and was intrigued at once. According to G. J. Cubitt years later, “the album gave birth to the idea and he left many drawings about, evidently working out his code and messages.” And, of course, when he wrote his story Doyle not only used “dancing men” inspired by G. J.’s work, but indirectly credited the Cubits for their inspiration by borrowing their name for the central characters, and modeling the name of “Ridling Thorpe Manor” on Ridlington and Edingtonhorpe, way-stations in Norfolk on the way to Happisburgh.

Cubitt pointed out to Helling that he himself “did not invent secret writing.” It is most unlikely that he would have seen the American St. Nicholas, but it seems wholly plausible that he would have seen the “Restless Fays” in Boy’s Own and modeled his dancing men on them— and then Doyle modeled his own dancing men on Cubitt’s. It is also thoroughly plausible to think that Cubitt did not recall where his seven-year-old self had gotten the idea. In any event, neither Doyle himself nor young Cubitt had any reason to think that their cipher might be derived from an American magazine of thirty years before. So while the dancing men may very well have been rooted ultimately in the dancing men of Freemasonry a “tree alphabet” that had been noticed in an 1874 encyclopedia, others relate to the interrelationships of collections. An example of the first type might be the cipher composed of “little figures of men” that somewhat resembled them (and the dancing men), and an “alphabet of Hermes” that resembled them more closely, and a cipher composed of “little figures of men” appears in the 1866 edition of the U.S. Army’s “Manual of Signals.”

In defense of The Bookman itself, it must be said that the magazine seems to have regretted giving a platform to Lyndon Orr and the Eminent Surgeon to vent his indignation that I object to the eminent surgeon’s objection to the courteousness of the message he received. His apparent doubt of its truth is uninteresting.” Also, as an anatomist, he should surely see that the Restless Imps and the Dancing Men, though similar, are not identical.” It seems appropriate to allow Miss Wells, who herself was to publish more than 70 mysteries and 100 other books, to have the last word.


d 1
Dr. Alvin E. Rodin
Jack D. Key
Allen Mackler
Richard Sveum

Greta Ann Reich
Mike and Julie McKuras
Vivian Mae McKuras
Mike and Julie McKuras
Timothy Johnson, Curator
Richard Sveum

In Honor Of
John Bergquist
Bob & Lucy Bruss
Timothy Johnson, Curator
Vivian Mae McKuras
Gretta Ann Reich

In Memory Of
Howard & Edna Hong
Allen Mackler
Dr. Alvin E. Rodin

From
Michael Kean
Michael Kean
Richard Sveum
Mike and Julie McKuras
Mike and Julie McKuras

From
Philip H. Swiggum
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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

Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections
8

\**Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections**

\*Volume 14 Number 2 June 2010*

\*University of Minnesota*

100 Years Ago...Continued from Page 2

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 Bergquist
Bob & Lucy Bruss
Timothy Johnson, Curator
Vivian Mae McKuras
Gretta Ann Reich

**In Memory Of**

Howard & Edna Hong
Allen Mackler
Dr. Alvin E. Rodin

\*For friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections*
Cryptogram was really three decades to Doyle, “pointing out to him that his to the dancing men. The Eminent Sur
bled across an item in an 1874 issue hear him saying “Aha!”), an unidenti
However, crowed Orr (you can almost “was given to Sir A. Conan Doyle for
peat the extraordinary success” of ear
love affairs of history, accused Doyle of-un-admitted plagiarism, deliberate
story , of course, deals with Holmes’s other stories in the same book.” The
“The Adventure of the Dancing Men,” evidently think
... The alphabet "precisely the ‘dancing men’ of Sir A. Conan Doyle’s story ... The alphabet con-
dancing men as far as he was con
herself, without doubt he would have
he would have received from Doyle an equally polite reply setting forth the true origin of the dancing men as far as he was con-
cerned. The story was first dug out in the early 1930s by the great Sherlock-
and, in any case, would probably be read by Doyle as such.

To begin with, Sir N. Charles was a New York publication; it seems not to have occurred to the Eminent Surgeon's letter to Doyle was in fact a satirical accusation of plagiarism, 'Goofish' — or, in any case, would probably be read by Doyle as such.

