



Sherlock Holmes

C O L L E C T I O N S



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"Your merits should be publicly recognized" (STUD)

Donald A. Yates, "The Greek Interpreter"

by Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI

Donald A. Yates – scholar, Baker Street Irregular, founder and resuscitator of scion societies, and lover of dogs, to name just a few of his accomplishments and qualities – was featured in the September 2012 issue of this newsletter. For those unfamiliar with his article "Sherlockian Memories," it can be referenced at the University of Minnesota's website at <https://www.lib.umn.edu/pdf/holmes/v16n3.pdf>. In it, he wrote about his introduction to the world of Holmes and his experiences with the many interesting people he'd met along the way. His article won the 2013 Bryce L. Crawford Award presented *in absentia* during the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections' annual membership meeting held in conjunction with our conference of that year, "Sherlock Holmes Through Time and Place."



Donald Yates

Photo from What's in a name?

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YEARS AGO

“At the 11th hour of the 11th day on the 11th month of 1918,” the war to end all wars formally concluded with the signing of the Armistice in a railroad car outside Compiègne, France. The loss of life from the conflict, military and civilian, was staggering. The financial, political and cultural changes that resulted from the war were equally astounding.

Catherine Cooke’s essay “Tinged with Foresight? Sir Arthur Conan Doyle as Prophet of the First World War,” which appeared in *Trenches: The War Service of Sherlock Holmes* (The Baker Street Irregulars, New York, 2017), addressed Conan Doyle’s desire to serve God and Country. When the war began in 1914 he was 55 years old, too old to serve. As Cooke wrote, “He knew something of war first hand and, as the Great War engulfed Europe, his younger brother, his son, his nephew and his brother-in-law were among those who would fight and who would die in, or shortly after, the conflict. Much of his non-Sherlockian fiction had dealt with historical war, but when Britain actually went to war, fiction no longer seemed appropriate.”

With the onset and conclusion of the war, Conan Doyle turned to poetry. It was a talent he developed early, as described in his autobiography *Memories and Adventures* (Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1924). He wrote about his schooling at Stonyhurst:

The particular incident, however, which brought my latent powers to the surface depended upon the fact that in the second highest class, which I reached in 1874, it was incumbent to write poetry (so called) on any theme given. This was done as a dreary unnatural task by most boys. Very comical their wooings of the muses used to be. For one saturated as I really with affection for verse, it was a labour of love, and I produced verses which were poor enough in themselves but seemed miracles to those who had no urge in that direction.

The Sherlock Holmes Collections holds a copy of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Guards Came Through and Other Poems* with the bookplate of John Bennett Shaw. Published by John Murray, London, in 1919, some of the poems were first published in this volume while others are reprinted after appearing in various newspapers. The book contains seventeen poems and various rhyming schemes. Pj Doyle, a member of the Norwegian Explorers and co-editor with E.W. McDiarmid of *The Baker Street Dozen*, commented on the style. As she wrote, “the poems are formal verse, but there is a splash of free verse here and there [with] predominantly end rhymes, but [in] a few spots he utilizes internal rhymes in the pattern: ‘Gunners who fell in battery L.’” She added “These were meant to be shared aloud. The reliance on rhyme and rhythm would make these easier for readers to memorize, too...The grand story teller is taking liberties and adapting tools to advance the tale he is telling.”

The first poem is the titular *The Guards Came Through*, first published on June 23, 1917 in *The Times*. It tells the story of the exhausted men of the Twenty-first – wounded, hungry, thirsty, and weary in body and mind – and their relief when they heard the cry “Clear the front for the Guards!” and saw two brigades of Irish, Scot, Welsh, Coldstream and Grenadier Guards march by. Though the narrator is bound for a hospital ward, “I’ll tell them in Blighty wherever I be, How the Guards came through.” “Victrix” relates that despite her grief and losses, “all is well with England.” “Those Others” describes how the return of the victorious troops at wars end is tempered with the memories of the fallen.

