



VERMISSA DAILY HERALD

The questionable marriage
of Miss Irene Adler!

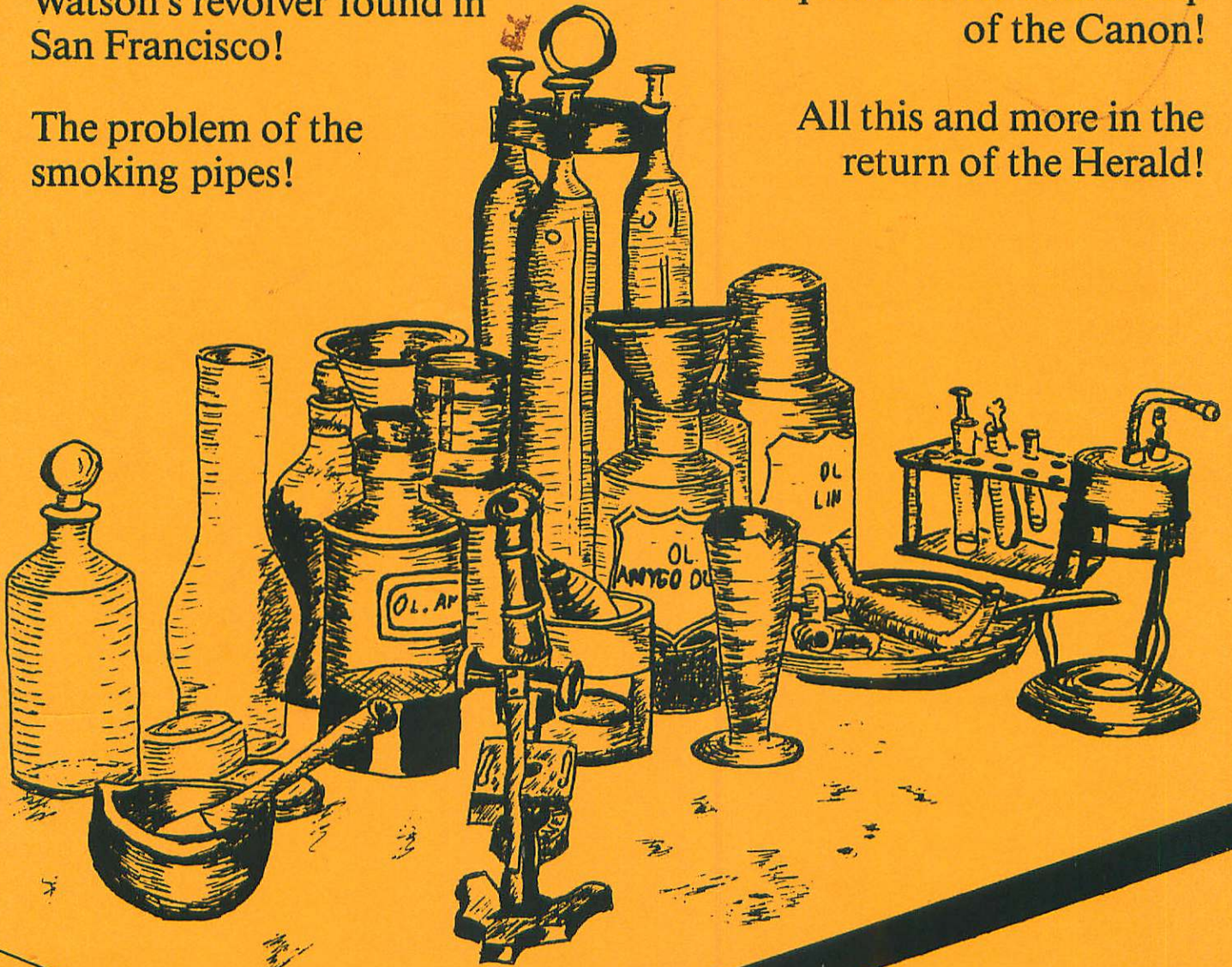
Watson's revolver found in
San Francisco!

The problem of the
smoking pipes!

Sherlock Holmes a neurotic?

The questionable authorship
of the Canon!

All this and more in the
return of the Herald!



“...his long, thin back
curved over a chemical vessel...”

THE ADVENTURE OF THE DANCING MEN

R
'85

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Editorial Acknowledgements	1
Stanger Pontiffiates Procrastinates James Stanger c/o Thomas E. Miller	2
Popping the Question to the Woman Poul Anderson	3
A Question of Authors Ronald White	8
A Brief Study of the Obsessive-Compulsive Neurosis in Holmes with a Commentary on its Beneficial Aspects and a Notation on Watson's Influence in the Fulfilment of Holmes' Career Susan Warner	10
The Wondrous Ten Shot Revolver or Dr. Watson in San Francisco Paul Scholten, M.D.	14
A Three Pipe Problem (Plus Two) Thomas E. Miller	17
Some Reflections on Trevor Hall and the Early Life of Sherlock Holmes Pamela Clark DICKENSHEET AWARD WINNER, 1985	21
Agony Column	25
Stanger Reviews The Tinder Box Sherlock Holmes Collection <u>Their Majestie's Bucketees</u> Young Indiana Holmes and the Temple of Spielberg	26

EDITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS:

Above all, Dover Press for its superb series of illustrative source books, particularly the following:

MEN, edited by Jim Harter

WOMEN, edited by Jim Harter

TRANSPORTATION, edited by Jim Harter

GOODS AND MERCHANDISE, edited by William Rowe

VICTORIAN SPOT ILLUSTRATIONS, edited by Carol Grafton

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ABOUT THE COVER

The cover illustration is a representation of the chemical table, as seen in the Sherlock Holmes' room. The room is located on the 30th floor of the Holiday Inn, near Union Square in San Francisco.

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STANGER ~~PONTIFICATE~~ PROCRASTINATES

" 'Boys,' said he, 'There's one man in this town that wants trimming up, and it's for you to see that he gets it. I'm speaking of James Stanger, of the Herald.' "

Overheard at a recent
Scowrers dinner

All right! All right! It's here! You can hold back on the tar and feathers, I don't even look good in tar and feathers. Seriously, though, this has been a project that was much longer in gestation than I had planned for. I can only plead inexperience, though you can't say I didn't warn you. Now that I have a fairly good idea of what I am doing, there should be about two issues a year, assuming that I receive enough submissions. As you can see, I've gone to a journal format in place of the old, unwealdy (at least to me) newspaper format. This allows for more articles per Herald -- I would like about five or six per issue -- and has proven a lot easier to set up.

I would here like to acknowledge the able assistance of Ronald White, who stepped in at the 11th hour with his extensive knowledge of photography and printing. If this journal has any trace of a professional appearance, it is directly due to Ron White. Indeed, if there be Brothers three, Moriarty; then let there be Stangers two. Consider me Stanger in Chief, which means, if you don't like the Herald, blame me, and Ron, Stanger in Ordinary. I also take full responsibility for all typos and misspellings. I believe that I managed to edit two in for every one I edited out. (Hollywood with an E, for Mycroft's sake! Who will edit the editor?)

I would also like to thank Jean-Teresa Sumner, that most able of literary agents, for arranging with Pam Clark to reprint Pam's Dickensheet award winning paper. It is proper that a paper which captured the Scowrer's top award should appear in the Scowrer's own journal. Most of all, of course, I would like to thank those people whose papers appear within this Herald. You simply can't have a journal without submissions. Speaking of which, if I am to get a second issue out this year, I need submissions. Learned papers are most desired, but poetry, parody, artwork and cartoons are also wanted, not to mention book reviews, film reviews and items for the agony column. If you have any items you want to submit for publication, just grab hold of me at any Scowrer's meeting, (I'am the one with the pipe carved into Holmes' likeness) or send it to the following address:

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POPPING THE QUESTION
TO THE WOMAN

by Poul Anderson

"To Sherlock Holmes she is always the woman." This, of course, explains our own fascination with Irene Adler, even though she only appears once in the Canon and it does not actually tell us very much about her.

We know only that she was born in New Jersey, but became an operatic star in Europe, singing contralto at La Scala and in Warsaw (and doubtless

other places). It was in the latter city that she met the King (then Prince) of Bohemia and took up with him. In 1888 she is described as having retired from the stage, although still no more than 30 years old, and living quietly in St. John's Wood -- a district of London where, according to the Annotated, wealthy men often lodged their mistresses. When the King's betrothal to a Scandinavian princess was arranged, she threatened to break it up by sending that puritanical family a compromising photograph on the eve of the wedding. Neither threats nor offers of large sums of money moved her to give it to the King. Meanwhile she was seeing Godfrey Norton of the Inner Temple. In what appeared to be sudden agitation on the part of both these young persons, they dashed off and went through a marriage ceremony which Holmes witnessed. The detective's efforts against her alerted Irene to the fact that he was on her trail, which she verified by trailing him in turn, disguised. She then left England with her man to escape the King's possible vengefulness. As further protection she took the photograph along, but left a note promising not to reveal it unless forced to do so in self-defense. Apparently the King believed this and felt himself safe; indeed, he expressed great admiration for her. Watson, writing not long after the incident, refers to her as the "late Irene Adler."

