



### The Hounds of the Internet

"A singular set of people, Watson."

Holmes is 48 years old and Watson 50.

#### Main Characters:

John Garrideb (a.k.a. "Killer" Evans), supposed American lawyer from Kansas. Nathan Garrideb, a reclusive bachelor and dedicated scholar and collector of antiques and paleontological curiosities.

#### Notable Quotes:

"You're not hurt, Watson? For God's sake, say that you are not hurt!"

It was worth a wound—it was worth many wounds—to know the depth of loyalty and love which lay behind that cold mask. The clear, hard eyes were dimmed for a moment, and the firm lips were shaking. For the one and only time I caught a glimpse of a great heart as well as of a great brain. All my years of humble but single-minded service culminated in that moment of revelation.

"By the Lord, it is as well for you. If you had killed Watson, you would not have got out of this room alive."

## An Inquiry into:

# "The Adventure of the Three Garridebs"

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"The Adventure of the Three Garridebs" first appeared in *Collier's Weekly Magazine* on October 25, 1924. It was published in *The Strand Magazine*, on January 1925. It is part of *The Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes*.

All our chronologists are in agreement that this adventure took place in 1902. This being the case, then at the time

### The Adventure of the Three Garridebs

Chronologist	Date of the Adventure
Canon	Thursday, Late June 1902
Baring-Gould	Thursday, June 26, 1902
Bell	Thursday, June 26, 1902
Blakeney	June 1902
Brend	June 1902
Christ	Thursday, June 26, 1902
Dakin	Thursday, June 26, 1902
Folsom	Thursday, June 26, 1902
Hall	June 26, 1902
Keefauver	Thursday, June 19, 1902
Klinger	1902
Zeisler	Thursday, June 26, 1902

Please note that Canon chronologists may differ on pivotal dates and comparative periods between cases, thus a simple majority is not necessarily correct. Most Canon scholars settle on a single chronologist's results for their research framework.



## *The Declined Knighthood*



The reasons why Sherlock Holmes declined the honor that his country wished to bestow upon him in the form of a knighthood is another perennial area of discussion for Canon scholars and students.

I have always wondered whether the explanation as to why our sleuth was willing to accept France's *Legion d'Honneur* but declined a British knighthood may have had something to do with his family background considering that, on the Vernet side, his grandmother was French. As he put it, "Art in the blood is liable to take the strangest forms." Could the reason for the refusal be a slight by English nobility (possibly even royalty) to some past member or even the entire family? Back then people were very much aware of their families' history—some going back to Norman/Saxon times—familial memory was exceedingly long. Contrast this to today, when we must pay a database to discover who our great-great-grandparents were.

Based on the year in which this case took place—1902—some canonical scholars have posited that the offer of knighthood may have been an attempt to honor him for his efforts in behalf of England during the Boer War.

That most charming of all Royals, Kaiser Wilhelm II, was openly partial to the Boers and in 1896 he sent a telegram to Stephanus Johannes Paulus Kruger, the Transvaal Republic's president, congratulating him on having repelled what history now calls the Jameson Raid, an ill-conceived sortie by 600 British irregulars from Cape Colony into the Transvaal under the command of Leander Starr Jameson. The raiders had hoped to trigger an anti-government uprising amongst British expatriate miners. Instead the whole thing was botched and ended tragically for them, with 65 of the raiders killed and the rest surrendering. Wilhelm's telegram generated great indignation in Great Britain, resulting in yet another new low in English and German relations.

While no indication of this has been discovered, it would be unsurprising to learn that Holmes engaged in counterespionage activities at the government's request. In view of the events that we do know took place in LAST, this would not be a farfetched theory. Several times Holmes clearly showed a readiness to serve his country when needed.

Some have conjectured that there is a strong possibility that the Great Detective decided not to become Sir Sherlock to retain at least a semblance of independence and not to be viewed as being part of the establishment. The hypothesis being that his might have deterred some of the humbler clients that he so liked to help, from consulting a titled investigator. According to this thinking, Holmes was more inclined to accept France's *Legion d'Honneur* because it would not have had that result upon his clientele and would still have left



**France's *Legion d'Honneur*.**

him free to reject the desires of authority. It would also have preserved what he most definitely seems to have considered his personal right to act as judge and jury when circumstances called for it.

