



Plugs & Dottles

Official Newsletter of the Nashville Scholars
of the Three Pipe Problem

1st Quarter Jan-Feb-Mar 2018

Jim Hawkins & Dean Richardson, Co-Editors

- Established 1979
- Meetings on third Saturday of every month (except Dec)
- Website: nashvillescholars.net
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Extraordinary Teacher

A 16-year teaching veteran, Shannon Carlisle is the accelerated learning teacher at a Franklin elementary school serving kindergarten-4th grade students. She considers herself the Chief Sherlockian of the school and has adorned the hallway to her classroom with Baker Street signs and decorated her classroom door to resemble the front door of the great detective.



"The Daintiest Thing under a Bonnet," Evelyn Herzog, founder of ASH and one of the first women invested in the BSI.

Nashville Scholar Honored in New York City!

On January 12, 2018, Shannon Carlisle continued to impress other Sherlockians far and wide by receiving her BSI Investiture from Michael Whelan as "Beacons of the Future!" (NAVA), taking her place as the first woman from Tennessee, and the third Nashville Scholar to gain membership in the venerable Baker Street Irregulars. Her canonical name (nom) relates to her award-winning teaching background and her development of the Junior Sherlockian Society earlier in 2017. Dr. Marino Alvarez and Bill Mason became BSI members in 2015.



"I didn't become a Sherlock Holmes enthusiast until 2011. That fall, I was given a new charge... to become the accelerated learning teacher at my school. My classrooms have had themes, and my room was currently 'the garden'. I was the 'kid gardener' charged with nurturing 'the seeds', my students. However, with my new position, I needed a new classroom theme... one that would inspire and embrace my new students. It was then that I decided my classroom would be 221b.

I felt that my learners could relate to many of Sherlock Holmes' character traits. Additionally, after analyzing his observational skills and deductive reasoning, it was my hope that my students would call upon those same powerful skills during their own studies daily."



(Photo of Evelyn Herzog (left column) courtesy of The Baker Street Irregulars Trust, www.bsitrust.org.)

Beacons of the 2018 BSI Weekend

Shannon Carlisle, ASH, BSI

Beacon (noun)- a person or thing that illuminates or inspires



From January 10 to 14, 2018, Sherlock Holmes devotees descended upon Manhattan to celebrate the 164th birthday of Sherlock Holmes. The long weekend included social gatherings and formal presentations attended by Sherlockians from around the world (Denmark, Australia, Great Britain, Spain, Japan, and more). This BSI Weekend was uniquely remarkable and memorable because of its beacons.

The Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes (ASH) are beacons of fellowship. "I was adopted into a troupe of clever, curious, and exuberant women who weren't afraid of being bright," recalled M.E. Rich (Couchon) as she shared her initial thoughts of the group for the article "Dubious and Questionable Memories: A History of the Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes" (*Baker Street Journal*, Christmas Annual, 2004). My weekend was bookended by ASH hosted events--ASH Wednesday, at Annie Moore's, and Sunday Brunch, at The Long Room. While attending these events, I quickly learned that M.E.'s initial impression of the ASHes continues to ring true today. Today's troupe of women and men are enthusiastic about Holmes and overflowing with camaraderie.

Dore Nash and Jim Cox are beacons of Christopher Morley's history in NYC. On Thursday, Dore and Jim led the 17th annual Christopher Morley Walk, which highlighted locations of the BSI founder's work and social life in Manhattan. The walk ended at McSorley's Old Ale House, which proved to be another opportunity for fellowship with Sherlockians who had traveled to the Big Apple. While touring St. Paul's Chapel and the Woolworth building, Dore recounted her September 11, 2001, experience. Although we deviated from the tour's focus, her tale was poignant. It highlighted the bravery and courage of our first responders and the many citizens in the area that day.

