

NEW The Medical Bulletin

An Irregular Publication of Doctor Watson's Neglected Patients
A Scion Society of The Baker Street Irregulars

Series 2, Number 4
Lab Technician - Stan Moskal

Fall, 1992
Editor - Larry Feldman

THE MEDICAL BULLETIN BOARD



The big news this time around is our upcoming annual Sherlock Homes Birthday Dinner scheduled for January 9th. As usual, this \$20 per plate event will be the Sherlockian event of the season, so if you haven't reserved your seat by now you'd better call Steve Robinson (303-794-9709) immediately to insure a place at The Denver Press Club for the festivities.

The speaker this year will be Tom Griffin, an honest to god Lab Criminologist for the Colorado Bureau of Investigation. It turns out that Tom is a real Sherlock Holmes fan (you mean there's someone who isn't?) and has expressed a real interest in participating with THE PATIENTS. He is eager to talk to us about the modern world of chemistry and detective work and how it relates to similar work that The Master Detective did about a century ago. You won't want to miss it.

Of course, there will also be the usual toasts. Or will there? Long time participants are aware that there is an ancient tradition at this annual event of toasting various people who have or had some relationship the world's first consulting detective. These toasts have, in the past, been in the form of "off the cuff" remarks, well planned speeches, verse, and even haiku (I'm stretching a point here, but it is possible!). However, last year I noticed that most of the toast givers were all the usual suspects. Not so this year! I will be calling various members, both new and old, and recruit them to toast specific characters from The Canon. So beware! And, if I don't call you, feel free to plan to make a toast anyway, as any and all will be collectively invited to jump in at some point in the evening. Again, the rules are you can toast anyone or anything living, dead, or otherwise engaged, as long as you can relate it to the life and times of Sherlock Holmes.

Another matter that is always dealt with at the dinner is the election of DWNP board members. This year, the positions of Chief Surgeon and Staff Surgeon as well as several Intern positions are to be elected. For those neophytes among you, I should explain here that "Chief Surgeon" and "Staff Surgeon" positions are roughly equivalent with those of "President" and "Vice President" in most organizations. "Interns" basically attend board meetings, vote on important issues, and help

Continued on page 2

FROM THE BOTTOM OF THE BAG

By John Stephenson

Once again we open our deep dark satchel, slowly reaching for some new discovery. A recent trip to Boston has filled our bag, so it is not long before we grasp an item of some importance. As we bring it up and into the light, we regard the item that is, perhaps, unknown to some of you.

The small book is entitled Brillig, Sonnets and Other Verse by Vincent Starrett. The book was published by Dierkes Press, Chicago, 1949 and is signed by Starrett with a dedication to a near legendary Sherlockian. "To Jay Finley Christ, B.S.I. for interim study - in friendship."

Among the sonnets are two that are of particular interest.

The Adventure of the Cat and the Fiddle

At first, we may suppose, it was a night
Like any other in the village year.
Calmly, no doubt, upon its listening ear
Fell the accustomed silence, left and right; until
The cat came fiddling, do si do,

Continued on Page 2



Continued from Page 1
THE MEDICAL BULLETIN BOARD

produce events. Most of these positions are wide open, so if you have any interest in being a board member or any questions about same, please contact our current Staff Surgeon Steve Robinson at 303-794-9709 ASAP.

Also, at the Birthday Dinner, available for the first, will be our official DWNP bottles of wine, fresh from Sherlock Holmes' special reserve! What's that? Do I hear some doubt to the wine's authenticity? If you don't believe me, just read it for yourself on the custom made label with a beautiful new drawing featuring our old club symbol, the cobwebbed doctor's bag. This sure-fire collector's item comes in both red and white for a mere \$10 per bottle. Those interested come prepared, since a limited supply is available.

If you were present at September's annual Doctor Watson's Birthday Picnic in Congress Park, then you missed a fun day of food, sunshine, croquet, and great conversation. Once again, Nancy Iona's picnic baskets were the hit of the day. Special thanks also goes to Intern Marty Ernsteen for producing a fine event with the largest attendance in years. Thanks Marty!

