



# Sherlock Holmes

C O L L E C T I O N S



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“Your merits should be publicly recognized” (STUD)

## The Sign of Four

**A**t a meeting of the Younger Stamfords of Iowa City, Iowa, a gift was made to the group. Mike Kramme, a member of the Younger Stamfords, presented the society with a copy of a script of *The Sign of Four*. This “remarkable little drama” (ABBE) has now been donated to the Sherlock Holmes Collections.

Dr. Michael Kramme is president of The Museum of Repertoire Americana. According to its website, “The Museum of Repertoire Americana, located in Mount Pleasant, Iowa, is dedicated to the preservation of memorabilia and artifacts of early repertoire theatre. The collection includes numerous painted curtains and scenic pieces; costumes and equipment used by individual performers and technicians; playbills, show cards, advertising sheets, etc.; and an extensive research library of rare scripts, correspondence, tour schedules, production photos



Theatre Museum in Mt. Pleasant

Photo courtesy of Michael Kramme

and other original source materials. Of special interest is the large collection of videotaped interviews with actual ‘trouper’ describing their professional and personal experiences.” (<http://www.thetheatremuseum.com/home.html>) The museum opened on September 1, 1973, reflecting the long-time interest of repertoire theatre company owners and actors Neil and Caroline Schaffner.

The Schaffners collected theatrical memorabilia from the 1850s to 1950s, a time when traveling performing companies toured rural areas of the United States. The troupes performed “comedy, farce, Broadway hits, adapted classics and suspenseful mysteries in settings that ranged from small-town opera houses to empty-lot tent theatres.” When the museum opened on the grounds of the Midwest Old Settlers and Threshers Association, volunteers catalogued the Schaffners’ collection. Since that time, numerous donations have been received of materials from the more than four hundred touring companies of that time, from their actors and their families. In addition to the materials listed, the museum holds newspaper clippings, scrapbooks, dissertations and items from minstrel shows, showboats and Chautauqs. The museum is also home to the Caroline Schaffner Research Library. In 1995 work began on a database for interested researchers to access. The Museum produces one of the old repertoire plays each summer.

Dr. Kramme located the duplicate copy of *The Sign of Four* that was originally part of the collection of Robert J. Sherman of Chicago, who ran a play bureau leasing scripts to these

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# 100

## YEARS AGO

### *The True Stories of Celebrated Crimes: Adventures of the World's Greatest Detectives*

The contentedly married Dr. Watson wrote in "A Scandal in Bohemia" that his own "complete happiness, and the home-centred interests which rise up around the man who first finds himself master of his own establishment" had caused him to drift apart from Sherlock Holmes. Watson was aware, though, of one "vague account" of his friend's activities, and that was Holmes's "summons to Odessa in the case of the Trepoff murder."

*A Scandal in Bohemia* occurred in March 1888. Twenty-one years later, journalist and author George Barton's *The True Stories of Celebrated Crimes: Adventures of the World's Greatest Detectives* was published by McKinlay Stone and Mackenzie of New York. One true story Barton recounts is the adventure of "General Trepoff and the Russian Students," an investigation set in March 1887. John Bennett Shaw had a copy of this book in his collection.

George Barton was born in 1866 in Philadelphia and joined the staff of the city's *Evening Star* when he was seventeen. Within two years he assumed the role of city editor. By the age of twenty-one, in 1887, he was employed by the *Philadelphia Inquirer*, serving as political editor and legislative correspondent. He was active in the American Catholic Historical Society, and eventually worked for several other newspapers as well as secretary to the collector of customs of the Port of Philadelphia from 1898 to 1913. He wrote a number of books related to

true crimes and mysteries, as well as historical works, including one detailing the work of Catholic nuns during the Civil War. He died in Philadelphia in March 1940.

The book includes fifteen chapters of true crimes and the police officials who solved them. Barton wrote in his introduction, "With the exception of necessary liberties in construction and a few pardonable embellishments,



General Trepoff and the Russian Students

these stories may be accepted as a series of real human documents." He also noted that "It is a fact, nevertheless, that the raw truth often possesses greater human interest than the most polished fiction." "General Trepoff and the Russian Students" recounts the story of Trepoff's investigation into a Nihilist threat to the Czar's life in the early part of March 1887. Trepoff was "in control of the secret service department of the police of St. Petersburg during the lawless period extending from 1875-1880." Barton describes M. Trepoff as "a typical example of the Russian policeman — cold, remorseless, and as inevitable as fate." He also noted that Trepoff was "successful in this difficult position because he won the warm commendation of the Czar,

and at the same time, the hearty detestation of the people....Vera Zassolic, a young Nihilist, shot at him while he was seated in his office in the early part of 1880." Despite his personality flaws, Trepoff's detective skills and instincts enabled him to capture the potential assassins and prevent the Czar's death, which was planned for March 13, 1887.

