

Adventure LVIII – The Adventure of the Retired Colourman



Paul Churchill once quipped he had a hard time studying for Sherlockian quizzes, so inspired by Simon Goodenough's *A Study in Scarlet – A Sherlock Holmes Murder Dossier*, Paul began collecting Canonical artifacts around 1990 to help him remember each story. Over 1,500 artifacts later, Paul's 'Evidence Boxes' became legendary in the Sherlockian world as he displayed them at numerous Scion meetings.

What Paul could not find, he made. He became known as a master forger, and 'created' numerous 'genuine faux' objects, such as letters, documents, and telegrams. Paul was invested in the Baker Street Irregulars in 2006 as "Corot." After Paul's passing, the Evidence Boxes were bequeathed to Watson's Tin Box Scion Society, a Society Paul co-founded in 1989. Debbie Clark has maintained the Boxes and continues the practice of displaying the items from one of the Boxes at each society meeting.


Beth Austin assisted in this effort by photographing, annotating the items, and finding the quotes for many of the items, while Denny Dobry and Rusty Mason supported Paul's efforts by photographing each of the items, as well as developing a comprehensive inventory with notations of item's mentioned in the story. Each of the Boxes is posted with permission of Debbie Clark and Jacquelynn Morris.



Pictured is the commercial art box from Amberley's former company. A colourman is someone who works for a color production manufacturer.

From the story:

Holmes took a rather soiled card from the table. 'Josiah Amberley. He says he was junior partner of Brickfall and Amberley, who are manufacturers of artistic materials.'



Josiah Amberley
The Haven
Lewisham, London SE

Josiah Amberley
The Haven Lewisham

Pictured are Josiah Amberley's calling, or visiting, cards, which he used for business and personal concerns.

From the story:

Holmes took a rather soiled card from the table. 'Josiah Amberley. He says he was junior partner of Brickfall and Amberley, who are manufacturers of artistic materials.'



Pictured is the photo of Mrs Amberley, which Josiah Amberley tore up in Watson's presence.

From the story:

'Retired in 1896, Watson. Early in 1897 he married a woman twenty years younger than himself - a good-looking woman, too, if the photograph does not flatter.'

Josiah Amberley ^{formerly} junior partner of Brickfall & Amberley
retired, 1896 age 61 (born 1835) after making pile
married, 1897 - wife 43 (!) photograph inside
settled in ^{fichee} Lewisham
↳ 2 yrs - broken & miserable

one hobby - chess

met Dr. Ray Ernest, fellow chess player.
treacherous friend!

↳ captured
queen!

disappeared with Amberley's wife last week
c. 21 July '98. with deed box and £7000
cash and securities, life savings!

Pictured is Holmes' handwritten notes on the case.

From the story:

Holmes glanced over some notes which he had scribbled upon the back of an envelope.

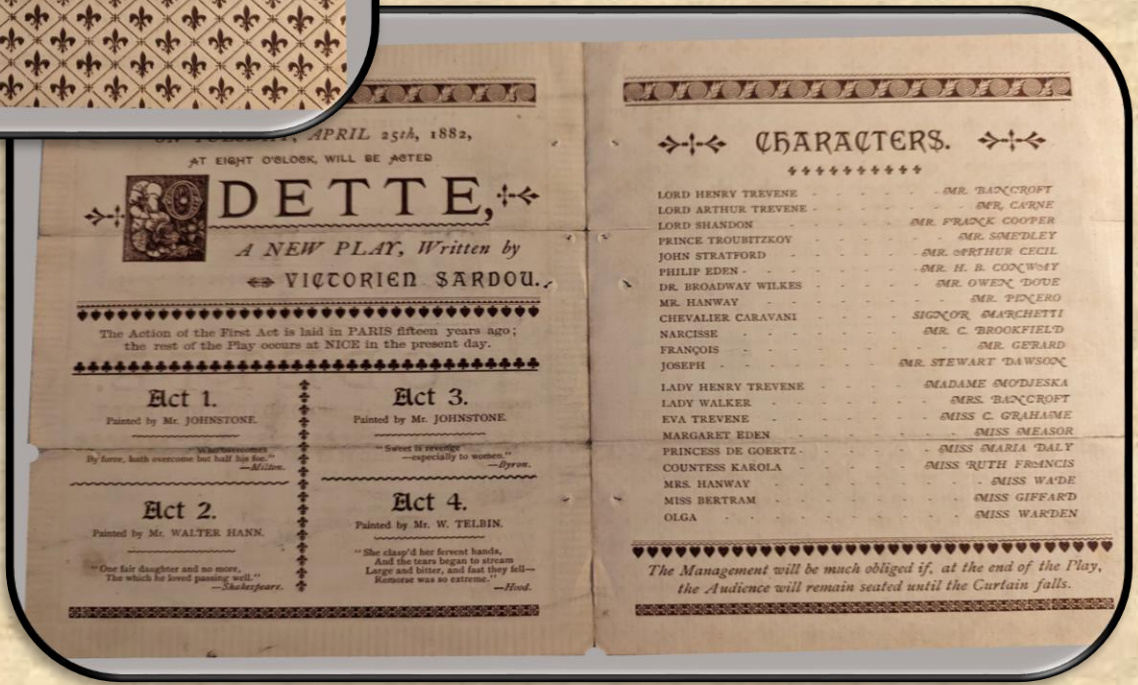
'Retired in 1896, Watson. Early in 1897 he married a woman twenty years younger than himself - a good-looking woman, too, if the photograph does not flatter.'



