

3-Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles



A Newsletter of The Nashville Scholars of the Three-Pipe Problem January and February 2008

Charter meeting January 1979
Billy Fields, Chief Investigator
Gael Stahl, Chaplain
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<http://www.nashvillescholars.net/nashvillescholars/id4.html>

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Submissions to Plugs and Dottles are encouraged and welcomed. Please send to either editor.

Next Meeting: March 15

Eat at noon; meeting to start around 1p.m.
Location: Charlie Bob's on 1330 Dickerson Pike, phone 262-2244 <http://www.charliebobs.com/>
Story: "The Speckled Band" with Debbie Hussey

2008 Meeting and Reading Schedule

March 15	"The Speckled Band" Debbie Hussey
April 12-13	Chattanooga Southern Sherlockian Gathering
April 19	"The Empty House" Bill Markie
May 17	"The Dancing Men" Tom and Anita Feller
June 21	a Brigadier Gerard story Dean Richardson
July ?	Victorian Picnic Taverns / Inns Talk by Billy Fields
August 16	"The Red Headed League" Mary Margarette Jordan
September 20	"The Musgrave Ritual" David Hayes
October 18	Choice of Bill Mason
November 15	"The Golden Pince-Nez" Marino Alvarez
December ?	To be decided later

The 4th Annual Gathering of Southern Sherlockians will be April 12 & 13 at the Chattanooga Read House. Expect to hear some great talks and enjoy Sherlockian comradeship. You can find complete information at the end of this newsletter.

Editor's Note

I am glad to say *Plugs and Dottles* is back from its editor's ("editor" meaning me) unexpected and unapproved hiatus. The 3PP had a good year. We discussed the Canon's CARD, YELL, GLOR, MUSG, REIG, and CROO. Stories "The Lost Special" and "Terror of Blue John Gap" gave a bit of variety. You will find some of those quizzes in this issue; others will follow later. Dean guided us through the fine points as we watched clips from several different films for our first "Sherlock in Film" meeting. We had a Victorian-style picnic at the Stahls' where Billy impressed us with his talk on "Food from the Canon." April found us meeting in Chattanooga for the 3rd Gathering of Southern Sherlockians, where our *The Misadventure of the Nashville Connection* was well received. Thanks to writers Tom and Anita Feller! In fact, it was so well received that we were talked into presenting another production at this year's Gathering. Watch for *Hee-Haw Holmes* written by Bill Mason and Brad Keefauver.

This January, scholars met at Ellendale's Restaurant to celebrate Holmes' birthday and to celebrate our 29th anniversary! We welcomed Bill Markie to the Nashville Scholars as he was invested as Webley. Details of the January meeting including Billy's Webley monograph and Dean's report on the Gillette to Brett conference are found here. Plus, there are notes from the February meeting where Gael presented the new book, *Life and Letters of Arthur Conan Doyle*. As part of catch up, there are quizzes from last year's meetings on "The Cardboard Box", "The Yellow Face" and "The Musgrave Ritual." This issue has our 2008 meeting and reading schedule where you can see that we are again mixing up Canonical stories with non-Canonical ACD stories. Finally, complete details for April's Southern Sherlockian Conference are found on the final page. Enjoy! -- KB

Notes from January 19th Meeting

Present were: Billy Fields, Gael and Susan Stahl, Bill and Cindy Mason, David Hayes, Al Thomason, Mary Margarett Jordan, Tom and Anita Feller, Debbie Hussey, Marino and Vicki Alvarez, Bill and Jean Markie, Jerome Boynton, Dean and Susan Richardson, Bill Baker, and Kay Blocker.

3PP Scholars met January 19th at Ellendale's Restaurant for a birthday celebration (*Holmes plus our 29th Birthday!*) and to plan the upcoming year. Thanks are due to Tom, who organized our meeting at Ellendale's. Billy began by reading a monograph on the Webley gun and presenting Bill Markie with a schilling for his investiture as Webley (you can find Billy's monograph in this issue). Bill Markie, now to be known as Webley, was welcomed to our scion. Several toasts were given – Gael: Dr. Watson; Bill Markie: Mrs. Hudson; Marino: Moriarty; and David: the Woman.

