

# THE TWEET SHEET



The occasional newsletter of **The Notorious Canary-Trainers** of Madison, Wisconsin  
A Scion of the Baker Street Irregulars • [communities.madison.com/canary](http://communities.madison.com/canary)

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**CASE STUDY FOR MAY: THE NAVAL TREATY.** We continue to take the stories in chronological order as suggested by William Baring-Gould. "*The Adventure of the Naval Treaty*" is our May selection. It originally was published in the October & November issues of *The Strand* in 1893 and in the U.S. in *Harper's Weekly* issues of Oct. 14 and 21 that same year. The longest of the short stories, it also was the first to be serialized and to contain a map. Baring-Gould dates it to July 30 through Aug. 1, 1889, or about a month and a half after our case study for April, "*The Stock-broker's Clerk*."

We meet to discuss it Sunday, **May 21**, returning to Barnes & Noble Booksellers after holding our April meeting at Booked for Murder. Our two meetings thereafter will consider "**The Cardboard Box**" on June 18 and "**The Adventure of the Engineer's Thumb**" July 16. Unless otherwise announced, these meetings will be from 3-4:30 p.m. at Barnes & Noble Booksellers, 7433 Mineral Point Rd., Madison (behind West Towne Shopping Center). There's no charge to attend and our meetings are open to the public.

*"Come at once if convenient. If inconvenient, come all the same."* (Sherlock Holmes in a message to Dr. John H. Watson, in "*The Creeping Man*")



**FIRST GROUP OF CANONICAL NAMES ANNOUNCED.** The Notorious Canary-Trainers April 10 welcomed the following individuals from the Canon to our group, as represented by current members in our initial selection and assignment of such identifications. They are shown here in alphabetical order of last names (where known), together with the Canary-Trainer member claiming the name and a source for the name:

**Billy the page** ("Mazarin Stone"): Mike McCoy ▫ **Hatty Doran** (Noble Bachelor): Nancy Glick ▫ **Birdy Edwards** (aka John Douglas) ("The Valley of Fear"): Peter Priegel ▫ **Inspector Tobias Gregson** of Scotland Yard ("A Study in Scarlet" and others) : Bob Ristau ▫ **Mrs. Hudson** ("A Study in Scarlet" and others): Jean Ristau ▫ **Lomax the sublibrarian** ("The Illustrious Client"): Susan Flaherty ▫ **Inspector Alec MacDonald** ("The Valley of Fear"): Richard MacDonald ▫ **Godfrey Norton, Esquire** ("A Scandal in Bohemia"): Thomas Boykoff ▫ **Sir James Saunders** ("Blanchard Soldier"): Don Schuster ▫ **Windigate**, proprietor of the Alpha Inn ("The Blue Carbuncle"): Tom Drucker

A separate record of the above list has been prepared and will be placed in the online archives of our Yahoo Group, and otherwise will be made available upon request at and between our monthly meetings. It will be updated as other names are added.

We've asked those in this first group to explain why they chose the name they did, to find a representative quote from the Canon by or about that character, and to consider, in the months ahead, developing a written biography of that character, short or long, based on what can be confirmed in the Canon and what may be reasonably surmised through creative brainwork. (Some may even decide to write a pastiche prominently featuring the character they chose, then sharing that with us.)

Those who didn't participate in this first go-round, or who join the group hereafter, may choose at their own timing a name of a character, location or event from the Canon with whom they would like to be identified.

Now let the fun begin!



**WHY THE NAME YOU CHOSE?** Several in the first group with Canonical names already have checked in with their rationale for the Canonical name they picked.

**Tom Drucker:** "The reason I chose 'Windigate' for my name among the Canary Trainers is that it is my name on the Hounds of the Internet. As for a quotation, our last glimpse of Windigate comes with Holmes's valedictory remark: 'Well, here's your good health, landlord, and prosperity to your house'."

**Bob Ristau (Inspector Tobias Gregson):** "The inspectors of Scotland Yard have a somewhat 'interesting' role in stories throughout the canon. Among them is Inspector Tobias Gregson who appears in five canonical stories. Holmes, in the Sign of the Four, admits that Gregson was 'the smartest of the Scotland Yarders'. Some, of course, would suggest that that was not very much coming from Holmes. In the Red Circle, Dr. Watson cites Gregson for his bravery. So, with my underlying desire for sleuthology, why not take on the persona of one, Tobias Gregson, who might some day rise to prominence in Scotland Yard?"

**Jean Ristau (Mrs. Hudson):** "Mrs. Hudson, a central character without a known first name, had a most interesting life with Sherlock Holmes as a roomer and boarder. She showed affection for Holmes in The Dying Detective and expressed frustration over his messiness in several canonical stories. After becoming somewhat hysterical over his return in the Empty House, she assisted Holmes by manipulating the bust that was central to the trap that Holmes set for Sebastian Moran. Mrs. Hudson was a friend, a good cook (comments in Black Peter and in The Naval Treaty) and housekeeper; I admire those traits and would be pleased to be a Mrs. Hudson."



