



Sherlock Holmes

C O L L E C T I O N S



Contents

*A Black
Sherlock Holmes*
1

100 Years Ago
2

50 Years Ago
3

Acquisitions
4

Musings
5

From the President
7

*An Update from
the Collections*
8

Remembrances
8

"Your merits should be publicly recognized" (STUD)

A Black Sherlock Holmes

The silent images flicker across the screen, showing all too well the damage from the chemical decomposition of the original nitrate film stock. Despite the damage, "The Black Sherlock Holmes" is a welcome new addition to the Sherlock Holmes Collections.



Photo from Henry T. Sampson's *Blacks in Black and White*

Sam Robinson as Knick Carter

Items make their way to the Sherlock Holmes Collections by many routes. "A Black Sherlock Holmes" arrived via a reference in Issue 47 of *Sherlock* magazine where it was noted that the 2002 Crime Scene at London's National Film Theatre would focus on Sherlock Holmes. Among the silent movies to be shown was "the very rare *A Black Sherlock Holmes*." Why would this film be considered very rare? The majority of silent films are gone, either through decomposition or purposeful destruction as it was believed no one would be interested in silents with the advent of "talkies." Thinking that the film was no longer extant, I contacted Catherine Cooke, B.S.I., to see if she had any thoughts as to how

to determine the availability of the film. She referred me to the British Film Institute, who in turn referred me to the Library of Congress; over the Atlantic Ocean and back again. The Library of Congress advised that they could make a copy of the original film, and after Curator Tim Johnson approved the purchase, the film was finally received at the Andersen Library.

To put this film in the proper context, we should consider that the era of the silent films was a time of segregated movie audiences. "In the age of Jim Crow...blacks, or whites in blackface, began to appear in movies as they did in minstrel shows, in vaudeville and in potboilers...black images on the screen increasingly mirrored the...racist images in society at large." (Woll, 39) The first film with an all African-American cast was noted as early as 1905, but white movie makers utilized black racial stereotypes for simple vaudevillian entertainment for white audiences, often

Continued on page 6

100

YEARS AGO

Frederic Dannay and Manfred Lee, cousins who wrote together under the pseudonym Ellery Queen, wrote in the introductory notes to *The Misadventures of Sherlock Holmes*, that “the name Sherlock Holmes is peculiarly susceptible to the twistings and misshapenings of burlesque-minded authors.”

One early writer who was able to twist and misshape the name Sherlock Holmes was William L. Riordan who published two parodies in the October 1903 Sunday magazine supplements of *The New York Times*. John Bennett Shaw had copies of these two short articles in his massive collection. (*Editor’s Note: Please see Musings for more information about how these articles found their way to Mr. Shaw.*) The first to be published was “The Adventure of Padlock Jones: The Stolen Diamonds” which ran on October 11 and the second, “The Adventure of Padlock Jones: A Bedlamite” on October 25. They were reprinted in the June, 1976 and September, 1976 issues of the *Baker Street Miscellanea*.

Riordan (1861-1909) was more familiar with Tammany Hall of New York than with Baker Street of London. He was a newspaper journalist and “like so many newspapermen of the day, was fascinated by New York City’s endless variety of characters.” (Mann, viii) One character who particularly fascinated Riordan was George Washington Plunkitt. Riordan wrote in his own preface to *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall*, that Plunkitt was “Tammany leader of the Fifteenth Assembly District,

Sachem of the Tammany Society and Chairman of the Elections Committee of Tammany Hall, who has held the offices of State Senator, Assemblyman, Police Magistrate, County Supervisor and Alderman, and who boasts of his record in filling four public offices in one year and drawing salaries from three of them at the same time.” (Riordan, xxiii) Plunkitt referred to a boot-black’s stand in the old New York County Courthouse as his office and it was there that he gave talks on politics. Riordan published the text of these discussions in the *New York Sun*, the *New York Evening Post*, the *Boston Transcript*, and the *New York World*, and saw them reprinted in papers throughout the United States. He collected them into book form in 1905 and described the volume as “the mental operations of perhaps the most thoroughly practical politician of the day.” (Riordan, xxiii) Among the numerous chapters were those titled “Honest Graft and Dishonest Graft,” “Tammany Leaders not Bookworms” and “Reciprocity in Patronage.”

