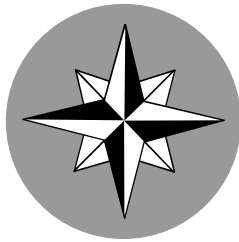




# EXPLORATIONS



## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Although we may regret the passing of a summer, albeit a cool one this year, we had a well attended movie night, and we can look forward to a presentation by distinguished Sherlockian editor Les Klinger and our annual dinner in the months to come. I would like to welcome five new members to the Norwegian Explorers. Our Canadian friends Ed and Maureen Van Der Flaes and Christopher, Barbara and Timothy Roden joined the Explorers while participating in our June conference.

"A River Runs by It" was certainly a success for the Norwegian Explorers. We hosted 125 people from throughout the United States, Canada and England, and

judging by the notes and comments I received as well as those posted on Internet sites, it was an event that everyone enjoyed. Such an event doesn't spontaneously occur; it took months and months of planning, phone calls, emails, letters and meetings. And when a conference goes as smoothly as this one, you know a lot of behind the scenes work and attention to details ensured its success. I would like to extend my personal thanks to the members of the Conference Committee: my co-chair Dick Sveum, Phil Bergem who was also a featured presenter, John Bergquist, Mike Eckman, Tim Johnson and Gary Thaden. They are a truly

*(Continued on page 2)*

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## FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

This issue of *Explorations* features a personal reminiscence of the late Richard Lancelyn Green from longtime Norwegian Explorer Andrew Malec, BSI, whose friendship with Richard spanned twenty-five years and who attended the memorial service for Richard in Bebington, England in May. We also offer glowing reports from attendees of our recent conference, "A River Runs by It," as compiled by Gary Thaden, who also contributes a review of a Sherlockian play performed at the annual Minnesota Fringe Festival. Mike Eckman offers a review of a nonfiction book with Sherlockian overtones, and — as always — Charles Clifford

reports on our monthly Study Group sessions.

We look forward to a visit from Les Klinger in November, as mentioned by Julie McKuras in her From the President column. I got a glimpse of a pre-publication copy of Les's *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes*, and it is a most impressive work. I eagerly await getting my own copy upon Les's visit.

Submissions for *Explorations* are always welcome. Email items in Word or plain text format to [bergq003@tc.umn.edu](mailto:bergq003@tc.umn.edu). ❖

**John Bergquist, Editor**

## FROM THE PRESIDENT (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 1)

a “singular set of people” who gave so much of their scarce free time to make this a memorable conference.

This fall we have several meetings planned. We had such a positive response to our last movie night that we had an encore on Sept. 28 when we viewed “The Whitechapel Vampire.” One advertisement about the film states “Death comes to the monks of a Whitechapel Abbey. The victims are found with bite marks upon their necks. Can Holmes and Watson prevail against this apparent denizen of the undead world?” No one was too scared and we were extremely pleased to have the 10 year old granddaughter of Explorer Bill Turley with us. Cecilia, an extremely bright and promising young lady, was presented with her own copy of *The Canon* and encouraged to return to our meetings.


Leslie Klinger will be speaking to the Norwegian Explorers on Nov. 11 at the Andersen Library. Les, the editor of the *Sherlock Holmes Reference* series, was commissioned by W. W. Norton to produce *The New Annotated Sherlock Holmes*. As Peter Blau noted in

the August 2004 *Scuttlebutt from the Spermaceti Press*, this two-volume work containing all of the Holmes short stories is “intended for the general public...offering the same overall format as Baring-Gould’s work, with annotations and illustrations, but covering an additional 37 years of Sherlockian scholarship.” The two-volume work will be offered for sale by Once Upon a Crime Mystery Bookstore at our meeting. The third volume, containing the long stories, is due next year. Don’t miss a chance to hear this entertaining speaker and purchase the book.

As is our tradition, the Annual Dinner will be held the first Thursday of December, so mark Dec. 2 on your calendar. We had such a positive response to the Minneapolis Golf Club that we have decided to host the dinner there again. Flyers will be mailed with details of all the above meetings. Sept. 18 and Oct. 16 were the first fall meetings of the Study Group. If you’re interested in joining the study group please contact me and I’ll add your name to the mailing list.

I hope to see many of you this fall.

Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI



**The Annual  
Dinner will be  
held the first  
Thursday of  
December, so  
mark Dec. 2 on  
your calendar.**



Our members from outside the Twin Cities may be interested to see this photo of a billboard that has been in rotation alongside major highways in the metro area. Photo courtesy of Ruth Berman.