We know who General Trepoff was, but who was the Trepoff named in "A Scandal in Bohemia"? In "Scandalous Bohemian Names," Chapter Seven in *Sherlock Holmes, A Study in Sources*, Donald A. Redmond writes of the Trepoff murder which was the reason for Holmes's summons to Odessa:

Christopher Redmond rejects the idea of Feodor Feodorovich Trepoff, police prefect of St. Petersburg, who was wounded by a young woman Nihilist in 1878, and who died in 1889 — but apparently not by murder. He suggests Feodor Feodorovich's son, Dmitri Feodorovich, who in his turn became commandant of the Imperial Police.

Dmitri Fedorovich's obituary in the September 16, 1906 *New York Times* noted that his father, Feodor, was "a foundling, whose parents were never known. He was found upon the back doorstep of a German family, by whom he was taken in, and the name of Trepphof (German for doorstep) was bestowed upon him for the place where he was found." Feodor rose to power in the service of Czar Alexander II and died in 1889. His son Dmitri followed his father's path into the police department and was named Police Master of Moscow and later Governor General of Moscow. He was described as ruthless and so hated that even his own relatives tried to kill him. He was only 50 years old when he died on September 15, 1906 as a result of a "heart affection and asthmatic troubles."

*Continued on page 8*

# 50

YEARS AGO

## The Gardner-Shaw Connection

Martin Gardner is a writer known to many people for his more than 75 books on many subjects, from philosophy to Oziana, mathematics to Chesterton, pseudoscience to poetry, magic to religion. And he has written about Sherlock Holmes.

In his unpublished memoirs, Gardner, now 95, writes about a high school experience.

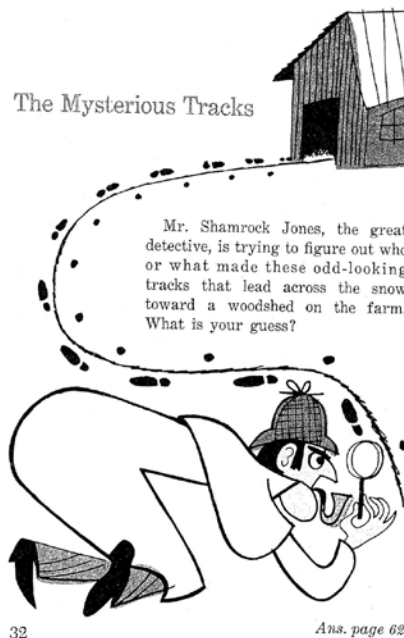
One day an English teacher asked everyone in class to say what book they had most enjoyed during the past few months. She expected us to name such novels as *Ivanhoe* or *Vanity Fair*, which had been assigned reading, but when it came to my turn I said *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. Everyone in the class tittered except the teacher who looked pained.

Gardner was quoted in the *Tulsa Tribune*, when just 12, asserting Holmes was his favorite!

While he attended Tulsa Central high school, John Bennett Shaw was at a parochial school in Tulsa. Gardner does not recall how they met, but they became fast friends and Shaw was a frequent visitor to Gardner's home. Gardner's family could afford a home tennis court and Shaw was a fine tennis player. Oddly, Gardner never met Shaw's parents.

As their undergraduate days ended they got together, in 1937, for a summer of directed reading. Two authors among many they concentrated on were Doyle and Chesterton. At this remove Gardner remembers bring-

ing Doyle to the table, and Shaw Chesterton whom the Notre Dame alumnus admired. They ordered a copy of Vincent Starrett's *Private Life of Sherlock Holmes*. Gardner wrote to Starrett about his claim that the color of Holmes's eyes was unknown; Gardner knew they were grey. No record of this correspondence survives, but Shaw once said in an interview that he and Gardner often met with Starrett when they haunted Chicago bookstores together in the 1930s. (Gardner does not recall this, though he does recall other encounters with Starrett.)