Pictured are tickets for the Haymarket Theatre, which was presenting *Odette*, which Holmes used as a clue to determining the solution to the mystery.

From the story:

‘On that particular evening old Amberley, wishing to give his wife a treat, had taken two upper circle seats at the Haymarket Theatre.’



Pictured is the program for the Haymarket Theatre, which was presenting *Odette*, which Holmes used as a clue to determining the solution to the mystery.

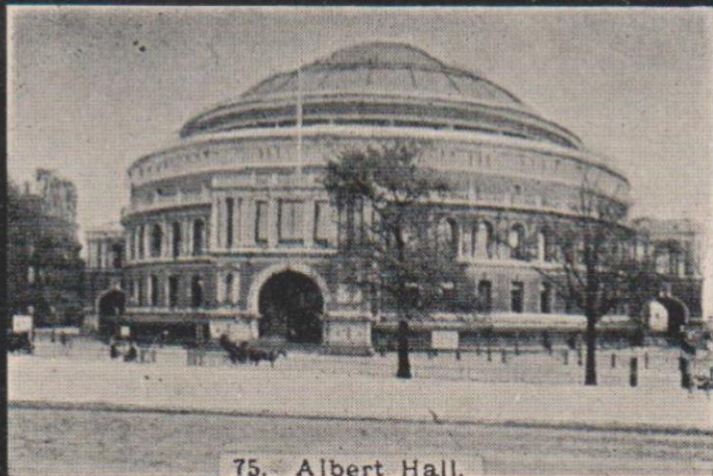
From the story:
 ‘On that particular evening old Amberley, wishing to give his wife a treat, had taken two upper circle seats at the Haymarket Theatre.’



Pictured are the chess pieces used by Amberley and his neighbor, Dr Ernest.

From the story:

‘So also is it that young Dr Ernest, an unmarried man, played chess with Amberley, and probably played the fool with his wife.’



75. Albert Hall.

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CIGARETTES**

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GENERAL INTEREST.

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The magnificent Con-
cert Hall of the great
metropolis.

**This Series contains
120 different Subjects.**

Pictured is a cigarette card for the Albert Hall, where Holmes and Watson attended a concert.

From the story:

‘Let us escape from this weary workaday world by the side door of music. Carina sings to-night at the Albert Hall, and we still have time to dress, dine and enjoy.’

Dear Watson,

There are one or two points of contact which I should wish to establish with Mr. Josiah Amberley. When I have done so we can dismiss the case - or not. I would only ask you to be on hand about three o'clock, as I conceive it possible that I may want you.

S. H.

Pictured is Holmes' handwritten note to Watson asking for his attendance.

From the story:

Dear Watson,

There are one or two points of contact which I should wish to establish with Mr Josiah Amberley. When I have done so we can dismiss the case - or not. I would only ask you to be on hand about three o'clock, as I conceive it possible that I may want you. S. H.



Pictured is the plaque the Railway Arms Hotel, where Watson called Holmes on the telephone.

From the story:

There was a telephone, however, at the little 'Railway Arms', and by it I got into touch with Holmes, who shared in our amazement at the result of our journey.

