, with a nice selection of tales and locales. The circumstances and timing all seem to fit well into the Canon and the presentation of the tales is comfortable and familiar. Some readers may object to details, but most are explicable and few are crucial. In fact, there seem to be fewer errors of fact or timing than is common for a similar collection of Canonical tales.

Reviewed by: Philip K. Jones, February, 2012



Tales from the Stranger's Room

Trade Paperbacks, AMX Publishing, London, 2011 **Editor:** David Ruffle

This is a collection of Sherlockian items that were originally published on the Internet. Some of them have been revised for this publication and some remain in their original forms. In contrast to the



usual Sherlockian anthology, this book is an assembly of fragments. Each item is complete and entire, but they mostly catch moments, not stories. Some are complete mysteries, with villains to catch and investigations to be performed, but, mostly, they are visions of Holmes and Watson, along with Mrs. Hudson, Inspector Lestrade and the irregulars at particular moments. Some of these moments are quite important, but that is all they are, moments.

A number of these items center on Christmases, mostly those following Holmes' return from the Great Hiatus. In general, the entire collection celebrates the change of Holmes into a human being. His boyhood is suggested as lonely and neglected with Mycroft as his only real human contact. His association with Watson is depicted as the source of his growing humanity and these tales seem to capture the moments he sees other people as more than simply data to be integrated into his catalogue of human activities.

Many of the items are authored by the editor, David Ruffle. He confines himself, mostly, to short pieces and to the area of Puns. Two of his creations are presented, both of which easily merit inclusion in any collection of Sherlockian narrative puns, if such can ever be published. Poems are also included. These are strictly outside my areas of expertise, but I do concede that they definitely convey impressions of the individuals they portray.

This collection is definitely not a group of Sherlockian mysteries. Instead, it is a series of more than forty small peeks at Holmes, Watson and the standard Doyle *dramatis personae* that are not afforded by the Canon. It is possible that readers may dislike or consider some of the views to be silly. It is completely impossible that all readers will fail to find at least one view that strikes a chord within their mind that says, "of course! That was the real Holmes (or Watson)." Further, readers may encounter a few old friends along the way.

Reviewed by: Philip K. Jones, February 2012



The Bookman Chronicles

Mass Market Paperbacks, Angry Robot Books, Nottingham, UK, 2011-2012 **Author:** Lavie Tidhar

This is a series of three novels set in a "Steampunk" Universe that includes a large population of Nineteenth Century fictional and historical characters. By "large," I mean that I lost track during the first volume and merely took occasional

notes during the later volumes. For example, Chief Sitting Bull appears in the same volume as Erich Weiss, aka Harry Houdini and Irene Adler is a Scotland Yard Inspector, keeping her eye on Fagin and Oliver Twist. The three volumes in the series are, respectively, "The Bookman," "Camera Obscura" and "The Great Game." All three volumes are, more or less, stand-alone publications. On the other hand, I have a number of questions after completing the third volume, so all of the answers are definitely *not* included in the books.

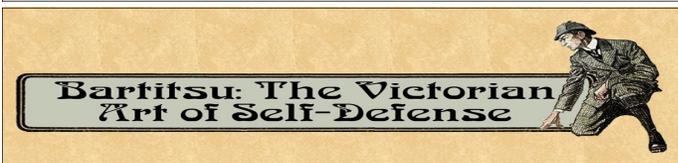
The main theme of the series revolves around Mycroft Holmes and his Intelligence Organization. Many other Sherlockian characters appear as well as an unruly mob of other personages. One really needs a scorecard to keep track. The author also has a habit of making readers work for understanding of the environment. Every once in a while, some character will summarize a part of history, either recent or ancient, so that readers can orient (not orientate) themselves. Mostly, though, the characters talk about more immediate concerns as do people involved in active lives so readers are left to catch up on their own. I found this aspect more interesting than most fictional settings because it makes a reader think. Meanwhile, the action continues and events keep happening.

The three volumes occur in 1888, in 1893 and in 1899. Many characters appear in all three volumes and some explanations are offered. I retain a number of serious questions, such as "What happened to Smallpox" and "Where did Amerigo Vespucci learn to pilot a ship?" There are also open questions about who is on which side of what. There seem to be more 'sides' than players and there are a real ocean full of players. Needless to say, the action takes place all over the place and even in some unexpected places.