One of the more exciting results that Marty produced at this year's picnic was the attendance some representatives of "The Denver Branch of The English-Speaking Union of the United States." My understanding is that this national organization is dedicated to the celebration of the language that both Shakespeare and Doyle used so well. Among those present at the picnic was the organization's Executive Director Dame Beryle A. Sykes-Windsor who proved to be as elegant and charming as one might hope. In case any of our membership are interested in participating with this interesting society, I will print their address, phone number and a calendar of some upcoming events in a special box elsewhere in this issue.

I hope you weren't one of the unfortunate few that missed November 19th's annual Sherlock Holmes Film Evening at the Eugene Field Library. Intern Bill Dorn did a swell job arranging for two classic though seldom seen old silent films. The first was "The Copper Beeches (1913)" starring M. Trelville as Holmes and "The Man With The Twisted Lip (1921)" with Ellie Norwood as the great detective. People also enjoyed participating in a "Jeopardy" styled quiz on Holmes movies, particularly Chief Surgeon John Stephenson, the hands down winner with over \$2100 in his "Jeopardy" bank (second prize came in at \$600). The room was packed and at least three new members joined the NEGLECTED PATIENTS that evening. Well done, Bill!

Membership renewal time is here! Just for fun, I'm including a copy of our new membership application designed by board member Marty Ernsteen. Don't delay in sending yours in if you wish to be sure that you will receive a copy of all event information and, of course, every single issue of THE NEW MEDICAL BULLETIN. Miss it not!

Continued from Page 1
BOTTOM OF THE BAG

Telling his longing in a gypsy tune,
Whereat the cow leaped nimbly
o'er the moon
And strange events went forward,
as we know.

What shall we say of this peculiar
matter?

There are two schools of thought;
one holds the cat
May have been drinking, and the
other that
There was connivance with the
spoon and platter.
One curious incident remains to
mention:
The dog did nothing to attract
attention.

The Adventure of the Empty
Cupboard

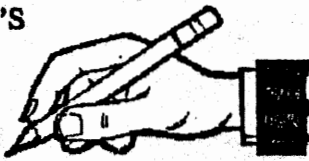
The burglary occurred, it can be
shown,
Sometime between the hours of
four and six.
The Hubbard woman, while a bit
prolix,
Is certain of the times. The stolen
bone,
Which at the stroke of four, was
plainly seen,
At six o'clock had vanished from
its place:
Thus, it is clear, a prima facie
case
rests against someone in the
hours between.

This is our problem. Now let us
assume
Some of the data to have been
suppressed.
This was an inside job, as you
have guessed -
There was no strange intruder in
the room.
In the bare cupboard certain prints
were found:
They were the footprints of a
gigantic hound!

Taking a moment to savor the
wit and the talent that was
uniquely the great Starrett's, we
close our bag until next time.



EDITOR'S
NOTES
by Larry
Feldman



In reaction to our previous issue of our humble newsletter, we received a letter from world renowned collector Peter Blau. A communication from Peter is always worthy of note, due largely to the fact that his is the distinction of being one of the great Sherlockian collectors of our time. The knowledge and resources that he has to draw on make his thoughtful comments always of unique depth and breath. His letter is reproduced here.

Dear Larry:

Many thanks for the second and third issues of *The New Medical Bulletin*, which are nicely done. And of course I'm glad to see that the *Patients* are publishing again -- the last issue of *The Medical Bulletin* received here was v. 14, n. 5 (winter 1989) -- have I missed anything other than n. 1 of your newsletter? And could I impose upon you for a copy of your n. 1?

Your articles on "The Three Canons" are interesting indeed, starting with *Hoby/Holly*, which I don't think anyone else has noticed before. That's the sort of thing that is fun to check with the manuscript (which on can't do in this case, since the manuscript of *The Gloria Scott* has never been reported).

The nationality of the *Shafters* actually is the other

way round, however, as demonstrated by the manuscript. They were German, but became Swedish in the British versions (due, as you noted, to anti-German feeling at the time of the War).