The Railway Arms

Little Purlington

Essex



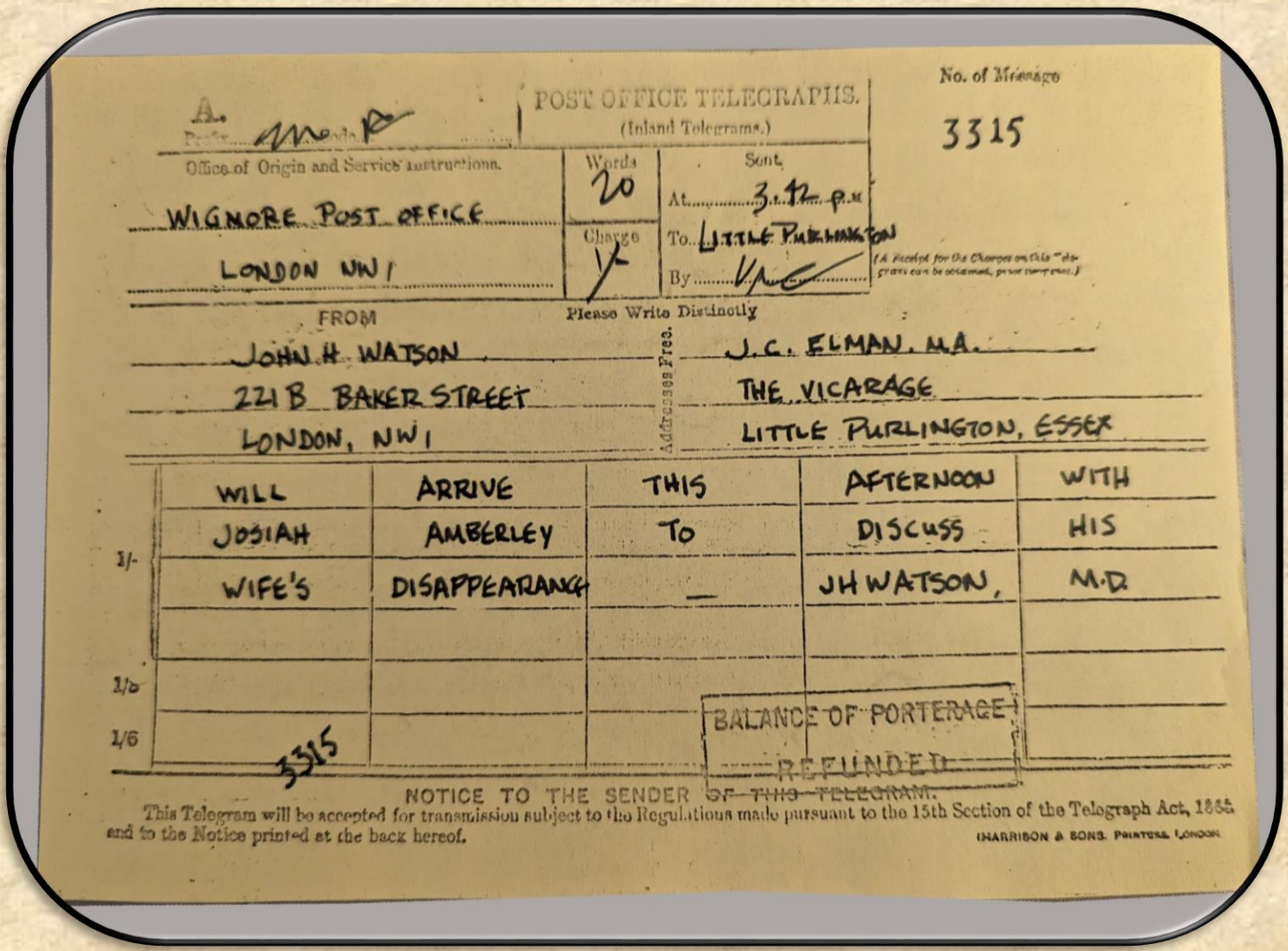
29. July 1898
Messrs. Amberley and Watson

1	Room (Watson)	2	9	2	9
1	Room (Amberley)	1	9	1	9
1	Breakfast (Watson)	0	9	0	9
Total Watson				3	6
Paid in Full 30 July .98					
Total Amberley				1	9
Grudgedly Paid in Full 30 July .98					

Pictured is the receipt for the Railway Arms Hotel in Little Purlington, where Watson and Amberley spent the night.

From the story:

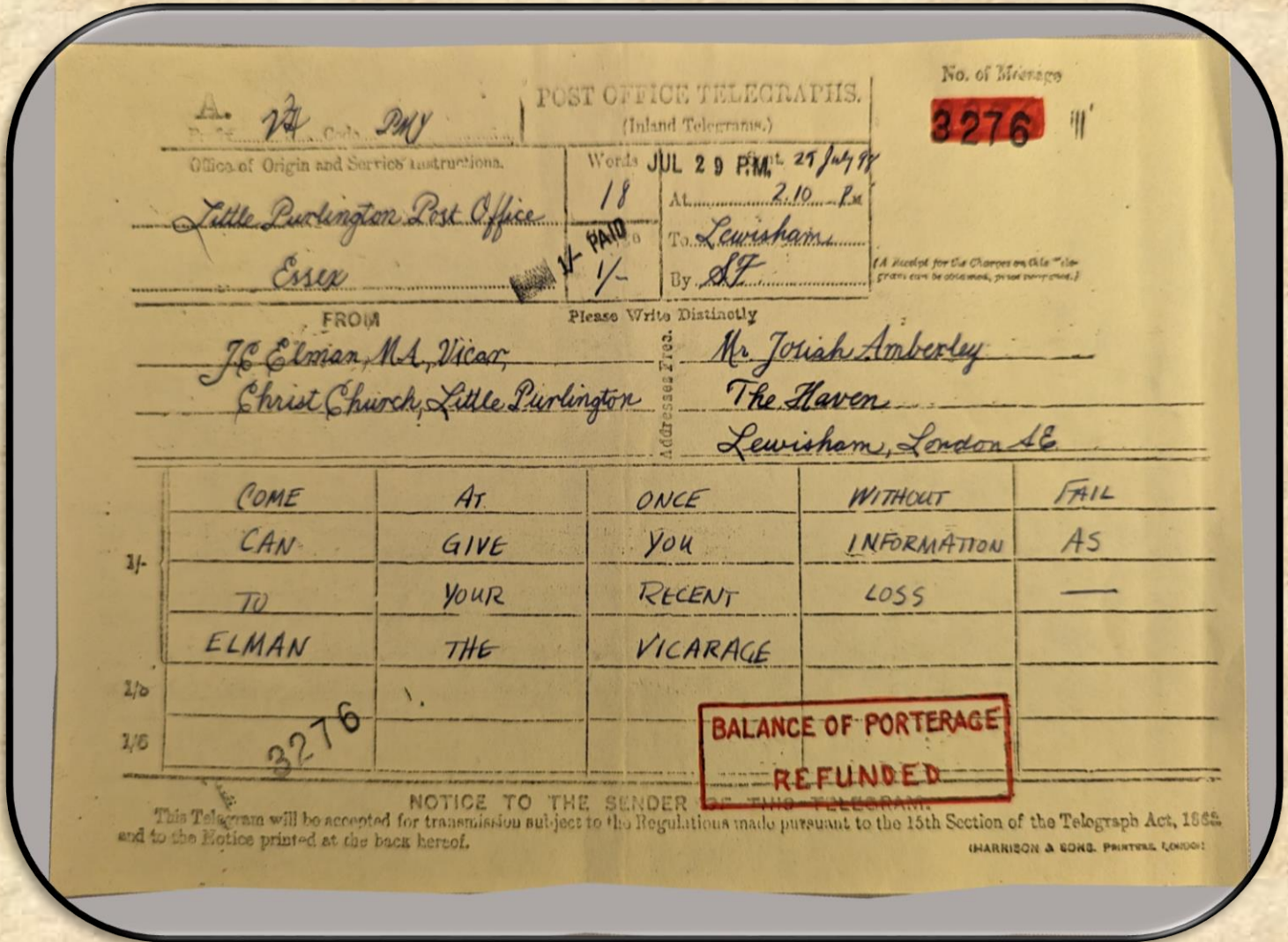
‘Most singular!’ said the distant voice. ‘Most remarkable! I much fear, my dear Watson, that there is no return train tonight. I have unwittingly condemned you to the horrors of a country inn.’



