

Baker Street *Elementary*

PRESENTS
"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"



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THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON
A056 -- CARE FOR A CUPPA? -- FEBRUARY, 2022



**WELCOME TO TOPIC # 056... TODAY, HOLMES AND I
WILL BE DISCUSSING THE WARM DRINKS OF THE
VICTORIAN ERA...**



THE SHERLOCK HOLMES STORIES HAD THIRTY-FIVE REFERENCES TO TEA AND THIRTY-ONE FOR COFFEE (PLUS ONE THAT DESCRIBED THE COLOR OF MISS MARY SUTHERLAND'S DRESS IN 'A CASE OF IDENTITY').



WHILE BRITAIN IS KNOWN FOR ITS TEA-DRINKING, COFFEE ALSO HAS ITS PLACE IN THE CULTURE, HAVING MADE ITS WAY TO THE ISLAND BEFORE THE FIRST TEA LEAF ARRIVED.



**COFFEE IS RECOGNIZED AS HAVING BEEN
INTRODUCED BY A TURK IN 1637 IN OXFORD
WHERE STUDENTS AND INSTRUCTORS CREATED
'THE OXFORD COFFEE CLUB.'**



THE FIRST COFFEEHOUSE, THE ANGEL, WAS OPENED THERE IN 1650, FOLLOWED TWO YEARS LATER IN LONDON BY A COFFEE STALL RUN BY PASQUA ROSEÉ, A GREEK, (NOW, SOMEWHAT IRONICALLY, THE SITE OF A STARBUCKS).



FROM THE BEGINNING, THESE ESTABLISHMENTS WERE CONSIDERED PLACES WHERE MEN IN THEIR PERIWIGS COULD GATHER TO DISCUSS TOPICS OF THE DAY GOSSIP, WRITE, AND REVIEW WHAT OTHERS HAD WRITTEN—ALL FUELED BY A DARK BREW SERVED IN DISHES WITH UNLIMITED REFILLS.



THE FIRST RECORDED SALE OF TEA WAS AT AN AUCTION IN 1658, BUT WAS FIRST MADE POPULAR AMONG THE ARISTOCRACY BY PORTUGAL PRINCESS CATHERINE OF BRAGANZA WHO MARRIED CHARLES II WHEN SHE BROUGHT HER HABIT WITH HER IN 1662.



SOON, THE PRACTICE SPREAD FROM THE ELITE TO THE MIDDLE CLASS WHERE IT WAS CONSUMED IN...COFFEEHOUSES... PRIOR TO 1689, TEA WAS TAXED IN LIQUID FORM.



THE TEA MERCHANTS WOULD BREW IT IN THE MORNING, PAY THE TAX TO THE COLLECTOR, AND SERVE IT THROUGHOUT THE DAY... IN 1689, TEA LEAVES WERE TAXED INSTEAD, AND COULD BE BREWED THROUGHOUT THE DAY.





ONLY MEN FREQUENTED COFFEEHOUSES.



**WOMEN WOULD HAVE THE MEN BRING THE LEAVES
TO BE USED FOR HOME CONSUMPTION AND SOCIAL
EVENTS SUCH AS TEA PARTIES WHERE THE
BEVERAGE WAS SERVED FROM SILVER TEAPOTS
INTO FINE CHINA CUPS.**



WHILE TEA IS DRUNK THROUGHOUT THE DAY
(FROM BREAKFAST ONWARD) 'AFTERNOON TEA'
RAISED THE TRADITIONAL TEA PARTY TO A
SOCIAL INSTITUTION.





ACCORDING TO LORE, IN 1841, ANNA MARIA, THE WIFE OF THE SEVENTH DUKE OF BEDFORD, INTRODUCED A LIGHT MEAL OF SMALL SANDWICHES AND PASTRIES AND TEA TO SEE HER THROUGH BETWEEN LUNCH AND DINNER.



*SHE WAS SOON INVITING FRIENDS TO JOIN HER,
AND THE RITUAL WAS BORN.*



*AFTERNOON TEA SHOULD NOT BE CONFUSED
WITH 'HIGH TEA.'*



**WITH THE ARRIVAL OF THE INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION,
WORKING CLASS FAMILIES SHIFTED THEIR MAIN
MEAL OF THE DAY TO THE LATE AFTERNOON.**



WHILE TEA WAS STILL SERVED, HOT AND MUCH MORE SUBSTANTIAL MEAL ACCOMPANIED IT WHEN EVERYONE ARRIVED HOME FROM SCHOOL OR WORK.





