



The Return of Sherlock Holmes

Adventure XXXVIII – The Adventure of the Missing Three-Quarter

Publishing History

38 of the 60 stories

First published in *The Strand Magazine*, August, 1904

IN the US *Collier's Weekly*, November 26, 1904

Part of *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* collection by

George Newnes, Ltd., London, 1905

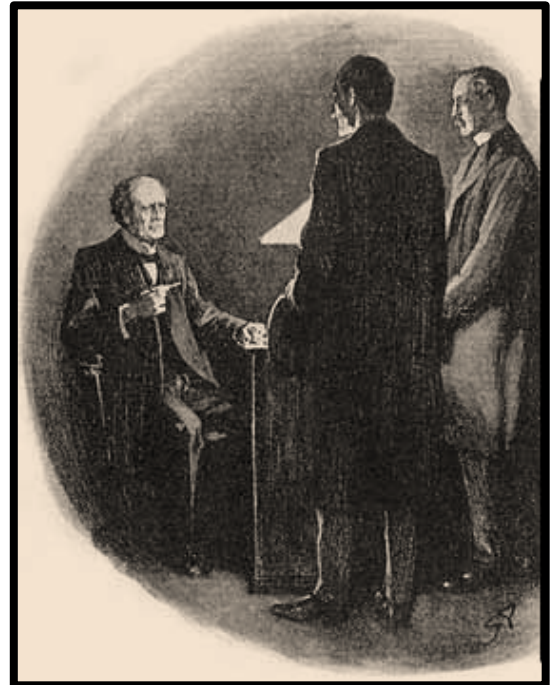
McClure Phillip & Co., New York, 1905

British illustrator – Sidney Paget

American illustrator – Frederick Dorr Steele

Chronology

Baring-Gould placed the dating of the story at Tuesday, December 8 to Thursday, December 10 1896 making it 41st of the 60. This means that Holmes is 42 and Watson 44.



Christopher Morley Says

“The telegram perplexed Holmes: it said: TERRIBLE MISFORTUNE, RIGHT WING THREE-QUARTER MISSING. It was queer that Watson, an old player of English Rugby football, didn't explain that this meant that one of the Cambridge team had disappeared on the eve of the Oxford-Cambridge game. Holmes and Watson go together to Cambridge to study the problem, and Holmes gets out his hypodermic syringe, but not to use on himself. However, Oxford won the game.”

Dummies Short Summary

“This missing-persons case begins looking like foul play, but ends in brokenhearted tragedy.”

How Many Words

At 8,076 words MISS has the 30th most words (#1 is VEIL – 4,499, #56 is NAVL – 12,701)

Classifying This Case

This case is one of 3 classified as a voluntary disappearance -- and no crime was committed. The other 2 were NOBL and VALL.

The Best Of Sherlock Holmes

- 1927 – Arthur Conan Doyle did not list it among his 12 favorites.
- 1944 – The Baker Street Irregulars voted it #4 on their worst list.
- 1959 - The Baker Street Irregulars voted it 51st on list of least favorites.
- 1999 – The Baker Street Irregulars voted it 49th of 56.
- 1999 – The Sherlock Holmes Society of London – 51 of 56.

What Else Happened That Year (1896)

- Jameson Raid in South Africa; British negotiations with Boers (to 1899) fail.
- Start of Kitchener's campaign against the Madhi in the Sudan (1896 - 99).
- Widespread famine in India, to 1897.
- National Portrait Gallery moves to present site in Trafalgar Square.
- First all-steel English building erected at West Hartlepool.
- Locomotives Act: repeal of "Red Flag" restriction; maximum speed raised to 14 mph.
- Royal Victorian Order founded as Personal Order of Sovereign.
- First modern Olympic Games are held at Athens.
- Utah admitted as state in the U.S.
- France annexes Madagascar.
- French Tunisian protectorate recognized by Italy.
- Italians are defeated by Menelek of Abyssinia at Adowa, resulting in Treaty of Addis-Ababa and end of Italian protectorate.
- Massacre of Armenians by Kurds and Circassians supported by the Sultan.

- Insurrection in Crete against Turkish rule.
- Beginning of the Klondike Gold Rush.
- First public film exhibition, in U.S.
- Wells publishes *Island of Dr. Moreau*.
- Giacomo Puccini debuts *La Boheme* at Turin.
- Antoine Henri Becquerel, observes radiation from uranium affects photographic plates; discovery of radioactivity.
- Nobel Prizes started, for physics, physiology or medicine, chemistry, literature, furtherance of the cause of peace.
- Guglielmo Marconi demonstrates on Salisbury Plain the practicability of wireless telegraphy.
- Samuel Langley (U.S.), successfully flies a steam-driven model aircraft.

Holmes And Watson – Personal Information

Both are residing where they can get Mrs. Hudson's excellent Scottish breakfast

Dramatis Personae

- **Cyril Overton** – Godfrey's coach
- **Inspector Stanley Hopkins** – referred Overton to Holmes
- **Godfrey Staunton** – the missing three quarter.
- **Godfrey's Wife**
- **Lord Mount-James** – Godfrey's godfather. Godfrey was his sole heir.
- **Dr. Leslie Armstrong** – cared for Godfrey's wife.
- **Pompey** – a drag-hound
- **Moorhouse** – Teammate of Godfrey.
- **Morton** – Teammate of Godfrey.
- **Johnson** – Teammate of Godfrey.
- **Stevenson** – Teammate of Godfrey..

Quotable Sherlock

- “Even the most insignificant problem would be welcome in these stagnant days.”
- “You live in a different world to me, Mr. Overton – a sweeter and healthier one. My ramifications stretch out into many sections of society, but never, I am happy to say, into amateur sport, which is the best and soundest thing in England.”
- “There is so much red tape in these matters.”
- Dr. Leslie Armstrong – “I have heard your name, Mr. Sherlock Holmes, and I am aware of your profession – one of which I by no means approve.”
- Holmes – “In that, Doctor, you will find yourself in agreement with every criminal in the country.”
- “A draghound will follow aniseed from here to John o’ Groat’s and our friend, Armstrong, would have to drive through the Cam before he would shake Pompey off his trail.”

Holmes’ Fee

“Staunton’s rich uncle, Lord Mount-James, a noble miser, was initially opposed to Overton’s hiring Holmes because of the cost. But when Holmes suggested the nephew may have been kidnapped for ransom or to learn how to burgle his house, Mount-James became worried about the villainy and the money. He told Holmes, “I beg you to leave no stone unturned to bring him safely back. As to money, well, so far as a fiver or even a tenner goes you can always look to me.” They way that Holmes dislikes snobbish nobles, he most likely sent a bill for considerable more than a tenner.”

Unrecorded Cases

- Henry Staunton who Holmes help hang.

Sherlock Holmes On The Big And The Little Screen

Not the kind of story that transfers to visual for most people, MISS has just been done once

- 1923 The Missing Three Quarter with Eille Norwood as one of his 47. The National Film and Television Archive at the BFI has viewing copies of this film but it has not been released.

Annotated Sherlock

- **“loose-box”** An enclosure in a stable in which the horse is kept unhaltered.
- . . . **“and let in”** to cheat or victimize.
- . . . **“draghounds”** Pompey was trained to race following a scent left by a “drag over a predetermined course. Originally, the dogs followed a fox.

Weapons

Nothing very violent in this one

- **Stick** - With which Holmes kept at bay both the dog and the coachman of Dr. Leslie Armstrong.
- **Dog** - Which either Dr. Leslie Armstrong or his coachman was about to set on Holmes.

Frank Mentzel