The toast to Holmes was deferred for the meeting finale. We broke for a fine buffet and then proceeded with business and Show and Tale.

Kay gave an accounting of funds. Dues (\$10 individual; \$20 family) are paid in January and can be given to Kay. There will be an auction at the February meeting; money will be added to the scion account. One area of concern had been the meeting location. While we have enjoyed meeting at the library, a desire was expressed to meet where we could have lunch. Billy with his deep connections found a new meeting place, Charlie Bob's on 1330 Dickerson Pike. Several Scholars met there in December and are willing to go back. It has a variety of food, sandwiches, salads, and great chicken wings.

The 2008 reading schedule is posted at the top. We decided to follow the suggestion that scholars would be quizmaster for the ACD story of their choosing. This turned out to be a great suggestion as our stories and quizmasters are set for the year. It was also decided to have two April meetings, the Chattanooga meeting and a regular meeting on April 19th. This wouldn't punish Scholars unable to go to the Chattanooga conference and would be a bonus for those able to go.

Show and Tale began with Gael passing around material received from the Australian scion, The Sydney Passengers. Gael also highly recommended the book, *Arthur Conan Doyle: A Life in Letters, A New View of Sir Arthur from the Conan Doyle Family Archives*, edited by Jon Lellenberg, Daniel Stashower, and Charles Foley. Gael will lead us in a discussion of this book at the February meeting. This brought up the idea of having a field trip to Sherlock's Books, not necessarily having the meeting there. It was mentioned that the store has moved and is no longer near the train station. Anyone

interested in organizing a field trip? Send out a note or phone call if you are going; who knows might show up.

Dean talked about and showed his *many* new books from the Indianapolis Gillette conference that he and Gael had attended. You can find Dean's report in this issue. He also mentioned that the February issue of *Ellery Queen Mystery Magazine* features Holmes on the cover and in two stories (by Steve Hockensmith and Edward Hoch). Bill Mason pointed out that it does so every year in this issue to coincide with the BSI celebration of Sherlock's birthday. Billy told us about his New York trip; we look forward to his report at a later date.

The Southern Sherlockian Conference will be coming up soon. Bill Mason reported that he and Brad Keefauver have been working on the *Hee Haw* play and there are parts for whoever will be there. If you have a favorite character you would like to play, let Bill know. We will have a reading of the play at the February meeting.

There is a new 3PP Web site thanks to Jim Hawkins. It was not possible to update the previous site at this time, but it should be revived at a later date. Check out the new site if you haven't already done so. You can find it at <http://www.nashvillescholars.net/nashvillescholars/id4.html>. The good suggestion was made that we add a listing of local bookstores and their locations to the 3PP site.

The meeting concluded with a reading of Starrett's *221B* in honor of Holmes' and the Scholars' 29th birthday.

by Scribner Kay

Investiture of William D Markie III **a.k.a. Webley**

Sherlock Holmes used his wits and powers of deduction much more often than a weapon, but when he was forced to take a more deadly approach, he depended upon a reliable weapon, a Webley.

The Webley, a .455 caliber revolver, was used by the British government as standard or limited standard for 60 years. The Mark I was adopted in November 1887, and the last of the standard Webley revolvers, the No. 1 Mark VI, was declared obsolete in 1947.

Holmes himself, we believe, carried a Webley "Metropolitan Police" revolver. This handy arm was a version of the popular RIC (Royal Irish Constabulary) revolver that was first introduced in 1867. The RIC was the basis for a number of different models throughout its long service life, with the M-P variant first making its appearance in 1883 when this 2 1/2-inch-barreled, solid-frame double action was accepted for service by the London Metropolitan Police.

