



THE BIMETALLIC QUESTION

Box 883 Stock Exchange Tower
Montreal, Canada H4Z 1K2

MINUTES of the meeting of the BIMETALLIC QUESTION April 3, 2008

Date of next meeting

The next meeting will take place on
Thursday, June 5th, at 6:30 p.m. at:
The Westmount Public Library
(Westmount Room)
4574 Sherbrooke Street West
Westmount, Quebec

The Quiz at the next meeting

"The Adventure of the Crooked
Man"

prepared by Roger Burrows.

This meeting's quiz: "The
Adventure of the Beryl Coronet"
prepared by Carol Abramson.

Minutes of the MEETING of the BIMETALLIC QUESTION held on Thursday, April 3rd,
2008 at the Westmount Library (Westmount Room), 4574 Sherbrooke Street West,
Westmount, Quebec.

Present: Carol Abramson, Maureen Anderson, Stanley Baker, Mac Belfer, Paul
Billette, Marie Burrows, Roger Burrows, David Dowse, David Kellett, Elliott Newman,
Erica Penner, Kathryn Radford, Wendy Wayling, Ronnie Zilman

Regrets: None.

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting was called promptly to order at 6:35 by Kathryn Radford.

ITEMS OF BUSINESS AND GENTLE TRANSACTION

(Incorporating Show and Tell, This and That, Fric and Frac, Raisins and Almonds)

1. Under Examination: Baker Pens Detection Piece

Continuing in his sterling efforts to spread the good name of the Bimetallic Question, our own Stanley Baker wrote a major story entitled "An Evening of Victorian Detection" which appeared in the February 24 issue of *The Westmount Examiner*. In the story, Stanley recounted the discussion by Dr. Joe Schwarcz about the friendship between Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Harry Houdini, and a woman who hosted a hoaxed séance.

David Dowse commented on the curiosity that Doyle, a man of science, could believe in the supernatural.

Kathryn Radford thereupon announced that she's superstitious – she had just received an MLA (Modern Language Association, an organization part of whose task is to set standards for communication in the written part of research reports such as college papers, theses, etc.). The subject of that issue was superstition.

At that precise moment in our meeting, the candles guttered in the Reading Room of the Westmount Public Library. This was made all the more interesting because we had no candles.

2. Going Green

Paul Billette referred us to a recently-published book in memory of the noted Sherlockian with Holmeseological tendencies, Richard Lancel(l)yn Green. Paul pointed out that the purpose of the book was to "keep the memory of Green green."

We are not sure, but it is possible that as a planet-friendly gesture, the volume may have been printed on biodegradable paper with a half-life of six years, using soy-based disappearing ink, and a newly-developed glue rendered from tulip petals guaranteed to disappear by May. The simulated gilt-edged effect is actually a form of egg yolk which will attract a certain variety of insect that upon licking it off, will explode leaving nary a trace or themselves or it, thereby making this planet safe for future publications of this magnitude.

3. All Aboard for Bimetallic South

Paul Billette would like to attend the next annual meeting of the Baker Street Irregulars next January in New York City. He's inviting any of us who have only dared but dream of this Odyssey to join him. We could drive down in one or more cars, for the several evenings' entertainment that such an outing would involve. The Sherlockian Apple usually furnishes a huge contingent of attendees and rolls out the carpet irregularly on a grand scale. Call Paul for a good time.

4. **Something's Fishy**

David Dowse has just about got us hooked on a web site entitled www.bigfish.com. On it, you can buy a game, and test your powers of observations. So that's his secret!

5. **Touchy Feely**

A week before the BmQ meeting, Kathryn Radford was in Paragraphe Bookstore and noticed their early spring collection of dolls. For \$20 you too can have your very own Sherlock Holmes doll made of felt. Once upon a time, wasn't Aislin's Sherlock Holmes on the logo of Paragraphe?

6. **More on Consumers Show Interest**

On her recent trip to Miami, Kathryn Radford noted that there were 252 murders in the previous year. (Me, I would have counted the number of yachts in the marinas, quantified the density of men-of-war on the beach, checked for hurricane damage, gone to Monty's Stone Crab in Coral Gables.) Because of the high murder rate, Kathryn reasoned that a show such as *CSI: Miami* makes sense. She discovered that the local universities have programs to prepare CSI technicians. She attended an open house at one of them. At this program, a crime reporter referred to mistakes made by the media when working on stories of violent death. In the real world, not all crime labs and related facilities are as computerized as on the CSI programs. However, more and more, on-site investigators are wearing sterile suits to avoid contaminating the crime scene. (Didn't we see this in one of Woody Allen's first movies?)

