

# Baker Street *Elementary*

PRESENTS  
"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"



# Baker Street Elementary

THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON  
# A032 -- A SHOT IN THE DARK -- FEBRUARY, 2022





**WELCOME TO TOPIC # 032... TODAY, WATSON AND I  
WILL LOOK AT THE USE OF FIREARMS IN THE  
SHERLOCK HOLMES STORIES.**





**FIREARMS FIGURED PROMINENTLY IN THREE OF THE CASES IN THE CANON: THE VERY SPECIAL AIR-GUN OF COLONEL SABASTIAN MORAN IN 'THE ADVENTURE OF THE EMPTY HOUSE,'...**





**...THE APPARENT DEATH OF HILTON CUBITT AND  
HIS WIFE'S SUICIDE IN 'THE ADVENTURE OF THE  
DANCING MEN,'...**



**...AND THE APPARENT MURDER OF MARIA GIBSON  
BY ONE OF A PAIR OF HER HUSBAND'S REVOLVERS  
FROM HIS 'ARSENAL' IN 'THE ADVENTURE OF THOR  
BRIDGE.'**





**IN ALL THREE DEATHS, MY KNOWLEDGE OF WEAPONS AND BALLISTICS PROVIDED THE TRUE NATURE AND SEQUENCE OF EVENTS.**



YOU WERE KNOWN TO USE SEVERAL DIFFERENT  
FIREARMS, INCLUDING A .45- CALIBER WEBLEY  
METROPOLITAN POLICE RIC (ROYAL IRISH  
CONSTABULARY) REVOLVER...





*...A .45-CALIBER BRITISH BULL DOG (A POCKET REVOLVER), AND A WEBLEY RIC CHAMBERED IN .442 (HIS PISTOL OF CHOICE).*



WHILE IT COULD BE ASSUMED YOU WERE NO SLOUCH WITH YOUR AIM (YOU COULDN'T HAVE 'DECORATED' OUR FLAT WITH THE INITIALS 'VR' IN BULLET HOLES WITHOUT A GREAT DEAL OF PRECISION), BARING-GOULD CONCLUDED I WAS THE BETTER SHOT.



YOU NEEDED ONLY A SINGLE BULLET TO TAKE DOWN A MASTIFF IN 'THE ADVENTURE OF THE COPPER BEECHES,' WHILE I NEEDED FIVE TO DO THE SAME WITH THE HOUND OF THE BASKERVILLES.



WHEN FIRST DEVELOPED, GUNS WERE BASICALLY  
HAND-HELD CANONS WHERE THE SHOOTER LOADED  
GUNPOWDER AND A STEEL BALL INTO THE BARREL  
AND LIT A FUSE.



A TRIGGER AND A PERCUSSION CAP LATER REPLACED  
THE FUSE.



**ADDING A REVOLVING CHAMBER THAT HELD SEVERAL SHOTS, REDUCING THE NEED TO RELOAD AND CREATED THE REVOLVER.**



BY THE 1870s, INSTEAD OF FILLING EACH CHAMBER WITH GUNPOWDER, THESE WEAPONS USED A BULLET CARTRIDGE CONTAINING THE PROJECTILE, GUNPOWDER, AND AN EXPLOSIVE CAP.