Other poems in the book are “Haig is Moving, August 1918”; “The Guns of Sussex”; “Ypres”; “Grousing”; “The Volunteer”; “The Night Patrol, September 1918”; “The Wreck on Loch McGarry”; “The Bigot,” with a stirring message about intolerance that is as relevant today as when it was written, “You, who would force the source of love to play your small sectarian part, and mould the mercy from above to fit your own contracted heart”; “The Athabasca Trail”; “Ragtime”; “Christmas in Wartime”; “Lindisfaire,” a heartbreaking poem about seeing his old bay hunter at “the greasy yard where the red hides lie” (spoiler alert, it ends well); “A Parable”; and “Fate.”

The preface of the book is a note from Conan Doyle. “I must apologize for the size of this booklet, which can only be justified on the grounds that there is some demand for the contents as recitations. I hope presently to combine whatever is worth preserving in my three volumes of verse, so as to make a single collection.”

Continued on page 7

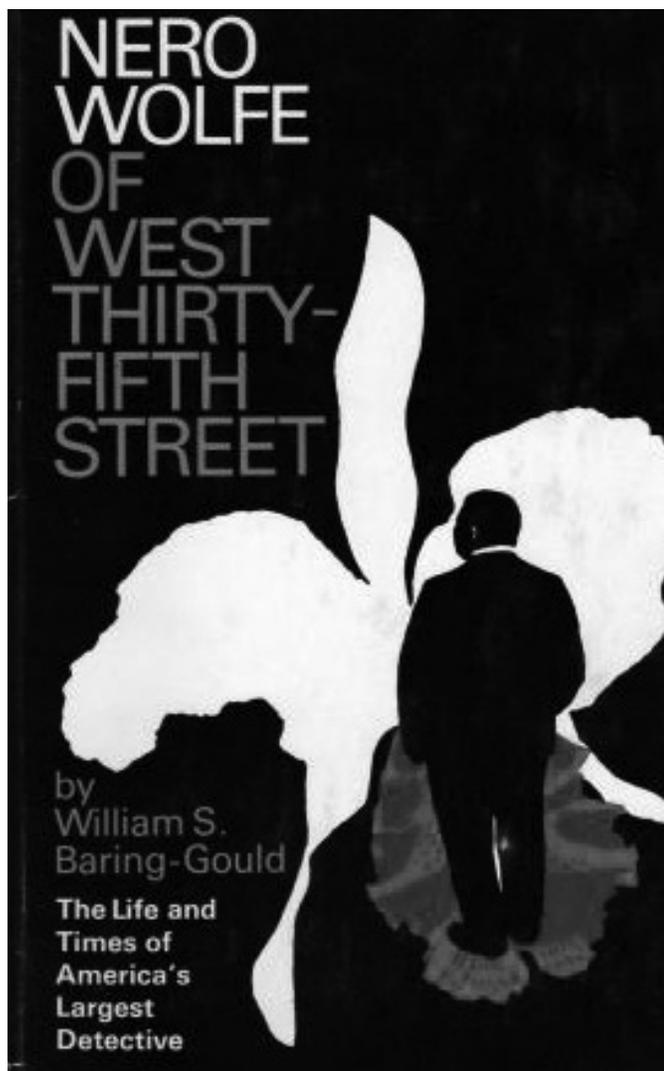
50

YEARS AGO

ON BARING-GOULD'S "NERO WOLFE OF WEST THIRTY-FIFTH STREET"

For Sherlockians, William S. Baring-Gould, BSI (*"The Gloria Scott"*), ASH (*"The Blue Swirl of His Tobacco Smoke"*, posthumous), will always be remembered as the author of *Sherlock Holmes of Baker Street: A Life of the World's First Consulting Detective* (1962), and to an even greater extent as the compiler, annotator, and editor of *The Annotated Sherlock Holmes* (1967). The two-volume *Annotated* has had particular influence on the Sherlockian world as the place where many of us first learned about Sherlockian scholarship and the organized Sherlockian community. Baring-Gould's untimely death in 1967, at the age of 54, surely deprived us of much more learned commentary and interesting speculation.

