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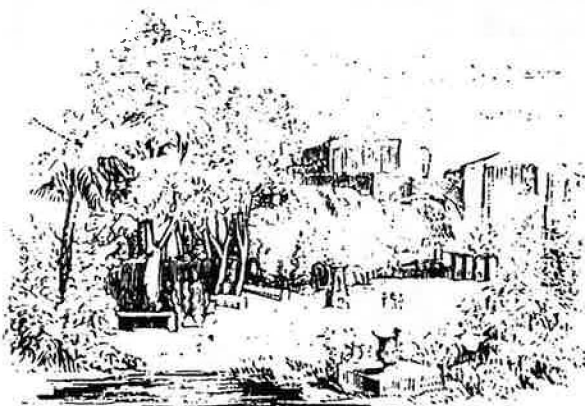
Being a Trifling Brochure
Highlighting the History of
America's Pioneer Academic Scion

THE GREEK INTERPRETERS
OF EAST LANSING, MICHIGAN

In Celebration of Their
Fortieth Anniversary Year

1985





East Lansing, Michigan
Foulest Antecedent Enterprises
 February, 1986

THE GREEK INTERPRETERS OF EAST LANSING, MICH.

One of Professor Robert P. Adams' English literature courses offered at Michigan State College during the 1945 winter term included *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*, and when student enthusiasts and Scandalous Bohemian Page Heldenbrand signed up, a MSC chapter of the Irregulars was inevitable.

Some eight other student devotees were soon attracted to the classroom-formed nucleus, and on an appropriately stormy night that April the *Greek Interpreters* were born. They were *Greek*, since attendance at MSC makes one a "Spartan," and of the Sacred Writings they hoped soon to become *Interpreters*; and they all subscribed heartily to the precept that "Holmes is where the heart is."

With their constitution adopted and their faculty sponsor, Prof. Adams (who had now joined the Akron ranks), serving in his Conan-ical capacity as "Diogenes" (attempting to keep the group reasonably honest) and Heldenbrand as "Chief Interpreter," they met Irregularly until June, concerning themselves chiefly with the writing of a collective pastiche (and main-

taining a watchful eye on a member's Hound to ensure that the dog did nothing in the night-time).

The following September found their *Diogenes* on leave-of-absence to continue a pet literary research, and their *Chief Interpreter* in the Navy, and when Prof. Adams returned in January, night classes and other evils attendant to the crowded campus conditions that had come to prevail rendered well nigh impossible the resumption of Greek Interpreting.

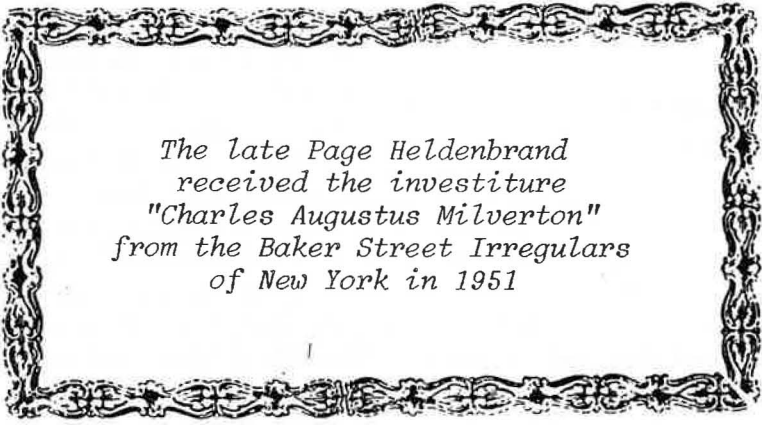
And so an East Lansing variety of the Reichenbach has claimed the collegiate scion; but at the edge of the abyss (i.e., in the BSI Archives) has been left the fruit of its labor—"The Singular Affair of Mr. Phillip Phot," the Second World War Service of Sherlock Holmes.

The Greek Interpreters, however, are by no means dead. Now they are exploring a remote mountainous region, or toying with a penicillin derivative, but when the time is ripe they will return, perhaps not the same men as before, but as ever eager to sit at Sherlock's feet. Meanwhile, *Diogenes* Adams and able new *Chief Interpreter* Lawrence H. White keep the gaslight burning.

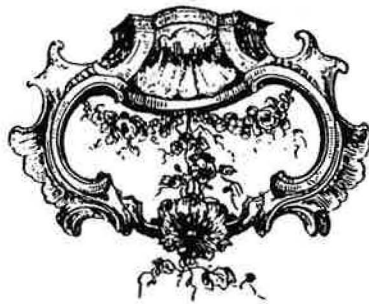
Communications should be addressed to Prof. Robert P. Adams, English Dept., Michigan State College, East Lansing, Michigan.

