



Communication

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Compliments of the Season from The Papers on the Sundial



HOW TO HAVE HOLIDAYS HOLMESIAN by Carl Heifetz

It is December 27. The excitement of Christmas has now faded into the languorous days that fill the interim preceding the New Year. The tree is resplendent in the living room in the far corner diagonally opposite the crackling fire place. The train set is now unattended except for the miniature figures that populate the surrounding village. All of the discarded wrapping paper has been cleared away and the contents neatly stowed in the proper toy chests. A gentle snow outside the window can be barely perceived through the lacy handiwork left by Jack Frost during the night, and sleigh bells are faintly heard over the sound coming from the family room. There, several figures can be seen cuddled on the floor leaning against the over stuffed sofa. The largest figure

is that of Grandpa, his neatly cut white hair and beard set off on top by the deerstalker cap perched gently on his head, and the new red and green turtle neck sweater, bearing leather patches on the elbows. Under his left and right arms rest, respectively, the twin nine year old grandchildren Tommy and Tammy. On Grandpa's lap, quietly sleeping, is the baby, and at his feet in placid and comfortable repose is the family spaniel, Topper. All eyes are focused on the giant television screen in front of them as they watch together, in the annual renewal of their family custom, the marvelous Christmas classic unfolds before their eyes.

Let us now shift the scene to Grandma's warm, enormous kitchen, filled with the delicious, fragrant odors of turkey hash simmering for dinner. Sitting around the large oval table that has been passed down through several generations are the two teenaged grandchildren - Bobby

and Bonnie, who have joined Grandma, Mom, and Dad at a late breakfast. The conversation has drifted to a discussion of the same well-remembered tale and the impact that it has had on their lives over the years. How an attempt to reunite Mr. Baker with his abandoned goose and hat led, via a goose's crop, to the discovery of the criminal who stole the remarkable and singular blue gem.

Yes, if you are a fan of the exploits of Mr. Sherlock Holmes and his companions, you very quickly perceived the subject of this essay. All of the characters in this sketch were doing what Sherlockians have done since 1934, that date of (cont. page 7)

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JINGLE BELLS

We're dashing through the snow
Like a herd of buffalo
Across the clues we go
Destroying all that shows.
Working very hard We're
always on our guard Our
minds are never jarred We're
all from Scotland Yard. Oh!
Jingle Bells Lestrade tells
Everyone he knows How he's
aware But nothing's there.
He's mental escargot.
Jingle Bells Someone delves
Into it with the Doc. The case
you see Is obviously
Solved by our Sherlock.

12 DAYS SHERLOCKIAN STYLE

On the first day of Christmas,
my true love gave to me a
picture of I-ren-ee.
On the second day of
Christmas, my true love gave to
me two human ears and a
picture of I-ren-ee.
On the third day of Christmas,
my true love gave to me three
speckled bands, two human
ears and a picture of I-ren-ee.
On the fourth day of Christmas,
my true love gave to me four
irregulars, three speckled
bands, two human ears and a
picture of I-ren-ee.
On the fifth day of Christmas,
my true love gave to me two
plus two plus one bees! Four
irregulars, three speckled
bands, etc.

Six geese a-choking
Seven hounds a-howling
Eight maids a cycling
Nine Pygmies blowing
Ten fiddlers fiddling
Eleven men a-dancing
Twelve stallions kicking

IT CAME UPON A MIDNIGHT CLEAR

It came upon a midnight clear
That blood-curdling howl of
old From a hound bending o'er
his kill To taste the
Baskerville's gold.
Peace in the castle, good will to
men From London's all
gracious Holmes. While
Watson watches Sir Henry and
At night the mo-ors he combs.
It came again one midnight
clear That blood-curdling howl
of old From a hound bending
o'er his kill To taste the
Baskerville's gold. Peace in
the castle. Sir Henry is well
The maid's brother with death
doth meet. Holmes with
Watson solves the case And
returns to Baker Street.

OH COME ALL SHERLOCKIANS

Oh come, all Sherlockians.
Joyful and Triumphant. Oh
come ye, oh come ye to Baker
Street. Come and behold him,
master of detective-land. Oh
come, let us reread him. Oh
come, let us reread him. Oh
come let us reread him,

Sherlock, the slueth.

