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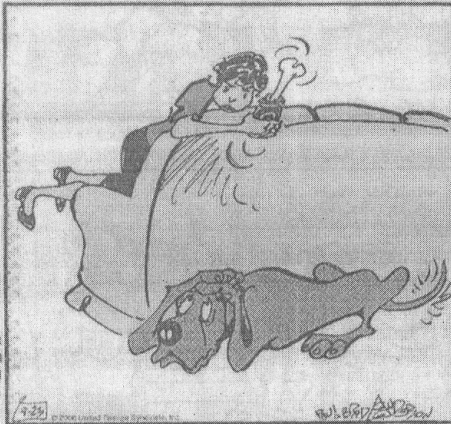
Communication No. 267

The Pleasant Places of Florida

Vol.10 No.9

MARMADUKE

Brad Anderson



"It doesn't take a Sherlock Holmes to figure out who has been in the peanut butter."

St. Petersburg Times September 23, 2006

From the Papers on the Sundial: We had a small but fun meeting recently at the Dunedin Public Library for our 31st Annual Fall Gathering. We began with a viewing of the BBC Jeremy Brett Illustrous Client, followed with visitation and lunch at a local cafe, Marguerite's. We returned to the library for "toasts" and presentations, announcements of things to come and closed with a recitation of The Musgrave Ritual and Vincent Starrett's 221B. Within these pages are transcripts. Enjoy!

The 31st Fall Gathering of The Pleasant Places of Florida

George Edwards presented a limerick and toast to Sir James Damery:
Who is this man called Colonel Sir James Damery?
Was he involved in a chicanery?
Oh no, he's no fool
He plays it real cool
He gets Holmes to make sense of insanity.

Jack Tracy tells us that Sir James took an anonymous interest in his friends and their families. He must have been a trusted advisor, a true friend who could be trusted. He had to be a man of great integrity to be

honored with this mission. We can only surmise for whom he was undertaking this mission. So, to a man who was a true friend and gentleman, I toast Sir James Damery.

Barry Edwards toasted Baron Gruner: To Baron Gruner, Collector Supreme of porcelain, women, souls. This ugliest acquisition not eggshell, but Violet - de Merville will be yet his malá pass, when Holmes and Watson combine once again to save the day and leave the Baron as the collected not the collector.

Donna Vaurio gave us a toast to Violet de Merville in poetic form:

A lovely flower went to sea...
And met a Baron ... handsome was he.

Though he was suspected of murder ... a definite rotter,
Made no difference to her, she was falling ... and he got her.

Many tried to rouse her fear
But not one word against him would she hear

For the lady became obsessed ... and deeply in love we're told
Until presented a book of brown leather with

(cont. on page 2)



Which room is the 221B Room in the Museum in Lucens and which is Nancy Garcés-Saroli's Miniature Room? To find out, visit www.pufichek.com/sherlocknsgsherlock.htm It took Nancy over 4 years to collect and create the components of the room.



(cont. from page 1) his arms emblazoned in gold.

When faced with proof of his depravity and lust ...
She broke off the engagement as she knew she must.
To Violet de Merville

Jeff Dow paid tribute to LeBrun:

Le Brun was an agent for truth
Who pursued Baron Gruner nail and tooth
When the Apaches were through
He was all black and blue
And now poor Le Brun can't sleuth.

Carl Heifetz toasted Dr. Hill Barton with the following paper:

Never in the history of British criminal investigation has there been a figure as mysterious and elusive as Dr. Hill Barton, a man whose identity and whereabouts were unknown from 1902 to 1924-5. There is no question that he was at the residence of Baron Gruner on the night of the latter's vicious disfigurement with vitriol, but he may also have been involved in this plot. However, try as they may, evidence of a Dr. Hill Barton has never been unearthed. It has probably been carefully destroyed to cover the source of this terrible attack. There is no mention of this individual in the phone directory or the records of any medical society, yet it was his card that was received by Baron Gruner's butler and was found on the floor, partially acid-digested, in his museum. In addition, the Baron was overheard, by an eaves-dropping servant, to address him as Dr. Barton during their conversation. Questioning the Baron was useless, since he claims to have forgotten the events of that evening encounter. In addition, the police have been blocked in their investigations by a curtain of silence put up by the British authorities.

Another possible manifestation of the presence of this mysterious gentleman was the item that he left behind in Baron Gruner's estate. It was a delicate little saucer of the most beautiful deep blue color of a design that was later determined to be a real egg-shell pottery of the Ming dynasty. It has been rumored that the police arranged for this item to be secretly returned, via arrangement with the noted Consulting Detective, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, to its rightful owner. According to Baron Gruner's curator, this saucer was never part of the baron's collection, and thus, must have been introduced to the site by Dr. Barton. How the latter obtained it is also a matter of conjecture since its mere presence has been obfuscated by the highest authorities. Also questionable is the claim by one constable that he received a card indicating the presence of the famous author, Dr. John Watson, at the site. This claim was also denied at the highest levels of government, and the constable has been warned to never raise this subject again. Another theory, raised privately by a few inspectors, is that Dr. Watson and Sherlock Holmes were involved. However, this has never been supported by eye-witness testimony, and the Royal Prince himself has argued that Mr. Holmes and Dr. Watson were loyal subjects of the crown, and thus, could never have engaged in a criminal conspiracy.

