



The Pleasant Places of Florida

(Suggested in The Five Orange Pips)

A Corresponding Scion Society of The Baker Street Irregulars

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12th Night Reflections

... in Canonical parlance, "The Woman" is Irene, at HQ [HOLMES Beach] it was ELENA, at least during the first weekend of September. The winds, rain,

and tides buffeted our "pleasant Places", but we came through nearly unscathed. Your not-so-simpleminded and amiable Recorder had enough sense to be in N.H. at the time of the hurricane. The Fall Gathering is scheduled for Sat., Oct.26th, at Mike Carroll's, so do let him know if you will be present. Without a doubt the most exciting S'ian happening this summer was put on by Staff Davis & his "Afghanistan Perceivers" of Tulsa, as they scaled and duly named "Holmes Peak". That is really scaling the heights of Holmesian endeavors! Caroline Everett reports of a housing development in Pinellas Park featuring 3 house plans all with Sherlockian names. I'll send you a photo-copy of the floor plans, if requested..... Ken Nail, Jr.

DEDICATION OF HOLMES PEAK



Scion Society "The Musgrave Story Scion". Justin Havee reports of the July 14th convening of the "Tropical Deerstalkers" of Miami. They will meet again on Oct.20th. Cordes Geer, of Future Productions of Tampa, has been sleuthingly active with a "Mystery Train" from Tampa to Jacksonville, and a "Murder at Sea" cruise out of Port Canaveral. This Recorder rec'd from Andrew Malec his "The Other Master: Frederick Dorr Steele", an elegant essay on the great S'ian artist. John Bennett Shaw writes that another of his Workshops was held at Stevens Inst, N.J. this past summer. Ppofffer, Dave McCallister reports that Playmakers of Ybor City are staging "Sherlock's Last Case" Nov.15-Dec.8. He wonders if a group of the local faithful want to make up a theatre party. He will tell us more of this at our Fall Gathering, I presume. As always, my thanks to all who have corresponded with this Recorder since #76, especially: Dick Lesh, Mike Carroll, Stanley Mackenzie, Tom Dunn, Paul & Janet Gunning, Alyssa Eisenacher, Wanda Butts, Julian Wolff, Steve Rothman, William Sarjeant [of Saskatoon], Ely Liebow, "Pat" Herst, and Jim Suszynski. Thanks to you all and my apologies for any omissions. For all you that watch your £'s & Shillings, This Communication is the fifth to be published in 1985. If you are a "Life-Time" subscriber, (\$10) or an annual (\$2.21) you can readily see what a bargain you've already received. The postage alone has totted up to \$1.10! not to mention printing & labels!

All the P.P. of F. Irregulars are coming 'round to MIKE CARROLL'S

for the **ANNUAL FALL GATHERING** SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26th at 12 Noon.

We have high hopes of having PETER BLAU, noted Sherlockian as our guest! PLEASE LET MIKE KNOW IF YOU'RE COMING.



COMMUNICATION #77

OCTOBER 14, 1985

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Pleasant Places of Florida

A Corresponding Scion Society of

THE BAKER STREET IRREGULARS

Please direct correspondence to:

The Rev'd Dr. Benton Wood, BSI - Recorder

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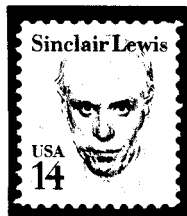
[* - On this day in 1887, Mr. Hosmer Angel disappeared. "A Case of Identity"]

Philatelic Philandering

.... or "Stamping Around"
with SHERLOCK HOLMES.

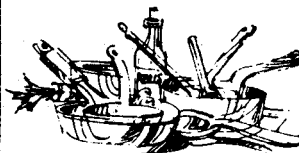


All sorts of Holmesian names have cropped up in the current Great American stamp series. There's the 7¢ Baldwin (VALL); the 10¢ Russell (FIVE); and the 18¢ MASON (BRUC, SHOS, SUSS & VALL). Hugh Harrington, of Massillon, Ohio insists that the BEP made an error on the 14¢ Sinclair Lewis issue claiming that it should be Professor Moriarty. Hugh (1634 Sherwood Ave., NW, Massillon 44646) is trying to locate a video tape of the 1939 film of the Hound. Can anyone help him out?



From

Mrs.
Hudson's
Kitchen



CURATE'S CHEEK

[Your amiable but simple-minded BSI Chaplain came upon this rather tasty dish during one of his sojourns to England. Incredibly quick and simple to prepare, it is fit for a Bishop or any other important guest who arrives on short notice. The brown sugar & mustard combine to make a wonderfully piquant sauce for the ham. Serve it with wild rice and a salad. Serves 4.