## INTERNET MUSINGS ON THE "A RIVER RUNS BY IT" CONFERENCE (CONTINUED)

(Continued from page 3)  
*ACD Email List*

Message: 3 Date: Tue, 22 Jun 2004 04:50:25 -0000  
From: "Randall Stock" <shbest@aol.com>  
Subject: "Horror of the Heights" facsimile

If you haven't seen the "Horror of the Heights" facsimile, I highly recommend getting it. I spent a lot of time studying facsimiles as I compiled my checklist of Holmes manuscript facsimiles, and the new "Horror" facsimile has some really outstanding points. To start with, it places the facsimile and its associated transcription on facing pages. Thus at an opening you can both read the transcript and refer to the image as needed. The transcript clearly notes changes in the manuscript and is supplemented with excellent annotations.

These annotations cover both textual variants and explanatory points. They directly compare the manuscript to appearances in the Strand, Everybody's Magazine, and Famous Fantastic Mysteries. Since book versions were based on the Strand text, you get a comprehensive sense of the editing and errors that come with publication. The explanatory points are especially valuable because they highlight new scientific knowledge and events that came after Conan Doyle wrote the story.

I also found the book's detailed description of the manuscript to be very helpful. With other facsimiles I always seem to have questions about what is, and what isn't, reproduced. However, this book not only reproduces a number of "extra" elements besides the text body, it also explicitly notes all the physical details, down to the watermarks on the paper!

The book's fine design, with 8.5 x 11 inch pages, provides for large, quality reproductions. It also presents the annotations in sidebars, which are far more convenient than endnotes. Finally, it includes the illustrations from the story's serial appearances, including several large ones in full color.

The two prefaces, introduction, essay, and closing note all add context to the manuscript and to the story. This book's combination of design and content is very impressive. While some facsimiles are rather dry and limited, this one should appeal to both the dedicated researcher and the casual scholar.

You can get it at: <http://www.ash-tree.bc.ca/calabashACD.htm>

Date: Tue, 22 Jun 2004 17:50:02 -0500  
From: "John Bergquist" <bergq003@tc.umn.edu>

Subject: Re: "Horror of the Heights" facsimile

Thanks for the kind words, Randall. We sought to do things with this manuscript facsimile that had not been done before in similar projects, and it's gratifying to realize that people such as you notice and appreciate the extra touches. Editor Phil Bergem and I "lobbied" our publisher Christopher Roden for color illustrations and the oversize treatment, and although the nonstandard size presented practical problems for bookmaking, Christopher was able to pull it off.

John Bergquist, General Editor

### *Sherlock Peoria*

*Sherlock Minneapolis* ... The long weekend symposiums held by the Norwegian Explorers every three years have been, perhaps, my very favorite of Sherlockian weekends. More than the annual NYC festivities, more than any symposiums I've had a hand in or presented a paper at . . . I hate to play favorites, but Minneapolis has just always been special to me. ...

There were some excellent [Sherlockian presentations]. I won't go down the whole list, but Gideon Hill does deserve special mention for his "A Trained Man of Medicine." That was one that reminded those of us that do talks just where the bar should be set....

When you look around the room at a Norwegian Explorers symposium, you tend to see a high percentage of solid Sherlockian players with a still-keen interest in Holmes. ... There's an energy in Minneapolis at these Sherlockian conventions, and it's a more focused energy than at many an other event.

The manuscript reproductions of "The Horror of the Heights" that we all got a copy of were fabulous, and Mrs. Georgina Doyle and her newly released Calabash Press book on Conan Doyle's first family, *Out of the Shadows*, were a special treat. ... The food was good, the cookies enormous, the library display multi-viewable.

Brad Keefauver



"There's an energy in Minneapolis at these Sherlockian conventions, and it's a more focused energy than at many an other event."

— Brad Keefauver



**A CERTAIN KNOWLEDGE  
OF BOOKS:  
RICHARD LANCELYN  
GREEN 1954-2004  
A PERSONAL REMINISCENCE  
BY ANDREW MALEC**

*"I have a certain knowledge of books."*

– Frank Middlemass as Henry Baker in the Granada  
Television version of "The Blue Carbuncle" (1984)

*This article is based on a talk that Andrew presented  
at A River Runs By It in Minneapolis on June 13,  
2004. – Ed.*

I first encountered Richard Lancelyn Green in the Spring of 1979, not long after the bulk of the Hench Collection had been deposited with the Special Collections and Rare Books division of the University of Minnesota Library (then residing in Wilson Library). The Curator Austin McLean told me he had received a telephone call from one Richard Lancelyn Green who had heard about our new holdings while pursuing his research at the more well established Arthur Conan Doyle collection at the Toronto Public Library and now intended to visit us. I smugly replied to Austin, in effect, "no, no you have the name wrong, surely you must be referring to Roger Lancelyn Green, the well known British Holmsonian and expert on Victorian literature."

When Richard arrived in due course (to use one of his favorite phrases), and I was confronted with a much younger man than the one I had been expecting, I began to grasp the nature of my error. And after some displays of ignorance on my part, all diplomatically dismissed by Richard, I also began to realize that here was a scholar of Conan Doyle whose knowledge of the subject differed not merely in

degree from that of anyone else I had ever encountered but indeed in kind.

