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# VERMISSA DAILY HERALD

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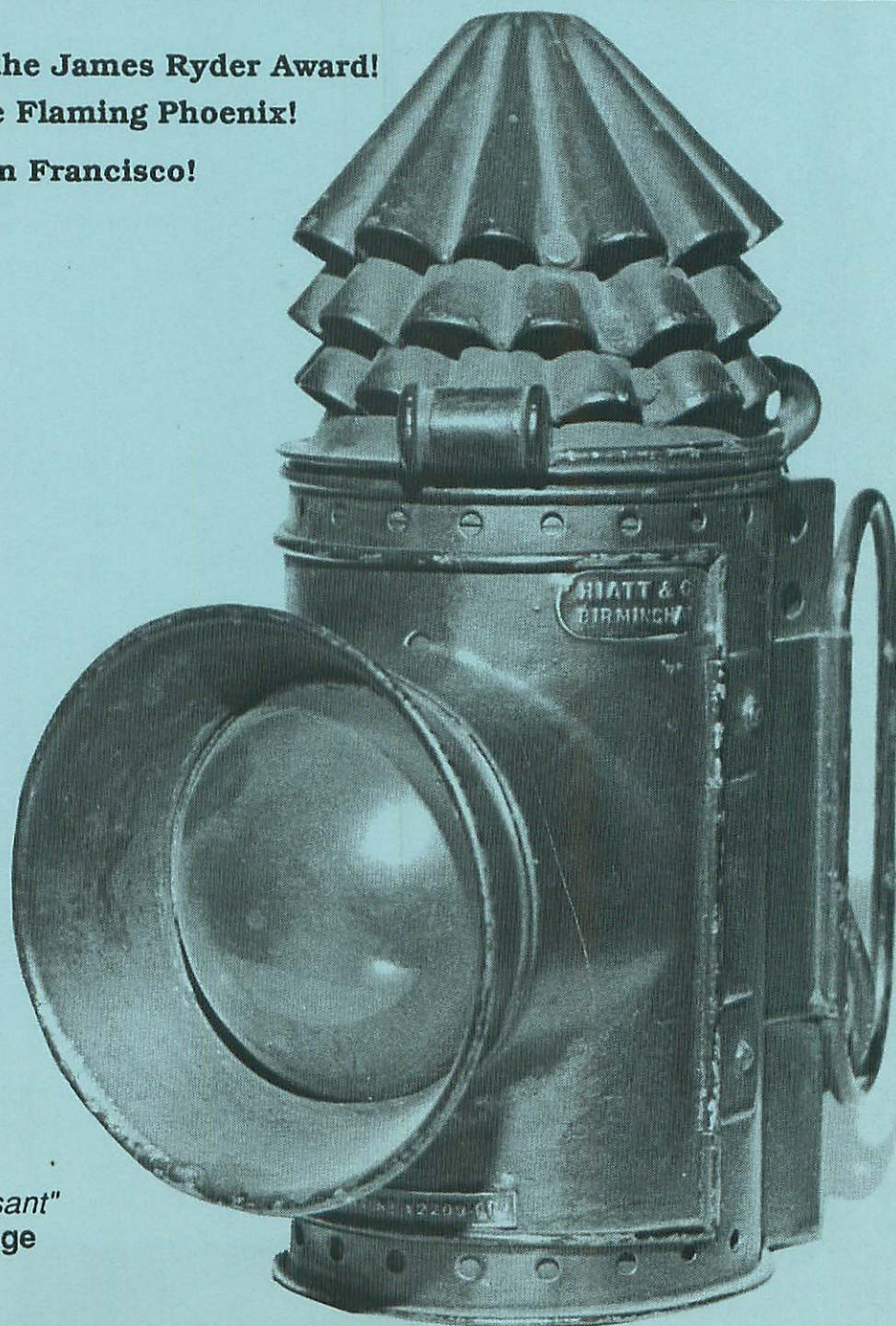
**In This Issue...**

**The First Winner of the James Ryder Award!**

**The Adventure of the Flaming Phoenix!**

**Sherlock Dines in San Francisco!**

**And Much More...**



*"Dark nights are unpleasant"*  
**The Scowrers Challenge**



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**A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF  
SHERLOCK HOLMES**

Sherlock Holmes, the greatest detective and perhaps the best and wisest man whom the English-speaking world has ever known, was born in 1854. He practiced as a private enquiry agent in London (chiefly at the immortal address of 221B Baker Street) from 1877 to 1891, when he was believed to have perished in the act of destroying the arch-criminal Professor Moriarty. In the third year he returned from the dead and resumed active practice until his retirement in 1903. Since that time he has devoted himself to beekeeping in the Sussex Downs (emerging from retirement to save the British Empire in 1914), and may, since his obituary has never been published, be still alive at an advanced age.

The world-famous accounts of his cases, from "A Study in Scarlet" (1887) to "The Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes" (1927), were written chiefly by his friend and associate Dr. John Harnish Watson (two accounts are by Holmes himself and two by questionable hands). Watson's skillful literary agent was his fellow physician Arthur Conan Doyle, himself a writer of some reputation, especially as a historical novelist. The assertion by the agent's sons that their father "wrote" the cases and even that he "created" the character of Holmes is patently absurd.

This creed is the firm belief of most rational men, but in particular, it is the devout doctrine of:

**THE BAKER STREET IRREGULARS**

—Anthony Boucher  
1911-1968  
Founding Bodymaster  
The Scowrers &  
Molly Maguires



**WHO ARE THE IRREGULARS?**

The original Baker Street Irregulars were a band of street urchins employed by Sherlock Holmes as assistants. Their namesakes today are an informal association of admirers of Holmes, devoted to the enjoyment and study of the Holmesian Canon, to happy conviviality, and to the publication of a quarterly journal of *Holmesiana* and so many other books and pamphlets that it has been remarked, "Never has so much been written by so many for so few."

The present Irregulars came into being in 1934, under the tutelage of the late Christopher Morley, who was the organization's first and only Gasogene (or chairman), ably abetted by bookman Vincent Starrett and news analyst Elmer Davis. The original group of seven members has spread until there are at least a score of scion societies in the United States - with such names as "The Speckled Band" (Boston), "The Hounds of the Baskerville (sic)" (Chicago), "The Brothers Three" (Moriarty, New Mexico) - and many loosely affiliated groups abroad, notably in London, Tokyo and Copenhagen.

Irregulars come from all branches of life and range from librarians to astronauts.

.....



**THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY AREA  
IRREGULARS**

The Bay Area scion (chapter) of the B.S.I., known as "The Scowrers (after a secret society of terrorists in "The Valley of Fear") and Molly Maguires" of San Francisco, was founded in 1944 by bookmen Joseph Henry Jackson and Anthony Boucher. This group meets irregularly (approximately three times a year) for dinner, discussion, the reading of papers and frequent toasts. The membership includes such diverse occupations as journalist, bank vice-president, travel planner, broker, photographer, writer, and numerous doctors, lawyers, teachers, office workers and domestic scientists.

Your interest in Sherlock Holmes is the principal requirement for membership in this group. If you would like to obtain more information regarding membership in The Scowrers & Molly Maguires please send your inquiry, along with a stamped self-addressed envelope, to:

**The Scowrers & Molly Maguires  
Vermissa Valley Lodge 341  
Mount Eden, California 94537**

\* \* \* \* \*

**STANGER PROCRASTINATES  
(AGAIN)**

Actually, I cannot say that we have been procrastinating all that much. It is more like some unseen hand has directed circumstances that prevented us from finishing the *Herald*. (Moriarty, is that you?)

Tom Miller, your senior Stanger, has been dealing with one family emergency after another. I wonder if the Pinkerton agents he works with might have something to do with that.

The Stangers junior, Susan Warner and Ron White, have been busily pursuing the mysterious figure in the glass-plate negative. I mean that literally. This past June, Ron and Susan followed the trail through Portland, Tacoma, Seattle and Victoria. Along with copies of the photos they were tracing, there were two reference items they took. The first was Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's book, *Our Second American Adventure*, and the second was a set of railroad timetables from June of

1923. They returned with a volume of news articles and other documents while muttering something about finding the source of "Watson's faulty memory." Look for an accounting of their travels at the January 1992 meeting.

\* \* \*

Meanwhile, the Scowrers have not been idle. Our traditional meetings in January and April were quite successful and were complimented with a June meeting. The purpose of this meeting was to view a special performance of *Sherlock Holmes and the Curse of the Sign of Four*. It is a delightful play with an interesting presentation. The dinner tables are set up among the various sets, so that the play takes place all around and among the audience. (See a full review of this play elsewhere in this issue.)

\* \* \*

With many thanks to Eugene Stovall, the new Scowrer pins are ready. They will be available at the meetings or by mail order through the Scowrer's mailing address. Check the Sherlockiana section for more details.

\* \* \*

Speaking of Sherlockian items... Brian Erickson, Charlotte Erickson and Ron White are putting the finishing touches on the 1992 calendar for 221B. Further information will be available as soon as the production work is finished.

\* \* \*

I am sure that you have noticed this issue of the *Herald* has undergone a few changes. Let the staff know whether you like the new look.

With Tom, Susan and Ron all occupied, have you wondered who is producing this column? Well, that's what computers are for.

— T. Boswell

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**NOTE:** Recent research has shown that Sherlock Holmes' first words to the religious leader of Nepal were not, "Hello Dali."