- 1 cup dark brown sugar
- 3½ tablespoons English mustard powder
- 1 pound cooked ham, thickly sliced
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 bunch watercress

Preheat the oven to 300°. Mix the sugar & mustard in a small bowl. Place the ham in a small ovenproof dish & sprinkle about a tablespoon of the mustard & sugar mixture over each slice. Put any remaining mustard & sugar over the top slice and add the cream.

Bake covered for 20 minutes and then uncovered for another 10. Put a little watercress on each plate before serving.

**A 'Corrupter' Watson: No. 2 but still trying
Holmes at Impasse**

Both Sides Attack Moriarty in Trial

Holmes Dance Theatre
hoping for travel and fame

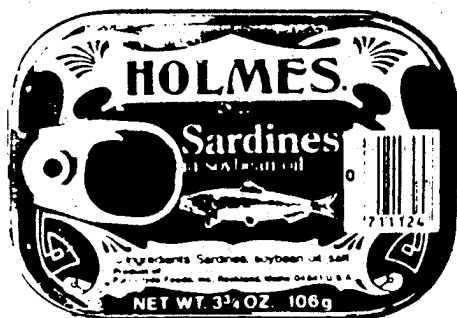


Agony Column

Readers are requested to send in items for this Column. Thank you.



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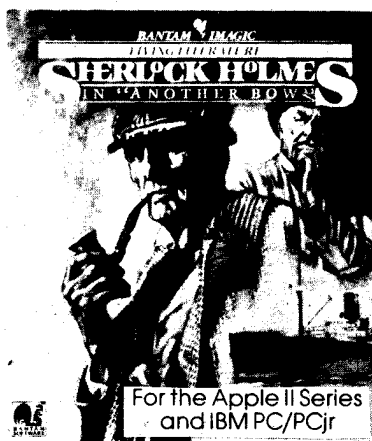
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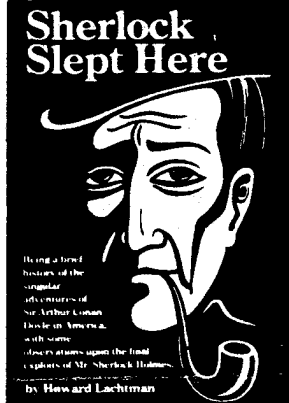
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'Evidence' that Sherlock is alive proves elementary to Holmesians

By MARK FINSTON

The game's still afoot: Sherlock Holmes is alive and well.

Forget the fact that he will be 131 years old, or that he has outlived all his contemporaries, Dr. Watson, Arthur Conan Doyle, Mrs. Hudson, everyone.

Some 135 people are attending a three-day Holmesian workshop, which ends this afternoon at Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken.

"And 99.9 percent of us believe that Holmes is still alive," declared Herbert Tinning, the workshop director. Tinning, from Weehawken, is a mechanical engineer.

"And he's in good shape."

Holmes is believed to live in the Sussex section of England, where he keeps bees. Sherlock expert John Bennett Shaw, the leader of the conclave, is equally convinced, attributing Holmes' longevity to the fountain-of-youth elixir provided by those bees.

"It doesn't matter if I have any evidence he's alive," said the 71-year-old Shaw. "What evidence do you have that he's dead?"

A telling point. Shaw has others.

One scholar has read every obituary published in the London Times since 1930. The London Times is big on obits, often placing them on the front page. No obituary of Sherlock Holmes has ever been found, said Shaw.

Moreover, he continued, Holmes receives an average of 14 letters a week. They are answered by a secretary.

"How many dead people have secretaries?" he asked.

And the Shaw clincher: "When you see who's alive today, wouldn't you choose Holmes? Over, say, the average baseball owner?"

About Dr. Watson—many are convinced Watson wrote the Holmes adventures, and that A. Conan Doyle was simply the literary agent—the news isn't so good.

Watson long ago passed on.

"Watson's health wasn't good," said Shaw. "He didn't have the wiry, dry stamina of Holmes. Besides, he was married three times. I've been married twice, and that almost did me in."

Shaw is a renowned Holmes scholar, although he might say that "Holmes" and "scholar" do not peacefully co-exist. "What we learn doesn't matter a damn, and that's why it's fun," he began one of his talks.

He is a retired oil well driller, funeral home owner and book store owner from Tulsa. He got hooked on Holmes as a kid, and now lives in Santa Fe, N.M., where he has, he said, the largest library of Sherlockiana in the world: 12,000 books and 8,000 other objects.



This memorabilia, much of it scholarly, much schlocky (76 different Holmes T-shirts), included in the collection was begat by only 56 short stories and four novels.