In addition to his role as a Sherlockian, Baring-Gould was one of the first scholars to write about another detective, Nero Wolfe, the creation of his fellow Sherlockian Rex Stout, BSI (*"The Boscombe Valley Mystery"*). The current year 2019 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the posthumous publication in 1969 of Baring-Gould's *Nero Wolfe of West Thirty-Fifth Street*, the first book devoted to reviewing and summarizing the Wolfean Corpus. (Stout's 33 Wolfe novels and 39 short stories are referred to by Wolfeans as the "Corpus", both to distinguish them from the Sherlockian "Canon" and perhaps also as a sly reference



to Wolfe's girth.) A copy of this book is contained in the University of Minnesota's Sherlock Holmes Collections, and is well worth the attention of anyone interested in the most prominent detective created by an Irregular.

Baring-Gould's foreword to *Nero Wolfe of West Thirty-Fifth Street* contains a short biography of Rex Stout. It is well-done, although largely superseded for today's readers by John McAleer's magisterial *Rex Stout: A Majesty's Life*. Part One of Baring-Gould's book is devoted to the "Cast of Characters," with chapters on Wolfe, Archie Goodwin, Wolfe's brownstone house on West 35th Street, Wolfe's chef Fritz Brenner,

Wolfe's late friend Marco Vukcik, and others – just as a Sherlockian reference work might open with chapters on Holmes, Watson, Baker Street, Mrs. Hudson, the Scotland Yard inspectors, and so forth. Part Two, "The Case-Book of Nero Wolfe," discusses Wolfe's (and Archie's) published cases chronologically, from *Fer-de-Lance* (1934) through *Death of a Doxy* (1966), the last Wolfe book to appear during Baring-Gould's lifetime. (Three more appeared afterwards.) Part Three of the Book contains five chapters about specific subjects, including "The Philosophy of Nero Wolfe" and "The Library of Nero Wolfe." The end material includes a map of the ground floor of Wolfe's house and a chronology of

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From the President

I've mentioned "Dark Places, Wicked Companions, and Strange Experiences" in previous issues of this newsletter and am happy to report that as the conference nears, we have a stellar group of speakers and vendors and plans well in place. I hope you'll join us August 8 – 11, 2019 (http://www.norwegianexplorers.org/2019_conference.html) at the Graduate Hotel <https://www.graduatehotels.com/minneapolis/>; 612.379.8888; info@graduateminneapolis.com), just ½ mile down University Ave. from Elmer L. Andersen Library in Minneapolis. The Conference is jointly sponsored by the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections, The University of Minnesota Libraries and the Norwegian Explorers of Minnesota. The Conference schedule leaves the morning of Friday, August 9th open, so that conference attendees can visit the exhibit, which will run

from July 8, 2019 – Oct. 25, 2019 in Elmer L. Andersen Library's First Floor Main Gallery. (<https://www.continuum.umn.edu/2019/02/dark-places-wicked-companions-and-strange-experiences/>) We have more vendors signed than ever before, and we have a mix of previous attendees and new attendees, so it should be a lot of fun for all.

Conference Confirmed Speakers Include:

Bill Mason, BSI
Cheryll Fong
Regina Stinson, ASH, BSI
Shannon Carlisle, ASH, BSI
Dan Payton
Jeffrey Hatcher, BSI
Alan Rettig
David Harnois
Ross Davies, BSI
Dan Polvere, BSI
Carlina de la Cova
Barbara Rusch, ASH, BSI

And, a Panel discussion of "Long-suffering Companions": featuring Judy Margolin, Mike McKuras, and Barbara Shaw

The Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections annual meeting will be held as part of the Conference on late Friday afternoon, with noted playwright Jeffery Hatcher as our speaker. Mr. Hatcher was the author the screenplay for the 2015 movie *Mr. Holmes* and numerous Sherlockian plays that have been staged at St. Paul's Park Square Theater, including the upcoming 2020 summer show *Holmes and Watson*. Members of the Norwegian Explorers will recall Mr. Hatcher's excellent address at one of annual December meetings. Membership in Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections is available to individuals: [https://www.lib.umn.edu/holmes/become-friend-holmes.](https://www.lib.umn.edu/holmes/become-friend-holmes/) ♡

Gary Thaden

Musings

The Sherlock Holmes Collections has been the fortunate recipient of several welcome additions. Our lead article focuses on the remarkable Professor Donald Yates and the generous donation of three books and related materials. I had the pleasure of meeting Don and having a long discussion about our canine friends. He was a scholar and a gentleman and one we should continue to honor.

Another donation, which will be highlighted in a later issue, was the Sherlock Holmes Collection that belonged to the late Susan Diamond, ASH, BSI. Her husband, Allan Devitt, carried out Susan's wishes that her books come to the Collections, and the donation was received with gratitude from Curator Timothy Johnson.

For our 100 Years Ago column, Ira Brad Matetsky, BSI ("The Final Problem," 2019) was the perfect

person to write the 50 Years Ago column about William Baring-Gould's *Nero Wolfe of West Thirty-Fifth Street*. In addition to his interest in Sherlock Holmes, Ira is a member and Werowance of The Wolfe Pack, the official Nero Wolfe literary society.

As Dr. Watson described Sherlock Holmes and his limits, I have to confess that my knowledge of poetry is feeble. I'd like to thank Pj Doyle, ASH, BSI for her comments on poetry structure. Our 100 Years Ago piece relates a non-Sherlockian work published not long after the end of World War I by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. The Conan Doyles and their extended family were profoundly affected by the war, as were so many others. *Arthur Conan Doyle, A Life in Letters* (Jon Lellenberg, Daniel Stashower, & Charles Foley, 2007) indicates their losses, and makes it clear why writing fiction during that period was difficult.

But for Conan Doyle, as for so many others scarred by the war, life would never be the same. Writing to a German correspondent afterwards, Conan Doyle tried to strike a note of reconciliation, but the losses weighed heavily." I have no ill feeling against you, but we have suffered so heavily," he said: "We all have a horror of Germany. My son was badly wounded on the Somme and died afterwards of pneumonia. My wife's brother, a doctor, died at Mons, my sister's husband, my wife's nephew, my sister's son, all dead."

Tim Johnson updates us about his schedule for late spring, which has continued to be busy, and Gary Thaden writes about our upcoming conference. You won't want to miss it. ♡

Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI

An Update from the Collections

Since last we gathered together on these pages, those on campus navigated their way through the hurly-burly of term papers, projects, annual evaluations, final examinations, dissertation defenses, and (for those fortunate graduates), commencement. In our department it is a time to recalibrate toward a summer schedule no less busy, but with a slightly different emphasis. With wider swaths of time open before us, our minds turn to larger projects that we were unable to accomplish during the rush of the academic year. For the Holmes Collections this will mean a bit of moving and shifting about, re-boxing, cataloging or describing additional materials that arrived during the year. It also means mounting a new exhibition in anticipation of the triennial conference in August. I'll also spend some time — most likely early mornings, evenings, or weekends — reading, researching, and writing. I have a number of projects in the works, some related to Holmes, which will result in presentations or publications. Summer is a good time for extended study — and catching your breath.

April opened in spectacular fashion with our regular “First Fridays” series of talks built around this year’s theme, “We Are Here: Women in the Archives,” followed on Saturday by a presentation in the library of “The Adventure of the Superfluous Pearl” by the Red-Throated League. This radio drama is one of the many scripts from the Edith Meiser Collection. We’re always delighted to see and hear players from the League perform so well (and have such fun) with Ms. Meiser’s work. It was a busy weekend in the Twin Cities as Minneapolis hosted the “Final Four” collegiate basketball tournament, an event that turned my commute into

something of an adventure. I believe we received an out-of-town visitor or two to view our current exhibit and to examine the 221B Sitting Room. As I write, I’m also scanning another series of scripts for consideration by the group for future performances. We multitask anytime we can!

