

## Adventure XXXI – The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist

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Paul Churchill once quipped he had a hard time studying for Sherlockian quizzes, so inspired by Simon Goodenough's *A Study in Scarlet – A Sherlock Holmes Murder Dossier*, Paul began collecting Canonical artifacts around 1990 to help him remember each story. Over 1,500 artifacts later, Paul's 'Evidence Boxes' became legendary in the Sherlockian world as he displayed them at numerous Scion meetings.

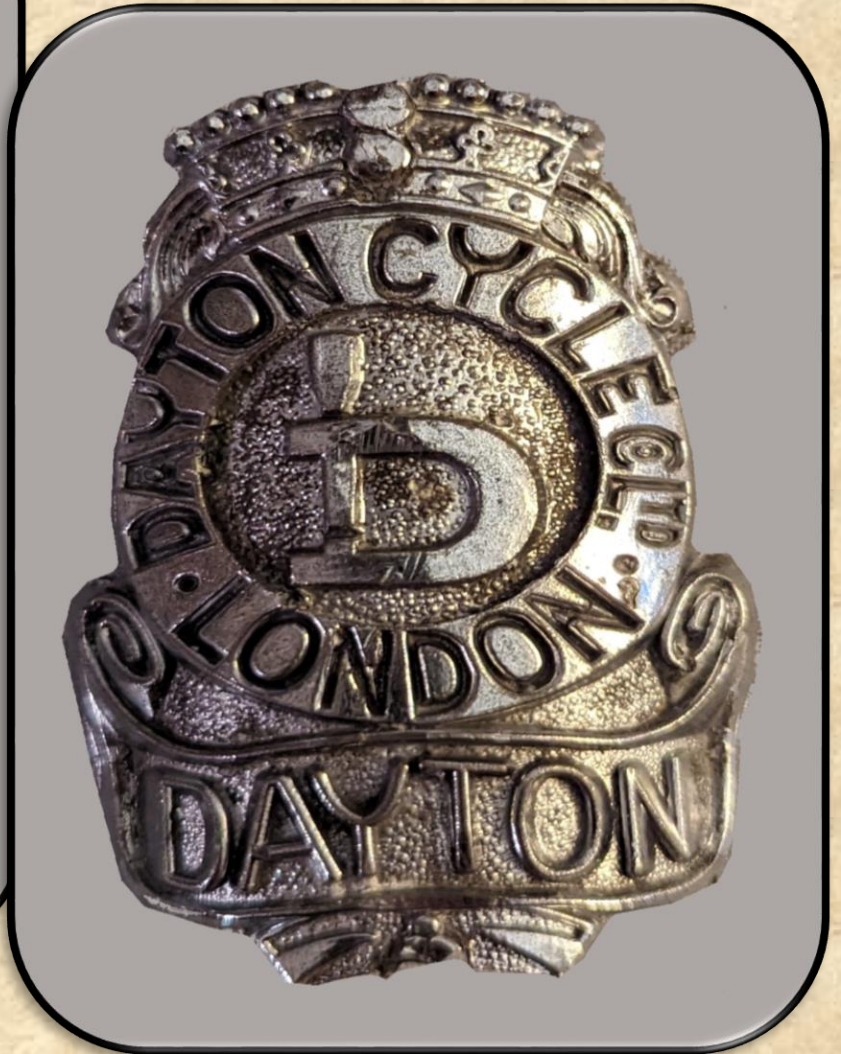
What Paul could not find, he made. He became known as a master forger, and 'created' numerous 'genuine faux' objects, such as letters, documents, and telegrams. Paul was invested in the Baker Street Irregulars in 2006 as "Corot." After Paul's passing, the Evidence Boxes were bequeathed to Watson's Tin Box Scion Society, a Society Paul co-founded in 1989. Debbie Clark has maintained the Boxes and continues the practice of displaying the items from one of the Boxes at each society meeting.

Beth Austin assisted in this effort by photographing, annotating the items, and finding the quotes for many of the items, while Denny Dobry and Rusty Mason supported Paul's efforts by photographing each of the items, as well as developing a comprehensive inventory with notations of item's mentioned in the story. Each of the Boxes is posted with permission of Debbie Clark and Jacquelynn Morris.



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Pictured is the Queen of hearts (Violet), knave of spades (Carruthers), knave of diamonds (Woodley), joker (Williamson). This is a connection between Bicycle Playing Cards to the principals in this adventure.