Then, of course, Holmes was a practical man. He was not above accepting outrageous fees such as the one paid by the Duke of Holderness, or a certain Gracious Lady's gift of distinction; so if knight-hood is honorific, not pecuniary—so why bother?

My personal hypothesis is that Watson, with his usual discretion, disguised the true identity of the King of Bohemia, and this nobleman was in reality the future Edward VII. Surely Holmes would not have been particularly anxious to be honored by the man who treated Irene Adler so shabbily!

### *The Mysterious Missing Images*

Uncounted canonical discussions have centered around exactly did John Garrideb's greeting meant: "Your pictures are not unlike you, sir. . . ."

When he said "pictures" was he referring to *The Strand's* illustrations by Paget and others? Or did he mean actual photographs? Paradoxically enough, although Sherlock Holmes was the premier detective—crime fighter—of his age, Scotland Yard's last court of appeal, no photograph of him seems to exist.



This presents a conundrum of astronomical proportions. The facts appear to be in contraposition. Even if Holmes had had an aversion to having someone photograph him in order to avoid making his features too familiar to the underworld, the fact remains some photographer—whether from a publication or a freelancer—should have been quite able to snap at least *one* photo of him. Again, Garrideb's comment seems to indicate

to me that he probably had run across Holmes' picture in a newspaper or magazine.

Even if this baffling lack of graphics for some reason had been due to the efforts of the government (doubtlessly headed by Mycroft), it seems unlikely that they could have been so thorough, to the extent of purging newspaper and magazines' morgues as well as library files throughout and beyond the Empire.

Equally puzzling is the lack of photos of Watson as well. One would think that somewhere there must be left at least a few sets of his different wedding pictures.

All of these are probably stored in the tin box...

### *The Persistent Accent*

Holmes deduces that John Garrideb "is really an American, but he has worn his accent smooth with years of London." It has been my personal observation that unless language therapy and exercises are involved, an adult living in a country not his own will not completely lose the accent with which he speaks the language; only small children seem to be able to effortlessly perform this minor miracle.

My experience is that after living for sometime in a foreign country it is not so much your accent that changes as is the fact that you pick up commonplace turns of phrase and idiomatic expressions that do not exist in your mother tongue—in this case in American English. I once spent a few weeks in the Deep South and got into the habit of saying "Y'all," which some residents found amusing because of my unsouthern accent. I have not been in the Middle East for many years yet, once in a while, an oc-

casional *Inshallah* slips out—the Arabic equivalent for “God willing” in English-speaking countries, or “*Si Dieu veut,*” in French-speaking countries.

### *Of Boodle and Real Currency*

Killer” Evans (a.k.a.) John Garrideb reveals that the counterfeit loot hidden beneath the floor of Alexander Garrideb came to £200,000 (≈\$75,000,000 today). This is a fabulous fortune by the standards of any time. Regarding the value of the fictitious property—\$5,000,000 per inheritor—at the rate of exchange then, \$5 (gold) = £1 (also gold) with which he tempted the poor old collector, that would have come to exactly £1,000,000, or about \$400,000,000 today.

Regardless of all their preparation and fine workmanship on the printing plates, I find the counterfeiters’ choice of denomination—£100—puzzling. Back then, £100 would be about \$40,000 today—a considerable sum in either time. Victorian England issued banknotes for values of £5, £10, £50, and £100. Some travel guides of the time suggested that “for ordinary use gold is preferable,” and advised tourists whenever using banknotes to “take down in a pocket-book the number of each note, as there is a bare possibility of its being in this way traced and recovered if lost or stolen.” Clearly, before the economic debacle brought on by two world wars, there was not very much paper in circulation back then; at least in the higher denominations.

In 1969 the U.S. \$100 note became the largest paper denomination. Previously, the U.S. Mint printed bills ranging from \$500 to \$10,000, now long ago discontinued. During the Second World War Nazi Germany forged British bank notes. The plan was to introduce them into Britain to destabilize the currency and collapse the economy. They successfully duplicated the rag paper used, produced near-identical engraving blocks, and deduced the algorithm used to create the alphanumeric serial code on each note. They chose the £5 note because they thought that a £5 note would not be too closely examined as one of higher denomination. They produced these notes until mid-1945; estimates of the value of the notes printed range from £132.6 million up to £300 million—so many of these fake notes were in general circulation that the Bank of England stopped producing new ones and after the war issued a new design.



