



The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes

Adventure XII – The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor

Publishing History

12 of the 60 stories

First published in *The Strand Magazine*, April, 1892

Part of The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes collection by

George Newnes, Ltd., London, 1892

Harper Bros., New York, 1892

British Illustrator – Sidney Paget

American Illustrator – J. C. Drake

Chronology

Baring-Gould places the date of the story at Friday, October 8, 1886 which makes it the 6th of the 60. This means that Holmes is 32 and Watson is 34.

Christopher Morley Says

“The story is particularly famous for Holmes’s pro-American sentiments. He serves a supper of congratulation for an attractive American couple, and thinks the lady has done well to escape becoming the bride of the aristocratic Lord St. Simon.



We realize from one of Holmes's deduction how prices have changed since 1887: the hotel bill lists the cost of a bedroom as 8 shillings (\$2) and a glass of sherry 8d (\$.16) – Holmes knows therefore that it is one of the most expensive hotels in London.”

Dummies Short Summary

“Holmes investigates the case of a jilted groom and a missing bride. But is there a crime?”

How Many Words

At 8,157 words NOBL has the 31st most words (#1 is VEIL – 4,499, #56 if NAVL – 12,701)

CLASSIFYING THIS CASE

This Case Is One Of 3 Classified As A Voluntary Disappearance -- And No Crime Was Committed. The Other 2 Were MISS and VALL.

The Best Of Sherlock Holmes

In the lower half of the popularity pole.

- 1927 – Arthur Conan Doyle did not it on his list of 12 favorites.
- 1944 – The Baker Street Irregulars voted it #5 on their worstlist.
- 1959 – The Baker Street Irregulars did not have it on their list of 10 favorites.
- 1999 – The Baker Street Irregulars voted it as 31st of the 56 short stories.
- 1999 – The Sherlock Holmes Society of London voted it as 38th of 56 short stories.

What Else Happened That Year (1886)

- Jameson Raid in South Africa; British negotiations with Boers (to 1899) fail.
- Start of Kitchener's campaign against the Madhi in the Sudan (1896 - 99).
- Anglo-French treaty settles boundaries in Siam.
- Widespread famine in India, to 1897.
- National Portrait Gallery moves to present site in Trafalgar Square.
- First all-steel English building erected at West Hartlepool.
- Locomotives Act: repeal of "Red Flag" restriction; maximum speed raised to 14 mph.
- First modern Olympic Games are held at Athens.

- Utah admitted as state in the U.S.
- France annexes Madagascar.
- Italians are defeated by Menelek of Abyssinia at Adowa, resulting in Treaty of Addis-Ababa and end of Italian protectorate.
- Massacre of Armenians by Kurds and Circassians supported by the Sultan.
- Insurrection in Crete against Turkish rule.
- Beginning of the Klondike Gold Rush.
- First public film exhibition, in U.S.
- Wells publishes Island of Dr. Moreau.
- Nobel Prizes started, for physics, physiology or medicine, chemistry, literature, furtherance of the cause of peace.
- Guglielmo Marconi demonstrates on Salisbury Plain the practicability of wireless telegraphy.
- Rehn, of Frankfort, sutures a heart wound; beginning of heart surgery.
- Earliest record of water chlorination, during typhoid outbreak in Italy.

Holmes And Watson – Personal Information

Our duo is sharing bachelor quarters at 221B Baker Street.

Dramatis Personae

One of the very few cases where 221B's page boy is actually mentioned. This kid should have been answering the door.

- **Lord Robert St. Simon**, the noble bachelor
- **Hattie Doran**, bride of the noble bachelor
- **Aloysius Doran**, Hattie's father. A California gold millionaire.
- **Lord Backwater**, recommended Holmes to St. Simon
- **Flora Millar**, a danseuse who had an affair with St. Simon before his marriage.
- **Alice**, long-time maid and confidant of Hattie.
- **Francis (Frank) Hay Moulton**, husband of Hattie – long presumed dead.
- **Lestrade**
- **Page Boy**, in Holmes' employ (no name given)

Quotable Sherlock

- "Still, jealousy is a strange transformer of characters."
- "American slang is very expressive sometimes."
- "This looks like one of those unwelcome social summonses which call upon a man either to be bored or to lie."
- "Draw your chair up and hand me my violin, for the only problem we have still to solve is how to while away these bleak autumnal evenings."
- "Do not dream of going, Watson, for I very much prefer having a witness, if only as a check of my own memory."
- "I read nothing except the criminal news and the agony column. The latter is always instructive."
- "I assure you, Watson, without affectation, that the status of my client is a matter of less moment to me than the interest of his case."
- "My correspondence has certainly the charm of variety, and the humbler are usually the more interesting."

Holmes' Fee

No mention

Unrecorded Cases

- The problem of the Grosvenor square furniture van
- The parallel case of the King of Scandinavia

Sherlock Holmes On The Big And The Little Screen

NOBL has only been on the screen twice and that was 71 years apart.

- 1921 *The Noble Bachelor* with Eille Norwood is #10 in his 47 movies.
- 1992 *The Eligible Bachelor* with Jeremy Brett in his 43 episode *Sherlock Holmes* series

Fainting In The Canon

In this tale Hattie Doran almost fainted and actually fainted.

Newspapers

Morning Post - The oldest London newspaper. It was strongly Conservative and heavily influenced fashions of the day.

Annotated Sherlock

- **“a tide-waiter”** A custom officer who waits for the tide to bring the ships in.
- **“the agony column”** Personal advertisements in the newspapers which often exhibited a weird and comic mixture of human perplexities.
- **“gaiters”** an old-fashioned term for “spats” which, in turn has become old-fashioned.
- **“caltrop”** is an iron ball with four spikes so arranged that three were embedded in the ground and one always stands upright. The device was used to impede cavalry troops and horses in particular.
- **“when you find a trout in the milk”** a reference to the practice by farmers of adding water to their milk to increase profits.

Weapons

This falls in the “miscellaneous” category of weapons

- **Serpentine** - A small lake in Hyde Park, thought by Lestrade and associates to have been used to drown Hattie Doran.

Frank Mentzel