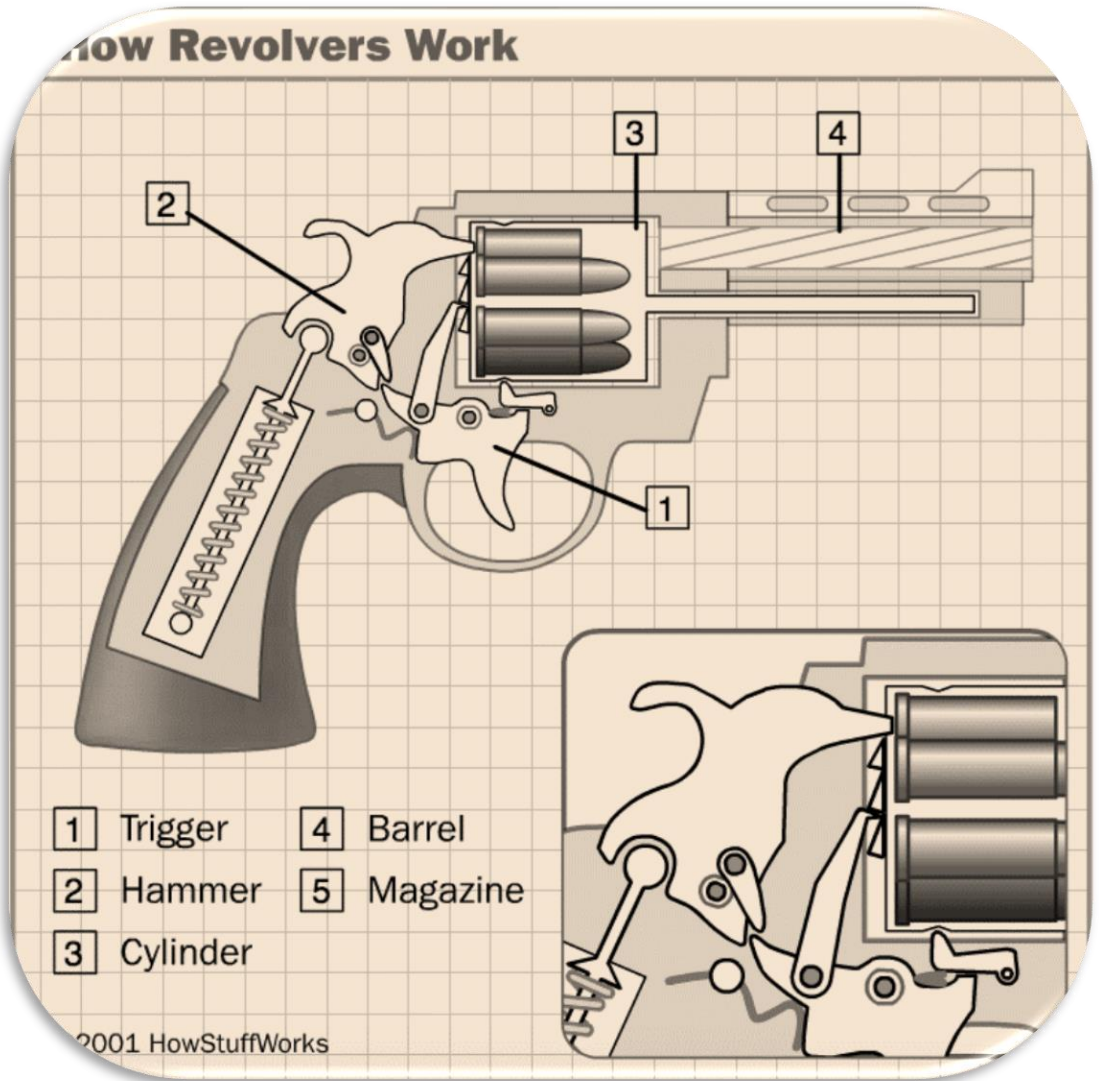


TODAY, AS THEN, WHEN THE SHOOTER PULLS THE TRIGGER, A HAMMER DRAWS BACK AND THEN SPRINGS FORWARD TO HIT THE CARTRIDGE AND ITS CAP.



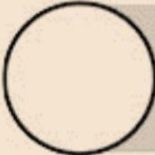

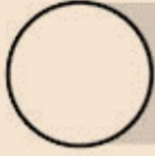



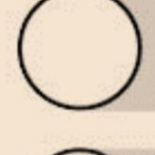









THE GUNPOWDER EXPLODES AND FORCES THE BULLET DOWN THE BARREL OF THE GUN.



**A GUN'S CALIBER REFERS TO THE INTERNAL DIAMETER OF THE GUN'S BARREL AND IS IMPORTANT IN IDENTIFYING THE MAKE OF HANDGUN.**



	<b>.45, .458</b>	
	<b>.44, .444</b>	
	<b>.40, 10mm</b>	
	<b>.357, .38, 9mm</b>	
	<b>.30-06, .308, .32, 7.62mm, 8mm</b>	
	<b>.270, .280, 7mm</b>	
	<b>.223, .25, 5.56mm, 6mm</b>	

AS NOTED ABOVE, MOST OF OUR FIREARMS WERE .45 CALIBER, MEANING THE INTERIOR DIAMETER OF YOUR TRUSTY SERVICE REVOLVER WAS .45 INCHES.





*COLONEL SABASTIAN MORAN, ON THE OTHER HAND, DECEIVED LAW ENFORCEMENT BY USING A SOFT REVOLVER BULLET IN HIS AIRGUN.*



**IN ADDITION TO THE TYPE OF GUN AND BULLET  
USED IN A CRIME, ANOTHER PART OF FORENSICS  
— REFERRED TO 'FIREARM EXAMINATION' —  
INVOLVES GUNSHOT EVIDENCE ON EITHER THE  
VICTIM OR SUSPECT.**