7. **Kidz R Sherlockian**

Wendy Wayling, the director of the children's library visited us again and reiterated her request for us to participate in the juvenile reading and activities program. Since we had not got back with her since the February meeting when she first extended the invitation, we redoubled our intention to do *something*.

We agreed that we will:

- dream up some Sherlockian projects for the children.
- display items of interest.
- recommend events.
- delegate a task force or sub-committee to take care of this.

The children will be encouraged to read books under different thematic headings, and keep a log of what they do during the program.

The program will take place from May 31 – August 29.

Wendy showed us the book *Eye and Crow* by Shane Peacock, about Sherlock Holmes as a young boy. Google sagaciously tells us:

Shane Peacock is a novelist, playwright, documentary screenwriter, and journalist. He grew up in Kapuskasing, Ontario, and attended Trent University and then the University of Toronto, where novelist Robertson Davies was one of his professors.

Early in his career, he wrote for the likes of Saturday Night, Readers' Digest, and Sports Illustrated, telling stories about bull riders, comedian Jim Carrey, crows, and other strange creatures, winning four National Magazine Award nominations, and a Silver Medal. His first book was a biography of spectacular Canadian The Great Farini, who walked over Niagara Falls on a high wire and invented the human cannonball act. He's written plays for the outdoor stages of The 4th Line Theatre in Millbrook, Ontario, incorporating circus performers and hand-to-hand combat into dramatic tales. His documentaries have appeared on History Television and the CTV national network.

We are not to confuse him with Shane Peacock, the Edmonton-born hockey player who went to the Pittsburgh Penguins in 1991.

See, folks? There's something in this for everyone. Tell your friends.

8. Sifting through the ASH

Ronnie Zillman introduced us to ASH, the acronymic Adventuresses of Sherlock Holmes. This is a Sherlockian organization founded in New York City in response to the Baker Street Irregulars which in its vision decided at the outset to exclude the priestesses of Irene Adler.

ASH has its own activities, and is still going strong. It identifies itself as the oldest Sherlockian women's society anywhere, and has recently celebrated its 40th anniversary. Its publication is *The Serpentine Muse*. This year, it officially admitted men into its membership.

9. The David Cornucopia

David Kellett had four items of interest for us:

- a. Three short mysteries.
He read, we solved.
- b. Granada Brettophile TV Series
We confirmed he da man.
David announced he has recently invested in the 12-disk set.
See him for further information on this treasure-trove.
- c. The portrait
David has a video capture of the famous photo of Irene Adler from "A Scandal in Bohemia" in a desk drawer, from the Granada segment based on this story.
- d. "The Picture of Dorian Kellet"
An artist friend of David's has rendered a photo of him taken at our annual banquet when David was dashingy costumed as a svelte Oscar Wilde in a stylish brown Victorian suit with – if memory serves – light brown piping. David showed us a photo of the portrait which has achieved a stunning effect with its rendering of David's eyes.

10. **First Toast – To the Master**
by David Dowse

Pinch-hitting for Maureen Peters, David's impromptu toast went on smooth like the finest *foie gras* on the thinnest French wafer in the fanciest French restaurant on Chicago's East Side overlooking the lake like a Leviathan waiting for the Apocalypse. (Note the influences on your poor, misguided Lowly Scribe of the immortals, Raymond Chandler, and Guy Noir, Detective.)

11. **Second Toast – To Dr. Watson**
by Kathryn Radford

Kathryn's toast compared Holmes's Watson to Don Quixote's Sancho Panza. This bears further study.

12. **Third Toast – To The Woman**
by Ronnie Zilman

Who is Irene Adler as Villain?
(uncorrected from a Tulane University web posting,
author not identified)

In the story "A Scandal in Bohemia" Irene Adler is not portrayed as an evil villain. She merely seeks revenge against the King of Bohemia, the man who broke her heart and treated her like she wasn't good enough to marry. Irene Adler is a caring person with a good heart and therefore is not the usual type of villain that Holmes and Watson deal with. She is not dangerous or crazy. The fact that Watson felt "ashamed" of himself for conspiring against Adler shows that she has an advantage over her enemies because her appearance does not arouse suspicions of her activities. The friendly, harmless personality of the antagonist adds to the story's appeal because in this case, unlike all the others, the reader sympathizes with the villain.