**THE SINGULAR AFFAIR OF
MR. PHILLIP PHOT**

By the Greek Interpreters of East Lansing, Michigan
Compiled by PAGE HELDENBRAND



*The late Page Heldenbrand
received the investiture
"Charles Augustus Milverton"
from the Baker Street Irregulars
of New York in 1951*



"I RATHER THINK we have Murray to thank for those," reflected Sherlock Holmes as we sat before our Sussex hearth one stormy evening in the Spring of 1945.

I turned my startled gaze from the cabinet which housed the published records of my friend's accomplishments to the worn chair in which he was stretched out, his feet extended toward the fire. "Really, Holmes, you never fail to astound me!" I exclaimed. "I should be onto your methods by this time, but I confess I don't see how you voiced my thoughts so exactly."

"My dear Watson, you overestimate my powers. I assure you it was quite simple. I had only to note your reactions to the thunderclap of a moment ago, and your mental processes were as clear as the most excellent wine which accompanied our dinner."

"Reaction, Holmes? I don't recall that. . . ."

"That your hand stole toward your old wound? It was from that I knew you had been reminded of the noise of battle at Maiwand, and your thoughts could then have only logically turned to your *orderly*, Murray, who rescued you in that bloody battle. And when you presently began to regard the volumes by your *publisher*, Murray, which contain the somewhat romantic record of my modest career, I made the observation which seems to have confounded you."

"Well, I never!" I chuckled. "I thought at first that you had done something clever."

"Which, I believe," retorted Holmes as he refilled his black clay pipe, "is the exact sentiment expressed some years ago by our

old friend Mr. Jabez Wilson. 'As I have said before, Watson, I sometimes feel that it is a capital error on my part to . . . answer the summons being beaten so persistently on our door," he finished as he rose in response to a loud knock. "Only a bearer of urgent tidings ventures out on such a night as this." A moment later he stood before me holding a telegram. "Extremely urgent, I should say, Watson," he said in answer to my questioning glance. "It's back into harness for us, old fellow."

He handed me the message. "COME AT ONCE. BIG GAME IS AFOOT. WILL CONTACT YOU WHEN ADVISABLE. BE ON YOUR GUARD. MYCROFT." "Your brother doesn't give us much to go on, Holmes," I commented when I had finished reading.

"I shouldn't imagine he would, Watson. A matter important enough to demand my presence in London is hardly the sort to be divulged in a telegram. And now I suggest we retire. I fancy the next few days may be slightly strenuous."

We caught the London train the next day, and during the course of our ride I attempted to draw Holmes into speculation as to the cause of Mycroft's mysterious wire. But the subject seemed to be the most remote from his thoughts. He talked instead of the theory of radar, of a newly-developed hybrid honey-bee, and of a dozen other things as completely foreign to the present affair. Arriving in London, a cab soon brought us to the familiar lodgings in Baker Street, which Holmes had arranged to have maintained upon his retirement. It was not long before we were again established in our old quarters, and I joined Holmes for a moment at the window, gazing through the curtains at the Baker Street scene as dusk gathered and the lights began to come on. How strange it seemed to be back with my old friend in the same rooms where many of his notable cases had come to an often dramatic climax! It was here, I recalled, that Jefferson Hope, the murderer of Enoch Drebbler and Joseph Stangerson, had felt the manacles lock on his wrists as he bent down to help fasten Holmes's portmanteau. Here, too, Mr. Culverton Smith, the murderous authority on Eastern diseases, and Count Negretto Sylvius, the Crown-jewel thief, had been brought to justice. And in this very alcove had stood the wax image of Holmes, with the lights so placed as to throw a sharp silhouette against the window—bait for the second most dangerous man in London, the ferocious Colonel

Sebastian Moran. The wall still showed, alongside the unframed print of Henry Ward Beecher, where the bullet from Moran's deadly airgun had spent its strength after passing precisely between the eyes of the bust. (Mme. Tussaud had later asked Holmes if she might have the replica for her famous waxworks just down the street.)

Then, turning to the concern of the moment, I asked: "Why do you suppose Mycroft warned you to be on your guard, Holmes?"

My friend settled himself comfortably in the armchair, filled a pipe with Cavendish, and pulled at it several times before replying. "As I have often said, Watson, it is foolish to theorize before one has the facts at his command, but if I were you I wouldn't stand *too close to the window*. Whatever this matter is that is responsible for Mycroft's telegram, I should not be surprised if it were an ugly one. For the moment all we can do is wait until we are advised of our next move." And with a shrug that indicated he had dismissed the matter from his thoughts, Holmes took his violin from its case and, throwing it across his knee, began to scrape at the instrument in his careless fashion, filling the room with the sonorous chords which had so often exasperated me in the past.