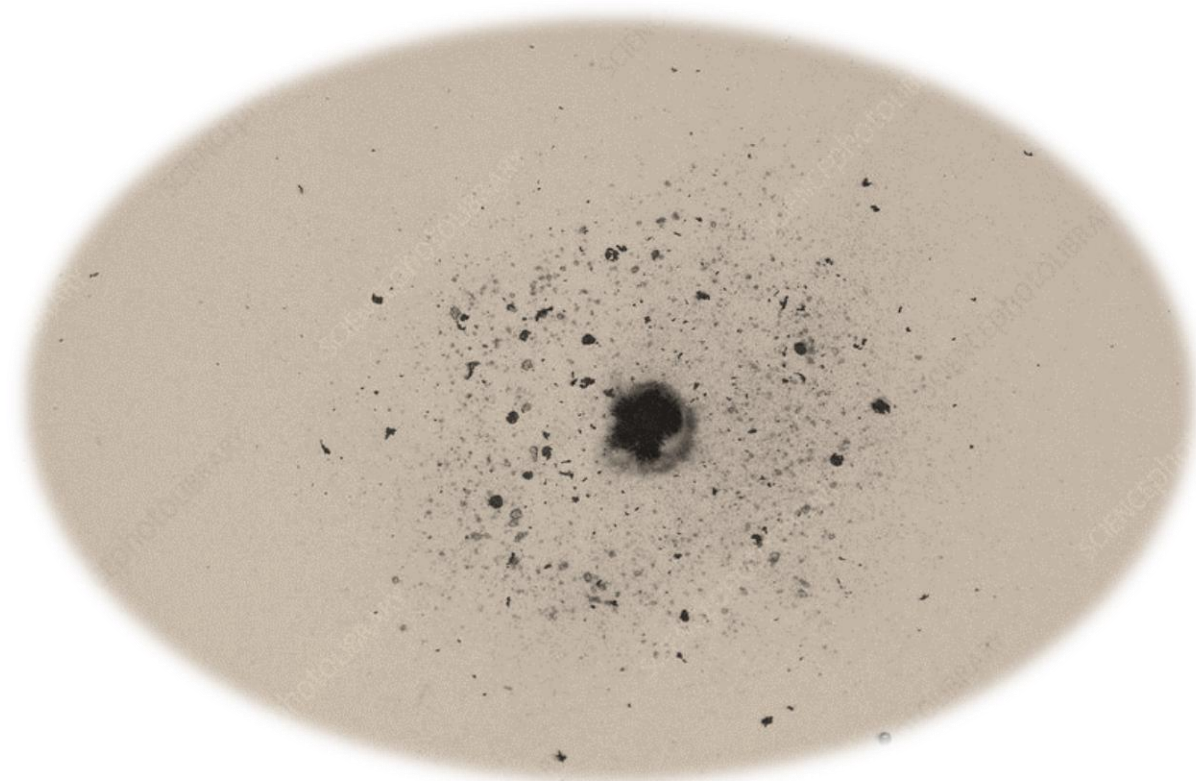




*AS NOTED ABOVE, WHEN A BULLET IS FIRED, THE GUNPOWDER EXPLODES.*



THE GASES AND OTHER PARTICLES CREATED BY THIS  
EXPLOSION FOLLOW THE BULLET AS WELL AS  
ESCAPING THROUGH SPACES IN THE WEAPON ITSELF.