Utilizing his knowledge of New York politics, Riordan wrote “The Adventure of Padlock Jones: A Bedlamite.” This short parody featured Padlock Jones and Dr. Jotson in their quarters on Candlestickmaker Street in New York. A Brooklynite seeks Jones’s help after his son, “feeble-minded from boyhood,” escapes from a sanitarium near Central Park. The cocaine-using Jones considers the case, then proceeds to a political rally later that night. Accompanied by Jotson and the unhappy father, Jones finds the boy amidst the crowd gathered to hear about “beet sugar and reciprocity.” The next morning, when questioned about how he guessed the boy would be at the rally, Jones responds with “Guess! Guess! Why will everybody, even you, Jotson, talk about my taking guesses?...I never guess; I deduce.”

In deducing where a young man would go to seek entertainment, Jones stated “... it occurred to me that if there was one place in New York to which a feeble-minded person would go on a blood-chilling night like this it was to an open-air meeting.”

His other parody, “The Stolen Diamonds” begins with “Padlock Jones picked up the shoes which our early morning visitor had inadvertently left behind him.” Stressing that he never guesses, he deduces that the owner of the shoes was absent-minded among other things, and that Jotson sees, but does not observe. “Why, my deductions are simplicity itself!” When the owner returns to gather his shoes he tells the duo he has been robbed of \$3000 worth of diamonds from his jewelry store. The thief, Jones deduces, is a young woman employee led astray by a scamp and has taken the diamonds to finance her wedding to him. The young woman was to be found at a clothing sale at Beagle’s; “Is not the deduction plain? Would your young woman or any other young woman with money miss that sale even if she risked state prison by going to the store?” The thief confesses and is let go for the sake of her family.

Riordan might be best remembered for his documentation of George Washington Plunkitt but Sherlockians still enjoy his clever parodies. He is, after all, as Arthur Mann noted in his introduction to the 1968 edition to Riordan’s book, “Plunkitt’s Boswell.” ♡

Julie McKuras

References:

Mann, Arthur. Introduction. *Plunkitt of Tammany Hall*. By William L. Riordan. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1963 edition.

50

YEARS AGO

THE GUILTY VICARAGE

by W. H. Auden

Throughout his career, the Anglo-American poet W.H. Auden (1907-1973) produced a steady stream of journalism, writing on subjects as various as opera, Henry James, Kierkegaard, cold weather, Mozart, the moon landing, ballet and, not least, the detective story. “The Guilty Vicarage” an analysis of the classic English whodunit — first appeared in 1948 in *Harper’s* magazine and was later reprinted in Auden’s 1962 collection *The Dyer’s Hand*. [Editor’s note: John Bennett Shaw’s collection included the 1953 *Modern Essays*, edited by Russel Nye. On the cover page is Shaw’s typed note “Much Holmesian reference in THE GUILTY VICARAGE pp. 400-412.”] It is one of his best-known essays, and one that any aficionado of the mystery should read.

Auden’s mind was categorical, and he liked nothing better than to create grids, diagrams and definitions. Though he confesses that for him “the reading of detective stories is an addiction,” he analyzes their appeal in the spirit of an Aristotle systematizing Greek tragedy or an Aquinas dissecting some subtle theological question. The result is a series of reflections presented like an outline. These are, as the original magazine article had it, “notes” on the nature of the whodunit.

