Extant Exhibits

The Remains of 1951

by NICHOLAS UTECHIN

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EXTANT EXHIBITS: THE REMAINS OF 1951

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RECENTLY, our new Chairman, Catherine Cooke, opened up some lines of enquiry into what material from the 1951 Abbey House Sherlock Holmes Exhibition might still be around in private hands. She was able to visit the Westminster Collection for the first time in 18 months in mid-August and has confirmed the items held there that were shown 70 years ago.

The Musée Sherlock Holmes de Lucens in Switzerland is perhaps less well known; but it holds many items from the Exhibition — as does the nearby Bibliothèque cantonale et universitaire Lausanne — all of which were originally in the possession of, or acquired by, Adrian Conan Doyle. Thanks to detailed information provided to me by Vincent Delay, it is clear that Switzerland is the main repository of such material.

I originally showed interest in all this because I happen to own one-and-a-half such items — and thought it worth expanding on the original premise and trying to find out where all the important items are today. It will help if you have a copy of the original Exhibition catalogue.[1] There was, of course, another Exhibition, which was put on in New York in 1952, and there was certainly some overlapping material contained therein. But that was much more of an Adrian Conan Doyle concept (even conceit) from the outset and does not — most would surely agree — carry the same historic Holmesian weight. I have not therefore done the same tracking and tracing.

The format for each listing is as follows: a) 1951 Catalogue number and item description; b) original 1951 source; c) present owner/whereabouts. I have added further comments or information as thought necessary or — even — interesting.

(1) Sir Arthur Conan Doyle: a bust in bronze — lent by Group Officer Jean Conan Doyle (hereafter Jean): Charles Foley

The original of the bust in question was created by American sculptor Jo Davidson (1883-1952) sometime in December 1929 — Doyle sat for him at his flat in Buckingham Palace Mansions.[2] That original is in the Los Angeles County Museum of Contemporary Art, but at least two small casts were produced and Charles Foley — Dame Jean Conan Doyle's heir — confirmed to me that "I brought the lovely little bust home as no-one else in the family wanted it". Unfortunately, no image is available.

There is a bronze bust of Doyle at the Musée, but it is signed "Kouneff 59" — thus it is assumed to have been created by sculptor Kostadin Kouneff (1906-82) in 1959.

(2) "Sir Arthur Conan Doyle — a pastel portrait by Henry Gates, 1933. After the oil painting by the same artist, 1927" — lent by Denis Conan Doyle (hereafter Denis): "Missing"

There is at the outset a scholarly discussion to be had here. At the Musée, there is a pastel portrait of Doyle which Vincent Delay identified to me as the one shown in the Exhibition as we worked on this article (I had asked him to provide me with definites and possibles). I was originally happy with this, although late on spotting that the date beneath Gates's signature on this portrait was quite definitely 1931, not 1933 as called for.

But Henry L. Gates (1872-1943) did more than one version of the oil original of 1927, which Dame Jean Conan Doyle presented to the National Portrait Gallery in 1959. There was indeed a totally different pastel, which was indeed dated 1933: those of long memories will recall it hung on an upstairs wall at the Sherlock Holmes pub in London. There is a photograph of Lord Donegall (former Editor of this parish) standing before it at the pub's opening under its new name in 1957; but this famous picture disappeared in the early 1990s and its present whereabouts are unknown. Nevertheless, here is the portrait we have described. Serious editorial discussion on the matter has led to the conclusion

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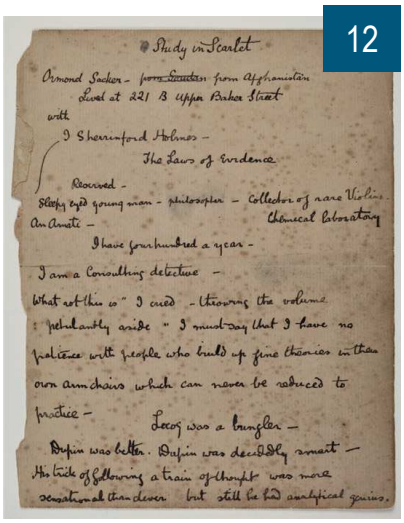
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Study in Scarlet

Armond Sacker - formerly Surgeon from Afghanistan
Lived at 221 B Upper Baker Street
with
I Sherrinford Holmes -
The Laws of Evidence
Observed -
Sleepy eyed young man - philosopher - Collector of rare Violins
An Amateur - Chemical Laboratory
I have four hundred a year -
I am a Consulting detective -
What rot this is" I cried - throwing the volume
: petulantly aside " I must say that I have no
patience with people who build up fine theories in their
own armchairs which can never be reduced to
practice -
Lecoq was a bungler -
Dupin was better. Dupin was decidedly smart -
His trick of following a train of thought was more
sensational than clever but still he had analytical genius.