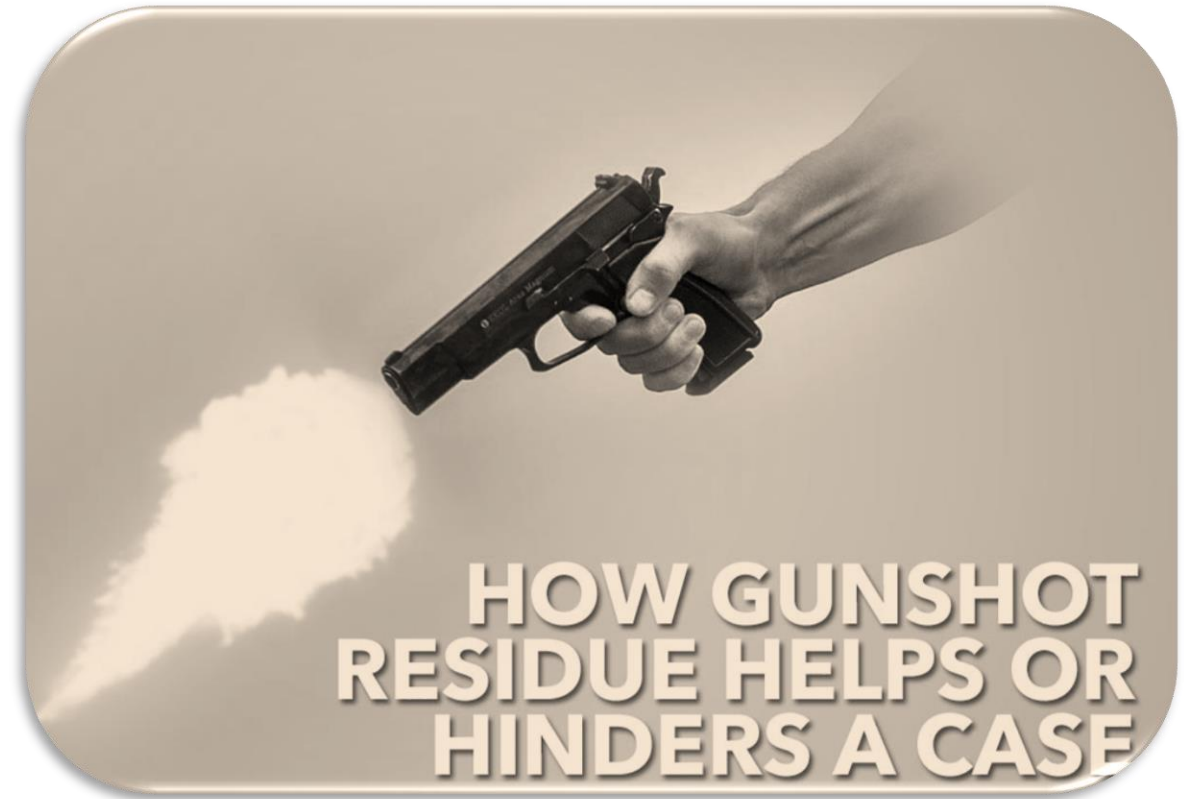


REVOLVERS ARE PARTICULARLY 'HOLEY' AND LEAVE MORE OF THIS RESIDUE ON THE SHOOTER.