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Pictured are plates of the bicycles rode by Violet Smith and Mr. Carruthers. Bicycle plates, such as Dayton and Aberdeen, identified the brand of the bicycle.

From the story:

‘You must know that every Saturday forenoon I ride on my bicycle to Farnham Station in order to get the 12.22 to town.’

‘Two weeks ago I was passing this place when I chanced to look back over my shoulder, and about two hundred yards behind me I saw a man, also on a bicycle.’

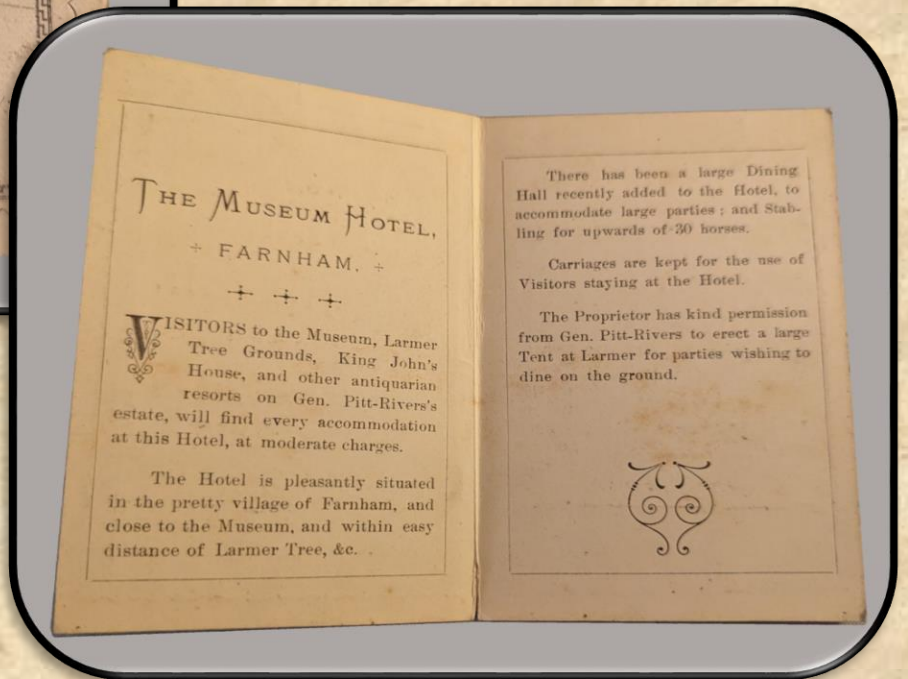
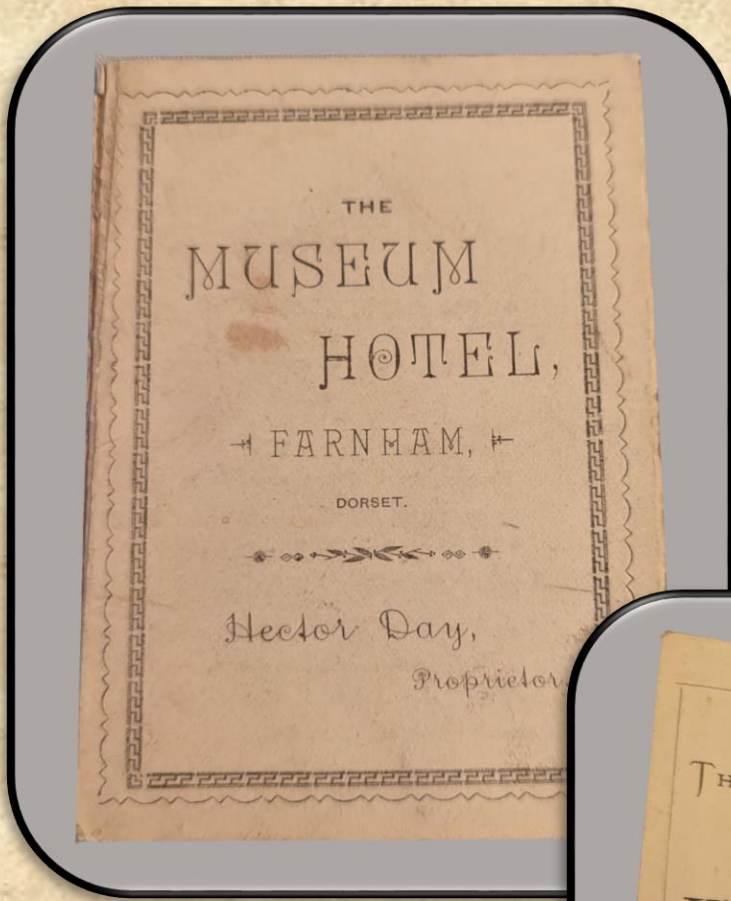


Pictured is Violet's uncle Ralph's share certificate in the Gold Mining Company in Africa, which Violet was due to inherit upon his death.

