

The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet



CHRISTOPHER MORLEY SAID . . .

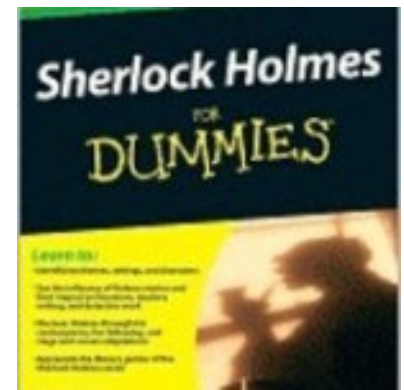
Dr. Watson thought it was a madman coming along Baker Street that winter morning; it was the portly banker Alexander Holder, whose despair was shown by his strange behavior. Holmes saved him from a scandal that would have involved an exalted name, but the story itself is less attractive than its brilliant opening.

DUMMIES SHORT SUMMARY (From *Sherlock Holmes for Dummies* by Steven Doyle & David Crowder)

“The theft of a priceless piece of jewelry allows Holmes to once again display his amazing crime-scene investigation skills.”

PUBLISHING HISTORY

- This is the 13th of the 60 stories published
- In England, it was published in *The Strand Magazine* in May, 1892
- In the U.S. it was published in various newspapers in April, 1982 ((the first 12 short stories (SCAN through FINA)) and some were published with permission but many were “pirated” and printed without permission)
- It is part of *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* collection, published by George Newnes, Ltd., London, 1892 and by Harper Bros., New York, 1892
- The British illustrator was Sidney Paget; the U.S. illustrator was J. C. Drake.



HOW MANY WORDS?

According to C. E. Lauderback, 1960 – – found on SHERLOCKIAN.NET website of Chris Redmond and at 9,783 words BERY has the 48th most words (#1 is VEIL – 4,499, #56 if NAVL – 12,701)

THE BEST OF SHERLOCK HOLMES (How do Sherlockians rate this story?)

- 1927 – Arthur Conan Doyle did not have it on this list of 12 favorites
- 1999 – The Baker Street Irregulars rated it 47th of the 56 short stories
- 1999 – The Sherlock Holmes Society of London votes it 49th of the 56 short stories

CLASSIFYING THE CASE (From *The Wandering Gipsies of Grimpen Mire* of Decatur, Alabama)

This case is one of 4 classified as a theft of gems. The others were BLUE, MAZA, and SIXN.

CHRONOLOGICALLY SPEAKING

Doyle was often very vague about stating WHEN the tale took place and included few contemporary references to help. Whether this was done intentionally or unthinkingly, the dating of events in the Canon is a very popular pastime pursued by several of our “scholars” researching and justifying their results to no end. We will default to William Baring-Gould’s dating of Friday, December 19, 1886 to Saturday, December 20, 1886 making it the 30th of the 60 stories in time. This means Holmes would be 32 and Watson is 34.

WHAT ELSE HAPPENED IN YEAR 1886?

It is always interesting to see what else is happening at the same time as the stories.

- Royal Niger Company Chartered.
- Colonial and Indian Exhibition.
- British annex Upper Burma.
- Prime Minister Gladstone’s Home Rule bill is defeated. It would have established a separate Irish legislature, Gladstone resigns.
- Chamberlain forms Liberal Unions.
- English Lawn Tennis Association is established.
- City of London buys Highgate Wood for public use.
- Woolwich Arsenal football team established.
- Slavery abolished in Cuba.
- Tunisia becomes a French protectorate.
- First Tournament of Roses parade is held in Pasadena.
- Geronimo surrenders, effectively ending the Indian Wars of the Southwest.
- Haymarket Square riot in Chicago.
- Alex Shagin 1986 Statue of Liberty Centennial Medal
- Statue of Liberty is dedicated.
- The Westinghouse Electric Company is established.
- Bonaparte family is banished from France.
- Robert Louis Stevenson publishes *Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* as well as *Kidnapped*
- Henry James publishes *The Bostonians*
- Rodin exhibits his statue, *The Kiss*.
- Franz Listz, Hungarian composer dies.
- James E Keeler discovers Saturn’s rings being made of debris.
- Nobel invents nitroglycerine.
- The element Fluorine is isolated.



HOLMES AND WATSON – PERSONAL INFO

The two gentlemen are sharing bachelor quarters at 221B.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

- **ALEXANDER HOLDER**, prominent banker
- **MARY HOLDER**, niece and adopted daughter of Alexander
- **ARTHUR HOLDER**, son of Alexander and a gambler

- **ANONYMOUS NOBLEMAN** leaves the coronet, a national treasure, with the banker as security for a loan
- **SIR GEORGE BURNWELL**, friend of Arthur, secret suitor of Mary. “One of the most dangerous men in England.” The thief
- **LUCY PAAR**, maid in the Holder house
- **FRANCIS PROSPER**, a green-grocer, suitor of Lucy

“QUOTABLE SHERLOCK”

Not the most memorable story, BERY had few memorable lines.