However, crowed Orr (you can almost hear him saying “Aha!”), an unidenti-
fied ‘eminent surgeon of this city” — presumably New York — had stum-
bled across an item in an 1874 issue of St. Nicho-

It was clear that “The Adventure of the Dancing Men” tells of one Hilton Cubit of Bulring Thorap Manor in Norfolk, whose wife is threatened by the villain through messages in the dancing men cipher. In the early 1900s Doyle frequently visited his sister Connie and his husband E.W. Hornung, the creator of Raffles, who lived near Cromer on the Norfolk coast. He would stay not far away at the Hill House Hotel in Happisburgh, which was run by a family named Cubit. One day Mrs. Cubit asked Doyle to write something in her niece’s autograph album. Some years before, when he was about seven years old, Mrs. Cubit had written his name and address in the album in “dancing men.” Doyle spotted this by sending him a one-cent postcard with some crude sarcastic doggerel ending. “But having tried all other things to justify your acts, I’m ‘pure coincidence’ alone remains — and fits the facts!”

Now, if the Eminent Surgeon had

Mr. Orr seems — or pretended — not to have perceived that the Eminent Surgeon’s letter to Doyle was in fact a satirical accusation of plagiarism, ‘Goofish’ — or, in any case, would probably be read by Doyle as such.

It will be recalled that “The Adventure of the Dancing Men” tells of one Hilton Cubit of Bulring Thorap Manor in Norfolk, whose wife is threatened by the villain through messages in the dancing men cipher. In the early 1900s Doyle frequently visited his sister Connie and his husband E.W. Hornung, the creator of Raffles, who lived near Cromer on the Norfolk coast. He would stay not far away at the Hill House Hotel in Happisburgh, which was run by a family named Cubit. One day Mrs. Cubit asked Doyle to write something in her niece’s autograph album. Some years before, when he was about seven years old, Mrs. Cubit had written his name and address in the album in “dancing men.” Doyle spotted this

What might collaborators look like within this “irregular” group of scholars, teachers, students and readers? These and other questions about collaboration will be one of the main items under discussion during our “Spirts of Sherlock Holmes” conference in August. A pre-conference breakfast meeting with representatives from many of the major collections will allow curators, archivists, and associated Friends leadership to begin exploring the topic. The panel discussion during the conference will move the topic forward and allow for additional input. This is an exciting time to work with special materials such as the Holmes Collections. It is our hope that this discussion will provide new ideas, insights, and avenues of discovery for everyone who appreciates Holmes and his creator. At a minimum, we hope this focus and discussion on collaboration will give us clary and a point from which to move forward. As Holmes observed in “The Adventure of Silver Blaze”: “At least I have got a grip of the essential facts of the case. I shall enumerate them to you, for nothing clears up a case so much as stating it to another person, and I can hardly expect your co-operation if I do not show you the position from which we start.”

**COLLECTIONS**

Here are the web addresses for the institutions cited, as listed on the Sherlock Holmes Collections webpage [http://special.lib.umn.edu/sahae/]

The Arthur Conan Doyle Collection at the Toronto Public Library —
http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/amu_spe_conan_doylesjp

The Arthur Conan Doyle Lancelyn Green Bequest at Portmount —
http://www.comandolycollection.co.uk/

bstrait.org/

The Katie Collection of Doyleana, New-
berry Library, Chicago —
http://www.newberry.org/programs/SCD-
bro.html

www.westminster.gov.uk/services/libraries/special/sherlock/

The Sub-Librarians Scion of the the Baker Street Irregulars in the American Library 

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**Acquisitions**

Barbara Mikulas created a copy of the article “Arthur Conan Doyle, the Scot Who Created Sherlock Holmes,” which ran in the May/June 2010 issue of The Highlander, The Magazine of Scott-

Among the many newsletters received were the latest issues of Foulscap Docu-

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[Image: Photo by Julie McKuras]

[Image: Photo by Tim Johnson and Brian McCusker]
facility operated jointly between Co-
Columbia University, Princeton Univer-
sity, and the New York Public Library. An example of the sort of a globally
be the Center for Research Libraries (CRL), an international consortium
of university, college, and independent
research libraries that acquires and
preserves newspapers, journals, docu-
ments, archives, and other traditional
digital resources from a global
network of sources and makes this ma-
terial available to students, faculty and
other researchers through interlibrary
loan and electronic delivery.

The University of Minnesota Librar-
ies is actively engaged in both types of
activities. Internally, for example, we
have streamlined acquisition processes,
allowing us to quickly move books and
periodicals out to researchers. Exter-
ally, we are now scanning about one
million items for the Google Books
Project. In Andersen Library, home to
our archival collections, we continue to
digitize portions of our collections for
web accessibility, have mounted over 4,000 electronic finding aids
for our archival collections, and
collaborate with other departments and
institutions on exhibits, instruction,
collection development, and program-
ning. All of these efforts point to the
importance of cooperation. Coopera-
tion, both internally and externally, will
be a key to our future success.