Unfortunately, the manuscript of "The Reigate Puzzle" also has never been reported. But Ann Byerly, in her article in *The Baker Street Miscellanea* (autumn 1983), notes that Sidney Paget's account-book entry has "7 drawings S.H. (Reigate Puzzle)", indicating that the American version of the title may in fact match the manuscript. The story title in *The Strand Magazine*, by the way, is "The Reigate Squire" (giving the story three different titles in print).

The manuscripts can be great fun, as with the story first titled "The Little Tin Box" -- changed to "The Adventure of the Second Chip" and then to "The Problem of Rushmere Bridge" and then to "The Problem of Thor's Bridge" -- which made it into print of course as "The Problem of Thor Bridge".

With best regards,
Peter

See what we mean? Peter, we're glad you enjoyed our humble periodical and your scholarly comments are most appreciated. The third, and perhaps final, installment of "The Three Canons" will appear in a future issue. As to previous issues, we believe you have been receiving THE LITMUS PAPER which was

our previous incarnation. We will try to supply you with issue n. 1 (gratis to you, natch) as soon as we get the chance. In the meantime, if you want to insure getting future issues of *The Medical Bulletin* (and this goes for everyone), make sure you renew your membership in *The Patients*. Info on how to do this appears elsewhere in this issue.

And speaking of our last issue, congratulations to member Sherrie Belnap for sending in all of the correct answers to Ellen Reffel's "A Sherlockian Mid-Term". We are not surprised at all that Sherrie was the only one to send in a list of complete and correct answers as she is a brilliant young woman. She has also promised us a scholarly paper for our humble newsletter. So far, however, she has only furnished us only with excuses. Well, Sherrie?

And speaking of scholarly papers, we are most pleased to include in this issue the first part of Thom Utecht's definitive treatment of the master detective and tobacco. This piece has seen publication only on the east coast, so it should be a new and welcome treat for all.

And that's it for this time. Please send any submissions or letters of comment to:

Larry Feldman
533 Jackson Street
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303-333-3859



SHERLOCK HOLMES AND THE INFERNAL MACHINISTS

by Larry Feldman

A computer game for fans of Sherlock Holmes and Agatha Christie? Seems unlikely, somehow. And yet, there are such games out there, and *The Infernal*



Machinists are willing to play them.

Most people when they think of computer games think of the mindless arcade of the "Super Mario Brothers" or "Pac Man". There are actually many other types of games designed for the home computer (as opposed to a video game system such as Nintendo) that are more of a thinking man's game. The kind I like the best are referred to as "An Adventure Game". In games of this sort the player takes on the role of a character in a story. On the computer screen, you see him interact with characters and situations. As a player you control where he goes, who he talks to, what he chooses to say, what he looks at, what he takes, and how he uses what he has in a three dimensional setting. It's up to the player to figure out how to maneuver the character through to a successful conclusion.

These games can be complicated and quite challenging. Historically, they have often been set in a fantasy or science fiction genre, such as in the famous "King's Quest" or "Space Quest" series. Playing one of these games is kind of like being inside a movie, though it can take weeks, or even months, to complete a game. For example, Sierra's "Robin Hood: Conquest of the Longbow" took me about a month to get through, while Interplay's "Star Trek, 25th Anniversary Edition" took me almost twice as long.

For the past month or so Ron Lies and I have gotten together to play Sierra's "Laura Bow: The Dagger of Amon-Ra", the second installment in the Laura Bow computer mystery series. We have gotten so interested and captivated by this game series that I have decided to make our club official, with a title inspired by two old Sherlockian pastiches (I'll let you guess which ones). Membership in the club is free, though attendance at meetings optional.

"Amon-Ra" stars amateur detective Laura Bow, who's kind of a cross between "The Hardy Boys" and "Nancy Drew", though her adventures

are more reminiscent of "Hercule Poirot". Set in the 1920s, in this story Laura has taken a job as a newspaper reporter in New York City. Her first assignment is to cover a museum benefit and the mysterious theft of a controversial dagger unearthed in a "King Tut" type excavational event. The story is split up into six acts, like an old fashioned mystery play. In the first act the player maneuvers Laura around old New York as she begins to interact with characters who have their own personalities, alibis, and attitudes while handling personal problems that will set her up for the rest of the game. In the second act, Laura attends the benefit at a Natural History Museum where she gets a chance to question more suspects and overhear very interesting conversations. She even catches a glimpse of the actual "Dagger of Amon-Ra" hidden among the imitation daggers in the museum souvenir shop. Unfortunately, she is escorted out of the shop by security before she can explain. Of course, when she returns later it is gone.

