



"A singular set of people, Watson."

Holmes was 34 years old and Doctor John H. Watson 36.

Main Characters:

Lord Robert St. Simon, a middle-aged bachelor, second son of the Duke of Balmoral, an impoverished aristocrat. Hattie Doran, young American heiress, St. Simon's fiancée. Flora Millar, former dancer at the Allegro music hall, ex-mistress of St. Simon. Aloysius Doran, Hattie's father, a former American miner who struck it rich. Francis Hay Moulton, Hattie's husband whom she believed dead. Inspector Giles Lestrade, Scotland Yard detective.

Notable Quotes:

"My correspondence certainly has the charm of variety."

"This looks like one of those unwelcome social summonses which call upon a man either to be bored or to lie."

"I assure you, Watson, without affectation, that the status of my client is a matter of less moment to me than the interest of his case."

"It is always a joy to meet an American . . . for I am one of those who believe that the folly of a monarch and the blundering of a minister in far-gone years will not prevent our children from being some day citizens of the same world-wide country under a flag which shall be a quartering of the Union Jack with the Stars and Stripes."

An Inquiry into: "The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor"

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"The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor" was first published in *The Strand Magazine* in April 1892. It is part of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*.

The case dating varies depending on the Canon chronology expert. The estimates appear on the table. If the case took place in 1888, as the majority states, then Sherlock

The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor

<i>Chronologist</i>	<i>Date of the Adventure</i>
<i>Canon</i>	Early October 1887
<i>Baring-Gould</i>	Friday, October 8, 1886
<i>Bell</i>	Tuesday, October 6, 1887
<i>Blakeney</i>	October 1888
<i>Brend</i>	Early October 1887
<i>Christ</i>	Tuesday, October 9, 1888
<i>Dakin</i>	Friday, October 12, 1888
<i>Folsom</i>	Friday, October 12, 1888
<i>Hall</i>	Early Autumn 1887
<i>Keefauver</i>	Thursday, October 6, 1887
<i>Klinger</i>	1888
<i>Zeisler</i>	Friday, December 7, 1888

Please note that Canon chronologists may differ on pivotal dates and comparative periods between cases, thus a simple majority is not necessarily correct. Most Canon scholars settle on a single chronologist's results for their research framework.



Yet Another Bland Memoir

The parameters by which Watson judged which of Holmes' cases he thought were worthy of seeing the light of day have always been a source of unending as well as irritating puzzlement for me. In this

instance, for example, he makes an extra effort to indicate at the beginning of the case that, “no memoir of [Holmes] would be complete without some little sketch of this remarkable episode.” To which I wonder, “In what way remarkable?” I must admit I find it very odd that the Good Doctor would be so ready to set down for us the facts of a very bland episode that is completely lacking in any deep conundrum or tangled skein. It has no criminal intent or doings, to be thwarted by the Great Detective; unless one stretches a point to consider Hattie Doran’s bigamy a crime.

Then again there is always the consolation that it does give us an opportunity to visit at 221B with our two friends and once more to laugh at Lestrade over his find and “deductions.”

A Bit of Commiseration Towards Mrs. Hudson



This case opens a window to daily life at 221B. It provides a very revealing and vivid mental image of the disarray at Baker Street. When Holmes asks Watson to provide him with a chronology of the happenings at the St. Simon’s wedding as covered by the newspapers, the Good Doctor immediately complies, beginning with the personal column of the *Morning Post* of “some weeks back”! On top of which we know that Holmes had several daily newspapers delivered to their rooms; when one considers that Holmes received several newspapers every

day, having several weeks’ worth of them must have resulted in prodigious stacks!

There must have been times when that legendary room must have resembled an alcoholic rat’s nest!

This brings us to long-suffering Mrs. Hudson. It is impossible not to feel sorry for the poor put-upon, woman. Although she obviously cared very much for her famous lodger, she still had to contend with target practice on her walls, correspondence transfixed by a jack knife on the mantle, piles of documents and papers scattered throughout, and the invasion of her house by very dubious characters at all hours of the day. She had to have felt like Sisyphus in her losing attempts to maintain any kind of tidiness in the Great Detective’s quarters.



