

# A STUDY GUIDE TO SHERLOCK HOLMES

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**The Return of Sherlock Holmes  
Adventure XXXIV -- The  
Adventure of Charles Augustus  
Milverton**

**CHARLES AUGUSTUS MILVERTON**  
**DATE OF ADVENTURE\***  
(Date of Milverton's murder)

**CLUES:**

1. Watson says, "... I saw the gleam of an electric switch ..." (578)
2. Electric lights were first introduced in Hampstead in 1894
3. "It is years since the incidents of which I speak took place ..." (572)
4. The story was first published in 1904
5. The 4<sup>th</sup> was "... a cold, frosty winter's evening ..." (574)
6. Church marriages were not possible in Advent (December) nor in Lent (March)
7. Months of February in 1895 to 1899 were not cold
8. Milverton says, "... there certainly will be no marriage on the 18<sup>th</sup> ..." (574)
9. Church marriages were not possible on Sunday
10. January 18, 1896 was Sunday
11. The burglary and murder took place on the 13<sup>th</sup>
12. Holmes and Watson went to the theater on the evening of the burglary, the 13<sup>th</sup>
13. There were no theater performances on Sunday
14. January 13, 1895 was Sunday
15. January 4 was not frosty in 1897 nor in 1898

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\*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.

## CONCLUSIONS:

- A. 1 and 2 imply it was after 1894
- B. 3 and 4 imply it was long before 1904 probably 1899 or earlier
- C. A and B imply it was 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898, or 1899
- D. 5 implies it was December, January, February or March
- E. D and 6 imply it was January or February
- F. C, E and 7 imply it was January
- G. F, 8, 9, and 10 imply it was not 1896
- H. 11, 12, 13, and 14 imply it was not 1895
- I. C, G, and H imply it was 1897, 1898, or 1899
- J. I and 15 imply it was 1899

**Milverton was murdered on Friday, January 13, 1899**

## CHARLES AUGUSTUS MILVERTON VOCABULARY WORDS

- diffidence (572) – **shyness**  
reticence (572) – **reluctance to speak**  
niggard (572) – **stingy**  
impecunious (573) – **poor**  
boggling (575) – **hesitating**  
rakish (575) – **dashing, jaunty**  
goatee (575) – **beard trimmed to a soft point**  
ante-room (577) – **waiting room**  
plethoric (577) – **overfull, inflated**  
truculent (577) – **cruel, savagely brutal**  
veranda (577) – **open porch, usually roofed**  
portière (578) – **curtain hung in a doorway to replace a door  
or as a decoration**  
maw (578) – **mouth, crop, stomach**  
indolent (579) – **inclined to avoid exertion**  
pinion (579) – **to bind a person's arms**  
languid (579) – **drooping from weakness or fatigue**  
tiara (582) – **crown like head ornament, a frontlet or coronet**

## CHARLES AUGUSTUS MILVERTON OPEN QUESTIONS

1. Why didn't Holmes suggest that Lady Eva Brackwell deny the letters as he did when he advised the King of Bohemia in "A Scandal in Bohemia"?

**A woman, even a lady, wouldn't be believed but a man, especially a king, would.**

2. Is not the happiness of a housemaid (Agatha) – to whom Holmes falsely became engaged – as important as that of a society lady (Lady Eva)?

**Apparently not to Sherlock Holmes. This is more evidence of the British class system especially in Victorian times.**

3. Why didn't one of the women who Milverton exposed later expose Milverton?

**Nobody would believe a woman (see answer to 1 above)**

4. Why didn't Holmes seize the envelope that Milverton showed to him and thus save one more life? (574)

**Was he trying to deceive Milverton into thinking that this was his best chance?**

5. How did the murderess escape?

**Not over the wall. Perhaps she disguised herself as a servant and slipped back into the house.**

6. Why was Holmes so sure that nobody would break in while he was destroying the papers?

**Was Milverton's butler part of the plan?**

7. What four crimes did Holmes commit (575, 576, 577, 581)?

**Attempted unlawful detention (575)**

**Breach of promise (576)**

**Breaking and entering (577)**

**Malicious damage (581)**

8. What crime did Watson commit (576)?

**Blackmail**

9. Was Holmes's behavior that of 'the best and wisest man I have ever known' (The Final Problem, 480)?

**That depends upon whom Watson met.**

## CHARLES AUGUSTUS MILVERTON SIMPLE QUIZ\*

1. Charles Augustus Milverton was
  - a. a connoisseur of fine wines
  - b. a blackmailer
  - c. a wealthy socialite
  - d. none of the above
  