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# THE ADVENTURE OF THE FLAMING PHOENIX

## THE ADVENTURE OF THE FLAMING PHOENIX

by

William Moir

### PREFACE

Fellow Sherlockians:

Recently, (I am not at liberty to say under what circumstances) I came into possession of some notes made by Dr. John Watson concerning a hitherto unknown adventure which he shared with his friend, Sherlock Holmes.

Thinking that it might be of some interest to the Scowrers & Molly Maguires of San Francisco, I have expanded these notes into a narrative in what I hope is a somewhat reasonable approximation of the good doctor's style.

I have included a copy of the photograph which figures in this account, the original of which is in the Bancroft Library. Also, for those who may wish to know where I obtained the information which I used to "flesh out" the narrative, I am including a bibliography of my sources.

— W. M.

### Part I

Sometime in the future, I hope to be able to reveal the facts concerning the only case that ever took my friend Sherlock Holmes and me to America. I think it is safe to say that nothing but the pursuit of an old and deadly enemy would have brought Holmes out of retirement in the peaceful Sussex countryside to San Francisco in that fateful April of 1906.

It had all begun earlier when the failure of a family business in which I had invested heavily not only my own savings but those entrusted to me by my loving wife had brought me to San Francisco, where the American branch of Messrs. William Watson & Company, still solvent, gave hope of recouping some of my losses.

The bank, no doubt to impress me with its sound financial state, had booked me into a suite of rooms at the newly-opened luxurious St. Francis Hotel on Union Square, of which, concerning the day of its opening, the society editor of the Chronicle



newspaper had written, "There were at one time more than fifteen millionaires within a space of fifty square feet."

I was certainly out of my element, but as I reveled in the posh surroundings I could not help but wish that Sherlock Holmes — with whom I had spent so many enjoyable evenings in the great hotels and restaurants of London — were here to share them with me. Little did I know that my wish would be granted and that we would soon be reunited in this spectacular city by the Bay, and involved in one of our most exciting and danger-filled adventures.

Shortly after my arrival in the city, I was invited to dinner in a private suite of the hotel by Mr. Rudolph Spreckels, whose family had made a fortune in the sugar importing and refining business, and who was a director of the bank on which I pinned my hopes for the recovery of my modest fortune.

I had been puzzled by his invitation. Surely such an eminent member of San Francisco's financial and social community would not concern himself with the problems of a minor and unimportant investor in a firm which was no doubt only one small part of his numerous commercial interests. I could not help but think that there was something more to his invitation, and I soon learned that I was correct in my surmise.

As I entered the room, a half dozen formally attired gentlemen rose from their seats about a splendidly set table, and Mr. Spreckels introduced me to the men with whom Sherlock Holmes and I would soon be allied in a battle as momentous as the

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one we had fought against the criminal empire of Professor Moriarty.

"Dr. Watson, may I introduce former mayor James D. Phelan, Chronicle publisher Michael de Young, Bulletin editor Fremont Older, District Attorney William Langdon, Special Justice Department Prosecutor Francis J. Henney, and the 'star of the Secret Service' William J. Burns."

Hardly had I recovered from the astonishment of meeting such a distinguished group of men when Spreckels continued, "Gentlemen, meet Dr. John Watson who, I trust, along with his distinguished associate, Sherlock Holmes, will join us in the crusade to rid our great and beloved city of the vile scourge which has overtaken it!"

Before I could stammer out the many questions that came tumbling into my head, he continued, "Time for questions later, doctor, and I promise you that they will be answered to your satisfaction. But first, let me introduce you to our second guest, who has just this afternoon arrived in the city."

At these words, a figure who had been sitting in a deep armchair with his back to us, rose to face me. He was dressed in the uniform of a British naval commander and wore the style of beard popular with the officers of that service.

"Dr. Watson--Commander Vernet."

"Vernet?" I said, staring at my fellow-guest. "That name is familiar to me."

"Oh?" he replied. "In what connection may I ask?"

"In connection with the family background of an old friend—"

I broke off with a start, for suddenly I had guessed who it was standing before me in one of his usual masterful disguises, and my guess was confirmed when, with a chuckle I had heard so many times and in a voice I knew so well, he said, "Watson, old fellow, you are improving. You saw through me, didn't you?"

"Yes, Holmes, but—what—how—?"

"All in good time, doctor," interposed Mr. Spreckels, "but first—dinner."

Dinner is a poor word to describe our meal. It was a feast, and one I will not soon

forget, served by impeccably trained waiters and presided over by the legendary master chef, Victor, himself. When it was finished, we moved into an adjoining sitting room and settled into comfortable leather chairs (how I was reminded of the Diogenes Club!) to enjoy brandy and cigars.

"Well, doctor," said our host, "I can see that you are bursting with questions concerning the reason for this meeting. I am going to let Fremont explain. He has a way with words, especially where our mayor and his political cronies are concerned."

This remark elicited laughter from the group, in which the newspaper editor joined. What followed was a passionate speech, punctuated only by nods and exclamations of assent from the others.

"I don't know how much you have heard or read back in England about the situation here in San Francisco, gentlemen, but this city —our city— is in the grip of a plague of evil, crime and corruption which would make, if you will pardon me, what you fought against in London seem like a Pacific Grove Methodist camp meeting!"

What followed was indeed a shocking account of thievery and murder along the Barbary Coast and in the Tenderloin district, gambling, opium trafficking and the selling of young girls into slavery and forced prostitution in Chinatown, abetted by bribery and graft among the police and in City Hall.

Rising to his feet, the lean, Six-foot tall Older, his flowing moustache shaking like a battle flag, went on, "All of this, Dr. Watson, Mr. Holmes, headed by a corrupt mayor named Eugene Schmitz and a slimy political boss named Abe Ruef—"

At this point, former mayor Phelan broke in, "Whoa, Older, whoa. Save some of those passionate words for your next editorial. I think Dr. Watson and Mr. Holmes have got the picture."

"I agree," added Michael de Young. "What they need to know is why this group came together and what we are attempting to do about it, and, most important of all, why we need their help." He turned to District Attorney Langdon. "Bill, I think you would be the best to explain that."

Langdon, as might be expected of a lawyer, wasted no time in emotional rhetoric, but outlined for us, clearly and precisely, how after Mayor Schmitz and his whole corrupt

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administration was returned to power in the election of 1905, Fremont Older had gone to Washington, D. C. and convinced President Theodore Roosevelt that he should assign Francis J. Heney as a special prosecutor with the district attorney's office and to release Wm. J. Burns from the Secret service as the chief investigator, all of this to be financed by Spreckels and Phelan.

"It has been a difficult and sometimes discouraging effort," added Heney, "but we have decided to concentrate on gathering evidence which will help us bring Ruef, Schmitz and their cronies to trial on charges of municipal graft and corruption, particularly where the selling of franchises for municipal services is involved."

During dinner, Holmes had explained his appearance. "The reason for my assuming this particular disguise, Watson, is simple. Since it was urgent that I reach here as quickly as possible and that I not be recognized by anyone, Brother Mycroft who, you will not be surprised to learn, still seems to be running the British Empire from his chair in Whitehall, arranged for me to sail on one of His Majesty's fastest naval vessels. So I became Commander Vernet."

He had been listening intently, fingers crossed under his chin, not muttering a word. Now he spoke.

"There is no doubt at all, gentlemen, that you are faced with an intolerable situation, and I certainly applaud your efforts to strike at the head of this evil octopus in order to free San Francisco from the grip of its manifold tentacles of criminal activity-- Good heavens, Watson, I seem to have

fallen into your unfortunate habit of resorting to literary metaphors!" His smile told me that he was again, as in our former days together, pulling my leg.

"However," he went on, "if it were merely a question of assisting you in bringing to justice a corrupt city government, I would hardly have left the peace and contentment of my rural retreat and made this long journey here." This brought exclamations of surprise from his hearers, myself included.

"But, Holmes, why then—" I began, only to be silenced by his upraised hand, as he turned to me.

"Only one reason—one CAUSE, if you will—has brought me here, Watson. You and I have seen just such a wave of crime once before, and I am convinced that now, as then, there is more behind it than a few corrupt politicians." He paused, and a steely gleam which I had not seen since our last case together came into his eyes.

"I am here, Watson, to track down the REAL mastermind, the EVIL GENIUS who thinks that he can accomplish here in America what we thwarted him from doing in England!"

For a moment I thought that perhaps my old friend's mind might have been affected by his years of inactivity and lack of mental challenge to keep it sharp.

"But Holmes, Moriarty is dead!"

"Yes Watson, I made sure of that once and for all at the Reichenbach Falls. However, Col. Sebastian Moran IS very much alive





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and here, I am convinced, in San Francisco. And the man who came to England to convince me is Detective Burns." Here he turned to the stocky, red-haired Irish-American and nodded to him to speak.

"I take the credit, doctor, for getting Mr. Holmes to agree to join us and believe me it was no easy task. Two pieces of evidence did the trick. One, I took to Sussex with me to show him. It is this photograph, taken by one of the Bulletin's photographers."

The picture, which he handed me, showed a group of men in bowler hats, seemingly unaware that they were being photographed. In the center were two figures. One, Burns pointed out to me, was the infamous Abe Ruef. Next to him, whispering into his ear, was a lawyer named Henry Ach.

"Aside from the fact that they certainly are a sinister looking group of rogues, I fail to see——" Holmes leaped out of his seat with an impatient exclamation.

"You fail to see, Watson, because you are not looking! Here," and his bony finger pointed to a figure half-hidden in the background, "look carefully at this man and tell me if you can ever forget that face."

