

# Baker Street *Elementary*

PRESENTS  
"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"



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THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON  
# 126 - HOLMES AND HIS SET - AUGUST, 2023



WELCOME TO TOPIC NUMBER # 126... TODAY WE  
WILL BE LOOKING AT THE ROLE CHEMISTRY PLAYED  
IN YOUR INVESTIGATIONS...





IN OUR FIRST ADVENTURE TOGETHER, I IDENTIFIED YOU AS A 'FIRST-RATE CHEMIST' AND DESCRIBED YOUR CONSTANT EXPERIMENTATION ONCE WE RENTED ROOMS AT 221B.



*FROM OUR FIRST MEETING, YOU SHOWED YOUR SKILLS IN CHEMISTRY WHEN YOU ANNOUNCED YOU HAD JUST DEVELOPED A TEST TO DETERMINE THE PRESENCE OF BLOOD.*





*IN ADDITION, THROUGHOUT THE CANON, YOU  
RELY ON CHEMICAL ANALYSES NOT ONLY AS A  
MEANS OF SOLVING A CASE BUT ALSO AS A FORM  
OF RELAXATION.*



**YOUR CHEMICAL STUDIES WERE SO WELL KNOWN,  
THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF CHEMISTRY AWARDED YOU  
A FELLOWSHIP IN 2002... NOT ALL, HOWEVER, HAVE  
AS HIGH AN OPINION OF YOUR ABILITIES AS MINE  
OR THIS ROYAL SOCIETY.**



**CHEMISTRY REFERS TO CHANGES IN THE NATURE OF SUBSTANCES, AND WAS FIRST STUDIED MORE THAN 4000 YEARS AGO BY THE ANCIENT EGYPTIANS.**