In January, as part of the Libraries’
planning process, James Neal, Vice
President for Information Services
and University Librarian at Columbia
University, presented a talk entitled
“Defensive Diversification Versus Rad-
cal Collaboration: The Strategic Context
for Content and Collection
in the Academic Research Library.”
That’s a topic for a complex subject,
but there were a number of impor-
tant “takeaways” that might guide our
future thinking and planning. Neal
dealt with a number of assumptions
about research libraries, collection
development, and collaboration. They were:

- Academic research libraries will
continue to develop comprehensive
collections in all formats
- Collections will seek to align with
university academic priorities and
funding realities
- Coordination of collection
development across the research
library community will remain
marginalized
- Academic research libraries will
increasingly focus on distinctive
and unique collections to service
to regional and national scholarly
audiences
- Academic research libraries will
build innovative bi-lateral and
tri-lateral partnerships to expand
content access and delivery
- Preservation and archiving of the
cultural and scientific record will
remain balkanized and episodic
- National and global information
policies will not facilitate the deep
collection collaboration needed
- Work of collection building will
require new approach to professional
staffing and organization
- Collections will need to align more
immediately with teaching and learning
processes
- User communities will create
their own collection tools for discovering,
disseminating and accessing content
- Academic research libraries will
assume expanded roles as new
scholarly communication business
models are implemented
- More focus will be placed on data
capture and analysis to support
collection development decisions

To bring this all down to our immedi-
ate level of interest, what might the
future look like for the Sherlock Hol-
mes Collections in terms of collection
development and collaboration? First,
a new collection development policy is
being drafted for the Holmes Collec-
tions that will provide future direction
in developing a comprehensive col-
collection. Both the DeWaal bibliographies
and its supplement will continue to be
used as tools in this regard. Second,
the Holmes Collections (like all of
our collections) will be guided by the
priorities set by the University. For the
Libraries, this means greater attention
to discovery and delivery services,
scholarly communication and publish-
ing, content and collections, electronic
education and learning support, and
electronic scholarship. For Holmes this
will mean making more material avail-
able through the Web (through finding
aids and our new Media Repository),
assuring high preservation standards
and treatment of materials, seeking
out new opportunities for teaching,
research and scholarship, and looking
for other avenues of outreach and col-
aboration.

Within our planning documents, as
they apply to content and collections,
there is one point that is particularly
inviting: “Explore and develop partner-
ships and collaborations with other
institutions and corporate partners in
torder to better serve users.” This is
especially exciting given the network of
Doyle and Holmes collections that has
developed over the years. And it invites
the question “What partnerships and
collaborations might be developed and
strengthened between Minnesota, The
Belle Isle Trust at Hadley, the Doyle Col-
lection at Toronto, the Lancelyn Green
Request at Portsmouth, the Holmes
Collection at Marylebone Library in
London, the Kittle Collection at the
Newberry Library in Chicago, and
other places where Holmes or Doyle
materials are found?” Are there ways,
based on these strong relationships,
that collections or services might be
enhanced to better serve the Doylean/
Sherlockian communities? Is there ex-
pertise among curators, archivists, and
other staff that could be shared across
the community that might benefit col-
lections and users? Might collection
development policies be shared across
institutions to gain a better insight into
who is collecting what and avoid
unnecessary duplication? And what
Friends of the Sherlock Holmes are?
Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections
Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections
Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections
From the President

The Annual Membership Meeting of the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections will take place on August 6, 2010 at the Elmer L. Andersen Library. I am pleased to report that the endowed E.W. McDiarmid Chairmanship of the Sherlock Holmes Collections will be presented to Timolby J. Johnson by Kris Kiesling, Elmer L. Andersen Director of Archives and Special Collections and Assistant University Librarian for Special Collections Advancement. The membership meeting will be held on the first day of The Spirits of Sherlock Holmes international conference and I encourage all Friends to attend both. Our triennial conferences are sponsored by the Friends, the Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota and the Special Collections and Rare Books division of the University of Minnesota Libraries.

I look forward to seeing everyone and personally thanking you for being a Friend. I hope that you will consider making a donation of maternal, mental or volunteering your time. Together we can make the Sherlock Holmes Col-
lections one of the best centers for the study of all things Sherlockian.

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

An Update from the Collections

On April 1st I had a real treat. I was a guest on Kerri Miller’s show on Minnesota Public Radio. (You’ll find the show on MPR’s web site; it was on the second hour, 10-11 am.) I’m a big fan of public radio. I listen to it when I get up in the morning and in the last thing I hear when going to bed. I don’t always get to be on the show as Kerri’s show is in the middle of my work day, but I try to check her program’s web page as often as possible.