It was not until Dr. Watson's publication of "The Adventure of the Illustrious Client" in 1924-5 that the true identity of Dr. Hill Barton was finally revealed.

This was followed by a toast from Mike Bryan to Lomax, the sub-librarian:

If the subject required is Chinese pottery (or anything else), one knows where one may go for assistance. Drive to St. James' Square, to the London Library, favored by Dickens, George Eliot, Thackeray, Tennyson, Kipling, and other luminaries, and inquire with Dr. Watson's sub-librarian friend, who soon will have you toddling off with a goodly volume. But first, be sure your membership subscription is paid up - 195 pounds per annum when last I checked. To Lomax, the sub-librarian!

Next, the Dow Family Players (Jeff, Wanda & Culver) did a presentation:

THE ILLUSTRIOUS CLIENT

Jeff: You know, not many people know that many of the Sherlock Holmes stories were written and re-written several times before the author was satisfied with them.

Culver: And who is that?

J: What?

C: The author.

J: Well, there's even a debate about that. There's a group of people who believe that Dr. John Watson is the author and not Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

C: Really?

J: Yes. They say that Holmes and Watson were *real* people who lived in the 1800's and that Doyle was just the publisher's agent. You see, in England, Doyle was more of an historical writer. He was involved in a lot of current political goings on in the era. Did you know that he solicited the government to provide the first flack jackets for the army?

C: No, I did not know that.

J: Anyway, because of his other interests, and the slightly different writing styles of his historical and science fiction novels, this group thinks that Doyle was merely an agent for Watson.

C: They were both doctors, so it would make sense that they knew each other.

J: That's right. This group is called the Baker Street Irregulars.

C: I call them nutcases.

J: What?

C: Nothing. So what were you saying about the different versions of the stories?

J: Oh that. Well, for *The Illustrious Client*, we've uncovered a couple of different styles that "Watson" experimented with.

C: What are they?

J: Well, one version seems to be a musical, a sort of folk version....

Wanda: (singing to the tune of *Blowing in the Wind*)

How many girls must a man destroy?

Before he is caught by the law?

And how many times must a future bride be told

Before she can see just one flaw?

(cont. on page 3)



(cont. from page 2)

The answer, I recall

Is echoed in the halls

When a man screams from tossed vitriol.

J: We also found a sci-fi version. (*he reads with a William Shatner voice*) Doctor. I have a solution of obtaining this foul book that will help convince this young, innocent woman of the evil that her fiancé fully encompasses.

W: (*southern accent*) Where do I come in?

J/Shatner: You must pretend to be a private collector. You must study these volumes about Chinese pottery enough to convince him that you are an expert in the field...

C/Spock: Captain, I feel that I should be the one to distract this man. My brain capacity would be suited to retaining such information more quickly than the doctor's.

J/Shatner: No, Spock, I need you here. At 221B. To handle the irregulars. Doc - you've got to do it! While you distract him I'll sneak in the back and steal the book. Now go memorize these facts. You have 2 hours to become an expert.

W/McCoy: Dammit, Holmes, I'm a doctor not a collector!

J: We even have a version done like a family TV sitcom

C: Wait a minute. TV wasn't invented when Doyle, er, Watson wrote the story.

J: It's okay. They both knew H.G. Wells.

W: *singing to the theme of The Brady Bunch*

It's a story, About a client, Who is just too illustrious to name

Had his coat of arms upon his carriage. All royals are the same

Seems his daughter, Fell for this Baron, Who collected women like teacups

Some he chipped or tossed then got a new one. Not on the up & up

So this client sent a man to visit Sherlock, Who decided that he would take the case, And that's how all this came together: A racy book and a deformed face

If you declare, To have affairs, Then you will wear Kitty's Winter's new skin care.

J: Well, as we all know, Doyle, er Watson wasn't happy with any of these, so what we know today is the story listed in The Case Book of Sherlock Holmes.

C: And a great case it is!

Next, as David McCallister passed out his deadly quizzes, we listened to his presentation:

Hell, London, Hath No Fury Like...

There are no coincidences. Some of the characters of the canon come back to haunt. Perhaps CHAS and ILLU are joined by more than nasty villains: the worst man in London vs. the most dangerous man in Europe. The real nexus is those whom Ronald Knox would recognize as the Greek dike of each piece, the engine of destructive downfall, embodied in the women.