The Mysterious Tracks

After that summer Gardner and Starrett roomed together in New York City, when Shaw went to graduate school there. Gardner had dropped out of Chicago Theological Seminary and was hoping to break into the free-lance market. After four months, with his funds depleted, having sold nothing he had written, they parted company, and Gardner returned to Tulsa and to a series of mundane jobs and Navy service. In 1948 Gardner, still free-lancing, wrote about Shaw for the *Tulsa Magazine*, after Shaw had returned to Tulsa and was operating a successful bookstore.

Shaw was now married to the red-haired Margaret, who Gardner recalls was every bit as witty as Shaw himself. The Shaw household was a meeting place of the literary and liberal crowds of Tulsa. Gardner recalls meeting William Saroyan there, as well as the occasional fellow-traveler. Gardner was not in Tulsa long, going on to Chicago and New York, eventually working on the children's magazine *Humpty Dumpty*.

Gardner's first true Sherlockian piece was "The Missing Walnuts," a *Humpty Dumpty* story that was reprinted in *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine* in 1956. (Frederic Dannay, BSI, "The Dying Detective," was an acquaintance.) Next was a Sherlockian allusion in "The Mysterious Tracks," printed in the *Arrow Book of Brain Teasers*, 1959 (the justification for this article). In 1960 he released his best-selling book, *The Annotated Alice*, published by Clarkson Potter, with whom Gardner had a good relationship. This was the first popular annotated work of literature, and spurred many similar works. Gardner knew W. S. Baring-Gould, who worked at Time-Life Inc., and introduced him to Potter; in 1962 Baring-Gould and his wife, Ceil, published *The Annotated Mother Goose*. And of course Baring-Gould went on to do *The Annotated Sherlock Holmes* for Potter, published in 1967.

Shaw owned a book called *Famous Single Poems*, by Burton Stevenson, that inspired Gardner's life-long interest in single-poem poets. So when Gardner produced his *Annotated Casey at the Bat*, he returned the favor to Shaw by including in his book references to the Kansas town Moorville, (Mudville) which had been mentioned in "The Three Garridebs."

Gardner spent 25 years at *Scientific American*, setting the standard for popular exposition of mathematics. His tireless efforts against pseudoscience have made him the father of

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## From the President

The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections annual membership meeting occurred on November 19, 2009. As Mike McKuras noted in his article about it, officers were re-elected, we welcomed Tim Reich as a new board member and thanked Phil Bergem for his many years of dedicated service on the board. It was my pleasure to present Tim Johnson with the Bryce L. Crawford, Jr. Award for the best article in the Friends Newsletter in 2009. He also delivered the State of the Collections Address.

The Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota was welcomed as a new member of the Sigerson Society, created to honor donors who contribute ten thousand dollars in gifts or pledges to The Sherlock Holmes Collections.

John Bergquist, BSI gave the Keynote Address titled *The Manuscript of "The Adventure of the Three Students" and Its Publication in Facsimile*, based on the presentation he gave at the Arthur Conan Doyle symposium at Harvard in May. The silent auction was a great success, with all money going to the E.W. McDiarmid Curatorship Endowment.

Next year's annual membership meeting will take place on August 6, 2010 in conjunction with *The Spirits of Sherlock Holmes*, an international conference at the Andersen Library from August 6-8, 2010 sponsored by the Friends, the University of Minnesota Libraries and the Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota.

As 2009 comes to an end, please consider a generous donation of time and material, not just money. We are thankful for all our Friends. With your help we will make The Sherlock Holmes Collections a World Center for research and study of all things Sherlockian. ♥

Richard J. Sveum, M.D., BSI

## Acquisitions

Larry Czarnecki donated his original pastel painting of Holmes and Watson, titled *Sleuths*, to the Sherlock Holmes Collections. Tim Johnson accepted it at the December 3rd Norwegian Explorers Annual Dinner.



Larry Czarnecki and Tim Johnson

Susan Diamond contributed several items of interest prepared for the 50th Running of the Chicago Silver Blaze: number 73 of 111 of her *History of the Race*, number 49 of 110 of *Congratulations from Sherlockian Scions*, and the special commemorative pin

issued for the events held October 31st and November 1st of this year. Also, John Bergquist donated the printer's proof for *Two Celebrations*, edited by Candace Lewis, the race handbook he produced for the Baker Street Irregulars.

George Hubbs visited the Collections on November 16. While there, he donated two books: *The Sign of Four* and a volume containing *The Hound of the Baskervilles* and *A Study in Scarlet*. The books are printed in either Russian or Ukrainian.