"Good Lord, Holmes, you're right. It is Col. Sebastian Moran, older, but unmistakable. What a stroke of luck that this photograph was taken."

"Yes, Watson, but it was no stroke of luck, but a professional detective's remarkable memory of your description of the colonel in the chronicle you called The Adventure of the Empty House that led to the identification of the man who inherited Professor Moriarty's mantle as the 'Napoleon of Crime' and who is now operating here in San Francisco."

"And," adds Burns, "the hope that Mr. Holmes would also recognize him and agree to come here to help track him down. It was a long shot, but it paid off."

"But you said two pieces of evidence. What was the second?"

"Ah, that was the deciding factor," said Holmes. "Fortunately, I am still an inveterate reader of newspaper items concerning crime. This small item appeared in a London paper at just about the time that Burns was trying to convince me of his theory about Moran. It was short,

but its significance was unmistakably clear. It told of a break-in and theft at Scotland Yard's Crime Museum. Only one thing was taken. Can you guess what it was?"

I knew immediately. "Von Herder's air gun!" I exclaimed. "Holmes, that fiend is planning to use it again!"

"Yes, Watson, and here in San Francisco. As Detective Burns has surmised, nothing in this world would stop me from coming here to track him down once more and to foil his devilish schemes. But I can't do it without you at my side. How fortunate that you were already here."

At this point he rose and gripped my hand. "Are you with me, old friend?"

"With all my heart, Holmes, with all my heart."

"Then, gentlemen, I think I will retire. Walk me to my room, Watson. It is across the hall from yours."

We offered our goodnights to the group and left. At my door, Holmes said, "I have left word for us to be called at seven. I think we could both use some extra sleep tomorrow morning."

But we were not to enjoy the extra sleep, no were we to be awakened by the pleasant voice of a hotel employee, but by the terrifying voice of Mother Nature. It was April 18, 1906, and at 5:15 that morning the great San Francisco earthquake struck.

### Part II

I will not take up the reader's time by describing what many others have told so well and in such great detail — how the hotel had been lifted up with a rocking motion and set down again with a lurch, accompanied by what one guest, the British consul general, described as "a noise like thousands of violins in discord", and of the terrible three days of fire that followed, destroying four square miles of the city, and leaving hundreds of dead in its wake.

No sooner had I recovered from the initial shock of being awakened by what seemed like the end of the world, than I found Holmes at my side, urging me to follow him out of the building and across to the adjoining Union Square, where we found ourselves mingling with the large number of stricken individuals who stared up at the St. Francis standing, seemingly intact. In

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three days it was to stand amidst a sea of ashes.

I did my best to help in my professional capacity, and I blush to read that I have been described by one author as "an English doctor (who) walked around Union Square taking the pulse of everyone he met..."

Within a few hours, Detective Burns, like a true Irish bulldog, had hunted us down and led us out to a house on Franklin Street, later known as the 'Prosecution House' because it was the headquarters from which he and his operatives carried on their investigations.

Within forty days, the enterprising owners of the St. Francis had built a temporary hotel in Union Square, dubbed the 'Little St. Francis', and Holmes and I were given rooms there.

One would have thought that this momentous catastrophe would have wiped out the crime and corruption which had held the city in its grip; but it was not so. It is true that Chinatown after its rebuilding, was never again the sink of opium dens and houses of prostitution it had been, and that the thief-ridden and murderous Barbary Coast would soon disappear into history; but bribery and corruption on the highest level seemed to have emerged triumphant, and it was 'business as usual' for Boss Ruef and his crowd.

This was symbolized graphically a few weeks after the earthquake, when Holmes and I stood among the cheering crowd on Market Street, and watched a flag-draped streetcar with Mayor Schmitz (who had become something of a hero) at the controls and Abe Ruef waving from one of the windows.

But their days in power were numbered. In May, Older and Heney moved forward with their graft prosecution case, and Burns and his agents relentlessly shadowed Schmitz, Ruef and the city supervisors, gathering evidence. It was clear that their organization would soon fall apart as had the shoddily-built City Hall for which they had bilked the taxpayers of millions of dollars.

Holmes and I, like two bloodhounds who had left the pack to follow another quarry, went our own way, determined not to rest until we had tracked down Col. Sebastian Moran, whose presence, like a sinister,

flickering shadow, darted here and there throughout the stricken city.

Once, we were sure we had spotted him near the Little St. Francis where, for a time, Abe Ruef was being held after his arrest. But before we could push our way through the crowd, he had slipped away.

After a year of frustration, events began to move swiftly. In May of 1907, realizing that the supervisors, to save their own skins, were testifying against him, Ruef confessed and pleaded guilty before a grand jury. He, in turn, gave evidence against Eugene Schmitz, who was then sentenced to jail on charges of extortion. Ruef's own trials dragged on into the following year.

"Now", exclaimed Holmes one evening, throwing down the issue of the Bulletin in which he had finished reading aloud the account of an attempt to murder a witness, ex-supervisor Gallagher, by blowing up his house with dynamite, "Moran is becoming desperate, Watson. He is resorting to crude and ill-planned measures. It is time to set our trap!"

"Yes, Holmes, but where and what kind of trap?"

"It is obvious, Watson, that he is now going to attempt to eliminate anyone who could possibly lead us to him, and who is the only man who knows the most about him, and has been his only link to the criminal empire he has built, the only one who could point a condemning finger at him."

"Of course", I replied, "Boss Ruef".

"Exactly. And where would be the best place to get at him? It would be difficult to do in the county jail. But there is another place in which he is exposed and in the open."

"In the courtroom, during the trials."

"Exactly, Watson, and that is where we will be watching and waiting for the maddened animal to walk into our trap, with — in an ironic twist of justice — Abe Ruef as the bait."

But the animal, to use Holmes' metaphor, did not fall easily into the trap, but circled round and round for months, hoping, perhaps, that the hunters would tire and go away. He should have known better. No one was more relentless and untiring than Sherlock Holmes. We attended every trial session and watched and waited.

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Because of the destruction of the court buildings during the earthquake and fire, the trials were being held in Temple Sherith Israel, one of the few large buildings which had been spared. It was an imposing Romanesque style structure with a large, beautifully decorated interior surmounted by an impressive skylighted dome surrounded by a balcony with tiers of seats.

It was from this balcony that Holmes and I mingled with other onlookers and observed the trial proceedings taking place below. Often, we could see, on the other side of the balcony, what came to be the familiar figure of Rabbi Jacob Nieto sat, as one newspaper described him, "...looking like a reincarnation of Michelangelo's Moses...gloomy, inscrutable, as he beheld the daily profanation of Jehovah's temple..."

The Rabbi certainly did not approve of the proceedings. Not that he had any doubts about Ruef's guilt, but because he felt that he, in his role as mediator between Ruef and the prosecutors, had been betrayed when they, as he claimed, went back on their promise to give Ruef certain immunity for his testimony.

Finally, on November 13, 1908, events reached a climax. At about 4:40 in the afternoon, a recess had been called and there was the usual bustle and movement among the spectators as some were leaving the courtroom, others rising to stretch their legs and converse with each other.

Suddenly, Holmes gripped my arm and pointed below. A small, nondescript man was weaving his way down the aisle towards the attorney's table. Without warning, he drew a pistol from the pocket of his overcoat and shot Prosecutor Heney in the head!

There was a moment of stunned silence and then pandemonium, as men struggled to disarm the would-be assassin, while others attempted to aid the wounded man.

"Good God, Holmes!", I cried, "is that Moran?"

"It can't be, Watson. It can't be. He would not take the chance of being caught so easily. Besides, it is Ruef he is after."

"But, then, why —?"

"It is obviously a diversion to create confusion and distract our attention." As

Holmes said this, his eyes were sweeping the balcony across from us.

"Did you see someone move in the back, over there, Watson? Look!"

"There is no one over there, but Rabbi Nieto. I saw him come in earlier, leaning on a cane. He must have injured his foot."

"Rabbi Nieto!" Holmes exclaimed. "It can't be Rabbi Nieto. He is on a trip to Europe —"

"But then, who —" I stammered.

"You forget, Watson", Holmes almost shouted, "that Col. Sebastian Moran is almost as great a master of disguise as I am! See — there —"

As I looked on, stunned, the figure on the other side came close to the front of the balcony and raised what was now no longer a cane, but the deadly barrel of the Von Herter air gun. It was aimed at Abe Ruef, standing now alone, a perfect target.

"Holmes, what are we going to do? We must stop him!" I cried.

Holmes did not answer. He had drawn his revolver and was aiming it with a hand as steady as it had ever been and fired its full load at the man with the rifle. I watched, frozen with suspense, as he turned part way and, with a howl of rage, attempted to aim the rifle at us.

But, Holmes, as always, had been a dead shot. The figure leaned over toward the railing and the rifle dropped from his hands to the floor below, followed by what to the horrified spectators below, appeared to be the body of Rabbi Jacob Nieto.

---

There is not much left to tell. When his disguise had been removed, it was the face of Col. Sebastian Moran, twisted with hate, that started with empty eyes up at the dome of the temple.

Through the influence of Michael de Young and Fremont Older, no account of the second assassination attempt ever appeared in the press and, thanks to quick work on the part of Detective Burns and his men, Moran's body was quickly removed and buried in an unmarked grave. Since Rabbi Nieto appeared in public after his return from Europe, alive and well, even those who had been present were not sure

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what they had witnessed, and the whisper rumors soon ceased.

A week later, Holmes and I returned to England. Before we left, we were given a magnificent farewell dinner by the men we had first met at the beginning of this — if you will pardon the pun — earth-shaking adventure.