WE WISH YOU A MARY CHRISTMAS

We wish you a Mary
Christmas. We wish you a
Mary Christmas. We wish you
a Mary Christmas and a John
Hamish year. Good Watsons
we bring to you and your
friends. We wish you a Mary
Christmas and a John Hamish
year.

FIVE ORANGE PIPS (SILENT NIGHT)

Five Orange Pips On the sun
dial Do not give Reason to
smile. Down in Florida lies
K.K.K. Face-down in the
Thames, Openshaw lays. Sleep
in heavenly peace. Sleep in
heavenly peace.

MORIARTY (AULD LANG SYNE)

Should Moriarty be forgot and
never brought to mind? Should
we forget a great villain? A
corpse, no one did find? For
James Moriarty might live
Although the chance was slim.
The great Professor might have
known How to dive and how to
swim.

*The previous Sherlockian Christmas Carols
were discovered in the unlocked file cabinet of
Wanda Dow, in her own hand-writing, so she
guesses she wrote them, but cannot swear
completely that it's true. She offers her
apologies if any of them were innocently
purloined.*

THE ADVENTURE OF THE CARBUNCLE BLUES

(The Rest of the Story by David McCallister)

I was again in Holmes' sitting room at 221-B Baker Street, the third day after Christmas [Holy Innocent's Day]. The denouement of the Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle was about to unfold. Mrs. Hudson had just laid tea for three with her best silver, bread and butter, and sandwiches left from last night's repast, when a visitor was announced.

"Ah, your Ladyship, the Countess of Morcar...," said Holmes, as he turned from the fire towards the door.

"No," said the young woman who entered the room, "I'm Catherine Cusack, her maid."

Holmes and I were both somewhat chagrined. She stood, dressed in a plain black maid's uniform with a white apron, and a mob cap pulled low over her left eye.

"I'm here to get the Countess' jewel," she said, "...but I don't know about the reward."

"It is Peterson, the commissionaire, who is due the reward," said Holmes, "I am surprised that the Countess did not come herself, Miss Cusack."

"She had a prior engagement," was the reply.

"No matter. Please take tea with us anyway. Will you pour?" said Holmes, archly. He went to the strongbox to retrieve the gem as the maid poured tea and took a slice of bread and butter for herself.

"Is this the Blue Carbuncle?" Holmes asked as he unwrapped the gem from a felt cloth, and set it on the table.

"Oh, yes, Mr. Holmes," said Miss Cusack, as she began to reach for the diamond. Suddenly, however, as the gem shone before us, Holmes swept up a marble bookend from his desk and smashed the flat side down on the diamond shattering it into sparkling shards.

The maid stood up, pale and startled, then

collapsed into the chair with a sigh.

"Don't play games with me, Madam," said Holmes, "I've been lied to twice, now, in this affair. Your only hope is in the truth - Countess!"

"Mr. Holmes, how did you know about me, about the diamond?" said the young woman, regaining her composure.

"I have made inquiries," said Holmes.

"But I haven't noticed that anyone has been investigating me," said the Countess.

"That is what you may expect, when I am on the case," said Holmes.

"I knew that the gem was not a genuine diamond at first glance. Peterson's test - that it cut glass - is notoriously inaccurate and unscientific. But then, perhaps I have had some experience with stones that is above the general populace.

"The next thing was to send Peterson for the files in Somerset House and the Law Courts this morning. From these, I learned that you don't have the wherewithal to offer a reward of £1,000, if the diamond were to be found. I then knew that something was seriously amiss in this exceptionally outre affair.

"Then, when you arrived here, dressed as your maid to put me off, I put it all together. Knowing your relationship with the jewel, it was unlikely that you would send Miss Cusack in your place, especially after the hint of her conspiracy in the news accounts. Next, not even a maid would pay a call of this nature without removing her apron. Your disguise is just a trifle too trite to be real. Mark you, Watson, the best disguises are those that only subtly suggest, not blare out, the impression that is desired. Finally, you poured the tea in our cups before adding milk, against the common lower class custom; and took bread and butter before sandwiches, as the upper class is taught."