That's not a bad begat, although Shaw pointed out that the originals have been translated into 44 languages, Braille, two different kinds of shorthand and Esperanto.

Shaw believes Holmes retired before World War I.

"Crime held no variety or charm to him anymore," he explained, although Shaw admitted he hasn't been in touch with Holmes ("We respect his privacy"). "And he always wanted to retire and write."

Another expert, Michael Hardwick, a writer from Great Britain, author of "The Sherlock Holmes Companion" plus radio and TV dramas on Holmes and other subjects, believes Holmes retired at age 50. The reason: Holmes suffered from "stress, which wasn't very fashionable in those days."

Maybe these days we call it "burn-out." And the crime experts, presumably put off by Holmes' prowess, never called on him for consultation.

"But I do know he turned down an investigation of Watergate," confided Shaw. Quoting from one of the Holmes books, Shaw voiced the reason in Holmes' words: "I'm not about to take on the father of evil."

Holmes never married. Some scholars find evidence that Holmes was a homosexual or a misogynist. Shaw scoffs at this, as does Hardwick: "To say that Holmes was a woman-hater is absolute rubbish. He was always kind to women, helped them. But he decided early that he required all physical and mental energies for his work." Hardwick added this decision undoubtedly contributed to Holmes' stress.

Shaw becomes a bit more serious when asked about the impact of the Sherlock Holmes series if they were being written today.

"I don't think they would have had the success they had," he analyzed. "But they would catch on. Ever since the caveman, there's been a need for someone to tell stories. And these are great stories. You couldn't keep them down."

Holmes present literary efforts won't fare as well. Bee keeping is not Holmes' only activity.

"He has been writing the history and technique of detective work, or something like that," said Shaw, unwilling to reveal his sources. "But you know the state of publishing. There's no sex, not much violence."

Shaw has no personal access to that longevity bee elixir. When he dies, his entire collection of Sherlockiana will be left to the University of Minnesota, where he occasionally lectures, and which already owns more Holmes-oriented research than any other American university.

This amuses Shaw, who feels that both the Holmes books and today's Holmes' scholars take much joy in poking fun at the ponderous, solemn, self-important nature of the academic world.

"Just think," he grinned, "200 years from now, some dull, dry fellow will be researching literature and he'll come across my collection. He'll be convinced that all that Holmes business must have been some sort of cult, and that John Bennett Shaw must have been a priest of that cult."

Everyone sitting around Shaw laughed, Shaw most of all.

The game will still be afoot in 200 years if the Sherlockians have anything to say about it.

Crypto-Cross

by Judah Koolyk

A Crossword with a Cryptogram Message

To solve this two-part puzzle, first complete the regular crossword below. Then transfer the letters from the appropriate squares of the grid to the blanks at the bottom of the page, according to the letter/number coordinates. (For example, the first blank, K11, should be filled with the letter from the

box in row K, column 11.) The letters in the blanks will then form a cipher (a quote and its source), to be solved as a regular cryptogram. After solving the cryptogram, use the same substitutions for the letters in the shaded diagonal of the grid to get a bonus message. *Answer Drawer, page 72*