One of the “sidebar” activities I engage with on social media involves a group of historians and other interested folks gathered together under the heading “Historians at the Movies,” also known by their hashtag, #HATM. Organized by Jason Herbert, a doctoral student in the history department at Minnesota, this cinematically inclined congregation recently received some national media attention. It is quite an energetic and interesting group. Every Saturday (it used to be Sunday) people virtually meet on Twitter while collectively watching the same movie, either from an online source such as Netflix or via DVD. On the first weekend in April we enjoyed “Apollo 13” together, “live tweeting” the movie with our various comments, insights, and tidbits. Occasionally a film will present me with an opportunity to share some archival resource or library collection that relates in some way to the film, as it did a couple weeks later when we viewed “All the President’s Men.” For me, it is another form of outreach. At some point in the near future, I hope to convince Jason that we should watch a Holmes film. I’m open to any suggestions you might have, but I confess that I’m leaning toward one of the more recent Robert Downey, Jr. productions. I’m very interested to hear what historians might say about Holmes, Watson, and the Victorian era.

Meanwhile, work (and reading) continues on fine-tuning our sum-

mer course for LearningLife in the College of Continuing and Professional Studies. The course, *Deductive Logic: The Best Stories of Sherlock Holmes*, begins in the middle of June and continues every other Thursday into July. Modelled somewhat on a two month seminar conducted in 2012, our sessions will allow extensive time for discussing an individual story and exploring the worlds of Doyle, Holmes, and Watson. I’m looking forward to a great time together in the classroom.

At the end of April it has become a tradition for academic librarians to gather at the University of Minnesota Landscape Arboretum for a day-long conference. Organized by the Academic and Research Library Division of the Minnesota Library Association, “ARLD Day” is designed as a time for sharing ideas, networking with colleagues, and exploring themes or programs developed at other institutions. It is also a very good way to put a cap on the end of the academic year. This year’s keynote speaker was Matthew Reidsma, Web Services Librarian at Grand Valley State University in Allendale, Michigan. Building on the work of others, notably Dr. Safiya Noble from UCLA and her best-selling book, *Algorithms of Oppression: How Search Engines Reinforce Racism*, Matthew explored the ethics of design and how our professional values find their ways into everything we create, from websites and search engines to user spaces and catalogs.

Sadly, we also said farewell to Yvonne Knop, our German Fulbright doctoral scholar who spent the last four months with us. We thoroughly enjoyed getting to know her and assisting with her research. We’re very excited about her extensive use of John Bennett Shaw’s massive

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“The Greek Interpreter” . . . *Continued from Page 1*

Professor Yates passed away at his home in St. Helena, California on October 17, 2017. While Yates didn't dwell upon his own accomplishments, several others mentioned them in that September 2012 issue. In 2018, Don's widow, Joanne Yates, and Andrea Labinger compiled, edited and designed the book *What's in a Name, A Collection of Articles, Reminiscences, Poetry and Prose that Defines the Life of a Man, Donald A. Yates*, published by the Michigan State University Libraries. The book was, Joanne wrote, a “remarkable Festschrift – a tribute from his friends and family to a man we were so fortunate to know.” Many friends and colleagues contributed to this volume and through its pages we get a glimpse of the man who took so much joy in reading and collecting. (Who else, as a teenager, would have appeared unannounced on the doorstep of Fred Dannay, one half of Ellery Queen, with a “suitcase of books he wanted signed”?)