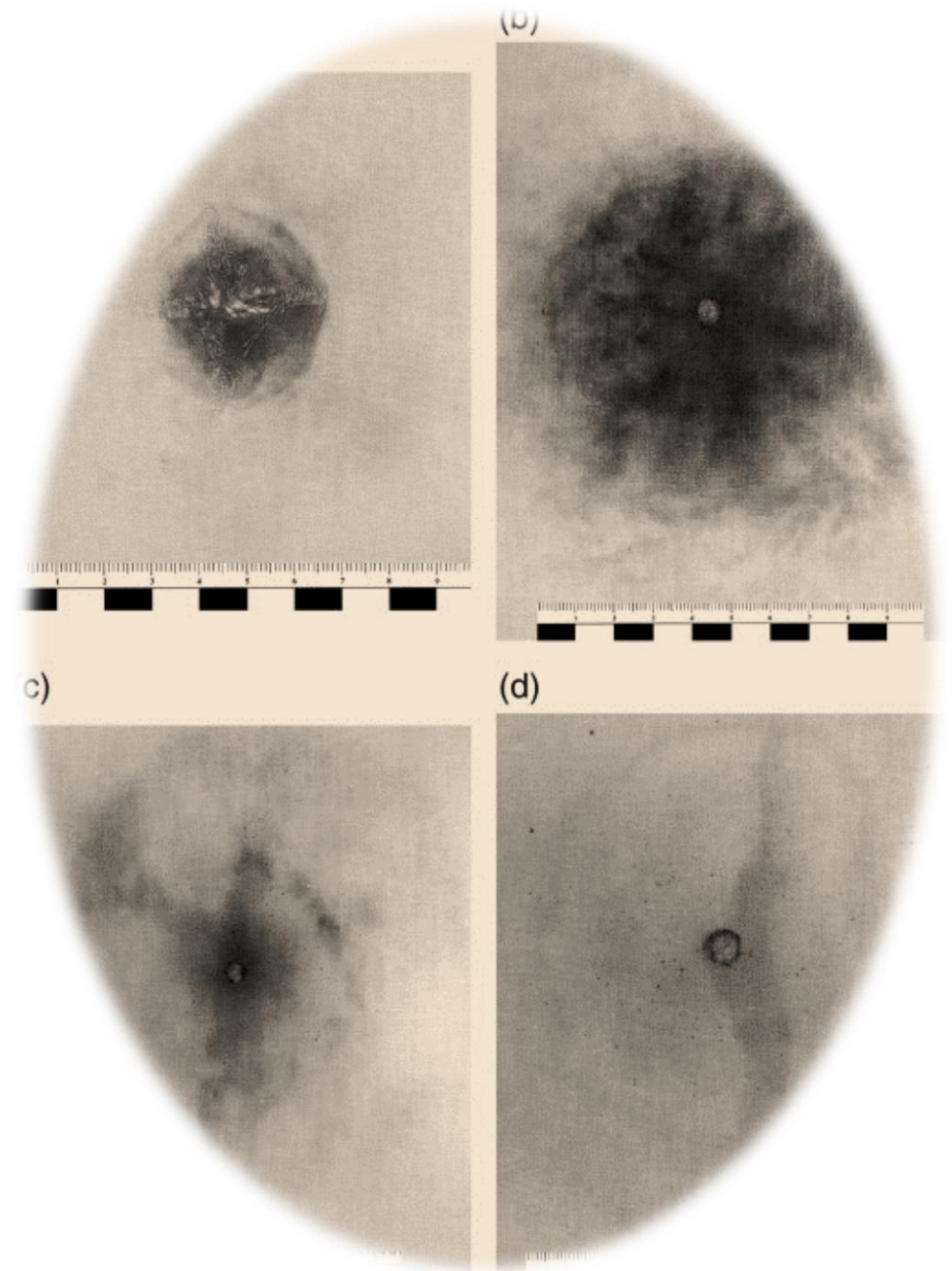


**IN THE CASE OF THE VICTIM, GUNSHOT RESIDUE (GSR) CAN BE USED TO DETERMINE HOW FAR THE VICTIM WAS FROM THE WEAPON.**



**HOW GUNSHOT RESIDUE HELPS OR HINDERS A CASE**

THE CLOSER THE TWO, THE MORE GSR  
WILL BE FOUND.





I USED THIS KNOWLEDGE OF GSR TO CONCLUDE THAT WILLIAM KIRWAN IN 'THE ADVENTURE OF THE REIGATE SQUIRE' WAS NOT SHOT DURING A STRUGGLE OVER A GUN AS REPORTED, BECAUSE HIS CLOTHES CARRIED NO BLACK MARKS FROM BEING SHOT AT CLOSE RANGE.

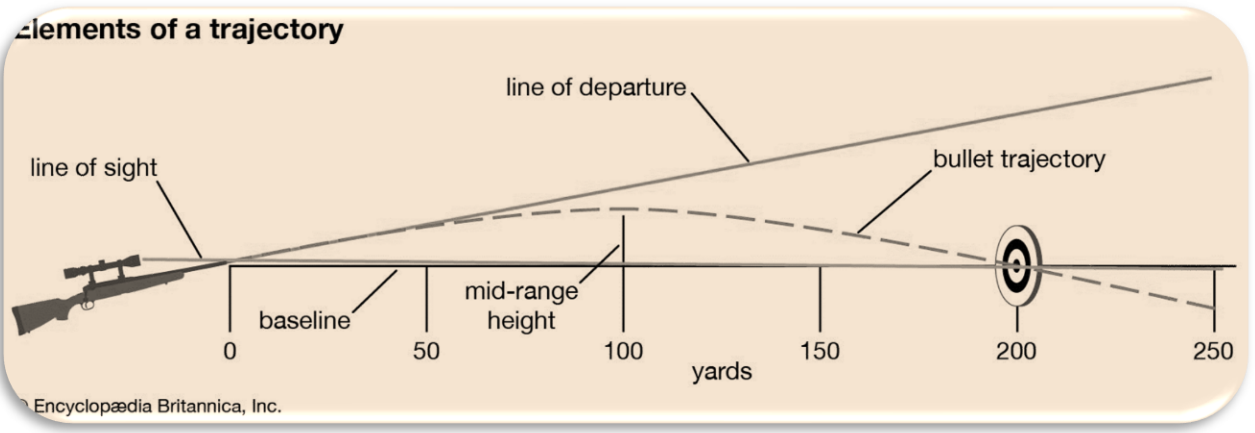




*I ALSO USED MY KNOWLEDGE OF GSR AND BALLISTICS IN THE 'THE ADVENTURE OF THE DANCING MEN' TO DETERMINE THE PRESENCE OF A THIRD SHOOTER IN THE MURDER OF HILTON CUBITT.*