We hate to accept that. One so beautiful, gifted, charming, resourceful, and brave should not die so young. The wrongness is compounded by the fact that I have commented on elsewhere, that she is Holmes' anima, his female counterpart in the Jungian sense. He must have recognized this unconsciously. Whether or not he was actually in love with her, her death would have been a cruel blow to him, the extinction of a part of himself. Now the Canon does not depict Holmes bowed down by grief at any time. Moreover, Watson writes that she "is" the woman. This is reiterated in the very last sentence of his account: "And when he speaks of Irene Adler, or when he refers to her photograph, it is always under the honourable title of the woman." The phrasing does not absolutely declare, but it does strongly imply, that at the time when Watson penned his chronicle, she was still alive and well.

Is it possible that some prissy Victorian copy editor inserted those words "the late" and that Watson failed to notice them when reading proof? Could it even have been the Agent who was responsible? The motive might have

been to shield readers from any shocking suggestion that the wages of sin is not always death.

I shall return to this matter in due course, but let us raise questions about the story in their proper order. For Lord knows there are plenty of them. No doubt all of mine, and probably more, have been asked here and there by others; I know that some have. However, it may be interesting, perhaps even helpful, to have the most obvious ones assembled in a single place, together with attempts at answering them. Therefore, let us begin our inquiry. The game's afoot, and delightful quarry she is.

(1) Why did Irene ever want to prevent the King's marriage? She seems to have come to despise him rather thoroughly, while having found herself a man she loved. Why should she care if he former lover committed matrimony?

(2) Why did she withdraw her threat, after making good her escape? The King's agents had been causing her a lot of trouble, Holmes only the latest and most formidable of them. Would she not have wanted to punish him?

(3) Why had she retired so early from a brilliant musical career?

(4) Since Norton had been seeing her for some time, why did he suddenly show up in great agitation?

(5) Why did they then immediately dash off to church -- and why in separate conveyances?

(6) Why did they go through a marriage ceremony that, as numerous scholars have pointed out could not have been valid under British law of the period?

(7) How did they get the use of the church for this -- not to mention a clergyman? Was the latter a fake?

(8) If Norton was a member of the British bar, How did he expect to make a living outside of England?

(9) Why does Watson throughout call her Irene Adler, not Irene Norton, even though in her note she signs herself by her married name?

Let me set forth notions that I have been entertaining about these matters. I do not claim that they are definitive, but some of them may stimulate thought, and thus bring us all closer to understanding.

(1) Why did Irene try to prevent the King's marriage? It does not seem likely that this was the spite of a woman spurned; she does not come across as that kind of person. Besides, quite likely it was she who had done the spurning. She had obviously discovered what an unpleasant character the (then) Prince was. Having lately become King, he promptly set about making a dynastic marriage. Quite possibly Irene felt sorry for his prospective Queen and resolved to save the poor girl from such an alliance.

(2) Why did she afterward change her mind about this? It seems reasonable to me that she did not want to involve her new man, Godfrey Norton, in the certain scandal if she carried through to the end.

(3) Why had she already retired from the opera? Probably those commentators are right who think the King's influence forced the managers of the leading houses not to engage her. This could have been an effort to pressure her into giving him the photograph -- and perhaps even becoming his mistress again, more or less discreetly, once the royal marriage had taken place. He did, in the end, speak rather wistfully about her. So Irene may, at first, have thought of her career as suffering a hiatus, not a termination.

(4) Why did Norton show up so excited, and in his turn excite her? Could he have learned what the situation was? This seems plausible. Irene, wanting to be honest with him, may have informed him herself, doubtless by letter. Alternatively, the King may have done so. While he could not yet

have heard from Holmes about Norton's closeness to Irene, some other agent of his may have discovered it. Thereupon the King passed the word on to the lawyer, in hopes that the latter would persuade Irene to yield. However, the King's behavior afterward is not very consistent with this hypothesis. On the whole, I think it was Irene herself who made the admission voluntarily. The news that his beloved was a Fallen Woman would have agitated any Victorian gentleman.

(5) Why did the two of them speed off like that? If I am right about the reason for Norton's excitement, then doubtless he decided that he wanted Irene in spite of everything, and his first duty was to get her out of the trouble she had brought on herself. He brouched a scheme he had already prepared, and she agreed -- perhaps because of an ultimatum that otherwise he must indeed give her up. He hastened off first to buy a wedding ring along the way, and she followed as soon as she could don a proper outer garment and suitably dainty bonnet.

(6) Why the false marriage? Because Norton had decided he dared not wait. The usual procedures, such as publication of the banns, might all too easily have alerted the King, who might then have struck in some ruthless fashion, not knowing what to expect next and therefore made desperate. On the other hand, if the King was confronted with what looked like a fait accompli, he would stay his hand until he found out whether or not Irene really meant to keep a promise not to interfere with his own marriage. I agree that this line of thought is somewhat shaky in its logic, but we must remember that Norton was under great stress -- and Irene herself probably not at her coolest and calmest.

(7) How did they get the use of the church? There are several possible ways, but the simplest hypothesis is that Norton stopped off en route to Irene's and bribed the verger, who may well have posed as the clergyman. They needed a witness not because of the law, which as a matter of fact required two witnesses, but in order to have some independent party present at the charade. Then afterward, if the King's agents investigated, they would turn up this party, who would doubtless have been telling all his cronies about his remarkable experience. Of course, the witness had to be someone too ignorant to realize that the ceremony was a farce. A drunken-looking groom seemed ideal. They did not then imagine that he was really Sherlock Holmes.

It is worth noting that after the ritual, Norton and Irene did not adjourn to a hotel, but went their separate ways. They did not meet again until early the following morning, and then only to catch the 5.15 from Charing Cross, for the Continent. A noble Victorian gentleman such as Norton would not have commenced his actual honeymoon until the wedding had been properly solemnized. No doubt Irene heaved a sigh at this latest male foolishness, but went along with it.

(8) How did Norton, afterward, propose to earn his keep? Here we venture into realms of speculation, but they do not seem overly fantastic. For the sake of the woman he loved, Norton had committed a felony. If I am right about his rectitude, that was admissible within the code; however, he could not in good conscience



continue to practice the law that he had violated. This, more than fear of the King, may have prompted the couple's decision to leave England.

Where, then, did they go? There was nothing for him on the Continent. Irene might resume her career, but to be supported by his wife would be intolerable for an English gentleman. America, though, was the land of opportunity; it was also Irene's native country.

Now "Adler" is a Jewish name, so her family must have been of that origin. Victorian Judaism was more strict than all but the most Orthodox of today. Irene was presumably apostate, since she not only went adventuring abroad, she took up with a goy -- indeed, with at least two goyim in succession. Of course, possibly her family had converted to Christianity, even before she was born, but it seems likelt that it would have retained a Jewish level of morality. In either case, Irene must have been estranged from her parents. Yet they must have been well off, or she could never have had the education and opportunities as a child that she clearly did have.

Therefore she quite likely proposed to her husband that they go to New Jersey and become reconciled with her parents. Her father could find a good business opportunity for his son-in-law. To be sure, such reconciliation would require abandoning the stage, which explains why the opera never again enjoyed her glorious voice.

(9) Finally, why does Watson never refer to her by her married name? To answer this, let us recall how Holmes was completely taken in by the pretended wedding ceremony. After all, he was a lifelong bachelor, who never spoke of the softer passions, save with a gibe and a sneer. He may never have been to a real wedding. Certainly the Canon gives no indication that he was any kind of a churchgoer. So I suggest that Watson, a married man, pointed out to Holmes how the latter had been taken in. The chagrin of the detective was so great that the good doctor, charitably, left this whole detail out of his account. However, since he himself had no way of knowing whether Irene ever did get legally married or not, he felt obliged to call her "Adler" throughout.

So far, I think, whether they are right or wrong, the ideas in this essay have hewn closely to the facts and are not unreasonable. Now I would like to close with one which, while conceivable, is a bit of frank fantasy and wishfulness. Early on, I wondered why Watson, writing only two or three years after the events he describes, refers to the late Irene Adler. If nothing else, we would expect him to give some further comment on so untimely a demise and the reason for it, as well as on a sadness that Holmes would surely not have been able entirely to conceal. I suggest that the phrase may have been a prudish editorial insertion.

It may also have been yet another slip of the Watsonian pen. Perhaps he meant to write "the former Irene Adler," having just then learned that she did afterward go through a legal marriage.

But a third possibility, although remote, is more intriguing. After the glamour and excitement of her former life, could Irene really have settled down to being a Victorian housewife? Her intelligence, boldness, and acting ability gave her the makings of a great detective. Might she not soon have kicked over the traces, faked her own death, and quietly contacted her old opponent, Mr. Sherlock Holmes? He would doubtless have been delighted to give her his guidance and thereafter have her assistance; a female detective in that era would have been unique and often invaluable. Although she necessarily operated anonymously, she may have carried out many exploits of her own.

If this far-fetched daydream should prove to be true, then we may well have to reckon Irene Adler among the Baker Street Irregulars! After all, they still raise their glasses to her memory.