Pictured is the telegram from Watson to Vicar Elman announcing his arrival with Amberley .

From the story:

When we at last reached the little station it was a two-mile drive before we came to the Vicarage, where a big, solemn, rather pompous clergyman received us in his study. Our telegram lay before him.



Pictured is the telegram purportedly sent by the vicar Elman to Josiah Amberley in regards to his wife.

From the story:

‘We came,’ I explained, ‘in answer to your wire.’

‘My wire! I sent no wire.’

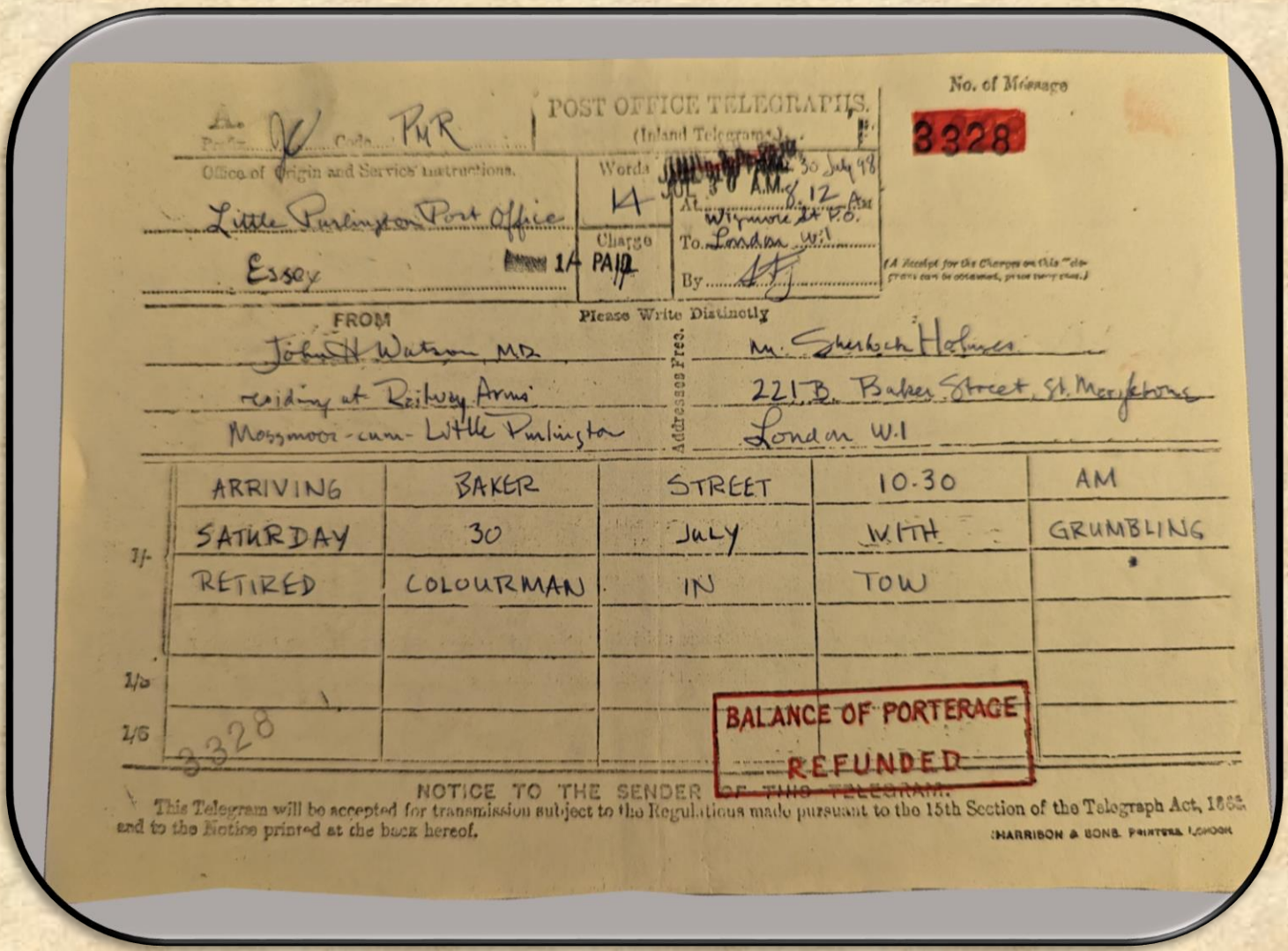
‘I mean the wire which you sent to Mr Josiah Amberley about his wife and his money.’