As we sat enjoying our brandy and cigars, Holmes examined the scroll which had been presented to us by a grateful city. At the top appeared the official seal, showing the mythical phoenix rising from the flames. Holmes looked at me slyly and smiled.

"Perhaps, old fellow, this would suggest an appropriate title for what no doubt — based on all of those notes I have seen you scribbling down — will become someday another one of your fanciful chronicles. The Adventure of the Flaming Phoenix, or something equally lurid."

At that point, William Burns came forward and handed him a package. "Here is another memento of your American adventure, Mr. Holmes. It is the Von Herder air rifle."

"What ever will I do with it?" queried Holmes.

"I thought you might want to keep it with your other mementoes. I have often wondered what has become of the furniture and other personal possessions you and Dr. Watson had in your rooms at 221B Baker Street".

"I can answer that", I said. "Would you believe, Holmes, that Mrs. Hudson, though she now lives in the country, has not sold any of our things — as you once suggested she do — but has put them all in storage and is saving them."

"Saving them! What for?" he asked in puzzlement.

"I think", I said, enjoying my moment of revenge with great relish, "That she has the idea that someday a group of your admirers and my readers will put them in a kind of exhibit or museum dedicated to your memory."

With a look on his face that I will not attempt to describe, the great detective rose from his seat and exclaimed, "I certainly hope not, Watson! I certainly hope not!"

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**SHERLOCK DINES IN  
SAN FRANCISCO**

by

Paul Scholten, M.D.

People talk of the Victorian Age as if it took place in the far distant past, somewhere between the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. They often comment on how much things have changed since Victoria's times; nothing now being the same in life and love and dress and food and drink. We cannot speak with authority on things amatory, after all, "the fair sex is your department, Watson", but having some small knowledge of wine and food, will point out how little has changed in that field in the century since Holmes and Watson were in their prime. In truth, if the partners were to come out of retirement and seek to duplicate their Canonical dining in present day San Francisco, they would have no problems at all.

If Holmes and Watson had a favorite food, it would be some type of wild game, for they mention game birds in the Canon more often than any other class of good; a cold partridge, a brace of grouse, a couple of braces of woodcock, duck, goose and pheasant. They would have no trouble satisfying their appetite for wildfowl in San Francisco, for game is available locally the year round; raised on farms, flown in from distant lands, or, in the fall, bagged by our local hunters. We know that Sherlock was also a hunter for he enjoyed wild duck shooting in the fens around Donnithorpe. (GLORIA SCOTT) Currently, after shooting his mallards in the Sacramento Delta, he could roast them himself or take them to any one of a number of fine local restaurants that will cook almost any game if one brings it in by prior arrangement. Among others are Jacks, 615 Sacramento St., Ernie's, 847 Montgomery St., and Trader Vic's, 20 Cosmo Place. First, however, Holmes would have to shoot his bird; but, if he or Watson did not have time to go hunting, he could always buy his game or have his favorite restaurant order it.

Local firms can supply grouse, quail, wild boar, buffalo, venison, wild duck, pheasant, partridge, tame or wild goose, squab, and almost any other game that one could desire. They include: Polarica, Inc., 105 Quint St., San Francisco; Durham Nightbird Game and Poultry, San Bruno; Krout's Pheasant Farm in Petaluma, and



the Santa Rosa Meat and Poultry Co., in that city.

A "brace of grouse" (SIGN OF FOUR) for instance, would be most enjoyable at Ernie's, especially if served with a lingonberry sauce, and if it followed Ernie's crab timbale and the meal was finished off with his raspberry mousse.

Modesto Lanzone's Enoteca Lanzone in Opera Plaza, practically an art gallery, would be glad to present "cold partridge and Montrachet" (VEILED LODGER) if ordered ahead. A "couple of brace of woodcock" (NOBLE BACHELOR), or simply "a woodcock" (BLUE CARBUNCLE), would taste very good at Jack's, especially if preceded by their bay shrimp salad and followed by French pancakes.

A goose (BLUE CARBUNCLE) could be ordered ahead at any of a dozen local restaurants, but nowhere could our detectives do better than the White Elephant Restaurant and Pub, 480 Sutter St. The author recalls the best roast goose he ever enjoyed, served there a few Christmas' ago after a round-robin reading of the tale of the Blue Carbuncle by a group of Scowlers and Molly Maguires in the Sherlock Holmes Room. If one wanted a goose for their own oven, Petrini's in Stonestown can supply a fat bird, nicely cleaned. If a live goose is desired, On Sang Poultry, 1114 Grant Ave., can supply that. A pheasant, (NOBLE BACHELOR, THOR BRIDGE, GLORIA SCOTT) would be very easy for Holmes to enjoy; The Blue Fox, 659 Merchant St.; Zola's, 395 Hayes St.; and Campton Place, among others, all have it on the regular menu. The Blue Fox also serves venison (ABBEY GRANGE). Tame duck is on scores of local menus, but as a

## SHERLOCK DINES IN SAN FRANCISCO

hunter (GLORIA SCOTT), Sherlock would expect duck to be a wild bird. The Nob Hill Room of the Mark Hopkins Hotel, California at Mason, serves widgeon duck on its daily menu.

Beef was obviously also one of their favorites, for in the SCANDAL IN BOHEMIA, we hear of "a slice of beef and a glass of beer". A perfect place to get it should be Tommy's Joynt, Geary at Van Ness, the best Hof Brau in town. Again, in the BERYL CORONET, Sherlock hungrily eats "cold beef between two slices of bread". Lefty O'Doul's, 333 Geary St., is another excellent, inexpensive Hof Brau where one's beef can be roast, corned or pastramified.

Oysters are mentioned in THE SIGN OF FOUR, and, in THE DYING DETECTIVE, Sherlock observes that "it is a wonder that the whole bed of the ocean is not one solid mass of oysters." For oysters on the half shell, Swan's Oyster Bar at 1517 Polk St. would be great, but equally good would be The Waterfront Restaurant at Pier 7 or the Zuni Cafe, 1658 Market St., where one can get an opened-to-order plate of one variety or an assortment from the 8 to 12 types of oyster they each carry on any one day.

Sherlock caught trout in the SHOSCOMB mill stream and in the NOBLE BACHELOR he quoted Thoreau's example of finding a trout in the milk to demonstrate the occasionally convincing nature of circumstantial evidence. The Hayes Street Grill, 320 Hayes St., does a beautiful job with trout, or any other fish, as do Tadich's and Sam's.

Our heroes frequently dine out and with 4,300 restaurants in San Francisco, a good substitute for their regular haunts should be easy to find. When the DYING DETECTIVE recovers, he suggests "something nutritious at Simpson's", and again, in the ILLUSTRIOUS CLIENT, we hear of Simpson's in the Strand. Simpson's, of course, is noted for its roast beef, although I personally do not like the way the serving chef at Simpson's cuts one's portion off the haunch in little niggling slices. At the House of Prime Rib, 1906 Van Ness Ave., one will get a proper large, thick, single slice, with refills as desired. If Sherlock really wanted to feel that he was at Simpson's, the French Room of the Cliff Hotel, Post at Sutter, would be a natural, with the beef wheeled to the table in a huge silver cart and carved table-side while one's taste buds tingle.

Our friends go for "a little dinner at Mancini's" (HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES). A similar Italian locale would be Buca Giovanni, 800 Greenwich St., a relaxed bistro with good country Italian cooking where rabbit is a house specialty. Also Italian is Caffe Sport, 574 Green St., which stands in nicely for "Goldini's, a garish Italian restaurant" (BRUCE-PARTINGTON PLANS). There are few places more garish than Caffe Sport; overly hung with bottles, plastic grapes, folk art and junk; very noisy, and serving great Sicilian food with garlic, garlic, garlic. "Dinner for two" (MAZARIN STONE), could hardly be done better than that at the White Elephant, 480 Sutter St., quiet and discrete with fine food. In both the MISSION THREE QUARTER and the MAN WITH THE TWISTED LIP, our adventurous duo have "a little dinner". Bardelli's, 243 O'Farrell St., offers a "small dinner before the show", salad and an entree; as well as a full San Francisco style Italian-Continental menu.

"A belated dinner" (THREE STUDENTS) could be had nicely at the Maltest Grill, 20 Annie St., behind the Palace Hotel, which serves very flavorful bistro foods. For "a cold supper" (MISSING THREE QUARTER and THE TWISTED LIP), the Kinokawa Sushi Bar at 347 Grant Ave., would be great. It is not certain that Watson had sushi in mind, but it fits the cold category and is quite tasty.

A "cold lunch" (THE FINAL PROBLEM), calls to mind Sam's, 374 Bush St., one of the two best seafood restaurants in the city. Shrimp cocktail, cracked Dungeness crab and Mondavi Fume Blanc would constitute a near perfect cold lunch. Watson would also feel quite comfortable at Tadich's, 240 California St., the city's second great fish place. It would be quite similar to "lunch at the Holborn" (STUDY IN SCARLET), and clam chowder, sand dabs muniere, rice pudding and Grgich-Hills Chardonnay would be nigh perfect. "A decent lunch and a bottle of claret" (HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES), could easily be found at Le Central, 453 Bush St. Their cassoulet would be hard to top. "A pleasant little lunch" (CARDBOARD BOX and HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES) could well be at The Cliff House, with a marvelous view of Seal Rocks and the Pacific Ocean and quite decent sandwiches, salads, seafood, and light entrees. "Cutlets for lunch" are mentioned in THE GOLDEN PINCE NEZ; and Luzern, at 1431 Noriega St., is a really fine, moderate priced Swiss place serving wiener schnitzel and veal cutlets with

morels and spaetel. For "lunch and tea" (BOSCOMB VALLEY), Campton Place, 340 Stockton St., recently named one of the twenty best restaurants in America, could be most pleasant. "A hasty lunch in the railroad station buffet" (NAVAL TREATY), would have to take place at the sandwich shop in the Transbay Terminal; not highly recommended, but adequate to keep body and soul together before a hasty trip. An even more informal lunch could come from "a paper of sandwiches" (NAVAL TREATY), and David's Deli at 474 Geary St. would carve and pack them to perfection. For "a sandwich and a cup of coffee" (RED-HEADED LEAGUE) Its Tops, 1801 Market St., is the quintessential coffee shop. On upper Market St., it is always crowded for breakfast, lunch and mid-afternoon snacking.