I saw clearly that nothing more in the way of conversation would be forthcoming from my friend that evening, and so retired to my room, where—what with the tiring day's journey and the faint melancholy tones from the sitting-room—I was soon fast asleep.

It was shortly after ten when I rose the next morning, and I found Holmes at breakfast amid a confusing array of chemical apparatus which he had set up throughout the room. "I have spent several most improving hours while you slumbered, Watson. In fact, I rather think I shall communicate the result of my little experiment to certain persons in the War Office. It should aid their *uranium* researches immensely. And now, old fellow, as soon as you have finished your coffee, we shall be off to the Diogenes Club."

"You have heard from Mycroft, then?"

"A message came not twenty minutes ago. We have only to join him to learn the details of this mysterious affair in which we seem to be involved."

I was ready in a moment and, slipping my revolver in my overcoat pocket at Holmes's suggestion, I followed him down the seventeen steps to the street, where he stood for a moment in the shadow of our doorway looking keenly up and down the block before starting for the cab-stand at the corner. He refused to take either of the first two cabs in line, but, urging me into the third, he called loudly, "Piccadilly Circus, driver," and we pulled out into the traffic.

"But why Piccadilly, Holmes?" I inquired softly. "Was that for the benefit of the other cabbies? Surely you don't think. . ."

"It is wise to take every precaution, Watson," my friend interrupted, "for I have no doubt that we are dealing with clever and desperate persons. Persons for whom Scotland Yard is no match—otherwise Mycroft would not have sent for me." As he said this, Holmes had been staring intently out of the rear window, and he now shouted to the driver: "Turn right at the intersection!"

"What is it, Holmes?" I exclaimed.

"We're being followed, Watson! I rather expected this would happen. Faster, driver, faster!" he called as we rounded the corner. "Aha! Watson," he cried a moment later. "You see!"

"You're right, Holmes. That black car has made the same turn."

Holmes urged the driver on, but our pursuers increased their speed accordingly. The chase wound through street after street, and it soon became apparent that we would be overtaken in another minute or two. I took out my revolver and made sure it was ready for use.

"We may not need that, Watson," said Holmes. "Turn here to the right," he called again to our cabbie, "and then left into the court and stop." The sudden maneuver brought us into a small circular courtyard, from which we watched breathlessly as the other car roared past.

Holmes breathed a sigh of relief. "Safe for the moment at least, Watson. I wonder why our foreign friends are so anxious to get their hands on us?"

"Foreign?"

"Certainly. Anyone familiar with London would never have been taken in by our trick. Now to Whitehall, driver," he said, and leaned back against the seat cushions in a contemplative mood

which lasted until we reached the government offices. Dismissing our cab, we walked around the corner to the Diogenes Club where, once inside, Holmes approached an attendant and asked where we might find Mycroft.

"I'm sorry, sir," was the reply, "but Mr. Holmes left the club about a half hour ago. Left in a great hurry he did, too."

"That's odd, Watson," my friend mused, and then turning to the attendant again: "Did he leave any message?"

"Well, sir, just before he went out by the rear door, he told me that if anyone inquired after him I should say that he could be contacted through a Mr. Phillip Phot."

"That's all he said?"

"Yes, sir."

"You're sure about that name?"

"Yes, sir. Phillip Phot."

"Has there been anyone else here looking for Mr. Holmes this morning?"

"Yes, sir. Another gentleman came just after Mr. Holmes left. I was going to give him the message, too, but when he learned Mr. Holmes was gone he rushed out before I was able."

"You say Mr. Holmes left in a great hurry?"

"Yes, sir. And most unusual I thought it at the time. He was sitting in the bow window, and then all of a sudden he jumped up and hurried out, giving me the message as he passed."

"This man—what did he look like?"

"Well, sir, I can't say that I noticed particularly. He was tall—about your height, I'd say, and he was wearing a dark suit, as I recall. What with me being a bit near-sighted, that's all I can really say for sure. I'm sorry I can't be of more help to you, sir. Is there something wrong?"

But Holmes was already half-way to the door. "Come, Watson, there's no time to be lost!"

I followed Holmes out of the club and across the street to Mycroft's lodgings. "What does it all mean, Holmes?" I asked as we waited for an answer to our ring. "Do you expect to find Mycroft here? And who is this Phillip Phot?"

"All that I hope to find here is a further clue to this business, Watson. As to your other questions, I am as mystified as you."