Interestingly, at the end of the story Holmes asks the King for the picture of Irene Adler that she has left behind as his only compensation for his efforts. This suggests that Holmes is deeply intrigued by "The Woman," the name by which he will always refer to her. "He was, I take it, the most perfect reasoning and observing machine that the world has seen, but as a lover he would have placed himself in a false position," Watson states (Doyle 209). Strangely, it is the mere fact that the villain in this case is a woman who throws Holmes' incredibly sharp detective skills off. His logical way of thinking is suddenly destroyed by "The Woman" and her irresistible feminism.

In Holmes' other cases, he is able to focus on success and to use all of his necessary skills to their full capacity. However, in this story, because the villain is a woman she is able to lead him astray. Holmes allows himself to be distracted by Ms Adler and to completely lose track of his intentions. One night on the street, a disguised Irene Adler walks by Holmes and says good evening to him. "I've heard that voice before," said Holmes, staring down the dimly lit street.

"Now, I wonder who the deuce that could have been" (Doyle 227). It is odd that such a brilliant detective is bewildered by the woman's voice. One would expect Holmes easily to pinpoint the voice to its owner, yet again his perception seems to be adversely affected by Ms Adler's feminine presence. His great amount of attention to and fascination by "The Woman" interrupts his thought process once again.

13. Fourth Toast – To Marmalade Mrs. Hudson
by Paul Billette

Mrs. Hudson is without a doubt *The Woman* in the Canon. She is of course, Holmes's landlady; a nice, motherly individual getting on in years, perhaps a little on the plump side. She's Scottish and a widow, or just possibly separated from her husband, who was possibly Mouse (sic?) Hudson. On the other hand, he may still be living with her, but be absent from Watson's accounts of life on Baker Street. Her first name is Martha. She is devoted to her employer Holmes, even giving up her life in London to accompany him to Sussex in retirement to continue looking after him there.

Long live the spirit of this formidable woman.
To Mrs. Hudson!

(Your Lowly Scribe has been thinking, always a dangerous activity. On the one hand, we have The Woman, an idealized, powerful, somewhat threatening character who may have upset SH's delicately balanced psyche, and on the other hand, we have Mrs. Hudson, the mainstay, the stable force who is always there, nurturing, and as a gatekeeper, is a protective symbol as well. Has there been any paper delivered on the (a) similarities and contrasts between the two characters, and (b) the forces in SACH's life and family history which would cause him to split the attributes embodied collectively by The Woman and Mrs. Hudson into two characters? Any takers?)

14. Quiz – Results

"The Adventure of the Beryl Coronet" prepared by Carol Abramson.

Possible total: 75

Winners were:

Rank	Name	Score	Prize
1.	Roger Burrows	71	glasses
2.	Marie Burrows	71	Ryvita multigrain crackers and cheese knives
3.	David Kellett	64	Nuts (not a comment on the state of the world)
4.	Erika Penner	48½	The satisfaction of a job well done

The next quiz will be based on "The Adventure of the Crooked Man," prepared by Roger Burrows.

15. Fifth Toast To the Society
by David Dowse

David talked about how the Society was named. The founders had wanted the BmQ name to have something to do with Canada. The logo was designed in the living room of a woman who was involved in its founding. Her daughter did the artwork. The logo incorporates two coins – one gold, the other silver to symbolize the bimetallic aspect.

16. Future Toasts

To The Master	-	Maureen Peters
To Dr. Watson	-	Rachel Alkallay
To The Woman	-	Stanley Baker
To Mrs. Hudson	-	Marie Burrows
To The Society	-	Mac Belfer

17. Be of Stout Heart

The excerpt that follows these minutes was delivered by mystery author Rex Stout (The Nero Wolfe series) to the Baker Street Irregulars.

Your Lowly Scribe has only partially recovered from the dreaded implications of Mr. Stout's shocking conclusions.

Obviously, Mr. Stout has not been to San Francisco in the 1970s. Or to Greenwich Village in more contemporary times.

Brilliant!

Our dear friends, you would confer a great favour upon us by joining us at the next meeting of "THE BIMETALLIC QUESTION" which is being held on Thursday, June 5th, 2008, at 6:30 p.m.

For the latest society news or updates on our history, please go to www.bimetallicquestion.org

Watson was a Woman?

by Rex Stout

GASOGENE: Tantalus: Buttons: Irregulars:

You will forgive me for refusing to join in your commemorative toast, "The Second Mrs. Watson," when you learn it was a matter of conscience. I could not bring myself to connive at the perpetuation of a hoax. Not only was there never a second Mrs. Watson; there was not even a first Mrs. Watson. Furthermore, there was no Doctor Watson.