When, on occasion, "the Prime Minister is lunching with me" (SECOND STAIN), the Spinnaker in Sausalito would give him very good seafood and a wonderful view of San Francisco with the Bay in between. More formal would be the Big Four Restaurant in the Huntington Hotel, at 1075 California St. Also impressive would be the Squire Room in the Fairmont Hotel. Even more regal would be lunch at the Pacific Union Club, across the street from the last two (an excellent stand-in for the Diogenes Club) (BRUCE-PARTINGTON PLANS, GREEK INTERPRETER).

Breakfasts are seldom neglected by our friends. If Sherlock simply wanted "eggs and toast" (RETIRED COLOURMAN), Miz Brown's Restaurant at 1350 Polk St., or the other four Miz Browns around town would certainly be adequate. If he wanted "an excellent breakfast" (BLACK PETER), then Sears Fine Foods at 439 Powell St. consistently serves the best traditional American breakfasts in town. For something more elegant, more expensive -- for instance, "rashers and eggs" (ENGINEERS THUMB) -- the Stanford Court Hotel Coffee Shop, 901 California St., will do it with style and perfect service. For a relaxing "ham and eggs" (NORWOOD BUILDER, NAVAL TREATY, TWISTED LIP, SIGN OF FOUR, SPECKLED BAND), the Mission Rock Resort and Boat Dock at China Basin offers a dockside window to watch the working port go by while one dines (a view similar to that from the Bar of Gold (TWISTED LIP).

In THE NAVAL TREATY we hear of "curried chicken for breakfast", a slightly unusual early morning dish. However, Cafe Justin, at the Meridian Hotel, 50 Third St., will

serve it to you if you call the night before. The Four Seas at 731 Grant Ave. has curry on its dim sum menu; and if you can wait until 11:00 AM, the New Delhi at 160 Ellis St. will curry anything. Curry was also mentioned in SILVER BLAZE, when curried mutton with powdered opium was served to the stable boy. Gaylord's in Ghiradelli Square serves the best East Indian food in San Francisco, including curried mutton; but you will have to bring your own powdered opium. Speaking of curry, if Dr. Watson should feel nostalgic for his days in Afghanistan before the unfortunate accident at Maiwand (STUDY IN SCARLET), the Helmand, at 430 Broadway, serves a full line of very good Afghan food, including all manner of curries.

A piece of pate de fole gras pie (NOBLE BACHELOR), is available in most local French restaurants and most of the city's delicatessens. The finest is made by Marcel and Henri in South San Francisco. This delicacy is available at Le Beau Nob Hill Market, 1263 Leavenworth St., and Vivande Porta Via, 2125 Fillmore, along many other delis.

If Sherlock again has a desire to "tear off a piece of bread" and devour it (FIVE ORANGE PIPS), we suggest Parisian French Bread, which is available in most grocery stores; and, if he happens to prefer natural whole grain bread, tassajara bread can be found at Green's at Fort Mason.

Tea is a regular beverage in the adventures (BOSCOMB VALLEY, BERYL CORONET, CARDBOARD BOX, YELLOW FACE, DEVIL'S ROOT, GREEK INTERPRETER, ILLUSTRIOUS CLIENT, CREEPING MAN, NAVAL TREATY, RESIDENT PATIENT) and can be obtained at Caffe Malvina, 1600 Stockton St.. This store carries a fine assortment of teas, in bulk or by the cup -- as well as coffees, espresso, and caffe latte. If it is High Tea that you desire, Cafe Justin at 50 Third St. can serve as high a tea as you desire: scones and jam; watercress and cucumber finger sandwiches; pastries and quail eggs (VALLEY OF FEAR).

Coffee is a favorite of Watson and Holmes (BERYL CORONET, SIGN OF FOUR, SPECKLED BAND), and any of the six Zim's Restaurants in San Francisco serve a great blend. For "the strongest coffee" (WISTERIA LODGE), Caffe Trieste, 1609 Vallejo, brews just that, as well as espresso and caffe latte. If you want a more elegant Cafe Noir (MUSGRAVE RITUAL), then Restaurant Pierre at the Meridian Hotel, 50 Third St., does this with a flourish.

## SHERLOCK DINES IN SAN FRANCISCO

Ghiradelli Chocolate Factory at Ghiradelli Square serves a great cup of cocoa (PRIORY SCHOOL) or, if you want cocoa fortified with brandy, cappucino would be great on a cold night at the Tosca Cafe, 242 Columbus Ave. Sometimes Sherlock is not terribly hungry. For simple "bread and cheese" (STUDY IN SCARLET), Creighton's Cheese and Fine Food, 673 Portola Dr. sells a wide range of excellent cheeses and sandwiches to eat there or to take out. If all Sherlock wants is two hard boiled eggs (THOR BRIDGE), then he should go to Tommy's Joynt at Geary and Van Ness, where a bowl of eggs sits on the back bar.

Dr. Watson and Sherlock Holmes are connoisseurs when it comes to things alcoholic, with an intimate acquaintance with the finest in wines, distilled spirits and liqueurs. Indeed, we first encountered Watson at the Criterion Bar (STUDY IN SCARLET) even before he had ever met Holmes; and in San Francisco, the ultimate, dignified, quiet and relaxing bar wherein to meet someone would be the Redwood Room of the Clift Hotel, Taylor at Sutter.

There are frequent references to wines all through the Canon. "Something nice in a white wine" (SIGN OF FOUR), could well be a very nice California Chardonnay, say, a Chalone, or perhaps a nice Mosel, a Berncastler Doctor, 1988, would be superb. Both are available at Coit Liquors, 585 Columbus Ave. Montrachet is mentioned in the VEILED LODGER. This is one of the best of the white Burgundy wines, available in many of our finest restaurants at Mr. Liquor, 250 Taraval St., and Fred Foster Liquors, 51 Second St. However, if Sherlock wanted an older vintage of Le Montrachet, from the finest vineyard, he had better have two or three hundred pounds with him. Beune (SIGN OF FOUR), is one of the better of the red Burgundies. Sherlock should go to the Standing Room Only Wine Bar at 4 Embarcadero for a glass, or to Connoisseur Imports at 462 Bryant St. for a bottle.

In THE STOCKBROKER'S CLERK we hear of Comet Wine, wine from a year when a famous comet crossed over the earth and supposedly improved the vintage. In 1986 Halley's Comet came by on its 76-year orbit; and, indeed, many wines were exceptionally good. A '86 Chateau La Fitte would be very nice; a '86 Romanee Conti would be even better. A '86 Napa Valley Stags Leap Cabernet would be very fine,

indeed. These wines are all available at Liquor Barn at 221 Old Bayshore.

Chianti and Tokay were the only wines that Thaddeus Sholto kept in the house (SIGN OF FOUR). He could easily have replenished his cellar at Molinari Delicatessen for the Chianti, at 373 Columbus Ave. He could have purchased more Tokay at the California Wine Merchant, 3237 Pierce St. Holmes and Watson savored Von Bork's Imperial Tokay in the Last Bow. For the Imperial Tokay Holmes and Watson would have to journey to Schoenbrunn Palace in Vienna, but the Cost Plus Wine Shop at 2598 Taylor St. can supply a very good socialistic tokay.

Bodymaster Jack McGinty welcomed Birdie Edwards to the Scowrers with a bottle of champagne, (Valley of Fear) of which there is no shortage in San Francisco. D&M Liquors at Sacramento and Fillmore stocks the widest selection of champagnes in the city. The Sherlock Holmes Public House, 480 Sutter St., has a fine collection on tap and a spectacular view to enjoy it with.

Claret (CARDBOARD BOX) is the English term for Bordeaux red wine. A very fine selection can be found at Draper and Esquin, 655 David St. A 1985 Chateau Margaux would be great at about \$85; Louis Martini's 1986 Cabernet at \$8.95 would be almost as good. "A pleasant little meal and a bottle of claret" (CARDBOARD BOX), would be easily found at Fournou's Ovens in the Stanford Court Hotel at 901 California St. "A glass of claret and some biscuits" (DYING DETECTIVE), is readily available at the London Wine Bar, 415 Sansome St.

A glass of port is enjoyed in both the GLORIA SCOTT and in the SIGN OF FOUR. The Castro Village Wine Co. tasting bar, 4121 19th St. has a nice selection of ports: ruby, tawny and vintage. In the CREEPING MAN adventure, our detectives partake of a famous vintage port. In San Francisco Sherlock could find a similar wine at Singer and Foy Wines, 1821 Powell St., which has a well-stocked tasting bar.

