



Sherlock Holmes

C O L L E C T I O N S

"Your merits should be publicly recognized" (STUD)



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The View from Laurel Cottage

By Richard J. Sveum, M. D.

It was my pleasure to visit David L. Hammer, B. S. I. (Major-General Stoner, 1986) and his wife, Audrey at their home, Laurel Cottage in Dubuque, Iowa. I spent a pleasant afternoon sitting with David in his Sherlockian library, looking at books and listening to stories. Hammer is a lawyer, scholar, writer, publisher and philanthropist. He has planned to give the "Sherlock Holmes Library of David L. Hammer" to the University of Minnesota, and with this designated gift, has been recognized as a member of the Heritage Society by the University of Minnesota Foundation. The inventory of his library is 80 pages long, with a recent addendum. The University of Minnesota Library will receive his books about Sherlock Holmes, records and correspondence of the Gasogene Press, personal Sherlockian correspondence and Sherlockian memorabilia. As an author and publisher he has many original handwritten drafts as well as corrected computer drafts, galleys and proofs. This valuable material will be added to the Sherlock Holmes Collections in Minnesota.

David L. Hammer grew up in Newton, Iowa, graduated from Grinnell College and attended Northwestern University Law School until he was drafted into service during the Korean War. After marrying Audrey, the couple then moved to Iowa City where Hammer completed Law

School at the University of Iowa, and then moved to Dubuque.

David and Audrey have traveled extensively, and it was in Egypt that he suggested that he would like to go on a Sherlockian tour of England. Through Scandinavian Airlines a Sherlockian tour

Laurel Cottage continued on page 4



David Hammer at Villa de Este, Lake Como, Italy

100 YEARS AGO

As the 145th birthday of Mr. Sherlock Holmes approaches, our article focuses on another gentlemen whose 100th Birthday is celebrated this year.

James Montgomery was born in 1898 in Trenton, New Jersey. His 1949 B.S.I. investiture was "The Red Circle". Described as a Philadelphia singer of Gilbert and Sullivan, he was an avid student of Sherlock Holmes and author of six *Montgomery's Christmas Annuals*. He was equally well known, however, for introducing a particular song to Sherlockians in the mid-1940's.

We Never Mention Aunt Clara was written on Christmas, 1936 by I. Eugene "Bud" and Ruth Willis, along with another couple, who began to discuss the proverbial skeletons in the closet while inspired by Scandinavian Glug. The song, *We Never Mention Aunt Clara*, scribbled down on a scrap of paper, was born that day. From that

modest beginning, although not copyrighted until February 16, 1946, this American Folk song became known by many throughout the country.

After hearing the song in his native Philadelphia, Montgomery first sang it to the Sons of the Copper Beeches in early 1952. He later sang it for the Amateur Mendicant Society of Detroit on March 17, 1955.

In *Art in the Blood*, Montgomery wrote of his own connection to the infamous Aunt Clara. Montgomery confirmed that his mother was born in New Jersey in 1868, and had a sister named Clara, ten years older than his mother. He concluded that this ne'er mentioned aunt was born in 1858. His deduction? That the famed Aunt Clara of song was indeed his own Aunt Clara, who had left New Jersey in disgrace. The only reminder of Clara was a picture turned to the bedroom wall. Far more interesting were his further conclusions that his Aunt Clara was none other than Irene Adler!

James Montgomery died on November 9, 1955, after introducing many Sherlockians to the exploits of Aunt Clara. Edgar W. Smith, the former editor of the *Baker Street Journal*, wrote

"There was no man among us more deeply respected, more warmly admired, more dearly loved. He was a familiar and welcome figure at those gatherings held within the reach of his native Philadelphia, and at the January dinner in New York there was never clamor for anyone but him."

In 1989, Sherlockian Peter Blau, B. S. I., located Bud Willis in Washington, D. C. Within a year, Blau and another famous Sherlockian, Bill Rabe, met with Willis, who opened his Aunt Clara files. In July 1990, Willis gave the archives to Bill Rabe. Mr. Rabe accepted the files with the provision that one-day they would rest either in Philadelphia or in Minnesota. Mr. Willis' reply was "By all means, let it be Minnesota. Aunt Clara should be with Sherlock." Bill Rabe donated the Aunt Clara files to the University, and when Bill Rabe passed away, his Collection came to the University of Minnesota as well.

The Aunt Clara files contain several stipulations by Willis that they cannot be opened until the year 2000. Perhaps in that year, we can let the public know what is contained in these files. Will it be further proof of Montgomery's claim as to the true identity of Aunt Clara? We'll let you know in 2000. ♣



A Study in Pictures, Montgomery's 1934 annual

Sherlockian songs, issued 1950, one of 100 copies



Collections Update – More Accessibility Soon

Timothy J. Johnson, Curator

In the last issue of the newsletter I mentioned a number of activities related to increasing the visibility and accessibility of the Sherlock Holmes Collections. In this issue I want to bring you up-to-date on one project that will improve access to the Collections.