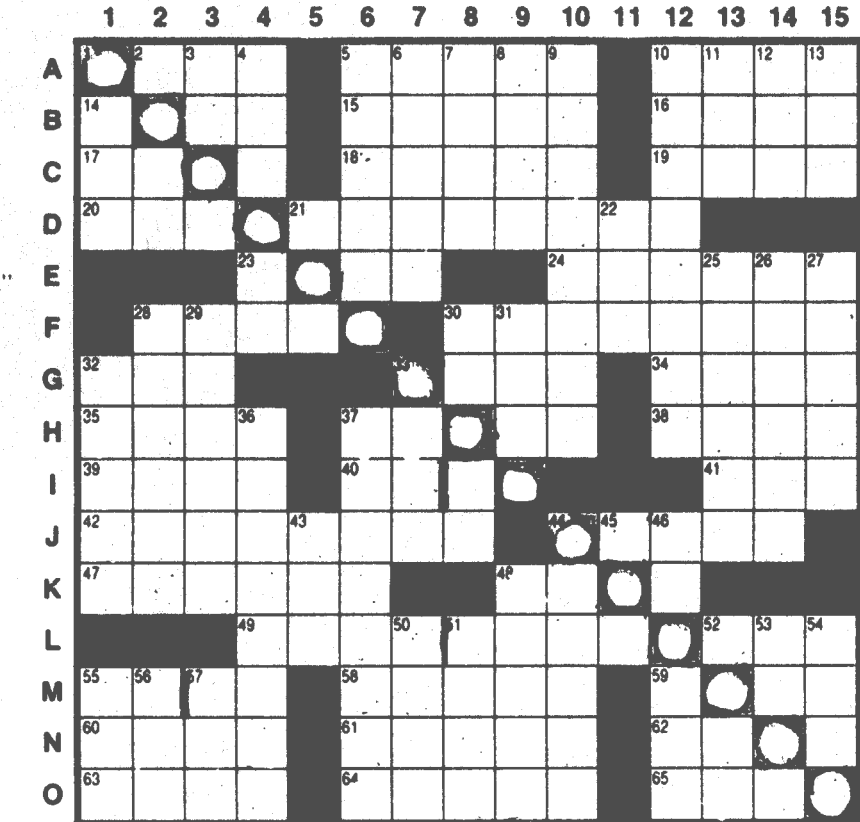
ACROSS

- 1 Float through the air
- 5 Elevator passageway
- 10 Shoots with a laser
- 14 Concerning: 2 wds.
- 15 Kind of top or tennis
- 16 Brainstorm
- 17 Let it be, to a proofreader
- 18 Apportion
- 19 Promotable chesspiece
- 20 Message on a pyramid
- 23 Summer drinks
- 24 French schools
- 28 Bouquet holders
- 30 Shriill sounding
- 32 Transgression
- 33 Fill an opening
- 34 Like custard
- 35 Numerical prefix
- 37 Stinking
- 38 Go boating
- 39 Cowardly Lion portrayer
- 40 "The jig ____": 2 wds.
- 41 *Uno plus due*
- 42 Like a savanna
- 44 Bonbon
- 47 Tel Aviv's locale
- 48 Nobel-winning chemist Otto

- 49 French civil law: 2 wds.
- 55 "And away ____!" (Gleason line): 2 wds.
- 58 Poet's Muse
- 59 ____ uncertain terms: 2 wds.
- 60 Was in the red
- 61 Stair part
- 62 Explorer Hedin
- 63 "The Way We ____"
- 64 Oodles
- 65 Novice

DOWN

- 1 Desire
- 2 Con man?
- 3 On the house
- 4 Aquarium fishes
- 5 Play grounds?
- 6 Corridors
- 7 Skillfully
- 8 Play that fails
- 9 Tied up
- 10 Address endings: 2 wds.
- 11 Nabokov novel
- 12 Sunday seat
- 13 Juan or Jose
- 21 Horatian verse
- 22 Here, to Henri
- 25 Papal envoy
- 26 Circled
- 27 Panache
- 28 Chapel heads
- 29 Pollen-bearing part
- 30 Normal position



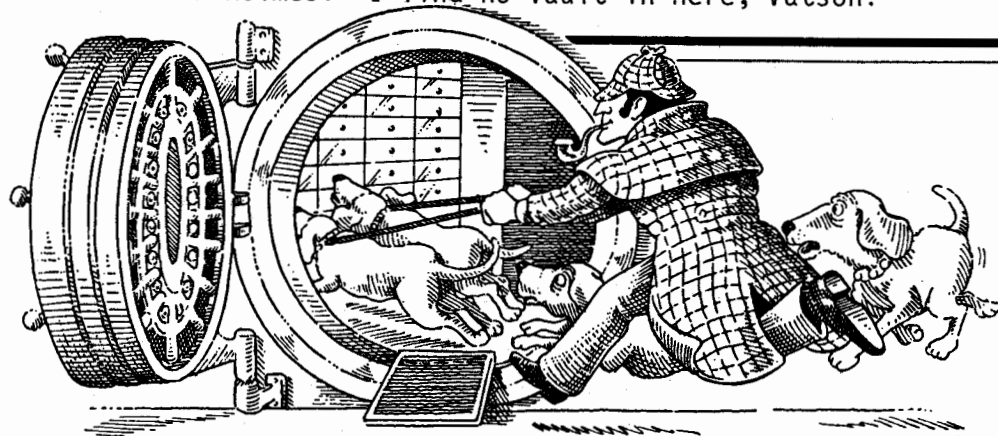
- 31 Stumble
- 43 Summer sign
- 48 Despised
- 53 Unique person
- 32 Conductor Georg
- 44 Tastes
- 50 Newsman Severeid
- 54 Naughty deed
- 33 Pianist Myra
- 45 He's on first
- 51 Shuttle launchers
- 55 "Golly!"
- 36 Call number?: 2 wds.
- 46 Way to avoid the draft
- 52 One deadly sin
- 56 Ram's mate
- 37 Fly catchers?