Firearms are noted in 21 different Canonical stories, and a review of the Canon demonstrates more than 100 citations involving guns, pistols, or revolvers.

Due to its size as compared to other revolvers of the day such as the Adams (an Adams Service revolver weighed 42 ounces unloaded), it is quite likely that when in *A Study in Scarlet* Holmes suggested to Watson that he "slip your revolver into your pocket," a Webley was being used.

On an interesting note, George Armstrong Custer, the great boy general, carried Webley's British Bulldogs to the Little Big Horn. As an officer, it was his choice, and his 1872 RIC revolvers served him as well as they could considering he was outnumbered and outgunned. This weapon was easier to handle in battle than most revolvers of the day, and its double action made firing easier. Nevertheless, it was not enough for Custer. Legend has it that after the Little Big Horn, Sitting Bull carried one of Custer's sidearms as a remembrance of the Son of the Morning Star.

As a Sherlockian of merit and great esteem, the Nashville Scholars of the Three-Pipe Problem find it fitting and proper that as a scion society of the Baker Street Irregulars, the world's first society devoted to keeping the memory of the master green, proclaim him as a member in good standing and very irregular.

There now, through the power granted to me through proper election and certification as Acting Chief Investigator of a BSI scion society, I proclaim this investiture.

Henceforth, from this day, William D. Markie III shall be known as Webley.

Presented by Billy Fields

From Gillette to Brett II and Back Again **November 17-18, 2007**

Gael, Susan (his, not mine), and I drove to Indianapolis on Thursday the 16th to stay with the Mooneys, long-time friends of the Stahls, in their beautiful riverside home a few miles from the Hilton Indianapolis North Hotel, where the conference was to be held.

The opening event of the weekend, the only one on Friday, was a mixer held that night in a suite that, judging from the size, must have been a bedroom sans beds. If you entered, you couldn't help meeting people, if only to say, "Excuse me. Pardon me. Could you remove your elbow from my stomach?" Still, everyone was friendly and welcoming, and the guest speakers were accessible—that is, if you could get to them. Gael, of course, knew everyone and introduced me to as many as he could reach. We had an especially interesting conversation with Jeremy Paul (scripter for several classic Brett episodes) and his lovely wife, actress Patricia Garwood (Mrs. Whitney in the Brett "Twisted Lip").

Saturday was a very full day, a mix of film screenings, all from 16mm prints (no VHS or DVD, thank you very much) and speakers. The day began early (8:30 EST) with short films. *The Man Who Disappeared* (1951), an adaptation of "Twisted Lip,"

was the pilot for a British TV series that didn't make it (and if you saw this, you'd understand why). *Do Detectives Think?* (1927) stars Laurel and Hardy, which should answer that question. While the print was poor, the laughs were great, overcoming my mild objection that the only connection to Holmes is Ollie's name (Sherlock Pinkham). *Silver Blaze* (1977) starring Christopher Plummer was supposed to round out the set, but unfortunately the print didn't arrive.

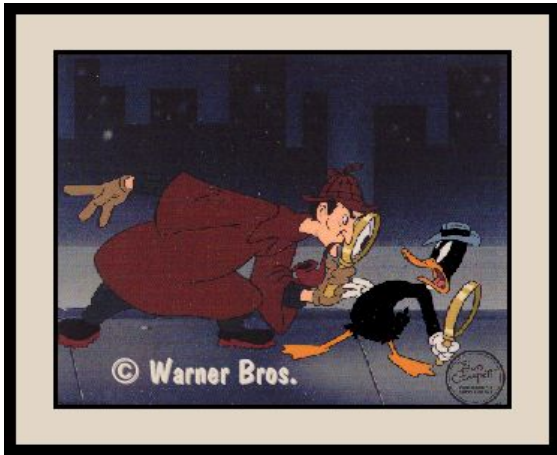
After opening remarks by Steve Doyle and Mark Gagen, whose Wessex Press sponsored the conference, the first speaker, Scott Allen Nollen, gave a brief history of early Sherlock films (from *Sherlock Holmes Baffled* in 1900 through the Arthur Wontner films of the '30s). Much fascinating information was imparted in little more than a half hour, and I made a point of obtaining his book, *Sir Arthur Conan Doyle at the Cinema: A Critical Study of the Film Adaptations* (1996; Macfarland trade paperback, \$35), which covers all the non-Holmes adaptations as well.