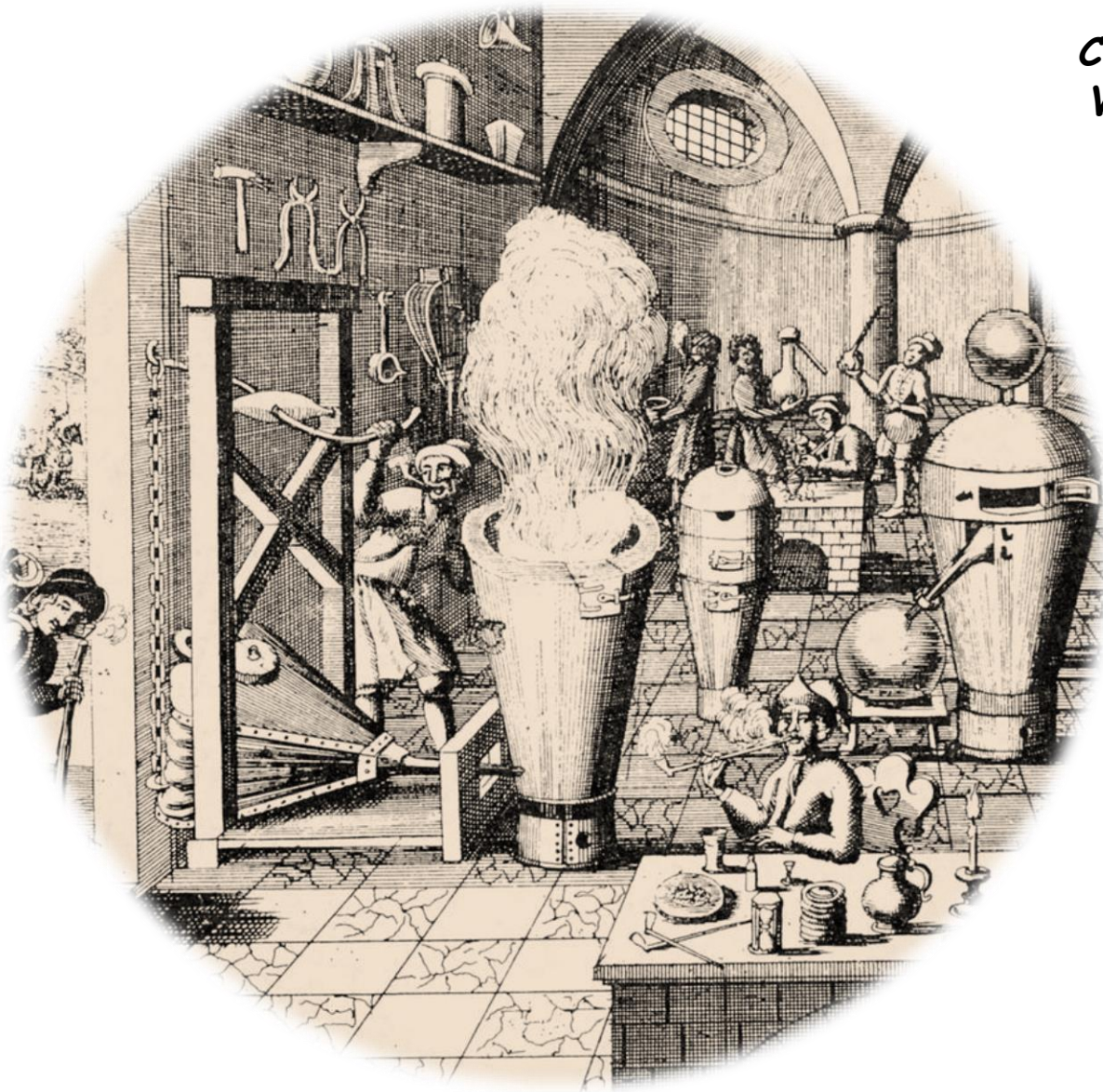




MUSLIM SCHOLARS CONTINUED STUDIES OF HOW MATTER CHANGED, CALLING IT AL-KIMIA, WHERE IT RETURNED TO EUROPE AS ALCHEMY, THE SEARCH FOR TRANSFORMING BASER METALS INTO GOLD.







**CHEMISTRY BECAME A PROPER SCIENCE IN THE 1700s  
WITH EXPERIMENTS INVOLVING THE DISCOVERY OF  
OXYGEN AMONG OTHER ELEMENTS.**



LATER DISCOVERIES SUCH AS THE RADIOACTIVE ELEMENTS BY THE CURRIES MARKED A TURN FROM TRADITIONAL TO MODERN CHEMISTRY.





*BOTH OXFORD AND CAMBRIDGE'S CURRICULA REFLECTED  
THE DEVELOPMENT OF SCIENTIFIC CHEMISTRY.*



**CAMBRIDGE HAS MORE THAN A 300-YEAR HISTORY IN THE DISCIPLINE, WITH ALCHEMY BEING FIRST PRACTICED THERE IN THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES.**