Emory Lee donated two items of interest to the Sherlock Holmes Collections. Emory forwarded the May 10, 1944 *Life* magazine issue featuring a long and detailed article titled "Sherlock Holmes, The Great Detective Takes a New Lease on Life" on pages 77-82 and the Fall 2009 *Stanford Medicine* with an article entitled "Medical Mysteries: Where's Holmes When We Need Him?" exploring several medical cases.

Gayle Lange Puhl sent in holographic copies of "my 1966 correspondence with Vincent Starrett," which included two letters from Starrett and a signed copy of his sonnet "221B."

Also received: the latest issues of *Foolsap Document* and Three Garridebs flyer; the September 2009 *Footprints & Lens of the Ribston-Pippins*, the Sound of the Baskervilles *Ineffable Twaddle*, *The Moor* from Sweden's Baskerville Hall Club, *Prescott's Press* and *Camden House Journal*. ♥



George Hubbs and Tim Johnson

Photo by Tim Reich

Photo by Julie McKuras

## An Update from the Collections

“ He had travelled a good deal in his time” (VALL)

In November I presented my annual “state of the collections” address to Friends at our annual meeting. Here, in shortened form, are some highlights from that talk.

This last year has been a time of travel... to and from the Collections. We saw a number of groups, families, classes, and individual visitors to the Library, to see exhibits, learn about our holdings, and explore those riches. At the same time, we found ourselves traveling to other places — to share our own experiences and to learn from others working in the same vineyard. Last November found us in Regina, Saskatchewan, delivering papers and sharing panel discussions at the University’s Doyle symposium. In January we were in New York and the annual birthday gathering of the Irregulars. The high point of the year was my visit to London and Portsmouth

in February and March with fantastic opportunities to explore collections and develop new relationships. The year of travel was capped off with the delightful Doyle symposium at Harvard in May.

The year also saw an increase in the collections through gifts and purchases. Notable gifts included the estate of the late Francine Swift, with other important donations from Peter E. Blau, David L. Hammer, Lee Karrer, Andrew Jay Peck and others. We continue our fruitful relationship with Otto Penzler and the Mysterious Bookshop and enjoy the local expertise of Steve Stilwell.

And we continue to look for new ways to share the collection with others. Our expanding roster of finding aids to archival collections and the upcoming Media Repository, to be launched in 2010, will allow us to mount many of the audio-visual resources from the Collections. We expect that the forthcoming movie *Sherlock Holmes* will draw further attention to the Library and our Holmes

resources; interviews have already been given to Public Radio’s “Studio 360” program and the Associated Press. The University’s Media Relations department is also working with us to provide additional exposure of the Collections. And, of course, our next conference in 2010 will give us a chance to share more of the collections — through exhibit and programs — with our Friends and the public.

In the end, we are in a strong position in terms of finances, collections, and the continuing dedication of you our Friends. We can’t do what we do without you. Through your involvement as volunteers, board members, newsletter authors and editors, and donors of money and materials you are moving us along our way to become the world’s center for the study and appreciation of our most famous consulting detective, Sherlock Holmes. Thank you! And best wishes for the coming year! ♥

Tim Johnson

## A Visit to the Collections

In late November, Associated Press reporter Jeffrey Baenen and photographer Dawn Vilella toured the Sherlock Holmes Collections. Baenen interviewed Tim Johnson, Dick Sveum and Julie McKuras for a planned article to run in conjunction with the release of the movie *Sherlock Holmes* in December. ♥



Photo by Julie McKuras

Timothy Johnson, Jeffrey Bainen and Dawn Vilella

## Musings

We’re pleased to welcome four new writers to this issue of our newsletter. Dana Richards writes about Martin Gardner, in recognition of Gardner’s 1959 *The Book of Brain Teasers*. Dana is working on a biography of Gardner, which will be in addition to a 350-page bibliography of Gardner’s works. Dana noted that the Sherlock Holmes Collections, which holds a file of the Shaw/Gardner correspondence, was helpful to him in writing the biography. Martin Gardner, who turned 95 on October 19th this year, has added here his own remembrance of his friend John Bennett Shaw. My thanks to Jon Lellenberg who forwarded the text of the October 19th *New York Times*

article by John Tierney about Gardner. Entitled “For Decades, Puzzling People With Mathematics,” Tierney covered Gardner’s writing history, calling Gardner “the world’s best-known recreational mathematician, [who has] probably introduced more people to the joys of math than anyone in history.”