The passing years have done nothing to modify that initial impression. I have never met anyone before or since who had such an innate and profound understanding of the ways books came to be published and distributed in both his native Great Britain and in North America as well. He displayed similar knowledge in connection with magazine and newspaper publications. Richard had an intuitive grasp of what was important, detecting patterns and relationships that could not be discerned by less gifted individuals. A certain knowledge of books indeed.

Richard was only able to stay for a few hours during that initial visit and, overcoming my embarrassment at my blunders, I got him to agree to remain in touch. Thus began our correspondence and friendship, the latter ripening over the next few years as Richard stayed with me several times in the early 1980s during his cross-country pilgrimages, though never more than for a day or two. He was still maintaining a fairly low profile at this time and I



Richard Lancelyn Green  
Photo by Gary Thaden

would occasionally get letters from well known Sherlockians wondering what he was up to and suggesting (rather naively, I thought) that his efforts were unlikely to amount to much if he did not consult this or that collector. I learned that he would fly to New York and then buy an all-you-can-ride bus ticket in order to visit important North American Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes collections both public and private. At this time he was working on some of the final details of the Conan Doyle bibliography he was compiling together with his collaborator John Michael Gibson. Often these trips would involve lengthy layovers in order to make connections in locales justifiably obscure to most Americans.

Certainly most of the times I saw Richard

*(Continued on page 7)*



**"I have never met  
anyone before or  
since who had such  
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**“We would often stay up very late talking about various bibliographical and collecting matters, and on occasion he would shed a layer or two of his famous reticence.”**

## A CERTAIN KNOWLEDGE OF BOOKS (CONTINUED)

in these days he was the worse for wear: by the time he reached the Twin Cities he probably had already traveled thousands of miles, catching what sleep he could on the bus. Even so, we would often stay up very late talking about various bibliographical and collecting matters, and on occasion he would shed a layer or two of his famous reticence in such a situation. I was amazed by his stamina even when fortified by an endless intake of coffee (something else he was famous for)—after even a day or two with him I was exhausted. I later learned that Richard was an accomplished world traveler so that the comparative privations of a journey by Greyhound were of no particular moment to him. That said, neither he nor I was a morning person, and we would tend to communicate with each other after waking with just enough monosyllables to lay out our plans for the rest of the day.

I had met Richard too late in the game to have had much of an impact on his bibliography. One thing I was proud of, however, was tracking down the letters Conan Doyle sent to Joseph Marshall Stoddart, editor of *Lippincott's Monthly Magazine* during the writing of *The Sign of the Four* (portions of the letters had been published in the past). Following a suggestion by Peter Blau, I was put in touch with the then owner of the manuscript for the story by the dealers who had bought it for him at auction. The letters were bound in with the manuscript, and we were provided with transcriptions that Richard duly reproduced in the bibliography (while noting, to me at least, that there were some problems with the transcriptions making one doubt they were completely accurate—I later lost track of his efforts to see and perhaps get copies of the letters for himself).

Owing in large part to my employment to work with the Hench collection at the University (and with the support of my superiors) I was able to render Richard some other small services over the years which were all too generously acknowledged in his bibliography and subsequent publications. Through such kind acknowledgments and by visiting Minnesota during his research Richard helped put our collec-

tions on the map. I am afraid I would always write to Richard far too often and at inordinate length. His replies, less frequent, were much more succinct and I was amply repaid in kind for any help I was able to give him.

Beyond the specific information we exchanged I found it thrilling to get behind-the-scenes information about Richard's research and what publications were in the offing. He told me in April 1980, for example, that his bibliography would not be issued at the end of that year by Dawson's of Pall Mall as originally envisioned since Dawson's was closing their publishing division. Instead, it would now be published by the far more prestigious Oxford University Press as part of their respected Soho Bibliographies series. The year *A Bibliography of A. Conan Doyle* finally was published, 1983, was the same year as my marriage and I have sometimes wondered which event had a more momentous effect on my life. Perhaps all I can say is that the bibliography has since been reissued in a new, revised edition while I am still on my original marriage.

As the 1980s progressed it became increasingly apparent that I would have to start spending more time on making a living and less on non-remunerative (if fascinating) bibliographical problems. My interest in Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes began to wane as well. I was thus in contact with Richard less and less until we reached the fantastic situation where he was actually writing me more often than I him by virtue of his annual Christmas cards. I saw him several more times when he participated in Minnesota conferences in the 1990s, by which time he was of course an international celebrity in the field, with all Europe and North American ringing with his name, the most respected Conan Doyle scholar of his or indeed any time. Whereas I then was able to enjoy his surprising late emergence as a gifted public speaker (only once, alas) I would also have to compete for his attention with many other supplicants for his limited time during the brief periods he could be with us. I then sometimes selfishly longed for the good old days when he was virtually unknown, when I liked to believe I was among the

## A CERTAIN KNOWLEDGE OF BOOKS (CONTINUED)



**“The Memorial Service in Bebington in every way served, at those who arranged it intended, as a celebration of Richard’s life and accomplishments.”**



Mourners at Poulton Hall  
Photo by Andrew Malec

very few who appreciated his true merit as a scholar (a conceit I was later to discover was unjustified by reality), when we were both (again, according to my skewed viewpoint at the time) just two young fellows attempting to make our way in an unsympathetic world. As brief as these later meetings were, Richard had that special facility for comfortable friendship that made it possible for us to pick up where we had last left off.