CRYPTOGRAM

K11 G2 O8 F12 A2 J7 H10 F3 A9 N8 C3 G14
 N2 H15 A12 K1 B7 N4 M15 C8 E5 H4 J10 E11
 H13 F8 L5 I1 B M3 E12 J14 O1 M12 C14 O9 C2 H2 B15
 L4 C6 O13 E13 M1 A8 M10 F6 A3 C10 L14 L9 D10 G8 C13
 K6 B10 K9 M8 D9 L10 J5 D4 K4 I15 J11 A13
 B8 L12 I3 D11 L8 J1 G7 I8 E15 A7 B9 K3 H8 D7 M6 J2
 C7 D1 O15 B12 K10 L8 A14 M13 A1 N13
 H14 G3 C12 H6 E4 D5

[Answer may be requested from the Recorder]

Herr Holmes: "I vind no vault in here, Vatson!"



Sherlock Holmes

130 sleuths focus on his exploits

HOBOKEN, N.J. (AP) — Master detective Sherlock Holmes may or may not be keeping bees in his native England, but he's certainly keeping the attention of more than 130 amateur sleuths attending a workshop here.

The revelation that Holmes lives, at the ripe old age of 131, crowned a mountain of lesser facts compiled by the "Sherlockians" who gathered for a three-day meeting on their favorite subject.

The exclusive focus of the "Sherlockians" are the 60 stories believed to have been penned from 1887 to 1927 by a British eye doctor, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Believed, that is, by outsiders, but not by experts led by the Baker Street Irregulars, the 275-member American society of arch-Sherlockians.

The Irregulars, named after Holmes' London flat at 221-B Baker Street, know that Doyle was only the literary agent for Dr. John Watson, the detective's faithful friend and storyteller, said conference organizer John Bennett Shaw, a senior fellow at the University of Minnesota.

The workshop, held on the campus of Stevens Institute of Technology across the Hudson River from New York City, ends today.

According to "the writings on the writings," as Sherlockians call their massive body of analytical literature, the good doctor himself thronged the exploits of his clever companion, Shaw said yesterday.

"Once you lose sight of the fact it's a spoof, you'll probably be locked up ... or maybe you'll get in Congress," said Shaw, who's running his 17th Sherlockian seminar. "We're not quite as crazy as we appear."

Sherlockians tend to wear T-shirts with slogans like "Sherlock Lives." They send each other Sherlockian Christmas cards and spend their vacations trying to find places like Tredanick Wollas, where Holmes' "Adventure of the Devil's Foot" took place.

To them, Holmes is "the master" as in master detective, Watson is "the author" and Doyle, knighted for his work, is relegated to "the agent."

Playhouse solves Sherlock Holmes

Chicago Tribune, Friday, September 27, 1985

staging

By H. Lee Murphy

ASTOUNDING!



A Pre-Publication Notice!

Announcing a new chapbook by the P.P. of F. to debut at the Fall Gathering on October 26.

"Dirty Pool" a philatelic/ numismatic S'ian pastiche and, by Ben Wood, "Philatelic Philandering". Pre-

"He (Doyle) was apparently a friend of Watson's," Shaw explained.

And how does Holmes himself view all this attention, surviving as he did a fall from a cliff with arch-enemy James Moriarty in "The Final Problem?"

The great detective enjoys it as a break from his beekeeping in Sussex, England, Shaw said with confidence. The Sherlockian said he received a jar hand-labeled "Holmes Honey" a few Christmases ago.

Any number of dramatists have attempted to adapt the Sherlock Holmes tales to the stage; Arthur Conan Doyle himself tried a few plays around the turn of the century. Yet many of these versions have failed to create much interest; detractors complain that the brilliantly eccentric detective's Victorian milieu is too talky, too intellectually fantastic for modern audiences.

Riverfront Playhouse's artistic director, David Morris, weighs in with a new account of "The Hound of the Baskervilles" that, while it doesn't overcome all the faults of its predecessors, certainly is a provocative addition to the Holmesian canon.

Morris considered two other published stage adaptations of "Baskervilles," which runs 125 pages or so as a long short story, but rejected each for straying too far from the intent of the original. He then spent a month or so over the summer devising his own version, borrowing as much of Doyle's dialogue as he could.

Titled "Sherlock Holmes and the Curse of the Baskervilles," Morris' play eschews Holmes' Baker Street London digs altogether—a significant part of the setting for the original story—in favor of a consolidation of the action in the eerie Devonshire moors populated by the cursed Baskerville clan. For a small storefront theater with limited stage, such a choice doubtless was unavoidable.

"Curse of the Baskervilles" plays at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday through Oct. 19 at the Riverfront Playhouse, 11 Water St. Mall, Aurora. Call 896-1246.

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