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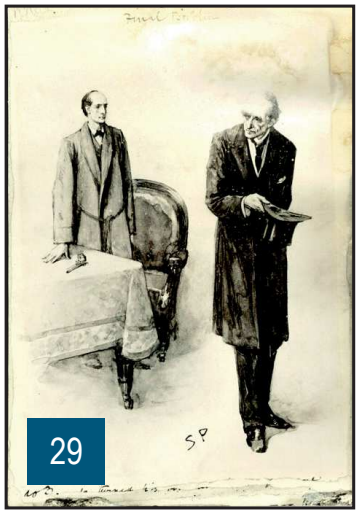
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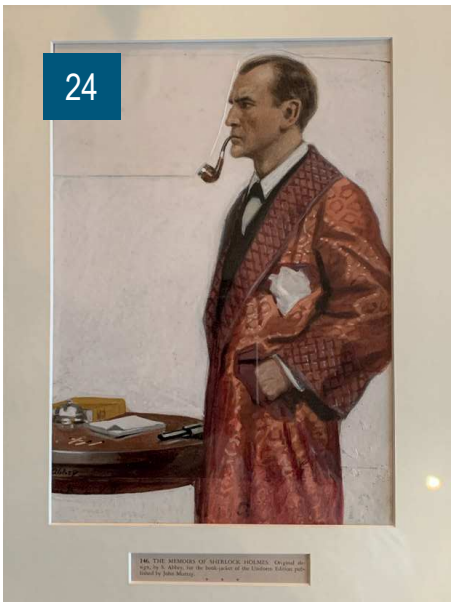
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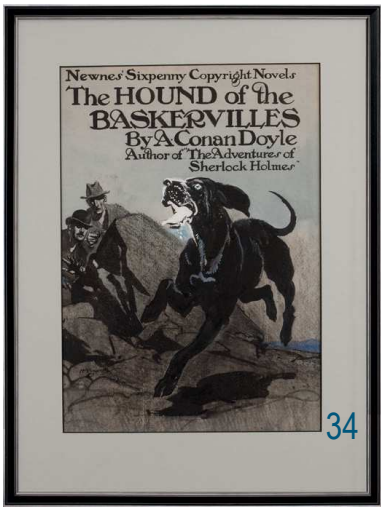

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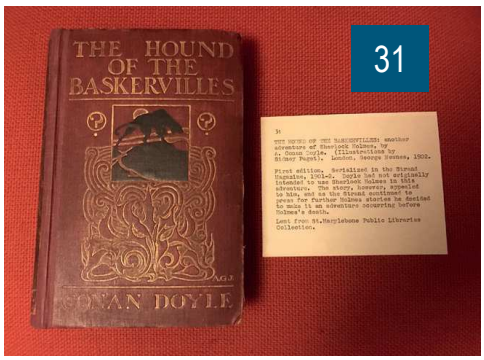

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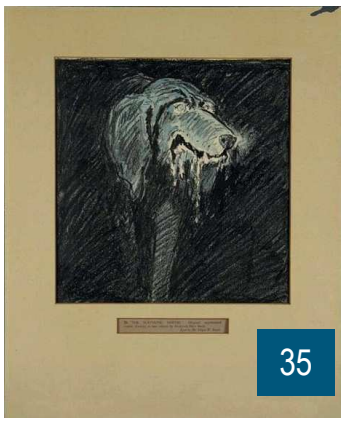
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that the two Doyle sons must each have had a Gates pastel — and it is the one owned by Adrian that is in the Musée.

(4) "The Life of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle" by John Dickson Carr, John Murray 1949 — lent by Adrian Conan Doyle (hereafter Adrian): Musée

(5) "The True Conan Doyle" by Adrian Conan Doyle, John Murray 1945 — From the St. Marylebone Public Libraries Collection (hereafter Marylebone): Sherlock Holmes Collection, currently at Mayfair Library (hereafter SH Collection)

(12) Notes for A Study in Scarlet — lent by Adrian: heirs of Anna Conan Doyle

(14) Angels of Darkness: a drama in three acts by A. Conan Doyle — holograph manuscript written 1889-90 — lent by Adrian: Toronto Public Library

(16) "A Scandal in Bohemia" contained in *The Strand Magazine*, Vol. 2 No. 1 July 1891 — from Marylebone: SH Collection

(17) "Sidney Paget" — photograph — lent by Winifred Paget (hereafter WP): Bibliothèque cantonale et universitaire Lausanne (hereafter Biblio)

(18) Walter Paget (photograph) — lent by WP: Biblio

(19) Sidney Paget wearing a deer-stalker (photo) — lent by WP: Robert Hess.

On the back of the photograph, in the handwriting of the Rev. John Paget (Sidney's son), are the words: "On the Colne, Oxhey. 1890. Sidney Paget in deerstalker, the only example". (Especial thanks to Diana Hess for achieving such a marvellous image from a difficult original).