Nollen's talk segued into the next showing, *The Devil's Foot* (1921) starring Eille Norwood. Although only 20 minutes long, it does an effective job of capturing the essence of the story, and the scene involving the dead dinner guests is quite eerie. Norwood makes a dominating if somewhat sedate Sherlock, full of the necessary gravitas and not too much of the melodramatic posing that silent film acting often displayed. I would love to see more in the series of 45 shorts (all adaptations) he made between 1921 and 1923.

Katherine White, co-founder of the Northern Musgraves and wife of David Stuart Davies, gave an insightful talk on the evolving portrayal of women in the screen canon (if we can call it that), and during the lunch break *House of Fear* (1945) with

Rathbone and Bruce was shown. After lunch Davies himself (among other things founding editor of the late, lamented *Sherlock Holmes Magazine*) took the podium to give a multimedia presentation on the Holmes/Watson relationship, interspersing commentary with clips from *The Private Life of Sherlock Holmes* and *Murder by Decree* as well as the inevitable Rathbone/Bruce and Brett/Hardwick duos. Despite the occasional glitch, it was a very effective and moving experience. Later I bought from him (and had him autograph, of course) *Sherlock Holmes: The Last Act* (1999; \$15; Calabash Press, P.O. Box 1360, Ashcroft, British Columbia, Canada V0K 1A0), a one-actor play about the Holmes/Watson relationship, with a foreword by Edward Hardwicke and an introduction by Roger Llewellyn, who essayed the role.

Pause for an animated interlude: *Duck Tracy* (194?) stars Daffy in a parody of mystery and crime films. Definitely a Looney Tune. Woo-hoo!



Julie McKuras gave a fascinating talk about Edith Meiser (1898-1993), a stage actress in the 1920s who became a writer for radio (as well as story editor for *The Shadow* radio show) and was instrumental in establishing Sherlock on the air waves. She scripted over 200 episodes, beginning with a short-lived series in 1930 (“The Speckled Band” was the first story, starring William Gillette) and including the Rathbone/Bruce outings of the ’40s. In fact, it was the success of that radio series that convinced 20th Century/Fox to produce another (if you count

the two Universal films as a short series) Sherlock film series featuring the dynamic duo.

This led nicely into the next speaker’s topic. Terrence Faherty championed the Fox series as “undervalued gems” faithful to the spirit if not the letter of the original stories. No argument from me on that score. He argued that Rathbone’s charisma, the warmth and humor of his interaction with Bruce, and the sheer fun of the films left a lasting favorable impression on the public toward the characters and the stories that helped to sustain their popularity even to the present day.

Continuing on the Fox roll, Michael Hoey reminisced with Faherty about his experiences in Hollywood as the son of Rathbone’s Lestrade, Dennis Hoey. As a child, he visited the set during production of several of the series films. He said that while Basil was cordial enough, Nigel was especially warm and grandfatherly toward him. He was fascinated by the filmmaking process and eventually became a writer, editor, producer, and director for film and TV. His credits include scripts for two of Elvis’s movies, *Stay Away, Joe* and *Live a Little, Love a Little*, and an episode of *The Rat Patrol*, and direction of episodes of *Murder, She Wrote*, *Fame*, *Dallas*, and *Falcon Crest*. He proved to be a great raconteur and very accessible to the audience both during and after his session, when he autographed copies of his autobiography. (No, unfortunately I didn’t buy that.)

