

# Baker Street *Elementary*

PRESENTS  
"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"



# Baker Street Elementary

THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON  
# 024 -- AND THEY'RE OFF! -- JANUARY, 2022



WELCOME TO TOPIC # 024... TODAY HOLMES AND  
ME WILL BE LOOKING AT THE SPORT OF KINGS,  
HORSE RACING IN GREAT BRITAIN.





THE SHERLOCKIAN STORIES INCLUDED TWO CASES INVOLVING RACE HORSES... YOU ARE CALLED IN TO INVESTIGATE THE DISAPPEARANCE OF SILVER BLAZE JUST BEFORE THE WESSEX CUP AND SIR ROBERT NORBERTON'S ODD BEHAVIOR PRIOR TO HIS HORSE PRINCE RUNNING IN THE EPSOM DERBY.



THE POPULARITY OF THE SPORT IN VICTORIAN ENGLAND, IN ADDITION TO THE CRIMINAL ELEMENT AT THAT TIME, MADE IT A PERFECT BACKDROP FOR THESE SHERLOCKIAN INVESTIGATIONS.





THE EXACT TIME OF THE HORSE'S ARRIVAL IN BRITAIN IS NOT KNOWN, BUT CAESAR'S FIRST INVASION OF BRITAIN IN 55 BC WAS REBUFFED BY A CAVALRY... THE ANIMALS WERE SMALLER THAN THOSE TODAY, BUT QUITE NUMEROUS.



**FOLLOWING THEIR USE IN WARFARE AND OTHER PURSUITS, RACING THE ANIMALS CAME INTO FASHION IN THE EARLY 1600s WHEN KING JAMES I BUILT THE FIRST GRANDSTAND ON THE NEWMARKET HEATH.**



**CHARLES II, HOWEVER, BROUGHT HORSERACING INTO ITS OWN WHEN HE BUILT A PALACE AND MOVED HIS COURT THERE TWICE A YEAR BEGINNING IN 1669... EVER SINCE, NEWMARKET HAS BEEN CONSIDERED THE HEADQUARTERS OF BRITISH HORSERACING.**





**IN ADDITION TO THE RACETRACKS AT NEWMARKET,  
THE JOCKEY CLUB BUILT A COFFEE HOUSE AT THE  
SITE FOR MEMBER MEETINGS IN 1752.**



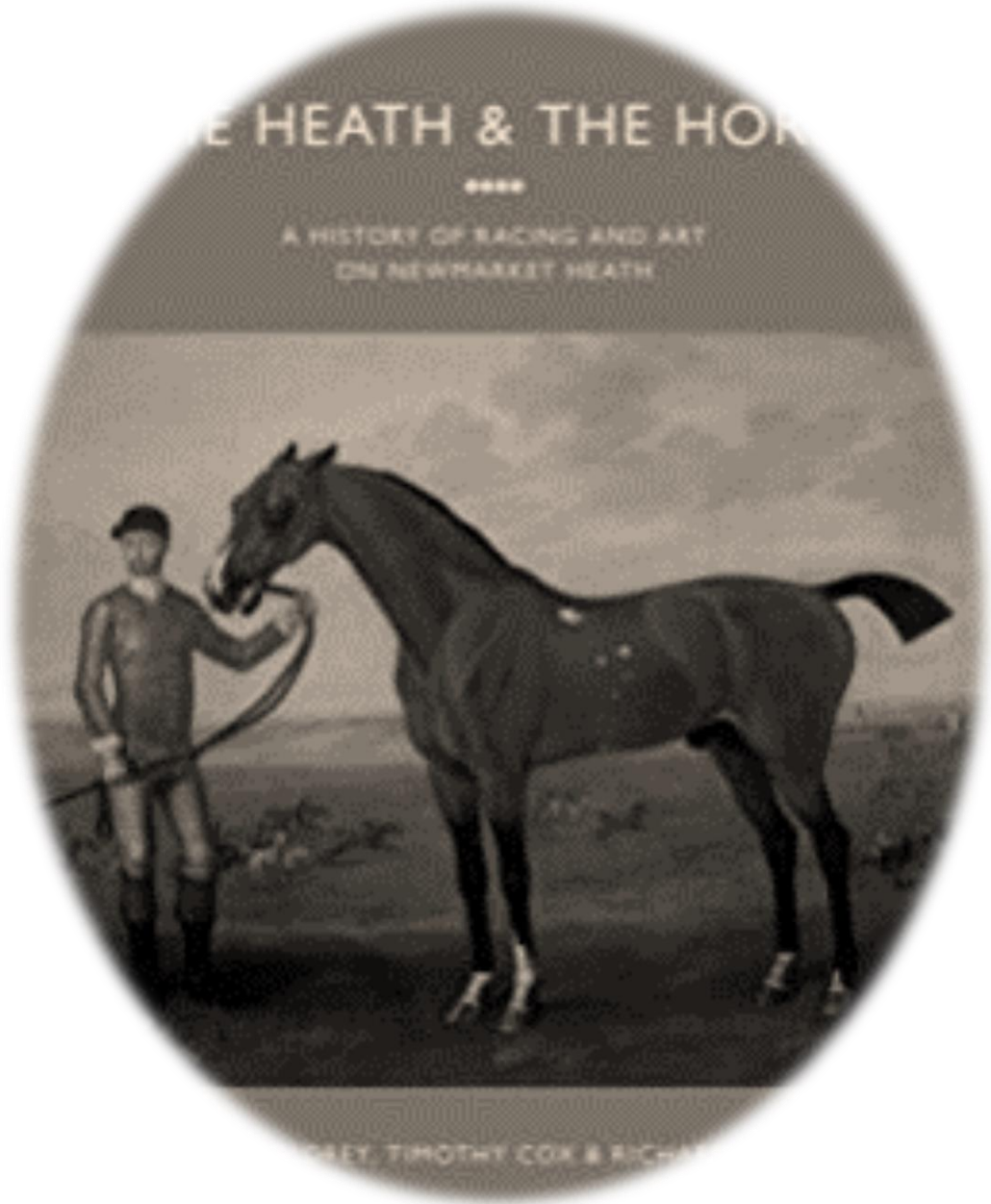
**THIS CLUB, CREATED BY GENTLEMEN PASSIONATE ABOUT HORSES AND RACING, BECAME THE OFFICIAL GOVERNING BODY FOR HORSERACING IN 1860s IN AN EFFORT TO IMPOSE MORE CONTROL OVER BETTING AND HORSE MANAGEMENT.**