- Holmes to Holder – *“You owe a very humble apology to that noble lad, your son, who carried himself in this matter as I should be proud to see my own son do, should I ever chance to have one.”*
- Holmes to Holder – *“It is an old maxim of mine that when you have excluded the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth.”*

HOLMES’ FEE

Once again, Holmes violates his own history of saying he treats all clients evenly.

- Holmes to client: *“You place no limit on the sum I may draw.”*
- Client’s reply: *“I would give my fortune to have them back.”*
- Holmes *“Very good.”*

Holmes charged his client £4,000, which included £3,000, 6s, in Holmes’ expenditures. That will fatten the bank account.

SHERLOCK HOLMES ON THE BIG AND THE LITTLE SCREEN

- 1921 *The Beryl Coronet* with Eille Norwood as his 9th of his 47 movies
- 1965 *The Beryl Coronet* with Douglas Wilmer as an episode of his *Sherlock Holmes* series on the BBC.
- Erich Schellow as Holmes and Paul Edwin Roth as Watson – *Das Beryll Diadem* (1967 Germany)
- 1967 *Das Beryll Diadem* with Eric Schellow in a short German *Sherlock Holmes* series
- 2001 *The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet* as an episode of *Sherlock Holmes in the 22nd Century* (Animated TV series)



SHERLOCK HOLMES IN DISGUISE

The Master of Disguise used the deception of being disguised 14 times in 11 of the 60 stories. In *The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet* Holmes plays a common loafer (as opposed to an uncommon one?).

UNRECORDED CASES *(That involved Holmes)*

Watson would tease / torture his readers with “I know something you don’t.” Oh my, how Sherlockians love this category. I have in excess of over 150 examples in my collection. There are none in this tale.

IS THERE A DOCTOR IN THE HOUSE?

Victorian London, in the Holmes’ time, had approximately 1 doctor for every 100 people. 31 of the 60 tales have a doctor in them. This, of course, does not count Holmes’ Boswell. This listing is by Leslie Klinger in the Winter 2015 edition of *The Baker Street Journal*. Whether it was Doyle or Watson, a doctor wrote the story. In this story there was no doctor involved or mentioned.

FAINTING IN THE CANON *(courtesy of Sherlockian Karen Murdock)*

Fainting is extremely common in the Canon, appearing, in some form, in 37 of the 60 tales. In 21 cases someone actually faints. In 22 cases someone almost faints. And in 5 cases someone pretends to faint. In this month’s story Mary Holder who actually faints

HOLMES’S PUBLISHED & PROJECTED WORKS

Sherlockians love this topic and are regularly searching for these items. Holmes mentions published or projected works in 11 of the stories but none are mentioned in this story.

NEWSPAPERS (Real and Fictional)

Though included in only 20 tales some of our more obsessed Sherlockians love this one but not in this one.

ANNOTATED SHERLOCK

The 60 Sherlock Holmes stories used English as spoken in England from the 1880’s until the 1910’s. Some words are foreign to us today and need a “contemporary translation.”. For example:

- **“bow window”**- (or curved bay window) was also mentioned in MAZA but no bow windows were on Victorian Baker Street.
- **“square, black Morocco case”** – A thin leather made from goatskin and tanned with sumac.
- **“beryl”** is a mineral, silicate of beryllium and aluminum whose crystals are hexagonal. Its colored form is considered a gem stone; emerald, the green variety of beryl is the most values, followed by aquamarine, which is blue-green. There is no evidence of the color of the beryls in the *Beryl Coronet*.
- **“farthing”** – originally a “fourthing” – a quarter-penny.
- **“a double carriage sweep”** – a curved driveway.
- **“chafering”** – bargaining or haggling about terms or price.

WEAPONS *(from A Compendium of Canonical Weaponry by Dettman and Bedford)*

So many things can be considered as “weapons” that only 2 or 3 tales fail to have at least one. A weapon is “a means by which one contends against another.” There are several general categories to classify “weapons” that include: firearms, human agents, cutlery, animals, blunt instruments, extortion, toxin, blackmail, and miscellaneous. In our story, which is short, you will find just the following:

- **Revolver** – Sherlock Holmes' and is mentioned in 8 cases. To clap to the head of Sir George Burnwell.
- **Life Preserver** – (black jack) Which Sir George Burnwell grabbed to strike at Holmes.

ODD STUFF

Once again Sherlockians tend to find limerick material in the stories. All of these had been posted on *The Hounds of the Internet* site.

From Olivia Stationery

Mr. Holder, in charge of the crown,
Felt his offspring was letting him down.
 But Arthur was true.
 Mr. Holmes saw him through –
But Georgie and Mary left town.

From Don Dillstone

That Arthur stole the jewels seemed plain,
But he asserted again and again:
 "I didn't do it!"
 And Holmes would prove it,
By the tracks in the snow in the lane.

From Bill Briggs

Family members shouldn't be trusted,
Especially young girls who have lusted
 Unrequitedly.
 Won't work, can't you see;
They're sure to end up getting busted.