Earlier on I was contacted by Chris Dall, who helps produce “Midmorning,” wondering if I could join the program to talk about Sherlock Holmes, the collections, and anything else Sherlockian that might come our way. The main guest for this segment of the show was David Grinn, a staff writer at the New Yorker, who was going to talk about his new book The Devil and Sherlock Holmes. I jumped at the chance.

The taping was perfect as only two nights earlier I’d watched an interview with David on the “Charlie Rose” show. I was ready to go. Of course David and the invitation from Chris just sealed the deal. I did have some concerns about appearing on the show with David, because of his article, “Mysterious Circumstances” and the interview from Chris just sealed the deal. I did have some concerns about appearing on the show with David, because of his article, “Mysterious Circumstances” (also the first chapter in his book), on the death of Richard Lancelyn Green, and how it was received by the Sherlockian community. I won’t detail those concerns here, but you’ll find them on my blog, “Special & Rare On A Stick.” I do want to thank those friends whose advice and guidance I sought in preparing for the program arrived early to set up and had the chance to meet Ornith, the library staff at Bethany who was setting up items for the silent auction, and to chat with some of the guests. Maybe the biggest delight for me that evening was to re- connect with Dayle Zelenka, executive director of the Traverse of the Sioux Libraries System and the director of SMILE, and his wife Gerda. Dayle and I overlapped our careers for a few years together on the library staff at North Park in Chicago.

The evening proceeded from a delightful dinner to a silent auction and then to my presentation. I had a chance to talk about the foundations of the Norwegian Explorers, and the Holmes Collections at the University. Along the way I introduced the audience to the wider Sherlockian world, the Baker Street Irregulars, some of the actors who’ve portrayed Holmes, and Holmes in popular culture. By all accounts the evening was a great time and a good conversation. The added bonus for me was the chance to talk more with Kerri after the show was over. We stayed in the studio after the show talking more about Holmes, Doyle, and the US collection. I hope she has the chance to visit us for a tour. She may bring me back a couple of weeks before our conference for a chance to plug that event and talk more about Holmes. I’m looking forward to the opportunity my thanks to Kerri, Chris, and the other folks at MPR for the invitation to talk about the Collections and about a great Sherlockian, Richard Lancelyn Green.

Another pleasant event, also in April, was the invitation from the South-central Minnesota Inter-Library Exchange (SMILE) to be their guest speaker on April 15 for their National Library Week. The chosen topic for the evening? What else, but Sherlock Holmes.

The theme for the evening was “Sleuthing @ Your Library with Sherlock Holmes” and the event was held in Meyer Hall at Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato.

Speaking of the Collections...”I wanted to be there for the opportunity to feature him and learn more about his friendship with Shaw.”

Timothy Johnson

Is it always an exciting time when we welcome a new writer to the pages of this newsletter, and with this issue, we welcome two. Kris Kiesling, the Elmer L. Andersen Director of Archives and Special Collections and Assistant University Librarian for Special Collections Advancement, worked with Gardner to write the lead article about library cooperation and the future for the Sherlock Holmes Collections. Kris is always an interesting and discerning contributor at our quarterly Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections meetings and we appreciate her insight.

For our 100th Anniversary issue, we chose to highlight the 1910 article “A Case of Coincidence. Relating to Sir A. C. Doyle,” that case being the code “The Dancing Men.” Reflecting on the need for more enjoyment by Thaddeus Holt’s masterful writing, as well as the accompanying photographs. His novel-like storytelling includes many illuminating profiles of the war’s central figures and the roles they played in specific deceptive operations. Thaddeus Holt generously agreed to write our 100th Anniversary piece. We believe he was an excellent choice.

Tim Johnson informs us about his busy schedule in his “Upcoming at the Collections.” Dick Stevan updates us in his column “From the President,” and wrote our 50th Anniversary issue about Mr. Gardner’s “Dancing Men.” Reflecting on the need for more enjoyment by Thaddeus Holt’s masterful writing, as well as the accompanying photographs. His novel-like storytelling includes many illuminating profiles of the war’s central figures and the roles they played in specific deceptive operations. Thaddeus Holt generously agreed to write our 100th Anniversary piece. We believe he was an excellent choice.

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I look forward to seeing many of you at our conference in August. I trust, whenever you are, that you’ll have a delightful summer.

