

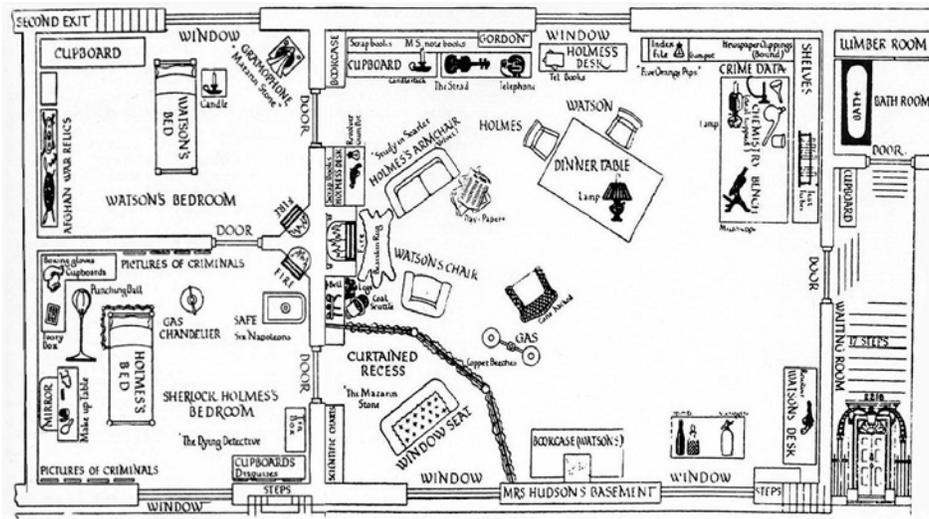
The Socio-Economic Status of Clients Who Visit 221B

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Synopsis

Meeting of the Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem September 16, 2017

As part of a series of Sherlock 101 presentations, this abridgement of the PowerPoint given at our meeting briefly presents the socio-economic status of the clients that visited 221B Baker Street. There were others with whom Holmes had as clients from various social-economic classes, but they did not initially consult with him at this residence. We are privy to the visitors who come to tell their stories aided by the visual image of where these discussions are taking place. We have a notion of what is meant when clients are asked to sit in a particular chair, or when a reference is made to the tobacco in the slipper, or the chemical table in the corner, or when observations are made from the bow window about a passerby. The sketch provides a referent to these descriptions when reading a story and provides a context for thinking about clients who went to 221B.



Source: Ernest H. Short's floor plan of 221B Room, circa 1948, and published in the *Strand* magazine in 1950. Retrieved from Chris Redmond's. <http://www.sherlockian.net>. October 12, 2011.

For example, when Mr. James M. Dodd visits 221B (BLAN), Sherlock Holmes writes, "It is my habit to sit with my back to the window and to place my visitors in the opposite chair, where the light falls full upon them." Holmes tells us that this vantage point permits him a better opportunity for observation.

Client Story Essentials

- Holmes is forewarned of their arrival – usually by telegram, calling card, or letter.

- Their appearance is scrutinized. This is a prerequisite to the story, but not necessarily pertinent.
- Client elaborates on problem. Each problem is of the utmost importance – if it wasn't then the story would not be in the reported collection of the canon.
- Socioeconomic status is lower middle, middle, upper middle, and aristocratic.
- Time is essential in most cases.
- Reflection is the most intriguing trait of SH (uncertainty, backward reasoning, signs and codes).
- Resolution includes Value Claims. (Instrumental, Intrinsic, Comparative, Decision, and Ideal).

Sherlock Holmes's Client Social Status

Charles Booth, published *Life and Labour of the People in London* which was a study of the poor and lower classes of London. In later volumes, he described the industrial and social conditions and the lives of the lower classes. Marc Mappen referred to the classification system devised by Booth and adapted it to apply to Holmes's cliental.¹ Mappen reported that ninety per cent of the clients of Sherlock Holmes, came from the upper 18 per cent of the population of London. His analysis is summarized below.

Poor = 31% of London Population	0% of SH Clients
Working Class = 51% of London Population	10% of SH Clients
Middle Class and above = 18% of London Population.	90% of SH Clients

Holmes did not represent the poor class consisting of 31% of the London population. However, he used disguises that were of a labor class. For example, in CHAS he is a plumber; in SCAN, a groom. The following is a listing of clients that went to 221B assigned to an socio-economic status.