Yet, again, she was ecstatic when he unexpectedly returned from the Great Hiatus and she learned that he was alive.

The Penurious Nobleman



As the second half of the 19th century began developing, the great houses of England experienced an increasingly rapid decline. For generations these great estates had traditionally provided their owners with considerable revenues derived from the use of the land. What was once a desirable asset was fast evolving into an encumbrance. The continuing robust development of the Industrial Revolution, coupled to considerable changes in the tax structure, made the ownership of land a losing venture, while opening new horizons in the cities for those who had once worked and cared for the land.

However, that was not all. This was a time when a double curse resulting from heavy land taxation combined with improved means of transportation and refrigeration. Crops and cattle alone no longer guaranteed a good income, with ships equipped with refrigeration bringing cheaper meats and produce from places like Argentina and New Zealand. It is not surprising that within a very short span of years land ownership transmuted into a burden.

Oscar Wilde's acerbic wit expressed this decline quite clearly. In *The Importance of Being Earnest*, when Lady Bracknell wishes to determine whether Jack Worthing is a suitable match for Gwendolen, she quizzes him about the source of his income and he reveals that it is chiefly in investments and not land, to which she replies, "That is satisfactory. What between the duties expected of one during one's lifetime, and the duties exacted from one after one's death, land has ceased to be either a profit or a pleasure. It gives one position, and prevents one from keeping it up. That's all that can be said about land."

In St. Simon's case, his financial situation seems to have deteriorated well beyond this considering that he found necessary to sell some of the estate's paintings.

Hattie's six-figure dowry that the newspapers reported with awe was not unusual; besides her own considerable personal fortune there would be more to come in the form of an inheritance when her millionaire father died. One may very well pity poor Lord Robert, who was so unexpectedly deprived of all this bounty and left to founder in a dark ocean of familial debt.



If the marriage between the unpolished, rough-and-tumble Hattie Doran and the aristocratic Lord Robert St. Simon seemed unusual it was not uncommon. When—aside from their substantial personal fortunes and personal property—marrying an American heiress could bring in an immediate welcome infusion to empty family coffers of £100,000 (≈\$38,000,000) to £500,000 (≈\$188,000,000) or more in the form of a dowry, it is not startling that these ladies were in such great demand.

The Peculiarly "Quiet" Marriage

According to what St. Simon told Holmes, the marriage had been celebrated quietly to avoid the possibility of a scandal caused by his former mistress, Flora Miller. Particularly viewed from the perspective of the time, this makes little sense.



While it is true that, as the term went, there were important "quiet" marriages, the reasons for such a decision were limited. The primary and genuinely justifiable reason was, back then, a serious illness or death in the family. Another not so ideal reason for such privacy might arise from the bride already finding herself in "an interesting condition."

Here, however, none of this makes sense considering that Lord Robert St. Simon was the heir of one of the great noble families of the Realm—for heaven's sake, Richard the Lionheart's blood flowed through the man's flaccid bluish veins!. Because of this the expectation would have been for a grand-scale wedding (particularly since it was the bride's father who would have borne the brunt of the expense).

One should also recall that Flora Miller's claim to fame was having been a chorus girl at the Allegro. As such, her social standing would have been well into negative numbers, and she would have been disdained and ridiculed by all those who count. The press might

have run a few column-inches about another poor girl seduced, abused, and abandoned by a heartless nobleman, but most classes considered nearly every one of those in the acting professions (particularly dancing girls) social lepers. Back then, particularly with the nobility, an aggrieved former mistress was not an uncommon occurrence and would generally been dismissed with a wink and a shrug. It would not have been considered a reason to carry out such an important event *sub rosa*.

I also find it peculiar that Hattie's father would have agreed to this. If he went through the trouble of buying a distinguished son-in-law for himself and a husband for Hattie, one would expect that he would have wanted to get her started on her road to nobility with sumptuous nuptials well above the level of vulgarity.