In CHAS, the avenger is a mysterious lady later seen in a photographer's display in Oxford Street. Obviously she is not the maid of the Countess d'Albert, whom

Milverton was expecting, nor even, presumably, that particular Countess herself. Otherwise, Milverton would have likely remarked on the fact, and Holmes would not have had to rack his brain with "vacant eyes" and an "abstracted manner" of "a man striving to recall something to his memory." He did remember her as we shall see, from another case of ten years previous. In her photograph she was "a regal and stately lady in Court dress, with a high diamond tiara upon her noble brow."

Now, who else in the canon would have been likely to have had an invitation to Court, and would have had need of a tiara, and also had loose diamonds to set in it? The Countess of Morcar, victim of the Yule-tide '89 Cosmopolitan Hotel Blue Carbuncle heist, that's who. CHAS is most often dated to 1899, although Bell, Brend and Zeisler date it earlier ('84, '82 and '86 respectively). BLUE is mostly set in 1889. Remember that in BLUE, Holmes discourses on the evil history of the stone. Perhaps some of that was personal history to the family (of whatever surname) that held the Morcar title. Two murders, a suicide, several robberies and a vitriol throwing, were the tally. Ah, vitriol throwing. Who does that sound like? Another canonical vixen, Kitty Winter!

Kitty Winter is introduced to us in the company of Shinwell "Porky" Johnson, an ex-felon underworld narc of Holmes in ILLU, unanimously dated in 1902. Although Ms. Winter remarks that she and Porky are "old mates," she also states that within the year she had been the latest mistress of Baron Adelbert Gruner. It is logical to assume that in order to have attracted the attention of the Baron, she must have previously been in society. And probably wealthy, as well as physically attractive, to boot. Therefore, despite her then present circumstances, she was not a woman born to the lower classes. She had been subject to the "leprous mark" for less than one year. The ravages of a sexually transmitted disease, no doubt.

Cast out as a pariah from her own level of society, her broken relationship with the Baron had thus ultimately driven her to the lower reaches of London. But not necessarily by the Baron himself. She said that it was upon his revelation to her of the book of his past conquests that he lost his hold over her, and she undertook to part from him. That book was the thing that "shook" her. Prior to that, she had loved him and even knew about "one or two murders" that he had confided in her. But, like Violet De Merville after her, "whatever he did went with me, same as this poor fool."

But, it was her adulterous relationship with Gruner that Milverton exploited. Catherine de Winter, Countess of Morcar, had written compromising love letters to Gruner, and Milverton got hold of them somehow. Perhaps by way of Gruner himself; for a cut of the take. When Milverton made his demand on Catherine, she refused to pay, even though Milverton "put it within her means." Kitty was always a resolute woman, and she just backed her ears and defied him to send the letters to Viscount Morcar.

Catherine may very well not have loved her husband by that time. Perhaps he was much older than she, and absorbed in public affairs as the "nobleman and statesman" as Watson notes. Perhaps her marriage was on the May/December order of the Brackenstall's of ABBE, but without the spouse abuse. Perhaps more like the situation obtaining in (cont. on page 4)



(cont. from page 3) PRIO between the Duke and his estranged wife. Whatever the circumstances, being matrimonially ignored and with concomitant social ennui, Catherine might have been a perfect set up for temptation by the Baron's attentions in the first place.

Naturally in the course of time, Gruner would have solicited some "sprightly" correspondence from Catherine; to put in his abominable memory book, if nothing else. But, Gruner could have had other uses for the letters as well. These letters would inevitably have been proof positive of her infidelity to her husband. In the Baron's position, it would have been useful to have had an intermediary in the form of Milverton to actually accomplish the blackmailing, thus ensuring plausible deniability on his part to Catherine and the rest of society. This was probably part of his standard operating procedure.

Nevertheless, upon refusing to be blackmailed, and even being faced with the forthcoming scandal, Catherine had not wished her husband's death. It was he whom the letters' revelations "broke his gallant heart and died." His was a "time honoured title" (the "de" indicating Huguenot or even Norman origins of the family name), and being sensitive rather along the lines of Lord Robert St. Simon, the shock to his amour-propre might have been too much. Perhaps he should have been made of a bit sterner stuff; von Ormstein of Bohemia certainly wouldn't have had such a fit of apoplexy. But then General de Merville was also incapable of helping himself and was a "broken man," "demoralized" by his daughter's liaison with Gruner. Gruner's relations with women seem to upset their men-folk; fathers as well as husbands, something fierce. Action was left to Catherine and the eponymous illustrious client, respectively.

In any case, Catherine herself may have secretly felt that revelation of the affair would have predictably led to a hushed-up divorce, which would then free her for Gruner. She therefor initially defied Milverton, but later was driven to undertake her revenge, when things turned out badly. It is not uncommon for even a willing adulteress, in the throes of feeling guilty over her duplicitous life of sin, to feel that her cuckolded husband is nevertheless somehow "the noblest gentleman who ever lived, a man whose boots I was never worthy to lace."