(20) "Holmes gave me a sketch of the events" — original wash drawing by Sidney Paget to illustrate Silver Blaze — lent by Adrian: Glen Miranker

(24) *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* — original design by S. Abbey for the book-jacket of the Uniform Edition, John Murray — lent by publishers: Musée

How interesting that the publishers John Murray did not get this item returned to them. This image quite appals me. For it is proof positive that I have made an error through all three editions of my book on cover illustrators.[3] I identified it as being by Frank Marston (although I had originally believed it to be by Abbey — Salomon van Abbe — I went with Marston, for reasons now lost in the mists, as "confirmed by other sources". In another piece of weak defence, I can claim that the "Abbey" signature (below the table rim at far left) was invisible in all copies I saw; indeed, in at least the 1954 and 1960 issues, the cover art was cropped fractionally below the top of the table — just below the matches. However, this is the perfect opportunity for me to admit that research is never, ever, over.

***(26) "The death of Sherlock Holmes"* — original wash drawing by Sidney Paget to illustrate *The Final Problem* — lent by Adrian:** private collector in Illinois

(27) The Reichenbach Falls — photograph by Anthony D. Howlett — lent by Howlett: Biblio

(29) "He turned his rounded back upon me" — original wash drawing by Sidney Paget to illustrate The Final Problem — lent by Adrian: Charles M. Collins

(31) The Hound of the Baskervilles - 1st edition — From Marylebone: SH Collection, with label.

(33) " 'Phosphorous,' I said" — original wash drawing by Sidney Paget to illustrate The Hound of the Baskervilles — lent by WP: Glen Miranker

(34) *The Hound of the Baskervilles* — original design in two colours by H. M. Brock R.I. for the book-jacket of an edition published by George Newnes, 1927 — lent by the artist: Glen Miranker.

In fact this illustration was prepared by Brock for the first Newnes paperback edition, of 1st Sept. 1912.[4]

(35) "The Slavering Hound" — original unpublished crayon drawing in two colours by Frederick (sic) Dorr Steele — lent by Edgar W. Smith: Jerry Margolin.

American collector Margolin's purchase of this item at auction in July 2021 stimulated the writing of this listing article.[5]

(37) The Return of Sherlock Holmes, George Newnes 1905 — a presentation copy of the first edition, signed by the author — lent by Denis: Musée

(38) "With his neck craned…" — original wash drawing by Sidney Paget to illustrate The Three Students — lent by WP: Constantine Rossakis

(39) "It hinged back like the lid of a box" — original wash drawing by Sidney Paget to illustrate The Adventure of the Second Stain — lent by WP: Glen Miranker.

(40) Sherlock Holmes — unpublished original wash drawing by Sidney Paget — lent by WP: private collector

(42) Silver cigarette case presented to Sidney Paget by Conan Doyle in 1893. It is inscribed "From Sherlock Holmes, 1893" — lent by WP: City of Portsmouth — the Richard Lancelyn Green Collection

(49) The Adventure of the Dying Detective — holograph manuscript — lent by Denis: Constantine Rossakis

(52) *The Case-Book of Sherlock Holmes* — original design by J. Abbey for the book-jacket of the Uniform Edition, John Murray — lent by the publishers: Biblio

As with Item 24, it seems strange that this never got back to John Murray's.

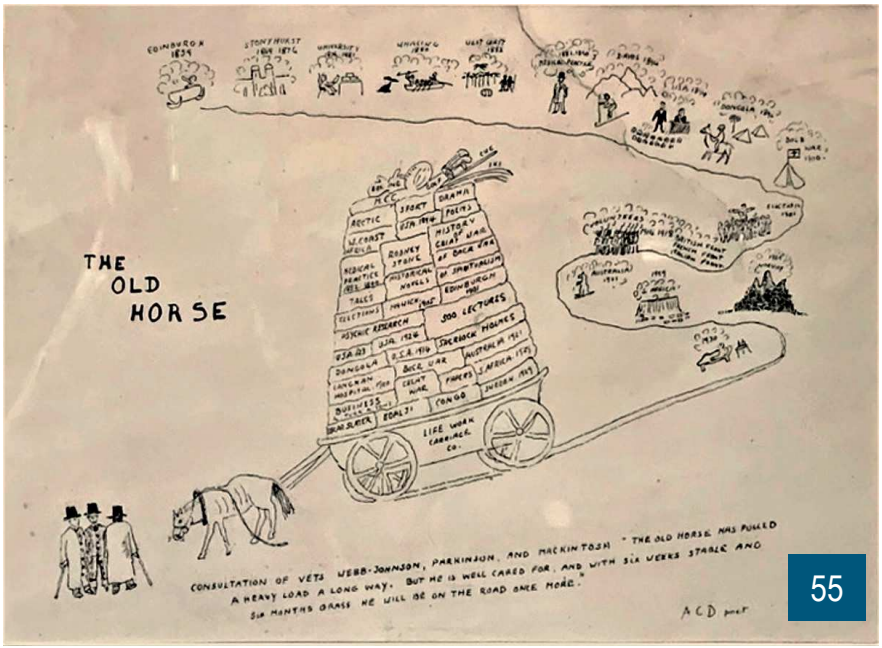
On this occasion, I did get matters correct in my cover artists book: J Abbey was Joseph van Abbe, younger brother of Salomon.