The Bride's Reaction

Hattie's behavior at the wedding does not make much sense, although Holmes seems to condone her when he remarks, "I fail to see that anyone is to blame. I can hardly see how the lady could have acted

otherwise, though her abrupt method of doing it was undoubtedly to be regretted. Having no mother, she had no one to advise her at such a crisis."



As she walks towards the altar, she sees the love of her life, the husband she believed dead, and displays remarkable *sang froid* in how she carries on without even a noticeable start, takes her vows, and then drops her bridal bouquet on the way out of the church for Moulton to insert his note in it.

Then, after having controlled her feelings, she proceeds to escape from St. Simon's house without any explanation, leaving him ignorant and con-

cerned about what has happened, alone to face guests and family, unable to give even a feeble explanation.

Clearly, a much better way of getting herself out of the situation in which she found herself would have been a simple and very common ploy of the time: fainting. She would then have been taken to a quiet place in the church where she might revealed to St. Simon what had happened both avoiding a scandal and not humiliating the poor man.

Instead, she acts in a way that precipitates a very public wild-goose chase that she had to realize would almost immediately involve the police. Worse—had Holmes not found her, she would have vanished just like Windibank's Hosmer Angel did in IDEN. St. Simon would not have been certain whether he was free to try to lure another heiress for years to come.



The Revealing Hotel Bill

Holmes' method to find the lovebirds' hotel through the amounts listed on the bill was inspired genius. If one looks at the hotel bill, the reason behind his deduction becomes clear. The bill read, "Oct. 4th, rooms 8s, breakfast 2s. 6d, cocktail 1s, lunch 2s. 6d, glass sherry, 8d." In today's currency the bill would state, "Oct. 4th, rooms \$200.00, breakfast \$27.00, cocktail \$19.00, lunch \$47.00, glass sherry, \$12.00."

Certainly, not the No-Tell Motel...

Another Reference Source

According to Holmes, he solved the case as soon as Lord Robert told him the details, because "I have notes of several similar cases There was a parallel instance in Aberdeen some years back, and something on very much the same lines at Munich the year after the Franco-Prussian War."

This seems to indicate that well before even meeting Watson our sleuth had already made a study of crime—both national and international. This is revealed in *STUD* by his reference to past crimes, to the extent that Stamford suggests, "You seem to be a walking calendar of crime. You might start a paper on those lines. Call it the 'Police News of the Past.' "

Although it is not made particularly clear, it seems that the notes referenced by Holmes are separate from "the good old index." That being the case, his notebooks must have been as voluminous as that other source of reference.

It is not very obvious how Holmes got the information he entered into his notebooks. One may logically assume that he subscribed to a number of varied newspapers—both British and Continental—which would have also included the American press because he seemed to be well-acquainted with criminal activities in the U.S., as well as with the crime fighters; some of the Pinkertons, for instance.

Nevertheless, would these have provided him sufficiently in-depth details to allow him to untangle other crimes? We complain today about not-too-accurate press coverage—back then, journalists abusively gave their imaginations even more free rein.



What else happened in 1888:

Empire



Mashonaland and Matabeleland declared British sphere of influence.

◀ Suez Canal Convention signed: Suez Canal declared open to ships of all nations and free from blockade.

Sarawak and Brunei placed under British protection.

A 7.0-7.3-magnitude earthquake strikes North Canterbury, New Zealand.

Great Britain annexes Christmas Island.

Queen Victoria grants a charter to the Imperial British East Africa Company, and it is incorporated in London, England.

Canadian Pacific Railway opens Hotel Vancouver, Vancouver, British Columbia.

Hailstones kill about 250 in Moradabad district of Delhi, India.

Britain

County Councils' Act establishes representative county-based authorities.

Jack the Ripper has murder spree in Whitechapel, kills his last victim.



Annie Besant leads the London match factory girls on strike.

