



His Last Bow

Adventure XLI – The Adventure of Wisteria Lodge

Publishing History

41 of the 60 stories

First published in *Collier's Weekly*, August 15, 1908, Originally *The Singular Experience of Mr. John Eccles*

In England *The Strand Magazine*, September & October 1908,

Originally *A Reminiscence of Mr. Sherlock Holmes:*

The Tiger of San Pedro

Part of *His Last Bow* collection (*As The Adventure of Wisteria*

Lodge) by John Murray, London, 1917

George H. Doran, New York, 1917

British Illustrator – Arthur Twiddle

American Illustrator – Frederick Dorr Steele

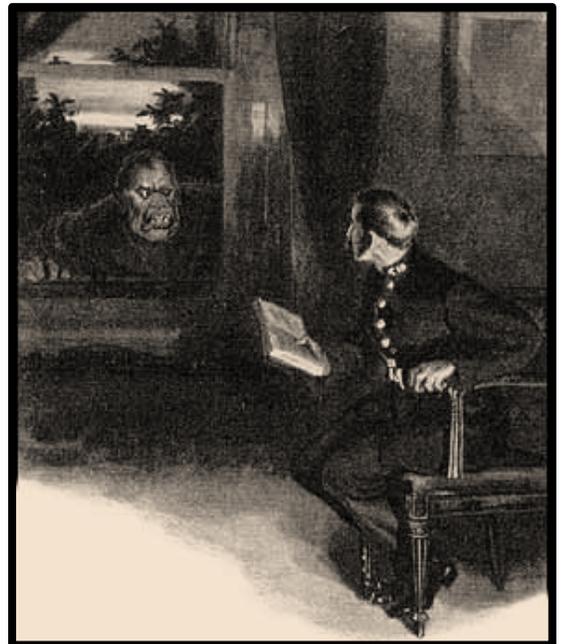
Chronology

Baring-Gould places the dating of the story at Monday, March 24

to Saturday, March 29, 1890 making it 28th of the 60. This means that Holmes is 46 and Watson 50.

Christopher Morley Says

“Grotesque was the word that always put Holmes on the alert. When Mr. J. Scott Eccles telegraphed that he had a grotesque experience Holmes was eager to hear the details. When Mr. Eccles went for an overnight visit with Señor Garcia, why did he find the house deserted in the morning?”



Dummies Short Summary

“When Mr. John Scott Eccles accepts an invitation from his new friend to visit Wisteria Lodge, little does he know what he’s getting himself into. By morning, his host is dead, and he’s a wanted man.”

How Many Words

At 11,591 words WIST has the 55th most words (#1 is VEIL – 4,499, #56 if NAVL – 12,701)

Classifying This Case

This case is one of 23 classified as a MURDER where the perpetrator Holmes solved the case but one of 5 where the perpetrator escaped justice. The others were FIVE, GREE, MUSG, and RESI.

The Best Of Sherlock Holmes

- 1999 – The Baker Street Irregulars voted it 37th of the 56 short stories.
- 1999 – The Sherlock Holmes Society of London voted it 34th of the 56 short stories.

What Else Happened That Year (1890)

- Roberts replaces Buller in South Africa; relief of Ladysmith, Mafeking, Kimberly; Boer leader Kronje surrenders at Paardeberg; Transvaal and Orange Free State annexed by Britain.
- Royal Niger Company's territories are taken over by the British government.
- Central London Railway (Central Line) opens; London's tubes electrified.
- Labour Representation Committee, beginning of the Labour Party.
- School made obligatory until age 14.
- Birmingham University founded.
- Davis Cup presented for men's international lawn tennis.
- Boxer Rebellion ended by military relief of besieged foreign legations.
- Franco-Italian Treaty concerning North African colonies.
- Tirpitz induces German Reichstag to pass Navy Act, to double the navy by 1920.
- Assassination of King Humberto of Italy, accessions of Victor Emmanuel III.
- Socialist Revolutionary Party formed in Russia, advocates terrorism.
- Russia occupies Manchuria, massacres 45,000 Chinese.
- Working day in France is limited to 10 hours.

- Conrad publishes Lord Jim.
- Theodore Dreiser publishes *Sister Carrie*.
- Puccini debuts *La Tosca*.
- Max Planck proposed Quantum theory.
- J.E. Brandenburger invents cellophane.
- First Zeppelin is built.
- Escalator, invented in the U.S.A., exhibited in Paris Exhibition.
- Hugo de Vries publishes The Mutation Theory, leading to the modern evolution theory.
- Benjamin Holt invents the caterpillar tractor.