Pictured is the white pill Amberley tried to take once he had been accused of murder. The pill was a suicide pill, probably either cyanide or arsenic.

From the story:

As he fell back into his chair he clapped his hand to his lips as if to stifle a cough. Holmes sprang at his throat like a tiger, and twisted his face towards the ground. A white pellet fell from between his gasping lips.



Pictured is telegram to Holmes from Watson announcing his arrival at Baker Street with Amberley.

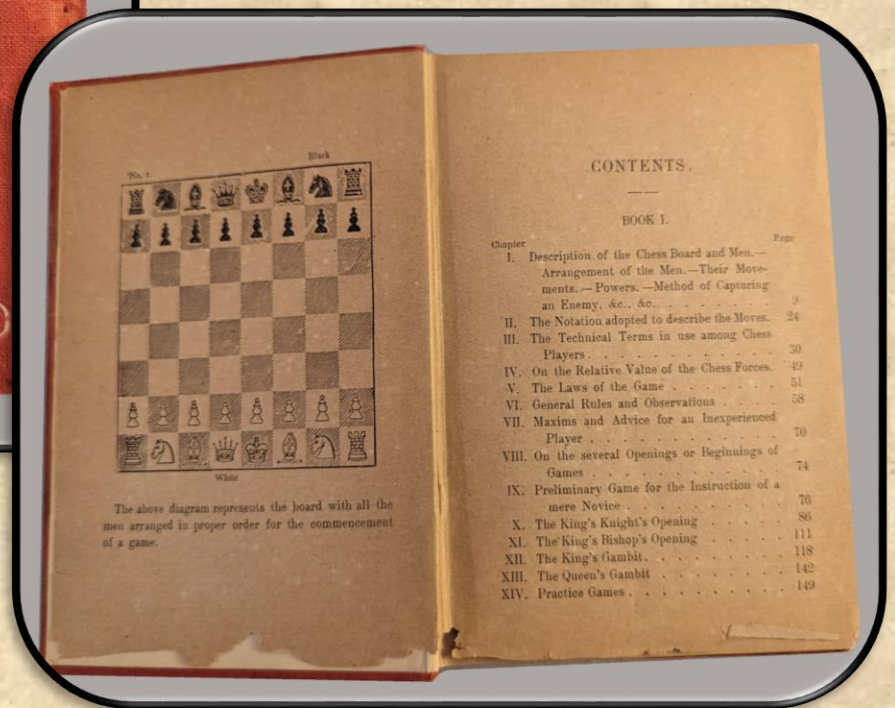
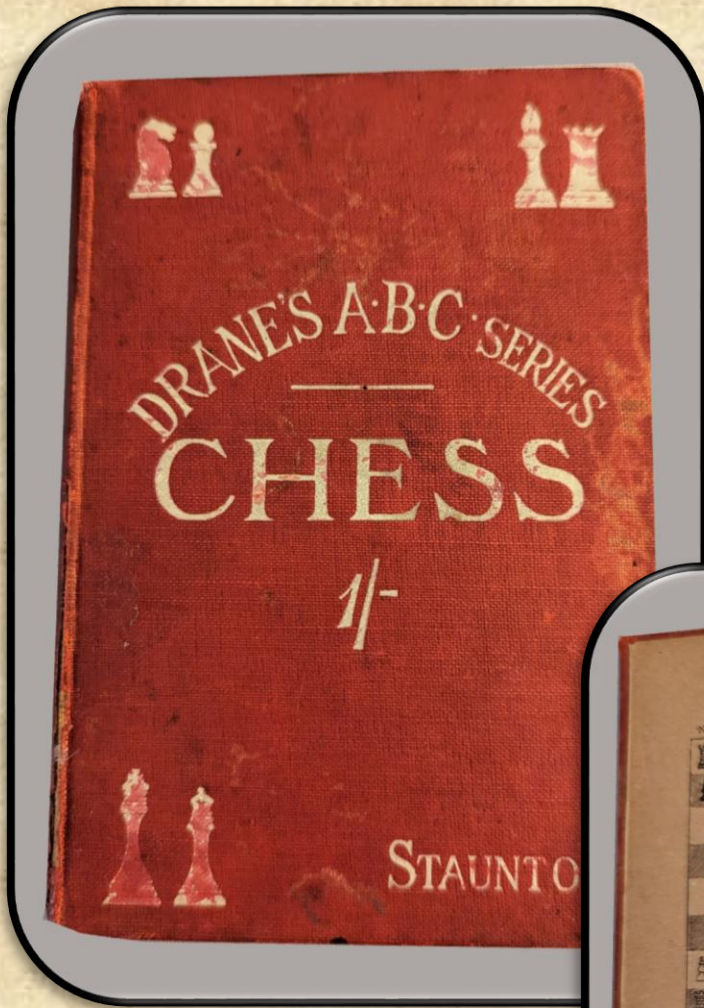
From the story:
 I had already warned Holmes by telegram of the hour of our arrival, but we found a message waiting that he was at Lewisham, and would expect us there.



