



# Plugs & Dottles

Official Newsletter of the Nashville Scholars  
of the Three Pipe Problem

January 2020

Jim Hawkins & Dean Richardson, Co-Editors

- Established 1979
- Meetings on third Saturday of every month (except Dec.)
- Website:  
[nashvillescholars.net](http://nashvillescholars.net)
- Facebook page
- Send comments:  
[seniorhawk@gmail.com](mailto:seniorhawk@gmail.com) or to  
[dean.h.richardson@gmail.com](mailto:dean.h.richardson@gmail.com)

The Nashville Scholars extends our sympathy to Cindy Mason, Chris Schweizer, and Dean Richardson who each lost a parent in 2019.

## WHAT WILL 2020 BRING?

The Nashville Scholars enter their 41st year. Some of the “old gang” are moving, but within the state. We hope they will continue to make the 3rd Saturday meetings each month.

BSI members Alvarez, Carlisle, Mason, and Ostrom will be attending the BSI dinner in New York City on January 17.

The Nashville Scholars will be celebrating Holmes’s 166th birthday on January 25, a week late because several of you will be coming back from New York City.

The story for our January meeting is “The Mazarin Stone” one of the stories in *The Case Book* (1927), the final set of 12 Sherlock Holmes stories. Read here:

<https://tinyurl.com/vlcgnuh>

**221B Baker St.**  
LONDON

## OUR 41ST YEAR



The Nashville Scholars sponsor REDH in granite marker.

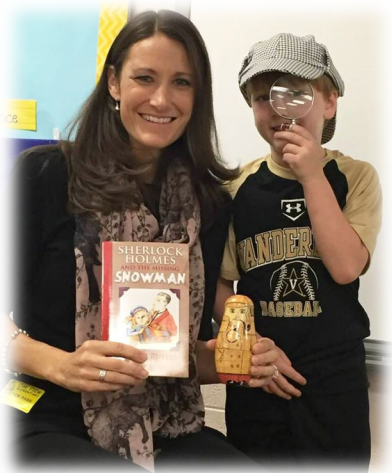
The granite marker was laid at the feet of the Sherlock-Segar statue in Chester, Illinois. This is the only granite, life-size statue of Sherlock Holmes in the Americas. The promoter of this unique installation is Michael McClure. Here he explains the reason for the statue.

“Elsie Segar is the creator of Popeye the Sailor man. Not only was Segar born and raised in Chester, but many of the characters from his Thimble Theater comic strip were based on residents of the town. To commemorate Chester's claim to fame, the “Popeye and Friends Character Trail” is a multi-year plan initiated to further the development of tourism in Chester, as well as celebrate the local cartoon-connection with Popeye the Sailor man, who had a bronze statue erected here in his honor in 1977.” (<https://www.baskervilleproductions.com/statue>)



**Nashville Scholar Derek Martin** was at the unveiling in Chester, Illinois on 7 December. Despite having been ill two days before, Martin made the four-hour drive from Nashville in time for the unveiling at 10 AM. The face for Holmes was based on the actual face of Elsie Segar. All the details are included in a report by Martin on page three of this newsletter.

Shannon Carlisle, Nashville Scholar and Director of the Junior Sherlockian Society, and Steve Mason, Beacon Society webmaster and communications chair, actively support “introducing Sherlock Holmes to students through exemplary educational experiences.” Shannon’s students at Franklin Special Schools know her to be an excited and enthusiastic teacher. For instance, here is how she celebrated the Nashville Scholars’ 40th Anniversary in verse.



### On the 40th Anniversary

1 Title + 2 Haikus = 40 Syllables to Celebrate the  
40 Years of the Nashville Scholars, by Shannon Carlisle

#### Music City's Cohort

The Nashville Scholars  
a mighty collection of  
Holmes enthusiasts

Connoisseurs of  
the Canon and the Grand Game  
plucky, pawky . . . peers

Steve Mason, active member of The Crew of the Barque Lone Star scion in Dallas, recently published a book of limericks on the Sherlockian canon. Below are the ones written by Shannon’s students about *The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle*.

### Limericks for The Crew of the Barque Lone Star

*From the 2018-2019 3rd graders of 221b Baker Street of Moore Elementary School,  
in Franklin, Tennessee*

#### The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle



*Katie*

There once was a piece of meat.  
It was sitting on the street.  
The Petersons did dine  
not knowing the crime.  
And, Ryder’s freedom was a treat!