**SHERLOCK HOLMES RADIO PROGRAM SCRIPT READING.** Four members of the Notorious Canary-Trainers accepted an invitation by another local non-profit group which recreates old network radio comedies and dramas, to attend an April 17 "table reading" of a 1939 Sherlock Holmes network radio program script. The event was held at Meriter Maingate.

The program originally aired Dec. 11, 1939, in a radio series then in its first season called "The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes" and which was sponsored by Bromo Quinine cold tablets. The original stars were Basil Rathbone and Nigel Bruce, reprising their movie roles as Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson in the popular series of mysteries. The script read April 17 was "The Musgrave Ritual."

Radio Active!, which advertises itself as offering "radio theater live!," holds monthly table readings where members of the troupe explore through a "first reading" how to interpret characters in the script in the event the script is performed before an audience.

Attending were **Thom Boykoff** (Godfrey Norton, Esq.), **Peter Priegel** (Birdy Edwards), **Christian Neuhaus** and **Mike McCoy** (Billy the page). Christian and Mike are also Radio Active! members. Christian took a turn as Sherlock Holmes.



**HAPPY 150TH BIRTHDAY, MADISON!** The Notorious Canary-Trainers joined over 80 other Madison area non-profits with booths at the city of Madison's official Sesquicentennial Birthday Party Sunday April 9 from 1-6 p.m. at Monona Terrace. The celebration area, which spread over several large rooms and hallways, was filled with partygoers much of the afternoon. Organizers estimated between 4,000-5,000 attended the event.

We were the only literary group to participate, although several others were expected but either dropped out or didn't show up Sunday.

Although we didn't have a prime location, we certainly got a lot of comment from those who walked by the table and from event planners about our unusual name. One of the lead planners told **Mike McCoy** we were informally voted by event staff as the group with the best name of all those at Monona Terrace that day.

"When I showed up early to find our table and set it up," Mike said in an email report later that day, "the established procedure was to check in, identify the group you were with, and then the person

with the list of participants would consult it, find your location, and provide general directions to it to you to find on your own.”

“I was there for two groups, and that was the procedure I followed when I first asked about the other group’s location. When I said the second group was the ‘Notorious Canary-Trainers’, there was no need for anyone to consult the list. They knew exactly where we were located and one of them even personally escorted me to the table! First class treatment!”

**Thom Boykoff** was there for the entire afternoon, being assisted by others from time to time. They were **Paul Devine, Christian Neuhaus, Bob and Jean Ristau, Louise and Christine Soder, and Mike.**

Bob Ristau reports about his experience there: “People were quite curious about the name of our organization. (Christian Neuhaus commented that “One person did ask if we were a birding organization.”) The deer stalker caps (Editor’s Note: provided by Thom) clued many in to our being a Sherlock Holmes group. Some people had not read a Sherlock Holmes story recently, but showed interest in what we do at our meetings. In the hour that I was there, perhaps two or three could be listed as ‘possible new members’.”

Thom Boykoff noted: “People stopped by who some of us know in different areas of our lives. For example, three members of the Badger Stamp Club, of which I am a member, stopped by. Visual images caught people’s attention: Christine Soder’s Sherlock Holmes Tavern sweatshirt and my deerstalker hat and the one I placed on the table. I guesstimate that during my shifts, about 6-10 people showed serious interest in our group and its meetings and may join us at one or more meetings. We captured my stockbroker’s attention with our next story: “The Stockbroker’s Clerk.” The female police officers especially enjoyed kidding around; possibly because we’re on the ‘same side’ they seemed to want to arrest me because I took an extra piece of birthday cake.”

Mike also provided a sign created especially for the event (which he will bring to our April 23 meeting for others in our group to see), two binders showing various aspects of our programs and history, copies of the Special Madison Sesquicentennial Edition of the Tweet Sheet (No. 2006-1) and business cards with contact information. Thom’s deerstalkers proved to be good conversation starters.

“This was the first time in my memory that area non-profits, particularly those which are all-volunteer, were gathered together in one place for the public,” Mike said. “I hope it becomes an annual event or is held every 18 months or so because I think all the groups which participated benefited from the spotlight. If it is repeated, I also hope other literary groups will join in because I think we’d make even a bigger impact that way.”

Thanks to all the volunteers for staffing the table for parts or all of the afternoon



**IT’S TUESDAYS WITH MURDER IN PORTAGE.** **Richard MacDonald** (Inspector Alec MacDonald) has started a mystery book group at the Portage Public Library, where he is the director, called “Tuesdays with Murder.” The next meeting is May 16. The Aug. 15 meeting will be devoted to Sherlock Holmes. Those planning to attend that session are being asked to first read at least one of the four novels and one of the 56 short stories from the Canon (no onerous requirement for our membership, for sure). The group meets the third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. in the Library Program Room unless otherwise noted. Anyone is welcome to drop in on any of the meetings, with the exception of July when advance notice is required because it includes food.