At base, this is an action series. Agents, counteragents, retired agents and secret agents wander in and out, change sides, switch masters and shoot it out with each other at the drop of a hat. It is difficult to bring up any subject without revealing some of the mysteries that are part of the story. As an example, there was a revolution in France in the late Eighteenth Century. It was called "The Quiet Revolution." Doctors Frankenstein and Jekyll are working together, sort of. Milady DeWinter and the Comte de Rochefort are still (or again) in business, working for the French Government, in between other clients. One hint, when the author talks about a "Vespucian" you can translate that as "American."

This is a fun series. There are lots of interesting characters, stolen from everywhere, as much action as can be kept track of and a whole slew of questions left unanswered. Familiar characters pop up in the oddest places for even odder reasons and familiar places all look just a little bit odd. If you can figure out what actually happened, please drop me a note. I'm still a bit puzzled.

Reviewed by: Philip K. Jones, February 2012





THE BEACON SOCIETY

Supporting and recognizing exemplary educational experiences that introduce young people to the Sherlock Holmes stories



A Scion Society of the Baker Street Irregulars

http://www.beaconsociety.com/BeingSherlock.html#Some_Beacon_Impersonators



THE ADVENTURES OF SHERLOCK HOLMES Ebenezer Maxwell Mansion

200 West Tulpehocken Street
Philadelphia, PA 19144

If you were in Philadelphia in April, you could have found out how Holmes and Watson arrived at 221B Baker Street, and watched them solve a puzzling murder that was committed inside a mysterious old mansion. On display in the Mansion library is an exhibit of Victorian medical equipment. Starring Josh Hitchens as Sherlock Holmes.

www.ebenezermaxwellmansion.org/sherlockholmes.html

An ad for SHERLOCK HOLMES' SECRET TO MARKETING SEMINARS



Sometimes it seems like you have to **channel your inner Sherlock Holmes** when you are marketing seminars. That is because before you sit down to write the registration page copy for your upcoming workshop or seminar, you have to do some **detective work**.

Not really much in the way of Sherlockian interests, but it's nice to see the Master's influence. The end of the ad states "So start digging for information and make Sherlock Holmes proud." <http://eventstrategysolutions.com/sherlock-holmes-secret-to-marketing-seminars>

ACTUAL WEBSITE AD: <http://www.beijing-kids.com/events/Side-by-Sides-Summer-Camp-Sherlock-Holmes>

Play detective in a modern day "whodunit" using simple, DIY crime solving techniques like finger printing, chromatography, and powder analysis.

Side by Side's summer camps aim to work on each child's academic, communication, social, emotional, behavioural and organisational skills.

Skills will include:

- team work
- language development
- social interaction
- confidence and self-esteem building
- creativity
- listening and following directions
- relationship building
- memory
- fine and gross motor skills
- planning, follow through, reflection and correction
- critical thinking and problem solving
- perseverance

Half-day programmes:

- 9 a.m. to noon, ages 6 – 8
- 1 to 4 p.m., ages 9 – 11



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THE YOUTH IS OUR FUTURE!!!

Moriarty Did It! A Sherlock Holmes Mystery was presented April 20th at the Daphne United Methodist Church in Daphne, AL. This was an original dramatic comedy written and performed by the Baldwin County 4H Creative and Performing Arts Club, primarily consisting of Baldwin County home-schooled students ages 5-18 years.





From Baskerville Hall to the Valley of Fear, the Real Forensics Behind the Great Detective's Greatest Cases



The Science of Sherlock Holmes

E. J. WAGNER

Everyone loves a mystery, and mystery-lovers are fascinated by Sherlock Holmes and forensic science. The *Science of Sherlock Holmes* is an objective, comprehensive, and entertaining exploration of Sherlock Holmes's contributions to forensic science. As described in Wiley's Winter 2006 catalog - "From autopsies to zoology: how Holmes eliminated the impossible" - this book uses the legendary adventures of Sherlock

Holmes as a jumping-off point to discuss the growth of forensic science during the 19th and early 20th century. The book explores the emergence of science from superstition, how forensic autopsies evolved from anatomical dissection, and the huge advances in blood chemistry and poison detection during the Victorian era. Delving into the early use of fingerprints, photography and trace evidence, it demonstrates how fact followed fiction in developing techniques of crime scene investigation. *The Science of Sherlock Holmes* presents sardonic new insights into landmark criminal cases that influenced the forensic world, including the 1849 Parkman/Webster dismemberment at Harvard Medical College, the slaughter of Jessie M'pherson in 1862 Scotland and the sanguinary cases of Lizzie Borden and Jack the Ripper. The book includes rare period illustrations.