By the time you read this it is my hope that the digital version of *The Universal Sherlock Holmes* will be up and running on our web site as an access tool to the Collections. Our original timetable was to have this listing available to interested researchers before the end of the year, and I believe we will meet that goal. We successfully loaded the disk containing *The Universal Sherlock Holmes* sent to us by George Vanderburgh and are in the process of designing a clear and con-

venient interface for use on our web page. Brian Hanson of the James Ford Bell Library at the University of Minnesota has been assisting me on this project and has given me a number of options for presentation and use. We're now in the process of selecting one of those options, refining the design, and taking care of other details and testing before mounting the finished project on our web site (www.lib.umn.edu/special/rare/rare.html).

When finished and loaded, the interface should allow researchers to search and locate various items from the Collections. After this initial phase we will begin to annotate the entries for items held by the University of Minnesota. Look for additional updates on access and cataloging in future issues of the newsletter. ♡

A Word from our President

My visit with David and Audrey Hammer was certainly an entertaining experience. It was rewarding to see his library, and know that one day his fine collection will come to the University of Minnesota. I hope that many more donors will join with David Hammer in planning their donations, and ensuring that their collections will become a part of the world's largest collection of Sherlockiana. To become a member of the University of Minnesota Heritage Society, all it takes is a planned future gift, in the form of bequests, gift annuity, trust, life insurance, pension or life income gift. Anyone interested in how to become a member of the Heritage Society should contact me.

I want to thank all those that have sent originals or copies of their corre-

spondence with John Bennett Shaw, including Chris Redmond, Donald Redmond, Jennie Paton, Tom Shaffer, Thomas A. Sebeok, Susan Diamond, Tom Dunn, Theodore Friedman and Bob Gellerstedt. I hope that there are many more who will take the time to look and share any letters with the Collections to help keep alive the spirit of John Bennett Shaw.

Thanks also to Chris Roden and Brad Keefauver for helping the Collections fill in back issues of periodicals. By donating materials and funds, we can continue our efforts in building and maintaining the remarkable Collections, and your contributions are always welcomed. ♡

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Musings

This issue concludes our second year of publication. Over the last year we've looked at the artwork in the Sherlock Holmes Collections including Norman Schatell and Frederic Dorr Steele material. The many languages in which the canon has been published and in particular the efforts of Alfred Levin to locate Yiddish editions have been described. We also reported on the first annual meeting of the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections and introduced Tim Johnson, the new Curator of Special Collections and Rare Books.

In this issue we again focus on a collector and donor to the Holmes Collections. This time we highlight publisher and author David Hammer. For those interested, Gael Stahl of the Nashville society Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem also conducted an interview with David Hammer. It was published in the May and July (1998) issues of their newsletter, *Three Pipe Problem Plugs and Dottles*. Gael has offered to email the entire interview to those who contact him at gaelbstahl@juno.com. Also, Tim Johnson provides an update on making the Collections more accessible online. There have been several researchers using the collections as well as some wonderful donations since our last issue.

Thanks to one and all for your continued material and monetary support of the Sherlock Holmes Collections.

Compliments of the Season to everyone. ♡

Bruce E. Southworth, B.S.I.
Editor

Laurel Cottage continued from page 1

was planned and Hammer began to study the Canon for actual sites. Hammer has said that Heinrich Schliemann, who found the city of Troy by studying *The Iliad*, was his inspiration.

Jack Tracy's Gaslight Press published the first of Hammer's travel books. It was through Tracy that Hammer met Michael Harrison. The two became close friends. Harrison, during his writer-in-residence appointments in Dubuque, lived with David and Audrey. It was about this time that Hammer formed his own publishing company called Gasogene Press (the name intentionally similar to Gaslight Press) to publish Harrison's *Immortal Sleuth*. Gasogene Press was not a vanity press but had a Board and published many authors including Michael Harrison, William Goodrich, John Bennett Shaw, Deborah Sage and Susan Rice. Hammer published Gasogene Press books in three categories: Canonical Travel, Sherlockian Scholarship and Pastiche.

The Game is Afoot, Hammer's first travel book was published in 1983, and is dedicated "to Audrey, The comrade of my journeys who is the companion of my years." The book describes their quest and credits, "our blessed Sherlock" who is "sufficient talisman to cause strangers to open their doors and permit an aging devotee to trespass over their grounds and intrude upon their privacy." *The Game is Afoot* was included in John Bennett Shaw's Basic Holmesian Library list. In 1986 Hammer wrote and published *For the Sake of the Game*. In the Forward, which was written aboard the Queen Elizabeth II in the North Atlantic on November 9, 1983, he recalled an exchange with Audrey about searching for the sites. She asked, "Why do that?" His response? "Because they're not there." But, Hammer said, "12 years and many adventures later, I could not give the same answer."

In *To Play the Game: Being a Travel Guide to the North America of Sherlock Holmes* (1991), Hammer notes "There is enjoyment in every aspect of Sherlockian activity for someone, but for me the greatest lies in the search." The third volume in the series, *The Worth of the Game: Being a Final Travel Guide to the England of Sherlock Holmes* (1993) was dedicated to "Neal and Agnes Hammer - most remarkable parents". The most recent book, *A Dangerous Game: Being a Travel Guide to the Europe of Sherlock Holmes* (1997), was dedicated to his grandsons "in hope that they too, like true Sherlockians, will both seek and find passports to those pleasant lands of the geography of the imagination." There is the promise of a final Game Book with a working title *The Game is Up* covering the Orient, South America and South Africa.