From the story:

'My mother and I were left without a relation in the world except one uncle, Ralph Smith, who went to Africa twenty-five years ago.'

'But he goes into the City two or three times a week. He is deeply interested in South African gold shares.'



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Pictured is a card from the Museum Hotel, Farnham, where Holmes and Watson probably stayed after freeing Violet Smith from her captors.

From the story:

We had ascertained from the lady that she went down upon the Monday by the train which leaves Waterloo at 9.50, so I started early and caught the 9.13. At Farnham Station I had no difficulty in being directed to Charlington Heath.



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Pictured is a model of the bicycle used by Violet Smith. Also pictured are clips which were worn to keep pant legs from getting caught in the chain.

From the story:

A quarter of an hour passed and then a second cyclist appeared. This time it was the young lady coming from the station.

An instant later the man emerged from his hiding place, sprang upon his bicycle, and followed her.



Mr. Sherlock Holmes  
221 B Baker Street  
London N.W.1.

Chiltern Grange, etc.  
15 April 1895

Dear Mr. Holmes,

It has happened again! The same man with the black beard appeared as before. When I slowed, he slowed also. But today I stopped, and he also stopped, keeping some distance between us. So I rapidly turned my bicycle around and made directly for him but he pedaled off away from me at a high rate of speed. I then turned back and went to Chiltern Grange, and I think I was again followed for some distance. You have asked me to report such incidents and that is the purpose of this letter. I shall continue to do so until I hear from you. Until then I remain

Yours truly,  
Violet Smith

P.S.

I am sure that you will respect my confidence, Mr. Holmes, when I tell you that my place here has become difficult owing to the fact that my employer has proposed marriage to me. I am convinced that his feelings are most deep and most honourable. At the same time my promise is, of course, given. He took my refusal very seriously, but also very gently. You can understand, however, that the situation is a little strained.

Pictured is the 1<sup>st</sup> letter sent by Violet Smith to Holmes, indicating she has been followed again, and that Carruthers has proposed marriage to her.

From the story:

Next morning we had a note from Miss Smith, recounting shortly and accurately the very incidents which I had seen, but the pith of the letter lay in the postscript.



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Pictured is a souvenir from Holmes encounter with Woodley at the pub. Holmes knocked out Woodley's tooth during their fight, probably the shot with his left fist.

From the story:

'The next few minutes were delicious. It was a straight left against a slogging ruffian. I emerged as you see me. Mr Woodley went home in a cart.'



Mr. Sherlock Holmes  
221 B Baker Street  
London NW1



Chiltern Grange, Surrey  
17 April 1895

Dear Mr. Holmes,

You will not be surprised, Mr. Holmes, to hear that I am leaving Mr. Carruthers' employment. Even the high pay cannot reconcile me to the discomforts of my situation. On Saturday I come up to town, and I do not intend to return. Mr. Carruthers has got a trap, and so the dangers of the lonely road, if there ever were any dangers, are now over.

As to the special cause of my leaving, it is not merely the strained situation with Mr. Carruthers, but it is the reappearance of that odious man, Mr. Woodley. He was always hideous, but he looks more awful than ever now, for he appears to have had an accident and he is much disfigured. I saw him out of the window, but I am glad to say I did not meet him. He had a long talk with Mr. Carruthers, who seemed much excited afterwards. Woodley must be staying in the neighbourhood, for he did not sleep here, and yet I caught a glimpse of him again this morning slinking about in the shrubbery. I would sooner have a savage wild animal loose about the place. I loathe and fear him more than I can say. How can Mr. Carruthers endure such a creature for a moment? However, all my troubles will be over on Saturday.

Sincerely yours,  
Violet Smith

Pictured is the 2<sup>nd</sup> letter sent by Violet Smith to Holmes, indicating she has chosen to leave Carruthers' employment, as she has been followed again.