For Auden the most satisfying detective stories follow a set of rules as rigorous as the classical unities. One needs a “closed society” — a village, a university, a snowbound countryhouse — so that the murderer isn’t any random psycho just passing by. What’s more, that

society must be at first perceived as good, innocent, in a state of grace. The murder discloses that someone in that Edenic world has fallen out of grace, so that his or her identification by the detective is necessary to allow the restoration of innocence to the Great Good Place. By this definition, Auden excludes much hard-boiled private eye fiction. The work of Raymond Chandler, he maintains, offers a study of the criminal milieu and the Philip Marlowe novels — which Auden judges powerful but “depressing” — ought to be judged not as escape fantasies but as works of art. This is, probably, the weakest section of Auden’s essay: I doubt that anyone regards *The Big Sleep* or *Farewell, My Lovely* as naturalistic studies.

As Auden proceeds, he grows both increasingly theological and Freudian in his statements, even viewing the murderer as a Satanic rebel. Here, though, Auden makes a brilliant point: An essential task for the writer of the mystery is to disguise the “demonic pride” of the killer both from the other characters and from the reader.

As an act of “disruption,” the murder leads to a tension between individuals and the law. Each of the various suspects, he concludes, should be guilty of something, even if not actual murder. The “principal causes of guilt” are the wish to kill, secrets such as “illicit amours,” intellectual hubris (a feeling of superiority to the actual investigator that leads to suspicious interference), a kind of innocence that results in a refusal to aid the inquiry, and “a lack of faith in another loved suspect,” which causes the well-intentioned friend to hide or confuse clues.

After describing the job of the detective as the restoration of “the state of grace in which the aesthetic and the ethical are as one,” Auden points to three exemplary figures: Arthur Conan Doyle’s Sherlock Holmes, Inspector French (created by Freeman Wills Croft), and G.K. Chesterton’s Father

Brown. In Holmes “scientific curiosity is raised to the status of a heroic passion.” Holmes’s reason for being a consulting detective is “a love for neutral truth” coupled with a need to escape his “feelings of melancholy.” Inspector French, whose adventures are not much read these days “detects for the sake of the innocent members of society,” works from a devotion to duty, and relies on other innocent people doing their own duties as postmen, clerks, and milkmen to break down seemingly airtight time tables and alibis. Father Brown’s prime motivation is compassion, and he investigates murders in order to save the souls of the sinners. “He solves his cases, not by approaching them objectively like a scientist or a policeman, but by subjectively imagining himself to be the murderer.”

In his last set of reflections Auden takes up the reader of mysteries, and the appeal of this form of “daydream literature.” He provocatively asserts, albeit without a lot of evidence, that “The identification of fantasy is always an attempt to avoid one’s own suffering: the identification of art is a sharing in the suffering of another.” So detective stories allow us to assuage our human sense of guilt and sin by proffering “the illusion of being disassociated from the murderer.” Auden ends by reemphasizing that the detective story addict indulges in “the fantasy of being restored to the Garden of Eden, to a state of innocence, where he may know love as love and not as the law. The driving force behind this daydream is the feeling of guilt.”

As powerful as Auden’s argument is, some readers — including this one — have long felt uneasy about his essay. First of all, Auden’s definitions work best, if at all, only for the “pure” classic tale. He skips over what he would probably dismiss as the mystery’s ornamental elements — elements that other fans would deem central: for instance, humor, style, atmosphere, the human interaction between the detective and his Watson. He also undervalues the

Continued on page 7

Acquisitions

The Sherlock Holmes Collections now has two copies of *The Norwegian Explorers Christmas Annual 2002*. Editor John Bergquist presented these to Curator Tim Johnson, one copy with a red cover and the second, a variant, with a green cover. (Only three copies were printed with a green cover.)

Jill Fritz forwarded a copy of *On Air Magazine*, the publication of San Diego's public radio station, KPBS. This January 2003 issue features an advertisement entitled "Holmes and the Hound" and gives information about the ExxonMobil Masterpiece Theatre adaptation of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.

Photo courtesy of John Bergquist.



John Bergquist, Don Hobbs and Richard Sveum

Don Hobbs, the Maniac Collector, donated a copy of one of his latest findings in foreign language editions of the Canon. While in New York in January, Don gave Dick Sveum and John Bergquist the paper and electronic copy of the Inuit version of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.