It was brown sherry that led to the destruction of the GLORIA SCOTT. Alejandro's at 1840 Clement St. and the Patio Espanol in the Spanish Cultural Center, 2850 Alemany Blvd., both have a good selection of the wines of Jerez as well as lovely Spanish meals: paella, chorizos, tortilla fritatas and all manner of tapas.



## THE VERMISSA DAILY HERALD

In the tale of the NOBLE BACHELOR, there is "a group of old and cobwebby bottles on the sideboard". If this is one's desire, the Wine House, 535 Bryant St., has them as old as you could want, and even somewhat dusty.

While investigating the mystery of SHOSCOMB OLD PLACE, Sherlock had a glass of wine with the proprietor of the Green Dragon Inn. A suitable substitute would be a glass at the Buena Vista Cafe, 2765 Hyde St. with a pleasant view of the Bay side and assorted characters strolling past the windows.

Beer is enjoyed in the tale of the BLUE CARBUNCLE, and Holmes wished for a glass while contemplating the SCANDAL IN BOHEMIA. Here in San Francisco our heroes would feel completely at home in the Edinburgh Castle, 950 Geary St., a Scottish-English pub in the best tradition.

The orange liqueur, Curaco, is mentioned in the BRUCE-PARTINGTON PLANS. If one wants a bottle, K & L Wines and Liquors, 4000 Balboa, has it. If Watson wanted it for an after-dinner drink, the Starlight Roof of the Sir Francis Drake Hotel, Sutter and Powell, would be a very pleasant place to enjoy it.

Brandy, brandy and water, brandy and soda, spirits of wine and brandy and ammonia, are mentioned in no less than fifteen of the adventures. If Sherlock wanted a bottle, Johnny Walker, 175 Sutter St., sells California, Spanish and Greek brandies, cognac, pisco, armagnac, marc,

and grappa. If he just wanted a pleasant glass of brandy, the Top of the Mark, Nob Hill, would provide a spectacular place to enjoy it.

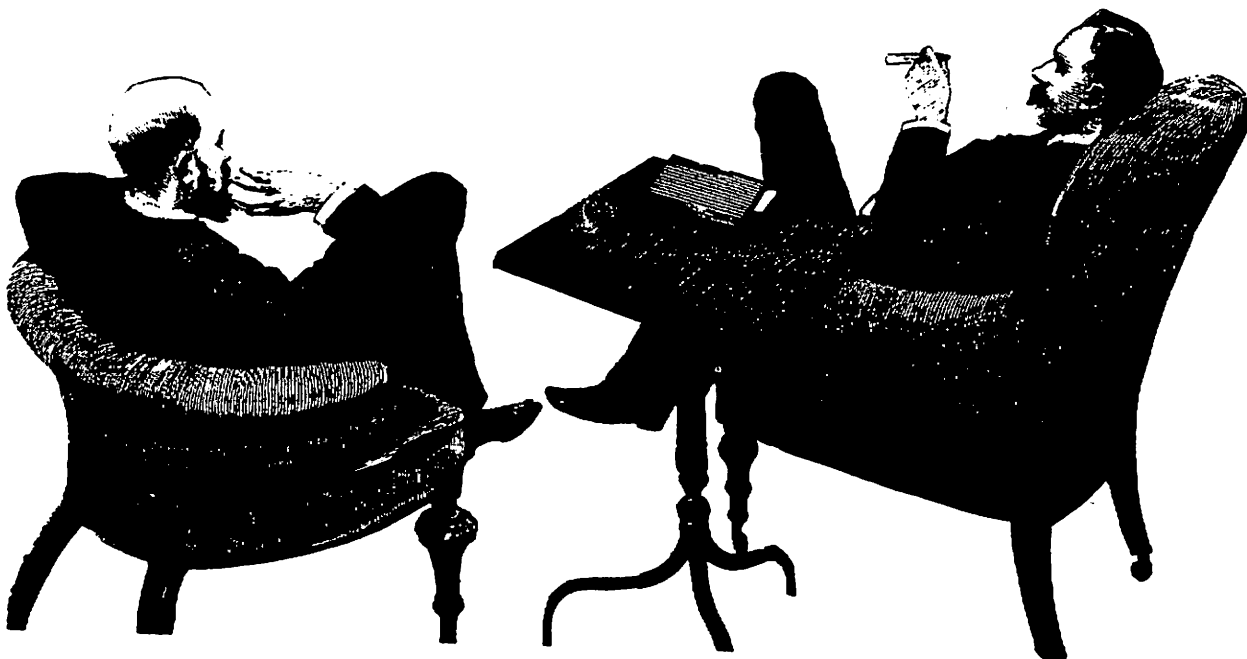
Whiskey and soda (NOBLE BACHELOR, READ-HEADED LEAGUE) and whisky and water (STUDY IN SCARLET, SIGN OF FOUR) mean Scotch whisky, of course, not Kentucky bourbon. The Sherlock Holmes Pub atop the Union Square Holiday Inn at 480 Sutter Str. stocks a very nice collection of scotches. If it is a bottle that Sherlock wanted, the Cannery Liquors, 2801 Leavenworth, boasts that it carries over a hundred single malts and innumerable blends.

For rum (BLACK PETER), there is really only one ideal local place, Trader Vic's at 20 Cosmo Place, for rum straight up, or in the most marvelous tropical drinks concocted anywhere.

This list of food and drink mentioned in the accounts of Sherlock Holmes adventures is far from complete, but should demonstrate that some things have changed very little in the past hundred years. Ergo: Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John Watson would have very little difficulty in finding the comestibles with which they are most familiar in present day San Francisco.

—Paul Scholten, M.D.

Presented to the Scowlers and Molly Maguires of San Francisco, San Francisco, January 5, 1991.



## SHERLOCKIANA

### THE 1990 DEAN DICKENSHEET AWARD

At the January Scowrer's meeting, Dr. Bruce Parker announced that this year's recipient of the Dean Dickensheet Award was Ron White for *The Adventure of the Glass Plate Negatives—Part I*. This paper proved to be the first part of an ongoing investigation regarding several 8x10 glass plate negatives which were received from a mysterious stranger (honest!).

When the plates were printed, one image bore a curious resemblance to a certain well-known author and literary agent. The investigation into the identity of this figure and the origin of the plates has now reached into at least seven states and three separate countries. It has also uncovered a tale of murder and piracy off the California coast. Further developments will be presented at the January 1992 meeting of the Scowrers.

Previous recipients of this award are:

**1984 — Pamela Clark**  
*Some Reflections on Trevor Hall and the Early Life of Sherlock Holmes.*

**1985 — Poul and Karen Anderson**  
In recognition of their numerous Sherlockian contributions.

**1986 — Dr. Paul Scholten**  
*Sherlock Holmes, Connoisseur, or Brandy in Victorian Medical Therapeutics.*

**1987 — Eugene Stovall**  
*The Woman.*

**1987 — Ray de Groat**  
In recognition of twenty years of very active service as Brother Harraway, our society's secretary.

**1988 — Marilyn MacGregor**  
*Doctor Watson's Mistress.*

**1988 — John Ruyle**  
In recognition of his many fine contributions to Sherlockiana.

**1989 — Rev. Nancy Louise Mackenzie**  
*Clairvoyantly, My Dear Watson!*

\* \* \* \* \*

### NEW SCOWRER PINS NOW AVAILABLE

Long time members of the Scowrers & Molly Maguires know that our classically designed lapel pin has been out of production for several years. This pin featured a red triangle on a black circular field. This was surrounded by a red circle upon which the words "Scowrers Molly Maguires" appeared in gold lettering. The entire pin was just over 5/8's inch in diameter.

Eugene Stovall, who was responsible for the beautifully designed centennial commemorative pins, The Disjecta Membra pin, Tidewaiters pins, and several others, has come through again. With thanks to Eugene we now have a new version of the Scowrers pin.

The new pin is nearly identical in design to the original with just two minor differences. The first is that it is slightly larger (just over 3/4's of an inch), and the second is that the central field is dark blue instead of black. This should keep the collectors happy, since they can easily tell the two pins apart.

The pins will be available at the Scowrers meetings for \$10.00. If ordering by mail please add \$3.00 for shipping and handling within the U.S., or \$5.00 outside the U.S. Make cheques payable to:

**The Scowrers & Molly Maguires**  
Vermissa Valley Lodge 341  
Mt. Eden, CA 94557

\* \* \* \* \*

Items found in an 1891 London paper—

**ROOMS FOR RENT:** Recently vacated by tenant who left no forwarding address. Prefer quiet non-smoker. Absolutely NO indoor pistol practice. Contact Mrs. Hudson 221a Baker Street.

**TO THE GOOD DOCTOR:** The recent reports of my demise may be exaggerated.  
—S.H.

**ANOTHER EVENING WITH  
SHERLOCK HOLMES**

A Review of the Sherlock Holmes Dinner  
Theater's Presentation of  
*Sherlock Holmes and the Curse of the  
Sign of Four*

On Saturday, June 8, 1991, 75 Scowrers, Mollies, and guests gathered in "Baskerville Hall" at the Holiday Inn, Union Square, for a special production of the Sherlock Holmes Dinner Theater presentation of *Sherlock Holmes and the Curse of the Sign of Four*. A grand time was had by all.

On the whole, the adaptation of "The Sign of Four" by Dennis Rosa is soundly done, retaining both the plot essentials and the flavor of the tale. Just why every adaptor must drag in Professor Moriarty is the subject for an essay in itself.

The play is produced and directed by Dustin Carsey, who has taken many useful suggestions on Sherlockian detail from members. The result is a sincere endeavor to present a Sherlockian adventure without slipping into parody.