Timothy Johnson

Music

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In his March 3, 1957 column “Books Alive,” which ran in the Champaign Tribune, Vance Starr recounted the Sherlockian dream that would be dashed by the summer plans of the Norwegian Explorers [of Minnesota], a sci- onsociety of the Baker Street Irregulars. He was writing about the planned pilgrimage to Reichenbach Falls but we hope his words also apply to the 2010 summer plans. In comparison with the Spirits of Sherlock Holmes conference to be held Aug 6-8, there will be two wonderful exhibits on display. Visitors will be pleased to see our late friend Allen Mackler’s replica of Sherlock Holmes sitting room at the Wilson Library from June 1 – August 29, and the conference display at the Elmer L. Andersen Library will be available from July 12 – October 15. We look forward to seeing many of our readers this summer.

Julie McKaras, ASH, BSI

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P 5 Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections

(Washington Times). In the February 20, 2010 Wall Street Journal Nicholas Rankin listed The Decoders as one of the five best books written about Britain’s military intellec-
ture. He wrote “This scholarly yet en-
tertaining magnum opus is the definitive account of all the strategies used by the Allies against the Axis in World War II. It’s a treasure trove of information about library cooperation and the future for the Sherlock Holmes Collections. Kris is always an interesting and discerning contributor at our quarterly Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections meetings and we appreciate her insight.

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An Update from the Collections

Doing a live radio show is always a little unnerving; you don’t want to make any mistakes or put your foot in your mouth. But in the end there were no worries. I felt well-prepared and Kerri quickly put me at ease. Minnesota Public Radio is a great radio operation and they do things at a high level of excellence. I have to admit the thrill of seeing some of the behind the scenesoperation, and I really enjoyed the time in the control room before going into the studio for my segment of the show. It was a great time and a good conversation.

The added bonus for me was the chance to talk more with Kerri after the show was over. We stayed in the studio after the show talking more about Holmes, Doyle, and the US collection. I hope she has the chance to visit us for a tour. She may bring her collection and the invitation to talk about the Collections and about a great Sherlockian, Richard Lancelyn Green.

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I look forward to seeing many of you at our conference in August. I trust, whenever you are there, that you’ll have a delightful evening.

—Timothy Johnson

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The timing was perfect as only two nights before the show I was received by the Sherlockian community. I won’t detail those concerns here, but you’ll find them on my blog, “Special & Rare On A Stick.” I do want to thank those friends whose advice and guidance I sought in preparing for the program.

From the President

T he Annual Membership Meeting of the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections will take place on August 6, 2010 at the Elmer L. Andersen Library. I am pleased to report that the endorsed E.W. Meling Resolution regarding curatorship of the Sherlock Holmes Collections will be presented to Timothy J. Johnson by Kris Kiesling, Elmer L. Andersen Director of Archives and Special Collections and Assistant University Librarian for Special Collections Advancement. The membership meeting will be held on the first day of The Spirits of Sherlock Holmes international conference and I encourage all Friends to attend both. Our regional conferences are one of the best centers for the study of all things Sherlockian.

—Richard J. Steum, M.D., B.S.I.

From the President

M usings

T his is always an exciting time when we welcome a new writer to the pages of this newsletter, and with this issue, we welcome two. Kris Kiesling, the Elmer L. Andersen Director of Archives and Special Collections and Assistant University Librarian for Special Collections Advancement, worked with Carter Tim Johnson on our lead article about library cooperation and the future for the Sherlock Holmes Collections. Kris is always an interesting and discerning contributor at our quarterly Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections meetings and we appreciate her insight.

For our 100 Years Ago article, we chose to highlight the 1910 article “A Case of Coincidence” relating to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s “The Dancing Men.” Reflecting on the need for an author to pen the piece, Jon Lellenberg noted the number of past members of the BSI community with backgrounds in this area. Fleischer Prantl’s 1939 book Secret and Urgent covered cryptography so extensively that the second edition was quickly withdrawn from circulation at the War Department’s request during World War II. Echo Clark, Jr. served in one of the most sensitive parts of U.S. military intelligence at the Pentagon during the war, and Bulo Daversport in Army Counterintelligence. There is present-day Sherlockians with similar backgrounds, and one man suggested for our 100 Years Ago by Jon was Thaddeus Holt.

Thad, described by Jon as a “deep-voiced Holmesian,” has contributed to the Baker Street Journal, is a Master-Copper-Beck-Smith of the Sons of the Copper Bechecrs. He has been a lawyer for over fifty years and served as the Deputy Under-Secretary of the Army from 1965-1967. Holt’s “You Have Been in Afghanistan, I Presume” appeared in the Western 1944-1945, and his book The Doctors, Allied Military Deception in the Second World War came out in 2004, and one reviewer noted that it “deserves a five-d吱al rating”.

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I look forward to seeing many of you at our conference in August. I trust, whenever you are there, that you’ll have a delightful evening.