The Countess, for it was certainly she, stood up slowly and statefully. She reached up and pulled off her cap to reveal scars and marks (cont. page 5)

The Mantle

by Jeffery F. Dow

Although Holmes had been more than busy at the time, I had taken the liberty of moving the box with the needle and cocaine from the mantle and hiding them all. The Christmas season was fast approaching and I was concerned that if his cases slowed down, he would have too much time unoccupied.

If I had my way I would have thrown the infernal items away. But I could not bring myself to disposing of Holmes' property without consulting with him.

So it was not a surprise when I was confronted one afternoon late in December.

"Watson," said Holmes, "have you done something with my—" he seemed to search for the words— "accessories?"

"You know how I feel about your habits, Holmes."

"That was not the question, Watson."

"No, Holmes, but that was my answer."

Holmes looked aghast at me and I fear he may have done me harm had we not been otherwise on such cordial terms.

It was fortunate, then, that there was a knock at the door. Holmes cast me one more unmollified glance and then absconded the door.

"Good evening, sir," Lestrade said. "I hated to bother you at such a time."

"No problem at all, Inspector," Holmes said. "It will serve to distract me from other...issues."

Lestrade looked from Holmes to me and then back again.

"I'm having a bit of a problem with a case, sir, and I was wondering if you could help me."

Holmes gestured to Lestrade to sit down on the couch and then took up residence in his own chair.

I did not hear much of the case presented. I was lost in my brooding over the exchange. Indeed, on occasion in glancing up from my paper I caught Holmes glaring at me.

Lestrade finished his story and left and then an hour later so did Holmes in disguise. He left without saying a word.

I put down my paper, at odds with myself. What was I thinking? How could I treat my dear friend that way? But that was exactly the point—he was my dear friend.

I went to the closet and pulled out the syringe and the narcotic and placed them back on the mantle.

Holmes did not return for two days, and I wondered if my actions

had anything to do with his tardiness. He paid scant attention to me as he swept in. His laborer's disguise was torn and I thought I saw blood on his face and knees before he disappeared into his room.

He returned, dressed in his street clothes. Now I did notice the bruise on his chin and below his eye.

"I hope the other fellow got the worst of it," I said.

Holmes laughed, and I knew that he must have instantly noticed the return of his diversions to the mantle.

"Thank you for your gift, Watson," he said taking up the box.

I winced inwardly but said, "I beg your pardon."

"A new syringe," he said looking in the box. "I should have known that's what you were doing."

"Holmes, I—"

"And now my gift to you, Watson," he said returning the item to the mantle. "I shall try to give it up."

"You don't mean it, Holmes."

"The mind rebels at inaction, Watson, so I cannot guarantee that I won't—" again he

Continued on page 5

Continued from page 4

searched for the word— “stray when my cases subside. But I shall try.”

“I am delighted to hear you say that, Holmes.”

“Would you join me for breakfast? I have quite a tale for you regarding Lestrade’s case.”

“I would be honored, Holmes.”

A CHRISTMAS CRIME

By Caroline Everett

“Someone’s got into the house!
Call Sherlock!” I cried to my spouse.
“Elementary,” quoth he -
“Look under the tree!
It can only have been Santa Klaus!”

(cont. from page 3) on the left side of her face. In a tone of dignity and resignation, she said, “And have you discovered the reasons for my deceptions, Mr. Holmes? Can you appreciate my position?”

“Yes, your Ladyship, I believe you have been through quite a trial in this life, and are due some Christmas compassion. Let me review your case while I decide what to do.

“Watson, you may recall the scandal that brought the unfortunate Countess to public notice. She was, on a certain occasion, a house guest at the country estate of the Earl of Morcar in Lancashire. The Earl was a self-made man in the iron foundry business in Carnforth, by Morecambe Bay — hence his choice of title—which he purchased. He also purchased an instant family heirloom, the Blue Carbuncle. It had only recently been discovered, just like himself. As naturally occurs to a man of wealth, a wife soon made herself present; one who desired the gem over the man. The Earl, in turn, had a roving eye, and it was not infrequently that young ladies were houseguests at his mansion.

