



The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes

Adventure LX – The Adventure of Shoscombe Old Place

Publishing History

60 of the 60

First published in *The Strand Magazine*, April, 1904

In the US *Liberty Magazine*, March 27, 1904

Part of *The Casebook of Sherlock Holmes* collection by

George Newnes, Ltd., London, 1905

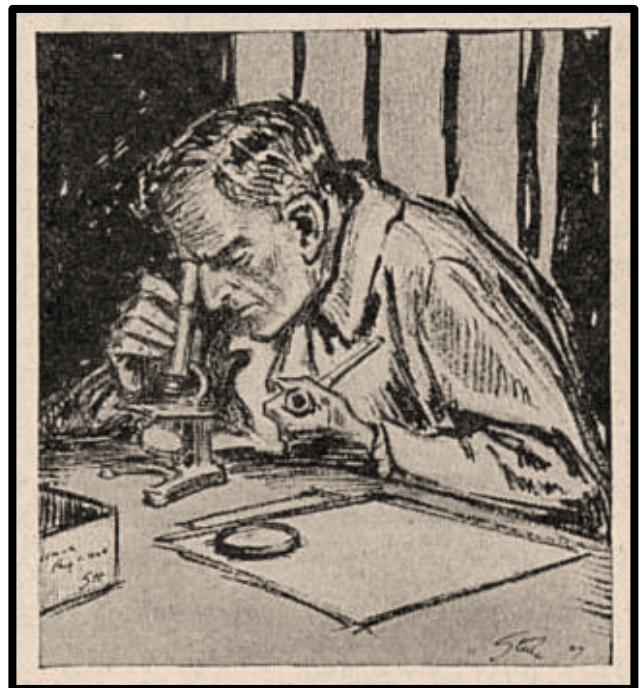
McClure Phillip & Co., New York, 1905

British Illustrator – Frank Wiles

U.S. illustrator – Frederick Dorr Steele

Chronology

Baring-Gould places the dating of the story at Tuesday, May 6 to Wednesday, 7, 1902 making it 50th of the 60. This means that Holmes is 46 and Watson 48.



Christopher Morley Says

“As in *Silver Blaze*, a horse and a dog are the explanation of the mystery: and here also there were legal anomalies that may puzzle students of law. Dr. Watson was always interested in horse-racing: in order to find out what was happening at the training quarters of the horse *Shoscombe Prince* (entered in the Derby) he and Holmes pretended to be fishermen and catch some trout for their supper.”

Dummies Short Summary

“Sir Robert Norberton has everything riding on his horse winning a race. Winning will save him from financial ruin. But why is he visiting an ancient family crypt at night? And how do you explain the human bone in the furnace? Sherlock’s love of dogs holds the key to solving this case.”

How Many Words

At 6,301 words SHOS has the 9th most words (#1 is VEIL – 4,499, #56 is NAVL – 12,701)

Classifying This Case

This case is one of fear of mounting debt. Holmes solved the problem but the debt was paid because of a winning horse.

The Best Of Sherlock Holmes

- 1927 – Arthur Conan Doyle did not have it on his list of 12 favorites.
- 1944 – The Baker Street Irregulars did not have in the list of the worst 10.

What Else Happened That Year (1902)

- Joseph Chamberlain advocates return to Protection and Imperial Preference.
- Peace of Vereeniging, ends Boer War.
- Salisbury resigns, succeeded as PM by Arthur Balfour.
- Anglo-Japanese Treaty, for mutual defense and to maintain status quo in Far East.
- Institution of the Order of Merit for distinguished service to the state; limited to 24 holders at one time.
- Esperanto introduced to England.
- Establishment of Metropolitan Water Board, supplying London.
- Arthur Conan Doyle is knighted.
- Franco-Italian secret treaty; Italy to remain neutral if France were attacked by a third power.
- Triple Alliance (Germany, Austria, Italy) renewed to 1914.
- Italian designs on Tripoli conditionally approved by France and Austria.
- Russo-Japanese Convention, Russia agrees to evacuate Manchuria in 18 months.
- French work day reduced to 9 1/2 hours.
- White settlement of Kenya begins.
- St. Pierre, Martinique, destroyed by earthquake.

- F.A. Krupp takes over Germania shipbuilding yard at Kiel; great armaments firm develops.
- 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.
- Picasso paints *Nude, Back View*.
- Wireless telegraphy applied to ships.
- Trans-Pacific Cable laid.
- Completion of Aswan Dam in Egypt.

Holmes And Watson – Personal Information

Holmes and Watson are both residing at 221B.

Dramatis Personae

Many love it when a character in the cast has 4 legs.

- **Sir Robert Norburton**, an adventuresome raiser of race horses.
- **Lady Beatrice Falder**, Sir Robert's sister who lives with him at Shoscombe and raises prize-winning spaniels.
- **John Mason**, head trainer for Sir Robert. Brought the case to Holmes.
- **Carrie Evans**, maid of Lady Beatrice.
- **Norlett Evans**, Carrie's husband. An actor.
- **Sam Brewer**, a money lender. Once horse-whipped by Robert. Now his chief creditor.
- **Josiah Barnes**, owner of the Green Dragon Inn. He took Lady Beatrice's spaniel.
- **Sandy Bain**, Jockey for Robert.
- **Harvey Mason**, son of John.
- **Stephens**, butler to Robert and Beatrice.
- **Shoshcombe Prince**, the fastest colt in England.
- **Half Bro. To The Prince**, although very similar in appearance to Prince, not nearly as fleet of foot.
- **Merivale**, of the Yard. A friend of Holmes.

Quotable Sherlock

- “By the way, Watson, you know something of racing?”
- (Watson) “I ought to. I pay for it with about half my wound pension.”
- “Things seem to be of a curiously mixed character. But that should surely help us. It is only the colourless, uneventful case which is hopeless.”
- “You do occasionally find a carrion crow among the eagles.”
- “Dogs don’t make mistakes.”

Holmes’ Fee

No fee is mentioned, but since Norburton got enough money to settle his debt, Holmes should have received a reasonable fee.

Unrecorded Cases

- The St. Pancreas Case
- The coiner Holmes ran down by the zinc and copper filings in his cuff

Sherlock Holmes On The Big And The Little Screen

- 1968 *Shoscombe Old Place* with Peter Cushing as an episode in his *Sherlock Holmes* series. This episode is lost.
- 1991 *Shoscombe Old Place* with Jeremy Brett in his 43 episode *Sherlock Holmes* series.

Annotated Sherlock

- **“barouche”** A four-wheeled carriage with a seat in front for the driver, two double seats inside facing each other with a folding top over the back seat.
- **“epithelial scales”** skin
- **“coiner”** manufacturer of forged coins
- **“plunger”** reckless bettor
- **“touts”** agents of inside information on race horses
- **“spoon-bait”** an artificial fishing lure, as per shape

Weapons

- **Loaded revolver** – In the gunroom at Shoscombe Old Place
- **Heavy stick** – Which Sir Robert Norberton used to threaten Holmes and Watson after he had discovered them in his mysterious family crypt.
- **Whip** – Of Sir Robert Norberton which he used to horsewhip Sam Brewer, the Curzon Street money lender.

Frank Mentzel