From the story:

The Thursday brought us another letter from our client:

'You will not be surprised, Mr Holmes [said she], to hear that I am leaving Mr Carruthers's employment.'



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Pictured is the handkerchief gag used on Violet Smith during the wedding ceremony with Woodley.

From the story:

On the farther side of it, under the shadow of a mighty oak, there stood a singular group of three people. One was a woman, our client, drooping and faint, a handkerchief round her mouth.

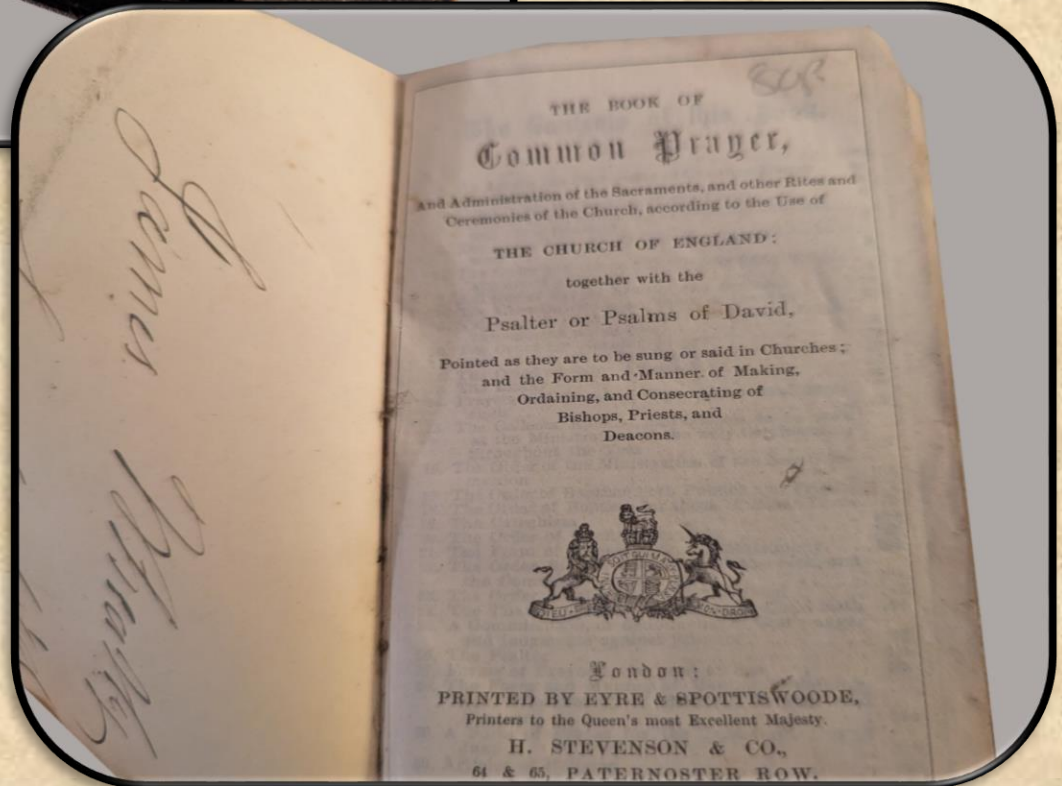


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Pictured is the clerical garb belonging to the defrocked clergyman Williamson, including a surplice, collar, and altar cloth.

From the story:

Between them an elderly, grey-bearded man, wearing a short surplice over a light tweed suit, had evidently just completed the wedding service.



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Pictured is the Hymnal and Prayer Book Williamson used during the sham wedding ceremony between Woodley and Violet Smith.

From the story:

Between them an elderly, grey-bearded man, wearing a short surplice over a light tweed suit, had evidently just completed the wedding service, for he pocketed his Prayer-Book as we appeared, and slapped the sinister bridegroom upon the back in jovial congratulation.



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Pictured is a photo Williamson, the defrocked minister, who conducted the sham wedding between Woodley and Violet Smith.

From the story:

Between them an elderly, grey-bearded man, wearing a short surplice over a light tweed suit...

Williamson, the ex-clergyman, bowed to us with mock politeness, and the bully Woodley advanced with a shout of brutal and exultant laughter.



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Pictured is the pistol Carruthers used to wound Woodley after the sham wedding ceremony between Woodley and Violet Smith.

From the story:

Then he raised his revolver and covered the young ruffian, who was advancing upon him with his dangerous riding-crop swinging in his hand.