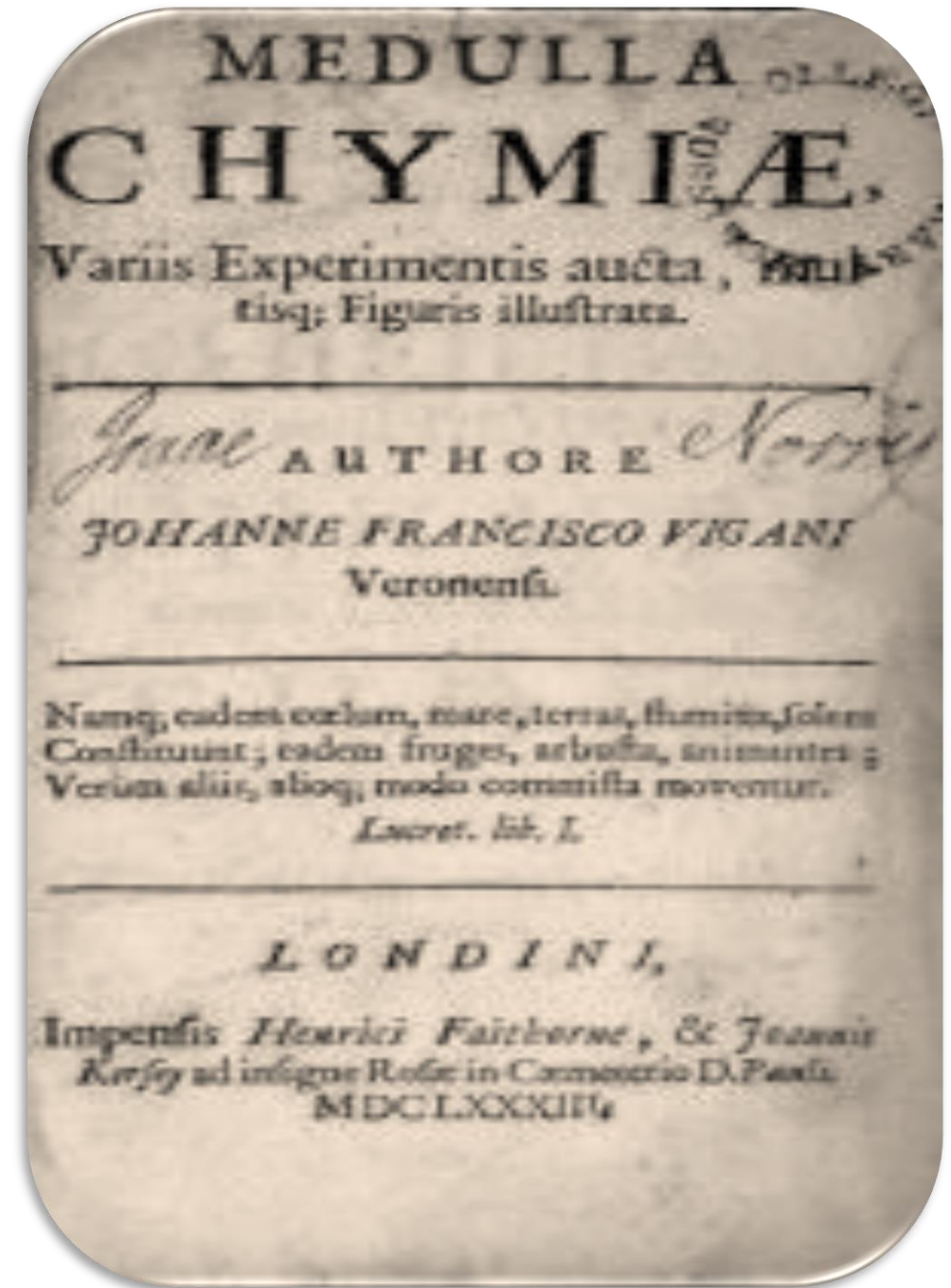


**THE SHIFT TO TRADITIONAL CHEMISTRY AT THIS INSTITUTION WAS MARKED BY THE UNIVERSITY NAMING ITALIAN CHEMIST AND PHARMACIST GIOVANNI F. VIGANI AS ITS FIRST PROFESSOR OF CHEMISTRY IN 1702.**





VIGANI HAD ALREADY BEEN LECTURING AT CAMBRIDGE FOR 20 YEARS BY THE TIME HE RECEIVED THIS RECOGNITION... HIS LECTURES WERE PRACTICALLY DRIVEN AND FOCUSED PRIMARILY ON THE PREPARATION OF MEDICAL COMPOUNDS.



**OXFORD'S INTRODUCTION OF CHEMISTRY BEGAN  
IN 1682 WITH THE CREATION OF THE  
ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM.**





**ELIAS ASHMOLE'S BEQUEST INCLUDED THE FIRST LABORATORY BUILT SPECIFICALLY FOR CHEMISTRY BECAUSE OF HIS INTEREST IN ALCHEMY.**