A QUESTION OF AUTHORS

by Ronald White

The heirs of Arthur Conan Doyle's estate contend that Doyle was the creator of a fictitious character called "Sherlock Holmes" and that the adventures came from Doyle's imagination, with little or no help from the outside. However, Sherlock Holmes' aficionados know that the adventures are accurate records of some of the cases that Dr. John H. Watson shared with his friend,

the world's first consulting detective. We also know that Watson penned these adventures, and that Doyle served as his literary agent, giving these studies to the public verbatim.-- Or did he?

After careful research, I have come to the realization that the original sixty case studies which form the basis of what we know of Sherlock Holmes and Dr. John H. Watson, were not written by Dr. Watson but by Arthur Conan Doyle. However, it is equally apparent that these were not solely from Doyle's imagination, but were based on sketches and comments he received from his close friend, Dr. John H. Watson.

I have found ample evidence for this view. The first piece of evidence to come to my attention was Watson's "wandering wound". In A Study in Scarlet (published in 1887), Watson spoke of his shoulder wound, the result of a Jezail bullet, as the reason for his return to England. In The Sign of the Four, published only three years later, we see Watson nursing his wounded leg ("...I had had a Jezail bullet through it some time before..."). I doubt that these are two separate wounds, as has been proposed, since there is not a single case where both wounds are mentioned. Even though Mr. William S. Baring-Gould places eight years between these cases, I doubt if Watson would forget where such a painful wound was located. It is much more likely that the sketch submitted to Doyle mentioned only that Watson was "painfully aware" of his old wound. Doyle, in fleshing out the sketch, would logically, give it a location. In doing so, he was probably referring to his own leg, which reportedly ached with changes in the weather.

Just as Watson would be unlikely to forget where he was wounded, he would be equally unlikely to forget his own name. However in the opening scene of The Man with the Twisted Lip, Watson's wife refers to him as James instead of John. Some people have suggested that this is a misinterpretation of Watson's handwriting by the original typesetter. Although I will concede that this is possible, I feel that it is, again, unlikely. John contains four letters, including the long letter "h", while James has five letters and contains no long letters. If we are to believe Holmes, in The Sign of the Four, as he states "...men of character will always differentiate their long letters, however illegibly they may write...", we must also assume that Watson would differentiate between an "m" and an "n". Others have hinted that he was called "James", because his middle name was "Hamish", which is Gaelic for James.

It is more probable that James came from the pen of Arthur Conan Doyle. My research has shown that Doyle was a close friend of two Dr. Watson's -- Dr. John H. Watson (late of the army medical corp and known as the biographer of Sherlock Holmes) and James Elmwood Watson (house physician at the Edinburgh Royal Hospital and later, physician to the British consulate at Newchung, Manchuria).

As Doyle rewrote the case that John Watson had submitted, it would be quite simple to allow the name "James" to be inserted where it should have read "John". That this was not later corrected by proofing can be attributed to a combination of factors, including publishing deadlines and the conflicting schedules of Drs. Doyle and John Watson.

I also feel that Watson would have been reluctant to place facts before the public that were patently unverified. Yet, in The Mazarin Stone we have a conversation between Count Sylvius and Sam Merton written word-for-word, even though neither Holmes nor Watson was present. It is true that Holmes was shown to be listening to the latter part of the conversation. However, the mention of a waiting room and the second exit from Holmes' bedroom (neither of which was mentioned in any other case) leads me to conclude that much of this story derives, not from Watson's sketches, but from Doyle's imagination.

Apparent errors in other cases are probably not due to Watson's "faulty memory" but to his incomplete notes or Doyle's misinterpretation of Watson's handwritten notes (it is a well-known fact that some members of the medical profession do not possess the clearest penmanship).

If Holmes and Watson were creations of Arthur Conan Doyle, as members of Doyle's family have claimed, then it would be difficult for Doyle to explain his attitude toward these works. After a total of only six published cases, Doyle wrote privately that he was weary of Holmes and wished he could make an end of him. It is hard to believe that a writer would turn away from a character so widely acclaimed and was, for the most part, his "bread and butter". Doyle claimed that the Holmes stories got in the way of his more important works, such as The White Company.

It is easier to believe that what Doyle resented was the fact that he was becoming known not for his own great works, but for works in which his role was limited to adapting case studies to a story form palatable to the reading public. Again, we see this resentment appearing when William Gillette asked Doyle if he could have Holmes marry during a play. Doyle replied:

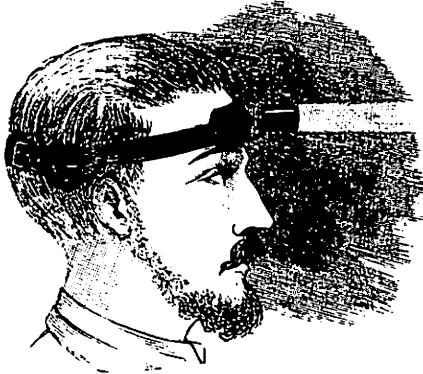
"You may marry him. murder him or do what you like with him."

This is hardly the treatment one would accord his own treasured original creation.

While Watson's main role was to present the facts of Holmes' investigations, he would hardly be above adding his own humorous anecdotes where he gets the better of Holmes. Who can forget the opening scene in The Valley of Fear where Holmes and Watson are discussing Professor Moriarty: Watson describes Moriarty as "the famous scientific criminal as famous among crooks as..." while Holmes interrupts with "My blushes, Watson". Watson continues with, "I was about to say, as he is unknown to the public". Scenes such as this one Watson would be likely to have written in full, with a fond remembrance, as he would also have written the scene in The Greek Interpreter, where he gives the correct solution to the case with very little prompting from Holmes.

In short there are, of course, many other indications that Doyle and Watson worked as collaborators in these cases. However, I believe even these few examples are enough to convince the studious Sherlockian that neither Doyle nor Watson was solely responsible for the final content, but that their collaboration presented the major facts of the cases and brought to life what could have been very dull case studies.

A BRIEF STUDY OF OBSESSIVE-COMPULSIVE NEUROSIS IN HOLMES WITH A COMMENTARY ON ITS BENEFICIAL ASPECTS AND A NOTATION ON WATSON'S INFLUENCE IN THE FULFILLMENT OF HOLMES' CAREER



by Susan Warner

Obsessive-compulsive neurosis, despite the school of psychology from which one argues, is a type of neurosis which can inhibit an individual from successful completion of a given task or completion of a career. Specifically, a person possessing obsessive-compulsive tendencies can become absorbed in the minute qualities of the situation at hand, leading to the extreme

of noncompletion of any given task or potential career due to endless flaws observed, or leading to great success in detail-oriented tasks and choice of career, if the personality is balanced with compensating qualities. In Sherlock Holmes' personality, examples of obsessive-compulsive qualities abound. It is not the focus of this paper to analyze his personality, but rather to comment on how this compulsion aided his career, with a desultory analysis of the interaction of Watson and Holmes, in the culmination of Holmes' uniquely successful life.

In examining the collegiate history of Sherlock Holmes (A Study in Scarlet) one discovers that he did not matriculate in any specific area of study. Possession of obsessive-compulsive traits would explain this fact, as a personality with this type of neurosis to the advanced degree that Holmes displayed, would have a difficult time settling on one course of study. Stamford, an acquaintance of Dr. Watson's and Holmes', in describing Holmes to Dr. Watson, described Holmes' lack of direction despite great proficiency in two areas;

"..I have no idea what he intends to go in for. I believe he is well up in anatomy, and he is a first-class chemist; but, as far as I know, he has never taken out any systematic medical classes. His studies are very desultory and eccentric, but he has amassed a lot of out-of-the-way knowledge which would astonish his professors." (A Study in Scarlet)

Dr. Watson, in listing his roommate's qualities in A Study in Scarlet shows a concise observation as to the particular manifestations of this type of neurosis. He lists;

"Sherlock Holmes - his limits"

1. Knowledge of Literature - Nil
2. Knowledge of Philosophy - Nil
3. Knowledge of Astronomy - Nil
4. Knowledge of Politics - Feeble
5. Knowledge of Botany - Variable
6. Well up in belladonna, opium, and poisons generally. Knows nothing of practical gardening.
7. Knowledge of Geology - Practical, but limited
8. Tells at a glance different soils from each other. After walks has shown me splashes upon his trousers, and told me by their colour and consistence in what part of London he had received them.

9. Knowledge of Chemistry - Profound
10. Knowledge of Anatomy - Accurate, but unsystematic
11. Knowledge of Sensational Literature - Immense
12. He appears to know every detail of every horror perpetrated in the century.
13. Plays the violin well.
14. Is an expert singlestick player, boxer and swordsman
15. Has a good practical knowledge of British law.

From the fact that Holmes was university educated in the British mode one can deduce that Holmes possessed an obsessive-compulsive neurotic disorder because through the nature of his education, he should have been a well-rounded individual, knowledgeable in Literature, Philosophy, as well as the hard sciences. Watson's observation of the narrow focus of Holmes' interests shows the effects of the neurosis on Holmes' selection of interests and partially explains his choice of career. It is the peculiar focus of such individuals to selectively ignore or "forget" training that does not satisfy the obsessive needs that they possess. Therefore, the global concepts of liberal arts would appear to be scarcely appealing to a personality obsessed with detail.

