

A STUDY GUIDE TO SHERLOCK HOLMES

By William S. Dorn



The Valley of Fear

THE VALLEY OF FEAR DATE OF THE ADVENTURE*

(Date of Holmes's first involvement in the case)

CLUES:

1. "Being the seventh of January ... " (773)
2. "... the events (apparent murder of John Douglas) of the night of January 6th ..." (781)
3. "Those were the early days at the end of the '80's, ..." (773)
4. Douglas says to Watson, "I've heard of you. You're the historian of this bunch." (812)
5. *A Study in Scarlet* was published in December 1887.
6. Holmes says, "... with the help ... of Dr. Watson's umbrella, I was able ... to fish up (from the moat) ... this bundle (which contained the missing dumb-bell)" (810)
7. The temperature in England on January 7, 1889 was below freezing.

CONCLUSIONS:

- A. 1 and 2 imply Holmes's involvement started on January 7
- B. 3 implies it was 1887, 1888 or 1889
- C. A, 4, and 5 imply it was 1888 or later
- D. 6 implies that the moat was not frozen over.
- E. A, D, and 7 imply it was not 1889
- F. B, C, and E imply it was 1888
- G. A and F imply it was January 7, 1888

**Holmes was first involved in the adventure on
Saturday, January 7, 1888**

*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 VALLEY OF FEAR VOCABULARY WORDS

- sardonic (769) – **bitterly scornful**
nom de plume (769) – **pen name**
pawky (769) – **shrewd and cunning**
solatium (770) – **compensation for injury to one's feelings**
asteroid (770) – **small planetoid revolving round the sun
between the orbits of Mars and Jupiter**
traduce (770) – **disgrace to by making malicious and false statements**
apocrypha (770) – **hidden things, secrets**
innate (770) – **inborn; inherent**
exultant (771) – **marked by great joy or jubilation; triumphant**
epistle (771, 865) – **letter**
unsavoury (771) – **distasteful or disagreeable**
Machiavellian (771) – **Nicolo Machiavelli (1469-1527) Italian
author of *The Prince*, first scientific
analysis of political power**
scintillating (772) – **throwing off sparks; sparkling**
coruscation (772) – **sudden display of intellectual brilliance**
terse (772) – **brief and to the point**
garrulous (772) – **rambling; tiresomely talkative**
auspicious (772) – **successful; prosperous**
bespoke (773) – **told of; indicated**
green-grocer (773) – **vegetable seller**
foolscap (773) – **13" x 16" writing sheets, with a fool's cap and
bells as a watermark**
dour (773, 799) – **sour or sullen**
Aberdonian (773, 786) – **someone from Aberdeen, Scotland**
prone (774) – **having a tendency toward; inclined**
callous (774, 799) – **emotionally hardened; unfeeling**
C.I.D. (775) – **Criminal Investigation Department of Scotland
Yard; the Metropolitan Police**

Jean Baptiste Greuze (775, 776) – **French artist (1725 – 1805) known for his painting of everyday life and morality scenes and for the delicacy of his portraiture**

exiguous (776) – **scanty in amount, diminutive**

Jonathan Wild (777) – **(1683 – 1725) central figure in London crime during the early part of the 18th century**

hypothesis (778, 790, 802) – **tentative explanation that accounts for a set of facts**

milk train (778) – **train that delivered milk and stopped at every station hence was a slow train**

snorter (778, 785, 798) – **slang for anything exceptionally remarkable for size, strength, mystery, etc.**

villas (779) – **large, luxurious country houses**

venerable (779) – **worthy of reverence and respect**

Hugo de Capus (779) – **presumably a Norman nobleman to whom Birlstone was granted by William Rufus (see the Red King below)**

fortalice (779) – **small fort**

the Red King (779) – **William II Rufus (1056 – 1100), King of England from 1087 to 1100 and the son of William the Conqueror**