**IN THE EARLY 1800s, HORSE OWNERS WHO WERE COMMONERS WERE PERMITTED TO ENTER THEIR ANIMALS IN THE RACES... AS A RESULT, THE EVENTS ATTRACTED LARGER CROWDS, INCLUDING THE WORKING CLASS.**







**BETTING HAD ALWAYS BEEN A PART OF THE SPORT,  
BUT IT GREW MORE PRONOUNCED IN THE 1830s  
AND 1840s WITH A NUMBER OF SCANDALS COMING  
TO LIGHT.**



**IN ADDITION TO UNSCRUPULOUS BOOKMAKERS,  
INELIGIBLE HORSES (ABOVE OR BELOW THE AGE  
LIMIT FOR THE RACE) WERE DISCOVERED AMONG  
THE ENTRANTS.**



WHILE BETTING ON HORSES HAD ALWAYS BEEN A PART OF THE SPORT, OFF-COURSE BETTING DEVELOPED IN RESPONSE TO THE WORKING CLASS INTEREST AND BY THE END OF THE 1840s, WAS AN IMPORTANT FEATURE OF THE ACTIVITY.





FOR THE MOST PART, THESE SITES EVOLVED FROM TOBACCONIST SHOPS WHERE MEN ALREADY CONGREGATED AND PLACED FRIENDLY WAGERS THROUGH THE PROPRIETOR... OVER TIME, HORSE BETTING REPLACED THE ORIGINAL COMMERCIAL TRADE IN MANY SUCH ESTABLISHMENTS.



**PARTITIONS WITH PIGEON HOLES FOR PLACING BETS REPLACED THE COUNTER.**





**LISTS OF THE VARIOUS RACES AND PARTICIPANTS' ODDS WERE LISTED ON THE WALLS, AND RESULTS WERE QUICKLY REPORTED AS FAST AS RUNNERS COULD ARRIVE FROM THE TELEGRAPH OFFICE.**



*Metropolitan Gallery at the Telegraph Office*





*ONE OF THE MOST WELL-KNOWN AND POPULAR ESTABLISHMENTS WAS DWYER'S IN ST. MARTIN'S LANE.*



**IN 1851, FOLLOWING HEAVY BETTING ON THE FAVORITE IN THE CHESTER CUP, THOSE WITH WINNING TICKETS ARRIVED TO FIND THE PLACE EMPTIED AND THE OWNER GONE, LEAVING BEHIND A DEBT OF TWENTY-FIVE THOUSAND POUNDS.**



*WITH THE JOCKEY CLUB'S MANAGEMENT, THE SPORT'S RESPECTABILITY ROSE, AND WITH ADDITIONAL SECURITY EFFORTS, SUCH AS ENCLOSING THE TRACKS AND PROVIDING STANDS, CERTAIN RACES GAINED POPULARITY AS SOCIAL EVENTS.*



THE JOCKEY CLUB

Since 1750





*IN ADDITION TO THE RACECOURSE, OTHER  
AMUSEMENTS (FROM FOOD VENDORS TO  
SIDESHOW ATTRACTIONS) WERE SET UP AROUND  
THE AREA.*



*THE ASCOT, RUN IN JUNE, BECAME PART OF THE SOCIAL SEASON WHERE WOMEN AND MEN ATTENDED (AND STILL DO) IN THEIR MOST ELEGANT CLOTHES.*



*DERBY DAY, ALSO OCCURRING IN MAY OR JUNE,  
BECAME A NATIONAL HOLIDAY.*







*AS THESE TWO SHERLOCKIAN CASES SHOW,  
HOWEVER, DESPITE THE JOCKEY CLUB'S EFFORTS TO  
MAINTAIN THE RESPECTABILITY OF HORSE RACING...*





*...ITS CONTINUED POPULARITY AND HISTORY OF  
BETTING ON THE OUTCOME, FOSTERED THE  
PERSISTENCE OF A CRIMINAL ELEMENT IN THE SPORT.*



*GRATEFULLY, YOU AND I FERRETED OUT AT LEAST  
TWO OF THE MOST GRIEVOUS OFFENSES.*





SO, WE HAVE COMPLETED TOPIC # 024 IN OUR SERIES...

IN TOPIC # 025, WE WILL LOOK AT THE RITUAL OF MARRIAGE IN VICTORIAN ENGLAND.



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"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"

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