Please keep your chairs.

Like all true disciples, I have always recurrently dipped into the Sacred Writings (called by the vulgar the Sherlock Holmes stories) for refreshment; but not long ago I reread them from beginning to end, and I was struck by a singular fact that reminded me of the dog in the night. The singular fact about the dog in the night, as we all know, was that it didn't bark; and the singular fact about Holmes in the night is that he is never seen going to bed. The writer of the tales, the Watson person, describes over and over again, in detail, all the other minutia of that famous household - suppers, breakfasts, arrangement of furniture, rainy evenings at home - but not once are we shown either Holmes or Watson going to bed. I wondered why not? Why such unnatural and obdurate restraint, nay, concealment, regarding one of the pleasantest episodes of the daily routine?

I got suspicious.

The uglier possibilities that occurred to me - that Holmes had false teeth or that Watson wore a toupee - I rejected as preposterous. They were much too obvious, and shall I say unsinister. But the game was afoot, and I sought the trail, in the only field available to me, the Sacred Writings themselves. And right at the very start, on page 9 of "A Study in Scarlet," I found this:

... it was rare for him to be up after ten at night, and he had invariably breakfasted and gone out before I rose in the morning.

I was indescribably shocked. How had so patent a clue escaped so many millions of readers through the years? That was, that could only be, a woman speaking of a man. Read it over. The true authentic speech of a wife telling of her husband's-- but wait. I was not indulging in idle speculation, but seeking evidence to establish a fact. It was unquestionably a woman speaking of a man, yes, but whether a wife of a husband, or a mistress of a lover, ... I admit I blushed. I blushed for Sherlock Holmes, and I closed the book. But the fire of curiosity was raging in me, and soon I opened again to the same page, and there in the second paragraph I saw:

The reader may set me down as a hopeless busybody, and when I confess how much this man stimulated my curiosity, and how often I endeavored to break through the reticence which he showed on all that concerned himself.

You bet she did. She would. Poor Holmes! She doesn't even bother to employ one of the stock euphemisms such as, "I wanted to understand him better," or, "I wanted to share things with him." She proclaims it with brutal directness, "I endeavored to break through the reticence." I shuddered and for the first time in my life felt that Sherlock Holmes was not a god, but human--human by his suffering. Also, from that one page I regarded the question of the Watson person's sex as settled for good. Indubitably she was female, but wife for mistress? I went on. Two pages later I found:

... his powers upon the violin ... at my request he has played me some of Mendelssohn's Lieder. . .

Imagine a man asking another man to play him some of Mendelssohn's Lieder on a violin!

And on the next page:

... I rose somewhat earlier than usual, and found that Sherlock Holmes had not yet finished his breakfast ... my plate had not been laid nor my coffee prepared. With ... petulance ... I rang the bell and gave a curt intimation that I was ready. Then I picked up a magazine from the table and attempted to while away the time with it, while my companion munched silently at his toast.

THAT is a terrible picture, and you know and I know how bitterly realistic it is. Change the diction, and it is practically a love

story by Ring Lardner. That Sherlock Holmes, like other men, had breakfasts like that is a hard pill for a true disciple to swallow, but we must face the facts. The chief thing to note of this excerpt is that it not only reinforces the conviction that Watson was a lady--that is to say, a woman--but also it bolsters our hope that Holmes did not through all those years live in sin. A man does not munch silently at his toast when breakfasting with his mistress; or, if he does, it won't be long until he gets a new one. But Holmes stuck to her--or she to him--for over a quarter of a century. Here are a few quotations from the later years:

. . . Sherlock Holmes was standing smiling at me . . . I rose to my feet, stared at him for some seconds in utter amazement, and then it appears that I must have fainted. . . .
--"The Adventure of the Empty House," page 4

I believe that I am one of the most long-suffering of the mortals.
-- "The Tragedy of the Birlstone," [The Valley of Fear] page1

The relations between us in those latter days were peculiar. He was a man of habits, narrow and concentrated habits, and I had become one of them. As an institution I was like the violin, the shag tobacco, the old black pipe, the index books, and others perhaps less excusable."
--"The Adventure of the Creeping Man," page 1

And we have been expected to believe that a man wrote those things! The frank and unconcerned admission that she fainted at the sight of Holmes after an absence! "I am one of the most long-suffering of mortals"--the oldest uxorial cliché in the world; Aeschylus used it; no doubt cave-men gnashed their teeth at it! And the familiar pathetic plaint, "As an institution I was like the old black pipe!"