All this was, of course, before Gruner revealed the book to her. Perhaps he was himself driven to do so because of the frustrations of his machinations with Milverton, coupled with his continued inability to throw that in her face. Perhaps he was looking for a way to end his affair with Catherine and move on to the next victim. He could, however, in his cups, show her the nasty book and possibly the chapter being devoted to her own self. A little bit of viciousness certainly not beyond him. Possibly there was a copy of the Oxford Street photo preceding the in flagrante centerfold portfolio.

In ILLU, it is revealed in the initial interview with Sir Charles Damery that Holmes had been keeping tabs on Baron Gruner, even though he had primarily done his dastardly deeds on the Continent, and presumably beyond Holmes' immediate purview. It is fine for Holmes to remark that "sooner or later he [Gruner] would find me [Holmes] some work to do." But

that is not enough of an explanation. Isn't it just a bit odd that Holmes would, as his very first opening salvo against Gruner, send to Shinwell Johnson to have him bring in Kitty Winter? And, too, that Porky was able to, "put my hand right on her, Mr. Holmes, within an hour of your message." It would seem that Ms. Winter was under slightly more scrutiny, if not protection, than her laments would indicate.

However, if Kitty Winter had been the avenger in CHAS, and Holmes had known of her as the Countess of Morcar even before that, then it was really her career that he was surreptitiously following, and only came on Gruner when she intersected with him. Think, too, of the ultimate result, when both Holmes and the illustrious client surely intervened on her behalf.

It has been suggested that Kitty, only one year away from the heights of the sophisticated company of Baron Gruner, must have had an extra component to bring her so low as to be in "Hell, London," poor health. Specifically, rather than actual leprosy mentioned twice (in Watson's first impression of her and Holmes' review of their interview with Miss de Merville), it was probably a sexually transmitted disease contracted from her profligate partner. It is alternately possible, of course, that she had tuberculosis or something else that gave her the "worn" look.

In her fall from grace, the unfortunate Catherine either changed her name or took on the more vulgar nickname of "Kitty" and shortened what was probably her maiden or married surname of "de Winter" to plain Anglicized Winter (if that hadn't been done previously by the family anyway). The name de Winter links her to other famous hoydens, Milady de Winter from *The Three Musketeers*, and Rebecca de Winter of Mandaly. (Also linking Doyle to Dumas and DuMaurier as well).

To conclude therefore, it was Catherine AKA "Kitty" "de" Winter, Countess of Morcar, who had had a jewel theft in 1889, murdered Charles Augustus Milverton in 1899, and attacked Baron Adelbert Gruner in 1902. No anachronisms, there. Physical resemblances? There is no description of the Countess in BLUE. In CHAS she is "tall, slim, dark, with a dark, handsome, clear-cut face," with a "curved nose, strong, dark eyebrows shading hard glittering eyes," and a "straight thin-lipped mouth," and with "a strong little chin." On the photo, Watson reads the time-honoured title of the great nobleman and statesman whose wife she had been. Obviously, even as a young widow, she was still then in society, her photo to be exhibited publicly. A mere three years later, in ILLU, she is still a "slim, flame-like young woman, with a pale intense face, yet worn." She had an "intensity of hatred" and "blazing eyes."

Milverton himself exclaims "bless the girl," when she shivers before him, so she was still arguably young at the time of CHAS. At the time of BLUE, she might have been very young, indeed, possibly very soon after in her debut season in London, when she was a recent bride. This would put her at reasonably 18 for BLUE in '89, 28 in '99 for CHAS and possibly no more than 30; still young enough, but "worn with sin," for ILLU in '02.



(cont. from page 4) Any further doubt of the identity? Consider psychology. What did Milverton's murderess do? She "ground her hell into his upturned face." And Kitty's most fervent wish? "Let me see this man in the mud, with my foot on his cursed face." An idee fixe, or procrustean bed? Kitty Winter's minimum sentence echoes Holmes' own Nolle Prose. "When the client is sufficiently illustrious, even the rigid British law becomes human and elastic." For her vitriol toss, Kitty Winter, aka Countess Morcar, secret murderer of Charles Agastus Milverton, may even have been able to get probation and some gain time for community service in Hell, London.