*Rowan*

There was a hat on the street  
with a piece of meat.  
The goose had a gem.  
The gem stumped Him (Peterson),  
but Holmes refused defeat.

*Finn*

There was a blue gem that was lost.  
It had a very great cost.  
It was inside a goose  
which Sherlock used to deduce.  
In the end, the culprit was tossed.

*Finn*

There once was a billycock and some meat  
that were abruptly left on the street.  
Peterson gave Holmes a ring.  
Holmes said, “It’s a bonny thing!”  
In the end, the culprit hated defeat.

*Caroline and Andrew*

There was a goose that was fed a blue gem.  
The criminal did this crime at PM.  
Sherlock investigate-ed.  
James Ryder experienced dread.  
It was Yuletide, so Holmes didn’t condemn.



### Dereck Attends the Unveiling in Chester, IL

On December 7, 2019, I had the honor of attending the unveiling of the first granite statue of Sherlock Holmes in the United States. It is Elzie C. Segar, the creator of Popeye, clothed as his ultimate hero, Sherlock Holmes. Segar was born on December 8, 1894, in Chester, Illinois, and he first introduced the character of Popeye the Sailor in his *Thimble Theatre* comic strip in 1929. This was my first visit to Chester, Illinois. The statues are used to further the development of tourism in Chester, as well as celebrate the local connection with Popeye, who had a bronze statue erected in Chester in 1977.

The crowd was gathered in the street in front of the covered statue as the police had it closed off. Fellow Sherlockian Mike McClure was kind enough to arrange snacks and hot beverages for those attending. Mike has been very involved with the town's Popeye statue trail including its new one of Holmes and Segar. I would estimate a crowd-size of around 100 including the band. The band kicked off the ceremony by playing "Jingle Bells." Next, a declaration about the statue was read to us by the local Illinois house member. Mr. and Mrs. Claus were on hand as well to unwrap the statue before an excited crowd. Applause worthy of our great detective greeted this new statue. The crowd spent the next 30 minutes taking photos with the statue and Mr. and Mrs. Claus. The Nashville Scholars of the Three-Pipe Problem have their name engraved on the statue along with our story, "The Red-Headed League."

Mike invited the Sherlockians who traveled to Chester into his home after the ceremony to see his Sherlock collections. These were most impressive. Next, I visited two other Popeye statues in the area with Holmes ties. Caster Oyl's statue is in front of the local hospital. Caster Oyl bears a resemblance to our favorite detective complete with a deerstalker cap and magnifying glass. Caster and Popeye had a detective agency in the *Thimble Theatre* comic strip, and Segar continued to promote Holmes-type themes in the storylines and art until his passing. Cole Oyl is in front of the local library. His statue displays three books including *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. I also visited the Wimpy statue, which stands next to the Popeye Museum and collectibles store. Sadly, there were twelve other statues that I did not get to visit, including Popeye's and Olive's. Another trip up is definitely in order, and I encourage every Sherlockian to visit one day. —Derek Martin, January 2020



Here is Derek as he points out the granite marker indicating that the Nashville Scholars made a significant contribution to the Sherlock Holmes statue in Chester, IL, and claims the Conan Doyle story—"The Red-Headed League" from which our name is derived.

~~a quote from REDH~~

"As a rule," said Holmes, "the more bizarre a thing is the less mysterious it proves to be. It is your commonplace, featureless crimes which are really puzzling, just as a commonplace face is the most difficult to identify. But I must be prompt over this matter."

"What are you going to do, then?" I asked.

"To smoke," he answered. "**It is quite a three-pipe problem**, and I beg that you won't speak to me for fifty minutes." He curled himself up in his chair, with his thin knees drawn up to his hawk-like nose, and there he sat with his eyes closed and his black clay pipe thrusting out like the bill of some strange bird.

## Getting to know Dave Price Charter Member “Grimpen Meyer”

Editor Hawkins says that some members might enjoy hearing more about my long and varied life, so here goes. If you find it interesting, fine; if not, blame ole Jim.