Yes, uxorial, for surely she was wife. And the old black pipe itself provides us with a clincher on that point. This comes from page 16 of "The Hound of the Baskervilles":

. . . did not return to Baker Street until evening. It was nearly nine o'clock when I found myself in the sitting-room once more.
My first impression as I opened the door was that a fire had broken out, for the room was so filled with smoke that the light of the lamp upon the table was blurred by it.
As I entered, however, my fears were set at rest, for it was the acrid fumes of strong coarse tobacco which took me by the throat and set me coughing. Through the haze I had a vague vision of Holmes in his dressing-gown coiled up in an arm-chair with his black clay pipe between his lips. Several rolls of paper lay around him.
"Caught cold, Watson?" said he.
"No, it's this poisonous atmosphere."
"I suppose it is pretty thick, now that you mention it."
"Thick! It is intolerable!"
"Open the window, then!"

I say husband and wife. Could anyone alive doubt it after reading that painful banal scene? Is there any need to pile on the evidence?

For a last-ditch skeptic there is more evidence, much more. The efforts to break Holmes of the cocaine habit, mentioned in various places in the Sacred Writings, display a typical reformist wife in action, especially the final gloating over her success. A more complicated, but no less conclusive, piece of evidence is the strange, the astounding recital of Holmes's famous disappearance, in "The Final Problem," and the reasons given therefor in a later tale, "The Adventure of the Empty House." It is incredible that this monstrous deception was not long ago exposed.

Holmes and Watson had together wandered up the valley of the Rhone, branched off at Leuk, made their way over the Gemmi Pass, and gone on, by way of Interlaken, to Meiringen. Near that village, as they were walking along a narrow trail high above a tremendous abyss, Watson was maneuvered back to the hotel by a fake message. Learning that the message was a fake, she (he) flew back to their trail, and found that Holmes was gone. No Holmes. All that was left of him was a polite and regretful note of farewell, there on a rock with his cigarette case for a paperweight, saying that Professor Moriarty had arrived and was about to push him into the abyss.

That in itself was rather corny. But go on to "The Adventure of the Empty House." Three years have passed. Sherlock Holmes has suddenly and unexpectedly reappeared in London, causing the Watson person to collapse in a faint. His explanation of his long absence is fantastic. He says that he had grappled with Professor Moriarty on the narrow trail and tossed him into the chasm; that, in order to deal at better advantage with the dangerous Sebastian Moran, he had decided to make it appear that he too had toppled over the cliff; that, so as to leave no returning footprints on the narrow trail, he had attempted to scale the upper cliff, and, while he was doing so, Sebastian Moran himself had appeared up above and thrown rocks at him; that by herculean efforts he had eluded Moran and escaped over the mountains; that for three years he had wandered around Persia and Tibet and France, communicating with no one but his brother Mycroft, so that Sebastian Moran would think he was dead. Though by his own account Moran knew, must have known, that he had got away!

That is what Watson says that Holmes told her (him). It is simply gibberish, below the level even of a village half-wit. It is impossible to suppose that Sherlock Holmes ever dreamed of imposing on any sane person with an explanation like that; it is impossible to believe that he would insult his own intelligence by offering such an explanation even to an idiot. I deny that he ever did. I believe that all he said, after Watson recovered from the faint, was this, "My dear, I am willing to try it again," for he was a courteous man. And it was Watson, who, attempting to cook up an explanation, made such a terrible hash of it.

THEN who was this person whose nom de plume was "Doctor Watson?" Where did she come from? What was she like? What was her name before she snared Holmes?

Let us see what we can do about the name, by methods that Holmes himself might have used. It was Watson who wrote immortal tales, therefore if she left a record of her name anywhere it must have been in the tales themselves. But what we are looking for is not her characteristics or the facts of her life, but her name, that is to say, her title; so obviously the place to look is in the titles of the tales.

There are sixty of the tales all told. The first step is to set them down in chronological order, and to number them from 1 to 60. Now, which shall we take first? Evidently the reason why Watson was at such pains to conceal her name in this clutter of titles was to mystify us, so the number to start with should be the most mystical number, namely seven. And to make it doubly sure, we shall make it seven times seven, which is 49. Very well. The 49th tale is "The Adventure of the Illustrious Client." We of course discard the first four words, "The Adventure of the," which are repeated in most of the titles. Result: "ILLUSTRIOUS CLIENT."