My connection with Richard resumed in the late 1990s when he at last got an e-mail account. Still, I would only write when something major was happening and like so many was in touch with him near the end of his life about the forthcoming auction of the Arthur Conan Doyle papers at Christie’s. I cannot bring myself to speculate about what happened during his last, perhaps tortured days on earth. Nor can I find words sufficient to express how deplorable the press coverage was of that terrible event with the puerile myth of “the Conan Doyle curse” receiving unwarranted currency in both the tabloids and supposedly more respectable papers.

I can dwell more happily, however, on the Memorial Service that was held for Richard at Saint Andrew’s

Church (Church of England) in Bebington, on the Wirral Peninsula, Merseyside, very close to the Lancelyn Green ancestral home Poulton Hall on May 22, 2004. I was able to attend in large part due to the generous hospitality of my friends R. Dixon and Paulina Smith of Cambridge and that of Michael Halewood in nearby Preston, with whose family Dixon and I stayed the night before the service.

The ceremony in every way served, at those who arranged it intended, as a celebration of Richard’s life and accomplishments. The weather that day, by a Minnesotan’s standards at least, was glorious. Attendance at the service was estimated at some 150 people, a figure presumably excluding the many people who actually took part in the ceremony since the supply of 200 copies of the program was exhausted before everyone had filed in. Members of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London had arranged for a coach to come up from that city so

*(Continued on page 9)*

## A CERTAIN KNOWLEDGE OF BOOKS (CONTINUED)



The most touching speech was "Requiescat in Pace" by the actor Douglas Wilmer, who said he loved Richard as the son he never had and remarked that it never occurred to him that he would have to perform such a service for him rather than the other way around.



this aspect of Richard's life was particularly well represented among the congregation. I met for the first time after the service such well known British Conan Doyle and Holmes enthusiasts as Owen Dudley Edwards, Nick Utechin, Peter Horrocks and John Michael Gibson. There were traditional hymns, prayers (including a reading from the Gospel according to Saint John, Chapter 14 by Richard's Godmother, the actress Joyce Redman) and music, all rendered most impressively by the musicians (trumpeters, a pianist and an organist) and the choir (the Wirral Singers) under the overall direction of the Reverend Stephen James, Rector of Saint Andrew's. However, there were also musical selections and readings representing some of Richard's varied interests, the former ranging from the music hall to opera and the latter including John Milton and Lewis Carroll. Conan Doyle was not forgotten: in addition to the apt Holmesian quotations on the back of the program there was a rousing rendition of "The Song of the Bow" (with music by Florence Aylward) sung by Gordon Pullin. *(Could the composer be a descendant of Samkin Aylward, the bowman who relished hearing "The Song of the Bow" in ACD's novel The White Company? Julie McKuras wrote about this striking coincidence in the March 1998 Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections newsletter. – Ed.)*

Side view of Poulton Hall  
Photo by Andrew Malec

The heart of the service was a series of tributes to Richard by several people who had figured prominently in his life or represented things that were important to him. Perhaps the most touching speech was Douglas Wilmer's "Requiescat in Pace" (Richard was very good friends with the elderly Wilmer and his wife and had sometimes vacationed with them). Wilmer said he loved Richard as the son he never had and remarked that it never occurred to him that he would have to perform such a service for him, thinking it was far more likely to be the other way around.

Peter Horrocks, representing the Sherlock Holmes Society of London, delivered an impressive summary of Richard's scholarly accomplishments and particularly of his importance to the activities and publications of that society. John Nichols, Her Majesty's Ambassador to Hungary, shared memories of student days with Richard and several warm, amusing anecdotes involving some of his most fondly remembered eccentricities (Richard had also been best man at Nichols's wedding and was the Godfather to one of his children). Richard was famous for leading a highly compartmentalized life but it was apparent from Nichols's recollections that his personality was essentially the same no matter which compartment he was in at any given moment.