FIGURE 1 MARY JANE & DAVE IN PARIS

I have had many jobs in life and traveled far and wide, mostly with circuses and magic shows. By the time I was twenty-three I had played all the lower forty-eight. Have played all the Canadian provinces save British Columbia and Newfoundland.

I had two magic shows; then my wife and I had our own small magic show, mostly playing schools in the South. Have been a newspaper reporter, director of a workshop for mentally challenged young adults, assistant superintendent of a state reformatory, and principal of a rural elementary school for five years. Also washed a lot of pots and pans and pushed wheelchairs and stretchers. And oh yeah, I ran a rodeo for three years.

### **From Dave Price’s Sherlockian biography.**

The first Sherlock Holmes story I ever read was “The Adventure of the Red-Headed League.” I also read a scholarly work titled *Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street* by William S. Baring-Gould. My canonical nom is Grimpen Meyer.

I attended my first Nashville Scholars meeting in 1979. Like many others I read Ken Beck's piece in the January 4, 1979 *Tennessean*, and I called John Shanks about joining. He told me Hap Cavett (who lived near me) had also expressed an interest and suggested we come together.

We missed the first meeting but made the second one at the Showboat Lounge in Madison.

I was born in Nashville's old Protestant Hospital for a cost of seventy dollars total—including delivery and seven nights’ stay. I remember when Nashville had street cars. I am almost as old as Dick Renfro, and that's saying a lot. When I was a kid Basil Rathbone was Sherlock—in black and white. I would see him at the Fifth Avenue, the Princess, or the Knickerbocker, all gone the way of the hoop skirt.

At some point Shanks moved away, and the group had petered out by the mid-eighties. It wasn't until Gael brought it back to life that my wife Mary Jane started coming with me. We were active through the nineties, when we fell by the wayside. Mary Jane died in 2011, and I just recently got back into Sherlockiana.



My life has been a varied one. I worked for seven different circuses, starting in 1959 as an advance man. I was running the Texas Prison Rodeo when I met Mary Jane, and in 1971 we took out a magic show playing schools in the South for three years;

we then settled down, and I went back to school for a master’s degree and taught school for eight years, five of which I was a rural school principal (elementary, my dear).

Mary Jane worked in hospitals most of her life and retired from Vanderbilt as Administrative Assistant of Surgical Research. I finished up my working life as a probation officer for the state. We have one son, John (now fifty), who lives with me and helps me since I spend most of the time in a wheelchair.

(Editor’s Note: We treasure our charter members and are thrilled when they come back to us. Welcome Back, Dave!)

*The Adventure of the Peculiar Protocols*  
by Nicholas Meyer  
A Review by Dean Richardson

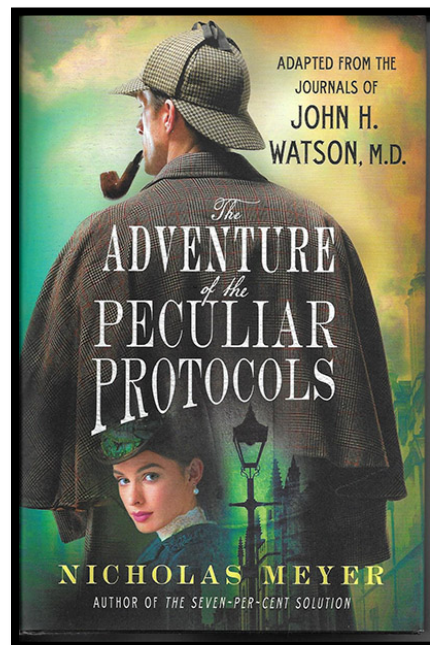
While Sherlock Holmes has never disappeared from popular culture, the degree of interest in him has varied over the past 132 years since his debut in 1888. More often the resurgence of his popularity has been spurred by dramatizations, whether on the stage, the silver screen, the radio, or television. Perhaps the greatest impact in print since the death of his creator was made by *The Seven-Per-Cent Solution* by Nicholas Meyer in 1974. Its forty weeks on the *New York Times* bestsellers list reinforced the continuing commercial viability of the Great Detective, and pastiches proliferated, not to mention a successful film adaptation scripted by the author.