Mike McKuras, “partner and confidant” of the editor, covers the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections annual meeting. Last but not least, Russell Merritt writes about his friend Chris Steinbrunner (“The Tankerville Scandal,” BSI) and why he chose to make a donation in his memory. I’d like to thank Karen and Bill Palmer, who describe

Steinbrunner as “a good friend - and an amazing man,” for sharing their photo. Our other articles feature a new donation to the Collections as well as the 100 Years Ago piece about the mysterious General Trepoff.

The Sherlock Holmes Collections have seen a slight surge in interest with the upcoming release of the film *Sherlock Holmes*. Good or bad as it might be, it’s always a pleasure to see reporters and photographers visiting the library.

We all hope that everyone has a good holiday season, and that we’ll see many of you in New York next month. ♥

Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI

## The Sign of Four... Continued from Page 1

touring companies. He also noted: "When a company manager leased a play, he was sent only one copy of the entire play. This was for the director. This is one of those copies. The manager also received a set of 'parts.' One part for each role. The part had only the individual actor's cues and lines rather than the entire script. This made the memorization of lines much easier and faster. Many of these companies performed five or six plays in rotation. Typically, they would perform the plays during one week, and then move to the next town

and repeat the plays the following week."

The Museum's website includes a list of familiar faces who toured in repertoire companies. Those named include Clark Gable, Chill Wills, Lyle Talbot, Irene Ryan, Warner Baxter, Milburn Stone (who appeared as Captain Vickery in the 1943 film *Sherlock Holmes Faces Death* with Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce), Ralph Bellamy, Red Skelton, and Melvyn Douglas.

*The Sign of Four* is an original, with two copied pages from the primary script

held by the museum. It features the canonical characters, with a few misspellings, and concludes with Holmes's statement: "You have saved the treasure Wiggins — and for the woman I love."

Dr. Richard Caplan, BSI ("Dr. Jackson") wrote that since the Younger Stammers have "no archives of any sort, it seemed to me that it might be appropriate for the collection at the University of Minnesota, if they didn't already have one, or one like that." ♣

Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI

## Remembering John Bennett Shaw

By Martin Gardner

My best friend during my high school days, then and thereafter, was John Shaw, the legendary book collector and Sherlock Holmes scholar. I cannot now recall how we met. It was an unlikely event because John, a devout Catholic, attended a Catholic school while I, raised a Methodist, attended a public school. Our paths diverged when I entered the University of Chicago and Shaw enrolled at Notre Dame.

Chicago is not far from Notre Dame, so there were many happy get-togethers in the Windy City. We enjoyed dining at Chicago's top restaurants, and exploring the city's rare bookstores. A heavy-set man, Shaw nevertheless was light on his feet, and actually played on Notre Dame's tennis team! I attended one match on the Chicago campus when his team won.

Shaw's first major book collection was of the writings of Gilbert Keith Chesterton, a famous British author we both admired, especially for his Father Brown mysteries. Shaw later gave his collection to Notre Dame. It contains many rare items such as a never-published set of drawings G.K. did for Wilkie Collins's novel *The Moonstone*.

After G.K., Shaw turned his attention to Sherlock Holmes and soon had one of the world's finest collections of Holmesiana. Shaw was active in the Baker Street

Irregulars. Decades later, when I lived in Manhattan, Shaw would invite me to the annual Irregular banquets. On January 8, 1971, Shaw was the after-dinner speaker. His talk was titled "To Shelve or To Censor: some disturbing thoughts about, and disgusting evidence from, the Sherlock Holmes Canon." It opened with Shaw saying that he had reread the entire Canon prior to a move to Santa Fe after the death of Margaret, his first wife. Shaw said he was profoundly shocked to discover that the canonical books were saturated with blatant porn! He would surely have to keep the books locked away from his young daughter Hodgie.

What followed in Shaw's notorious talk were dozens of startling quotations. In "The Red Headed League," for example, a banker laments the fact that he was forced to miss his usual Saturday night rubber. In "The Speckled Band," Holmes remarks that that morning he knocked up Mrs. Hudson, his landlady. And so on. Although the talk had the audience rolling in the aisles, it was unsuitable for publication in the Irregulars' journal. Happily it was preserved in a fanzine called *Shades of Sherlock* (Vol. 5, No. 2, August 14, 1971). My copy is inscribed "To Martin Gardner who will understand, being a careful reader, too. John Bennett Shaw, BSI." After our undergraduate days John and I shared an apartment near Columbia University where Shaw was taking courses

in English literature, and I was struggling to survive on occasional sales to little magazines. After that we drifted apart, I to Chicago and into the Navy, and to even more years in New York City.