Jacobean times (779, 807) – **James I (1603-1625); James II (1685-1688)**

feudal (779, 780) – **built between the 9th and 15th centuries**

turbid (780, 787) – **cloudy, roiled**

windlass (780, 818) – **lifting machine consisting of a horizontal cylinder turned by a crank so that a line attached to the bridge is wound around the cylinder**

moulder (780) – **crumble into dust; disintegrate**

grizzling, grizzled (780, 804, 811, 849, 850) – **flecked with gray**

reticent (780, 792, 849) – **reluctant or unwilling to discuss something**

acute (780) – **sharp; sensitive**

denizens (781) – **native inhabitants**

bucolic (782) – **pastoral, rustic**

a rum thing (784) – **puzzling, exciting, bothersome**

dog-cart (784) – **a cart with two seats placed back-to-back; name is derived from box under rear seat, a box originally used to carry dogs**

ruddy face (785) – **face with a healthy, reddish color**

bandy legs (785) – **legs bowed or bent in an outward curve; bowlegged**

gaiters (785) – **cloth or leather covering for the legs extending from the instep to the ankle or knee**

fluting (785) – **grooves formed by narrow pleats between the barrels**

pollarded elms (787) – **elms cut back to the trunk to promote growth**

sward (787) – **grassy surface**

yews (787, 798) – **conifer (evergreen) trees**

gables (787) – **triangular section of wall at the end of a peaked roof in the space between the two sloping lines of the roof**

gnarled (788) – **rugged and roughened from old age or work**

splay-foot (790, 798) – **abnormally flat and turned-out foot**

spanner (791, 850) – **a wrench**

pantry (792, 801) – **room off a kitchen where food, tableware, linens, and similar items are stored**

implacable (793) – **impossible to appease or pacify by making concessions**

transfigured (798) – **had his outward appearance dramatically changed; transformed**

girded (798) – **encircled**

balm (798) – **soothing, healing, or comforting quality**

demure (798) – **modest and reserved in manner**

reserve (799) – **keeping his feelings and thoughts to himself**

- levity (799) – **inappropriate gaiety; frivolity**
high tea (799) – **fairly substantial meal that includes tea and is served in the late afternoon or early evening**
debonair (799) – **affable or courteous in bearing or manner**
fathomed (800) – **comprehended; completely understood**
unilateral (800) – **affecting only one side**
asceticism (800) – **appearance of extreme self-denial**
inglenook (800) – **chimney corner where there are seats**
obtrusive (800) – **undesirably noticeable**
ululation (801) – **howling as from a dog or a wolf**
vendetta (802) – **bitter, destructive feud**
genius loci (803) – **a beneficent spirit or demon**
valise (803, 804) – **a case for clothes or toilet articles**
porter (804) – **doorman**
chambermaid (804) – **maid who cleans and cares for bedrooms**
reefer jacket (804) – **close-fitting double-breasted jacket of thick cloth**
docketing (806) – **summarizing**
singular (806, 815, 817, 862) – **beyond what is ordinary or usual; remarkable**
waistcoat (807, 837) – **vest**
James I (807) – **(1566 – 1625) King of England who also served as King of Scotland as James VI**
verbatim (807) – **in exactly the same words; word for word**
Charles (807) – **Charles I (1600 – 1649), King of England from 1625 until his execution in 1649**
the Second George (807) – **George II (1683 – 1760), King of Great Britain and Ireland from 1727 to 1760**
deuced (807) – **darned; confounded**
amiabilities (807) – **friendly talk**
Weald (808) – **district of southeastern England lying across Sussex, Kent, and the South Downs**
hostelry (808) – **inn; hotel**
sordid (809) – **depressing**
denouement (809) – **final outcome**

- inference (809) – **drawing a logical conclusion from premises assumed to be true**
- sombre (809) – **dark and gloomy**
- asperity (809) – **harshness, sharpness of tone**
- casement (810) – **window that opens outward on hinges**
- rasping (810) – **harsh, grating sounds**
- fowling piece (810) – **light shotgun used for shooting birds and small animals**
- rector (811) – **principal of a school, college, or university**
- emissaries (811) – **people sent on a mission to represent the interests of another**
- consternation (811) – **sense of paralyzing dismay**
- acid (811) – **with an unpleasant tone**
- irony (811) – **words that express something opposite to their literal meaning**
- warrant (811, 844) – **written authorization to make a search, a seizure, or an arrest**
- peine forte et dure* (811) – **heavy and harsh punishment**
- jack-in-a-box (812) – **toy consisting of a clown-like puppet that springs out of a box when the lid is opened**
- connivance (812) – **knowledge of and tacit consent to the commission of an illegal act by another**
- gorges (815) – **deep, narrow passages with steep rocky sides, ravines**
- crag (815) – **steeply projecting mass of rock forming part of a rugged cliff**
- gregarious (816) – **seeking and enjoying the company of others; sociable**
- slag (816, 820, 850, 851) – **the waste that is left after using heat to separate the iron out of metallic ore**
- collieries (816, 831) – **coal mines**
- swarthy (816, 826, 862, 863) – **having a dark complexion**
- heeled (816) – **armed**