Les Klinger forwarded the manuscript material for his recently published *The Return of Sherlock Holmes*. This is the fifth volume in The Sherlock Holmes Reference Library, which is published by Wessex Press.

Hugo Koch has forwarded two packages recently. The first contained his monograph *The Adventure of the American Violinist* and Phil Cornell's



Photo courtesy of Julie McKura

Phil Cornell's artwork from *The Adventure of the American Violinist*

original artwork that graces the cover. This private edition of 100 was done for Christmas, 2002 and is inscribed by Mr. Koch. More recently received was the privately printed *The Death Ship*. This printing was limited to 33 copies, and Mr. Koch donated number 2 of this W. Clark Russell story, which is illustrated by Charles Doyle, Gustav Dore and F. W. Hayes, with an introduction by Hugo Koch.

Mary K. St. John, Associate Professor at the General College of the University of Minnesota, gave Special Collections and Rare Books Curator Timothy Johnson the February 1997 *Gourmet* magazine which had an article "The Case of the Victorian Detective: On the Trail of Sherlock Holmes" by Jo Durden-Smith.

Photo courtesy of Julie



Julie McKuras, Dan Stashower, and Regina Stinson at the 2003 B.S.I. Dinner

Regina Stinson of Royal Oak, Michigan, who served as Chief

Inspector of The Ribston-Pippins for 13 years, forwarded copies of the entire run of *Footprints & Lens of the Ribston-Pippins*. The monthly newsletter originated with the February, 1989 issue.

Francine Swift is pictured here at the B.S.I. Cocktail Party in January, where she took the opportunity to donate a copy of the play "Upstairs, Downstairs, All Around the Holmes: A Drama of Sherlock Holmes in 13 Episodes" by Norman M. Davis and Wayne B. Swift. The script indicates it was presented by The Red Circle Players of the Red Circle of Washington D. C., 1974-1978. In addition to the play itself, a brief history of the Red Circle Players as written by Wayne Swift is included.



Photo by Julie McKuras

Richard Sveum, Francine Swift, and John Bergquist

Jean Tretter, Collection Specialist for the Tretter Collection at the Elmer L. Andersen Library, donated several magazines to the Holmes Collections. Among the periodicals were the October 2000 *American Philatelist* featuring the article "The Adventure of the Detective Stamp" by William R. Hanson; the September 1997 *Smithsonian* with Tom Huntington's "The Man Who Believed in Fairies"; and the November 1998 *American Philatelist* with the article "Victor Lynch, Forger" by David Hammer.

C. C. Williamsen has provided the Collections with a copy of *Sherlock Holmes and the Adventure of the Beleaguered Cub Fan* by John H. Watson, M. D. The title page states this book was written by Dr. Watson with help from C. C. Williamson. The book was published in 2001 by Chazcliff1 Books. ♡

Musings

I have the enviable task of welcoming another distinguished writer to this newsletter. Michael Dirda is a writer and senior editor for *The Washington Post Book World*. He received the 1993 Pulitzer Prize for criticism and is the author of *Readings: Essays and Literary Entertainments* and *An Open Book: Coming of Age in the Heartland*, to be published by Norton this fall. In 2002 he was invested in the Baker Street Irregulars as “Langdale Pike.” Mr. Dirda gives us a fresh look at W. H. Auden’s essay on detective fiction in the 50 Years Ago column.

Our lead article was a collaborative process in many ways, from the initial discovery of the film’s existence, to obtaining it, to writing about it. I would like to thank Professor John Wright for his assistance with this article. Prof. Wright is the Director of Graduate Studies and Associate Professor in the African-American and African Studies Department, and Assoc. Professor in the English Department, at the University of Minnesota. I had the great pleasure of taking the course “African-American Cinema” from Prof. Wright several years ago and knew he would be the perfect resource for this article.