In addition to collecting, Shaw somehow managed to hold down several jobs in Tulsa. Margaret's family owned a funeral home. After her father jumped to his death out of a hospital window, John took over the management of the funeral home. For a while he even drove the home's ambulance! [hearse?] I remember him telling me about having to take a badly wounded person to the hospital after a bad traffic accident.

He also bought and managed Tulsa's finest new-books and records shop. My article, "Tulsa's Fabulous Bookman," appeared in *The Tulsan*, a local periodical. Shaw also found time to take care of a shallow-oil drilling company started by an uncle.

John's second marriage was to Dorothy, who had been a clerk at his bookstore. She is best remembered in Sherlockian circles for her beautiful model of 221B Baker Street, accurate even to its bullet holes in the wall and the number of steps to its entrance.

Shaw was often asked if Sherlock Holmes was a real person or just a fictional character. He always answered, "Yes."

# Annual Meeting of the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections

The annual meeting of The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections was held on Thursday, November 19 in the Givens Suite of the Andersen Library, and was called to order by Dr. Richard Sveum, President. During his remarks, Dick announced that the 2010 conference, jointly hosted by the Friends, the Sherlock Holmes Collections and the Norwegian Explorers, has been rescheduled for August 6-8.

Tim Johnson, Curator of Special Collections, reviewed the current fund balances and explained how the money is used to acquire and sustain the collection. Tim also cited the continued valuable volunteerism of Lucy Brusic, Julie McKuras, and Dick Sveum.

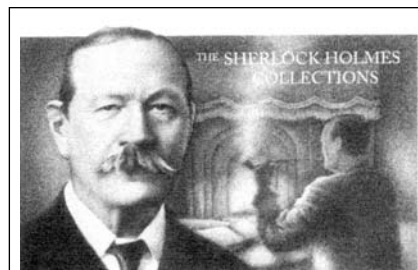
Julie McKuras reviewed the history of the Friends quarterly newsletter which is now in its thirteenth year and mailed to 366 subscribers throughout the world. The election of officers was then conducted by Michael McKuras. Phillip Bergem stepped down from the Board, Tim Reich was elected as a new member-at-large, and all other board members remained in their roles.

Elmer L. Andersen Director of Archives and Special Collections Kris Kiesling announced that during the next 6-8 month period Tim Johnson will move into a half time position as the E. W. McDiarmid Curator of the Sherlock Holmes Collections. Tim will continue half time in his current role as director of Special Collections.

Tim Johnson presented the state of the Collections with particular emphasis on his travels over the past year. Through these travels, he has worked to build relationships with the libraries of Portsmouth and London, and with the University of Regina in Saskatchewan. Tim was also presented with the Bryce L. Crawford Award for his article "He Made a Journey Abroad," in the June 2009 issue of this newsletter.

John Bergquist gave the keynote address titled *The Manuscript of "The Adventure of the Three Students" and Its Publication in Facsimile*. Mark your calendars for the next Friends meeting to be held on August 6, 2010. ♡

Michael McKuras



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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## My Donation to the Sherlock Holmes Collections

By Russell Merritt BSI

My donation to the Sherlock Holmes Collections is meant to honor the memory of my friend Chris Steinbrunner, who died in 1993. Many of you reading this didn't have the opportunity to know this unique man.

Today I suppose Chris Steinbrunner would be called a mentor, but in the 1950s he seemed to me more like a Pied Piper. Sherlockians will best remember him as the author of *The Films of Sherlock Holmes* and *The Encyclopedia of Mystery and Detection*. But for those of us who knew him he was the urbane whirling dervish who could spin out ideas and projects faster than a speeding New York subway. Officially he was a copy writer at WOR-TV, banging out scripts for *Zacherly the Cool Ghoul*, *Million Dollar Movie*, and

Joe Franklin's *Down Memory Lane* — the whiz kid who later became the network's film programming director. But unofficially he presided over a wide range of interlocking activities. He organized local film series, produced mystery and horror radio dramas; headed the New York chapter of the Mystery Writers of America; hosted book review programs; organized Sherlock Holmes exhibitions, film screenings, and seances; and founded the Priory Scholars of Fordham scion society. I met him in 1957 at a Mystery Writers of America cocktail party. I was a high school sophomore at the time; he was already an award-winning scriptwriter. But as fellow lovers of Conan Doyle, we bonded. In the years that followed no one was more encouraging than Chris in getting me to write stories, essays, and scripts. This became his stock in trade

