

# A STUDY GUIDE TO SHERLOCK HOLMES

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The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes  
Adventure XXI -- The Adventure  
of the Reigate Squire (Puzzle)

## THE REIGATE PUZZLE

### DATE OF THE ADVENTURE\*

(Date the Cunninghams were captured)

#### CLUES:

1. "... Holmes recovered from ... his immense exertions in the spring of '87." (398)
2. "... upon the fourteenth of April ... I received a telegram ... that Holmes was lying ill ..." (398)
3. "Within twenty-four hours I was in his sick-room ..." (398)
4. "Three days later we were back in Baker Street ..." (398)
5. "... a week after our return ... we were under the colonel's roof ..." (398)
6. "... the next morning ... the colonel's butler rushed in..." to tell Colonel Hayter, Holmes and Watson that William Kirwin had been shot the night before. (399)
7. Holmes captured the two Cunninghams on the same day that he heard about the murder.

#### CONCLUSIONS:

- A. 1 and 2 imply that Watson received the telegram on April 14, 1887
- B. A and 3 imply that Watson arrived at Holmes's sick room on April 15, 1887
- C. B and 4 imply that Holmes and Watson were back in Baker Street on April 18, 1887
- D. C and 5 imply that Holmes and Watson were in Reigate on April 25, 1887
- E. D, 6 and 7 imply that the Cunninghams were captured on April 26, 1887

### **The Cunninghams were captured on Tuesday, April 26, 1887**

\*The story may contain other clues to the date of the adventure. However, use only the clues shown here. Your only goal should be to use logical reasoning to find a date based on the clues shown here.

## THE REIGATE PUZZLE VOCABULARY WORDS

- singular (398, 399, 403, 405, 408) – **beyond what is ordinary or usual; remarkable**
- magnate (398, 407) – **a powerful or influential person, especially in business or industry**
- presses (399) – **an upright closet for storing clothes**
- plated candlesticks (399) – **candlesticks coated with silver**
- obtruded (399) – **imposed itself without invitation**
- J.P. (399, 404, 405) – **Justice of the Peace ; a magistrate appointed to preserve the peace in a county; often a local landowner**
- coachman (399, 406) – **driver of any carriage**
- pantry (399) – **room off a kitchen where food, tableware, linens, and similar items are stored**
- crib (400) – **a house or store; cracking a crib meant robbing a house or store**
- parish (400) – **a political subdivision of a British county or shire, usually corresponding in boundaries to an original ecclesiastical parish**
- Queen Anne house (403) – **house of unpretending and simple style with considerable construction of brick**
- Malplaquet (403) – **village in the north of France where English forces defeated the French in the early part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century**
- lintel (403) – **a horizontal crosspiece over a door or window**
- trap (403) – **one-horse, two-wheeled, open carriage**
- stone-flagged (405) – **with a floor made from flat slabs of stone**
- drawing-room (405) – **living room**
- malicious (405) – **deliberately harmful; spiteful**
- tartly (405) – **sharply; bitterly**

- commonplace room (405) – **room with no particular features; ordinary**
- dressing room (406) – **room off the bedroom where clothes are kept and where the room's resident dresses**
- petrel (406) – **any one of numerous black, gray, or white sea birds, especially the storm petrel, a bird that flies so close to the water that it appears to be walking on the water; perhaps so-named because Saint Peter walked on the water**
- vestige (406) – **visible trace, evidence**
- docilely (407) – **ready and willing to be taught; teachable**
- solicitors (408) – **lawyers who handle routine legal business but do not plead cases in court**
- astuteness (409) – **shrewdness; discernment**
- commiserating (409) – **feeling or expressing sorrow or pity for; sympathizing with**

## THE REIGATE PUZZLE OPEN QUESTIONS

1. This story was originally published in *The Strand* with the title “The Reigate Squire”. When it appeared in book form in *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes*, the last word was changed to the plural and the title became “The Reigate Squires”. The American edition of the book used the title, “The Reigate Puzzle”. Why do you think these title changes were made?

**The original title used the singular “squire” when, in fact, there were two squires. When this was noted, the last word was changed from “squire” to “squires”. On the other hand, “squire” is a British word, which means**

**‘an English country gentleman, especially the chief landowner in a district’**

**The American publishers thought that Americans would not understand the meaning of the word “squire” and hence be confused. So they changed the last word to “puzzle”.**

2. On page 408 Holmes says, “There were twenty-three other deductions which would be of more interest to experts than to you.” What were those 23 deductions concerned with? For example, one deduction could be concerned with the quality of the paper, that is, was the paper costly, average, or cheap.

- 1. The quality of the paper – costly, average, or cheap.<sup>++</sup>**
- 2. The rag content of the paper.**
- 3. Where the paper came from.**
- 4. The quality of the ink.**
- 5. The chemical nature of the ink.**
- 6. Where the ink came from.**
- 7. The age of the writing.**
- 8. Was the paper folded? If so, how?**
- 9. Had the fragment been torn from the whole, or the whole from the fragment?**
- 10. Was the tear started at the bottom or the top?**
- 11. Was the first penman right or left-handed?**
- 12. Was the second penman was right or left-handed?**
- 13. The type of pen used.**
- 14. Did both penmen use the same pen?**
- 15. The size of the sheet of paper from which the fragment came.**
- 16. Was the original sheet of paper notepaper, wrapping paper, or what?**
- 17. Were there any erasures on the paper?**
- 18. Had the writing been blotted between writings?**
- 19. Had the writing been blotted after the second writing?**
- 20. Did both penmen use the same ink supply?**
- 21. Were there fingernail marks made when the paper was torn?**
- 22. Was there any scent on the paper?**
- 23. Were there any other marks or stains on the paper?**

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<sup>++</sup>These 23 clues are from an essay “The Twenty-Three Deductions” by John Ball, Jr. (see p. 343 of Volume I of Baring-Gould in the Bibliography of this book).