In their introduction in A Study in Scarlet Watson stated that he found his first impressions of Holmes' qualities rather mystifying:

"If I can only find what the fellow is driving at by reconciling all these accomplishments, and discovering a calling which needs them all...I may as well give up the attempt at once." (A Study in Scarlet)

Watson continued in his observations of the apparently undisciplined nature of Holmes:

"I see that I have alluded above to his powers on the violin. These were very remarkable, but as eccentric as all his other accomplishments. That he could play pieces, and difficult pieces, I knew well, because at my request he has played me some of Mendelssohn's Lieder, and other favourites. When left to himself, however, he would seldom produce any music or attempt any recognized air..." (A Study in Scarlet)

The observation of the seemingly scattered, yet detailed interests, all which point to a futile endeavor for success, as defined by society's norms, is a common hallmark of the person observing a typical obsessive-compulsive neurotic.

One must now comment on how this eccentric personality interacted with Watson, for the study of Holmes' career is incomplete without studying the relationship of "his Boswell" (as Holmes termed Watson) (Scandal in Bohemia), to the personage of Holmes. For Watson, the peculiarities of Holmes acted as a stimulus to his non-neurotic personality. To Stamford, the gentleman who introduced Holmes to Watson, Watson states his initial impressions of Holmes:

"This is very piquant. I am much obliged to you for bringing us together. 'The proper study of mankind is man', you know". (A Study in Scarlet)

In the beginning of their association, Watson notes with growing depth, the qualities of Holmes which we would term strongly obsessive-compulsive and noted how these qualities affected himself:

"As the weeks went by, my interest in him and my curiosity as to his aims in life gradually deepened and increased...The reader may set me down as a hopeless busybody when I confess how much this man stimulated my curiosity, and how often I endeavoured to break through the reticence which he showed on all that concerned himself. Before pronouncing judgement, however, be it remembered how objectless was my life, and how little there was to engage my attention...He was not studying medicine. He had himself, in reply to a question, confirmed Stamford's opinion upon that point. Neither did he appear to have pursued any course of reading which might fit him for a degree in science or any other

recognized portal which give him an entrance into the learned world. Yet his zeal for certain studies was remarkable, and within eccentric limits his knowledge was so extraordinarily ample and minute that his observations have fairly astounded me." (A Study in Scarlet)

Thus Holmes piqued Watson's interests and served as a contrast to Watson's more conventional approach to life. Holmes acted as a mental stimulant for Watson and balanced the innate prosaic qualities of Watson with his unusual approach to life. For Holmes, on the other hand, his very eccentricity and obscure interests, without the balancing of Watson's non-neurotic approach to life, would have rendered him a mere footnote in the annals of criminology. Watson in short, Holmes' ballast. It is notable that the bulk of Holmes' career coincided with his association with Watson. Watson's association with Holmes began with A Study in Scarlet and concluded with The Veiled Lodger, a span of seventeen years (as Watson commented in The Veiled Lodger), out of the twenty-three that Holmes was a detective.

In temperament Watson appeared to possess a calm, practical and old-fashioned attitude toward life. For example, when Victor Hatherly came to his surgery hysterical and with a thumb chopped off, Watson gave him brandy, cleaned and dressed the wound, and took him to Holmes, to help Mr. Hatherly solve his case (Engineer's Thumb). Watson was not given to a keen interest in medical research, but did a dutiful reading of such medical journals as British Medical Journal, in order to keep current in medical techniques (Stock-broker's Clerk) as well as studying a new treatise in pathology (Study in Scarlet). His conversation, however, was devoid of references to the medical profession or technological advances, and instead, he appeared to be motivated to read a good sea story rather than study advances in medicine (Five Orange Pips).

In contrast Holmes was uneven in temperament, being alternately depressed or exalted. He could utilize theatrical gestures in the resolution of crimes (Six Napoleons), and was given to disguises when the situation warranted it. For example, in Sign of the Four he impersonated an aged master mariner; in Scandal in Bohemia a drunken groom and a clergyman; in The Man with the Twisted Lip an old man; in Beryl Coronet a common loafer; in Mazarin Stone an old woman; continuing through various adventures into his final one, in which he played an Irish-American, anti-British espionage agent (His Last Bow). Such use of theatrics and imagination successfully deceived Watson on many occasions, and serves as an additional illustration between the minds of these two men.

In terms of interest in research, Holmes was keen to write and publish monographs on obscure topics. His interests ranged from "The Book of Life", a treatise on the science of detection (A Study in Scarlet) to study of tobacco ashes ("Upon the Distinction between the Ashes of the Various Tobaccos" in The Sign of the Four and Boscombe Valley Mystery). to various topics in the science of detection (footsteps and the use of plaster of paris-- Sign of the Four; a hand's shape being influenced by its trade -- Sign of the Four; the influence of a typewriter in crime -- Case of Identity; cryptology -- Dancing Men; the human ear -- The Cardboard Box, Lady Frances Carfax; the use of dogs in detective work -- Creeping Man). Holmes wrote, as well as studied obscure themes about the topic of detection; as well as other leit motifs in his lexicon of interests, which contrasted well with the non-intellectual nature of Watson.

Watson acted not only as a buffer to his friend's high-strung, tense nature but also was of extreme benefit to him. Without Watson's aid, Holmes would probably been incurably addicted to a seven-per-cent solution of cocaine as well as morphine (Sign of the Four, The Yellow Face). The steady influence that Watson gave Holmes may have done much to rescue Holmes from a premature

death due to addiction.

As the greatest gift to Holmes on Watson's part, he gave Holmes the immeasurable gift of loyalty. In such cases as Bruce-Partington, in which he reluctantly aids Holmes in breaking into a house by purchasing the necessary tools, as well as standing watch while Holmes cracked a safe (Milverton), Watson mitigated some of the deep distrust that Holmes' methods inspired among persons not acquainted with the effectiveness of his methods (Speckled Band, Mazarin Stone). Watson's publications of Holmes' cases served to advance his friend's career quite rapidly. Loyalty, again, was Watson's motivation. He was determined to see that his friend's methods were avenged, when the police took credit for Holmes' work. Watson states to Holmes prophetically in A Study in Scarlet, the first case of their association together:

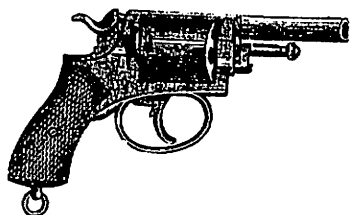
"Never mind... I have all the facts in my journal, and the public shall know them."

Watson was no detective. Despite his patient attempts to deduce Holmes' reasoning, Watson was not gifted along these lines. As an example, in The Creeping Man, Watson could not see the relationship between an angry wolfhound and a visit to Bohemia, despite the fact that evidence was being pieced together quite rapidly by Holmes. Watson's sole comment was one of relief as Holmes is placing the evidence together: "Thank goodness that something connects with something." Watson, in short, was not the observant personality that Holmes was. For instance, Watson could not tell Holmes how many steps led up from their hall to their consulting room at 221B Baker Street. He was gratified to learn from Holmes that there were seventeen steps (A Scandal in Bohemia). However, despite his lack of observant powers, his patience and willingness to listen gave Holmes both the perfect format for lecturer, and sounding-board for his theories. In numerous adventures, Holmes thanked Watson for his patience and suggestions which led Holmes to the solution.

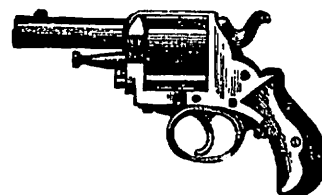
Without the association of Watson, Holmes would have never had the great fruition of his career. Certainly his gifts and aid to Scotland Yard would have been appreciated in criminology circles, but his help to other people he served would have never occurred without the counterpart of Watson. Moreover, Watson weaned him from cocaine and morphine addiction and may have contributed to his being able to retire to a quiet life in Sussex, a place devoid of constant mental and physical stimulation. Before his association with Watson, Holmes could never have countenanced a bucolic existence. As Holmes stated to Watson at the beginning of The Sign of the Four, in regard to his need for drugs:

"My mind...rebels at stagnation. Give me problems, give me work, give me the most abstruse cryptogram, or the most intricate analysis, and I am in my own proper atmosphere. I can dispense then with artificial stimulants. But I abhor the dull routine of existence. I crave for mental exaltation. That is why I have chosen my own particular profession, or rather created it, for I am the only one in the world."

Through the long association with Watson, it thus appears that the obsessive-compulsive qualities of Holmes found a focus for fulfillment in a brilliant career, and were sublimated into his retiree's avocation of the study of bees (His Last Bow). That is, he modified his need for mental stimulation from the outside world of Scotland Yard and an urban setting into satisfaction at living in a rustic community and studying the methodical behavior of bees. While Holmes possessed the great genius for the science of detection, he needed the perfect compliment found in Watson. Thus, through Watson, Holmes found fulfillment and focus. For Watson, Holmes' association afforded him friendship with one of the most remarkable personalities of the Century, gave him an alternative lifestyle to the convalescent's existence he possibly envisioned for himself following his return to England from Afghanistan (A Study in Scarlet) and stimulated his latent literary ability for recording his friend's cases, to their mutual benefit.