100 Years Ago focuses on two little known parodies by W. L. Riordan. The stories were pasted into a notebook labeled “Before 1903” by John Bennett Shaw but there is no indication as to how he came to have them. Sometimes the story of how Shaw amassed his collection is as interesting as the item itself. Jon Lellenberg, reading the article before it went to press, sent me the following note about John Bennett Shaw:

The “50 Years Ago” item about the Riordan parodies from John Bennett Shaw’s Collection took me back. I sent them to John some 30 years ago. In 1972 I was determined to find the missing Shylock Homes par-

odies by John Kendrick Bangs, one of which had appeared in the Ellery Queen “Misadventures of Sherlock Holmes” (Fred Dannay no longer recalled where he’d found it, and I spent more Saturday mornings than I can remember at the Library of Congress going through tons of old 1903 newspapers. I eventually found them in the *New York Herald* (more of them than Fred had ever realized had been published), but in the meantime I’d also found a number of other unknown Sherlock Holmes parodies, including these two by Riordan which had appeared in the *Times*. Shaw was so magnetic — both in the attractiveness of his personality and enthusiasm for the hobby, and in the way that he collected, in the way that Sherlock Holmes material moved in his direction irresistibly, like iron filings toward a magnet — that one of the greatest pleasures of especially younger and newer Sherlockians such as I was at the time was to find something to send him from the past, however slight and ephemeral it might be, like those Riordan parodies, that he had never seen before. We drew delight from delighting him that way. I’ve just gone to my Shaw correspondence file and find this in a letter dated September 27, 1972: “Yes I did get the two unknown pastiches by Riordan - thanks for sending them via Saul [Cohen, who’d been visiting Washington — the beginning of another extremely valuable relationship in my Irregular career]. And they are interesting finds indeed. I am listing things that should go in the first de Waal supplement and I have more than 50 so far....poor fellow, he tackled a task indeed. He knows it.”

J. B. Post of Paoli, PA sent an email regarding John Bergquist’s article on Julian Wolff’s *The Sherlockian Atlas* in the last issue. Mr. Post noted that “two of the maps in THE SHERLOCKIAN

ATLAS were reproduced in (his) AN ATLAS OF FANTASY (Mirage, 1973: Ballantine/Souvenir, 1979.)” The Sherlock Holmes Collections holds copies of these books with John Bennett Shaw’s bookplate. Karen Murdock, a geographer by trade, also wrote in to comment about Dr. Wolff’s maps, stating that they “are the more remarkable when you consider the technology available (and unavailable) to him at the time he made his Sherlockian maps...He lettered those maps with something called a ‘Leroy set’...A Leroy lettering set is a difficult-to-master mechanical device. In using it, the mapmaker traces a letter on a plastic template with the point of a stylus pen, while the other end of the pen (which has a little ink reservoir) marks that letter on the map. Using the Leroy set with any success requires a great deal of time and patience and the rock-steady hand of a master diamond cutter.”

And so we begin our seventh year of writing this newsletter. I was invited to accompany Norwegian Explorer Board Member Gary Thaden (author of “Watson’s Books” in *The Norwegian Explorers Christmas Annual 2002*) to his daughter’s school on Feb. 25. The students of Emerson School in Minneapolis performed adaptations of “The Boscombe Valley Mystery” and “The Hound of the Baskervilles.” It was such a pleasure to see the plays and to note the children so engaged in both stories. Afterwards, Gary presented the play’s director with a number of books with Holmes stories to be given to the students. As I often have the opportunity to wander through the Sherlock Holmes Collections, I don’t believe we’re in any danger of running out of material to cover in future issues of this newsletter. And with the next generation being introduced to Holmes and nurtured by teachers and parents like Gary, I don’t believe we’ll run out of readers and writers in the years to come. ♡

Julie McKuras, A.S.H., B.S.I.