## THE REIGATE PUZZLE SIMPLE QUIZ\*

1. What was found in the hand of the murdered man, William Kirwin?
  - a. nothing
  - b. a sheet of paper
  - c. a piece of a sheet of paper
  - d. a club
  
2. What did Holmes knock over in order to distract everyone?
  - a. a table holding a clock
  - b. a table with a bowl of oranges and a carafe of water
  - c. a table with nothing on it
  - d. none of the above
  
3. Why was William Kirwin murdered?
  - a. he had robbed the Acton house
  - b. he was blackmailing the Cunninghams
  - c. he was planning to run away and marry Annie Morrison
  - d. none of the above

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\* The Simple Quiz is designed to determine if the student has read the story. Anyone who has read the story through should have no trouble in completing this quiz. The Intermediate and Advanced Quizzes are more challenging.

## THE REIGATE PUZZLE INTERMEDIATE QUIZ<sup>#</sup>

1. What information did Holmes get from the mother of William Kirwin, the murdered man?
  - a. nothing
  - b. William Kirwin's age
  - c. the time William Kirwin left home
  - d. none of the above
  
2. Why did Holmes fake a nervous attack when he, Watson, and Inspector Forrester were visiting with the Cunninghams?
  - a. to give Watson time to complete his search
  - b. to distract the Cunninghams' attention from Watson
  - c. to stop the inspector from revealing the one clue
  - d. none of the above
  
3. Why did Holmes knock over the dish of oranges and carafe of water?
  - a. to give himself time to inspect the garden for footprints
  - b. to give himself time to get the incriminating piece of paper from Alec Cunningham's dressing gown
  - c. to give Inspector Forrester time to search the sitting-room
  - d. none of the above
  
4. How did Holmes get a sample of the elder Cunningham's writing?
  - a. Holmes got the elder Cunningham to sign the reward note
  - b. Holmes asked the elder Cunningham to write the reward note
  - c. Holmes deliberately made a mistake when he wrote the reward note
  - d. none of the above

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<sup>#</sup> The Intermediate Quiz is designed to test whether the student has read the story with reasonable attention to detail. The Simple Quiz is an easier test while the Advanced Quiz is much more challenging.

## THE REIGATE PUZZLE & ADVANCED QUIZ<sup>&</sup>

1. How did Watson describe Baron Maupertuis?
  - a. the most dangerous man on the Continent
  - b. the most accomplished swindler in Europe
  - c. the most hated man on the face of the Earth
  - d. none of the above
  
2. Where was Holmes lying ill?
  - a. the Hotel Dulong
  - b. a boarding house in Lyons
  - c. his rooms in Baker Street
  - d. none of the above
  
3. What was the police inspector's name?
  - a. Acton
  - b. Hayter
  - c. Forrester
  - d. none of the above
  
4. Where did the Cunninghams keep their dog?
  - a. in a kennel far from the house
  - b. chained on the side of the house
  - c. in the cellar
  - d. none of the above

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<sup>&</sup> The Advanced Quiz is designed for aficionados of the Canon. The questions are quite challenging. The Intermediate and Simple Quizzes are designed for the more casual reader of the stories.

## ANSWERS TO QUIZZES

QUESTION	1	2	3	4
<b>Silver Blaze</b>				
Simple	c	b	d	xx
Intermediate	c	a	a	b
Advanced	c	c	b	a
<b>The Yellow Face</b>				
Simple	b	c	c	xx
Intermediate	b	b	c	a
Advanced	c	b	b	c
<b>Stock-Broker's Clerk</b>				
Simple	a	b	c	xx
Intermediate	c	c	a	a
Advanced	a	a	b	b
<b>'Gloria Scott'</b>				
Simple	b	b	a	xx
Intermediate	b	a	b	c
Advanced	c	c	a	c
<b>Musgrave Ritual</b>				
Simple	b	d	a	xx
Intermediate	b	a	a	c
Advanced	a	b	c	a
<b>Reigate Puzzle</b>				
Simple	c	b	b	xx
Intermediate	a	c	b	c
Advanced	b	a	c	b
<b>Crooked Man</b>				
Simple	b	b	a	c
Intermediate	b	a	c	c
Advanced	c	d	a	b
<b>Resident Patient</b>				
Simple	c	b	c	xx
Intermediate	c	a	b	d
Advanced	b	c	c	a

Answers to Quizzes

QUESTION	1	2	3	4
<b>Greek Interpreter</b>				
Simple	b	c	c	xx
Intermediate	b	c	b	a
Advanced	c	a	b	b
<b>Naval Treaty</b>				
Simple	c	a	b	xx
Intermediate	b	a	c	a
Advanced	c	b	c	b
<b>Final Problem</b>				
Simple	c	b	c	xx
Intermediate	b	c	c	a
Advanced	a	a	b	b