In 1989 Gasogene published *Studies in Scarlet*, a project started by John Bennett Shaw "our own St. John (the semi-divine)". Among the book's many contributors besides Shaw and Hammer are Michael Hardwick, Michael Harrison, Evelyn Herzog, Jon Lellenberg and E. W. McDiarmid.

Like our hero Sherlock Holmes, David Hammer is retired and living in a cottage, not overlooking the Channel but a mighty river. Laurel Cottage was named by his friend Michael Harrison, and has a commanding view of the Mississippi River from the bluffs. David Hammer is often called out of retirement, like Holmes, to take on special cases and trials. He continues to write, with several works completed including his tell all autobiography, *The Game is Underfoot: Annals of a Sherlockian Publisher*.

I appreciated the chance to visit Laurel Cottage, dine with David and Audrey, view the art collections, the libraries, the study, meet their dachshunds and discuss his generous bequest. Like his friend John Bennett Shaw, Hammer's planned donation of his library will eventually take an honored position at the Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota. ♡

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YEARS AGO

Christmas, "the season of forgiveness", news, and thoughts turn to *The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle*. First published in the *Strand Magazine* in January 1892, and in *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* that same year, it was "ranked third on the list of favorite stories of the readers of the *Baker Street Journal* in 1959", according to Matthew E. Bunson's *Encyclopedia Sherlockiana*. Our 50-year article focuses on the first separate edition of this story, published in 1948. The title page of *The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle* indicates the volume contains the story "with an introduction by Christopher Morley edited and with a Bibliographical Note by Edgar W. Smith, The Baker Street Irregulars, Inc., Publishers, New York, 1948". The colophon on the opposing page states that this is the first book to be published by the Baker Street Irregulars, Inc. It has two of Sidney Paget's illustrations from the *Strand Magazine*.

Dedicated to "Baker Street Irregulars Everywhere," this special volume was printed in two editions. The 75 page Deluxe edition came in a decorated slipcase in a limited run of 1500 numbered copies, and contains a note on the Baker Street Irregulars. The Sherlock Holmes Collections has two of these Deluxe editions; #55, John Bennett Shaw's book, and #1163, the book that belonged to Dr. Philip S. Hench.

The other edition contains 64 pages. In the Collections is the copy of Dr. E. W. McDiarmid, Sigerson of the Norwegian Explorers. It has a royal blue cloth cover with silver letters on the spine, a bookjacket, and has Dr. McDiarmid's bookplate.

As Dr. Watson came to extend his greetings to Sherlock Holmes, so we extend our Compliments of the Season! ♡

Acquisitions

An extensive number of items have recently been donated to the Sherlock Holmes Collections. While all of the items donated are interesting and will take a special place within the Collections, we have chosen several to highlight:

- 1) Four books have been donated by Mitch Higurashi of Tokyo, Japan. Mitch has translated a number of stories from the Canon, including *A Study in Scarlet*, and a collection of short stories.
- 2) Author Larry Millett, along with a review copy and first edition hard-back copy donated the manuscript for the recently published *Sherlock Holmes and the Ice Palace Murders*.

- 3) A recording of Minnesota Public Radio's broadcast of "All Things Considered" with host John Rabe, discussing the Norwegian Explorers' 50th Anniversary with WCCO newsman Don Shelby, E. W. "Mac" McDiarmid, and Julie McKuras.

Materials continue to come into the Collections, in the form of books, correspondence, radio tapes, clippings, journals and Sherlockian lapel pins. It is through this generosity that the Sherlock Holmes Collections continue to grow. We want to thank everyone for their diligence in helping to attain our goal of making this the world center for the study and research on all things Sherlockian. ♣



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.

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Using the Sherlock Holmes Collections

Many people write to and phone the Sherlock Holmes Collections for guidance and answers to Sherlockian queries. Others come in person to conduct research on projects. Since late this summer, several people have visited the Collections with particular subjects that they were researching.

Catherine Cooke, of London's Westminster Library, visited the Wilson Library during her visit to Minneapolis in August for the Founders' Footprints Conference. Catherine advised that she was assessing four or five items that are not in the Westminster Library.

Susan Dahlinger also visited the Collections during August's Conference. Sue is writing a book, as she wrote to us, "...about the Messrs. Starrett and Gillette and the first American publication of the play, *Sherlock Holmes*, working from such things as Mr. Gillette's 1899 script (1000's of notes in WHG's own hand), Mr. Starrett's 1902 script, letters..."

Randall Stock was in to research contests and polls involved in rating the Canon, primarily by the B. S. I. He intends his project as "a cross between fun and working on a paper." ♣

Remembrances

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

IN HONOR OF

E.W. McDiarmid

FROM

Richard J. Sveum

IN MEMORY OF

Eileen Elizabeth Katz

FROM

Warren Randall

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