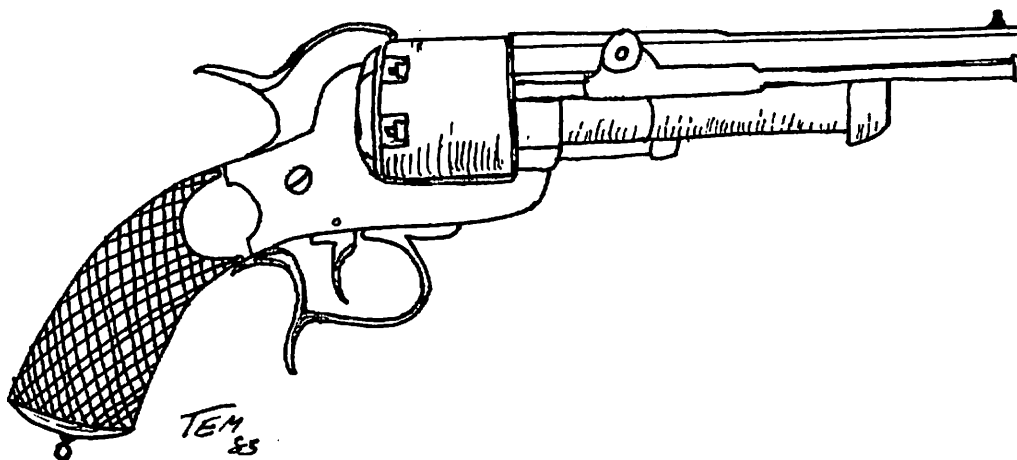
THE WONDROUS TEN SHOT REVOLVER
OR
DOCTOR WATSON IN SAN FRANCISCO



by PAUL SCHOLTEN, M.D.

It will be recalled that in Dr. Watson's Bag, a paper presented to The Scowrers and Molly Maguires in May, 1976, certain facts were introduced regarding Doctor John Watson's alleged residence in San Francisco during the the 1880's. Further confirmatory details have now come to light.

My late grandfather, Herman Scholten, built a set of flats at 180-184 Clara St., in the South of Market District of San Francisco in 1869. About 1885, an Englishman, a Doctor John Watson, rented rooms from him and practised medicine in them for a short time. He left suddenly, owing his last months rent, and, as a pledge against the rent, left a derringer, a fine set of abortionists instruments, and a wondrous ten shot revolver. The family has held them against Dr. Watson's back rent, and they still await his return and their redemption.



What evidence do we have that our Dr. Watson and Sherlock Holmes' amanuensis are the same person? There are quite strong indications. John Dickson Carr, writing in The Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, 1949, pp 105-107, notes that Doyle wrote a three-act play entitled Angels of Darkness: acts one and two in 1889, and the final act in 1890. Essentially it is a re-write of the Utah scenes of A Study in Scarlet; which was published three years earlier, in 1887. However, the whole play takes place in the United States, rather than in London and Utah as it is related in the Canon. The play reveals that Watson practised medicine in San Francisco, and, either he was wed in San Francisco to a young lady named Violet, or, he heartlessly jilted the girl whom he holds in his arms as the curtain falls. Who was she? Carr does not tell us - only hints at black perfidity and a well known name. But who? Violet? Alice Whiting? Constance Adams? Who can tell!

Further; Dr. W.S. Bristow, writing in "The Mystery of the Third Continent" (a reference to Watson's "experience with women on three continents") states that Watson's father and brother came to America to fight in the 1861-65 Civil War and remained in the United States after Appomattox. Subsequently, Doctor John Watson came to San Francisco in late 1883, or early 1884, to attend his ill brother, who then died, and Watson went into practice for a time, to support himself and earn his passage back to England.

This premise is supported by the Canon which contains no record of Holmes' activities from The Speckled Band, which occurred in April, 1883, until the adventure of The Resident Patient, which dates from October, 1886. This hiatus of three and a half years can best be explained by Watson's presence in San Francisco during this time. Holmes was at the peak of his powers and activities and must have solved many important cases in these years, but the record remains blank; lacking a Watson to record them.

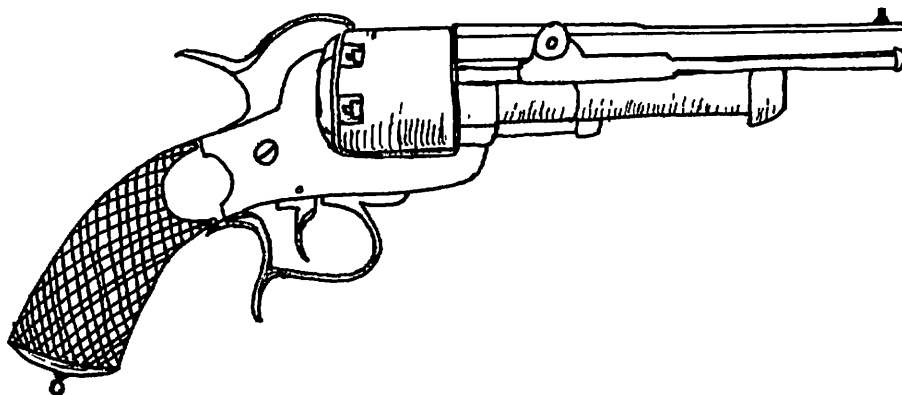
As to the ten shot revolver. It is a double-barreled over-and-under pistol with nine shots of 42 caliber which are fired through the upper barrel, and below, a second barrel of 60 caliber that is a short 20 gauge shotgun. It is a fearsome weapon; if one cannot hit his enemies in nine solid shots, he can always finish them off with a blast of buckshot. It is known as the Le Mat pistol or the "Grapeshot Revolver." The Le Mat was the invention of a New Orleans physician of French birth, Doctor J. A. F. Le Mat; later Colonel Le Mat of the Confederate States Army. He was a business associate of General Beauregard in New Orleans and developed the revolver just before the Civil War when the U.S. Army held a competition, in 1859, to adopt an official dragoon type revolver, a light cavalry weapon for hit and run tactics. Dr. Le Mat produced this weapon for the competition and was granted U.S. Patent #15,925. He lost out to the famous Colt Dragoon Pistol when the examining board judged that his mechanism was overly complicated. Actually, the weapon is not really complex and is very similar to the Colt. Both are cap and ball revolvers with the cylinder revolving around a central pinion, a pin on the Colt, the shotgun barrel on the Le Mat; six shots for the Colt, nine in the Le Mat cylinder. They both load from the front, which is somewhat tedious. Both have ejector-rammers to push in the loads; the Le Mat has an additional detachable ramrod for the shotgun. The Le Mat took nine round balls of lead weighing 130 grains and the shotgun could be loaded with 5 or 6 solid shot or a handful of buckshot. In an emergency, the shotgun could be filled with almost anything; scrap metal, gravel, or birdshot. It has an ingenious hammer which flips up and down to select the barrel to be fired and the top of the hammer is notched to form the rear sight. It is somewhat heavy as a sidearm at 50 ounces, a little over three pounds, but since a horse was going to carry it and its bearer, weight wasn't too important. It could be field stripped, or taken apart without tools just by unscrewing the various parts by hand, something that could not be done with the Colt to which it lost the competition.

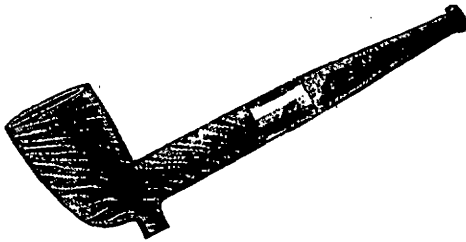
When the Civil War broke out in 1861, Doctor Le Mat offered his gun to the Confederate government, but the South had no machinery capable of producing it. Their only armament plant was a rifle factory seized from the Federals at Harper's Ferry, and transported south. Le Mat secured a contract from the Confederate War Department to supply it with 5000 of his pistols and sailed for France on the British ship Trent. The Trent became involved in an international incident when the U.S. Navy stopped the ship and took off two of Le Mat's fellow passengers, the Confederate commissioners Mason and Slidell, but Le Mat was left aboard. He continued on to Paris where he engaged the firm of C. Girard & Cie. to manufacture 2500 pistols, which were then smuggled back to the Southern forces through the Yankee blockade. They were beautifully made, with engraving and checkering and proved to be very popular with cavalry and other horse borne officers. Le Mat presented a

number of his guns to Confederate generals; J.E.B. Stuart, Beauregard, and General Richard Anderson are known to have habitually carried them. Each gun and its parts were carefully numbered; Stuart carried #712 and it can be viewed today in the Confederate Museum in Richmond, Virginia. The pistol that Dr. Watson left behind is #1853, a fine example of Confederate weaponry, still in perfect firing condition.

How did Watson happen to have it in San Francisco? It would appear that Dr. Watson inherited it from his brother who had served in the Union Army alongside of his father and one of them captured the pistol from a Confederate Horseman. American soldiers being inveterate souvenir collectors, Watson's brother kept it with him and he had it when he drifted west and into alcoholism. When Watson came to San Francisco to nurse his brother in his final illness, the gun became his. Later, preparing to leave San Francisco, Watson owed a room and board bill and pledged his instruments and two guns. Possibly he intended to send for them, or thought he might return, or, perhaps, had no desire to go through Her Majesty's Customs with two guns and a set of abortionist's tools.