His revolver cracked, and I saw the blood spurt from the front of Woodley's waistcoat.

Police Superintendent  
Farnham Police Station

Come at once to Charington Hall.  
I am detaining Bert Carruthers,  
a Mr. Williamson (defrocked clergyman),  
and Jack Woodley, the last of whom  
has suffered a revolver wound but  
who is under the medical care of  
Dr John H Watson, my colleague.  
There has been an attempt by  
Messrs Williamson and Woodley to  
force Miss Violet Smith to marry  
Woodley. Bring several constables  
with you as this is a bad lot.

Sh Sherlock Holmes

P.S. You may feel free to telephone  
Inspector G. Lestrade at Scotland Yard  
for a reference.

Pictured is the note Holmes wrote, asking for police assistance at the end of the investigation.

From the story:

‘Here, you!’ he shouted to the frightened groom, who had appeared at the edge of the glade. ‘Come here. Take this note as hard as you can ride to Farnham.’ He scribbled a few words upon a leaf from his notebook.



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Pictured is the false beard Carruthers wore while pursuing Violet Smith on her bicycle.

From the story:

‘You can take your beard off, Bob,’ said he. ‘I know you right enough. Well, you and your pals have just come in time for me to be able to introduce you to Mrs Woodley.’

Our guide's answer was a singular one. He snatched off the dark beard which had disguised him and threw it on the ground, disclosing a long, sallow, clean-shaven face below it.





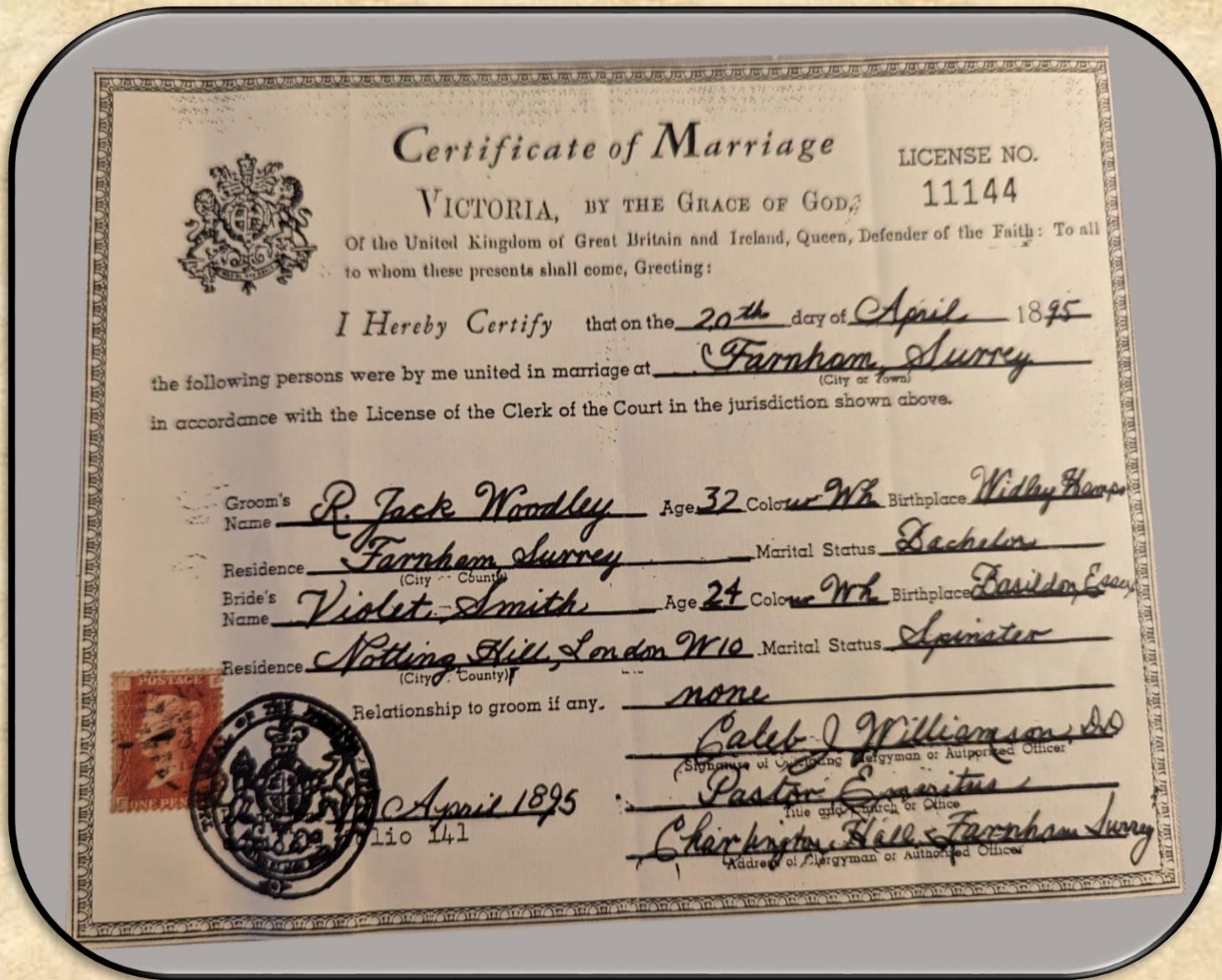
Sherlock Holmes  
Consulting Detective  
221 B Baker Street  
London