Meyer's major innovation in *Solution* was to allow Sherlock to interact with both actual historical persons and events and with characters from contemporary fiction. (One could argue that the film *A Study in Terror* [1966] and its novelization by Ellery Queen paved the way as Holmes encountered Jack the Ripper.) That has been his modus operandi as well in the follow-up pastiches, *The West End Horror* (1976), *The Canary Trainer* (1993), and now *The Adventure of the Peculiar Protocols* (2019). Where the previous works were "newly discovered" case records by the Good Doctor, this is purportedly a diary from 1905, until recently in private hands and sold at auction.

The story in brief: Mycroft persuades Sherlock to investigate the source of a presumably bogus Russian document, *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*, that seems to outline a Jewish plot to take over the world. Accompanied by his Boswell and a translator, Mrs. Anna Strunsky Walling, he sets out on a perilous journey via boat, Orient Express, and hay wagon, to Russia

and back, followed by mysterious agents. Adventures (and occasional deductions) ensue.

Meyer is a good storyteller and manages to reflect the prose style of the master without slavishly imitating it. He works within the given parameters of the Canon but makes interesting embellishments. For example, Watson's second wife is named Juliet, and she is the sister of the literary critic Edward Garnett, whose wife, Constance, was the first great English translator of the Russian masters (Pushkin, Dostoevsky, Tolstoy, Chekhov, Turgenev). Constance translates *The Protocols* and assists Holmes and Watson in tracing the manuscript's origins and setting them on course. *The Scarlet Pimpernel* also plays a part, as do other historical persons of that time (i.e., besides Mrs. Walling, who later with her husband founded the NAACP). The background details never seem gratuitous, always enhancing the story and helping to move the action forward. Indeed, it is a quick and satisfying reading experience. May Mr. Meyer write more.



**2020 SCHEDULE\*: THE NASHVILLE SCHOLARS**

January to March: Grand Deceptions and Despicable Villains  
April to June: Red Herrings Revealed  
August to November: Victorian Soldiers Returned

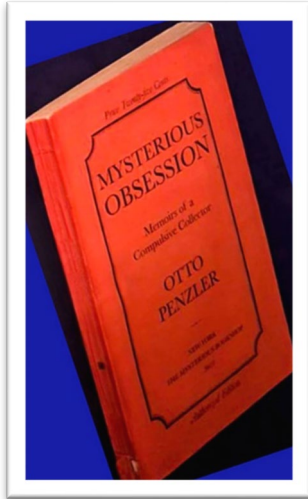
Jan	“The Mazarin Stone” ( <i>The Case Book</i> ) TALK: “Jewels in the Canon” or “The Floor Plan at Baker Street”	July	“The Red-Headed League” ( <i>The Adventures</i> ) TALK: “Holmes’s ‘Smartest’ and Most ‘Daring’ Opponents”
Feb	“The Dying Detective” ( <i>His Last Bow</i> ) TALK: “The British in the Tropics” or “Holmes as an Actor”	Aug	“The Crooked Man” ( <i>The Memoirs</i> ) TALK: “The Indian Mutiny” or “Biblical References in the Canon”
Mar	“A Case of Identity” ( <i>The Adventures</i> ) TALK: “Women in the Victorian Workforce” or “Romance in Victorian Times”	Sept	<i>The Sign of Four</i> (Novel) TALK: “Watson’s Wives” or “Canonical Ties to India”
Apr	“The Golden Pince-Nez” ( <i>The Return</i> ) TALK: “Victorian County Estates”	Oct	ACD Horror Story “The Horror of the Heights”
May	Picnic—Special Presentations	Nov	“The Blanched Soldier” ( <i>The Case Book</i> ) TALK: “The Boer War and Conan Doyle” or “Soldiers of the Canon”
June	“The Stockbroker’s Clerk” ( <i>The Memoirs</i> ) TALK: Big Business Victorian Style or Dentistry and Teeth in the Canon		* Devised by Bill Mason.

The top twelve Conan Doyle short stories, ranked in popularity from highest to lowest by the *Baker Street Irregulars*, in 1999. However, the list on the left is not in the correct order. Can you rearrange the list to make it correct? (Three are giveaways.)