Pictured are the tinted glasses worn by Mr. Barker, a private investigation and a friendly Holmes' rival.

From the story:

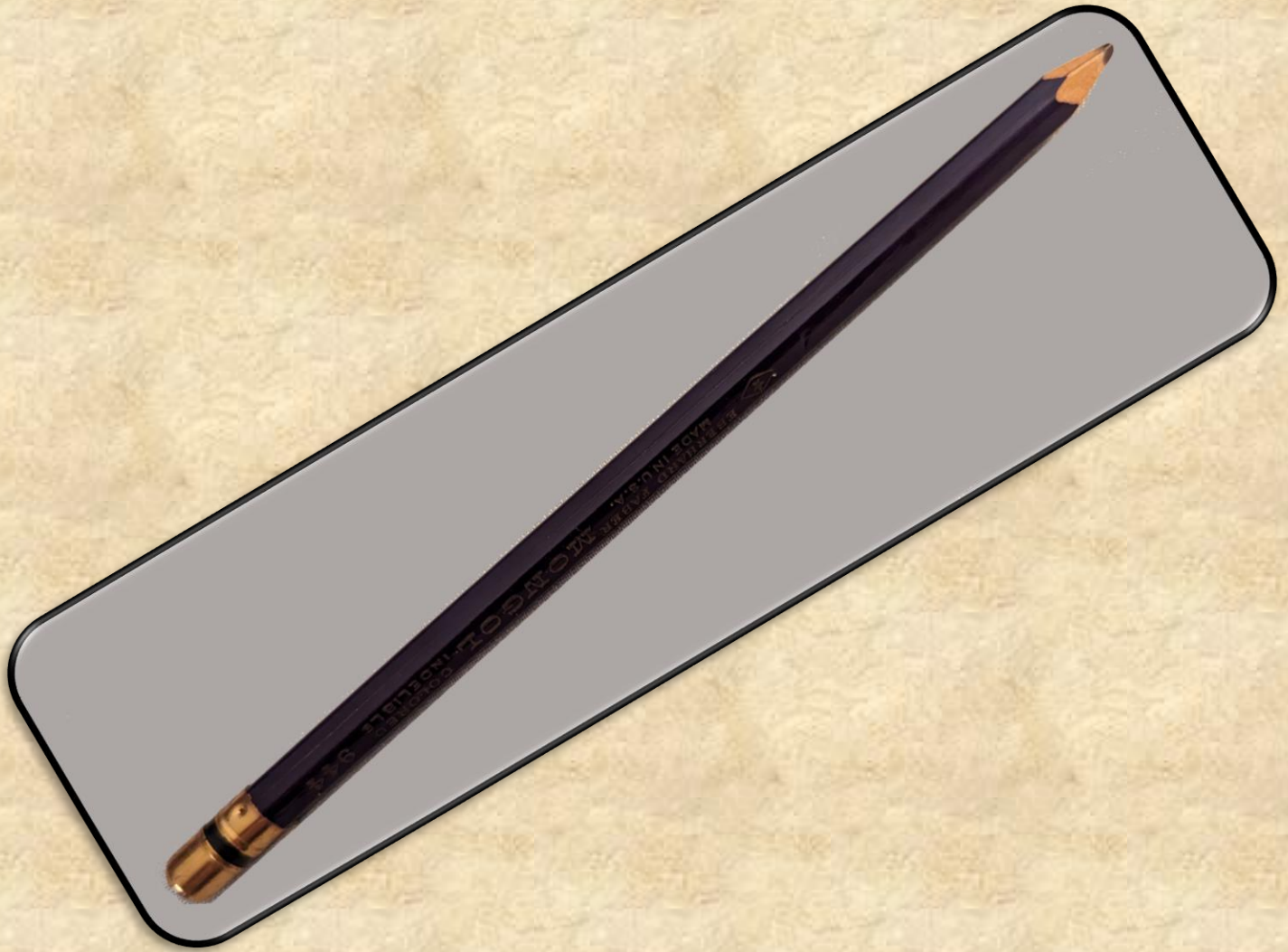
A stern-looking, impassive man sat beside him, a dark man with grey-tinted glasses and a large Masonic pin projecting from his tie.



Pictured is the book on chess which Amberley read to hone his playing skills.

From the story:

‘Such a one came upon the scene in the person of this chess-playing doctor. Amberley excelled at chess - one mark, Watson, of a scheming mind.’



Pictured is the indelible purple pencil which Ray Ernest tried to write “We were murdered” on the wall.

From the story:

‘Now, look here! Just above the skirting is scribbled with a purple indelible pencil: ‘We we-’ That's all.’

Additional items of interest
in “The Adventure of the
Retired Colourman” not
included in the original
Evidence Box.