(53) The Adventure of the Retired Colourman — holograph manuscript — lent by Jean: The British Library

(55) The Old Horse — Drawing by A. Conan Doyle during his last illness, 1930 — lent by Mary Conan Doyle: Private collector

(56) *A Bibliographical Catalogue of the Writings of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, M.D., LL.D., 1879-1928* by Harold Locke — lent by Michael Pointer: Nicholas Utechin (with label)

I bought this in July 1987 from a dealer called Edna Whiteson, in London's Portobello Road. It is not interesting just because it was lent for the Exhibition: before Pointer owned it, it had been in the hands of another collector, Hubert J Norman, and laid in were a typescript of Holmesian and Doyleian material that Norman was clearly preparing to sell, together with a fascinating letter from a book dealer, George Bates of Brighton — dated 29 November 1941 — discussing the then-rarities in Holmesiana/ Doyleiana. I wrote about Norman in the BSJ (Vol. 62 No. 2 — Summer 2012).



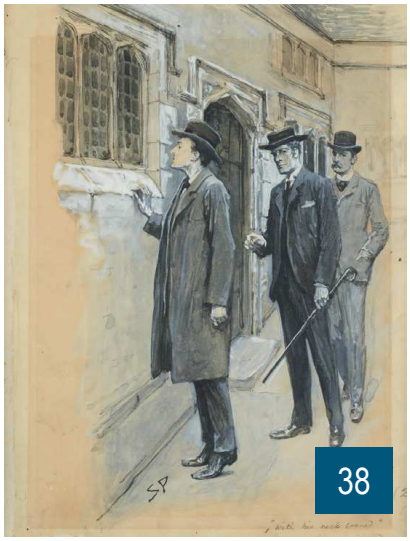
(58) *The Sign of Four,* and *The Hound of the Baskervilles* — Crowborough Edition, Doubleday 1930 — lent by Jean: Peter E. Blau, with label.

This volume is part of Set 753/1000, which used to belong to Dame Jean Conan Doyle (as noted above). After her death, it was presented to Blau in person by Charles Foley. Blau already owned a Crowborough set, but this one has now become one of his proudest possessions.

(76) *Hunden Fra Baskerville,* H. Aschehong 1911 (Norwegian translation) — From Marylebone: SH Collection

(84) *The Misadventures of Sherlock Holmes* edited by Ellery Queen. Little, Brown and Company 1944 — lent by Anthony Howlett: SH Collection, with label

(94) *Some Personalia about Mr. Sherlock Holmes,* by A. Conan Doyle — holograph manuscript — lent by Adrian: Toronto Public Library



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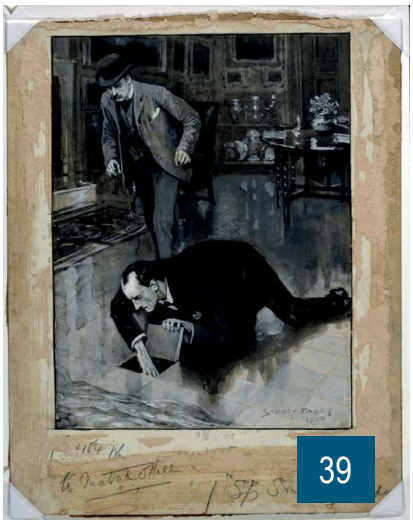

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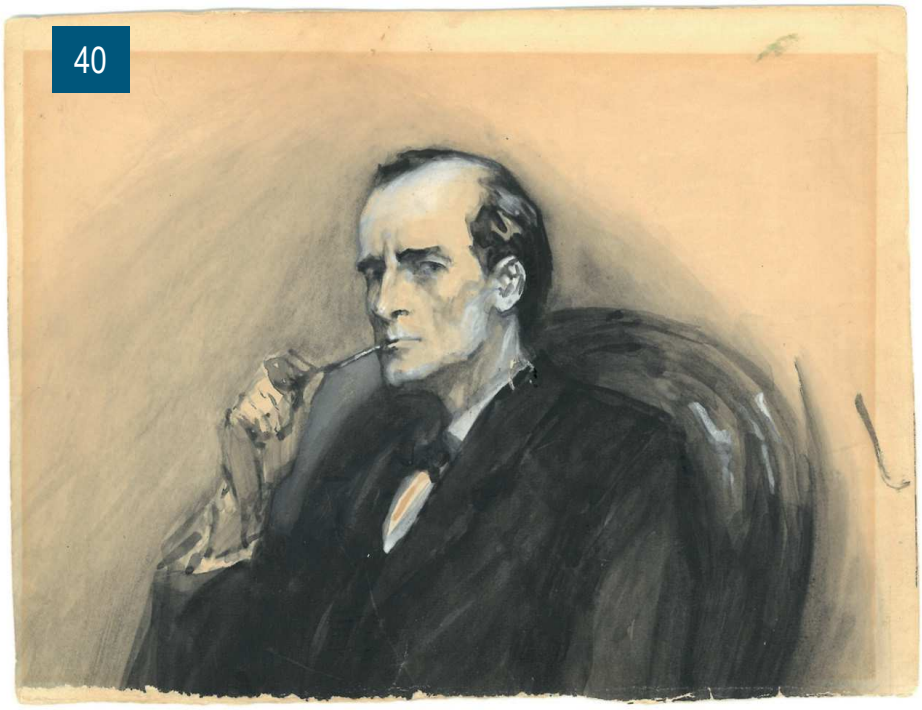