Sherlock Holmes and the Repulsive Affair of the Red Leech

Performed by Rackheath Players at Rackheath Village Hall
21st – 24th June at 7.45

Holmes is asked by London banker, Crosby, to find his daughter, who has been abducted by a sinister intruder. In a farcical series of accidents, Watson manages to kill the banker's housekeeper, and maim his ageing butler in the space of twenty minutes.

In spite of these setbacks, Holmes unearths a plot which takes us at breakneck speed from a cellar full of leeches, through an East End brothel to the stage of a London theatre.

For all its joyful humour, the play remains faithful to the pattern and spirit of the Holmes stories, and is beloved by Sherlockians everywhere.

SCIENCE STUDY BREAK



Science Study Break: SHERLOCK HOLMES!

In November of last year, Dr. Jim Bryant (Biology) and Dr. Sam Gosling (Psychology) (The University of Texas at Austin) presented an elementary "Science Study Break" using scenes

from the BBC program *Sherlock!* and Granada Television's *Sherlock Holmes* series to illustrate the master sleuth's use of statistics and observations of the everyday manifestations of personality.



In April, the Creative Arts Center Kidz Krew Performing Arts Program performed on the Windom stage, presenting *Sherlock Holmes and the Grimm Imbroglia*. The crowds were impressed with the story, costumes and the 21 talented young actors.

A group of Sherlock Holmes enthusiasts – known as "Sherlockians" – attended the Saturday evening performance. Don Hobbs and Herb Linder from Dallas, Pam and Steven Mason from Denton, and Dean Clark from Tulsa made the trek to Windom to view the play. The group was enthusiastic about the show and commented how they have been to Barcelona, London, New York and Minneapolis (among other cities) for Sherlock Holmes events.

"Now we have been to Windom," said Hobbs. Hobbs also said, "The only bad Sherlock Holmes play is the one never produced."

Sherlock Holmes Living Statue

Our Sherlock Holmes Living Statue looks amazing in custom pewter silver paint and makeup - silver is our favourite element, it's elementary, dear Watson.



This Human Statue is perfect for all sorts of events including Murder Mystery Evenings, English Themed Events, Literary Events, Sherlock Holmes Parties and anything else that requires entertainment with a cunning mind and a focus on detail.

"Once you eliminate the impossible, whatever remains, no matter how improbable, must be the truth." Wise words indeed, but this Living Statue will keep you guessing all night and the only truth that will remain is that this is another great piece of entertainment from The Living Statue Company.

<http://www.thelivingstatuecompany.com/sherlockholmeslivingstatue2.html>



Park Plaza Sherlock Holmes London has teamed up with West End Events to offer regular evenings filled with interactive mystery & comedy entertainment!

Plot Synopsis: The Curse of the B'stadvilles:

The branches of the B'stadville family tree are dropping off year by year. So, with no direct heir to his family seat, Lord B'stadville decides to draw up a new will.

Family, friends & neighbours have all been invited to a dinner where Lord B'stadville will reveal his plans. The family is feuding, the servants are revolting, but someone will be named as successor to his estate. However little does he know there is a murderer amongst them who has other plans...

Who will inherit, who will die, who will survive the evening with their honour intact? Only Sherlock Holmes, Master Detective can solve the case of The B'stadville Inheritance.



November 2-4, 2012... be sure to reserve early!

The game's afoot in Victorian Cape May... Choose your weekend for a suspense-filled encounter

with that inimitable detective Sherlock Holmes in the National Historic Landmark City of Cape May, New Jersey.

Solve the mystery of Sherlock Holmes and the Trial of Moriarty's Challenge!

The strength of a man is measured not by the trials he knows he can overcome but by the challenges he fears will beat him. Join Holmes and Watson as they race into the maze of deceptions while they attempt to solve a murder before it happens. The gauntlet is thrown. The possible victims are many, including the Queen herself. Choose the wrong one, and all will be lost. Who is the master of this treacherous riddle? Why, Moriarty himself, of course.

Get into the spirit of things by donning Victorian attire. Stalk the gaslit streets in search of clues and compete for the \$250 grand prize and a variety of other valuable gifts as you attempt to solve the mystery. Enjoy a Fall getaway and a new mystery, written especially for 2012.

There are many inns participating. Visit http://capemaymac.org/content/subpage_main.aspx?id=96 for more info.