If you didn't make it, we don't want you to miss out on David's devious quizzes, so here they are:

WATSON LEVEL

1. Holmes says, "It can't hurt now." What can't hurt?
2. What establishment was on the upper floor of a Northumberland Ave. building?
3. Sir James Damery held what military rank?
4. Holmes recognizes Baron Gruner as of what nationality?
5. Where had General de Merville gained fame?
6. How does Damery initially describe Violet de Merville? (5 of 7 adjectives)
7. What instrument did Holmes' "old friend" Charlie Peace play?
8. Where was Baron, Gruner's house?
9. Who was Holmes' "valuable assistant" at this time?
10. What is the address for Kitty Winter?
11. What was on the outside of Baron Gruner's diary?
12. What headline horrified Watson?
13. To what hospital was Holmes taken?
14. Who was Holmes' doctor?
15. By what Cunard liner was Gruner going to America?
16. What was Watson's "name for the evening"?
17. What color was the Ming saucer?
18. What weapon did Kitty Winter use against Baron Gruner?
19. How does Watson finally learn the identity of the Illustrious Client?
20. What newspaper carried the report of the break in the Gruner/deMerville engagement?

MYCROFT LEVEL

1. In what year was Watson allowed to tell the story?
2. What was Sir James Damery's Club?
3. What negotiations had he undertaken prior to this adventure?
4. Where was Watson living at the time of this adventure?
5. Name two locations of Baron Gruner's prior crimes.
6. Where did Gruner meet Violet de Merville?
7. What was Damery's private Phone number?
8. What was the name of Gruner's house?
9. Where did Gruner play polo?
10. What of Gruner's quivered with amusement like the

short antennae of an insect?

11. Name three things Baron Gruner collected.
12. By what title does Kitty Winter call Adelbert's diary?
13. What is the address for Violet de Merville?
14. What disability did the news vendor have whom Watson stole from?
15. Where did the newspaper story say Holmes was attacked?
16. Where did Watson bone up on Chinese pottery?
17. Name three Chinese names associated with pottery.
18. What names does Gruner call Kitty Winter?
19. What drug was administered to both Holmes and Gruner?
20. What Biblical remark did Holmes make about Gruner's "transformation"?

High scores in the quizzes went to Donna Vaurio and George Edwards. The meeting was concluded after a discussion of product placement in the canon (Cunard cruises, Cafe Royal) and notice of upcoming events. (check our calendar)



ITEMS CURRENTLY ON DISPLAY AT THE DUNEDIN PUBLIC LIBRARY FROM THE COLLECTION OF JEFF & WANDA DOW



ANSWERS: Watson: 1.Revealing the story. 2.A Turkish bath 3.Colonel 4.Austrian 5.The Khyber 6.Young, rich, beautiful, accomplished, a wonder-woman, lovely, innocent, girl. 7.Violin 8.Kingston 9. Shinwell "Porky" Johnson 10.Hell, London 11.His coat of arms 12.Murderous Attack on Sherlock Holmes 13.Charing Cross 14.Sir Leslie Oakshott 15.Ruritania 16.Dr. Hill Barton 17.Deep blue 18.Oil of vitriol 19.By the coat of arms on the side of the carriage 20.Morning Post **Mycroft:** 1.1912 2.The Carlton 3.Sir George Lewis over the Hammerford Will case 4.Queen Anne St. 5.Paris, Prague, Switzerland 6.A Mediterranean yachting voyage 7.XX.31 8.Vernon Lodge 9.Hurlingham 10.Moustache 11.Books, pictures & women 12.Souls I Have Ruined 13.104 Barkley Square 14.A peg leg 15.Regent Street, outside the Cafe Royal 16.London Library 17.Ming, Hung-wu, Yung-lo, Yuan, Tang, Northern Wei 18.Hell cat, She Devil 19.Morphine 20."The wages of sin, Watson - the wages of sin."



The Tarlton Murders

From time to time in our early years together at Baker Street, Holmes would fill in some of the time he spent waiting for clients to turn up by telling me of his early cases. As I was still recruiting my health, these interludes served to prevent my wasting my meager funds at Billiards or at the Track.

During a discussion the affair I recorded as "The Musgrave Ritual," Holmes mentioned "The Tarlton Murders," an earlier case he had dealt with. One day when he was waxing expansive, I asked him to tell me about that very early case.

"It wasn't properly a case, you see," Holmes remarked. "I was reading of the deaths of an entire family, one Charles Tarlton, his wife and their four children, due to poor ventilation of their fireplace when I remarked some details that seemed to me to be suspicious. I mentioned these to then Sergeant Lestrade and suggested he find answers to one or two questions."

"What details were those, Holmes?" I enquired.

"It seems that a distant cousin, one Daniel Tarlton, made all the funeral arrangements for the family which was practically indigent. His only concern, however, seemed to be that proper death certificates be made out on all the family members, even the twin infants. Further, he posted an elaborate announcement of the tragedy in several Newspapers."

"What questions did you ask the good Lestrade to answer?" I asked.

"I suggested that the exact relationship of Mr. Tarlton to the deceased family be ascertained and that any other relatives be identified."

"Did any such relatives turn up?" I asked.