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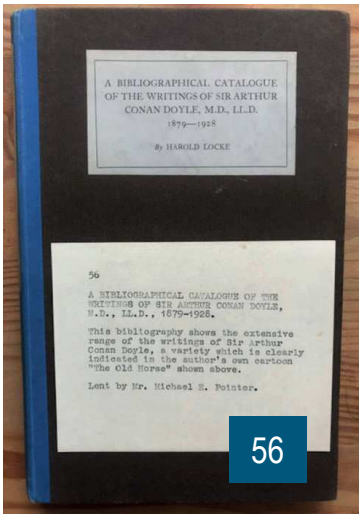

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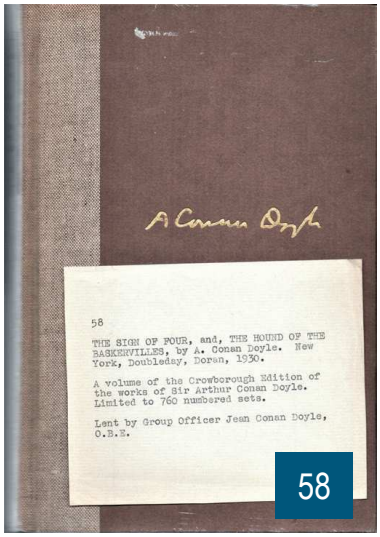

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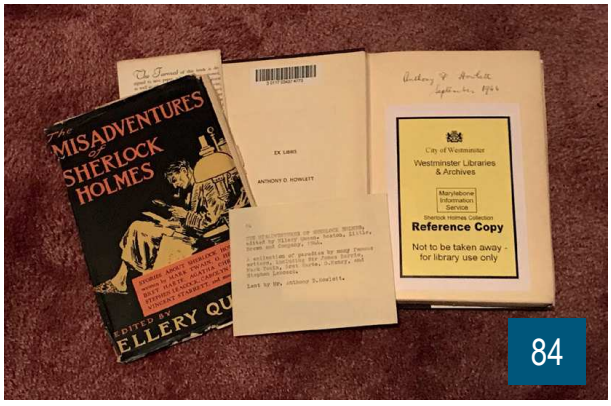

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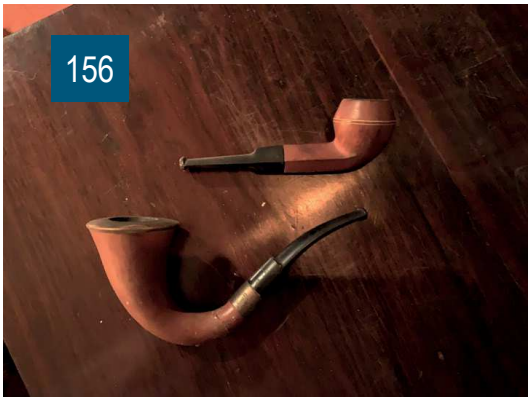
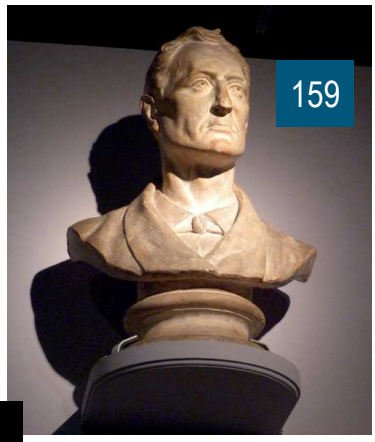
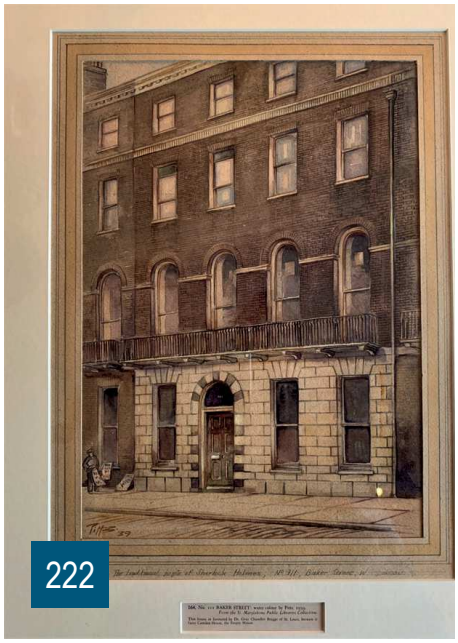
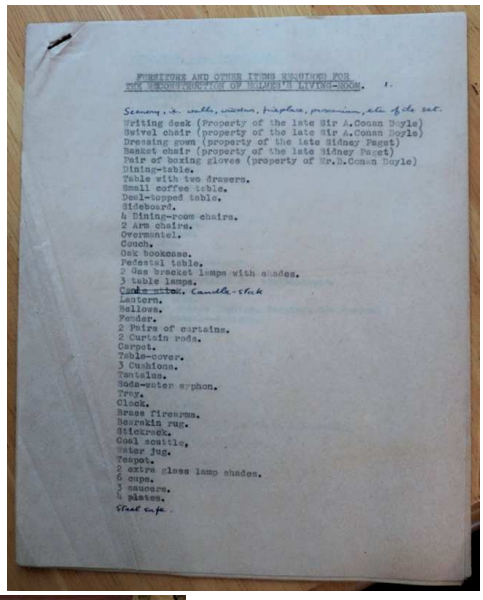