**German forged five-pound note.**

This is somewhat reflected in the 1946 Basil Rathbone Holmes movie (his last in the series), *Dressed to Kill*, which deals with stolen Bank of England five-pound printing plates.

Evans deserves no sympathy whatsoever; however, his desperation to get at the hidden counterfeit £200,000 is perfectly understandable. Nevertheless, even had his scheme succeeded it very likely would all have been for nothing. Watson tells us that the printing press was rusted, which indicates the presence of humidity. This, of course, is not surprising when one considers English weather and the methods of construction back then—what we today recognize as insulation was something yet to come. This leads one to wonder what the actual physical condition of the fake banknotes could have been, subjected to humidity, rot, and the very likely presence of paper-chomping insects. The area beneath Garrideb’s floor may have been an ideal place for the ongoing operation, but it was far from being a place suitable for storing paper for some five years.

## *The Revealing Injury*

In the entire Canon this is the only instance in which we witness the full depth of regard that Sherlock Holmes held for his friend and colleague, Doctor John H. Watson.

It is very gratifying to witness Holmes' deep affection for his years-long friend and colleague when he was shot. In an age during which one was weaned on the "stiff upper lip" and most displays of warmth were viewed as bad manners or as a sign of weakness, the Great Detective's reaction to Watson's injury is *the* moment in the entire Canon, in which we truly see what is in Sherlock Holmes' heart. After all the years of battling injustice together, it is pleasant to see the high regard that our



two crime combating veterans had for one another. There is no weakness whatsoever here—only a fierce loyalty and comradeship.

Although many respected students of the Canon were originally horrified at this prospect, it pleases me to think that had Watson been seriously injured or killed, Holmes would have seen to it that Evans' next appointment was with the coroner. There is no question in my mind that Holmes was not exaggerating. Had Watson's wound been serious or fatal, some coroner would wonder how John Garrideb ended up with a pockmarked "VR" on his forehead.

## *Evans as a Malefactor*

It is easy to understand why Evans became so upset when Garrideb brought Holmes into his scheme. Having lived in London for years and perhaps even having met some unwitting acquaintances of our sleuth while in jail, he certainly had to have been aware of the Great Detective's abilities and fear that he would discover his very original plan to get at the loot. He was right to be concerned; after all, Holmes saw right through him almost immediately.

If one exerts extraordinary effort, it is almost possible to evoke a little pity for “Killer” Evans. Over those five years in prison he had to have gone through the tortures of Hades, knowing that a potential fortune lay hidden under a few floorboards. His description of it must have circled every corner of his mind: “two thousand of Prescott’s notes worth a hundred each and fit to pass anywhere.”

It seems to be a given that hubris sooner or later trips us all. Instead of abandoning his original plan and disappearing for what would have been a short while and then returning later to try a different scheme, Evans decided instead that he would outwit the Wizard of Baker Street.

Bad choice.



### *The Tragic Garrideb*

Of all the participants in this case, Nathan Garrideb comes out as a truly tragic figure. How can one not feel sorrow and horror over the result of Evans’ schemes? The poor harmless dusty scholar and collector, who only pined for a means to enlarge his collection of curios, certainly did not deserve what happened to him. Had Evans not misused him the way he did, the old boy would have happily spent the rest of his existence among his treasures, cataloguing and caring for them. His collapse when learning that he had been deceived and that there would be no fortune coming his way is truly pathetic.