The book is divided into chapters which cover his family, his introduction to mystery fiction, Sherlock Holmes, rare books, his time at Michigan State University as “Translator and Author Colleague and Teacher,” and his work with the

Argentine writer Jorge Luis Borges. We learn that he received his first edition of the Canon in January 1944 when his mother gave him *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* in honor of his graduation from junior high school. It was a treasured and well-read book, full of Don's notes and underlined sentences. It was the volume he took to the January 8, 1960 Baker Street Irregular dinner, his first, held at Cavanaugh's Restaurant, where he had it signed by Irregulars such as Basil Davenport, Edgar W. Smith, Ernest Bloomfield Zeisler and Howard Haycraft. In 1950 he collected the signatures of those at a revival meeting of The Greek Interpreters of East Lansing, and in April 1984, of attendees at The Napa Valley Napoleons of Sherlock Holmes inaugural dinner.

Don's first contribution to the *Baker Street Journal* appeared in the July 1956 issue. “A Final Illumination of the Lucca Code” was noted as written by Yates, a professor of Spanish, and “a Member of The Amateur Mendicant Society of Detroit and author of the treatise ‘The Spanish-American Detective Story.’” He initially received the BSI investiture of “Melas” but was later awarded the more prestigious titular investiture

“The Greek Interpreter” when it became available again.

Don's copy of *The Complete Sherlock Holmes* was given by him to Jon Lellenberg some time ago. When writing about Professor Yates in his essay “The Making of a Baker Street Irregular” in the new Festschrift, Jon spoke of his friendship with Don and closed with “Don was an essential part of us, and the broader Baker Street Irregulars; the seeds of it all are in this *Complete Sherlock Holmes* of his boyhood. I am proud to have it today, and will make sure it goes to a suitable and appreciative home after me.” Jon has now donated this volume to the Sherlock Holmes Collections. Joanne Yates donated not only the Festschrift, but also Don's unique copy of *The Hound of the Baskervilles*. Like the other treasured book, this one was also inscribed by a number of Don Yates' contemporaries. They are remarkable reminders of a life well-lived, surrounded by friends and family. Those reminders have found a permanent and “suitable and appreciative home.”

Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI

50 Years Ago... *Continued from Page 3*

Wolfe's life; this is probably not the right place to evaluate Baring-Gould as either a Wolfean or a Sherlockian chronologist.

Of importance to Sherlockians, Stout's acknowledged authorial debt to Sherlock Holmes and Arthur Conan Doyle does not go unmentioned:

Of course, as is well known, Stout has a boundless admiration for the late Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. He is a long-time member of the Baker Street Irregulars, that curious but thoroughly delightful group of Holmes enthusiasts. He has been toastmaster at most of their annual dinners for more years than most members can remember, and he is the author of the all-time high in Holmesian spoofery, a "slight monograph" called "Watson Was a Woman." (Page xiii.)

(For more on Rex Stout's participation at BSI Dinners, see my article in the 2019 edition of *The Newspapers*, the scion publication of the Sherlockians of Baltimore, edited by Greg Ruby.)

In his biography of Nero Wolfe, as in his earlier biography of Sherlock

Holmes, Baring-Gould proves a strong proponent of the theory, expounded upon in the January 1956 *Baker Street Journal* by John Clark, that Sherlock Holmes was Nero Wolfe's biological father. I must confess that despite its superficial appeal, this theory has always left me cold, both as a Wolfean and as a Sherlockian: for me, the two detectives lived and live on in different universes; it is Rex Stout who was and will forever be the link between them. In fairness to Baring-Gould and Clark, one key piece of evidence upon which they rely – Wolfe's statement to an FBI agent in an early novel that he was born in the United States, rather than in Montenegro, as is indicated elsewhere in the Corpus – has turned out to be spurious; Stout later told John McAleer, and surviving correspondence confirms, that Stout was forced to interpolate this statement into *Over My Dead Body* (1939) by an officious editor at *The American Magazine*, which was publishing an abridgement of the novel.