Jeremy Paul was the last speaker of the afternoon. He too was an excellent teller of tales (as you would expect, given his credentials), recounting his background in theater—excuse me, theatre, radio, and television leading to his first Brett/Sherlock script, “The Naval Treaty,” for *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. The two

Jeremys had been friends since the '60s, and Brett recommended him to the producers of the series. His adaptation of "The Musgrave Ritual" won the Edgar for Best Television Episode, and he was nominated for "The Problem of Thor Bridge." Altogether he wrote 11 of the 41 Granada episodes, and Brett commissioned him to write a play, *The Secret of Sherlock Holmes*, which Brett and Edward Hardwicke performed at the Wyndham Theatre in London's West End during the 1988-1989 season. After his talk, I bought from him and had him autograph three published scripts, *The Musgrave Ritual* (1988/1992; \$11; Ian Hendry Publications, Ltd., 20 Park Drive, Romford, Essex RM1 4LH), *The Red Circle: Shooting Script* (1994/2006; \$11; Gaslight Publications, available from Empire Publishing Service, P.O. Box 1132, Studio City, California 91614-0132), and *The Secret of Sherlock Holmes* (1989/1991, 1996; \$11; Players Press, also via Empire Publishing).

During the break before the banquet (which I did not attend), I wandered around the dealers' tables once more, something I did frequently between presentations. There were about 20 different tables displaying books new, old, and rare, and related Holmes and Doyle items, including issues of *The Strand* and prints, jewelry, figures, and crafts. Oh, and at one point I won the door prize (after the previous two persons whose names were drawn proved to be absent): *The Sherlock Holmes Collector's Edition*, a 5-DVD set of two TV movies starring Christopher Lee and Patrick Macnee, *Incident at Victoria Falls* and *Sherlock Holmes and the Leading Lady* (both 1991) and a documentary on Jack the Ripper.

After the banquet, there was one final event, the showing of a 16mm-print of the television movie *The Return of the World's Greatest Detective* (1976), starring Larry Hagman (post-*Jeannie*, pre-*Dallas*) as a motorcycle cop who, after a concussion, believes he is Sherlock and sets up a practice, with his cute young psychiatrist (Jenny O'Hara), whose last name happens to be Watson, humoring him by assuming that role. It's actually better than that

sounds—or maybe it's just my nostalgia for the '70s, of which this is so much a product (and victim). It also sounds suspiciously similar to the film *They Might Be Giants* (1971), in which George C. Scott is a judge who thinks he's Sherlock and Joanne Woodward is his psychiatrist, whose name is Dr. Watson.

Ms. O'Hara was scheduled to attend the showing, but at the last minute had to cancel because of an acting opportunity. That would have been icing on the cake (or maybe "cupcake" is more apropos), but the movie was still a fitting conclusion to a thoroughly satisfying, even exciting conference. I wish I didn't have to wait four years for the next one. —Dean

Notes from the February 16th Meeting

Present: Gael Stahl, Jerome Boynton, Marino Alvarez, Debbie Hussey, Tom and Anita Feller, Al Thomason, Bill Markie, Bill Baker, Mary Margaret Jordan, Bob and Joyce White, and Dean Richardson

The group gathered at the new location, Charlie Bob's on Dickerson Pike, beginning more or less at noon. Okay, we dragged in over a span of about an hour, with Jerome and Gael first at about 12:15 and the last stragglers around 1:15. Unfamiliarity with that part of town was the most frequent explanation. The program began about 1:30 with show and tale.

Gael passed around one of his latest acquisitions, *You Know My Methods, Watson* by David Hammer (2007; Battered Silicon Press, \$20 tpb). Mary Margaret showed a galley/reviewer's copy of *The Man Who Created Sherlock Holmes* by Andrew Lycott (2007; Free Press), which she received at a Sisters in Crime meeting in January. And of

course Bill Baker distributed his latest batch of free books.