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Pictured is Holmes visiting, or calling, card which he provided to Carruthers for further assistance if needed.

From the story:

‘As to you, Mr Carruthers, I think that you have done what you could to make amends for your share in an evil plot. There is my card, sir, and if my evidence can be of help to you in your trial it shall be at your disposal.’



Pictured is the sham marriage license, created by Williamson to fraudulently marry Woodley and Violet Smith.

From the story:

‘We had a licence for the marriage. I have it here in my pocket.’

‘Then you got it by a trick. But in any case a forced marriage is no marriage, but it is a very serious felony, as you will discover before you have finished.’



# POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS.

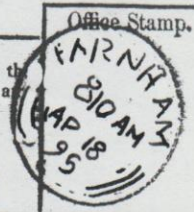
Office Stamp.

& Strickland, London.

If the Receiver of an Inland Telegram doubts its accuracy, he may have it repeated on payment of half the amount originally paid for its transmission, any fraction of 1d. less than  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. being reckoned as  $\frac{1}{2}$ d.; and if it be found that there was an error of accuracy, the amount paid for repetition will be refunded. Special conditions are applicable to the repetition of Foreign Telegrams.

5784

Charges } £ s. d.  
to pay } - 3/6



ded } JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICAN REPUBLIC at 6.30 AM. Received }  
it } RECEIVED LONDON FOR RETRANSMITTAL here at } 8.10 AM.

RECEIVED FARNHAM

TO } JACK WOODLEY, CHARLINGTON HALL, FARNHAM, SURREY

THE OLD MAN IS DEAD.

N.B.—This Form must accompany any inquiry made respecting this Telegram.

Pictured is the telegram sent to Jack Woodley, alerting him to the death of Violet Smith's uncle in Africa.

From the story:

'Then when the cable came I knew they were bound to make a move.' Carruthers took a telegram from his pocket.

'That's it!' said he. It was short and concise: THE OLD MAN IS DEAD.'

A.

Prefix \_\_\_\_\_ Code \_\_\_\_\_

POST OFFICE TELEGRAPHS

(Inland Telegrams)

No. of Message \_\_\_\_\_

Office of Origin and Service Instructions.  
FARNHAM, SURREY

Words 19  
Charge 1/-

Sent At 3 PM  
Date: 20/4/95  
By [Signature]



(A receipt for the charges on this telegram can be obtained upon request)

FROM

Please Write Distinctly

TO

SHERLOCK HOLMES  
221B BAKER ST  
LONDON NW 1

CYRIL MORTON  
% MIDLAND ELECTRIC COMPANY  
COVENTRY

	PLEASE	CALL	UPON	VIOLET	SMITH
1-	AT	HER	MOTHER'S	HOUSE	ALL
	IS	WELL	BUT	SHE	HAS
	LEFT	CHILTERN	GRANGE	FOREVER	
1/3					
1/6					

NOTICE TO THE SENDER OF THIS TELEGRAM

This Telegram will be accepted for transmission subject to the Regulations made pursuant to the 15th Section of the Telegraph Act, 1866, and to the HARRISON & SONS, Printers, LONDON

Pictured is Holmes' telegram to Cyril Morton, Miss Smith's fiancé, telling him to find Violet at her mother's house.

From the story:


'If she is not quite convalescent you will find that a hint that we were about to telegraph to a young electrician in the Midlands would probably complete the cure.'

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Additional items of interest  
in “The Adventure of the  
Solitary Cyclist” not  
included in the original  
Evidence Box.