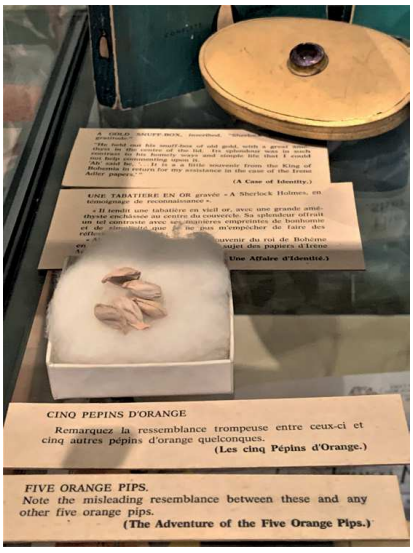





FURNITURE AND OTHER ITEMS REQUIRED FOR THE RECONSTRUCTION OF HOLMES'S LIVING-ROOM.

Scenery, i.e. walls, windows, fireplace, panelling, etc. if de sired.

Writing desk (Property of the late Sir A.Conan Doyle)
Swivel chair (property of the late Sir A.Conan Doyle)
Dressing gown (property of the late Sidney Paget)
Basket chair (property of the late Sidney Paget)
Pair of boxing gloves (property of Mr.A.Conan Doyle)
Dining-table.
Table with two drawers.
Small coffee table.
Desk-topped table.
Sideboard.
4 Dining-room chairs.
2 Arm chairs.
Overmantel.
Couch.
Oak bookcase.
Pedestal table.
2 Gas bracket lamps with shades.
3 table lamps.
Candle-sticks. Camella-stick
Lantern.
Bellows.
Fender.
2 Pairs of curtains.
2 Curtain rods.
Carpet.
Table-cover.
3 Cushions.
Tantalus.
Soda-water syphon.
Tray.
Clock.
Brass firearms.
Bearskin rug.
Stickrack.
Coal scuttle.
Water jug.
Teapot.
2 extra glass lamp shades.
6 cups.
5 saucers.
4 plates.
Steel cafe



The desk and chair of Sherlock Holmes; The dressing gown; A page from Jack Thorne's instructions; Five Orange Pips and a Gold Snuff-Box; Guns.

(131) *Sherlock Holmes and Music* by Guy Warrack, Faber 1947 — From Marylebone: SH Collection

(156) A pipe, distinctly Holmesian, used by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle — lent by Adrian: Musée

(159) Sherlock Holmes — a bust by F. L. Wilkins — lent by Adrian: Musée.[6]

(164) *Baker Street Legacy — the will of Sherlock Holmes,* The Musgrave Ritualists 1951 — presented by the Musgrave Ritualists: Biblio

(222) No. 111 Baker Street: water colour by Pitts 1939 — lent by Marylebone: Musée

To my knowledge, no research had hitherto been carried out on Pitts until a flurry in August for this article. The crucial reveal is that the artist is not and never was "Pitts": he was *Pitt* — with a following zig-zag that everyone from Jack Thorne onwards has thought was an 's'. Edgar W Pitt, born in Birmingham in 1894, first exhibited in 1927 and showed 22 times with the Royal Society of Arts in that city. Westminster Libraries have another three works by him (all listed as by "Pitts") and the London Metropolitan Archive similarly.[7] He died in 1975.

Interestingly, a cutting from the *Westminster & Pimlico News* of 17th February 1961 reported that an Edgar W Pitt, of Blackheath in London, had won the top award in a City of London art exhibition at the Guildhall with drawings of buildings in Westminster.

It will be noted that, although this water colour had been loaned by the St. Marylebone Public Libraries Collection for the Exhibtion, it has ended up in Switzerland. Two other items — those original dust-jacket illustrations from the Abbey brothers — were also never returned, for whatever reason. As Mattias Bostrom commented on events in 1959:[8] "Finally, Adrian had returned the last borrowed items of the New York exhibition. Or were there even more? It is quite likely that things kindly lent by generous people for the London exhibition, and then more or less automatically borrowed again by Adrian for the U.S.A. tour, never were returned. People had forgotten about it — or even died — during those seven or eight years. Instead those things ended up at the pub, or at the home of Adrian Conan Doyle".