Commission to examine charges against Parnell.

◀ General Buller founds RASC (Royal Army Service Corps).

County Councils Act: elects councils to take over administrative duties of JPs.

Foundation of London General Omnibus Company.

Miners Federation of Great Britain formed; demands minimum wage.

Foundation of Scottish Labour Party.

Final report on Commission on Elementary Education Acts in England.

English Priory of Knights Hospitalers authorized by Royal Charter.

World

French Indochina formed.

Princess Isabel of Brazil signs *Lei Auréa* abolishing slavery.

Emperor Wilhelm I of Germany dies; Frederick III becomes Emperor from March to June, dies, and is succeeded by Wilhelm II.

Benjamin Harrison elected President of United States. Even though Cleveland received more popular votes, the Electoral College gives Harrison the election.



Unemployment demonstration in Rome suppressed by the military.

Louisville, Kentucky, becomes first government in U.S. to adopt Australian ballot.

Marshal Bazaine, officer in charge of the French Foreign Legion in Mexico during Emperor Maximilian's rule, dies.

◀ King Leopold II of Belgium introduces the Order of the African Star.

Agricultural depression causes Sweden to abandon free trade.

British Honduras adopts decimal currency.

Great Blizzard of 1888 strikes northeast U.S., 400 die.

Phil Sheridan, who fought as a Union General against the South during the American Civil War dies.

Clashes in Paris between Radicals and Monarchists. Anarchists riot in favor of weavers of Lille and glass blowers of Lion. Paris stone masons and waiters strike for higher wages and shorter work schedules.

More liberal constitution granted to Serbia by Milan.

Pennsylvania's Monongehela River rises 32 feet after 24-hour rainfall.

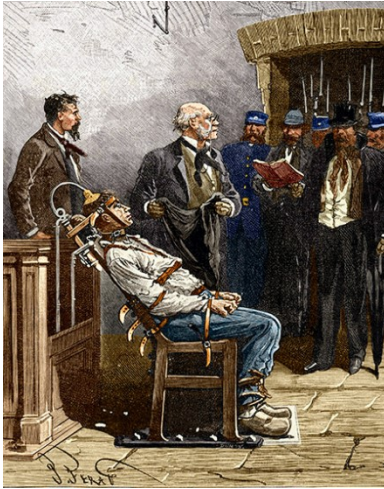
Bandai volcano in Japan erupts for first time in 1,000 years.

Use of Danish language forbidden in schools in German N. Schleswig.

Founding of the Dutch shipping line Koninklijke Paketvaart-Maatschappij (KPM). It supports the unification and development of the colonial economy.

Reconstructed free port of Hamburg opens.

The Washington Monument officially opens to the general public.



Italy and Spain sign military treaty.

Revolution in Haiti culminates in the destruction of public buildings and the flight of President Salomon.

Ferdinand de Lesseps attempts to issue a fresh series of 1,000,000 bonds "to finish the Panama Canal." Proposal is withdrawn, de Lesseps resigns his directorship, and the project collapses.

Italians near Alite relieved by the withdrawal of the Abyssinians.

◀ New York State establishes electric chair for method of death penalty.

The first beauty contest is held, the Concours de Beauté, at Spa in Belgium. Winner is 18-year-old Bertha Soucaret of Guadeloupe.

First organized rodeo competition held, Prescott, Arizona.

Boulangier supported by Monarchists in France; his popularity threatens Third Republic.

Main portion of Bremen incorporated into German Customs Union; parts of Weser estuary remain free port.

Art

Van Gogh in Arles, Holland, paints *Sunflowers*, *Portrait of Armand Roulin*, *La Mousme*, and *Drawbridge at Arles*. Cuts off his left earlobe and gives it to a prostitute in Arles.



Oscar Wilde publishes *The Happy Prince and Other Tales*.

John Phillip Sousa composes the military march *Semper Fidelis* for the U.S. Marine Corp.

Tchaikovsky performs *Symphony No. 5 in E Minor* at St. Petersburg.