And then, someone is murdered. After examining the scene of the crime, Laura finds herself and the suspects (now the third act) locked in the spooky museum overnight. As the plot thickens, more people are found dead, and deadly traps and mysterious behaviors abound. Can Laura survive the night and solve the mystery? We'll let you know.

A new game that will interest all Sherlock and Ripper fans is Electronic Arts' "The Lost Files of Sherlock Holmes", a mystery in which Holmes and Watson investigate a series of murders that may or may not mean the return of Jack the Ripper. Holmes and Watson plus many other characters (such as Lestrade, Gregson, and the Baker Street Irregulars) and settings (such as the Baker Street, Scotland Yard, and Covent Garden) are excellently and authentically reproduced as Holmes and Watson travel by cab through London, tracking down every lead and making use of all of Holmes' skills including his ability to analyze materials chemically to provide new avenues of investigation. The graphics are impressive and the original soundtrack does much in creating the appropriate atmosphere. The ad for the game promises over 30 hours of game play, so if you'd like to view it, we should be working on this one for quite a while.

And that's my invitation. If you'd like to attend one of these challenging mystery evenings, let me know. I'll invite you to the next regular meeting of THE INFERNAL MACHINISTS.

**DENVER BRANCH OF
THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING UNION
OF THE UNITED STATES**

As promised in "The Medical Bulletin Board", here is a list of some of the Union's upcoming events. By the time that this publication reaches you, it will probably be too late to attend their **GALA CHRISTMAS DINNER** held at the University Club on December 9th, featuring Judy Pankratz with her Musical Marionettes performing "Christmas in Colorado", but here are some other events that you can still get in on.

January, 1993 Cocktail Party. Place and date to be announced.

Sunday, February 14, 1993 Tea honoring new members

March 16, 1993 Evelyn Wrench Scholar, Richard Lederman, author, speaker and broadcaster.

April, 1993 Scholarship Dinner at the University Club.

May 3, 1993 Donald Young, Safari Guide in Africa, Speaker and authority on Sir Richard Burton.

June, 1993 The Queen's Birthday Party

I really don't see how it's possible to be a Sherlockian and not be an Anglophile as well. If this sounds like your English cup of tea, I urge you to contact the Union. All the information you will need is below.

Address:
6000 East Evans Avenue, Bldg 2,
Suite 339
Denver, CO 80222

Telephone: 692-8177

President: Roger A. Reeves
Executive Director: Dame Beryle A. Sykes-Windsor
Office Hours: 10 A.M. to 3 P.M.
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday

**ANSWERS TO ELLEN REFFEL'S "A SHERLOCKIAN
MID-TERM"**

by Sherrie Belnap

[Editor's note - Sherrie was the only one to send in a complete list of correct answers to the challenging quiz designed by teacher Ellen Reffel to perplex her 7th grade students. I present those answers to you here, so that you may check them with your own.]

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1. Doctor Watson | 14. Violin |
| 2. Professor Moriarty | 15. Cocaine |
| 3. Sherlock Holmes | 16. Hawk nose |
| 4. Mrs. Hudson | 17. Thin |
| 5. The Woman | 18. Stout |
| 6. Mycroft Holmes | 19. Reichenbach Falls |
| 7. Inspector Lestrade | 20. Magnifying Glass |
| 8. Scotland Yard | 21. Inverness Cape |
| 9. 221 B Baker Street | 22. Deerstalker |
| 10. The Baker Street Irregulars | 23. Deduce |
| 11. London | 24. Elementary |
| 12. Chemicals | 25. The game is afoot! |
| 13. Pipe | |

