

# Baker Street *Elementary*

PRESENTS  
"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"



# Baker Street Elementary

THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON  
# A023 -- A TRUE KNOCK-OUT -- JANUARY, 2022





*WELCOME TO TOPIC # 023... TODAY, WATSON AND I WILL LOOK AT THE USE OF CHLOROFORM IN CRIMES OF THE SHERLOCKIAN STORIES.*







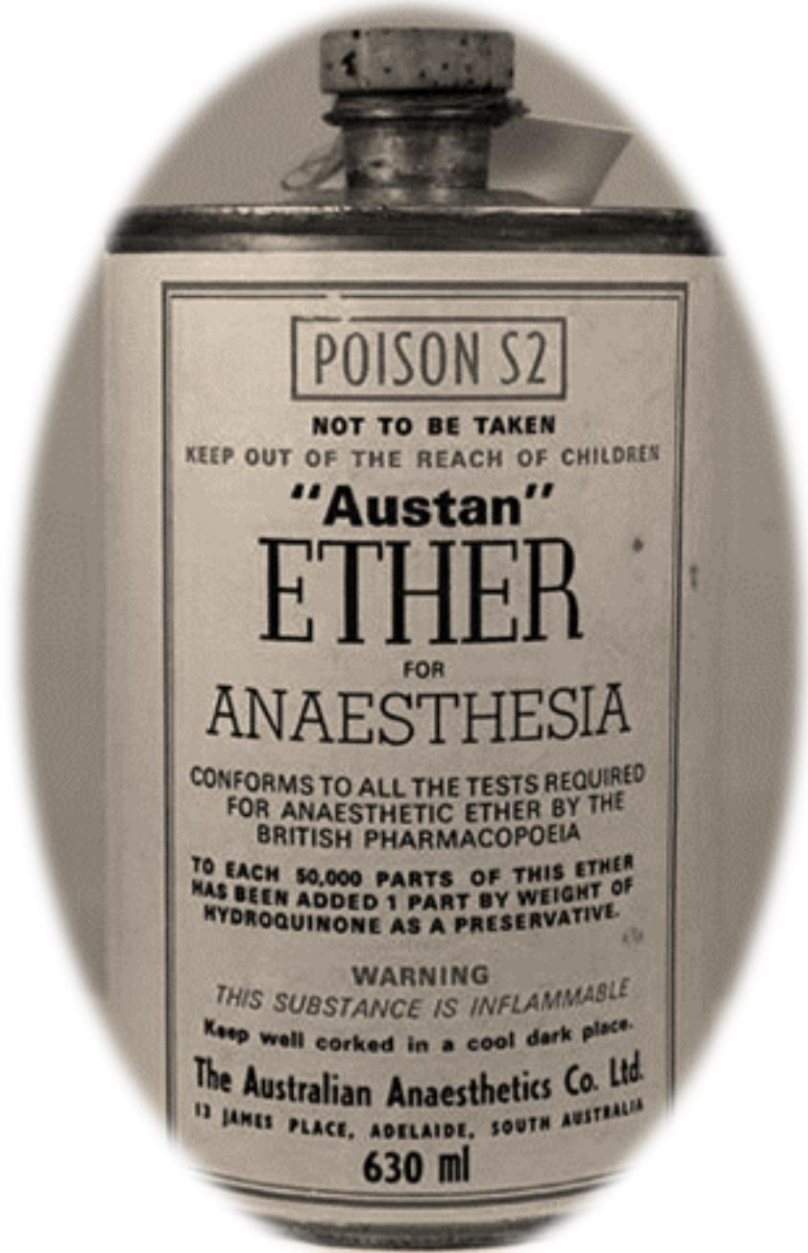
*IN THREE STORIES, SOMEONE IS INCAPACITATED  
BY CHLOROFORM.*





LADY FRANCE CARFAX ALMOST DIED FROM BREATHING THE FUMES WHILE HIDDEN IN A COFFIN, HOLMES CAPTURED GERMAN AGENT VON BORK WITH A SPONGE SOAKED IN IT, AND MARY MABERLEY WAS OVERCOME WITH A RAG HELD OVER HER MOUTH.