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From the President
“I am exceedingly obliged”... Continued from Page 1

The University of Minnesota Librar- ies is actively engaged in both types of activities. Internally, for example, we have streamlined acquisition processes, allowing us to quickly move books and periodicals out to researchers. Externally, we are now scanning about one million items for the Google Books Project. In Andersen Library, home to our special collections, we continue to digitize portions of our collections for web accessibility, having mounted over 2,000,000 finding aids for our archival collections, and cooperate with other departments and institutions on exhibits, instruction, collection development, and programming. All of these points contribute to the importance of cooperation. Cooperation, both internally and externally, will be a key to our future success.

In January, as part of the Libraries’ planning process, James Neal, Vice President for Information Services and University Librarian at Columbia University, presented a talk entitled “Defensive Diversification Versus Radical Collaboration: The Strategic Context for Content and Collection in the Academic Research Library.” That’s a long title for a complex subject, but there were a number of important “takeaways” that might guide our future thinking and planning. Neal made a number of assumptions about research libraries, collection development, and collaboration. They were:

- Academic research libraries will continue to develop comprehensive collections in all formats
- Collections will seek to align with university academic priorities and funding realities
- Coordination of collection development across the research library community will remain marginalized
- Academic research libraries will increasingly focus on distinctive and unique collections in service to regional and national scholarly audiences
- Academic research libraries will build innovative bi-lateral and tri-lateral partnerships to expand content access and delivery
- Preservation and archiving of the cultural and scientific record will remain balkanized and episodic
- National and global information policies will not facilitate the deep collection collaboration needed
- Work of collection building will require new approach to professional staffing and organization
- Collections will need to align more intimately with teaching and learning processes
- User communities will create their own tools for discovering, disseminating and accessing content
- Academic research libraries will assume expanded roles as new scholarly communication business models are implemented
- More focus will be placed on data capture and analysis to support collection development decisions

To bring this all down to our immediate level of interest, what might the future look like for the Sherlock Holmes Collections in terms of collection development and collaboration? First, a new collection development policy is being drafted for the Holmes Collections that will provide future direction in developing a comprehensive collection. Both the DeWaal bibliographies and its supplement will continue to be used as tools in this regard. Second, the Holmes Collections (like all of our collections) will be guided by the priorities set by the University. For the Libraries, this means greater attention to discovery and delivery services, scholarly communication and publishing, content and collections, electronic education and learning support, and electronic scholarship. For Holmes this will mean making more material available through the Web (including finding aids and our new Media Repository), assuring high preservation standards and treatment of materials, seeking out new opportunities for teaching, research, and scholarship, and looking for other avenues of outreach and collaboration.

Within our planning documents, as they apply to content and collections, there is one point that is particularly inviting: “Explore and develop partnerships and collaborations with other institutions and commercial partners in order to better serve users.” This is especially exciting given the network of Doyle and Holmes collections that has developed over the years. And it invites the question “What partnerships and collaborations might be developed and strengthened between Minnesota, The BSI Trust in London, the Doyle Collection at the Kittle Collection, the Lanchen Green Bequest at Portsmouth, the Holmes Collections at Marylebone Library in London, the Kittle Collection at the Newberry Library in Chicago, and other places where Holmes or Doyle materials are found?” Are there ways, building on these strong relationships, that collections or services might be enhanced to better serve the Doylean/Sherlockian communities? Is there expertise among curators, archivists, and other staff that could be shared across the community that might benefit collections and users? Might collection development policies be shared across institutions to gain a better insight into who is collecting what and avoid unnecessary duplication? And what of Friends groups? Are there ways for them to interact in collaborative ways?

Continued on page 7

In January 1960, the journal of the Kansas Medical Society published “Arthur Conan Doyle: Doctor and Writer (1859-1930)” written by C. Frederick Kittle, M.D., Kansas City. The article begins, “One hundred years ago – on May 22 to be exact – Arthur Conan Doyle, the creator of Sherlock Holmes was born.” The six page article covers the life of Conan Doyle, concluding: “He was a combination of many different entities blended into one: the physician, the sportsman, the champion of the underdog, the historian, the orator and the author.” At that time Dr. Kittle was a member of the Department of Surgery, University of Kansas Medical School, Kansas City, Kansas.