1. *The Empty House*
2. *The Six Napoleons*
3. *The Blue Carbuncle*
4. *The Man with the Twisted Lip*
5. *Silver Blaze*
6. *The Musgrave Ritual*
7. *The Speckled Band*
8. *The Red-Headed League*
9. *A Scandal in Bohemia*
10. *The Final Problem*
11. *The Dancing Men*
12. *The Bruce-Partington Plans*

1. *The* \_\_\_\_\_
2. *The* \_\_\_\_(-)\_\_\_\_
3. *A* \_\_\_\_\_
4. *?* \_\_\_\_\_
5. *The* \_\_\_\_\_
6. *The* \_\_\_\_\_
7. *The* \_\_\_\_\_
8. *The* \_\_\_\_\_
9. *The* \_\_\_\_\_
10. *The* \_\_\_\_\_
11. *The* \_\_\_\_(-)\_\_\_\_
12. *The* \_\_\_\_\_

Just add the correct number, if you like.  
Answers available on the Nashville Scholars’  
website: [follow this link](#)



Otto Penzler, owner of Mysterious Books in New York City (since 1979), has been a friend to all the Nashville Scholars who have attended the Sherlock Holmes birthday celebrations each January. He recently wrote a book about his life of book collecting, each of

the 26 chapters showing the cover of a favorite book along with the story of how it came to be in his collection. It is perfect for book lovers of all stripes, not just mystery fans. He admits that the first mystery book he ever read was *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* and submits that “it should be required reading in every high school in America.” This “tell-all” book is *Mysterious Obsession: Memoirs of a Compulsive Collector* (New York: The Mysterious Bookshop, 2019)

Pictured below is Billy Fields with Otto in his Mysterious Bookshop store on 58 Warren Street in New York City. Billy is a favorite of all New Yorkers, especially Mr. Penzler, probably because Billy buys so many books from him.

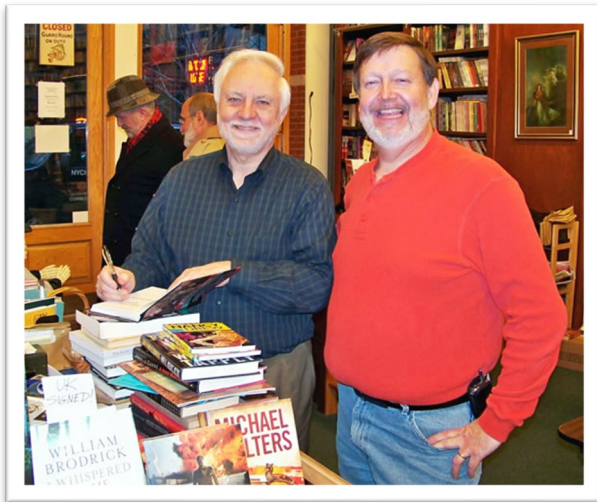


FIGURE 2- VICKI AND MARINO IN OTTO'S BOOKSHOP



If you need a book from Otto (and you do!), contact him and the staff here: [info@mysteriouspress.com](mailto:info@mysteriouspress.com).

**Shinwell Before Using** note: On February 18 Kino Lorber will release on Blu-ray and standard DVD the delightful German comic mystery *The Man Who Was Sherlock Holmes* (1937). In a case of mistaken identity, people in Berlin think Morris Flint (Hans Albers) is actually the Great Detective incognito and involve him and his traveling companion, Mackie, in an investigation. He goes with the flow, to much comic effect, and proves almost as ingenious as the GD. Also released on that date is *Munchausen* (1940) with Albers as the legendary Baron in a German super-production. Both are great fun without a hint of propaganda, despite their origins (i.e., NAZI Germany!). (*Editor Dean Richardson keeps us aware of the publishing side of Holmes.*)



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

(THE ROMANS USED THE JULIAN CALENDAR,  
SO ADD OR SUBTRACT 11 DAYS)

Our dear English friends, Roger Johnson and Jean Upton, sent this greeting to the Nashville Scholars. We thought it a perfect way to bring this first *Plugs & Dottles* of 2020 to a close. Roger and his wife have been the editors of *The District Messenger*, the newsletter of **The Sherlock Holmes Society of London**, for years. Their roles have changed a bit lately. Jean is the editor of the newsletter. Roger is now the Commissioning Editor of *The Sherlock Holmes Journal*.

The fans and friends of Sherlock Holmes form a worldwide community.

**Happy New Year, indeed!**