The Black Sherlock Holmes... Continued from Page 1

"...shamelessly [playing] on race humor, with blacks as the butts of jokes and pranks." (Woll, 40)

Entrepreneurs looked to the new business of movie making and the era of race films began. Race films featured African-American casts and were "aimed primarily at black audiences who had grown weary of the 'good old darkeys' and dancing pickaninies of mainstream cinema and who were outraged by the success of D. W. Griffith's 'The Birth of a Nation.' These audiences could be targeted in an economically efficient way because their viewing was primarily restricted to all-black theatres..." (McMahan) The studios producing these films featured black actors but were often owned by white entrepreneurs. As did producers of most movies of the day, the producers of race films looked to popular culture and literature for their films, including white sources.

By 1910, black showman William Foster and his Foster Photoplay Company began producing all African-American cast shorts for black audiences in Chicago, more accurately addressing black life while adhering to the model of Hollywood genres. Other race picture companies appeared, including the Historical Feature Film Company of Chicago in 1915. It catered to both black and white audiences and produced 2-reel slapstick comedies which relied on racial stereotyping. Drawing criticism for the racist images, which resulted in a boycott of their pictures, they reorganized in 1917 as the Ebony Film Corporation and opened offices at 608 S. Dearborn St. in Chicago. They had an indoor production studio on N. California Ave. in Chicago and an outdoor facility at Lake Winnebago near Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Ebony was still white controlled but the director of the company was an African-American named L. J. Pollard.

The Ebony Film Corporation had a "stock company of 40 black actors, 26 of whom were members of the George M. Lewis Stock Company." (Sampson, 201) The George M. Lewis Stock Company of black vaudevillians and stage actors worked not only for Ebony, but also for the great black filmmaker and producer Oscar Micheaux, according to Professor John Wright of the African-American and African Studies Department at the University of Minnesota. Among the members of the stock company were Sam Robinson, whose cousin was Bill "Bojangles" Robinson, Samuel Jacks, Yvonne Junior, Will Starks, Julia Wilson, Evon Skeeter, Walter Brogsdale, Robert Dupree, and Frank Pollard.

"A Black Sherlock Holmes," the first production of the newly reorganized Ebony Film Cooperation, was released in April, 1918 and distributed by the General Film Corporation of New York City. The plot focuses on Knick Carter, portrayed by Sam Robinson, who believes he is a great detective. He and his assistant Reuma Tism, portrayed by Rudolph Tatum, attempt to save a kidnapped young woman, Sheeza Sneezee, portrayed by Yvonne Junior. Knick eventually saves Sheeza, who is able to marry her true love. The film was directed by R. G. Phillips and runs for 12 minutes.

The plot of the film was similar to "Spying the Spy," released the same year, in which Sam Robinson plays the lead character of Sambo Sam, an "amateur spy hunter" (Sampson, 271) who tries to be a hero by catching German spies. The movies were well received by white audiences who enjoyed the novelty of "colored players who have an original and inborn sense of humor all their own" (Sampson, 241), according to a review in the *Exhibition Herald*. Where this, and the other Ebony productions, failed was with black audiences and the black press who con-

sidered the productions humiliating. The plots weren't based on any real experience, "but rather on what whites 'knew' about blacks based primarily on the literature of the South and its stereotypes." (McMahon) Black readers had read the serialized publication from 1907 to 1909 of John Edward Bruce's "The Black Sleuth," "but the attitude toward the black detective in Bruce's militantly race proud tale is worlds apart from that of Ebony Corps's minstrelsy-based caricature," wrote Professor Wright. Black audiences had also been treated to the film representations such as the earnest detective in Oscar Micheaux's "Within our Gates."

The Ebony Film Corporation produced 21 films featuring their stock company but many of their releases were not booked into the black theatres. The black newspaper *The Chicago Defender* urged theatre owners not to book Ebony films because they caused "respectable ladies and gentlemen to blush with shame and humiliation." (Sampson, 207) The company went out of business in 1919. With the acquisition of "The Black Sherlock Holmes," we have a film which, while it may be objectionable in its characters stereotypical behavior, still serves to indicate the popularity of the truly great detective, Sherlock Holmes. ♣

Julie McKuras, A.S.H., B.S.I.