**IMPERIAL THEATRE**  
WESTMINSTER.

ROYAL AMERICAN  
**MIDGETS**



**ACTUAL  
LIFE-SIZE.**

**GENERAL MITE**

The Smallest Perfect Man the World  
has ever produced, now in his 18th  
year. Actual present weight  
**9lbs.**

**ON MONDAY, JULY 3<sup>rd</sup>**  
TWICE DAILY, 3 TO 6 AND 7.30 TO 9.30  
Admission - **ONE SHILLING**

AGENTS' Sole Proprietors, Messrs. G. & J. G. & Co., Ltd., London, Strand.

Pictured is an advertisement for the Imperial Theatre, Westminster. Violet Smith's father was the conductor of the orchestra there years before.

From the story:

'My father is dead, Mr Holmes. He was James Smith, who conducted the orchestra at the old Imperial Theatre.'

# Times.

**DOVER.—DIVER'S CASTLE HOTEL**, on the Quay, near both railway stations and Admiralty Pier, whence boats depart. Views of sea, Castle, and cliffs. Coffee and reading room. Terms moderate. Best attention. Night porter. Wire or write.

**HOTEL BURLINGTON in DOVER BAY.**

**SAURDAY to MONDAY, £2 2s.**  
Including rail and hotel accommodation.  
Available for one journey on Saturdays and Mondays only by any train.

**COUPONS** may be obtained through Messrs. THOMAS COOK and SONS and their Branch Office; Chief Office, Leadenhall-street, London; also on application to the Manager, Hotel Burlington, Dover.

**INCLUSIVE TERMS:** One week from £3 10s., According to position of rooms.  
The Hotel is situated opposite the Promenade Pier, where Military Bands perform regularly. The prettiest illuminated sea front on the coast. General Steam Navigation Company's steamers from Tilbury arrive within 50 yards of the Hotel. Burlington String Band every night in the lounge.

**EASTBOURNE.—ALEXANDER HOTEL**, facing sea, close to Devonshire-park and baths. Unexceptionable cuisine. Choice vintage wines. Home comforts. Sanitary certificate.—M. E. Harrison, Proprietress. Telephone 132.

**ROYAL PAVILION HOTEL, FOLKESTONE.**  
THE LATEST AND MOST MODERN NEW BUILDINGS

Forming a most desirable addition to this

**OLD-ESTABLISHED FINE WHITE HOTEL.**

Famous for its

**HOME-LIKE COMFORT and CUISINE.**

Are NOW OPEN for the reception of Visitors.

**FOLKESTONE ROYAL PAVILION HOTEL.**  
Music every evening in the Winter Gardens.

**RAMSGATE.—The GRANVILLE**, leading Hotel.  
Cuisine unexcelled. Turkish and osone baths. Certificated

**ST. BAR**

The WINTER

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For

**L**ooking for Mrs Frank Smith, or her daughter, Violet, who were related to Ralph Smith, late of Africa.

Mr. Carruthers and Mr. Woodley have vital information which will ensure a safer future for you.

Please come to Mr. Themes, attorney, for further details.

Pictured is the advertisement, which ran in the Times, seeking Mrs. Smith or Violet Smith.

From the story:

‘When Father died we were left very poor, but one day we were told that there was an advertisement in *The Times* inquiring for our whereabouts. We went at once to the lawyer whose name was given in the paper. There we met two gentlemen, Mr Carruthers and Mr Woodley, who were home on a visit from South Africa.’



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Pictured is a photo of Charlington Heath, an area Violet Smith must ride through to get to Carruther's estate each week.

From the story:

'The road from Chiltern Grange is a lonely one, and at one spot it is particularly so, for it lies for over a mile between Charlington Heath upon one side and the woods which lie round Charlington Hall upon the other.'





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Pictured is a card from the Farnham rail station, where Holmes and Watson arrived to assist Violet Smith.

From the story:

We had ascertained from the lady that she went down upon the Monday by the train which leaves Waterloo at 9.50, so I started early and caught the 9.13. At Farnham Station I had no difficulty in being directed to Charlington Heath.



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Pictured is a postal card for the Jolly Farmer, the country pub where Holmes had an entanglement with Mr. Woodley.

From the story:

‘I found that country pub which I had already recommended to your notice, and there I made my discreet inquiries. The next few minutes were delicious. It was a straight left against a slogging ruffian.’