WHILE ETHER AND CHLOROFORM WERE BOTH DEVELOPED AND INTRODUCED AS ANESTHESIA AT ABOUT THE SAME TIME, CHLOROFORM ACHIEVED GREATER POPULARITY AND WAS MORE WIDELY USED THROUGHOUT THE 1800s.







IN 1831, CHLOROFORM WAS DEVELOPED ALMOST SIMULTANEOUSLY IN THE US BY SAMUEL GUTHRIE, IN FRANCE BY EUGENE SOUBEIRAN, AND IN GERMANY BY JUSTUS VON LIEBIG.



*GUTHRIE, HOWEVER, PUBLISHED HIS FINDINGS FIRST AND IS GIVEN CREDIT FOR THE PROCESS.*





SEEKING A CHEAP PESTICIDE, HE USED A HOME-MADE  
DISTILLATION APPARATUS TO CREATE 'CHLORIC ETHER'  
FROM CHLORIDE OF LIME AND WHISKEY.



*FOLLOWING ITS DEVELOPMENT, HE FREELY SHARED THE RESULTING PLEASANT-TASTING SPIRIT WITH HIS FRIENDS, WHICH THEY IMBIBED A NUMBER OF TIMES OVER THE NEXT SIX MONTHS TO DETERMINE ITS EFFECTS.*

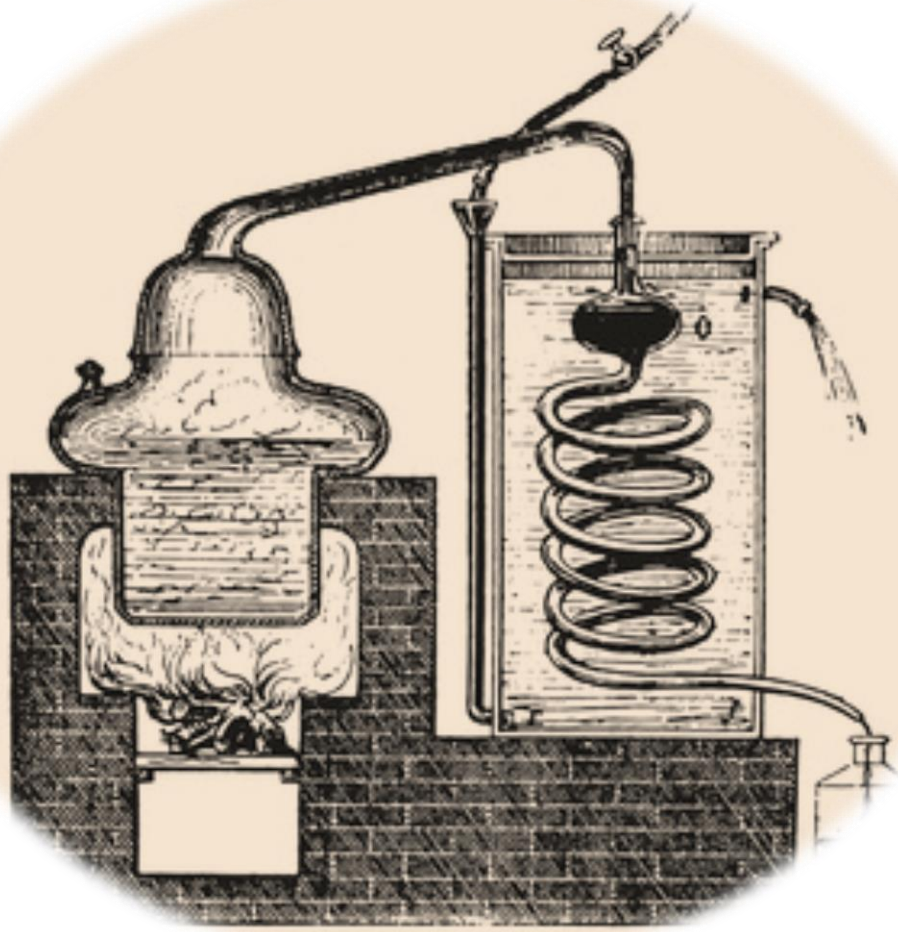


THE LIQUID CAME TO BE KNOWN AS 'SWEET WHISKEY,' INGESTED FOR ITS INTOXICATING EFFECTS AS A NERVOUS SYSTEM DEPRESSANT.