“On the occasion of your visit, the Earl paid you quite a bit of attention, which did not go unnoticed by the first Countess. This ended in the first Countess’ catching you and the Earl in his room, with you modelling the Blue Carbuncle, and very little else if the tabloids’ version is more accurate than the *Times*’.”

“At the sight, the first Countess flew into a rage and somehow acquired a vial of acid, which she threw at you, thus marking your face. Later, after the divorce, the Earl married you out of guilt and pity.

Then, the first Countess became insane and murdered the Earl and committed suicide. These are some of the events that I recounted to you, Watson, in the course of the history of the gem that I gave yesterday.

“Now, Countess,” Holmes continued, “You are a widow and penniless. In another aping of the old aristocracy, the Earl had had his estate entailed to descend only to the children of his first wife. They used this fact to cut you off altogether, as their revenge against you.

“In order to deprive them of their cursed heirloom, and to get yourself some money, you have come to London and contrived with your maid to gull that simpleton, Ryder, into the false theft at the Cosmopolitan. It is ironic, is it not, Watson, that Ryder’s dreams of instant wealth were based on only shiny glass. Perhaps only the professional criminals, Maudsley or Jack Horner, would have known that the Blue Carbuncle was only a lure, not lucre. You then knew, of course, that there was no need to worry about the reward, as, if the fake gem were returned, it could be denounced; while the real diamond was on its way to the cutters of Amsterdam.

“Nevertheless, harm was done by putting Horner in jeopardy, and in gaol, when he should have been eating Christmas pie with his family. Still, he will be free by New Year’s.”

“Believe me, Mr. Holmes,” the Countess said, “I would not have seen anyone actually come to harm over that gem— (cont. page 6)

(cont. from page 5) not after my own misfortunes."

"Just so, your Ladyship," Holmes replied, "And now that I have met you and know the extent of the injustices done to you, I am willing to extend the pardon of Ryder to a blanket amnesty for all concerned, in the spirit of the season, and on your pledge never to deceive again."

"Thank you from the bottom of my heart, Mr. Holmes," she said, "What a goose I was to think I could deceive you as easily as a hotel attendant. It is my New Year's resolution—to be rid of the past entirely and meet the future bravely. The only reward I can give you is another burden. I leave you with the instrument of so much evil and temptation—the Blue Carbuncle itself."

With that, the Countess produced the true Blue from the pocket of her apron. She held it for a moment in her palm as it shone bright and glistened in the gaslight.

Holmes reached out with his two hands and slowly enclosed the diamond. "What is sauce for the goose, eh Watson? Perhaps we can see that it does no more harm," said Holmes, "I'll put it away in the safe."

"And now, before you go, will you not pour us a fresh cup of tea, Countess, and pass the woodcock sandwiches?"

LOOK FOR 'THE REST OF THE STORY' BY DAVID MCCALLISTER WHEREIN HE DESCRIBES WHAT HAPPENED AFTERWARDS IN FOUR MORE CASES BESIDES BLUE CARBUNCLE, COMING FROM PLEASANT PLACES OF FLORIDA PUBLICATIONS IN 1998!

THE ADVENTURE OF THE BLUE CARBUNCLE CHALLENGE

This quiz was sent to us by The American Firm, a fellow Scion Society of the BSI. Now we all know you can just go to your copy and look these up, but why not see how many you can answer without peeking?

1. Who was the owner of the stone?
2. Where was it originally found?
3. What did it weigh?
4. What was its value?
5. The lost goose belonged to _____.
6. Who was the poultry supplier?
7. Who is Windigate?
8. Who was the plumber?
9. Who is Peterson?
10. John Robinson was _____.
11. Who is Mr. Cocksure?
12. Breckin Ridge is a _____.
13. The maid's name is _____.
14. James Ryder's occupation is _____.
15. What was the date that the case began?
16. What Season was it?
- 17, 18 & 19. What other stories are mentioned in this story?
20. The Goose Club's location.
21. What was Holmes and Watson's meal?

SPECIAL THANKS TO EDWARD S. SMITH, JR. FOR SENDING ALONG THIS HOLIDAY CHALLENGE.