CALENDAR SHERLOCKIANA 2012

May 18-20 - 26th Annual Sherlock Holmes/ACD Symposium. "Cheetahs and Adders and Hounds, Oh My." Dayton, OH. Contact Cathy Gill at chipsworth@fuse.net

May 26 - The Sherlock Holmes Society of London vs Eton College in Victorian Cricket.

June 9 - A Scintillation of Scions V, Watson's Tin Box. Contact Jacquelynn Morris www.watsonstinbox.org

June 24 - The Sherlock Holmes Society of London vs The P G Wodehouse Society. Annual Victorian Cricket Match held at West Wycombe ground.

August 4 - Silver Blaze. Saratoga Springs, NY. The Baker Street Irregulars. Contact Lou & Candace Lewis www.silverblazeny.homestead.com

August 31-Sept. 3 - Sherlock Holmes: Behind the Canonical Screen. Los Angeles, CA. Contact Michael Kean bakerstreetjournal.com/losangeles2012.html

September 9-16 - The Sherlock Holmes Society of London Swiss Pilgrimage, Interlaken & Meiringen, Switzerland.

October 4-7 - Bouchercon XLIII, Cleveland, OH. bouchercon2012.com/

October 12-14 - Uno Studio in Holmes (25th Anniversary) -The No Fog Countries Meeting II Contact Enrico Solito www.unostudioinholmes.org

2013

January 9-13 - Sherlock Holmes Birthday Weekend (extended) NY, NY

May 3-5 - Malice Domestic XXV Bethesda, MD www.malicedomestic.org

September 19-22 - Bouchercon XLIV Albany, NY bcon2013.com

HE'S EVERYWHERE... CBS TV is working on a pilot set in NY titled *Elementary*, starring Jonny Lee Miller as the twenty-first century Holmes with Lucy Liu as Dr. Joan Watson and Aidan Quinn as NYPD Captain Gregson ... Ready for a *Gnomeo & Juliet* sequel? Me neither. Especially when the title is *Gnomeo & Juliet: Sherlock Gnomes*. The porcelain detective joins up with the rest of the gang to investigate a wave of gnome disappearances from England's suburbs ... Do you have a murder mystery party in mind for your (insert group here)? Then you need The Irregular Special Players. Check out the website at www.crime4u.com Visiting Bahrain, Saudi Arabia? Then check in to The Gulf Hotel and relax in the Sherlock Holmes pub....The Cardinal Stritch University (Milwaukee, WI) Theater Department presented the Winner of the 2007 Edgar Award for Best Mystery Play, *Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure* adapted by Steven Dietz from the original 1899 play by William Gillette and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle on April 27 In March, the East Lynne Theater Company (Atlantic City, NJ) presented Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes' Adventure of the Norwood Builder* in the style of a 1930s radio broadcast, complete with live sound effects and commercials. The production was part of Sherlock Holmes Weekend, sponsored by the Mid-Atlantic Center for the Arts & Humanities (MAC) ... On April 14th, The Historic Village at Allaire, Farmingdale, NJ presented a theater presentation of *Sherlock Holmes and the Speckled Band*. Sounds new wave/country ... Tulsa Oklahoma included several evenings in April of Sherlock Holmes short stories at their Liddy Doenges Theatre, Tulsa Performing Art Center "Getting Spring Started In Tulsa" celebration. Right up there with the gun show

The Pleasant Places of Florida

(founded in 1972)

Rev. Leslie Marshall, B.S.I. 1972-1977
Dr. Benton Wood, B.S.I. 1977 - 1988
Bill Ward, B.S.I. 1988 - 1989
Dr. Benton Wood, B. S.I. 1989 -1996
The Last Court of Appeals 1997 - present

For the Record:

THE LAST COURT OF APPEALS

David McCallister, *Master of the House*,
most gatherings, host of the annual Wessex Cup)

(Master of Ceremonies at

Carl Heifetz, *Representative (both with the Servants and with the Tradespeople)*,
(Correspondent)

(Communications,

Wanda & Jeff Dow, *The Papers on the Sundial*,
Website and Bookkeeping)

(Film Festivals and

Mike Bryan, *The Unopened Newspaper*,
The Marshall Wood Fund)

Please make note of the issue number on your mailing label. This will be the final issue number of your paper newsletter. We are phasing out printed newsletters. Please go to our website at <http://ppofl.net> for all club news. All newsletters can be found on the site. Those appearing after your issue number can be printed by you from the site if you prefer a printed newsletter.

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