HE CONSIDERED IT A STIMULUS, BUT DID REPORT TO HIS DAUGHTER THAT SHE WAS THE FIRST TO RECEIVE IT TO REDUCE HER PAIN.





HE ALSO SENT SAMPLES TO A NUMBER OF PHYSICIANS FOR ADDITIONAL EXPERIMENTS AS TO ITS USES.

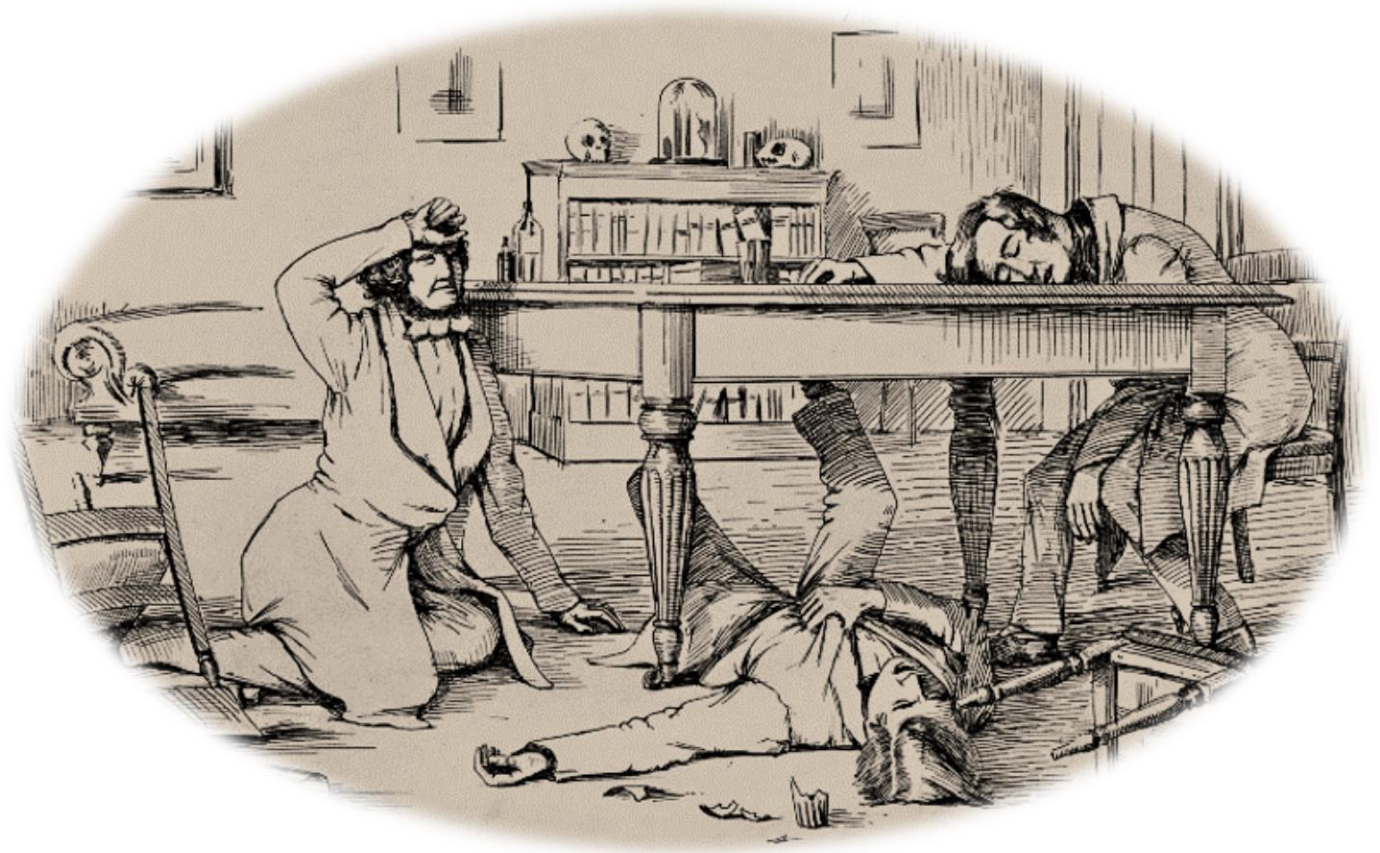


DR. ELI IVES REPORTED USING IT FOR ASTHMA IN  
1832, BUT ITS USE AS AN ANESTHESIA WAS NOT  
DETERMINED UNTIL 1847...