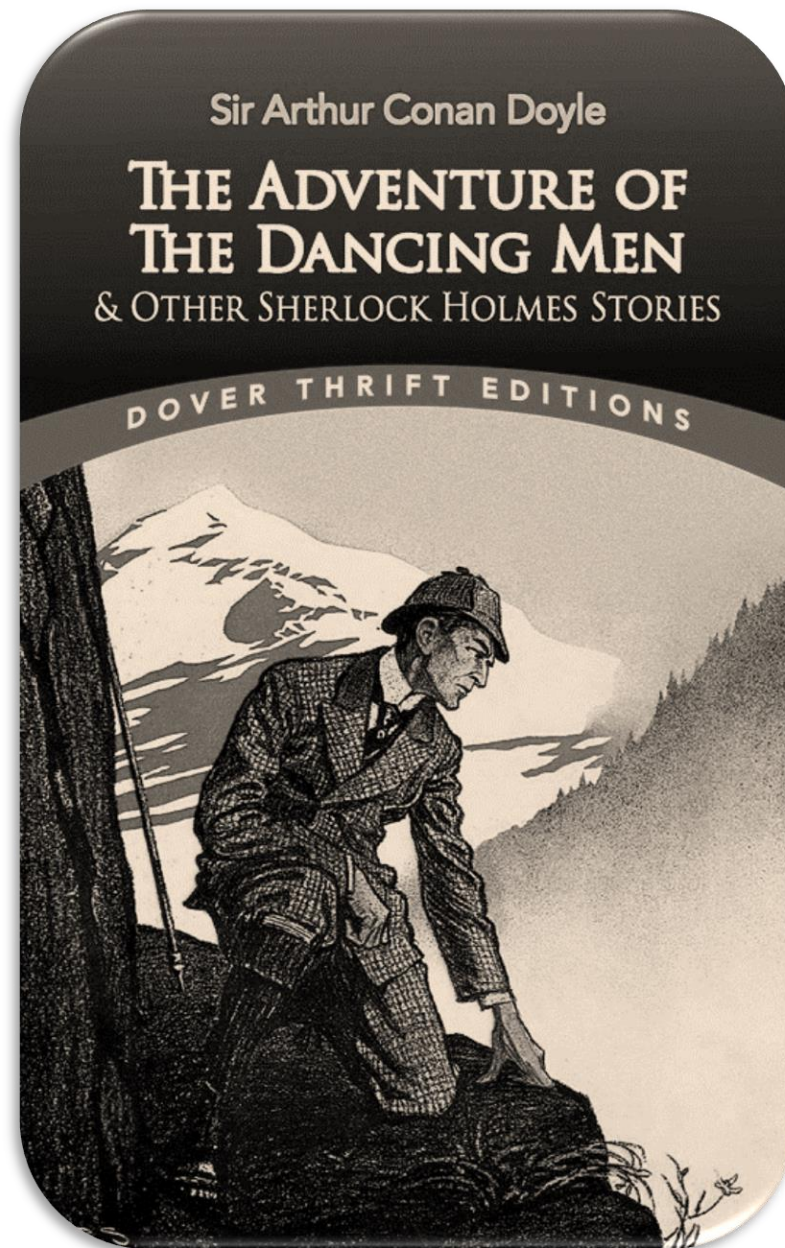
**BALLISTICS IS THE STUDY OF HOW BULLETS, AND OTHER PROJECTILES, TRAVEL.**



YOU NOTED THE LACK OF POWDER MARKS ON THE VICTIM, BUT SOME ON MRS. CUBITT'S HANDS, AND A THIRD BULLET HOLE THROUGH A WINDOW SASH, INDICATING A THIRD SHOT AND SHOOTER.



TAKEN TOGETHER, THE EVIDENCE INDICATED CUBITT AND THE THIRD PERSON EXCHANGED GUNSHOTS — ONE WITH DEADLY AIM AND THE SECOND MISSING ITS INTENDED VICTIM.



**UPON FINDING HER HUSBAND DEAD, MRS. CUBITT  
UNSUCCESSFULLY ATTEMPTED TO TAKE HER OWN  
LIFE AND WOULD HAVE BEEN TRIED FOR MURDER  
WITHOUT YOUR KEEN OBSERVATIONS AND  
DISCOVERY OF THE THIRD SHOT.**