- demeanour (818) – **behavior; deportment**
gripsack (819, 820, 848) – **small suitcase**
turbulent (819) – **unruly**
veranda (819) – **roofed and partly enclosed porch that extends along the outside of a house**
piquant (820) – **charming; interesting**
planing mill (821) – **mill where wood is cut into boards or sheets**
obtruded (822) – **thrust; pushed forward**
circumlocution (822) – **evasiveness; roundabout expressions**
acushla (823, 825, 847, 856) – **an Irish term of endearment**
curtly (824) – **rudely brief or abrupt**
gilt (826) – **covered with a thin layer of gold or something resembling gold**
audacity (826) – **fearless daring**
courtiers (816) – **people who practice flattery**
pea-jacket (828) – **sailor's short overcoat of coarse woolen cloth**
cowed (829) – **frightened by a show of force**
baleful (830) – **portending evil; ominous**
colleen (830) – **Irish expression for a pretty girl**
bunker (831) – **storage place**
queer (831) – **counterfeit money**
fêted (832) – **honored**
postulant (832) – **candidate for admission usually to religious orders**
mettle (835) – **courage and fortitude**
croaker (837) – **person who grumbles or habitually predicts evil**
stole (837) – **long scarf worn over the shoulders and behind the neck**
compunction (837) – **uneasiness caused by a sense of guilt**
opprobrium (837) – **disgrace following shameful conduct**
patent (837) – **obvious; plain**
infamous (840) – **having an exceedingly bad reputation; notorious**
excommunicated (842) – **deprived of the right of church membership by ecclesiastical authority**

- sitting-room (843, 846) – **living room**
- wry (843) – **twisted in an expression of distaste or displeasure**
- imprecations (845) – **curses**
- deposed (845) – **testified**
- dock (846) – **place where the prisoner stands in the courtroom**
- Danton (848) – **Georges Jacques Danton (1759 – 1794) leader in the French Revolution; his moderate policies were opposed by Robespierre**
- Robespierre (848) – **Maximillian Robespierre (1758–1794) extremist, lawyer, revolutionary leader during the French Revolution**
- frock coat (848) – **close fitting, double-breasted, knee-length coat**
- abstainers (849) – **people who did not drink alcoholic beverages**
- clinkers (850) – **irregular, hard lumps of ash that remain after the combustion of coal**
- contretemps (851) – **unforeseen event that disrupts the normal course of things**
- blood-mottled (851) – **covered with spots or blotches of blood**
- plaudits (851) – **enthusiastic expressions of praise or approval**
- warned (851) – **notified in advance**
- colour sergeant (851) – **non-commissioned officer in charge of the flag**
- quarries (852) – **open pits from which coal is obtained by digging, cutting and blasting**
- resolute (853) – **determined; unwavering**
- haggard (854) – **appearing worn and exhausted**
- physic (854) – **medicine; cure**
- no show (854) – **no chance**
- keening (854) – **mourning the dead using a shrill voice**
- wake (854) – **watch over the body of a deceased person before burial**
- bonny (856) – **pretty**
- Solomon (857) – **(10th century BC) son of David and Bathsheba; succeeded David as King of Israel and was renowned for his wisdom**

felon (857) – **someone who has committed a grave crime such as murder, rape, or burglary**

stick at nothing (858) – **not back away from any challenge**

athwart (860) – **from side to side; crosswise**

deal table (861) – **table with a wooden top**

lithe (862) – **supple; graceful**

strident (863) – **grating or shrill**

police trial (865) – **trial for those persons brought up on charges made by the police**