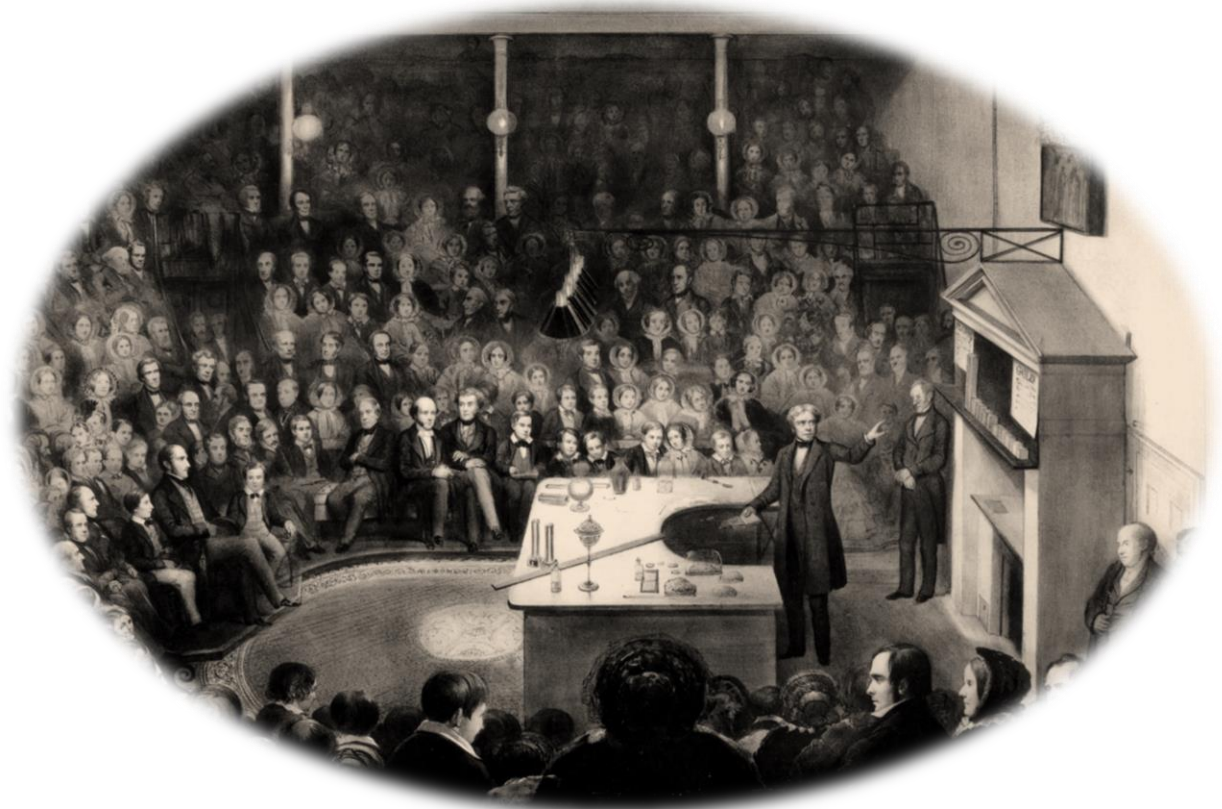




**CHEMISTRY, HOWEVER, WOULD HAVE TO WAIT ALMOST TWO HUNDRED YEARS (1860) UNTIL IT WAS RECOGNIZED AS A SEPARATE DISCIPLINE WITH THE CREATION OF A SMALL LABORATORY ATTACHED TO THE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY.**



**FOR MOST OF THE 19TH CENTURY, LITTLE  
EXPERIMENTATION OR STUDY OF CHEMISTRY  
OCCURRED AT THE UNIVERSITIES OUTSIDE  
THAT TAUGHT TO MEDICAL STUDENTS.**





*YOUR TRAINING IN CHEMISTRY, THEN, WOULD  
HAVE BEEN PRIMARILY FOCUSED ON MEDICAL  
APPLICATIONS, AND NOT SURPRISINGLY, YOU  
FIRST MEET ME AT THE CHEMISTRY LABORATORY  
AT ST. BARTHOLOMEW'S HOSPITAL.*