*MY KNOWLEDGE OF FIREARM INVESTIGATIONS  
TOOK A MORE MATHEMATICAL BENT IN 'THE  
ADVENTURE OF THOR BRIDGE.'*



*ONE OF A PAIR OF REVOLVERS WAS FOUND IN THE  
SUSPECT'S WARDROBE.*



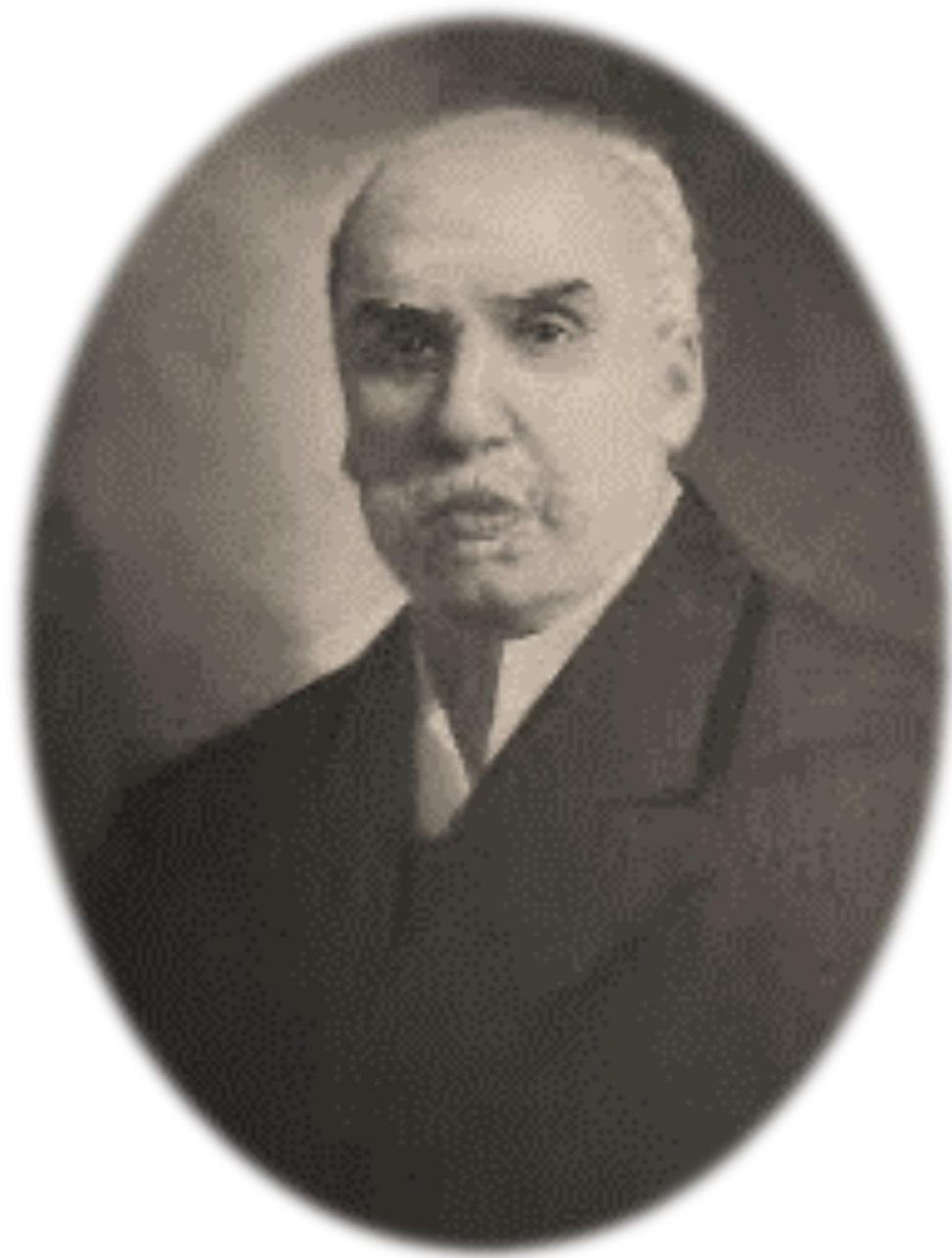
*THE OTHER WAS MISSING... GIVEN THAT TWO  
MINUS ONE LEAVES ONE, THE SECOND REVOLVER  
WAS THE MURDER WEAPON...*



*...ESPECIALLY WHEN A NEW CHIP APPEARED ON THE BRIDGE RAILING WHERE THE VICTIM DIED.*



*SEVERAL CRIMINOLOGISTS AND SHERLOCKIANS  
HAVE NOTED THIS CASE RESEMBLED AN 1893  
SUICIDE DESCRIBED BY HANS GROSS.*



IN THIS ACTUAL EVENT, A GRAIN MERCHANT STAGED HIS SUICIDE TO APPEAR AS A HOMICIDE BY TYING A STONE TO HIS PISTOL AND LETTING IT BE DRAGGED OVER A BRIDGE AND INTO THE WATER.



Fig. 3.



Fig. 4.



Fig. 5.

**WHILE FIREARMS APPEARED IN SEVERAL OF SHERLOCK HOLMES' CASES, INCLUDING ONE WHERE A MYSTERIOUS WIDOW FIRED 'BARREL AFTER BARREL,' INSTEAD OF 'CHAMBER AFTER CHAMBER' TO END THE LIFE OF CHARLES AUGUSTUS MILVERTON.**