*(Continued on page 10)*



**“How fitting that Portsmouth, the city in which Sherlock Holmes was born, shall now become perhaps the premier center for the study of his creator.”**

## A CERTAIN KNOWLEDGE OF BOOKS (CONTINUED)

After the service there was a Champagne Reception and Luncheon at Poulton Hall. That in turn was followed by a program conducted by the Sherlock Holmes Society of London with further tributes to Richard and readings from his writings: unfortunately, my party was unable to stay for this program. I did have a chance to meet Richard’s mother, June Lancelyn Green, as well as his brother, Scirard Lancelyn Green, and (much more briefly) his sister, Priscilla West. June Lancelyn Green’s spirits in particular seemed to be elevated that day by how well the service had gone, the size of the turnout and the knowledge that many had come from considerable distances to express their regard for her son (I was quick to tell her that though I would not have come to England just then if not for the service that thanks to my hosts my journey had been in very easy stages—for others it was considerably more difficult, including a man who told me he had just flown in from Los Angeles). I was able to convey to all three of them the condolences and admiration of Richard’s many friends in Minnesota, and I am sure they found that to be consoling.

Richard was so reticent about his family that it occurred to me I might never have met them if not for these unhappy circumstances. I am most pleased that I did for I found meeting with them even briefly to be very comforting. Probably the most emotional moment that day, and indeed the only really sad one was when I was talking to Scirard, who at 54 was near Richard in age and looked very much like him — at one point he inclined his head in such a way that I was reminded of one of Richard’s own characteristic mannerisms and it was as if my vanished friend was suddenly standing once more before me.

Richard’s death is a great disaster for the world of Conan Doyle studies. Now many important works may simply not ever get written and many things that will be published will be less valuable for the lack of his assistance — or at least subsequent correction. Even so the blow to scholarship is secondary to the personal loss those of us feel who were fortunate to be his

friend (in my case a friendship lasting nearly 25 years and just over half my life). It seems all too likely that Richard would have been unable to appreciate he will be missed more for himself than his work. It is nevertheless true.

## POSTSCRIPT

Now word has come that at least part of Richard’s remarkable legacy will be preserved for perpetuity. As a final act of generosity Richard has willed his incomparable collection of Conan Doyle books and memorabilia, including a great deal of material on Sherlock Holmes, to the Portsmouth Library Service. After the collection is catalogued (a process said to be already underway) the collection will be housed in the Central Library. The bequest of some 20,000 items valued at 2 million pounds has been widely reported in the press and Conan Doyle scholars everywhere will eagerly await for news of when the collection will become available for research and exhibition. How fitting that the city in which Sherlock Holmes was born shall now become perhaps the premier center for the study of his creator. ❖

**Andrew Malec**



## SHERLOCKIAN EVENTS

### SHERLOCK HOLMES: MURDER AT THE ABBEY GRANGE A REVIEW OF A FRINGE FESTIVAL PERFORMANCE

Despite the organizer's title, the performance closely followed Dr. Watson's version of the murder of Sir Eustace Brackenstall. Playing to a full house on opening night, Hardcover Theater used dialogue from "The Adventure of the Abbey Grange" to give a fine performance of a Sherlock Holmes story.

Adopted by Mark Steven Jenson and directed by Natalie Diem, this one-hour play uses the well known symbols of Sherlock Holmes that come from the Abbey Grange story: "Come Watson, come! The game is afoot."; beeswax in only one of the three wine glasses; the wronged woman; Sherlock Holmes outwitting the police; and Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson playing judge and jury to the killer.

(The story line: Sir Eustace is found murdered by Inspector Hopkins, who calls in Sherlock Holmes. Although the crime at first seems pedestrian, Holmes follows the leads, tells Hopkins to drag the bottom of the pond (in winter), interviews the killer and solves the crime.)

Steve Lewis as Doctor Watson gives an enthusiastic performance. He is sometimes confused by Mr. Holmes's quick leaps of logic, but he shows none of the befuddlement of Nigel Bruce. Joe Leary, as Inspector Hopkins, plays

the enthusiastic student to Mr. Holmes's superior ability. Alayne Hopkins gives a great performance. Coy, suffering, and yet a strong will all come through as elements of Mary Brackenstall. Theresa (Jan Joseph) is the backbone of her mistress and a co-conspirator in the crime. Steve Kath as the love interest Captain Jack Croker, started out slow but put on a fine performance by the end. But no Sherlock Holmes play survives without Mr. Holmes. At first, Tim McGivern seems too old to play an Abbey Grange Sherlock Holmes (in 1897, Holmes

would have been 43), but no matter, an extremely accurate rendition of the story propels us forward and Mr. McGivern directs the investigation with authority and logic. Although there were attempts at Australian accents, none of the British accents came through. The enthusiastic audience took no notice and gave the cast a well deserved round of applause, both before and after the actors gave away a copy of Barnes and Noble's edition of "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" (which does not contain the Abbey Grange story).

This wonderful adaptation played at the Theatre Garage in Minneapolis five times in eight days in August as part of the annual Fringe Festival (<http://www.fringefestival.org/>, photo and cast information still

available as of this writing). We were fortunate enough to have the program mention the Norwegian Explorers and the University of Minnesota's Sherlock Holmes Collections (both online and the special exhibit). ❖

Gary Thaden



The play uses the well known symbols of Sherlock Holmes that come from the Abbey Grange story: "Come Watson, come! The game is afoot." and Holmes and Watson playing judge and jury to the killer.