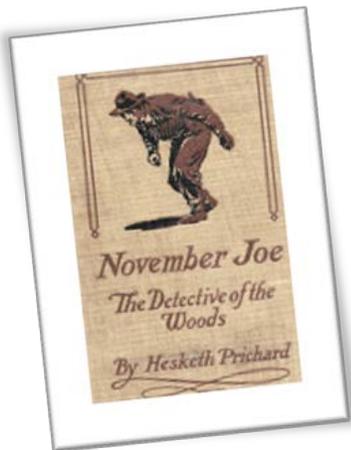
The BSI are beacons of Holmesian scholarship. Friday's BSI Dinner attendees learned about Holmes's wartime efforts. Ross Davies explained how petite Sherlock Holmes books made their way to the soldiers and sailors in boxes and tins. Whitman's was one such company that helped send greetings and goods to the troops. Whitman's Soldiers' and Sailors' assortment was advertised to be the "most effective 'ammunition' for carrying brightness and pleasure." Maria Fleischhack highlighted German villains in the Canon who proved to be nemeses to both Holmes and Britain. In addition, Will Walsh wondered whether Mycroft and Conan Doyle knew each other and shared and acted upon the fear of a secret attack on Britain during the Great War. As a part of his presentation, he shared his father's watercolors of the ships mentioned in the Canon.

(continued page 3)

The Beacon Society is a beacon of the great detective for students of all ages. On Saturday, during the society's general meeting, multiple programs were highlighted. To increase familiarity with the Canon, Sherlockians are encouraged to complete the Fortescue Scholarship Honours Program.

After completing the three-part open-book assessment, participants earn their Doctorate in Sherlockiana, the Sh.D. degree. An overview of the Junior Sherlockian Society was also presented. We celebrated the fact that after a year of creating and collecting content and building the site, juniorsherlockian.com launched on the 221st day of this past year (August 9, 2017). Those in attendance were encouraged to participate in the promotion of the program by sharing JSS wooden nickels, bookmarks, and posters with children and youth eager to learn more about Holmes's character traits, observational skills, capacity for critical thought, and inductive and deductive reasoning. Also, Bill Mason and Marino Alvarez were recognized for their years of service.

As always, I am grateful for the beacons I encounter on all my Sherlockian adventures. The beacons of the 2018 BSI Weekend both *illuminated* the great detective and his enthusiasts, and *inspired* me to continue to keep his memory green.



November Joe: A Backwoods Sherlock
A Review by Dean Richardson

November Joe: A Detective of the Woods is a collection of short stories by Hesketh Prichard (1876-1922) published in 1913. Only one ("The Mystery of Francis Buckman") had appeared previously in a magazine, as best I can determine. Prichard was a prolific writer of short stories, both solo and in collaboration with his mother Kate (like current author "Charles Todd," actually Charles and Caroline Todd). Together they wrote a series about Don Q, a gentleman thief like Raffles (and the basis of the Douglas Fairbanks swashbuckler film *Don Q, Son of Zorro*), and under the pseudonyms H. Heron and E. Heron a series about Flaxman Low, a psychic detective.

November Joe is a woodsman in the wilds of Quebec. He is young and uneducated but a master at tracking, woodcraft, and observation. His skills are occasionally requested by the Canadian police in finding criminals or examining crime scenes. He is a cross between Sherlock Holmes and Natty Bumppo (protagonist in *The Deerhunter* and *The Last of the Mohicans*).

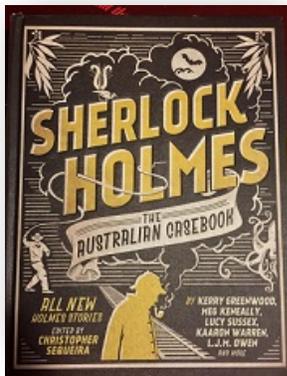
Here's an example from "The Hundred Thousand Dollar Robbery." His Watson, Mr. Quaritch, a businessman in Quebec who employs Joe as guide for hunting trips, asks November how he knows whose tracks a particular set are when he's never seen the man. November replies, "When first we happened upon them about four hours back, while you was lightin' your pipe, . . . they come out of the bush, and when we reached near Cartier's place they went back into the bush again. Then a mile out of Cartier's out of the bush they come on to the road again. What can that circumventin' mean? Feller who made the tracks don't want to be seen. Number 8 boots, city-made, nails in 'em, rubber heels. Come on."