MOMENTARY

*Why did I do it?
For many the hour
I have metered the cost
from every perspective I know:
width, height, and depth;
hue, shade or tint;
bitter, sweet, sour, and salt.
Benefit too I have scanned straight and skew,
every angle obtuse and acute.
Cost-benefit, and benefit-cost.
I've balanced each fact with precision.
Again in the end
I know, yes, I know
that the cost is too great
as I judge from my perch here and now.
But time has its way of diluting the urges
which rose in that moment with precipitate surges.
It was my mind against moment.
That bestial moment!
It shows its snide face all too often.
When next it appears, will I fight? who will win?
Am I letting a moment begin?*



S. II.

SHERLOCK'S SMOKING HABIT

by Thom Utecht

Part I

Holmes' smoking is one of the few traditional identifications that has some Canonical validity. The deerstalker cap



and the Inverness cape may or may not be valid, depending on how one interprets Watson's words. Despite this, they have been often used symbolize and identify the Master. The use of a pipe is the only one which we know is correct, and even here, there is the mystery of the calabash, which is never mentioned, but may have been smoked...more about that later.

In *THE YELLOW FACE*, Holmes says of pipes that "Nothing has more individuality save, perhaps, watches and bootlaces." The implications of this postulate is that we can learn much about Holmes from his pipes.

One of my favorite notations in Baring-Gould's *Annotated Sherlock Holmes*, and attributed to John L. Hicks(1), is "No one can doubt that the Master preferred a pipe to cigars and cigarettes. He smokes a pipe in 35 of the cases and probably does in 3 others, and in still another talks about his pipe without, as far as the reader knows, actually lighting it. He smokes nothing but a pipe in 29, or, if one includes the doubtful instances, 32. He indulges in cigars definitely in 8 tales and probably in one other, and in cigarettes definitely in nine and probably in one other. In only 10 cases does he smoke cigars and/or cigarettes but not a pipe."

It seems obvious that a pipe was the chosen favorite of Holmes when using tobacco. Holmes did many things that a pipe smoker of today would cringe at. But perhaps here we have done the Master an injustice. To properly illustrate this, however, I must take you into the wonderful world of the pipe smoker. This is unfortunately necessary, since lately there seems to be a movement to stop smoking, and while it will probably not catch on, as most radical and really unfashionable movements do not, it has resulted in an appalling lack of education regarding pipes and tobacco use, which impedes a non-smoker's attempt to study the Master through his pipe. The pipe is a simple instrument. The tobacco is

tamped down in the bowl and lit, and the smoke travels through the shank and stem into the smoker's mouth. By puffing, the tobacco is consumed, leaving only ash. Additionally, a layer of carbon is built up in the bowl, which further enhances the cooling process and makes smoking more pleasurable. The amount of ash left, as well as the amount of unburnt tobacco, known as a dottle, left in the heel or foot of the pipe bowl, depends on several factors - namely the type of tobacco, the type of pipe used, and the smoker. All these three elements are key, if we are to understand Holmes' smoking habits. First, let's look at the tobacco. Most will recall the quote from *THE ENGINEER'S THUMB*, with Holmes "smoking his before-breakfast pipe, which was composed of all the plugs and dottles left from his smokes of the day before, all carefully dried and collected on the corner of the mantelpiece." Truly, one of the most disgusting descriptions in literature.

The burning rate of tobacco depends on four things: how dry it is, how rapidly the smoker puffs, the way the tobacco is cut, and how it is packed in the bowl. The cut of the tobacco will affect the rate of burning. The finer the cut, the faster the burning rate. The amount of moisture contained in the tobacco affects it as well, with drier burning faster than moister. While this seems obvious, many a novice pipe smoker has not realized that a fine cut curled tobacco will burn faster and hotter than a cake tobacco that is moist, and has suffered for it.

A tobacco that burns fast, due to the amount of moisture it contains as well as its cut, will be quite hot. A stringier cut, such as a cavendish, will burn slower and cooler. Additionally, the larger the pipe bowl, the more heat from smoking is absorbed, thus cooling the smoke. And then there is the smoker. If he puffs furiously, and generates a great deal of saliva, then the amount of moisture built up at the bottom of the pipe becomes so great that the tobacco is unburned, a "wet" smoke. If the puffing is regular, and in keeping with the type of tobacco and type of pipe, the tobacco will be almost entirely consumed.