*A GREAT DEAL OF CONTROVERSY SWIRLED AROUND
CAMELLIA SINENSIS.*



AFTER THE INTRODUCTION OF THE BEVERAGE IN
BRITAIN, PROMINENT THEOLOGIANS AND
PHILANTHROPISTS ARGUED FOR AND AGAINST ITS
CONSUMPTION CONSIDERING DELETERIOUS TO ONE'S
HEALTH – OR AT LEAST TO THOSE IN THE WORKING
CLASS – OR A HEALTHFUL SUBSTITUTE TO GIN.



THE RISE OF THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT LED TO AN INCREASE IN TEA AND COFFEEHOUSES THAT OFFERED NON-ALCOHOLIC ALTERNATIVES TO PUBS.



TEA'S POPULARITY ALSO INCREASED ISSUES RELATED TO SMUGGLING AND EVEN A WAR WITH CHINA.



**DUE TO HIGH TAXES THE GOVERNMENT PLACED ON
TEA (THERE WAS A CERTAIN 'TEA PARTY' IN
BOSTON TO PROTEST SUCH TARIFFS) SMUGGLERS
WOULD BRING IN THE PRODUCT AND UNDERCUT
LEGITIMATE SELLERS.**



THE GOVERNMENT FINALLY SUCCUMBED TO PRESSURES AND ELIMINATED THE TAX IN 1785.



BECAUSE ALL TEA CAME FROM CHINA (ALONG WITH OTHER GOODS SUCH AS SILK) A GREAT TRADE IMBALANCE OCCURRED BETWEEN IT AND OTHER COUNTRIES... THE ONE IMPORT THAT COULD BE SOLD IN ENOUGH QUANTITY FOR THE REQUIRED SILVER AND GOLD WAS OPIUM.



FOR THE BRITISH, THE EAST INDIA COMPANY USED 'COUNTRY TRADERS' LICENSED TO CARRY GOODS FROM INDIA TO CHINA TO SELL THE PRODUCT, WHICH THE COMPANY THEN USED TO PURCHASE CHINESE PRODUCTS.



British East India Company



**BY 1838, SO MUCH OPIUM WAS SOLD THAT THE TRADE
BALANCE ACTUALLY TIPPED IN BRITAIN'S FAVOR.**



CHINESE EFFORTS TO STEM THE TRADE LED TO TWO WARS WHERE THE EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WERE ABLE TO CREATE A LEGAL TRADE IN THE DRUG.



THE CHINESE OPIUM WARS

JACK BEECHING



SUBTERFUGE WAS NOT LIMITED TO SMUGGLING.



THERE WERE ATTEMPTS TO BRING SEEDLING AND SEEDS FROM CHINA TO INDIA FOR CULTIVATION, BUT THEY NEVER FLOURISHED AS WELL AS A NATIVE BUSH FOUND IN THE UPPER BRAHMAPUTURA VALLEY, WHICH LED TO LARGE TEA PLANTATIONS AND THE CREATION OF SEVERAL MAJOR COMPANIES.



TEA CONTINUES TO BE A MAJOR PART OF THE BRITISH DIET, WITH THE AVERAGE BRITISH MAN DRINKING ABOUT THIRTEEN CUPS A WEEK, AND WOMEN DRINKING ABOUT ELEVEN.



COFFEE DRINKING HAVING BEEN ON THE RISE SINCE THE 1970s, A RESULT OF A SWING IN PREFERENCES AS WELL AS A PUSH TO REDUCE WORKPLACE...



...'TEA BREAKS' UNDER MARGARET THATCHER HAS
LED TO FEWER CUPS BEING CONSUMED EACH YEAR.





**YOU AND I WERE NOT ABOVE CONSUMING BOTH
TEA AND COFFEE, BUT AS WITH OTHER
VICTORIANS, TEA OFFERED A SOCIAL MOMENT
UNIQUE TO BRITISH CULTURE.**





WE SAT DOWN TO HIGH TEA IN THE VALLEY OF FEAR, NOT 'HIGH COFFEE.'



SO, WE HAVE COMPLETED TOPIC # 056 IN OUR SERIES...

IN TOPIC # 057, WE WILL BE LOOKING AT THE MUSIC OF OUR ERA.



ORIGINAL SOURCE MATERIAL FOR THIS TOPIC:

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"THE LIFE AND TIMES IN VICTORIAN LONDON"

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