(continued on page 4)

The stories are full of such deductions, narrated by Quaritch in the engaging late Victorian/Edwardian style of which Conan Doyle was a master (with November's crude vernacular in sharp contrast). The subjects range from robbery to blackmail to murder, the characters are interesting, and the settings are vivid and refreshingly different from the usual city streets and genteel country estates.

The book appears to be a novel, but actually the first two chapters are essentially two introductions, one for Quaritch, the second for November. The remaining chapters are separate, loosely connected short stories (well, the last, longer story spans five "chapters"). At least three have been anthologized ("The Hundred Thousand Dollar Robbery" in the 2015 *Rivals of Sherlock Holmes*, edited by Stefan Dziemanowicz, "The Crime at Big Tree Portage" in *The Dead Witness: A Connoisseur's Collection of Victorian Detective Stories* [2011], edited by Michael Sims, and "The Murder at the Duck Club" in *Cosmopolitan Crimes: Foreign Rivals of Sherlock Holmes* [1971] edited by Hugh Greene). Until the advent of e-publishing the book had not been reprinted since the 1910s. Now you can find e-books and Create-Space paperback versions on Amazon, but you can also find original copies there and on ABE Books for as little as \$20. That's what my Grosset & Dunlap reprint cost, and it includes an illustrated cloth cover and three interior illustrations.

For a change of pace from Baker Street, why not trek to Canada and engage November Joe?



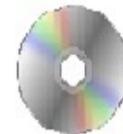
We were surprised and happy to receive a special package from a special friend of ours (and all Sherlockians!) just before Christmas. It was from the Sydney Passengers' incomparable artist, Phil Cornell. Although we've never met in person, we have been "email pals" for years, and he is always so kind to send the Nashville Scholars a Christmas greeting and a New Year's greeting. This time it was a newly published book, *Sherlock Holmes - The Australian Casebook*, edited by Chris Sequeira with a host of contributors and an introduction by Bill Barnes (BSI), Captain of the Sydney Passengers. Many thanks to Phil, Bill, Chris and all the writers of this exciting new "casebook".

The editors have made a decision to move Dean Richardson's excellent column, *Shinwell Before Using*, to the website where it may be edited more frequently than this newsletter format. Please access his column here:
www.nashvillescholars.net/documents/sherlockiana.html



Shinwell Before Using

by Dean Richardson



Diligently seeking out Books - Film - Comics - DVD's and CD's that deepen our knowledge of Sherlock Holmes and his times.



Bill Mason reports on the BSI Weekend (Jan 18 - 21)

The Baker Street Irregulars weekend was marked by excellent weather, at least for January in New York. And there was plenty to do as always: the ASH Wednesday dinner at Annie Moore's, the Gillette Luncheon, the Baker Street Babes' Charity Ball, the Christopher Morley Walk, the Distinguished Speaker Lecture, breakfast at the Red Flame, shopping at the Mysterious Bookshop and the vendor's room, either the BSI Dinner or Gaslight Gala, the so-called Cocktail Reception on Saturday that is really another huge meal with an auction and an entertaining program, partying at O'Lunney's Pub at Times Square, and more. Now, I didn't do all of these things, but there is never any shortage of Sherlockian events with great Sherlockian company. I encourage every person reading this to go and experience the weekend for yourself.

In the midst of this, we found time for an important meeting of the Beacon Society, a group that is dedicated to teaching young people about Sherlock Holmes in a classroom, library or other educational setting.

In 2017, I finished my third and final year as Head-Light (President) of the Beacons and turned the position over to Denny Dobry, who is already doing an excellent job. I do believe the past three years was a very successful period for the organization. More grants were approved than ever before, the amount of individual awards was raised from \$300 to \$500, our partnership with 221B Con was cemented, a record number of applicants were considered for the Beacon Award, the website was updated, a new and effective communications strategy was implemented, and the Beacon Society is now in its best financial situation in its history. In addition to all of that, I am particularly proud of the establishment of the Junior Sherlockian program, which I consider one of the signature accomplishments of my tenure.