(12A) *Beeton's Christmas Annual 1887* — lent by A. E. Rowe: Newberry Library, Chicago.

This copy was later bought from Mr Rowe by Stanley MacKenzie; it is Copy R8 in Randall Stock's census of known copies of *Beeton's*.

From Exhibition Catalogue Section X1: "The Living Room at 221B — 'Five o'clock on a foggy evening in 1898'": it is confirmed by Vincent Delay that the **door, window and fireplace/ mantelpiece** originals from the '51 Exhibition are at the Musée.

Also at Lucens are **"The desk and chair of Sherlock Holmes"** as noted on p. 59 of the Catalogue, **"the ones which Sir Arthur Conan Doyle used when writing many of the Holmes stories" — lent by Denis.**

And, of course, there is "the dressing gown", lent by WP — that is, Sidney Paget's dressing-gown (also on p. 59 of the Catalogue): now in the possession of Robert Hess.

This is an opportunity to publish for the first time **a page from C. T. (Jack) Thorne's detailed typescript instructions** as to what items should appear in the reconstruction.[9]

Vincent Delay was kind enough to take several photographs at the Lucens Musée for this article which are without doubt "extant exhibits". He has been careful to point out — in separate communications — that there are also items for which there is not absolute proof that they are the originals. Nevertheless, as they remained in the possession of Adrian Conan Doyle and were transferred to the Musée, it would appear as good as definite that they too are "extants". As this is a *Journal* of record, they deserve illustration as well

It is therefore more than likely that the **pair of handcuffs** on Doyle's desk (above) are Catalogue No. 171. There is also a display cabinet which likely contains Nos. 149, 150 and 153 (guns):

And while the **five orange pips** in the foreground may be No. 138 (they do look rather bright), why should the **gold snuff-box** in the background not be No. 169?

I end with a couple of side stories.

Our Honorary Member, Auberon Redfearn, then aged 16,

visited the ’51 Exhibition and has a very specific reason for remembering the event:

“[It] had a friendly intimacy and a direct stimulating relevance to the Canon. . . . To my enquiring and admiring mind, nothing seemed to have been overlooked. It really was a comprehensive facsimile record of memorable objects in the Canon, set out in neat order with accompanying brief descriptive cards, and all, of course, scrupulously listed in the Catalogue. A single morning was totally inadequate to do it all justice, but that was all the time I had. . . .

“[P]laced outside the entrance door to the Exhibition was a large 4′ 1¾″ high cut-out black-and-white head and shoulders of Sherlock Holmes, mounted on hardboard. To my eyes it looked identical to the one used by John Murray on the cover of the dust-wrapper for the Omnibus edition of the Long Stories. *[It is, but in reverse—NU]* . . . I took a photograph of it with my little box camera . . . but found to my chagrin that the picture was hopelessly over-exposed... My mother wrote to Jack Thorne... to ask if we could buy the cut-out. He replied that we could have it for nothing, and sent it up to Yorkshire by rail...So I still possess an exhibit”.[10]

Marylebone Library files retain the correspondence from Auberon’s mother, Elsie: here she is writing to Thorne in October 1951:

“I cannot tell you how he is looking forward to having this picture. He had set his heart upon it. He has always been a most enthusiastic reader of anything in connection with the great detective; in fact, even now for his thesis this term he is writing a monograph upon the life of Sherlock and is collecting all possible data he can for this purpose. For at least one member of the British Public the Exhibition at Abbey House was not in vain. My son hopes to read for the Law himself and has decided that Sherlock shall have a prominent place in his library someday. Last term he won the school’s Open Theoretical Chemistry Prize so you will understand how much Sherlock & himself have in common”.[11]

I have a further item in my own collection, one very closely connected to Colin Prestige — intimately involved, of course, with the preparation of the Exhibition. It may never have actually been on show, but it was certainly a “first reserve”.

As part of the sitting-room reconstruction, designer Michael Weight wanted a copy of the *Sign of Four* Agra Fort map to lie around on the sideboard. We know it did, because there it is in the short film about the Exhibition made by Pathé (I took a screengrab).

Some years ago, I acquired a notebook from the papers of Colin Prestige, which consisted of drafts for articles. Folded in also is a thin parchment-type piece of paper (13 ¼ x 9 ½ ins) on which is hand-drawn…a copy of the Sign of Four map! Until I chanced on the Pathe film recently, I made nothing of it — but, of course, kept it safely.

While not an exact copy of the map on the film (see the signatures below Jonathan Small’s and a difference in the actual lines of the map), it is close indeed. Looking at Colin’s handwriting — especially his ‘f’s — led me to the conclusion that he drew the original and made a copy or two to slot into place if need be (if something got spilled, for example).