"Indeed yes," replied Holmes. "There was an elderly recluse who was more closely related to the deceased family than to Mr. Daniel Tarlton. In fact, his will left his entire estate to the dead Charles Tarlton with the rest of his family being his heirs. With the death of these people, Mr. Daniel Tarlton was now the sole heir to a considerable fortune. It became apparent that the 'blocked' fireplace should be investigated further and, of course, it proved to have been tampered with during a 'free cleaning' offered by a chimney sweep who was later proved to be a servant of Dan Tarlton in disguise."

"So, the fact of the murders was revealed only by the existence of an unsuspected will?" I commented.

"Yes," said Holmes, "the will was a dead giveaway."

Written to a suggestion by "The Vatican Cameo." First published on *The Shamlockian's Liston* October 17th, 2006.

Simpson's in the Strand

One evening after successful conclusion of a case, Holmes and I were celebrating with a festive meal at Simpson's when the Headwaiter, Mr. Charles, approached and asked our indulgence. He said that he had heard of Holmes' knack at solving problems and hoped that he would lend his expertise to a problem that had occurred in the restaurant.

Holmes had enjoyed his veal cutlets and felt well-satisfied so he asked Mr. Charles to explain.

It seemed that the restaurant had recently hired a new head chef and the wearer of the cordon blue was all that he had been expected to be. His sauces were exquisite and his souffles were unmatched. He was adding touches of continental elegance to the menu, but, all the while preserving the core of solid British competence for which Simpson's had always been noted. It seems he even knew how to prepare roast beef and Yorkshire pudding that one could swear to have been brought fresh from the Dales.

The problem occurred with the introduction of a new German dish, Hassenpfeffer. Each serving had been sent back by irate customers who claimed it was either too hot or too cold or too sour or not sour enough. Every complaint was different but each serving resulted in a complaint.

Holmes listened politely and then assured Mr. Charles that there was nothing to worry about. This was simply a coincidence. He explained: "Don't worry. Your chef is merely having a bad hare day."

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Spying in the Bristol Channel

During the Great War, Holmes was employed by the Government in a number of capacities. I only learned of some of these services long afterward. One fall day, after I had moved to the South Downs to share Holmes' retirement, his housekeeper served us a succulent Mulberry Pie. Holmes began eating and then began to laugh. Naturally, I asked the reason.

"The pie reminded me of a strange case I handled during the War," he said. It was in the late Fall and Winter of 1914 and we were beginning to lose merchant shipping to German raiders, both small surface ships and submarines. The losses were not frequent, but they were persistent and always seemed to be ships with particularly needed cargoes. Most of the losses occurred in the Irish Sea and the approaches to the Bristol Channel, so I was asked to look into the matter.

After a careful check of shipping records and Port logs, it became apparent that most of the valuable ships that had been lost were headed into Bristol. Further, they had notified the Harbormaster at Bristol of their expected arrival by radio and had asked that an escort be sent to meet them at an appropriate time and location. In almost every case, the ships had been attacked and sunk only hours before their escort was scheduled to arrive. Naturally, my thought turned to the security of the codes being used; however, the same codes were in use all over the UK Maritime Establishment and the coded messages gave no indication of cargos or even the type of ship concerned. All ships used arbitrarily assigned code names and those names were independent of the transmission codes.

The problem was finally cracked by analyzing the personnel with access to the combination of information required to select the proper ships. Only three clerks in the offices in Bristol could have assembled the necessary facts in the time available to spur action: Mr. Tristan Jones, The Honourable Wilberforce Penn and Shamus Casey. Each was put under observation, but no contact with possible enemy agents could be found.

Mr. Jones was Welsh and spent most of his time with his extended family in the country. Penn had relatives who managed two bakeries in the small village of Avonmouth where he was a frequent visitor, and consumer. Casey was from Ireland and kept up constant and voluminous mail communications with his relatives across the Irish sea. One of these persons had to be sending data to foreign agents who signalled the raiders when to attack.

My break came when I visited the Avonmouth bakeries. The two shops offered wide selections of pastries at wildly varying prices, all similar, but differing in details. A quick check with the local constable revealed that these prices changed almost daily, with no apparent reason or logic. This was the mechanism for passing information to the enemy agents."

"Holmes," I gasped. "You can't mean..."

"Yes Watson, it was the pie rates of Penn's aunts that told the tale."