Gael then gave the main presentation of the meeting, a talk about the new *Life and Letters of Arthur Conan Doyle* edited by Lellenberg, Stashower, and Foley. He began by circulating eight earlier biographies of ACD as well as a first American edition of Doyle's *Memories and Adventures* (1928; Little Brown). He mentioned that the majority of the letters are to ACD's mother, written from the time he was eight until her death in 1920. Although he avoided some topics with his mother (including his relationship with Jean Leckie), the letters still cover a wide range of topics and interests. Gael noted that Doyle's interest in spiritualism and séances began rather early, when he rejected Catholicism in his 20s, but he didn't pursue the interest until the deaths of his brother and older son in World War One. Gael noted that although the writing doesn't have the kind of magic found in the Canon, the 600-plus pages of letters make fascinating reading, and he gave the book a high recommendation.

Anita mentioned that the Barnes and Noble Opry Mills reading group would discuss *Hound* on February 26.

Mary Margaret read a humorous poem by ACD on the topic of the early 1920s.

The meeting closed with the traditional reading by Gael of Vincent Starrett's "221B Baker Street."

—Dean



Quizzes from 2007 Meetings

From January, February, & July

Quiz on "The Cardboard Box"

by Jerome Boynton

1. The unpublished case that Inspector Lestrade mentions in this story involves what?
 - a. counterfeit money
 - b. forgery
 - c. bogus laundry
 - d. a stolen diamond
2. The story starts on a "blazing hot day in August." On what day of the week did it start?
 - a. Monday
 - b. Wednesday
 - c. Friday
 - d. Thursday
3. In Watson's description of Susan Cushing, what feature was not described?
 - a. large, gentle eyes
 - b. grizzled hair
 - c. a beaming smile
 - d. placid faced
4. In which London paper did Mr. Holmes read of the package sent to Miss Cushing?
 - a. *The Globe*
 - b. *The Pall Mall Gazette*
 - c. *The Standard*
 - d. *The Daily Chronicle*
5. The box of ears had been sent from Belfast, Ireland. How long did it take the Royal Mail to reach Miss Cushing?
 - a. one day
 - b. two days
 - c. three days
 - d. a week
6. Mary Browner and Alec Fairbairn were killed with what weapon?
 - a. big, sharp knife
 - b. revolver

- c. big, heavy stick
d. boat paddle
7. How far did Susan Cushing live from her sister Sarah?
a. five miles
b. two miles
c. one mile
d. three miles
8. James Browner was a steward on what ship?
a. *S.S. Conqueror*
b. *S.S. Nelson*
c. *S.S. May Day*
d. *S.S. Britannic*
9. Two of Dr. Watson's chronicled cases were mentioned in this story. What were they?
a. _____
b. _____
10. Only one of the following items was found in James Browner's sea chest. Which one was it?
a. a heavy revolver
b. a heavy stick
c. a big, sharp knife
d. a bottle of poison
11. In this story Sherlock Holmes describes Inspector Lestrade as . . .
a. an astute fellow
b. an imbecile
c. dull-witted
d. a tenacious bull-dog
12. How old was Susan Cushing, the oldest sister?
a. 60 years old
b. 50 years old
c. early 30s
d. 40 years old
13. In what form of tobacco did Mr. Holmes indulge in this story?
a. his pipe
b. cigars
c. cigarettes
d. snuff
14. How much did Mr. Holmes pay for his Stradivarius?
a. Sixty-five shillings
b. ten pounds
c. fifty-five shillings
d. twenty pounds
15. True or False
James Browner confessed to the two murders but later recanted.
16. True or False
Mr. Holmes was convinced James Browner was guilty of murder from the scene of the crime.

Answers:

- c. bogus laundry*
- c. Friday*
- c. a beaming smile*
- d. The Daily Chronicle*
- a. one day*
- c. big heavy stick*
- c. one mile*
- c. S.S. May Day*
- A Study in Scarlet and The Sign of the Four*
- c. big, sharp knife*
- d. a tenacious bull-dog*
- b. 50 years old*
- b. cigars*
- c. fifty-five shillings*
- False*
- False*

A Quiz on "The Yellow Face"
by Kay Blocker

- In what season does this story occur?
- How did Holmes know Munro's name?