Of course, I am well aware that nothing can be done in the Beacon Society—an all-volunteer organization with a membership spanning the North American continent—without the kind of really outstanding individuals who make sure that our committees and programs are working well. Every member of the Board was outstanding, and I am especially grateful to and proud of the two committee chairs from the Nashville Scholars, Marino Alvarez and Shannon Carlisle. Marino guided the Awards Committee for the past six years and he did it with the kind of thoroughness and professionalism that we have come to take for granted with him. Shannon took on the Junior Sherlockians at the beginning of the program, and her work has earned well-deserved attention and praise throughout the Sherlockian universe.

Which leads me to the highlight of the Baker Street Irregulars weekend. Just over three years ago, there were no living BSI members in Tennessee. In 2015, both Marino Alvarez and I were awarded our shillings, and a year later Tim Greer of Memphis was invested. This year, we were more than delighted when Shannon Carlisle became the fourth living Tennessean—and the first ever female Sherlockian from Tennessee—to become a member of the BSI. Her canonical name is fitting: "Beacons of the Future!"—complete with an exclamation mark. There is no doubt that her outstanding work as an educator who incorporates Sherlock Holmes in her class was a major factor in that accomplishment. Of course, her personal charm and grace, her sparkling personality, her genuine friendliness with every Sherlockian she meets, and her commitment to the past and future of the Sherlock Holmes phenomenon cemented her place in the BSI.

Marino and I were honored to be in the room when Shannon joined our ranks in the Baker Street Irregulars, and I am sure all of you share our pride in her. So I ask you to join me now in saluting Shannon Carlisle, "Beacons of the Future!"

---Bill Mason, 1/20/2018



(Holmes) "Then how many (steps) are there?"

(Watson) "How many? I don't know."

"Quite so! You have not observed. And yet you have seen. That is just my point. Now, I know that there are seventeen steps, **because I have both seen and observed. (SCAN)**

A Note on the BSI Weekend from Dr. Marino Alvarez



The events of the BSI Weekend began with the BSI Distinguished Speaker Lecture given by Martin Edwards, who chairs England's Crime Writers' Association (CWA). He focused on a comparison of British and

American crime literary writers. On Friday, Bill, Shannon, Joe Eckrich, and I first had breakfast at The Flame, then traveled to Otto's Mysterious Bookshop and on to the Strand Bookshop. We were able to find several books of importance.

At the Reception before the BSI Dinner I met Miguel Ojeda from Barcelona, Spain. We had been in contact before this event, and we agreed to see each other again when Vicki and I visit Barcelona. The Dinner was significant in that Shannon was invested as "Beacons of the

Future!" This follows her being invested into ASH in November. These are well-deserved recognitions of her accomplishments. Very proud of Shannon.

At the Beacon Society Meeting on Saturday, Hanna Al-Kowski, a sixteen-year-old high school junior, was present to accept her Honorable Mention Certificate. Her project resulted in a short film she wrote and produced titled, *A Study In Sherlock*, to be used by 7th grade English teachers. The video is on YouTube where English teachers can easily access it: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B2irlvY9nQs>

After six years as Award's Chairperson, I was pleasantly surprised by Denny Dobry with a plaque commemorating this tenure. Bill Mason also received his plaque for his three-year service as Head Light. Shannon discussed the operations of the Junior Sherlockians, and her slide presentation highlighted the purpose for involving students in this scion. She mentioned that Jim Hawkins completed the stages and received his Junior Sherlockian Certificate. Needless to say, we are very proud of Jim. Over the four days in NYC, I had an opportunity to meet old friends and establish new ones. Bill and I had a quiet dinner together on Saturday evening that wrapped up the weekend festivities.

The Nashville Scholars are featured in a video/slideshow recently prepared by Jim Hawkins, our web technician. See it here:



<https://animoto.com/play/dlcmlogbmNk7owlalRvPHQ>