George Moore publishes *Confessions of a Young Man*.

◀ *Casey at the Bat* is published in *The San Francisco Examiner*, and recited publicly for the first time.

Cézanne paints *Peasant in a Blue Smock*.

Guilbert and Sullivan debut *The Yeomen of the Guard*.

Iannis Psichari, one of the creators of modern Greek literary language, publishes *My Journey* in demotic Greek.

Morris publishes *Dream of John Bull*, on a socialist commonwealth.

Matthew Arnold, critic, essayist, and poet dies.

Fontane publishes *Irrungen, Wirrungen*.

Monet paints *Cap d'Antibes*.

Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch publishes *Troy Town*, a novel about Cornwall.

Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec paints *Trace Horse of the Bus Line, Place Clichy*.

Stevenson publishes *The Black Arrow*, a novel about the War of the Roses.

Rimsky-Korsakov composes *Scheherazade*.

Charles Doughty publishes *Travels in Arabia Deserta*.

Seurat paints *Fishing Fleet at Port-en-Bessin*.

Thomas Hardy publishes *Wessex Tales*.

Kipling publishes *Soldiers Three*, and *Plain Tales from the Hills*; short stories of India.

Science and Technology

Dunlop's pneumatic tire developed, principle still unproven.

First wax drinking straw patented, by Marvin C Stone in Washington DC.

George Eastman registers the trademark "Kodak" and receives a patent for his box camera, which uses photographic paper roll-film.

Emile Berliner improves the gramophone.

Dr. Fitz, Boston surgeon, advocates the removal of the vermiform appendix in certain intestinal disorders, after several post-mortem operations. His advice is followed.

William Bundy patents the timecard clock.



First ballpoint pen patented.

The first known recording of classical music, Handel's *Israel in Egypt*, is made on wax cylinder.

Fridtjof Nansen, Norwegian explorer, crosses the Greenland icefield.

◀ Clinton Merriam founds the National Geographical Society in Washington, D.C., for "the increase and diffusion of geographical knowledge," and the first issue of its magazine is published.

Thomas Edison files a patent for the Optical Phonograph (the first movie).

Bertha Benz, wife of inventor Karl Benz, drives from Mannheim to Pforzheim, Germany in the first long distance automobile trip.

Lick Observatory, Mount Hamilton, California, formally inaugurates the Ewing duplex-pendulum seismometer, Ewing horizontal-pendulum seismometers, and Gray-Ewing vertical seismometers.

Hudson and Sclater publish *Argentine Ornithology*.

Mercerizing process introduced into cotton manufacture; facilitates later development of the artificial silk industry.

Spanish navy launches first submarine, designed by Isaac Peral. It features accumulator batteries, three dynamos, two 30-hp engines, electric propulsion, a torpedo tube, and periscope. Displacement is 80 tonnes, length 48 feet, and 6 feet beam.

Nikola Tesla makes first AC motor.

In the U.S., Leroy Buffington patents a system to build skyscrapers.

Incubators are first used for premature infants.

Pasteur Institute for the treatment of hydrophobia founded.

Theophilus Van Kannel of Philadelphia patents revolving door.

Sir J. Dewar and Sir F. Abel invent cordite.

William Seward Burroughs patents the first successful adding machine.

Louis Le Prince films the Roundhay Garden Scene, the earliest surviving film.

Heinrich Hertz produces electromagnetic waves, proves light and heat are both forms of electromagnetic radiation. Sir Oliver Lodge makes same discovery independently. Hertz used an induction coil; Lodge Leyden jars.

Next week's case: BERY.

Respectfully submitted,

Murray, the Courageous Orderly

(a.k.a. Alexander E. Braun)

"I should have fallen into the hands
of the murderous Ghazis had it not
been for the devotion and courage
shown by Murray, my orderly..."

All Sherlock Holmes photos have been published by courtesy of ITV Granada.

If you would like to join the Hounds of the Internet, email us at CourageousMurray@aol.com.

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