— inspiring newcomers and showing them the possibilities of the modern Sherlockian world. He would have been enthusiastic about what's being accomplished today with the Sherlock Holmes Collections. ♡



Chris Steinbrunner

Photo courtesy of Karen and Bill Palmer

## 100 Years Ago...Continued from Page 2

The *New York Times* stated that in 1897, Dmitri “was shot and badly wounded by Vera Sassoulich because he had her fiancé publicly flogged for failing to salute an officer of the gendarmerie.” George Barton’s statement about the attempted murder of Feodor by Vera Zassolic seems very similar to the shooting of Dmitri by Vera Sassoulich.

Whatever the confusion is regarding which Trepoff was shot by which Vera, we know that neither father nor son died in 1887 or early 1888 when Holmes was summoned to Odessa. Holmes’s summons there must have been interesting, and the name Trepoff lives on. Michael Kurland uses it in his *The Infernal Device*. As for the

canonical Trepoff, the notorious punster John Bennett Shaw wrote an article in the December 1973 issue of the *Baker Street Journal*. The first line of “Sherlock Holmes was not Russian,” was “At least he was hurried in 1887.”

Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI

## 50 Years Ago...Continued from Page 3

the modern skeptical movement. His interest in the fringes of science started in the 1920s with Hugo Gernsback, editor of *Weird Tales*, and he picked up most of Conan Doyle’s Spiritualism books at William Targ’s bookstore in Chicago in the 1930s. In 1975 Gardner published “The Irrelevance of Conan Doyle” in *Beyond Baker Street: A Sherlockian Anthology*, a Festschrift in honor of BSI Commissionaire Julian Wolff edited by Michael Harrison (Bobbs-Merrill, 1976). This article combined an attack on Doyle’s extreme credulity with a whimsical bit of Higher Criticism.

In 1984, because of his abiding interest

in G. K. Chesterton, Gardner wrote a review of a pamphlet by Robert Mayer, a rival of Shaw amongst Chesterton collectors. Published in *Baker Street Miscellanea*, the story is about a meeting of Sherlock Holmes and Father Brown. Gardner has written far more about Chesterton than Shaw ever did, including *The Annotated Innocence of Father Brown* and his new *The Fantastic Fiction of Gilbert Chesterton*, published by the Battered Silicon Dispatch Box, which includes the Mayer review.

Finally in 1998 Gardner published the pastiche *Visitors from Oz* to celebrate the centenary of Baum’s original work. It contains a character named Sheerluck Brown,

with nods to Doyle and Chesterton. But there is another interesting tid-bit. There is a cameo by Carroll’s White Knight who sings the poem, “When you are tired of virtue.” This poem was written by Vincent Starrett, and when he and Gardner met, in 1948, Gardner greatly amused Starrett by reciting it, and observing that it could be sung to the tune of “When Irish Eyes are Smiling.”

Martin Gardner has kindly supplied a sidebar about Shaw to accompany this article. A similar article was published in the *Baker Street Journal*, December 1990.

Dana Richards BSI

## Remembrances

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

### In Honor Of

David & Priscilla Hammond  
Francine Kitts  
Paul Lockwood  
Julie McKuras  
Julie McKuras  
Julie McKuras  
Austin McLean  
Sherlockian Friends  
Bob & Terry Thomalen

### In Memory Of

Elmer & Alice Beerman  
June Berg  
Paul Churchill  
Jim Duval  
Joe Fink  
Sidney Goldberg  
Richard Lancelyn Green  
Richard Lancelyn Green  
Richard Lancelyn Green  
Don Hardenbrook  
Allen Mackler  
Allen Mackler  
Joseph & Eleonore Margolin  
Gordon Marlow  
Martha McCormack  
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Michael K. Mullaly  
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Philip Sherman  
Jan Stauber  
Chris Steinbrunner  
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Thomas Galbo  
Al Gregory  
John Lockwood  
Andy Fusco  
Robert Katz, MD  
Bill Vande Water  
Charles Press  
Sandy Kozinn  
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### From

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### Mailing list corrections requested—

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

Timothy J. Johnson, Curator