Thus, a Civil War pistol, left behind, lends credence to the postulate that Holmes' companion was indeed in San Francisco in the 1880's. In any event, the pledge is still held in safety, awaiting the good doctor's return. Meanwhile, Dr. Watson's stay in San Francisco remains under investigation, and hopefully, further details will be revealed when the incredible tale of "How Joaquin Murieta's Head Got Into The Glass Bottle" is ready for presentation.





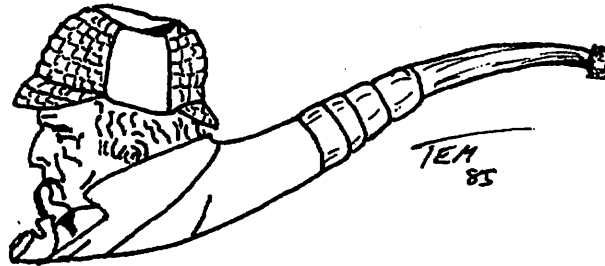
A THREE PIPE PROBLEM

(PLUS TWO)

by Thomas E. Miller



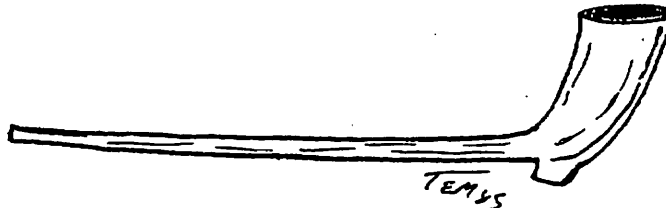
"Pipes are occasionally of extraordinary interest." Thus, Sherlock Holmes on one of his favorite vices. It is evident that Sherlock Holmes is one of the great smokers of history, given to smoking cigarettes and cigars as well, he is best known for his love of the pipe. A pipe is, with deerstalker, Inverness cape, and magnifying glass, one of the objects most often found in Sherlockian Iconography. Paradoxically enough, the pipe most often depicted is one he most likely never smoked. The pipes of Sherlock Holmes can therefore be divided into three categories; the pipes he smoked, the pipes he could have smoked, and those he almost certainly did not smoke. Take, for example, the hand-carved "Metz" meerschaum which is illustrated below.



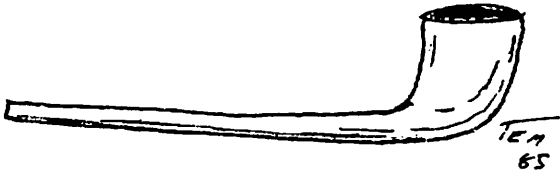
(This is not a Magritte)

It seems fairly safe to say that Holmes never smoked a pipe like this. This is rather a pity, the Escher effect would have been something to see.

Holmes did own a great number of pipes, however, the canon makes this quite clear. Reference is made in DYIN to "A litter of pipes..." and in BLUE to a "...pipe rack within his reach...", but only three types of pipe are referred to in the canon. Firstly, the black clay, from the description, a clay blackened by much use. Clay pipes have the virtues of being cheap, next to impossible to burn out and of having a small bowl. The clay pipe in my collection, here illustrated, is from a mold first made in 1716 and still used today. Holmes could well have had one just like it. This particular pipe takes about twenty minutes to smoke down. This makes Holmes feat of compressing a three pipe problem into fifty minutes understandable. He was smoking fast, but not like a locomotive.



The Tinderbox Sherlock Holmes Collection has a clay pipe of a somewhat different shape, which was also readily available during the Victorian period.



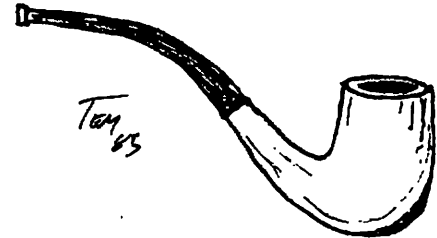
Holmes favored a long stemmed cherrywood pipe when he was in a disputatious mood. Cherrywoods are rather curious pipes. They smoke hotter and are more prone to burn out than briars.

Cherrywood pipes are most often made up in a rustic pot shape with the bark left on the bowl in order to protect the delicate inner wood; a primary branch, fitted with a mouthpiece, often becomes the stem. Thus, a person smoking a cherrywood looks rather like he is smoking a tree limb.



Then, there is the briar and the question of the "curved" pipe. The description in the canon simply says an old briar, in one passage in PRIO, it mentions that his pipe had an amber bit, nowhere is the shape of the stem alluded to. It could well have been, what is properly called, a bent stem pipe.

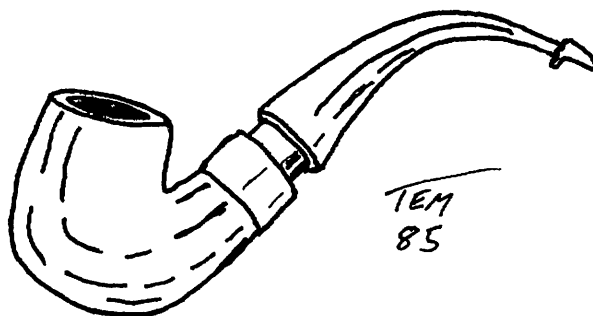
Aha! I hear you cry, in righteous indignation, have not the great Sherlockian authorities, among them John Dickson Carr and William S. Baring-Gould, stated that the "curved" pipe was unknown in England until the Boer War of 1899? Indeed they have so stated and indeed, they have been dead wrong. The problem stems from taking the calabash as being the first bent stem pipe. The calabash may well have first arrived in 1899, though even this is doubtful, seeing that calabashes have been made into pipes by various African tribes since 1600, and I find it unlikely that none were brought over to England prior to 1899. Bent stem briars were certainly available in England before 1889.



Richard Carleton Hacker's Ultimate Pipe Book states that the first briar bent was introduced around 1885. The first reference to Holmes' old briar-root pipe was in SIGN, dated in 1887. IN short, this pipe could have been a bent. There is nothing chronologically that forbids it. It might be argued that a two year old pipe hardly counts as being old, given Holmes' fierce smoking habits, even a new pipe would be likely to appear ancient in short order. The commonly told story is that William Gillette first introduced the bent stem pipe to Sherlockian iconography because he found that he could speak his lines better from around a bent stem than from around a straight stem. I propose an alternative theory, that, while in conversation with the agent, the agent may have revealed that Holmes favored a bent stem. Mr. Gillette, of course, immediately adopted one.

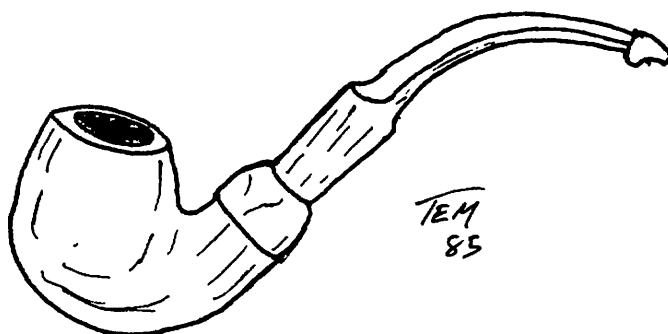
Bent stem pipes have been around, then, a lot longer than the writings

on the writings would have us believe. Consider the Peterson's System pipe. The pipe illustrated is one purchased by Mark Twain in 1896.



According to Kapp and Peterson's company history, the first System pipe was turned out in 1890, and it was not simply a bent stem, but a perfected bent stem, the result of a long evolutionary chain. Charles Peterson started making pipes in Dublin in 1875, and by 1885 was beginning to produce bents. Holmes could have smoked a Peterson's from 1890 on, a period that, by Baring-Gould's chronology, covers at least 34 of the recorded cases, as well as the Great Hiatus.

It is certain that, whether or not Holmes ever smoked a Peterson's, it is the brand of pipe most commonly used by the actors who have portrayed the great detective.

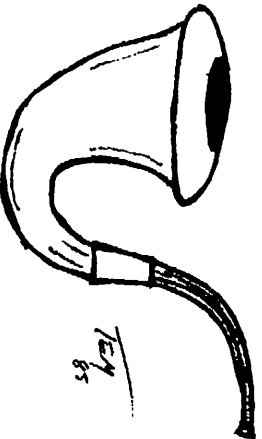


Gillette used one, as did Rathbone in the Universal series. James Braginton smoked one in the 1914 film of *STUD*. Clive Brook made use of a Peterson's in his two films. Harry Benham and Arthur Wontner used Peterson's as well. Even the German made Necklace of Death, with Christopher Lee, featured a Peterson's, not to mention the ballet, The Great Detective. Of the two most famous of the illustrators, Sidney Paget depicted a straight stem, Frederic Dorr Steele usually depicted a Peterson's. Indeed, the overall predominance of the Peterson's pipe in visual depictions of the Master is so apparent, that I am seriously considering contacting our sister scion down south and recommending that they change their name to the Non-Canonical Peterson's System.

Speaking of our sister scion, some words should be said about their pet icon, the calabash. The calabash pipe is somewhat of a mystery. It is uniformly associated with Holmes, but up until very recently did not appear on the screen, or in book illustrations, to any large degree, nor even in comic books.