Tim McGivern as Holmes and Steve Lewis as Watson in *Sherlock Holmes: Murder at the Abbey Grange*

# SHERLOCK HOLMES STUDY GROUP

## THE PRIORY SCHOOL

An extraordinary large group assembled at the Southdale Library in Edina on February 21st, 2004, to discuss the story "The Adventure of the Priory School." This month's group included many new faces curious about The Norwegian Explorers. An article in the *Sun Newspapers*, written by John Klun, had mentioned the time and place of our gathering. President Julie McKuras welcomed the visitors, and Karen Murdock chaired the discussion that followed.

Much scholarly research and writing has been inspired by "The Priory School." Researchers have found that there is no Holderness Hall and no Duke of Holderness. There is, however, a Peak district, a Mackleton, and a town of Chesterfield. They are in the north of England, though this be the north of Englishmen's minds (in the midlands, north-central England), rather than the geographical north.

There may have been speculation as to who the real Duke of Holderness was, but the important thing is that the title of "Duke" applied to the highest level of the English aristocracy. Two-hundred-fifty thousand acres is quite a large land-holding, so the reward of five-thousand pounds mentioned by Dr. Thorneycroft Huxtable was surely to be made good, should Holmes find the Duke of Holderness's abducted son. Such a reward would have gotten the attention of Holmes, as he often performed his services for free and was not a rich man. This reward turned into six thousand pounds at the first meeting with the Duke and eventually to twelve thousand pounds as the Duke sought to bribe Mr. Holmes. This leads to the important question of this story: Could our hero, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, the world's leading consulting detective, be bribed?

Many of our attendees believed that because Holmes accepted the reward from the Duke, and made no visit to the police to inform them of the truth, that he did in fact accept a bribe. On the contrary, I feel that while Holmes may have accepted the money, he didn't allow that to keep him from turning in Reuben

Hayes, the murderer of the German master Heidegger. Holmes declares, "As to Hayes, I say nothing. The gallows awaits him, and I would do nothing to save him from it." However, Mr. James Wilder was surely guilty of kidnapping, and the Duke was guilty of involvement in a cover-up. Holmes did accept money, but he has demonstrated previously when he collected no fee that he was only interested in justice, not legal prosecution. Justice was certainly done to James Wilder, banishing him with no inheritance, and to the Duke, teaching him a lesson and requiring him to reunite the child with his mother. Certainly, the twelve thousand pounds can be regarded as a "fine" imposed on the Duke by Sherlock Holmes. And what of Watson's six thousand pounds? Well, even if Holmes pocketed the entire sum, we do know that he did buy Watson's practice for a princely amount.

Other issues came up in the discussion: Can you deduce the direction of travel of a bicycle by viewing its tracks? Yes, but maybe Watson simplified the explanation. Could a horse gallop with "cow shoes" on? Maybe. Why would Wilder not kidnap the boy while he was living at home? Too obviously an inside job? How could Hayes be persuaded to keep quiet about the involvement of Wilder? Possibly by promising him a life term rather than hanging. Our legal experts felt that the Duke, by passing out pounds, might have been able to get Hayes acquitted. I think that Holmes would have prevented that.

It was proposed that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle may have been trying to tarnish the image of Sherlock Holmes by insinuating, as it were, that Holmes had accepted a bribe. That might be true, considering that earlier he had tried to do away with Holmes for good at Reichenbach Falls. ❖

Charles Clifford



**"The important question of this story: Could our hero, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, the world's leading consulting detective, be bribed?"**

## SHERLOCK HOLMES STUDY GROUP (CONTINUED)

### CHARLES AUGUSTUS MILVERTON

An eternity in prison: an unthinkable fate, yet Dr. Watson and Sherlock Holmes were willing to face it to preserve a lady's honor. In "The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton," our heroes were faced with a decision of whether to obey the law of man or to honor a "higher law." They chose the latter. In this adventure, we can't help but admire the passion and resolve of Dr. Watson when he insists on accompanying Holmes in burgling the home of "The worst man in London." While there they witness an extraordinary event that may or may not have been considered a murder.

A Victorian blackmailer, Charles Augustus Milverton, was free to operate under British law; he was always smart enough to stay clear of the British justice system. He probably had not ever "murdered," yet a certain lady felt that he was responsible for her husband's death. She imposed her own justice on him, almost within Holmes and Watson's collective grasp. Yet our heroes allowed her to escape and refused to turn her in to the authorities. We all must struggle with the story's implications: will there be a time in our lives when we are faced with such a decision? How will we act?

The Sherlock Holmes Study Group met at the home of Phil and Karen Bergem on April 24<sup>th</sup>, 2004. After showing us the new custom-built bookshelves that hold his impressive Sherlockian and Doylean collection, Phil led the discussion.