References:

- McMahan, Alison. *Race Pictures Before Race Cinema*. Available at: mcmahan1.htm
- Richards, Larry. *African-American Films Through 1959*. Jefferson, NC and London: McFarland and Co., Inc., 1998.
- Sampson, Henry T. *Blacks in Black and White, A Source Book on Black Films*. Metuchen, NJ and London: The Scarecrow Press, 1995.
- Woll, Allen L. and Randall M. Miller. *Ethnic and Racial Images in American Film and Television*. New York and London: Garland Publishing, 1987.

From the President

This issue starts our seventh year of reporting about the Sherlock Holmes Collections and the work of the Friends. As I look back at my collection of the Friends Newsletters I can see that we have covered the history of the collections, new donations and gifts, and the exceptional generosity of our friends.

I am happy to report the completion of the cataloging project thanks to a gift from the Hubbs Family with additional funding from the University Library and the Hench Endowment. We can now truly say that we have access as well as preservation. The E. W. McDiarmid Curatorship fund has topped \$40,000 with much more in pledges. We are still looking for new members to join the Sigerson Society with a gift or pledge of \$10,000 to the Curatorship Endowment.

Looking forward we can see a financial challenge looming. The State of Minnesota is facing a major revenue shortfall and the University of Minnesota has cut the Library budget. It appears that Special Collections will suffer cuts in both acquisitions monies and staffing during the first round of cuts. We expect that a second round of cuts that address the impending state deficit will be deeper still.

50 Years.. Continued from Page 3

appeal of the puzzle — not the who-done-it but the how-done-it — and hence fails to touch on the work of such giants as Agatha Christie, John Dickson Carr and Ellery Queen, all masters of this aspect of the mystery. Above all, Auden misses one great psychological

What else can you do? To cover the loss in acquisition allocation we hope that authors will donate a copy of every new monograph so we do not need to purchase the book, and that every editor of a serial will consider donating a subscription to the University. The Sherlock Holmes Collections has lost funding for Beth Bogle, the Library Assistant and Collection Specialist. This leaves Curator Tim Johnson with only student help to run Special Collections and Rare Books. We are counting on you, the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, to help now more than ever to cover the fall in State funding. Money is always needed.

As we consider how we can best continue to obtain new publications, I want to thank two special friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, Francine Swift and Don Hobbs, who made special donations this year in New York. It is with the generosity of such donors that we can continue to collect previously printed materials.

Please help it what ever way to can as we try to make the Sherlock Holmes Collections the World Center for the study of Sherlock Holmes and related areas. ♡

Richard J. Sveum, M.D., B.S.I.

appeal of these stories: The gratification in watching not innocence restored, but rather a complex, seemingly random or even apparently supernatural tangle of events gradually given order and purpose. In our own lives we often feel ourselves the playthings of fate and the

gods; but in the traditional mystery we are comforted by entering a universe where everything, no matter how bizarre or improbable, ultimately makes sense. ♡

Michael Dirda, B.S.I.



The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections is a quarterly newsletter published by the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections which seek to promote the activities, interests and needs of the Special Collections and Rare Books Department, University of Minnesota Libraries.

Mail editorial correspondence c/o:

Editor

Julie McKuras
13512 Granada Ave.
Apple Valley, MN 55124
952-431-1934
952-431-5965 Fax
mike9750@aol.com

Editorial Board

John Bergquist, Timothy Johnson,
Jon Lellenberg, Richard J. Sveum, M.D.

Copyright © 2003

University of Minnesota Library

The University of Minnesota is an Equal
Opportunity Educator and Employer.

An Update from the Collections

In the midst of war preparations and yellow and orange alerts, life goes on in the world of Sherlock Holmes and the Collections at Minnesota. I am reminded of Holmes's own thoughts on the subject as they are recorded in "His Last Bow." The quotation is a familiar one: "Good old Watson! You are the one fixed point in a changing age. There's an east wind coming all the same, such a wind as never blew on England yet. It will be cold and bitter, Watson, and a good many of us may wither before its blast. But it's God's own wind none the less, and a cleaner, better, stronger land will lie in the sunshine when the storm has cleared."