The first use of a calabash, on stage, that I have been able to trace,

was with Henry Oscar in a 1922 production of the Speckled Band. The first appearance in a straight Sherlock Holmes film seems to have been in Rathbone's Spider Woman. Rathbone didn't smoke it, mark you, it was given to Lestrade as a momento when Holmes was thought dead. Obviously the convention existed before then, but where did the calabash first appear? The answer becomes clear, if you look at a calabash.



A calabash is not a pipe, a calabash is a caricature of a pipe. Indeed, the earliest use of a calabash that I have been able to confirm, was in a caricature of H.A. Saintsbury appearing as Holmes in the play Speckled Band, which appeared in a copy of the Bystander of 1910. Needless to say, Saintsbury did not smoke a calabash on stage, he used a large, banded, half-bent briar. Thereafter the calabash appeared mainly in caricatures, cartoons and parodies, such as the Lewis Higgins illustrations to Todd's Bound of the Haskervilles of 1915.

The Hound of the Baskervilles of 1957 marks the turning point for the calabash in film. In this film starring Peter Cushing, and in his BBC series, there was an amazing fidelity to the canon in choice of pipes. After the conclusion of this series, all faithfulness was lost until the more recent Brett/Burke series. Of the next several films, one featured a Peterson's, one a bent briar, and five used calabashes. When you see Christopher Plummer, one of the very best of recent portrayers of the Master, throw an Inverness and deerstalker on over white tie and tails, and then return to a calabash at Baker Street, it becomes obvious that the caricature has overtaken the man.

Indeed, with the miscasting of such an, otherwise, fine actor as Nicol Williamson as Holmes, it is obvious that to the minds, so-called, of the film making world, anyone in deerstalker and Inverness, with a calabash in his mouth, is Sherlock Holmes.

As a source of out-of-print British books, I can definitely recommend Richard Dalby. His service is fast, his prices reasonable, and he has managed to track down several books that I had long ago given up any hope of finding. I can also recommend his own monograph, The Bram Stoker Bibliography, an extremely useful book for those interested in Stoker and the Dracula story. Mr. Dalby can be reached at the following address.

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SOME REFLECTIONS ON TREVOR HALL
AND THE
EARLY LIFE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES

by Pamela Clark

I am sure that many Sherlockians are acquainted with Trevor Hall's scholarly comments on various aspects of the Canon, in particular with his conjectures regarding the tragedy which is alleged to have cast its shadow over the early life of Sherlock Holmes. Briefly, it was Hall in his Sherlock Holmes: Ten Literary Studies who advanced the theory

that the great detective's mother was murdered by his father as a result of her marital infidelity.

Let me confess here at the outset that I was not introduced to Mr. Hall's contention in the most favorable circumstances. I met it in a footnote on page 228 of a paperback from the 10¢ table at a library book sale-- and at first acquaintance, I thought it the most outrageous, ridiculous, indefensible notion I had read in a long time. The very idea of grafting murder and adultery onto Holmes's family tree! The longer I thought about that affront to one of my favorite people, the more it rankled, until I had to do something to pacify my indignation. Unable to find a copy of Hall's book, I finally turned to the Canon to reconstruct his evidence -- if any -- and satisfy myself that it did not really prove anything.

I soon discovered -- rather to my surprise -- that Holmes indeed has a strong personal reaction to the eternal triangle where it involves two men and a woman. This reaction is sufficiently pronounced and sufficiently beyond his conscious control that it causes him to take uncharacteristic action in the handling of some of his cases. And on at least two occasions, it leads him to commit serious blunders, errors he acknowledges as such after the fact.

Holmes has no great confidence in Watson's powers as a detective, yet there are three cases that he sends the good doctor to investigate. Of these, The Retired Colourman, as first presented, definitely focuses on a woman who has been unfaithful to her husband, and a similar analysis can be made of The Solitary Cyclist as well. In The Solitary Cyclist, Violet Smith is not so much frightened of her pursuer as she is curious about him, and I think a person of any worldly experience is entitled to wonder how long her engagement to Cyril Morton would last if the chap on the bicycle turned out to be a personable young country squire with £10,000 a year.

While Holmes shows a certain reluctance to take an active part in the cases just mentioned, he gets to the bottom of them with his usual skill and dispatch once he does take a hand.

He does not fare so well when confronted by what he thinks is the eternal triangle in The Valley of Fear.

When Holmes and Watson arrive at Birlstone Manor, they are taken to see a corpse the face of which has been completely obliterated by a shotgun blast fired at close range. Now, the wife of the supposed decedent, Ivy Douglas, behaves as if nothing traumatic has occurred. There are two quite conclusions which can be drawn from her conduct. Number 1: she wanted her husband dead so that she could freely pursue her relationship with family friend Cecil Barker. Number 2: she is in fact a loyal and faithful wife, and the corpse on the study floor is not that of her husband. Sherlock Holmes, the man who claims to follow the facts docilely wherever they lead, jumps to conclusion Number 1, and he clings to it so tenaciously that he declines a meeting with Ivy Douglas and Cecil Barker when they half-way offer -- through the intermediary of Dr. Watson -- to take him into their confidence. Holmes never tells us exactly why he casts Ivy Douglas in the role of a faithless wife, but he does tacitly acknowledge it as a blunder when he returns from his midnight fishing expedition to the moat and says to Watson, "I say, would you be afraid to sleep in the same room with a lunatic, a man with softening of the brain?"

Holmes admits the blunder here, but he had made it before in connection with The Yellow Face when he assumed that Effie Munro was being blackmailed by a still-living first husband, and if I read the signs correctly, he is going to do it again in The Dancing Men. Even after Holmes has sent the telegram to Chicago -- after he suspects that Hilton Cubitt is embroiled in a very dangerous situation -- he does not go to Norfolk to look into the matter personally. Why? I submit that it is because of his reluctance to confront Mrs. Hilton Cubitt. The French have a proverb: a fortress willing to parley and a woman willing to listen are both going to surrender. Elsie Cubitt is doing more than listening. She has replied, at least once. So rather than involve himself in what will be for him personally a painful situation, Holmes waits in London until all the evidence is in, and by that time it is too late to prevent his client's murder.

I doubt that Holmes ever apologized to Mrs. Hilton Cubitt for having misjudged her -- and thereby contributed to her husband's death. But we are told that she devoted herself to charitable works in her later life. I like to think that the projects she chose to support received liberal contributions from an anonymous London donor.

Taken individually, no one of these five cases would have convinced me that Trevor Hall was correct in his conjectures about Holmes's early life. But when I had them all joted down on one sheet of paper, I found myself conceding that Hall was not the complete lunatic I had first thought him. Given that Holmes repeatedly saw the eternal triangle where it did not exist, it is certainly plausible that at some time in his own life he was emotionally close to a situation in which a woman cheated on her husband. Who could this woman have been? His mother is an

obvious possibility. The only other promising candidate would be a wife, and while some commentators have credited him with an early marriage, I cannot agree with them, especially in the present context. If Holmes had been married, and his wife had left him for another man, I cannot believe that he would have been as protective of women and their love relationships as he was all his life.

Sherlock Holmes was one of the staunchest defenders of romantic love in recent history. He patched up marriages: The Man with the Twisted Lip, The Second Stain, The Priory School, and The Sussex Vampire. For good measure, let us put The Noble Bachelor in this category, though it could also be classed in the next.

Holmes was instrumental in removing the obstacles dividing lovers: The Boscombe Valley Mystery, The Speckled Band, The Problem of Thor Bridge, The Naval Treaty, and The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax.

Most interesting to me, we see love offered and accepted as the justification for murder seven times in the Canon: The Musgrave Ritual, Charles Augustus Milverton, The Red Circle, The Greek Interpreter, Wisteria Lodge, The Devil's Foot, and Abbey Grange. True, in the last instance, Watson grants Captain Crokers's plea of self-defense, but if I were the captain, I would want to be represented by an able barrister in a real court of law. On the basis of Holmes's comments at the end of Abbey Grange, we should probably add an eighth case to the list, A Study in Scarlet. Later in his career, Holmes would have sided with Jefferson Hope against the police.

In all of these cases, Holmes takes the point of view of the woman involved, even in Thor Bridge where he has a low opinion of Neil Gibson. Only once in the Canon does he ever oppose a woman's judgement in a matter of the heart, and that is in The Illustrious Client where he has moral certainty, if not proof, that Baron Gruner murdered a previous wife. Holmes goes to great lengths in breaking off the engagement between Violet de Merville and Adelbert Gruner, and his actions lead me to wonder if he may not have some more personal motive than the desire to protect this young woman from the consequences of her own blindness. Not only is he severely beaten by hired thugs, not only does he risk



going to prison for housebreaking and complicity in the throwing of vitriol, but he and Kitty Winter have that remarkable interview with Miss de Merville. Given the year (1902) and given Holmes's reserved nature, it cannot have been easy for him to discuss sex frankly with an unmarried woman, but he does it. He does it even though he realizes that the probability of success is small.