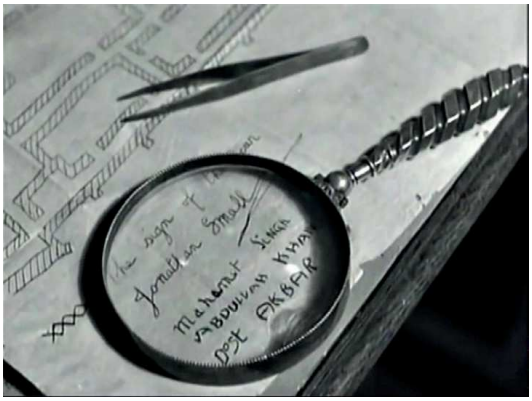
Last year, I mentioned this to our Hon. Editor and he told an interesting story, which I quote in slightly edited form:

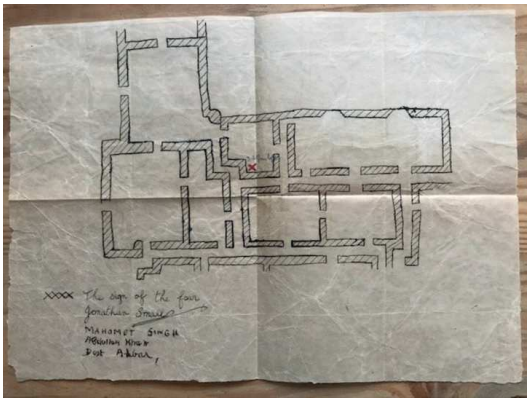
“Not long after Jean and I had started looking after the sitting-room at the Sherlock Holmes pub, Tom Stix hosted a lunch there for British Baker Street Irregulars and their spouses. Tony Howlett and Colin Prestige were interested to see the sitting room — but when I drew their attention to the plan of the Agra Fort, drawn by *Jean* (my emphasis), Colin became furious: ‘What have you done with the original map? Where is it? I drew the original map! Have you destroyed it?’...

“The fact is that the original *was* all but destroyed, but not by us. When we took responsibility for the room, we learned that the then-managers had found that a washing machine on the floor above had overflowed, sending water through the sitting room ceiling and causing rather a lot of damage. One of the items too badly damaged to put on display again was the map…”

Despite the Prestige rage, this episode does at least prove my initial instinct was correct.

So, finally, to the contents of the Sherlock Holmes pub. In the first Whitbread & Co. *Catalogue of the Collection,*12 57 items are listed and not one can be identified from the ’51 Catalogue that is not already allocated above at present. However, the pub certainly houses many elements of the reconstruction





Auberon Redfearn's souvenir of the Exhibition

Colin Prestige's map of the Old Fort

Colin Prestige's variant map of the Old Fort

of 221B's sitting room as originally put together by designer Michael Weight in 1951. Restrictions have prohibited Roger or Jean from visiting the pub for some two years; but Roger looked hard at the Pathé film and has positively identified at least three items that were present in 1951 and are still present in the reconstruction: the framed photograph of *the* woman, the three bone-handled oriental daggers and the Arcadia and Black Shag tobacco tins.

NOTES

1. If not, see www.westminsteronlineorg/catalogue.
2. All information on this item from http.//altamarkings.blogspot.com (19th February 2013).
3. *From Abbey To Wiles: Sherlock Holmes Classic British Cover Artists.* Sherlock Holmes Society of London 2016/2019/2021.
4. Information from Glen Miranker.
5. There is much detail on this item — as on the Sidney Paget original drawings and Doyle MSS mentioned here — on Randall Stock's invaluable site www.bestofsherlock.com.
6. Photograph taken by Jean Upton at the Museum of London Exhibition *Sherlock Holmes: The Man who never Lived and will never Die*, 2015).
7. Thanks to Catherine Cooke and Nicholas Osborne (Collection Services Officer for Westminster Libraries)… My ex-BBC friend Howard Benson also worked on this identification on 10th August!
8. *The Exhibitionists — The Baker Street Journal 2018 Christmas Annual.*
9. Photograph taken by Roger Johnson and Jean Upton.
10. *The Exhibitionists* op. cit.
11. The contents of this marvellous maternally-proud letter provided by Auberon for this article.
12. Undated, but December 1957.

I am very grateful to Vincent Delay for providing details and images of items held at the Musée Sherlock Holmes de Lucens and in the Bibliothèque cantonale et universitaire Lausanne; Catherine Cooke has done the same vis a vis the Marylebone Sherlock Holmes Collection. Glen Miranker, Peter E Blau, Robert Hess and Paul Martin have kindly either provided images or given permission for their reproduction. Roger Johnson, Randall Stock, Auberon Redfearn and Annie Utechin have also been of great assistance.

Nick Utechin is a freelance radio producer and broadcaster. He edited The Sherlock Holmes Journal for thirty years and is a frequent contributor to the literature of Sherlock Holmes. Since 1975 he has been known to the Baker Street Irregulars as "The Ancient British Barrow". He is the official Historian of the Sherlock Holmes Society of London, and was made an Honorary Member in 2007.