2. At the end of the story Milverton
  - a. is dead
  - b. has had his face disfigured by acid
  - c. is in jail
  - d. none of the above
  
3. What did Holmes do with the papers he removed from Milverton's safe?
  - a. he burned them
  - b. he returned them to their rightful owners
  - c. he gave them to the police
  - 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.

## CHARLES AUGUSTUS MILVERTON INTERMEDIATE QUIZ<sup>#</sup>

1. To whom did Holmes become engaged to marry?
  - a. the grocery clerk near Milverton's house
  - b. the post office caretaker
  - c. Milverton's housemaid
  - d. none of the above
  
2. What was the name of Milverton's house?
  - a. Appledore Towers
  - b. Dovercourt Manor
  - c. Hampstead Hall
  - d. none of the above
  
3. Who was Holmes's client in the case?
  - a. Lady Eva Brackwell
  - b. the Duchess of Dovercourt
  - c. Lady Hilda Trelawney Hope
  - d. none of the above
  
4. Which character from Dickens did Watson say Milverton looked like?
  - a. Scrooge
  - b. Mr. Pickwick
  - c. Fagin
  - 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.

## CHARLES AUGUSTUS MILVERTON ADVANCED QUIZ<sup>&</sup>

1. How many letters did Milverton's lady visitor on the night of his death say that she had compromising the Countess d'Albert?
  - a. two
  - b. five
  - c. seven
  - d. none of the above
2. Which one of the following particulars did Lestrade NOT use in describing the second criminal who happened to be Watson?
  - a. square jaw
  - b. thick neck
  - c. slight limp
  - d. strongly built
3. Where was the electric light switch in Milverton's study?
  - a. in the corner between the bookcase and the wall
  - b. near the corridor door
  - c. just behind the desk
  - d. none of the above
4. How many miles did Watson estimate that he and Holmes had run after escaping from Appledore Towers?
  - a. two miles
  - b. more than three miles
  - c. four and one-half miles
  - 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 FOR THE RETURN

QUESTION	1	2	3	4
<b>Empty House</b>				
Simple	c	c	c	xx
Intermediate	a	b	c	c
Advanced	c	a	a	b
<b>Norwood Builder</b>				
Simple	c	a	b	xx
Intermediate	a	a	b	c
Advanced	a	a	a	b
<b>Dancing Men</b>				
Simple	b	b	a	xx
Intermediate	b	c	a	a
Advanced	b	b	a	b
<b>Solitary Cyclist</b>				
Simple	a	c	c	xx
Intermediate	b	c	c	b
Advanced	b	c	a	c
<b>Priory School</b>				
Simple	b	a	c	xx
Intermediate	c	b	a	b
Advanced	d	a	c	b
<b>Black Peter</b>				
Simple	b	a	c	xx
Intermediate	b	c	b	c
Advanced	b	c	b	d
<b>Charles Augustus Milverton</b>				
Simple	b	a	a	xx
Intermediate	c	c	a	b
Advanced	b	c	b	a

QUESTION	1	2	3	4
<b>Six Napoleons</b>				
Simple	a	c	c	xx
Intermediate	b	b	c	b
Advanced	c	a	a	b
<b>Three Students</b>				
Simple	c	a	d	xx
Intermediate	a	b	c	b
Advanced	b	c	a	b
<b>Golden Pince-Nez</b>				
Simple	a	b	a	xx
Intermediate	c	c	c	a
Advanced	b	b	c	c
<b>Missing Three-Quarter</b>				
Simple	b	c	b	xx
Intermediate	b	a	b	c
Advanced	a	c	b	a
<b>Abbey Grange</b>				
Simple	a	c	c	xx
Intermediate	c	b	b	c
Advanced	b	b	a	b
<b>Second Stain</b>				
Simple	a	a	b	xx
Intermediate	c	a	b	c
Advanced	a	b	a	c