More details are available at <http://www.madison.com/communities/canary/pages/baraboobooks.php>



**SHERLOCK HOLMES PLAY IN MILWAUKEE “LOTS OF FUN.”** The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel’s Sunday Encore section of April 16 contained a very positive review of ‘Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure’ which just opened at a Milwaukee theater. “Detective’s final adventure is cerebral – and lots of fun,” according to the review by Damien Jaques. For the complete text of the review and two photos, go to [www.jsonline.com/story/index.aspx?id=416338](http://www.jsonline.com/story/index.aspx?id=416338) (continued)

"Sherlock Holmes: The Final Adventure" continues through May 14 in the Quadracci Powerhouse Theater at the Baker Theater Complex, 108 E. Wells St. Tickets are on sale at the Rep's box office in the complex's lobby, by phone at (414) 224-9490, and online at [www.milwaukeeep.com](http://www.milwaukeeep.com)



### **BOOK REVIEW: "THE SCIENCE OF SHERLOCK HOLMES."** The April 11

Christian Science Monitor reviewed a new book that mixes 19<sup>th</sup> century science and Sherlock Holmes and also travels -- as the book's cover promises -- "from Baskerville Hall to the Valley of Fear" to reveal "the real forensics behind the Great Detective's greatest cases." The book is entitled "The Science of Sherlock Holmes," by E. J. Wagner. It's published by J. Wiley & Sons, comes in at 244 pages, and sells retail for \$24.95.

The reviewer concludes that the book "will intrigue readers with incredible stories and amazing tales from the early days of forensic science. But what will they think of Sherlock Holmes and his brilliant and highly innovative forensic skills? To paraphrase Dr. Watson, the reaction will surely be elementary." For the full review, go to [www.csmonitor.com/2006/0411/p14s01-bogn.html](http://www.csmonitor.com/2006/0411/p14s01-bogn.html)



### **HERE'S ANOTHER VIRTUAL RECREATION OF HOLMES' DIGS AT 221B.**

There's an interesting Web site that brings the sitting room of Sherlock Holmes into your home -- at least if you're visiting it from your home. It's called 221b Baker Street/Los Angeles and its owner promises "an authentic recreation of the famed sitting room of Mr. Sherlock Holmes."

"Located in California's sunny San Fernando Valley, you'll find more than 300 rare items and furnishings related to the master detective. You'll also discover text and Canonical notations that will assist your visit. The present incarnation of the room debuted with much acclaim in September of 1998 and was officially recognized by the mayor of the city of Los Angeles. I also invite you to join the BAKER STREET BUILDERS, the only scion society devoted to the study of the sitting room at 221b. We've attracted members from across the country as well as around the world."

Intrigued? Check it out at [221bbakerstreetla.com/index.asp](http://221bbakerstreetla.com/index.asp) Be sure to click on the photo that is displayed when the page opens, to access more views from different angles in the room.



### **ALSO WORTH NOTING...**

The **Baker Street Irregular's** next annual dinner will be held in New York on Jan. 12, 2007, while the Sherlock Holmes Society of London will meet for the same purpose Jan. 20....The March issue of Golf Digest offers details about what golf meant to Arthur Conan Doyle in an article entitled, "**How Golf Saved Sherlock Holmes.**" (It apparently meant more to Doyle than to Holmes, based on the published stories of his exploits.)....**Take a look at "wearable art"** dedicated to Sherlock Holmes at [www.ptierneydesigns.etsy.com](http://www.ptierneydesigns.etsy.com). Among other items offered for sale, there's a "Great Detectives" mystery necklace and a "Sherlock Holmes Rathbone and Bruce" necklace.

The **March 2006 issue of the Spermaceti Press** - a newsletter produced by Peter Blau for the serious Sherlockians -- now is available online at [members.cox.net/sherlock1/most.txt](http://members.cox.net/sherlock1/most.txt) For previous issues, go to [members.cox.net/sherlock1/scuttle.ht](http://members.cox.net/sherlock1/scuttle.ht) Printed copies are available via subscription for \$10 a year and get to you before the contents are available online. Subscription details are at the Web site at the second link...."**The Adventure of Sherlock Holmes' Smarter Brother,**" a Christmas 1975 Hollywood comedy release starring Gene Wilder, has just been released on DVD (out April 4). This makes it easily available for public viewing again as the VHS version has been out of production for years. Some Sherlockians enjoy it, others don't.

To nominate items for publication, send them to [mikemccoy1852@yahoo.com](mailto:mikemccoy1852@yahoo.com) or Tweet Sheet Editor, One Hiawatha Circle, Madison, WI 53711. This and future editions of this publication will be posted in our Web site archives. For information: Thom Boykoff 608/833-3369 □ Mike McCoy 608/274-1638