As a group, we felt that Holmes and Watson had acted correctly. Given the character of Charles Augustus Milverton, the issue was fairly one-sided, yet we would certainly feel dif-

ferently if Holmes and Watson had been arrested and their reputations destroyed. The discussion soon moved to other aspects of the case. It was felt that Holmes, posing as Escott, the plumber, might have improperly used the affections of Agatha, Milverton's housemaid. Certainly this is true, but Agatha had another suitor, so she no doubt would have suffered very little. Yet, to think that she was engaged to Sherlock Holmes!

The Milverton "death," for lack of a more precise word, was one of four in the Canon that our group could recall happening

"right before our eyes." Demises of villains in "The Speckled Band," "The Dancing Men," and *The Sign of Four* were similar. It would seem that most Canonical stories involve an investigation of a crime that occurred before Watson's narration started. We found it exciting, even shocking, as the mysterious lady "emptied barrel after barrel into Milverton's body," then "looked at him intently and ground her heel into his upturned face." We

felt that Milverton's last line, "You've done me" lacked poetic flair, but the scene was otherwise quite well written. Perhaps Edward G. Robinson's line, "I ain't so tough" was better, but this scene did work. The story was different from many others in the Canon, but enjoyable and enlightening.

Holmes's words, "You know, Watson, I don't mind confessing that I would have made a highly efficient criminal" held another important clue to his personality. What if he had joined forces with Professor Moriarty? The future of society, as well as of literature would certainly have suffered. ❖

Charles Clifford



"We can't help but admire the passion and resolve of Dr. Watson when he insists on accompanying Holmes in burgling the home of "The worst man in London."

## SHERLOCK HOLMES STUDY GROUP (CONTINUED)

### THE SIX NAPOLEONS

A smaller group assembled in the basement of the Merriam Park Library on Saturday, May 15, 2004. “The Adventure of The Six Napoleons” was the topic of discussion. This story is remembered easily, although it is not often listed among Sherlockian favorites. Karen Murdock, leader of the discussion, presented an article written by Nicholas Utechin. This article listed “The Six Napoleons” as the “51<sup>st</sup> most likely” Canonical story to be researched and written about. We wondered why it ranked so low, but we could not really explain this. Perhaps because we don’t learn anything “new” about the Sherlock Holmes character here, or possibly because not many blatant errors were committed by Dr. Watson in recounting the adventure. (*The relative neglect of “The Six Napoleons” was nicely redressed by the recent volume in The Baker Street Irregulars Manuscript Series, The Napoleon Bust Business Again, ably edited by Bill Hyder. – Ed.*)

Of curiosity was the mention by Holmes of “the dreadful business of the Abernetty family” which “was first brought to my notice by the depth which the parsley had sunk into the butter upon a hot day.” This was controversial enough in our minds that Karen Murdock was compelled to place two sticks of butter, on a plate, in front of us, with parsley and a key upon them. This “experiment” was monitored throughout the proceedings. The day being quite cool, neither the key nor the parsley made much of an impression on the butter.

“The Six Napoleons” story involved the smashing of Napoleonic busts, which Inspector Lestrade and Dr. Watson conjectured could have been the work of a “monomaniac.” Our discussion descended into a discussion of monomania. Apparently, monomania is a bad thing in some cases, but in most perfectly acceptable. For example, Sherlock Holmes is fairly monomaniacal about the science of detection, but that is a good thing. One thing we did agree on is that monomania is somebody else’s problem. (As it turns out, monomania had nothing to do with the crimes involved in the story.)

Some of us had problems understanding the washing of the top step at the scene of the murder. It was mentioned that Arthur Conan Doyle loved “secret societies,” and that this was the only mention of the Mafia in the Canon. It was mentioned that parsley and the Mafia are connected in that restaurants serve parsley because they fear that if they don’t serve the Mafia’s product, their establishments might be bombed. We found that “lumber rooms” are just English storerooms. Why did Holmes require a signature for the sale of the bust? By the looks in the eyes of our lawyers, Holmes was a smart businessman as well as a master detective.

Possibly due to something lacking in this story, our discussion took a right turn into a discussion of the Falklands War, returning only shortly before our allotted time was up and we reluctantly went our separate ways. ❖

Charles Clifford



“Why did Holmes require a signature for the sale of the bust? By the looks in the eyes of our lawyers, Holmes was a smart businessman as well as a master detective.”

## FOR THE INTREPID BAKER STREET IRREGULAR



**“The Baker Street Irregulars did not take Neville Chamberlain into their confidence, because he was pursuing appeasement.”**

Would you be interested in a book that has 43 well distributed page references in its index to “Baker Street Irregulars” but no entry for Holmes, Watson, Doyle – or Morley? I was surprised to find the references in William Stevenson’s *A Man Called Intrepid*. I was reading the book, which is about espionage in the Second World War, to find information on the spying activities in Bermuda. The book is a great read, and the references to Irregulars were a bonus.