The next most significant thing about Watson is her (his) constant effort to convince us that those things happened exactly as she (he) tells them; that they are on the square. Good. The first square of an integer is the integer 4. We take the title of the 4th tale and get RED-HEADED LEAGUE."

We proceed to elimination. Of all the factors that contribute to an ordinary man's success, which one did Holmes invariably exclude, or eliminate? Luck. In crap-shooting, what are the lucky numbers? Seven and eleven. But we have already used 7, which eliminates it, so there is nothing left but 11. The 11th tale is about the "ENGINEER'S THUMB."

Next, what was Holmes's age at the time he moved to Baker Street? Twenty-seven. The 27th tale is the adventure of the "NORWOOD BUILDER." And what was Watson's age? Twenty-six. The 26th tale is the adventure of the "EMPTY HOUSE." But there is no need to belabor the obvious. Just as it is a simple matter to decipher the code of the Dancing Men when Holmes has once put you on the right track, so can you, for yourself, make the additional required selections now that I have explained the method. And you will inevitably get what I got:

Illustrious Client
Red-headed League
Engineer's Thumb
Norwood Builder
Empty House

Wisteria Lodge
Abbey Grange
Twisted Lip
Study in Scarlet
Orange Pips
Noble Bachelor

And, acrostically simple, the initial letters read down, the carefully hidden secret is ours. Her name was Irene Watson.

But not so fast. Is there any way of checking that? Of discovering her name by any other method, say a priori? We can try and see. A woman wrote the stories about Sherlock Holmes that has been demonstrated; and that woman was his wife. Does there appear, anywhere in the stories, a woman whom Holmes fell for? Whom he really cottoned to? Indeed there does. "A Scandal in Bohemia" opens like this:

"To Sherlock Holmes she is always the woman. . . . In his eyes she eclipses and predominates the whole of her sex."

And what was the name of the woman? Irene!

But, you say, not Irene Watson, but Irene Adler. Certainly, Watson's whole purpose, from beginning to end, was to confuse and bewilder us regarding her identity. So note that name well. Adler. What is an adler, or, as it is, commonly spelled, addler? An addler is one who, or that which, addles. Befuddles. Confuses. I admit I admire that stroke; it is worthy of Holmes himself. In the very act of deceiving and confusing us, she has the audacity to employ a name that brazenly

announces her purpose.

An amusing corroborative detail about this Irene of "Scandal in Bohemia"--the woman to Holmes according to the narrator of the tales--is that Holmes was present at her wedding at the Church of St. Monica in the Edgeware Road. It is related that he was there as a witness, but that is pure poppycock. Holmes himself says "I was half-dragged up to the altar, and before I knew where I was I found myself mumbling responses. . . ." Those are not the words of an indifferent witness, but of a reluctant, ensnared, bulldozed man--in short, a bridegroom. And in all the 1323 pages of the Sacred Writings, that is the only wedding we ever see--the only one, so far as we are told, that Holmes ever graced with his presence.

All this is very sketchy. I admit it. I am now collecting material for a fuller treatment of the subject, a complete demonstration of the evidence and the inevitable conclusion. It will fill two volumes, the second of which will consist of certain speculations regarding various concrete results of that long-continued and--I fear, alas--none-too-happy union. For instance, what of the parentage of Lord Peter Wimsey, who was born, I believe, around the turn of the century--about the time of the publication of "The Adventure of the Second Stain"? That will bear looking into.

Notes

GASOGENE

The titles of Gasogene, Tantalus, and Buttons were given to officers of the Baker Street Irregulars, a society which at this early date could be thought of as a sort of gentleman's club that met irregularly for dinner, drinking, and reciting mock-scholarly papers on the canon. Stout is addressing the various members after their traditional toast to women of the canon, such as Irene Adler and the second Mrs. Watson.

the dog in the night

In the SILV case, Holmes points out the "curious incident of the dog in the night-time" to Inspector Gregory as an important clue to solving the mystery.

Mendelssohn's Lieder

Felix Mendelssohn is the German composer of Lieder ohne Worte, or Songs Without Words.

Lord Peter Wimsey

For those who don't know him, Lord Peter is the noble amateur sleuth whom Dorothy L. Sayers wrote about in the 1920s and '30s. It is highly unlikely that Stout could successfully graft Holmes into the Wimsey family or vice versa.