George Adams' Holmes is vigorously and energetically performed. This is Holmes involved in a challenging case, his mind bubbling with ideas and impatient at the necessity to delegate actual investigations to the Irregulars and wait for results. Never mind that he doesn't look like our visualization of Holmes; we all have our individual preferences anyway. (A subject for another essay.)

As Dr. Watson, Tim Hart is just far enough behind Holmes' reasoning for the audience to identify with him. He well portrays the competent individual caught up in events just beyond his comprehension. His falling in love with Mary Morstan is drawn with a delicate tenderness which avoids embarrassing the viewer. Never mind the

fact that he doesn't look quite like Watson; he acts like Watson, therefore he is Watson.

The remainder of the cast is equally professional. Catherine Boursier's Mary Morstan is fresh, young and innocent, believable both as the bewildered client and as she falls in love with Watson. Paul Harkness bumbles as Lestrade should bumble, a prosaic policeman of the time caught up in unusual events. Allen Lewis is an elegantly exotic Thadeus Sholto, slightly out of touch with reality. Ned Nackley as peg-legged Jonathan Small is a beautiful character study and as scurvy a villain as one could want. Max Solomon's Wiggins is the street-wise little scamp one would expect, equally anxious to do a good job for Holmes and to collect his pay.

It is not an easy task to turn a hotel banquet room into both a stage and dining hall. To meet this challenge the center of the room became the Baker Street rooms, the primary set, with smaller sets at either end for the Sholto residence and the police launch on the Thames. Dr. Watson's style lends itself to this kind of adaptation, for Baker Street is the center of his universe. Clients visit, Lestrade drops by, cases are begun and resolved, Holmes and Watson go about their business and return to discuss their activities. The set for the Baker Street rooms is well designed for its purpose. It provides us with those furnishings deemed essential by all Sherlockians, while providing sufficient space for movement by the actors. The Sholto residence, by contrast evokes the "mysterious" east in all its glamour.

Over the years the Scowrers have had several opportunities to enjoy Sherlockian Theatrical performances. Some of these have been delightful; others have bordered on disaster. This production stands out for both the quality of the production and the ambience of the environment.

— Shirley Dickensheet



*Sherlock Holmes and the Curse of the Sign of Four*

—Photo by Ron White



**THE JAMES RYDER AWARD**

by

Ron White

James Ryder was arguably the most incompetent of the criminals recorded in the canon. True, there are others that might vie for that honor. However, Ryder's incompetence had a certain inventiveness. It is with this in mind that the staff of the *Vermissa Daily Herald* wishes to honor(?) individuals whose unique style has created a new class of criminal klutz.

It seems that each year there are numerous contenders for this "award," such as the pair of would be bank robbers who took a page from *The Red-Headed League*. They attempted to tunnel into a bank vault only to find themselves in the men's lavatory. They were so upset that they left their gloves and drilling equipment and just took off. Actually, they were only off by about 15 feet. (See, high school math and geometry can be important. A little miscalculation can blow your whole weekend's work.)

We have also heard several different accounts of bank robbers writing their demand notes on the back of their own deposit slips. However, last year there was one person who stood well apart from the pack. The following story is true. There was some confusion as to his name, so for our purpose we will call him "Mr. Jones."

Mr. Jones had recently returned to his Florida home from a European trip. As with most travellers, he arrived with a few odd pieces of foreign currency in his pockets. While sorting through the currency he had an idea. At least one of the bills looked like it might be easy to counterfeit. Of course, he knew that engraving printing plates would be too difficult and, besides, printing bills with all the same serial numbers would make them difficult to spend quickly. Fortunately, modern technology provided the answer.

Mr. Jones spent approximately \$19,000 on a computer system with a scanner and color laser printer. He scanned in the currency and programmed the computer to change the serial numbers as it printed the bills. His operation was well underway when federal agents picked up the trail.

There was no cat and mouse chase. The agents simply showed up at his door with a warrant. When the investigating agent saw

the stack of counterfeit currency he started to laugh. It seems that the currency Mr. Jones had selected were *Polish zlotys*. The three million counterfeit zlotys would have been worth roughly three hundred U.S. dollars. Mr. Jones had spent nearly that much on the paper for the laser printer. With a mind like that I wonder if his other profession might have been as a stockbroker specializing in "junk bonds," or, possibly, he was an investment counselor for certain savings and loans.

At the mystery writers conference (Stanford University, March 30th) Police Chief Joseph McNamara said, "There are no 'Moriartys' out there." Maybe not, but there a lot of "James Ryder" want-to-bes. If you have a nominee, just send the details to:

Ron White  
C/O the Scowrers & Molly Maguires  
Vermissa Valley Lodge 341  
Mt. Eden, CA 94557.

\* \* \* \* \*

**SHERLOCK HOLMES CHESS SET**

**ATTENTION: Sherlockian Comrades  
In Arms Who Play Chess, Collect  
Chess Sets, Etc.**

A lovely chess set (without board) is now for sale in U.S. dollars \$185.00. The characters are all Sherlockian in origin. For example, Irene Adler is the black queen, while Mrs. Hudson is the white queen. To order this set, obtain more information, etc., here is the manufacturer and phone number:

Mascot Direct  
Roughmoor House  
Station Road  
Williton, Somerset, TA4 4RF  
ENGLAND

Phone: (0984) 32497

\* \* \* \* \*

**ATTENTION JAMES RYDER:** Your goose has been cooked. If you wish to collect the "disjecta membra" contact S. H. at 221b Baker Street.

\* \* \* \* \*

# STAND WITH ME HERE UPON THE TERRACE

## STAND WITH ME HERE UPON THE TERRACE

It is with regret we must stand upon the terrace and again mark the passing of distinguished members of the Sherlockian world. We were all enriched by their presence.

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Scowrer **Barney Gould** died quietly and unexpectedly at his home in Mill Valley on Tuesday, May 7, 1991. Barney was 82. Barney was born in Santa Rosa, and graduated from Stanford in 1931.

Though the press hailed Barney as a newspaperman, press agent, restaurateur, promoter, and showman, we Scowrers remember him as a cheerful Sherlockian kinspirit, with a fund of knowledge of our Holmes and of our city. It was Barney who brought Billy Rose's famous *Money-making Aquacade* to the financially troubled San Francisco International Exposition (on Treasure Island) in 1940. Last year the show's star, Esther Williams, credited Barney with "saving" the fair.

In 1982 Barney wrote *Sherlock Holmes and the Shakespeare Solution* which cogently set forth the argument (proposed by Alden Brooks) that the plays generally attributed to Shakespeare were in fact written by Sir Edward Dyer. Peter Donat revised Barney's play, and it was staged in Barrie, Ontario in 1986, and in Sunnyvale, California (with Donat as a fine, somewhat older Holmes) in 1989.

We Scowrers extend our deepest sympathy and affection to Elsie Dean Gould, his loving and patient wife of 53 years, to his sons, Bryan and Terry, and to his Granddaughter.

— Ted Schulz

\* \* \* \*

**Lenore Glen Offord** passed away on April 24, 1991, in Ashland, Oregon. Two esteemed members of our organization have offered the following tributes.

## LENORE GLEN OFFORD

1905 — 1991

(The Old Russian Woman)

The Scowrers and Molly Maguires have lost a distinguished member and much-loved friend. Lenore Glen Offord died April 24th in Ashland, Oregon. Lee and her husband Harold had moved there to be near their daughter Judith Kennedy, choreographer with the Oregon Shakespearean Festival. An esteemed mystery novelist, Lee was also a mystery reviewer. For thirty years she covered the field in the *San Francisco Chronicle*.

As a member of our scion from its earliest days, she personified the Irregular ideal -- a blend of fun and scholarship. Her contributions to the cause were such that the Baker Street Irregulars' traditional stag policy was obliged to yield and she became the first invested woman.

— Phyllis White

\* \* \* \*

**Lenore Glen Offord** was one of the first Mollies and was the first, and for many years only, woman investitured Baker Street Irregular. She wrote *Mysteries* and reviewed them regularly for the *San Francisco Chronicle*. In spite of severe space limitations, Lee had the rare talent of always letting me know whether the book was one I wanted to read.

Lee had a fine sense of humor and a great sense of fun. When a forestry field trip took us to New Mexico, we were delighted to drive 30 miles on a hot afternoon to send a telegram to a Scowrers and Mollies meeting from Moriarty, New Mexico several years before John Bennett Shaw moved there. When we got there, we found to our dismay that the place was too small to have its own telegraphic by line, so we had to add "from Moriarty" to our text.

"Happy Birthday, Sherlock Holmes" was written for Lee, and she introduced me to the Scowrers and Molly Maguires. In 1975, I wrote a bit of doggerel to toast her as "The Woman." I quote it now and in tribute to her indomitable spirit, leave it in present tense:

**THE VERMISSA DAILY HERALD**

*Halloo, Lee!*

*She's a mystery writer, critic,  
B. S. I. par excellence,  
A witty, gracious lady  
Of friendly ambience.*

*While natives of Spokane  
Can speak of their 'Lenore,'  
In Vermissa Valley circles  
She is 'Lee' forevermore.*

*The Old Russian Woman  
Is quite a nifty dame—  
Come Scowrers and Mollies  
To fondly toast her name:*

*Lee Offord*

— Marilyn MacGregor

\* \* \* \*

We gratefully acknowledge *The Arthur Conan Doyle Society* for notice of the following recent passings.