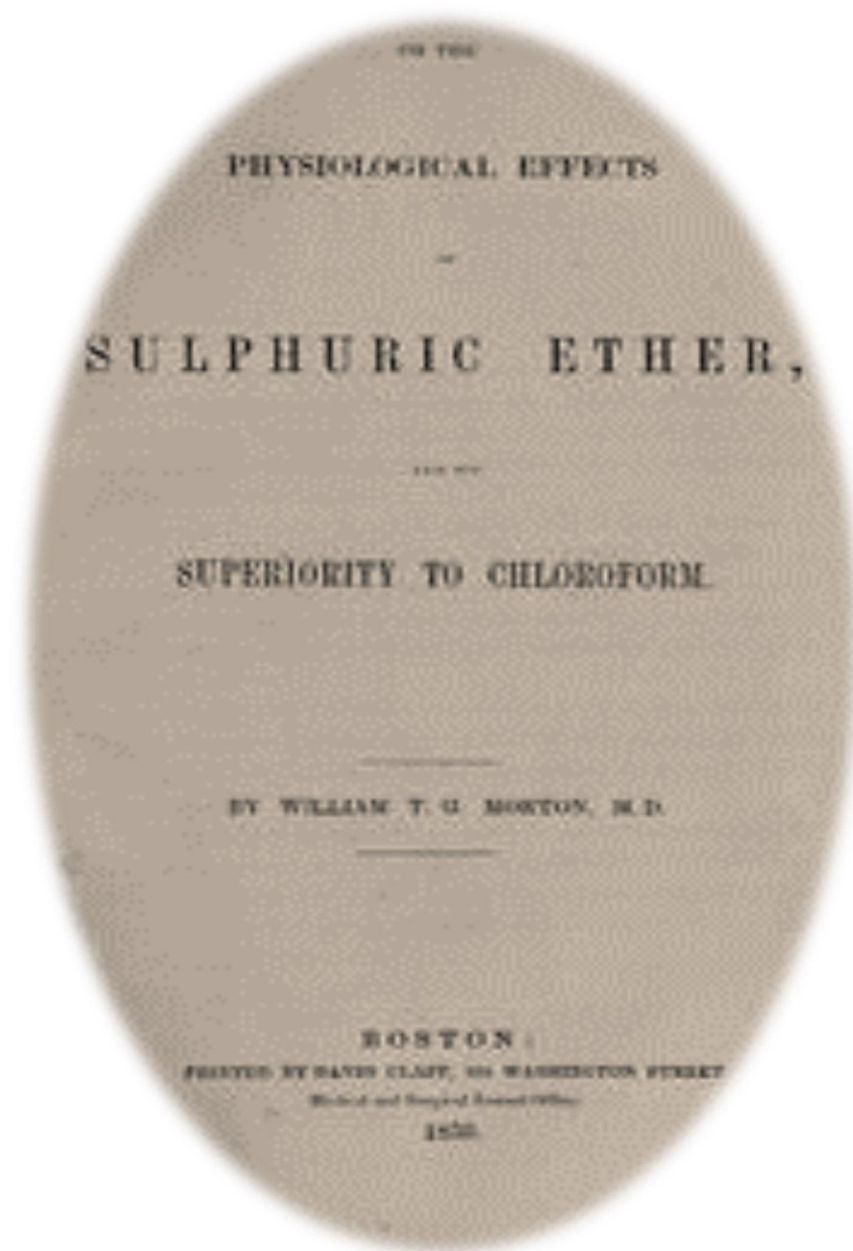




*...WHEN DR. JAMES SIMPSON AND TWO OTHER PHYSICIANS OPENED ONE OF GUTHRIE'S SAMPLE BOTTLES AND INHALED DEEPLY.*



WHEN THEY CAME TO THE NEXT MORNING, THEY ANNOUNCED THEY HAD FOUND A SUBSTITUTE FOR SULPHURIC ETHER, INTRODUCED AS AN ANESTHETIC ONLY THE YEAR BEFORE.