One cannot talk of Holmes' smoking without mentioning shag tobacco, which is actually a type of cut versus a specific tobacco. Shag is a finely shredded, through coarse tobacco, and it is found in many commercial pipe blends. It is generally dry, and burns rapidly. Joseph Fume,

Continued on the following page

Continued from the preceding page

in "A Paper: - Of Tobacco; Treating of the Rise, Progress, Pleasures, and Advantages of Smoking", published in London in 1839, said "Shag tobacco has obtained its distinctive name from its being so finely cut that the filaments appear like so much shag, the old name for short and matted wool or hair. It is manufactured of the strongest and very worst kind of leaf, and is chiefly consumed by the poorer classes. People of a nervous temperament, who take little exercise, ought to particularly to avoid smoking this kind of tobacco, as its frequent use is apt to induce paralytic affections.."

At first glance, it would appear that shag tobacco would be one type that Holmes should avoid, if we are to take Fume's warning to heart. For although Holmes was "always in training", as Watson reported in *THE SOLITARY CYCLIST* and "a good runner", as in *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*, he seldom took "exercise for its own sake" (*THE YELLOW FACE*), and his restlessness has been commented on frequently in the Canon (*THE RED HEADED LEAGUE*, *THE SIGN OF THE FOUR*, *THE PROBLEM OF THOR BRIDGE*). Could it be that Holmes, in those early years when he scrapped to earn his bread and cheese, developed a taste for shag, this tobacco of the poorer classes, and simply kept it, even though he could afford more milder blends later on? In *A SCANDAL IN BOHEMIA* he received two fills of shag for helping the ostlers in the Serpentine Mews with their work. But there is further evidence to sift through. Jack Tracy(2) defines shag as a strong, coarsely cut tobacco, which is certainly different from the fine cut described above.

The reason for this has to do with our changing language. In Victorian England, the term "shag" applied to a strong coarse cut tobacco. Somewhere along the line, shag went from referring to a fine cut, to this coarse cut, and then back to the original meaning. This then would change one's opinion as to the suitability of shag for Holmes.

A coarse cut tobacco, unlike a fine cut, burns slowly. This feature would suit Holmes' smoking style, which was nervous to say the least. We've seen that Holmes, in *THE MAN WITH THE TWISTED LIP*, consumed an ounce of shag in one night, and in *SILVER BLAZE*, charged and recharged his pipe with the strongest black tobacco. For someone with this nervous energy, this constant puffing would result in a

very wet smoke. Either this is a bit of exaggeration, and Holmes had two pipes, which Watson forgot to mention, or didn't notice; or Holmes simply wiped out his pipe and continued to smoke. If Holmes had not done this, the amount of moisture built up in the pipe would have rendered it unsmokable by the third or fourth pipeful. Even allowing for this possibility, my own postulation is that Holmes did have another pipe. The amount of heat and moisture buildup would have made the pipe taste most foul, and hardly conducive to contemplative thinking.

Because of the amount of heat and moisture absorbed, it is recommended that a pipe rest in-between smokes, which is why many pipe smokers carry two pipes if they smoke almost constantly. This does not apply, of course, to renowned Sherlockian Peter Blau, who emulates Holmes by constantly smoking one pipe, which he wipes out with a napkin and then refills and smokes. I mentioned to Peter that he was doing exactly what every pipe book said you should not do, and he replied that he had never found a pipe book that made any sense when it came to filling and smoking the pipe. I agree with him there, since I have reviewed eight different books on pipe and pipe smoking, and each claims to have the last word on how one should pack and smoke a pipe. Each is slightly different, and I do it myself in my own unique way. If something has worked for me for twenty years, I don't think I need to fix it now. But these differences, or variations, underscore the reason that Holmes' smoking habits could be misunderstood, especially since times have changed since the 1890's, and the quality of pipes and tobacco has changed.

This brings us to the type of pipes Sherlock Holmes smoked.

CONTINUED IN A FUTURE ISSUE.