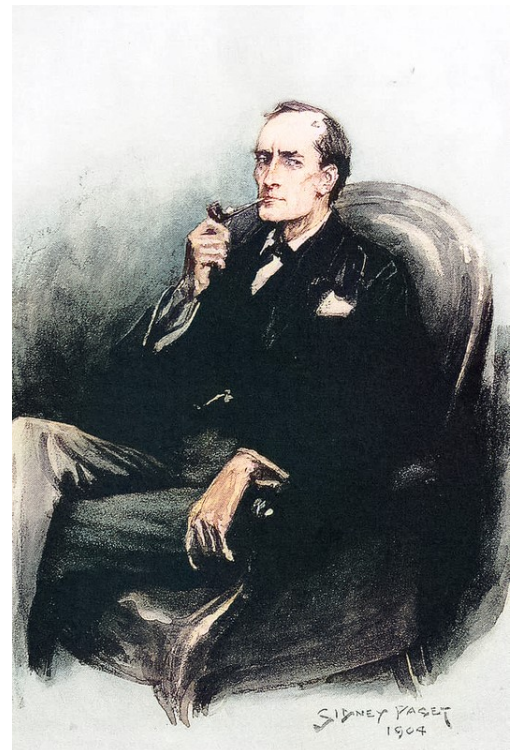
### *A Matter of Health?*

Based on Watson’s comment that it was Holmes’ habit to spend several days in bed from time to time, added to the fact that he retired when still only about 50 years old would seem to point to the possibility that his health was not good; perhaps not irretrievably lost, but fragile nevertheless.

There are some earlier indications of this. Watson writes about his friend’s iron constitution showing symptoms of giving way. This led to a Harley Street doctor order him to relax, leading to the holiday in Cornwall documented in DEVI.

Another clue to this lies in the fact that someone like him, so thoroughly involved and devoted to his chosen profession, with his reasoning ability intact, would have been unwilling to hang up his spurs unless prompted by some medical condition. What this might have been is anybody’s guess, but it could be that at times it caused him considerable discomfort or even pain. This would also be a likely explanation for his use of opioids and occasional bouts of ill-temper towards Watson.

We do know, however, that his health had to have been sufficiently adequate for him to engage in the counterespionage activities set down in LAST.





## *What else happened in 1902:*

### *Empire*



First celebration of Empire Day (renamed “Commonwealth Day” in 1959).

◀ Joseph Chamberlain advocates return to Protection and Imperial Preference.

Anglo-German fleet seizes Venezuelan fleet to recover debts and reparations.

Peace of Vereeniging, ends Boer War.

### *Britain*

Salisbury resigns, succeeded as PM by Arthur Balfour.

Anglo-Japanese Treaty for mutual defense and to maintain status quo in Far East.

Sir Giles Gilbert Scott designs Liverpool Cathedral.

Institution of the Order of Merit for distinguished service to the state; limited to 24 holders at one time.

Education Act abolishes School Board system. Local control goes to town and county councils.

Secondary Education authorized out of rates.

British Academy granted Royal Charter.

Esperanto introduced to England.

Establishment of Metropolitan Water Board, supplying London.

Arthur Conan Doyle is knighted.

### *World*

Franco-Italian secret treaty; Italy to remain neutral if France were attacked by a third power.

Failure of second Belgian General Strike.



Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria, and Italy) renewed to 1914.

Italian designs on Tripoli conditionally approved by France and Austria.

◀ F.A. Krupp takes over Germania shipbuilding yard at Kiel; great armaments firm develops.

Russo-Japanese Convention, Russia agrees to evacuate Manchuria in 18 months.

French work day reduced to 9½ hours.

Public Health Act in France improves artisan living conditions.

White settlement of Kenya begins.

St. Pierre, Martinique, destroyed by earthquake.

Abdul Hamid gives Germany concessions to build railway to Baghdad; rail system to stretch from Hamburg to the Persian Gulf.

Tientsin Sanitary Police established; first Chinese public health measure.

### *Art*

Conan Doyle publishes *The Hound of the Baskervilles*.

Kipling publishes *Just So Stories*.

Arthur Edward Woodley Mason publishes *The Four Feathers*.

Beatrix Potter publishes *Peter Rabbit*.

Enrico Caruso makes his first gramophone record—154 recordings in all.

Gauguin paints *The Call*.

Debussy composes *Pelléas et Mélisandé*.

Picasso paints *Nude, Back View*.

Elgar composes *Coronation Ode*.

### *Science and Technology*

Wireless telegraphy applied to ships.

Trans-Pacific Cable laid.

Completion of Aswan Dam in Egypt.

Dunlop's pneumatic tire developed, principle still unproven.

### *Next week's case: ILLU.*

Respectfully submitted,

*Murray, the Courageous Orderly*

(a.k.a. Alexander E. Braun)

"I should have fallen into the hands of the murderous Ghazis had it not been for the devotion and courage shown by Murray, my orderly..."

*All Sherlock Holmes photos have been published by courtesy of ITV Granada.*

**If you would like to join the Hounds of the Internet, email us at [CourageousMurray@aol.com](mailto:CourageousMurray@aol.com).**

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