ANSWERS: 1. Countess of Morcar 2. Arroy River, China 3. Forty Grains 4. More than 20,000 pounds 5. Mrs. Henry Baker 6. Mrs. Oakshott 7. Enkoper/Landlord of The Alpha Inn 8. John Horner 9. Commissioner 10. an alias 11. Sherlock Holmes 12. A salesman 13. Catherine Cusack 14. Hotel Attendant 15. December 25, Christmas morning 16. The Season of Forgiveness 17. The Irene Adler paper/SCAN 18. The singular case of Miss Mary Sutherland/IDEN 19. Adventure of the man with the twisted lip 20. The Alpha Inn 21. Woodcock

THE LAST COURT OF APPEALS WOULD LIKE TO WISH YOU HAPPY
HOLIDAYS AND A PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR!

Robert R. McCallister

Carl McFety

(cont. from front page) the founding of "The Baker Street Irregulars." They were all renewing their acquaintanceship with The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle. As originally suggested by Christopher Morley himself, the founding father of the BSI, this is a perfect way to observe the spirit of the Christmas season. We tell and retell the kind acts of the commissionaire Peterson who first rescued Henry Baker from the Tottenham Court Road loungers and then his desire, via the assistance of Mr. Sherlock Holmes, to locate the rightful owner of the goose and hat which were abandoned during the skirmish. This parable is then climaxed by the spirit of forgiveness displayed by Mr. Holmes when he allowed the novice thief John Ryder to "go forth and sin no more."

Can there be any better way to mark holidays and special occasions than by passing on the lore of the Canon to our heirs and offspring? This is a Sherlockian imperative paralleling the words of an even more ancient canonical tradition "And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children." This, and other narratives are readily available in bookstores everywhere, generally at a nominal cost. I invite you to join us in our efforts to keep green the memory of the individual whom the good Dr. Watson proclaimed to be, "the best and wisest man whom I have ever known," Mr. Sherlock Holmes.

Published in the *Suncoast News* (Wednesday, November 29, 1995, page 20-21)

THE CONNECTION

by Wanda Dow

"What's this?" Sherlock Holmes queried his friend upon being handed a small gift-wrapped box.

"Call it a holiday gift," Watson smiled. "I saw it and thought of you and couldn't resist the purchase."

The great detective opened the box and pulled out a tangle of small, bent metal tubes. He stared at it blankly. "This made you think of me?"

"The object is to untangle them into three separate units," Watson explained.

Holmes continued to stare. He sighed. "Watson, I fail to see why you would think I should be interested in a child's game."

Watson could hardly contain his glee.

"Elementary, Holmes," he said. "It's a three pipe problem."



Clifford Smith

He struck a match on his boot and held it up against the wall.

Come join us on Saturday, March 7th, 1998, at 11:30 a.m. for a pleasant lunch in downtown St. Petersburg. At 1:00 p.m. embark on a journey into the unfathomable world of the **TITANIC**. The **TITANIC** was the largest moving object on the Earth and a technological accomplishment of mankind filled with the latest modern conveniences. She was thought to be unsinkable. Glimpse the grandeur that was once part of the Edwardian era from more than 300 objects recovered from the wreck site. See how a sequence of human events contributed to the tragedy. And hear the chilling stories of the expedition that found her. **TITANIC** The Exhibition is at the Florida International Museum at 100 Second Street North, downtown St. Petersburg (Exit 10 off I-275). Book your passage today. Cost is \$12.45 per person for the exhibit. Lunch is "dutch treat" and will be at a restaurant within walking distance to the museum. Make checks payable to **CARL HEIFETZ** & mail to Carl Heifetz,

Yes! I want to have lunch and travel back through time with other PPoF members to examine the **TITANIC**. I understand that you will notify me of the eating establishment at which we will meet at 11:30 a.m. I also understand that should we not have 20 or more people going, I may have to pay an additional fee for entry into the exhibit.

Name(s) _____ Phone _____

Street Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

I enclose \$ _____ made payable to Carl Heifetz,



Eighth Annual Wessex Cup of the

PLEASANT PLACES OF FLORIDA

Saturday, February 14, 1998 at 11:30 a.m.