The Sherlock Holmes Collections at the University of Minnesota has a reprinted copy of the article that was sent to Nathan Bengs by Dr. Kittle in 1962. Included was a cover letter, typed on University of Kansas Medical Center stationery, thanking Bengs for his letter to Dr. Kittle. After John Bennett Shaw acquired the article and accompanying correspondence, he added his “The Library of John Bennett Shaw, B.S.I.” bookplate to the bottom of the letter. The Kittle to Bengs to Shaw to Minnesota connection is an interesting provenance. Another connection to Minnesota occurred when Dr. Kittle delivered the University of Minnesota Medical School Quarterly Surgical Seminar, History of Medicine Lecture on December 2, 1964. “Arthur Conan Doyle, Detective – Doctor” (revised and enlarged) was published in April 1965, issue of the University of Minnesota Medical Bulletin, Official Publication of University of Minnesota Hospitals, Minnesota Medical Foundation and the Minnesota Medical Alumni Association.

Dr. Kittle admits that he got a lot out of the basic article that he rewrote and changed over the ensuing fifty years. It has appeared, as noted by Ronald DeWaal as “slightly changed” as “The Case of the Versatile A. Conan Doyle” in The University of Chicago Magazine in 1969 and as “Sherlock Holmes – Physician and Detective” in The Proceedings of the Institute of Medicine of Chicago in 1981. Not listed in DeWaal is the article, “There’s More to Doyle than Holmes” that was published in The Phonos, the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society’s quarterly journal in 1997. The Caxton Club of Chicago has the article on their website at http://www.caxton-club.org/readings/doyle.html.

While we enjoy the Kittle to Bengs to Shaw to Minnesota connection, there is equally an interesting relationship predating Dr. Kittle’s article. Dr. Logan Clendening (1884-1945) was the founder and chair of the Department of the History and Philosophy of Medicine at the University of Kansas Medical School and is known to us for his Sherlockian writings, and as a “friend and benefactor of Vincent Starrett,” (Jon Lellenberg, “Logan Clendening: Canonizing an Irregular Saint,” Baker Street Journal, December 1992). Dr. Ralph Major succeeded Clendening as department chair and delivered the address, “Logan Clendening” at the 1938 Logan Clendening Lecture in the History and Philosophy of Medicine at the medical school. Major was a mentor of Dr. Kittle at a time Kittle was beginning his interest in Conan Doyle scholarship and building his own collection while serving as a surgery resident at the University of Kansas Medical Center in the mid-1950s. At this time, Dr. Kittle acquired the 19-page handwritten manuscript of “The Romance of Medicine,” written by Arthur Conan Doyle in 1910. It was this manuscript, a lecture about the nature of medicine and his reflection on his experiences as a physician in South Africa, that inspired London’s St. Mary’s Hospital Medical School, which sparked Kittle’s collecting passion in Dr. Doyle.

The Kittle Collection of Doyleana was donated to the Newberry Library in Chicago in 2003 to commemorate the establishment of the collection. Donald J. Terras, RSI published Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes: Essays and Art on The Doctor and The Detective. The Newberry Library has the “Biography of a Collector” on their website at http://www.newberry.org/programs/biographies. Dr. Kittle recently reflected on the fifty years since he published his original article. He still pursues his collecting passion and told me that he continues to acquire and read books about Arthur Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes. Like the subject of his article written fifty years ago, we celebrate Dr. Kittle as a doctor and writer.

Richard J. Sveen, M.D., RSI
old and warning him against the pos-
cryptogram was really three decades of
bled across an item in an 1874 issue fied “eminent surgeon of this city”
However, crowed Orr (you can almost
substitution cipher.) “Some credit,”
ent little stick-figure or “dancing man.”
“Some interest compared with the
"The Adventure of the Dancing Men,”
was paid.” One of these stories was
repeat the extraordinary success” of ear
In 1904, said Orr, Doyle “tried to re-
secondly ins-
so to say, a second’s in-
pection should have shown, the stick-
figures are much the same, but their
poses are quite different. Similarly,
Mr. Orr seems — or purported — not to
have perceived that the Eminent
Surgeon’s letter to Doyle was in fact
a sarcasm accusation of plagiarism,
"Gotcha” — or, in any case, would
probably be read by Doyle as such.
To begin with, St. Nicholas was a New
York publication; it seems not to have
occurred to the Eminent Surgeon
that Doyle was not likely to have seen
an American children’s magazine of
three years ago. In fact, evidence
would probably read by Doyle as such.
Now, the Eminent Surgeon had
couched his original letter in courteous
terms, without doubt he would have
received from Doyle an equally polite
reply setting forth the true origin of
the dancing men as far as he was con-
cerned. The story was first dug out in the early 1930s by the great Sherlock-
ian Gavin B larne, and further
ished out by the Dutch Sherlockian Corne-
lius Helling, who got it from the very
individual who inspired Doyle.
During the discussion, the panel during the conference will move the topic
further along and allow for additional
input. This is an exciting time to work
with special materials such as the Holmes
Collections. It is our hope that this discus-
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Collections. It is our hope that this discus-

The Adventure of the Media Buzz...