I am sorry that we do not have available a verbatim account of that discussion. I believe that it would provide direct evidence relevant to Trevor Hall's conjectures about Holmes's early life. A woman of Violet de Merville's strength of purpose would hardly have listened tamely to what Holmes had to say. I think she challenged him -- asked him how he could possibly know what her married life would be like with Adelbert Gruner. I think he told her that he had seen it happen to another woman. I am not sure that he identified that woman as his mother in so many words, but I think he said enough that we would have been able to identify her. Doyle did not choose to write that scene for us, however, so we are forced back upon judicious appeal to the imagination and circumstantial evidence.

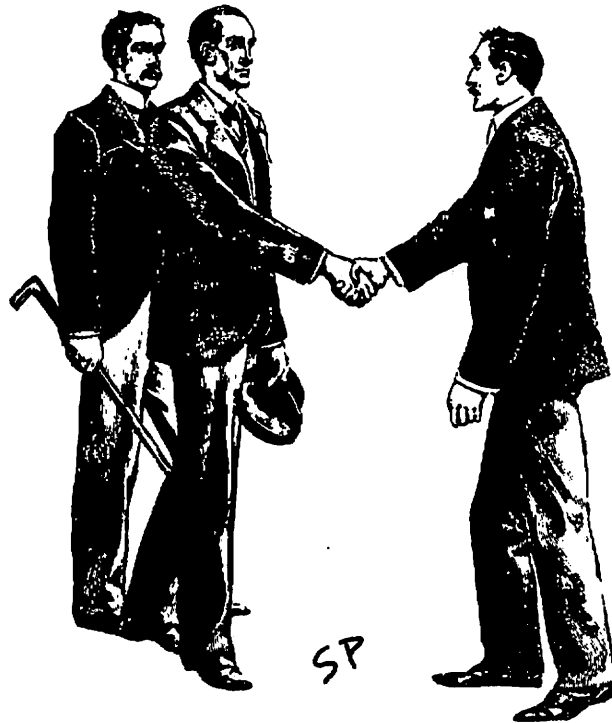
At least the circumstantial evidence all points in the same direction -- Holmes's tendency to see marital infidelity where it did not exist, his defense of love relationships from the viewpoint of the woman involved, as if his early experiences inclined him to see women as potential victims of domestic violence and therefore the ones most entitled to define the limits of an intimate relationship. But in spite of the many Canonical cases which illustrate these attitudes on the part of Holmes, I would not have regarded Trevor Hall's theory as anything more than interesting and plausible, had it not been for one particular story Doyle wrote. As I discovered when I finally read Ten Literary Studies, Hall does not cite this case in support of his position, but it is the one which convinced me that Squire Holmes really murdered his wife, thereby shaping the lives of his two sons for both good and ill. I do not know if my readers will be convinced or not, but I would like to conclude with a discussion of The Cardboard Box.

Why, on this one occasion, should Holmes turn his information over to Lestrade and allow the police to make the arrest? He says it is because he chooses to be associated only with those cases which "present some difficulty in their solution." But that is false. As far as the effort Holmes has to put forth is concerned, Silver Blaze is no more difficult than The Cardboard Box. True, Colonel Ross's behavior in Silver Blaze is annoying, and Holmes wants to teach him a lesson. But in The Cardboard Box Lestrade is more than half convinced that the severed human ears are a practical joke, so Holmes would have reason to teach him a lesson, too. He does not. Why?

I submit that Sherlock Holmes sees in the crime committed by Jim Browner a close parallel with the actions of his own father. He is afraid that in the presence of this man who murdered his wife and her lover, his façade of stoicism and clinical detachment toward even the most sensational crimes would disintegrate, that Watson and Lestrade would see him as a vulnerable human being stripped of the mask which he has so

carefully built up over the years. Rather than take that risk, he leaves it to Lestrade to effect Browner's arrest and listen first-hand to his confession.

My glimpse of the vulnerable human being in no way lessens my esteem for Sherlock Holmes. Indeed, I respect him the more as a man who had the courage to enter a profession which might at any moment reopen the wounds of his private life. He is for me, as for John H. Watson, one of the "best and wisest men I have ever known."



AGONY

FRED S.: I am sorry, I simply don't see the resemblance.

VLAD D.

Neither do I.

SHERLOCK H.

Odd, I see it.

CHRISTOPHER L.

So do I.

FRANK L.

PAM: I don' got to show you no stinkin' Badgers.

J.S.

J.S.: No, not J.T.S., the other J.S.

J.S.

S.H.: The best bones of all go to Carnegie Hall.

M.

SCOWRERS: Agony wanted, contact Stanger. (Ted, where are you when fillers are needed?)

STANGER REVIEWS

The Tinder Box Sherlock Holmes Collection:

The Tinder Box Pipe and Tobacco Shops have long maintained an understandable interest in that most celebrated of pipe smokers, Mr. Sherlock Holmes. This has been shown by their Sherlock Holmes Commemorative Pipe, their collector plates and other fine Sherlockian collectables. Their ongoing interest in Holmes has also been shown by a display of Sherlockian memorabilia which has been making the rounds of various Tinder Boxes and which I had the opportunity of examining at the East Ridge mall last year.

The collection purports to be of the actual possessions of Holmes and Watson. It was put together by Richard Carleton Hacker, the marketing consultant for the Tinder Box chain, and the author of the Ultimate Pipe Book. Being a tobacconist, the Tinder Box, not unnaturally, emphasizes pipe and tobacco products. There is, of course, one of the clichéd calabashes, a particularly fine specimen with silver mountings, (this particular pipe puts in an appearance on the back of Hacker's book) but they also include a black clay, rather different from the one in my collection. There is a meershaum cigar holder, purportedly Mycroft's and a box of Egyptian cigarettes of the type so fervently puffed in the Adventure of the Golden Pince Nez. These cigarettes are Sullivans, possibly borrowed from the estate of A.J. Raffles.

The Persian Slipper is there, and a deerstalker hat, as well as Dr. Mortimer's Penang Lawyer. Dr. Watson is represented by his medical bag and the celebrated tin dispatch case. The Golden Pince-Nez themselves appear and a very elaborate silver and ivory magnifying glass. A survivor of the six Napoleons and a collection of purported childhood photographs round out the collection, along with a copy of the Practical Handbook of Bee Culture. A few theater cards were used as a background.

Overall a most interesting display. I do reserve some doubts about the various exhibits. The tin dispatch box is rather on the small side. The silver and ivory mounted lens is downright garish for a Victorian gentleman, but perhaps it was a gift from The Woman. Still, all things considered, the collection was well worth a visit.

Their Majestie's Bucketcers, by L. Neil Smith (Ballantine, 1981)

This is a book that is very likely to be overlooked by most Sherlockians. It is a Science Fiction novel, set on a far distant world inhabited by tripedal (and trisexual!) pseudocrustaceans, there isn't even an Earth human character in the main text of the story. Nonetheless, there are very strong Sherlockian resonances throughout the story. It is written, very much in the Watsonian manner, as the narrative of one Mymysir Offe W66m, a member of that third sex mentioned above, and a paracauterist connected to the Bucketcers, the combined police and fire service of the city of Mathas. His associate, Agot Edmoot Mav, is Chief Investigator of the Bucketcers, a gentleman of highly advanced perceptions. Smith's planet of Sodde Lydfe seems to have reached their equivalent of the Victorian Era on Earth, ahead in some aspects, behind in others. The novel revolves around the murder of their equivalent of Charles Darwin. Overall, a most entertaining variation on a theme. Considerably more than a simple pastiche, with well defined and interesting characters, even if they are overgrown crabs. Highly recommended.

YOUNG INDIANA HOLMES AND THE TEMPLE OF SPIELBERG

Being both a reader and a film fan occasionally results in my being torn two ways. On the one hand I find the idea of well-loved literary characters coming to life on the screen rather delightful; on the other hand, what often happens to those characters at the tender hands of Holleywood is sometimes regrettable. Take Young Sherlock Holmes for example. It is not a bad film, actually, it's a quite decent film. It just doesn't seem to know what sort of film it is supposed to be. The opening scenes present a rather pleasant, if unCanonical, view of a teenage Holmes just beginning to realize his powers at a Public School in England. The young Watson is thrown in for good measure, although disclaimers are included at the beginning and end of the film indicating that the film makers are well aware that Holmes didn't really meet Watson until well into adulthood. Unfortunately, from this pleasing beginning the plot takes off in a direction that seems to be more Sax Rohmer than Conan Doyle. Sax Rohmer, with a strong measure of Talbot Mundy and a soupçon of Jules Verne.

There is also a bittersweet ending that was out of keeping with the overall feel of the movie, not to mention being telegraphed a quarter of the way through the film. There is also the problem of the last minute surprise ending. At the very end of the closing credits there is a last, surprise, revelation. Well and good, only it required an escape from certain death, a virtually impossible escape, though Christopher Lee pulled off the same stunt in one of his Dracula films. Still, Count Dracula would be rather more difficult to kill off than this very human villain. When this impossible escape is coupled with a completely absurd flying machine another problem of this film emerges, willing suspension of disbelief goes only so far. After you are bombarded by Egyptian cultists, a hidden pyramid in London, a man powered flying machine and a young love affair for Holmes, you begin to wonder why Steven Spielberg bothered to pick on Sherlock Holmes, it would have worked far better as a childhood exploit of Indiana Jones.