3. How does Holmes explain his descriptions of Grant as . . .
- Muscular
 - Good teeth
 - Left handed
 - Careless in his habits
 - Well to do

Watson says "The Yellow Face" and the affair of "The Second Stain" (and some say "The Musgrave Ritual") were cases where Holmes erred in his reasoning. How can we explain this?

Why was the race of Effie's child such an issue?

4. Holmes says three objects have the most individuality for giving information. The smoking pipe is one. What are the other two?

Answers:

5. Match these up:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------|
| a. The 2nd husband | Effie |
| b. The wife | Atlanta |
| c. The child | Lucy |
| d. The 1st husband | Norbury |
| e. Where Effie and John lived | John |
| f. Where Effie and Grant lived | Jack |

1. Spring ("faint shoots of green were breaking on the elms")
2. Munro's name was written on lining of his hat
3. Muscular – bit through pipe amber; Good teeth – bit through pipe amber; Left handed – burnt right side of pipe; Careless in his habits – forgot his pipe; Well to do – smokes expensive brand of tobacco
4. Watches and bootlaces
5. 2nd husband – Jack; the wife – Effie; the child – Lucy
the 1st husband – John; where Effie and John lived – Atlanta; where Effie and Jack lived – Norbury
6. Occasionally used cocaine
7. Yellow fever and yellow face
8. Munro is left handed because the pipe is burnt on the right side. Watson is right handed.
9. Effie is being blackmailed by her first husband.
10. It is a mask to disguise that Lucy is black.
11. He picked her up and kissed her.
12. Norbury
13. "Wide awake" is a broad-brimmed felt hat so called because it doesn't have a nap and doesn't want one; 7% is Holmes's strength of cocaine in The Sign of the Four.

6. What was Holmes's only vice, according to Watson?

7. Name two times where the word *yellow* figures prominently in this story.

8. Is Grant Munro right or left handed? How does Holmes know? Is Watson right or left handed?

9. What is Holmes's theory of Munro's dilemma?

10. What is the secret of the yellow face?

11. What was Munro's response upon learning about Effie's child?

12. What word does Holmes tell Watson to say if Holmes ever gets overconfident?

13. Extra credits:
What is a "wide awake"?

Effie's return on her money is seven percent.
Where else have we seen seven percent?

A Quiz on "The Musgrave Ritual" by Bill Mason

1. Watson described Sherlock Holmes's "untidy" habits -- six of the most famous of Holmes's eccentricities. Name three of them.

- Holmes pulls papers and documents from a "large tin box" concerning the Musgrave Ritual and five other unrecorded cases. Name two of them.
- Two other canonical, published cases of Sherlock Holmes are mentioned. Name them.
- Where did Holmes lodge when he was first in London?
- How many cases did Sherlock Holmes handle professionally before Reginald Musgrave brought him this case?
- In addition to managing the family estates at Hurlstone, what official responsibility did Reginald Musgrave have?
- Why did Reginald Musgrave have trouble sleeping?
- Where did he leave his book?
- What sort of old weapon did Musgrave take from the wall?
- Holmes mentioned Rachel Howells's ancestry twice. What was that ancestry, and why did Holmes think it was significant?
- How was the manor house of the Musgraves shaped?
- What date was chiseled over the entrance of the oldest portion of the manor? Why is that date significant in American history?
- Two specific types of trees are mentioned in the ritual, but another is mentioned as growing on the grounds of Hurlstone. What was it?
- What was being stored in the cellar above the secret chamber where Brunton's body was found?
- Who was summoned to help move the flagstone?
- What was the purpose of the Musgrave ritual?
- Which of the Basil Rathbone movies was an adaptation, if a loose one, of "The Musgrave Ritual"?