Pictured is Josiah Amberley's deed box, which his wife supposedly took with her when she left with her consort.

From the story:

'What is more, the faithless spouse carried off the old man's deed-box as her personal luggage with a good part of his life's savings within.'



OLD LEWISHAM - High Street and old Fire Station c1910 COLLECTORCARD Croydon CRO 1HW C154

Pictured is a postal card from Lewisham, where Josiah Amberley resided with his wife.

From the story:

And so it was that on a summer afternoon I set forth to Lewisham, little dreaming that within a week the affair in which I was engaging would be the eager debate of all England.



Pictured is prosthetic worn by Josiah Amberley, which Holmes noticed.

From the story:

‘Left shoe wrinkled, right one smooth.’

‘I did not observe that.’

‘No, you wouldn't. I spotted his artificial limb. But proceed.’



Pictured is the pot of green paint and brush Amberley was using to paint the interior of the house.

From the story:

‘The house, too, was slatternly to the last degree, but the poor man seemed himself to be aware of it and to be trying to remedy it, for a great pot of green paint stood in the centre of the hall and he was carrying a thick brush in his left hand.’



Pictured is the telephone installed at Baker Street which Holmes used to track down certain clues.

From the story:

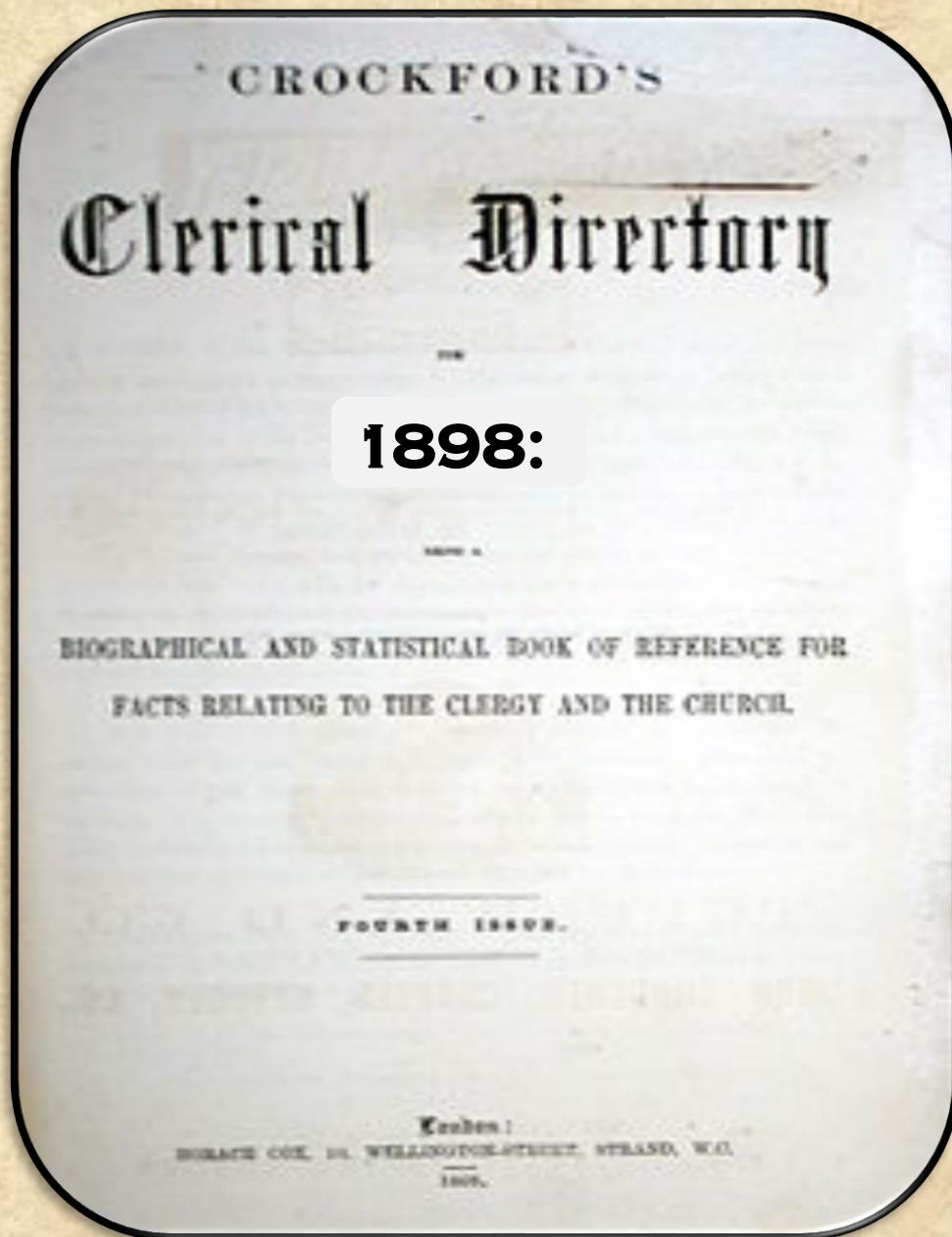
‘It has been done. Thanks to the telephone and the help of the Yard, I can usually get my essentials without leaving this room.’