In reading other books about British Intelligence in the Second World War, I found that *A Man Called Intrepid* sometimes contains stories that are a good read but not necessarily true. In the other books, however, I did discover one invested Irregular who did participate in the activities. But, in general, the Irregulars in *Intrepid* are not those who receive invitations during birthday dinners in New York. Rather, they were members “of the various intelligence groups, consisting now of mostly of gifted amateurs, who were known in general as ‘The Baker Street Irregulars,’ after the amateurs who aided Sherlock Holmes. Like the methods of the great detective, their approach was unorthodox.”

*A Man Called Intrepid* is mainly about the period just before the Second World War and the early years of the war when William Donovan in the US and Sir William Stevenson (no relation to the author) in the UK developed their countries’ respective secret services. It provides quite a bit of detail about the efforts of the US, especially those of President Franklin Roosevelt, to counter the Nazi threat even before the nation was at war. Secrecy was required to protect the agents and the efforts both from the Nazis and from the agents’ governments.

In particular, the Baker Street Irregulars did not take Neville Chamberlain into their confidence, because he was pursuing appeasement. They did, however, provide information to President Roosevelt. Roosevelt saw England as the US’s first line of defense against the Nazi threat. One of the Irregulars, Collin Cubbins, escaped from Poland, made an effort in Nor-

way to mount a resistance against Germany, and by April of 1940 was in London trying to prevent England from capitulating.

Cubbins became one of the leaders of the Irregulars and was willing to train others in the methods of guerilla warfare. As a veteran of the resistance in Poland, he had seen the result of half-hearted measures. Like Holmes and Watson, however, the Irregulars did have standards. They were loyal to the king and obedient to the crown. Their oath stated that they would “do those things which assisted in the execution of His Majesty’s Government policy but which could not be acknowledged.” Apparently, the Irregulars were not anticipating any emerald tiepins.

This organization of Irregulars was rather irregular in the beginning. It was organized eventually into the Baker Street Club, or BSC. Later, the BSC became British Security Coordination when it had to register with the US State Department once the US entered the war. Like the later Sherlockian Irregulars, the BSC was in New York and served as the point through which all Allied secrets passed. The New York location, however, was never officially acknowledged. In good Sherlockian fashion, Stevenson arrived in New York posing as a passport control officer.

In SIGN, Holmes noted of the irregulars that “They can go everywhere, see everything, overhear everyone. *Intrepid* tells “too good to be true” stories of Noel Coward, Greta Garbo, and Leslie Howard as secret agents whose notoriety sheltered them. Other sources, particularly H. Montgomery Hyde’s *Room 3603* and *Secret Intelligent Agent* state that these celebrities were not spies, and Stevenson himself says that Leslie Howard never worked for him.

At least one person identified as an Irregular was not true to “King and Country.” Kim Philby was a Soviet spy who held a key desk job in British intelligence. He recognized that the strengthening of the ties between British and US intelligence agencies was a threat to his masters in Moscow. Therefore, he took steps such as misplacing orders or having messages overlooked to sabotage the partnership. Philby was

*(Continued on page 16)*

## FOR THE INTREPID BAKER STREET IRREGULAR (CONTINUED)

the only example of such activity that Stevenson noted.

The authentic Irregular Rex Stout helped British Intelligence write the booklet "Sequel to the Apocalypse: The Uncensored Story: How your Dimes and Quarters Helped Pay for Hitler's War." According to H. Montgomery Hyde, the purpose of the booklet was to expose the extent of the I. G. Farben empire in America. I.G. Farben had links to several U. S. companies. In fact, Standard Oil of New Jersey, whose relationship with I. G. Farben was highlighted in the booklet, was willing to pay \$50,000 to know who was behind the publication and purchased many of the \$0.25 booklets to keep them from being read.

The author of *A Man Called Intrepid* noted that Sir William Stevenson was willing to reveal the secrets given in the book to show what can be done by the citizens of many nations when their freedoms have been challenged. Holmes often worked with Americans and in NOBL stated to the American Francis Hay Moulton "I am one of those who believe that the folly of a monarch and the blundering of a minister in far-gone years will not prevent our children from being some day citizens of the same world-wide country under a flag which shall be a quartering of the Union Jack with the Stars and Stripes."

The story told in *A Man Called Intrepid* is of the allies, including Holmes's England and Moulton's US united in a cause. Winston Churchill, upon being made an honorary citizen of the US, wrote these lines to President Kennedy: "Our comradeship and our brotherhood in war were unexampled. We stood together and because of that the free world now stands."

Holmes would have been pleased with the efforts of these Baker Street Irregulars. ❖

*Mike acknowledges the help of Jon Lellenberg in pointing out additional sources that cast doubt on certain claims in Stevenson's book. – Ed.*

**Michael Eckman**

## THE HOUND FROM HELL A VINTAGE RADIO RECREATION

The Friends of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection of the Toronto Public Library are pleased to announce the release of an audio CD featuring a dramatic reading of the Edith Meiser radio play, *THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES*.

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