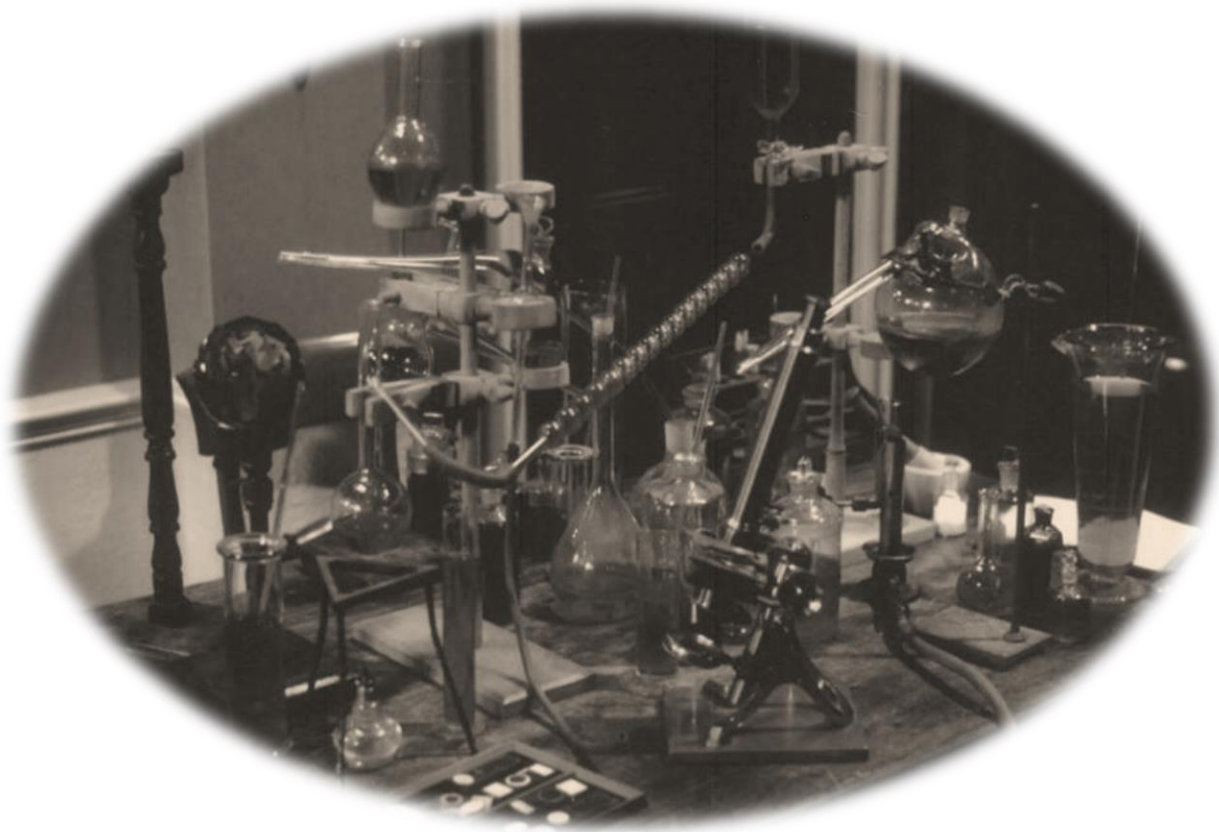


I, OF COURSE, HAD MY OWN CHEMISTRY EQUIPMENT, WHICH YOU DESCRIBE IN NUMEROUS ADVENTURES AS SITTING ON AN ACID-STAINED TABLE.





*ALSO MENTIONED ALONG THE WAY ARE  
GLASSWARE—IN PARTICULAR, A RETORT USED IN  
DISTILLATION—A BUNSEN BURNER, A MICROSCOPE,  
AND OTHER ITEMS SUCH AS LITMUS PAPER.*



**ISAAC ASIMOV DISSECTED SEVERAL OF YOUR  
CHEMISTRY REFERENCES IN THE CANON AND  
NOTES THAT THE DESCRIPTIONS OF YOUR EFFORTS  
IMPLIED A RATHER LIMITED KNOWLEDGE IN THE  
AREA, AND RATHER 'BLUNDERING.'**





*YOUR ONE MAJOR INSIGHT INVOLVED THE DEVIL'S  
FOOT ROOT, WHOSE EFFECTS WHEN GROUND AND  
BURNED IMITATED THAT OF LSD.*



**JAMES O'BRIEN'S REVIEW OF ASIMOV'S  
ASSESSMENT, AS WELL AS HIS EXAMINATION OF  
HOLMES' INTEREST IN CHEMISTRY, QUESTIONS MY  
CONCLUSION THAT YOUR EFFORTS WERE  
'PROFOUND...' IN THE END, O'BRIEN LABELS THEM  
AS 'ECCENTRIC.'**



**MY REPUTATION AS A DETECTIVE IS BASED IN PART ON MY ABILITY TO APPLY SCIENCE AND DEDUCTIVE REASONING TO SOLVE A CASE.**





*AT THE TIME OF MY INTRODUCTION TO YOU, I WAS ALREADY ON THIS PATH AS I DEVELOPED MY TEST FOR THE PRESENCE OF BLOOD IN A STAIN.*



# CHEMISTRY AND CRIME

FROM SHERLOCK HOLMES  
TO TODAY'S COURTROOM

Edited by Samuel M. Gerber



*WHILE MY ABILITIES MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN AS  
'PROFOUND' AS YOU SUGGESTED, THE  
APPLICATION OF SUCH SKILLS STILL PLACED ME  
ABOVE THOSE DEPENDING ON INSTINCT TO SOLVE  
A CRIME.*



SO, WE HAVE COMPLETED TOPIC # 126 IN OUR SERIES...

IN TOPIC # 126, WE WILL BE LOOKING AT THE DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF  
THE LONDON UNDERGROUND DURING THE VICTORIAN PERIOD.





## ORIGINAL SOURCE MATERIAL FOR FOR THIS TOPIC:

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"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"

IS CREATED THROUGH THE INGENUITY & HARD WORK OF:  
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