Holmes And Watson – Personal Information

This story finds both gentlemen still living at 221B.

Dramatis Personae

- **Mr. Scott Eccles**, brought the case to Holmes.
- **Aloysius Garcia**, a freedom fighter for the people of San Pedro.
- **The Mulatto**, cook and housekeeper for Garcia.
- **Inspector Baynes**, of the yard
- **Inspector Gregson** " " "
- **Mr. Henderson** aka "**The Tiger Of San Pedro**" aka **Don Murillo** aka **Marquess Of Montalvo**
- **Mr. Lucas** aka **Signor Rulli**, secretary and confidant of Henderson.
- **Miss Burnet**, aka **Senora Sipora Victor Durado**, governess of Henderson's children
- **John Warner**, former gardener for Henderson. Hired by Holmes to keep watch on his house.
- **Melville**, a retired brewer who introduced Eccles and Garcia.
- **Constable Walters** guarded Wisteria lodge and was frightened by the cook staring through the window.
- **Constable Downing** had his thumb severely chewed by the cook as the latter was being captured.

Quotable Sherlock

- "My mind is like a racing engine, tearing itself to pieces because it is not connected up with the work for which it was built."

- “Life is commonplace; the papers are sterile; audacity and romance seem to have passed forever from the criminal world.”
- “Well, we can only possess our souls in patience until this excellent inspector comes back for us.”
- “I have not all my facts yet but I do not think there are any insuperable difficulties. Still, it is an error to argue in front of your data. You find yourself insensibly twisting them around to fit your theories.”
- “Our difficulties are not over. Our police work ends, but our legal work begins.”
- “There is but one step from the grotesque to the horrible.”

Unrecorded Cases

- The Case of Colonel Carruthers

Sherlock Holmes On The Big And The Little Screen

- 1921 *The Tiger of San Pedro* with Eille Norwood. The National Film and Television Archive at the BFI has viewing copies of this film but it has not been released
- 1968 *Wisteria Lodge* with Peter Cushing as part of his *Sherlock Holmes* series. This episode is lost.
- 1988 *Wisteria Lodge* with Jeremy Brett as an episode of his 43 episodes as Sherlock

Fainting In The Canon

In this tale, John Scott Eccles almost faints.

Annotated Sherlock

- “**quarter-day is at hand**” Are the traditional days in England and Scotland for the division of the year when quarterly payments such as rent, payment of taxes, etc. take place. Are associated with Christmas, Lent, Mid-Summer (June 24), and Michaelmas (Sept. 29)
- “**a remand**” A judicial order for committal.
- “**Inspector Gregson**” only here and in **STUD** and **GREE**
- “**dog-grate**” a detached fire-grate standing in a fireplace on supports called dogs
- “**sleeve-link**” a cuff-link
- “**spud**” a small spade used for digging out weeds, possible source of slang for potato

- **“baize”** green cotton or woolen material imitating felt
- **“Jacobean”** during the reign of James I
- **“Assizes”** trial sessions, civil and criminal, held at periodic times and locations by moving judges and courts

Weapons

- **Old-Fashioned, Pin-Fire Revolver** - Found in the home of Aloysius Garcia.
- **Firearm(s)** - Which Don Murillo, the notorious “Tiger of San Pedro,” had Victor Durando shot with.
- **Firearms** - Which Garcia and two confederates had fired at Murillo and Lopez, his secretary, in an attempt to end their evil lives.
- **Knives** - Which Murillo and Lopez were ready to thrust into Signora Victor Durando (alias Miss Burnett), and which they later used to torture her.
- **Blunt Instrument (thought to be a sandbag by Gregson)** - Which Juan Murillo used to kill Aloysius Garcia.
- **Opium** - Used to drug Signora Victor Durando (alias Miss Burnet) by Murillo and Lopez.
- **Teeth** - Of the Mulatto savage, with which he bit Constable Downing, who was in the act of arresting him.
- **Fists (presumably)** - Which Murillo and Lopez used to beat up Signora Durando.
- **Dog Whip** - The use of which got Henderson (Murillo) into trouble with the townspeople several times.
- **Starvation** - Of Signora Durando, used as a means of torture by Murillo and Lopez.
- **Weapons** - Which were used in the successful assassination of Murillo and Lopez.

Frank Mentzel