Pictured is a postal card for Frinton, in Essex, which is near Little Purlington, the residence of Vicar Elman.

From the story:

‘Little Purlington is in Essex, I believe, not far from Frinton. Well, of course you will start at once’



Pictured is the front page from the Crockford Clerical Director for 1898, which Holmes consulted to ensure their was a Vicar Elman.

From the story:

‘Where is my Crockford? Yes, here we have him. J. C. Elman, MA, Living of Mossmoor cum Little Purlington. Look up the trains, Watson.’



Pictured is the masonic pin worn by Mr. Barker, a private investigation and a friendly Holmes' rival.

From the story:

A stern-looking, impassive man sat beside him, a dark man with grey-tinted glasses and a large Masonic pin projecting from his tie.

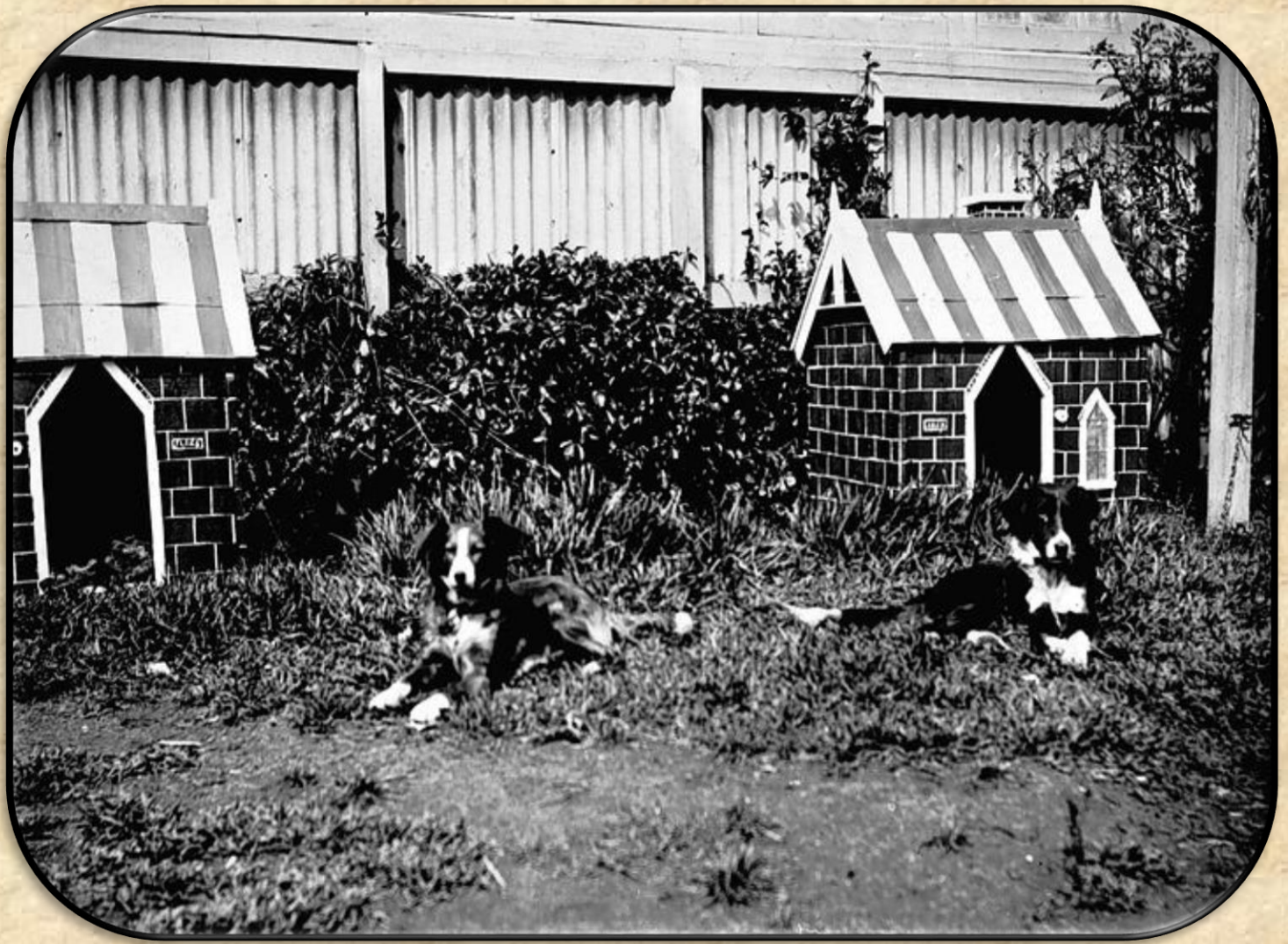


Pictured is a photo of Essex County Inspector McKinnon, who returned with Holmes to Amberley's residence after his arrest.

From the story:

In less time than he had named, however, Holmes was back, in company with a smart young police inspector.

'Well, well, MacKinnon is a good fellow,' said Holmes, with a tolerant smile.



Pictured is the kennel which was built over the unused well, where the bodies were found, on Amberley's property.

From the story:

'...and the subsequent inquiry which led to the discovery of the bodies in a disused well, cleverly concealed by a dog-kennel, should live in the history of crime as a standing example of the intelligence of our professional detectives.'