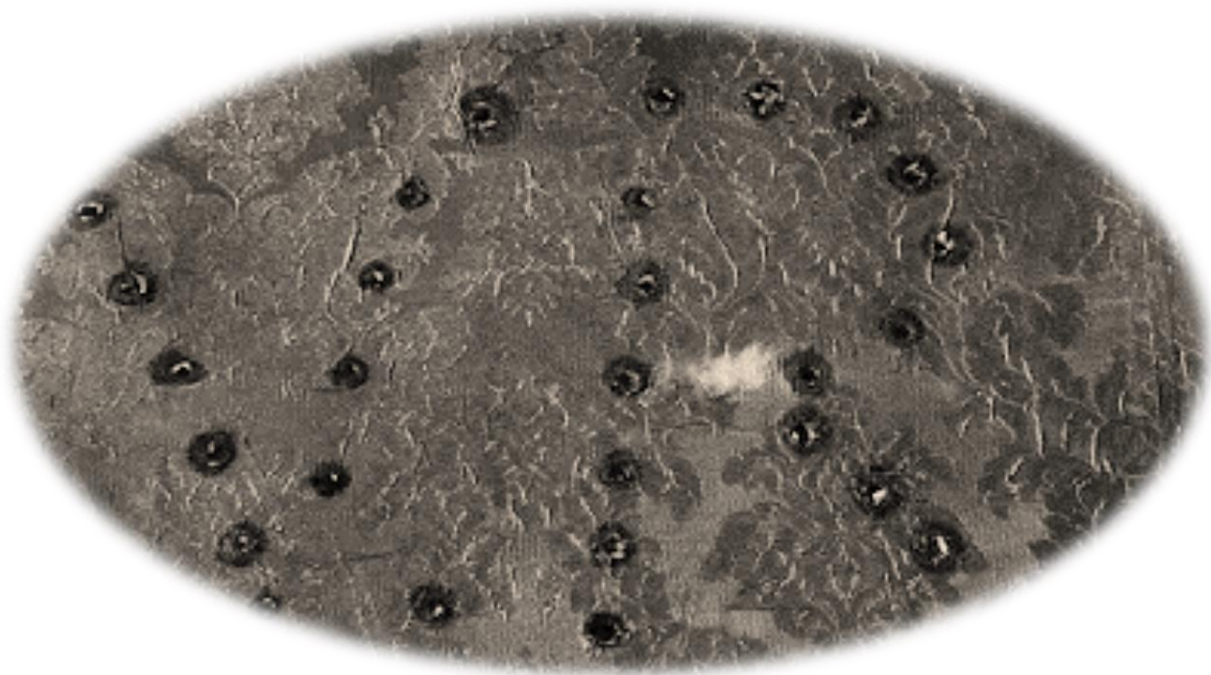


**MY OBSERVATIONS AND THE USE OF MY  
KNOWLEDGE OF BALLISTICS AND RELATED FIREARM  
TRAITS WERE OF PARTICULAR IMPORTANCE IN A  
SMALLER NUMBER.**





*ALL THE SAME, MY CONCLUSIONS WERE NEVER  
PROVED TO BE A SHOT IN THE DARK.*



SO, WE HAVE COMPLETED TOPIC # 032 IN OUR SERIES...

IN TOPIC # 033, WE WILL LOOK AT THE USE OF HANDCUFFS IN THE SHERLOCKIAN STORIES.



## REFERENCES FOR THIS TOPIC:

- [HTTPS://LITERARY007.COM/2015/03/31/ARMED-FOR-HER-MAJESTY-JAMES-BOND-AND-SHERLOCK-HOLMES-WEAPONRY/](https://literary007.com/2015/03/31/armed-for-her-majesty-james-bond-and-sherlock-holmes-weaponry/)
- [HTTPS://SIMANAITISSAYS.COM/2015/05/15/FIREARMS-OF-THE-HOLMESIAN-CANON/](https://simanaitissays.com/2015/05/15/firearms-of-the-holmesian-canon/)
- WILLIAM S. BARING-GOULD, THE ANNOTATED SHERLOCK HOLMES, VOLUME II. NEW YORK: CLARKSON N POTTER, INC., 1967
- [HTTPS://SCIENCE.HOWSTUFFWORKS.COM/REVOLVER2.HTM](https://science.howstuffworks.com/revolver2.htm)
- D.P. LYLE, FORENSICS FOR DUMMIES. HOBOKEN, NJ: JOHN WILEY & SONS, INC., 2019
- [HTTPS://JOURNALS.LWW.COM/AMJFORENSICMEDICINE/FULLTEXT/2016/06000/DISGUISING\\_A\\_SUICIDE\\_AS\\_A\\_HOMICIDE\\_\\_SIR\\_ARTHUR.9.ASPX](https://journals.lww.com/amjforensicmedicine/fulltext/2016/06000/disguising_a_suicide_as_a_homicide__sir_arthur.9.aspx)
- [HTTPS://CREATIVECOMMONS.ORG/LICENSES/BY-SA/2.0/DEED.EN](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/deed.en)



# Baker Street *Elementary*

"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"

IS CREATED THROUGH THE INGENUITY & HARD WORK OF:

JOE FAY  
LIESE SHERWOOD-FABRE  
RUSTY MASON  
&  
STEVE MASON