He's EVERYWHERE ... *Scientific American* magazine, July 2006 issue contained an article concerning the effect of TV CSI shows on the real world of forensics. It begins "Forensic science has been the backbone of mystery stories from Edgar Allan Poe's Dupin adventures to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes tales to Jack Klugman's *Quincy* television series to today's wildly successful forensics shows. Holmes's methods presaged many actual techniques for linking physical evidence to the perpetrator of a crime, such as blood testing." ... If you go to www.dailyscript.com, you can find movie scripts available to read online, one of which is *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* ... Sherlockian M.C. Black is an established guide for walking tours through Holmes' London, with an expanding portfolio of routes. If you're in his area, contact him for a walk designed to suit your interests! 01920 467930 by phone or MCB@DetectiveWalks.co.uk ... Speaking of tours, you can now tour Stonyhurst College, the alma mater of literary agent, AC Doyle ... Someone told us www.otrcat.com has Sherlockian radio plays available now on CD in mp3 format ... Everyone should check out <http://bakerstreetjournal.blogspot.com> for links to Sherlockian sites available to the world ... Carolyn & Joel Sentar tell us the latest edition of *The Sherlockian E-Times* is now on the internet at www.sherlock-holmes.come/e ... We also heard that bbs.keyhole.com/ubb/showthread.php/Cat/0/Number/238870/an/0/page/0#238870 (whew!) will allow you to download the Google Earth "Placemark" which shows the places to which H & W traveled in their various adventures, BUT! you need a lot of memory available ... If you're in Archbold, Ohio this coming February, be sure to catch the Archbold Community Theatre's *Hound of the Baskervilles* play.

For now you can visit www.archboldcommunitytheatre.com ... This January, Ascaron Entertainment (UK) will release the new Sherlock Holmes computer game from Frogwares/93 Games called *The Awakened*. Holmes & Watson investigate strange disappearances, which seem related to the activity of a secret sect (say that fast 10 times). The duo travel from Baker Street to a psychiatric hospital near Basle, Switzerland, Louisiana and Scotland, with a twist of H. P. Lovecraft's weird tales. Visit www.sherlockholmes-thegames.com to find out more ... *The Sherlock Holmes Pub* in Northumberland Street has not only been recently refurbished, but will soon be offering tours ... BBC1 is planning on a new "2-part family drama" for Sunday afternoons next year - *Baker Street Irregulars*. An original Holmes mystery written by Richard Kurti and Bev Doyle, it pits Holmes and the Irregulars against "one of Holmes' greatest enemies." Jonathan Pryce & Bill Paterson play Holmes & Watson. Wonder when/if it will cross the waters? ... Next June in Peel (Isle of Man) the Midsummer Actor's Company will perform a unique walkabout production of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. "The plan is to start the first scene on the site of St. Peter's Church, in the town centre, and to involve as much of the local community as possible to create the feel of a late Victorian country fair. The opening scene, to set the legend of the ghostly hound, will be conveyed as a rustic melodrama... After the scene at the church, the audience will walk, via the new footbridge, to the castle, which will represent Baskerville Hall and its environs on Dartmoor. There will be about 10 scenes in the castle ground, becoming more spookily atmospheric as the evening progresses and darkness falls." ... We received a new book announcement from Pleasure Boat Studio: A Literary Press titled *The Case of Emily V.* by Keith Oatley. Winner of the Commonwealth Writers Prize for Best First Novel in 1994, it is just now being released in the US. The mystery involves Emily, a young woman distraught by the murder of a

CALENDAR SHERLOCKIANA 2006

(being a listing of Sherlockian events worldwide)

2006
November - Display at the Dunedin Library (223 Douglas Avenue) of some of the collection of Wanda & Jeff Dow.

2007
January 11-13 - *BSI Festivities* in New York, NY. Dinner to be held on Friday, January 12.

February 3 - Florida Wessex Cup XVII. Full buffet @ 11:30am in the Clubhouse, followed by races in the stadium seating inside. \$18.95 per person. Sherlockians & Non - All are welcome! Reserve by January 23rd to David McCallister (see back page). Sponsored by The Pleasant Places of Florida.

April 21 or 28 (TBA) - Mike Bryan is trying to arrange another Sherlock Holmes film festival at one of the local libraries. Keep your eyes peeled for forthcoming information.

PPoF Spring Gathering - No date as yet, but arrangements have been taken on by Donna Vaurio. More info to follow.

May 4-6 - *Malice Domestic XIX* at the Central City Marriott in Arlington, VA. Register at PO Box 8007, Gaithersburg, MD 20898 or visit www.malicedomestic.org

September 27-30 - *Bouchercon 38 Bearly Alive* in Anchorage, AK. Anchorage Hilton Hotel. Guests of Honor are Ann Rule, Alexander McCall, Jayne Ann Krentz (aka Amanda Quick aka Jayne Castle) & Barbara Peters See bouchercon2007.com

2008
October 9-12 - *Bouchercon 39 Charmed to Death* in Baltimore, MD at the Wyndham (410-385-6605). Guests of Honor Laura Lippman & John Harvey with Toastmaster Mark Billingham. See bouchercon2008.blogspot.com

British diplomat, a murder she believes she committed. Dr. Sigmund Freud (her therapist) suggests that she is only fantasizing, but it takes Sherlock Holmes to resolve the issue ... *Nickelodeon's Noggin* channel (Pre-K) recently ran an episode with Pablo the Penguin as the *World's Greatest Detective* with deerstalker & inverness ... Moscow City Hall's Monuments Committee has decided that there needs to be a monument to Holmes & Watson in Moscow. Check out the story at www.mosnews.com/news/2006/11/18/holmesstatue.shtml ...