Nero Wolfe of West Thirty-Fifth Street is a valuable, if imperfect, introduction to Rex Stout and the world of Nero Wolfe that he created, and it is well worth reading or rereading in its fiftieth anniversary year. ♡

Ira Brad Matetsky, BSI

100 Years Ago... *Continued from Page 2*

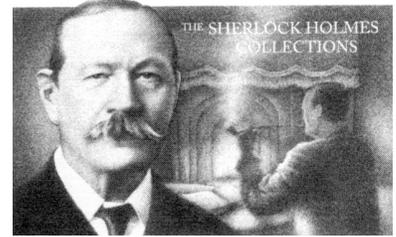
In the last pages were reviews of the poetry from *Songs of the Road* and *Songs of Action*, praising Conan Doyle's story-telling through verse. The following year George H. Doran & Co. published a three-volume set of Conan Doyle's poetry; *Songs of the Road*, *Songs of Action*, and *The Guards Came Through*.

With the recent centenary of the end of World War I, and the release of Peter Jackson's film "They Shall Not Grow Old" about British troops fighting on the Western Front 1914-1918, this book of poems seems particularly pertinent to the observation of the war that failed to end all wars.

The website Arthur Conan Doyle Encyclopedia has the text of the 19 pages on their website. ♡

https://www.arthur-conan-doyle.com/index.php?title=The_Guards_Came_Through_and_Other_Poems

Julie McKuras, ASH, BSI



The *Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections* is a quarterly newsletter published by the Friends of the Sherlock Holmes Collections which seek to promote the activities, interests and needs of the Special Collections and Rare Books Department, University of Minnesota Libraries.

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 **LIBRARIES**

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An Update from the Collections... *Continued from Page 5*

collection of clippings and articles, carefully assembled over the decades and extending from the late 19th century until shortly before Shaw's death. This is the first comprehensive use of this material, and we are eager to see how it will manifest itself in Yvonne's dissertation. Other materials from the Collections were also consulted as she kept us very busy loading the next cart of books or boxes for her use. It is our dear hope that she'll make other visits in the future. It was our sincere pleasure to have her with us during the first third of the year.

As April moved into May, we spent the first Tuesday of the month making our way 250 miles north to the town of Bagley, Minnesota. The next morning, in the company of about fifty members from the group Northern Exposure in Lifelong

Learning, otherwise known as NELL, it was my pleasure to share a bit of the history of the Sherlock Holmes Collections and how it came to be at the University. Along the way we had ample opportunities to talk about Sir Arthur, Mr. Holmes, Dr. Watson, and the large number of readers and enthusiasts who follow in their wake. A special word of thanks to Tamara Edevold who extended this invitation to a beautiful part of the state and made arrangements for my overnight stay. It was a great time in the north woods!

Finally, the Friends of the University Libraries annual celebration was held in the middle of May. Our special guests this year was Archivist of the United States, David S. Ferriero, in a conversation with Minnesota Public Radio journalist Tom Weber. Together they explored the theme

"Truths, Tweets, and Tomorrows," in what was promised to be "a lively and penetrating look into our nation's storehouse — the secrets and the future of our collective memory."

Thank you for jogging my memory and helping keep forever green the memory of Sherlock Holmes and Doctor Watson. It is an enjoyable hobby, a captivating pastime, and an important academic endeavor. We continue to appreciate your strong support and active engagement in observing, recording, collecting, preserving, and sharing this amazing Holmesian universe. All the best to you during these summer months. May all your summer adventures bring joy and relaxation. I look forward to seeing many of you at our August conference. 🍷

*Timothy J. Johnson
E.W. McDiarmid Curator of the
Sherlock Holmes Collections.*

Remembrances

In supporting the Sherlock Holmes Collections, many donors have made contributions either in honor or in memory of special persons.

In Honor Of

Phillip Bergem

In Memory Of

Peter Calamai
Susan Diamond
David Hammer

From

Lucy and Bob Brusic

From

Charles Prepolec
Allan Devitt
Pj Doyle

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