Come join us for the Eighth Annual running of the Wessex Cup, sponsored by The Pleasant Places of Florida. This year's choice of dinner will be NY Strip Steak. (Please let David know well ahead of time if a substitution needs to be made due to dietary restrictions.) As with every previous year, we will meet at the Tampa Bay Downs Skye Terrace Dining Room in the Clubhouse at 11:30 a.m. Our race is scheduled to be number four. When you send in your registration, David will forward a map and tickets to you, so be sure to make your reservation early enough to have these sent to you. Registration must be POSTMARKED no later than 2/1/98.

Please sign me/us up at \$15.00 per person.

Name(s) _____

Street Address _____

City, State and Zip _____

Phone _____

Make checks payable to:
DAVID MCCALLISTER
Mail to: David McCallister,

Details & map will be forwarded when payment is received.



DETAILED MENU

All entrees will be served with a salad, potato, vegetable, herb rolls with butter & roasted garlic, dessert and drink (tea, coffee, water, or soft drink). Price of dinner includes tax and gratuities.

Chicken - Herb Crusted Chicken Breast, pan seared and baked, finished with a lime butter emulsion. (This is a new menu item.)

Salmon - Poached Salmon Sante Fe, simmered in citrus broth, finished with an infused green chili, tomato, oil and romoularde salsa. (This is another new dish and the manager warns that it may be a little spicy for some.)

NY Strip - NY Strip au Poivre, grilled seasoned strip steak topped with a soft peppercorn brandied cream sauce. (This item is no longer on their menu, but they have agreed to prepare it for us!)

Vegetarian - Individually prepared according to the type of vegetarian you are. (Suggestions are Pasta Primavera, Vegetable Rissoto or Eggplant Rollatini.) Please let me know if you choose this entree if you are a strict Vegetarian who eats no meat, fish or animal by-products, or if you eat fish or if you eat dairy.

No pipe or cigar smoking is requested by management.



Eighth Annual Wessex Cup of the

PLEASANT PLACES OF FLORIDA

The Skye Terrace Dining Room is located on the third floor of the Clubhouse overlooking the entire track. This are combines fine dining comfort with a panoramic view of all the racing action.

Your ticket includes Clubhouse admission, Skye Terrace seating, program, entree, tax & gratuity.

Please Note: The Dining Room is a nonsmoking area. Collared shirts required for gentlemen, no shorts, please.



Sherlock's Sunshine Celebration has been set for January 17, 1998 from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. at the Cite Grille in Dunedin. Although we'd like to honor the Master by our appearance as well as our decorum, we realise that this IS Florida, so black tie is optional. Price will be \$22.00 per person. To honor dear Sherlock, please compose a limerick, poem or song. Mail it in or bring it with you to the dinner. You will not be forced to perform, but items received will be combined to form a PPOF publication. If you wish to attend, please fill out the form below and mail to Wanda Dow,

We have a choice of an interior side room which will seat 20, or a covered exterior room if we have a bigger crowd. Registrations must be postmarked ON OR BEFORE **December 31, 1997**. Please keep in mind that holiday mails are backlogged. Give your registration plenty of time to get to its destination.

Yes, I definitely want to celebrate the birthday of the Master in January. Count me in and send me directions. Enclosed is my check for \$_____.

Name(s)

Mailing Address

City, State, Zip Code

Phone

My choice of meal is (circle) Chicken Salmon NY Strip Vegetarian

Not only do I want to celebrate, I want to make a presentation on _____.

I also want to make a toast to _____.

I would be willing to make a toast to the character of your choice.

Mail your payment & response to Wanda Dow,

LAST CHANCE TO REGISTER!!!!

The Pleasant Places of Florida

*Founded: 1972
by Leslie Marshall (dec.)*

Recorder Emeritus: Dr. Benton Wood

For the record:

THE LAST COURT OF APPEALS

David McCallister, Master of the House,

Jeff & Wanda Dow, The Papers on the Sundial,

Carl L. Helfetz, Representative both with the Servants and with the Tradespeople,

**IF YOU SEE A RED CHECK HERE: , THIS IS YOUR LAST COMMUNICATION! USE
THE RENEWAL FORM INSIDE TO CONTINUE YOUR MEMBERSHIP.**

**Pleasant Places of Florida
The Papers On The Sundial**