FLORIDA WESSEX CUP XVII
SATURDAY February 3, 2007

A day of racing and Sherlockian fun and fellowship
SAME TRACK CONDITIONS AS LAST YEAR
we will be dining inside



*** The CLUBHOUSE TURN BUFFET on the 2nd Floor
FULL BUFFET @ 11:30 AM

Herb Roasted Chicken, Sirloin Beef tips over rice, Fresh Fruit Tray, Pasta Salad with Dressings,
Macaroni and Cheese, Vegetable, Sheet Cake, Rolls, Iced Tea and Coffee, tax and gratuity.

\$18.95 per person includes:

Buffet, Clubhouse Admission, Racing Program and Souvenir PPOF Program, stadium (inside)
seating for races. Parking, tips, wagering, and drinks on your own.

RESERVATIONS by Jan. 23, 2007 ARE NECESSARY

Out of town visitors, spouses, children, Non or Neo-Sherlockians - **ALL ARE WELCOME**

Any further inquiries to David R. McCallister

RESERVATION FORM

Please reserve _____ spaces for the Florida Wessex Cup XVII:

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

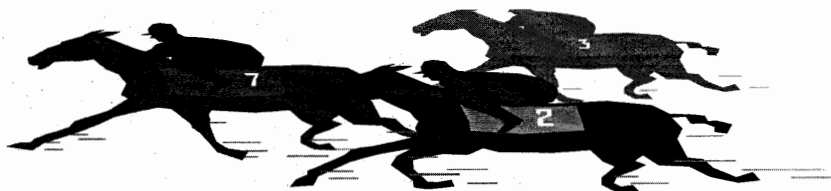
Phone/Email: () _____

I understand that you will be sending tickets and a map about Jan. 26th. Enclosed is \$ _____
for _____ reservations.

I've also enclosed \$ _____ for the Marshall/Wood Fund (The Marshall/Wood Fund was
established to keep the spirit of Holmes alive in local libraries throughout Florida, beginning
with schools in Pinellas County. Sherlockian books are purchased with the funds and donated to
schools in need.)

Please make checks out to David R. McCallister.

Send to:



The Pleasant Places of Florida

founded in 1972
by Leslie Marshall, B.S.I. (dec.)

Recorder Emeritus: Dr. Benton Wood, B.S.I.

For the Record:

THE LAST COURT OF APPEALS

David McCallister, Master of the House,

(Master of Ceremonies at most gatherings, host of the annual Wessex Cup)

Carl Heifetz, Representative (both with the Servants and with the Tradespeople),

(Correspondent & Communication)

Wanda & Jeff Dow, The Papers on the Sundial,

(Communications and Bookkeeping)

Please make note of the date after your name on the mailing label. This is the expiration date of your club membership. You will not receive further Communications after this date unless you renew. Renewals should be sent, with any updates, to Wanda Dow. Make all checks payable to Wanda Dow. US\$12.00 (US/CAN) or US\$13.00 (INTL)

FANDORIN MYSTERIES The Russian Sherlock Holmes who started in *The Winter Queen* and *Murder on the Leviathan* returns in these novels by Russian literary phenomenon Boris Akunin. "Akunin is wildly popular in his homeland, and deservedly so," assayed *The New Yorker*. "His plots are intricate, with one story nesting inside the next, like *matryoshka*. And although some references may prove challenging to Americans, the wealth of period detail—about tactics in battles fought with cavalry and cannon, for example, and the gruesome outcomes—is impressive."



69385

THE TURKISH GAMBIT

Boris Akunin

Random House (pap) 12.95 **8.95**

In this third Erast Fandorin mystery, set in 1877, war has broken out between Russia and the Ottoman Empire. The brilliant detective is among the ranks of the Russian army, looking for a suspected Turkish spy. He is assisted, somewhat reluctantly, by a young woman with revolutionary ideals, who has disguised herself as a boy to search for her fiancé at the front. Her cold attitude toward Fandorin, a "lackey of the throne," begins to change as she comes to respect his courage, deductive powers, and piercing gaze. (229/2005)

69384

THE DEATH OF ACHILLES

Boris Akunin

Random House (pap) 12.95 **8.95**

It is 1882 in this fourth mystery with renowned diplomat and detective Erast Fandorin, who returns at last to Mother Russia after six years of foreign travel and adventure. In the Moscow hotel where he and his loyal, if impertinent, Japanese manservant Masa are staying, Fandorin's old war-hero friend General Michel Sobolev is found dead, supposedly of a heart attack. But Fandorin finds a German cabaret singer involved, and soon crosses paths with a mysterious assassin who may have tangled with him before. (320/2006)

Daedalus Books catalog, Fall 2006. Visit salebooks.com