



## The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes

### Adventure LVIII – The Adventure of the Retired Colourman

**First published in:**

*Liberty*, December 18, 1926

**Time frame of story (known/surmised):**

July/August 1898. (It was an affair in which would be the eager debate of all England.)

**Holmes & Watson living arrangements:**

Not stated. At the beginning of the story Holmes & Watson are together at 221B but is unclear if Watson is residing there or just calling.



**Opening scene:**

Watson observes client departing from 221B. Discusses case with Holmes, and Holmes sends Watson to investigate at client's house, called The Haven.

**Client:**

Josiah Amberley, a pathetic, futile, broken creature, who had few outward graces. He was like some penurious patrician who has sunk into the company of his inferiors.

**Crime or concern:**

Disappearance of wife (20 years younger) and chess-playing friend of client, with some seven thousand pounds' worth of cash and securities .

**Villain:**

The client turned out to have murdered his wife and her friend/lover.

**Motive:**

Jealousy

**Logic used to solve:**

Use of paint indicated covering up smell of gas. Holmes sent client and Watson on a trip to get them out of town so he could burgle premises.

**Policemen:**

McKinnon, a smart young police Inspector and good fellow.

**Holmes' fees:**

No mention, but since the client was shown to be the criminal, it is unlikely Holmes got paid. Possibly he had an arrangement with the police, which could account for his allowing them credit for solving the case.

**Transport:**

Watson set forth for Lewisham and returned to Baker St. late that evening. Mode of transport unspecified.

Watson and client took the 5:20 from Liverpool Street to Little Purlington (on a branch line), and then a two mile drive to the vicarage. It was not a pleasant trip for the weather was hot. Then they took the train back to London the next morning.

**Food:**

The morning following some toast crumbs and two empty eggshells provided evidence that Holmes had risen and left early.

**Drink/vices:**

None mentioned

**Other cases mentioned:**

The case of the two Coptic patriarchs, which was coming to a head.

**Notable Quotables:**

“Cut out the poetry, Watson,” – Holmes

“You have missed everything of importance, yet even those things which have obtruded themselves upon your notice give rise to serious thought.” – Holmes

“With your natural advantages, Watson, every lady is your helper and accomplice.” – Holmes

“What did you do with the bodies?” – Holmes

“Pooh! What an awful smell of paint!” – Insp. McKinnon

**Other interestings:**

We at McMurdo’s Camp note there are similarities between this case and that of Dr. Hawley Harvey Crippen, who murdered his troublesome wife in 1910, fled with his lover, and was captured by the use of wireless telegraphy and a trans-Atlantic chase by ocean liner, a case which was the eager debate of all England.

**When all is said and done:**

Holmes backed away and allowed the police, who discovered of the bodies in a disused well, cleverly concealed by a dog kennel, to take credit for the solution.

**McMurdo’s Camp**