The reminder, and the quotation, comes from Michael Hardwick's *The Complete Guide to Sherlock Holmes*, a book I have enjoyed paging through over the last weeks. I came upon Hardwick's *Guide* while preparing an article for publication. (For the completists among our readership, here is an advance notice of something for your collection.) The article, entitled "The Adventure of the Unopened Box: Building the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota Libraries," will appear in the future under two guises. First, it will appear as an article in the professional journal *The Acquisitions Librarian*, in a special theme issue edited by Judith Overmier (Professor Emeritus) and Rhonda Harris Taylor (Associate

Professor) from the School of Library and Information Studies at the University of Oklahoma. The theme issue — *Mysteries: From Creation to Consumption* — will include articles on mystery book publishers, specialist mystery book stores, mystery books in alternative formats, mystery book research collections (here is where the Holmes Collections fit in), reviewing mystery books, and mystery book clubs. Second, after the journal issue appears, the collected articles will be published as chapters in book format. *The Acquisitions Librarian* is a biannual publication (two issues per volume) produced by The Haworth Press. The exact date of publication is unknown, but we will inform readers of the date when it is made known. My thanks to Julie McKuras and Dick Sveum for reading the manuscript and offering helpful comments.

And while we wait on the unknown, we can report on something that has come to completion — the cataloging of books and periodicals in the Holmes Collections. The three-year project, financed in part by a gift from the Hubbs Family, was completed in December 2002. Together, the MINITEX contract catalogers and the University Libraries' staff cataloged 15,252 items, all of which appear in the online catalog (www.lib.umn.edu). The items are searchable by author, title, and subject as well as other access points, such as the

De Waal number (where available). The Library's cost share in the project — originally pegged at \$80,000 — finished at \$112,753. The total project cost for cataloging and processing was nearly \$263,000.

On a related note, I have completed the preliminary manuscript of a bibliography that may become a supplement to Ronald De Waal's *The Universal Sherlock Holmes*. The bibliography includes 3,227 entries for items that appeared after the publication of *The Universal*. My thanks to those of you who sent me lists of items for inclusion in this Sherlockian update. Stay tuned for further news on the publication of this bibliography.

Finally, let me offer a word of thanks for your continued support of the Sherlock Holmes Collections at Minnesota. In front of me, pinned to a board by my desk, is Jeff Decker's cartoon of an elephant caravan with John Bennett Shaw atop the lead pachyderm, the road leading to the U of M. I keep it there as a reminder of past journeys traveled and paths yet ahead. We have come a long way on that road, and your assistance along the way is greatly appreciated. But there are more steps to take. I hope you will continue with us on the trek, and endure the winds along the way. ♡

Timothy Johnson

Remembrances

In supporting the Sherlock Holmes Collections, many donors have made contributions either in honor or in memory of special persons.

IN HONOR OF

John Baesch & Evelyn Herzog's engagement
Susan E. Dahlinger
Ralph E. Edwards, B.S.I.
Fred Kittle, M. D.
Karen Murdock

FROM

Julie McKuras
Laura Kuhn
James E. Smith II
Larry and Ann Koppers
Rosemary Michaud

IN MEMORY OF

Don Hardenbrook
Al Rodin
John Bennett Shaw
John Bennett Shaw
Murray Shaw

FROM

Jim Coffin
Roy Pilot
Saul Cohen
John E. Stephenson
Julie McKuras

For any inquiries contact:

Timothy J. Johnson, Curator
612-624-3552 or
johns976@tc.umn.edu

Sherlock Holmes Collections

Suite 111, Elmer L. Andersen Library
University of Minnesota
222 21st Ave. S.
Minneapolis, MN 55455
Telephone: 612-624-7526
FAX: 612-626-9353

Timothy J. Johnson, Curator

Mailing list corrections requested—

Because of the high cost of returned newsletters, we would appreciate being informed of changes of address or other corrections.