Answers:

- Keeps cigars in coal-scuttle; keeps tobacco in the toe end of Persian slipper; unanswered correspondence was transfixed by jackknife in center of wooden mantelpiece; pistol practice was to sit in armchair and adorn V.R. in*

the opposite wall; kept chemicals and criminal relics all over the chambers; would not destroy any of his case papers plus he would not organize or file them leaving the papers out to accumulate everywhere

- Tarleton murders; case of Vamberry, the wine merchant; adventure of the old Russian woman; the singular affair of the aluminum crutch; account of Ricoletti of the clubfoot and his abominable wife*
- "The Gloria Scott"; A Study in Scarlet*
- Montague Street just round the corner from the British Museum*
- Two cases*
- Member of the district that he lived in*
- Drank strong coffee after dinner*
- Billiard-room*
- Battle-axe*
- Welsh; her blood was fiery and passionate*
- In the shape of a L*
- 1607; founding date of Jamestown*
- Elm and oak are mentioned in the Ritual; the third tree is beech*
- Wood*
- County policy constable*
- To tell what was hidden (the Crown of Charles the First) and where it was hidden*
- Sherlock Holmes Faces Death (1943)*

Discussion Questions

- Where else is a tin box of unrecorded cases mentioned in the Canon? How are the boxes related?
- If Brunton had been employed by the Musgraves for 20 years and was highly intelligent, why would he need to examine the Musgrave Ritual in the middle of the night in Musgrave's library? Wouldn't he have made a copy or memorized it long before?
- Reginald Musgrave himself thought the ritual was of little significance. In light of this, was his decision to dismiss Brunton after 20 years of faithful service justified,

or was it an overreaction? Was there some other reason for Musgrave's decision?

4. If both Brunton and Sherlock Holmes were able to decipher the meaning of the Musgrave ritual in such a short period of time, what does that tell us about the Musgrave family over the course of more than two centuries?
5. If the manor house had been searched as thoroughly as Musgrave claimed — “we ransacked every room and cellar without discovering the least sign of the missing man” — how was it that Brunton's muffler, tied to an iron ring that was attached to a flagstone, next to a barrel with a lantern on it, was missed?
6. Is it credible to think that the elm tree would not have grown between the time of Charles I and the time of Reginald Musgrave, or for that matter, between the time of Charles I and Charles II? Why would Sir Ralph Musgrave devise a coded set of directions dependent upon the height, rather than the location, of a tree?
7. What month would be “the sixth from the first”? Would the omission of 11 days from the calendar in 1752 — an internationally adopted change that placed the calendar on its current, very exact system — make a difference in solving the puzzle?
8. Rachel Howells is described as suffering from “brain fever”? What does that mean? What effect did the death of Brunton have upon her, and how is that effect related to her brain fever?
9. Holmes imagined “the drumming of hands against the slab of stone” as Rachel Howells fled from the scene, yet Brunton's body showed “no wound or bruise upon his person.” What would a 40-year-old man in good health and of at least average strength do when he found himself suddenly trapped in a small chamber

“about seven feet deep and four feet square”? Why were there no wounds or bruises on Brunton's body? How did he actually die?

10. What “crime” was Rachel Howells guilty of committing? How did a woman who was suffering from “brain fever” and irrational, if not mentally ill, manage not only to escape from Hurlstone, but from England altogether?
11. Why would the British government allow the Musgrave family to retain the crown? Would it not belong to the royal family and/or to the British nation?
12. Janet Tregellis is the forgotten woman of this tale. If Brunton threw over Rachel Howells in favor of Janet Tregellis, the daughter of the head gamekeeper, why did she not figure in the story in any way? Why would Brunton turn to Rachel as an accomplice in lifting the flagstone rather than to Janet?



Next Meeting!

***Your presence is hereby required
at Charlie Bob's Restaurant***

Date: March 15th

Eat at Noon

Meeting to start around 1pm

Discussion topic:

“The Speckled Band”

Quizmaster Debbie Hussey

See you there.



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