**Michael Hardwick** died on March 4, 1991. He was the first person since the late Christopher Morley to receive the B.S.I. investiture of *The Sign of the Four*. His Sherlockian expertise was widely acknowledged and his published works included; *Prisoner of the Devil*, *The Complete Guide to Sherlock Holmes*, *The private Life of Dr. Watson*, *Sherlock Holmes: My Life and Crimes*, and *The Revenge of the Hound*.

\* \* \* \*

**Graham Greene** passed away recently in England. Rated among the finest modern British writers, he provided the forward for Green and Gibson's *A Bibliography of A. Conan Doyle* and the introduction for the last John Murry edition of *The Sign of Four*.

\* \* \* \*

**DON'T BE LEFT BEHIND AT POST TIME!**

*The Fifth Annual Running of  
the Silver Blaze Derby*

The Scowrers & Molly Maguires of San Francisco will sponsor the fifth annual Silver Blaze Derby at Bay Meadows Race Track in San Mateo on Sunday October 20th, 1991. Tickets are \$25.00 each if ordered before October 1st, 1991, or \$30.00 thereafter. Prices include Clubhouse admission, an all-you-can-eat buffet luncheon and a program guide.

Previous runnings have been great fun for all, and profitable for many. Order your tickets early and join us for our day at the races. (Victorian clothing is optional. Casual dress is acceptable.)

For tickets and further information write to:  
**Bruce R. Parker, MD, BSI**  
Department of Radiology  
Packard Children's Hospital  
725 Welch Road  
Palo Alto, CA 94304

Make cheques payable to:  
**The Dean Dickensheet Memorial Fund.**

\* \* 30 \* \*





# 221BBS



a  
Sherlockian  
Bulletin Board  
System



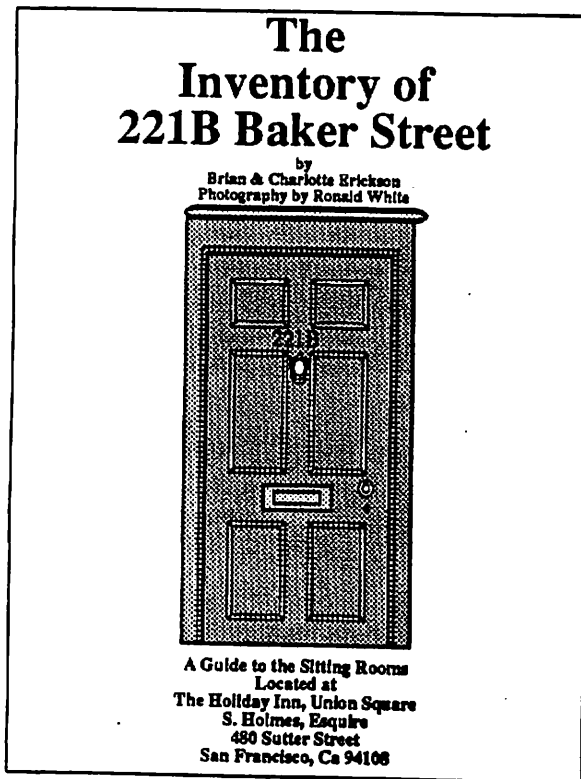
- \*\* Public and Private Message Centers
- \*\* Sherlockian Trading Post
- \*\* Sherlockian Reference Libraries (Society, Book and Audio & Video listings)
- \*\* Inquiries about Sherlockian Topics - ask that Sherlockian question that has always intrigued you and possibly one of our members will be able to answer it.
- \*\* What's New in the Vermissa Daily Herald - the official journal of the Scowrers and Molly Maguires of the San Francisco Bay Area.
- \*\* Current Holmesian Events - Local, National & International events listed for travelling Sherlockians.
- \*\* Assorted *Disjecta Membra* and Much More!

To access **221BBS** have your computer call (415) 949-1734  
Operating hours are: 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.  
Set your communication software to: 8 Bits, No Parity, 1 Stop Bit.  
You can use 300/1200/2400 BAUD.  
For more information contact Brian and Charlotte Erickson  
1920 Marich Way Mtn. View, CA 94040



# The Inventory of 221B Baker Street

By  
Brian & Charlotte Erickson  
Photography by Ronald White



*The Inventory of 221B Baker Street* is a comprehensive listing of the items found in those most famous sitting rooms of the World's Greatest Consulting Detective as recreated at the S. Holmes Esq., Holiday Inn-Union Square in San Francisco. Included are descriptions of the items, along with quotes from The Canon where they are mentioned. There are detailed photographs of the room, by section, showing the location of these items. Also, some individual photos were placed within the text. And lastly, there is a floor plan giving a general layout of the room.

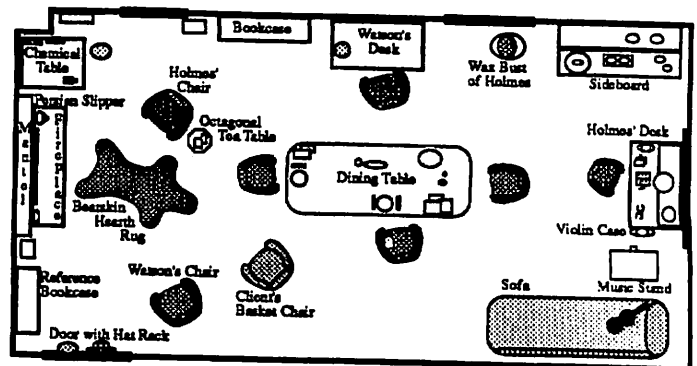
This monograph is priced at \$10.00 each, plus \$5.00 each for shipping and handling within the U.S., and \$7.50 each for foreign delivery. Send your cheque or money order payable to:

Brian or Charlotte Erickson  
1920 Marich Way  
Mtn. View, CA 94040

## EXAMPLE:

**Gasogene:** A device for producing aerated water, often referred to as 'soda water', by the chemical reaction of an acid upon an alkali carbonate, typically used when mixing alcoholic drinks.

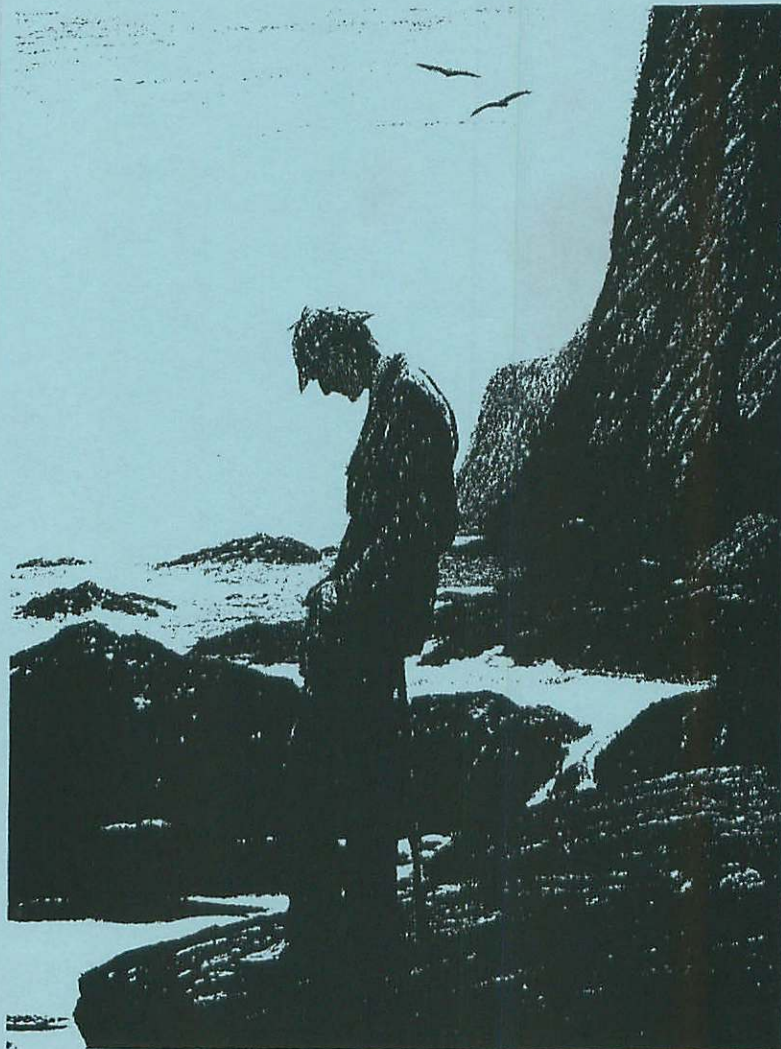
Ref: "With hardly a word spoken, but with a kindly eye, he [Holmes] waved me [Watson] to an arm-chair, threw across his case of cigars, and indicated a spirit case and a gasogene in the corner." SCAN  
"The gasogene and cigars are in the old place." (Holmes) MAZA



Floor Plan of 221B Baker Street at the S. Holmes, Esq.



LENORE GLEN OFFORD  
1905 — 1991



One likes to think that there is some fantastic limbo for the children of imagination. Some strange impossible place where the beaux of Fielding may still make love to the belles of Richardson. Where Scott's heroes still may strut. Dicken's delightful Cockneys still raise a laugh, and Thackeray's worldlings continue to carry on their reprehensible careers. Perhaps in some humble corner of such a Valhalla Sherlock and his Watson may for a time find a place..." — Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

The B.S.I.'s *Old Russian Woman* is no more,  
Though still we know she lives,  
Wherever Scanlan's glass is raised,  
To those who fell from ranks;  
—To Lee.

— Harraway  
V.V. 341