WHILE ETHER HAD ALSO SERVED AS AN ANESTHETIC, CHLOROFORM GAINED GREATER POPULARITY BECAUSE IT WAS FASTER-ACTING AND NON-FLAMMABLE.







*J. Simpson*

IT WAS USED EXTENSIVELY IN THE U.S. DURING THE CIVIL WAR AND AFTER SIMPSON USED IT ON A PATIENT DURING CHILDBIRTH...



...IT BECAME POPULAR ENOUGH FOR QUEEN VICTORIA TO USE IT DURING THE DELIVERY OF HER EIGHTH CHILD, PRINCE LEOPOLD, IN 1853.





*SHE INHALED THE ANESTHETIC FROM A  
HANDKERCHIEF AND DECLARED AFTERWARDS, IT  
WAS 'DELIGHTFUL BEYOND MEASURE,' AND NEVER  
HAD SHE RECOVERED SO QUICKLY.*





**DESPITE THE ROYAL SEAL OF APPROVAL, THE USE  
OF CHLOROFORM WAS NOT WITHOUT RISK OR  
CONTROVERSY.**



*THE FIRST FATALITY RELATED TO CHLOROFORM  
OCCURRED IN 1848 WHEN A FIFTEEN-YEAR-OLD  
GIRL DIED AFTER BEING ADMINISTERED THE DRUG.*



IT WAS NOT UNTIL 1911 THAT IT WAS DETERMINED CHLOROFORM CAUSED CARDIAC FIBRILLATION. WHILE FATAL COMPLICATIONS WERE ESTIMATED AT 1 IN 3,000 TO 6,000 ADMINISTRATIONS (VS. 1 IN 14,000 TO 28,000 FOR ETHER)...





...IT WAS STILL THE GO-TO ANESTHETIC IN THE UK AND GERMAN-SPEAKING COUNTRIES BETWEEN 1865 TO 1920, WITH 80-95% OF ALL NARCOSES PERFORMED USING THE COMPOUND.





**CHLOROFORM'S ADMINISTRATION HAD ALWAYS BEEN PROBLEMATIC... TOO MUCH, AND THE PATIENT DIED... TOO LITTLE AND THE PATIENT REMAINED AWAKE.**



DECLINE IN THE USE OF CHLOROFORM OCCURRED  
IN THE 1930s AS INHALATION EQUIPMENT  
IMPROVED AND ANESTHETICS SUCH AS NITROUS  
OXIDE WERE INTRODUCED FOR SAFER, MORE  
EFFECTIVE NARCOSIS.





BY 1976, THE END OF CHLOROFORM'S USE WAS OFFICIALLY MARKED BY ITS REMOVAL FROM MEDICAL TEXTS.

EXPOSING <sup>the</sup> MYTHS  
#1: Chloroform



*CURRENT ESTIMATES SUGGEST IT CAN TAKE AS LONG AS TEN MINUTES FOR A PERSON TO SUCCUMB, BUT POPULAR VICTORIAN PRESS AND FICTION PROPAGATED THE MYTH OF THE COMPOUND'S INSTANTANEOUS EFFECTS.*



*AS FOR OVERDOSES, YOU NOTED THE USE OF  
ETHER TO ASSIST IN REVIVING LADY CARFAX.*





**THIS WAS PROPOSED BY AUGUST FABRE IN 1857,  
BUT COULD NOT BE SHOWN TO BE EFFECTIVE IN A  
SERIES OF EXPERIMENTS AND ACTUALLY APPEARED  
TO AGGRAVATE THE SYMPTOMS.**



REGARDLESS, THE ALLURE OF THE DRUG'S TRUE BENEFITS AND USES LED TO CHLOROFORM'S PERVASIVE APPEARANCE AMONG THE CRIMINAL ELEMENT IN SHERLOCKIAN TALES.



*SO, WE HAVE COMPLETED TOPIC # 023 IN OUR SERIES...*

*IN TOPIC # 024, WE WILL LOOK AT HORSE RACING IN VICTORIAN ENGLAND.*





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# *Baker Street Elementary*

"The Life and Times in Victorian London"

IS CREATED THROUGH THE INGENUITY & HARD WORK OF:

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