Aristocrats

Lord Wilhelm Gottsreich Sigismund von Ormstein (Count Von Dramm) was Grand Duke of Cassel-Feistein and hereditary King of Bohemia in 1888 (SCAN).

Lord Robert St. Simon (NOBL).

Sir James Damery Emmissary on behalf of Violet de Merrivale's father, General Merrivale.

Lord Bellinger (Prime Minister), (SECO).

Prime Minister and Home Secretary (MAZA).

Prime Minister with Foraging Secretary (LAST).

¹ The reader is referred to Marc Mappen. "The Clients: How Illustrious Were They." *Baker Street Journal*, vol. 26, no. 3, (September 1976), pp. 141-146.

Trelawney Hope (SECO) Secretary for Foreign Affairs and son-in-law of the Duke of Belminster.

Neil Gibson, the Gold King (THOR). He was considered to be upper class because of his wealth.

Upper Middle Class

Helen Stoner (SPEC) Heir to an estate.

John Openshaw (FIVE) Heir to two estates.

Grant Munro (YELL) Merchant.

James Mortimer (HOUN) Country physician.

Alexander Holder (BERY) Banker to royalty.

Robert Ferguson (SUSS) Tea broker.

Hilton Cubitt (DANC) Had property and servants.

Dr. James Morimer (HOUN) a medical physician, highly regarded by his peers, left hospital to the country; some may consider him to be middle class; brought Sir Henry Baskerville, heir to Baskerville Hall to visit Holmes.

Mrs Neville St. Claire (TWIS) Lived in a large house and on grounds being as worthy afforded by a successful businessman, even though her husband was a professional beggar.

Scott Eccles (WIST) Described wearing gold-rimmed glasses, spats, air of respectability.

Thornycroft Huxtable (PIOR) Founder and principal of the Priory School.

Middle Class

Dr. Percy Trevelyan (RESI) Required financial backing of an investor before he could set up practice.

Mr. James M. Dodd (BLAN) Young stockbroker.

John Hector MacFarlane (NORW) Young solicitor.

Trevor Bennett (CREE) Professional assistant to a University scientist.

Victor Hatherly (ENGR) Professional engineer. Slow start (£27.10), but had an inheritance from his father.

Jabez Wilson (REHD) Pawnbroker. Like Josiah Amberley (RETI) fortunes on way down.

Mary Morstan (SIGN) Governess who had money to retain SH.

Violet Hunter (COPP) Governess.

Violet Smith (SOLI) Music teacher.

Miss Mary Southerland (CASE) provided SH with fullest accounting than any other client (e.g., price paid for father's plumbing business; that she received 4.5 per cent interest on an inheritance from her Uncle Ned; and, she received two pence per sheet for typing, often doing 20 sheets per day.

Labor Class

Hal Pycroft (STOC) Clerk. Watson thought Pycroft was a "smart young man of the class who have been labeled Cockney."

John Mason (SHOS) Head trainer at stables Shoscombe Old Place when he retained SH.

Mrs. Merrilow (YEIL) Landlady of boarding house.

Mrs. Warren (REDC) Landlady. She mentions that SH has arranged an affair for one of her previous lodgers. Mr. Fairdale Hobbs, the year before.

James Winter (3GAR) when in Chicago, alias John Garrideb, Counsellor at Law, Moorville, Kansas, USA when in London, who also has aliases of Morecroft and Killer Evans.

Clients Referred by Scotland Yard

Josiah Amberley (RETI) – sent by the Yard.

Alexander Holder (BERY) – sent by an Inspector.

Cyril Overton (MISS) – sent by Inspector Stanley Hopkins.

A brief discussion for each of the client visitors were discussed; with reasons for including individuals into stratified classifications, albeit arbitrary.

Members were asked to reflect on those clients that visited Sherlock Holmes at 221B and make comments regarding their choices with regard to the following questions.

Your Observations

- Who are the clients that impress you and why?
- What are the distinguishing characteristics or features that draw your attention?
- How would you classify the order of important cases that these clients bring to SH? (interesting, immediate, convoluted, thought-provoking)
- Are there other clients that came to 221B that are omitted?
- Are there any clients listed that you would reclassify according to their socio-economic status?