What might collaboration look like within this “irregular” group of scholars, teachers, students and readers?

These and other questions about col-
Rudeness, and outright lying.

unknown to the Eminent Surgeon,

That the facts!”

The Eminent Surgeon’s letter to Doyle was in fact
A Case of Coincidence

acquaintance that he must have left, but with a
light-hearted brushoff, sending to the
Eminent Surgeon a postcard that sim-
ply said: “Dear Sir: Pure Coincidence.
Yours truly, A. Conan Doyle.” That was not any satisfactory answer when
sent to an eminent member of Sir A.
Conan Doyle’s own profession,” stunted
Lyndon Orr. “It was curt in tone and
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However, crowed Orr (you can almost
hear him saying “Atha!”), an unidenti-
fied “eminent surgeon of this city” —
presumably New York — had stum-
bled across an item in an 1874 issue of St.
Nicholas, a children’s magazine, featuring a cipher called “the Restless Imps”
Little stick-figures very similar to
the dancing men. The Eminent
Surgeon then took it upon himself to write to Doyle, “pointing out to him that his
cipher was really three decades old and warning him against the pos-
sibility that other aged material might be palmed off on him.”

Now, Mr. Orr’s powers of observa-
tion were clearly rudimentary. He said
that the cipher in Poe’s The Gold Bug
consisted of numbers, which
when in fact it consists of numbers and
of punctuation marks. He said that no
ciphers were employed in
“The Dancing Men,” evidently think-
— or, in any case, would

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Surgeon then took it upon himself to write to Doyle, “pointing out to him that his
cipher was really three decades old and warning him against the pos-
and was intrigued at once. According to G. J. Cubitt years later, “The album gave birth to the idea and he left many drawings about, evidently working out his code and messages.” And, of course, when he wrote his story Doyle not only used “dancing men” inspired by G. J. work, but indirectly credited the Cubitts for their inspiration by borrowing their name for the central characters, and modeling the name of “Ridling Thorpe Manor” on Ridlington and Edington, way-stations in Norfolk on the way to Happisburgh.

Cubitt pointed out to Helling that he himself “did not invent secret writing.” It is most unlikely that he would have seen the American St. Nicholas, but it seems wholly plausible that he would have seen the “Restless Fays” in Boy’s Own and modeled his dancing men on them—and then Doyle modeled his own dancing men on Cubitt’s. It is also thoroughly plausible to think that Cubitt did not recall where his seven-year-old self had gotten the idea. In any event, neither Doyle himself nor young Cubitt had any reason to think that their cipher might be derived from an American magazine of thirty years before. So while the dancing men may very well have been rooted ultimately in the restless imps, there was no way for Doyle to know this, and when the restless imps were brought to his attention by the Eminent Surgeon he must indeed have seen it as coincidence. (Cubitt humorously sent to Cornelius Helling an “autograph” composed of stick figures— who form letters with the poses of their bodies. These do not much resemble either Doyle’s dancing men or the restless imps/fays, whereas the latter do resemble each other very much. But it is not at all clear that Cubitt’s 1950s figures were intended to reflect the dancing men of the old autograph album, nor that after the lapse of more than half a century Cubitt would have remembered in detail the cipher used by him at the age of seven.)

Actually the restless imps/fays themselves were not particularly original. Others have noticed in an 1874 encyclopedia of Freemasonry a “tree alphabet” that somewhat resembled them (and the dancing men) and an “alphabet of Hermes” that resembled them more closely, and a cipher composed of “little figures of men” somewhat resembled them (and the dancing men), and it is therefore in a spirit of righteous indignation that I object to the eminent authors as Sir A. Conan Doyle receive, they would wonder that they are answered at all. “An author has no more time to give away to strangers than any other working-man, and it is therefore in a spirit of righteous indignation that I object to the eminent surgeon’s objection to the correctness of the message he received. His apparent doubt of its truth is uninteresting.” “Also, as an anarchist, he should surely see that the Restless Imps and the Dancing Men, though similar, are not identical.”

It seems appropriate to allow Miss Wells, who herself was to publish more than 70 mysteries and 100 other books, to have the last word.

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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 Bergquist
Bob & Lucy Brucic
Timothy Johnson, Curator
Vivian Mae McKuras
Gretta Ann Reich

In Memory Of

Howard & Edna Hong
Allen Mackler
Dr. Alva E. Rodin

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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

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University of Minnesota

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