Quarter Session (865) – **courts held quarterly in rural areas by justices of the peace**

enigmatic (865) – **puzzling**

superscription (865) – **words written above the body of the letter, perhaps the name of the writer and the address and date**

unwonted (865) – **out of the ordinary; unusual**

triphammer (866) – **heavy, power-operated hammer**

THE VALLEY OF FEAR OPEN QUESTIONS

1. On page 811 Holmes says to Douglas "I am sure you will find it best ... (to tell the truth about Baldwin)." Then on page 865 when he hears of the Douglas being lost overboard, Holmes says "I feared as much." If Holmes feared the Douglas was in danger, why did he allow him to go to his death?

Holmes assumed that Moriarty would know of Baldwin's murder and attempt to murder Douglas. Therefore, Holmes thought that Douglas would be safer away from England.

2. After McMurdo's initiation and the attack on the editor, McMurdo wrote a long letter (page 840). To whom did he write?

Probably to his bosses at Pinkertons

3. When McGinty and others were acquitted of the attack on the editor, a little, dark bearded, resolute fellow said, "You damned murderers!" Who was this little man?

There is no clue to this at all.

THE VALLEY OF FEAR SIMPLE QUIZ*

1. Which one of the following names did Jack Douglas use in the story?
 - a. McGinty
 - b. Barker
 - c. Jack McMurdo
 - d. none of the above

2. Holmes searched the moat for
 - a. the murder weapon
 - b. a dumb bell
 - c. clothes
 - d. none of the above

3. The initiation ordeal that Birdy Edwards had to endure was
 - a. cutting his arm to draw blood to sign his name
 - b. a needle put through his nose
 - c. a red-hot brand applied to his arm
 - d. none of the above

* 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 VALLEY OF FEAR INTERMEDIATE QUIZ[#]

1. What is the name of the artist who painted the portrait hanging in Professor Moriarty's study?
 - a. Vincent van Gogh
 - b. Jean Baptiste Greuze
 - c. Rembrandt van Rijn
 - d. none of the above
2. In what state did Douglas and Barker have their successful mining venture?
 - a. California
 - b. Montana
 - c. Nevada
 - d. none of the above
3. What was Porlock's first name?
 - a. Andrew
 - b. Fred
 - c. Peter
 - d. none of the above
4. When the manager of the Crow Hill Mine was murdered, the mine engineer, Menzies, "... gave a roar of rage at the sight and rushed with an iron spanner at the murderers ... " What is the meaning of the word 'spanner' in this sentence?
 - a. crow bar
 - b. axe
 - c. wrench
 - d. none of the above

[#] 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 VALLEY OF FEAR & ADVANCED QUIZ

1. What was the title of the portrait hanging in Professor Moriarty's study?
 - a. La Jeune Fille à l'agneau
 - b. The Laughing Cavalier
 - c. Young Girl with a Lamb
 - d. none of the above
2. Which one of the following was NOT one of the rings that Jack Douglas wore on his left hand?
 - a. a nugget ring
 - b. a gold wedding band
 - c. a silver Masonic ring
 - d. a twisted snake ring
3. Where in California did Douglas and Barker have their successful mining venture?
 - a. Arcadia Valley
 - b. Benito Canyon
 - c. High Sierra
 - d. none of the above
4. Lawler and Andrews were sent to Vermissa to carry out the murder of Josiah H. Dunn who was the manager of one of the mines in Vermissa that did not cooperate with Lodge 341. What was the name of the mine, which Dunn managed?
 - a. Crow Hill
 - b. Gilmerton
 - c. Iron Dike
 - d. none of the above

& 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
Study in Scarlet				
Simple	b	c	b	xx
Intermediate	a	b	a	b
Advanced	c	b	b	a
Sign of Four				
Simple	a	c	c	xx
Intermediate	b	c	b	a
Advanced	a	c	a	c
Hound of the Baskervilles				
Simple	c	c	a	xx
Intermediate	b	b	c	c
Advanced	b	a	b	d
Valley of Fear				
Simple	c	b	c	xx
Intermediate	b	a	b	c
Advanced	a	c	b	a