Just then the door was opened by a small white-haired lady,

who told us in answer to my friend's question: "Why no, sir. Mr. Holmes came in a short while ago, but he left almost immediately afterward. He appeared to be in a great hurry."

"Has there been a tall man here looking for Mr. Holmes today?"

"Sakes alive! How did you know? He came just after Mr. Holmes went out, and was so disappointed not to find him in, too. You wouldn't be Mr. Holmes's brother, would you? I seem to recognize. . . ."

"That's quite correct," said Holmes, brushing past her into the hallway. "I'd like to see his rooms, if you have no objection. Come along, Watson." Leaving the housekeeper standing below in amazement, I followed him up the staircase and into Mycroft's sitting-room, where he immediately began to rifle the contents of a desk that stood against the far wall. "There has to be another piece to our puzzle here somewhere, Watson, and I would not be at all surprised if—yes, here it is!"

I bent over Holmes's shoulder and read the penned lines on the sheet of note-paper which he was examining with his magnifying glass. "It seems to be a speech of some sort."

"Exactly, Watson. A speech that Mycroft was writing for some government official—a speech about Allied cooperation. It is far from finished, but Mycroft has left us another clue here. You see this last sentence? It has been added just recently, and in great haste, whereas the rest of the context was done some days ago. The ink has not dried as thoroughly on the last line, and the pen has bitten much more deeply on the upstrokes. There's even a slight blur at the end of the final word. It has a bearing on the case, Watson. It fits into the picture. I only wish I knew where."

I read the sentence to which he referred. It said only: "*Our first thought must be perfect unity.*" "I can't see that this will be of any help, Holmes. It seems to fit right into the speech."

"I know, old fellow, but it also has a deeper meaning. Once we are on to it, everything will be much clearer." Holmes spent the better part of an hour completing a thorough search of his brother's quarters, but unearthed nothing more, save for some bits of ash and charred paper which he carefully gathered up from the grate. "And now," he said, with a last sweeping surveyal that appeared to penetrate into the furthest recesses of the rooms, "I suggest we return to Baker Street. There is nothing more to be learned here."

Holmes said nothing during the ride back to our lodgings. He puffed thoughtfully on his pipe, and though he showed little apparent emotion, I could tell that he was worried about his brother's strange disappearance, in addition to being profoundly puzzled at the seemingly incomprehensible aspects of the present situation. That afternoon my friend busied himself consulting his reference indexes and the London directories, but nowhere was he able to find anyone by a name resembling that of "Phillip Phot."

With the ashes he was more successful. By treating the charred remnants with various chemicals and patiently assembling them, he was able to reproduce what had evidently been a newspaper clipping. "From the agony column of the *Times*, I should judge by the type face, Watson. But I fear we are little better off than before—it's in cipher. However, if you will be good enough to hand me the *Times* for day before yesterday, I shall have a more legible copy for my decoding efforts."

"But how can you be sure of the *date* from the clipping, Holmes?"

"Simple deduction, old fellow. Since we can be reasonably certain that it was this coded message that was in part responsible for Mycroft's summons, it is safe to assume that it appeared the same day he sent his wire."

While Holmes was unfolding the paper the telephone rang, and as I moved to answer he sprang from his chair and seized me roughly by the arm before my hand could reach the receiver. "Don't touch it, Watson!" he cried, his voice filled with apprehension. Then, dumfounded, I watched as he swiftly followed the cord to the wall-box, snatched away the cover, and tore loose the connections inside.

"Our foreign friends of this morning have again favoured us with their attentions, Watson. If you will note the small but I fancy extremely destructive explosive charge that was wired to our telephone, I believe you will see readily enough that neither of us is meant to be alive at this moment."

"But I don't see how you knew."

"Elementary, Watson. Only Mycroft and these unknown enemies of ours are aware of our presence in Baker Street, and since the secret nature of the information which Mycroft intended to

communicate to me would make it inadvisable for him to phone, it wasn't difficult to surmise just who was desirous of having our receiver lifted."

Holmes then proceeded to take from the corner the heavy sledge which had played such a prominent part in the schemes of Baron Maupertuis and, to my amazement, to break out our front windows. "I doubt if our would-be assassins have risked remaining in the neighborhood while we met our violent end," he said by way of explanation, "but they are probably not far off. They knew when we returned. And as they will doubtless be by to ascertain their success before long, I fancy this little deception will satisfy their homicidal penchant in our regard and enable us to continue our investigation more comfortably. If you will stand here to one side, my dear fellow, where you will not be subject to observation from the street, we shall await the entry of the villains."

Holmes had hardly spoken when the same black car which had given us chase that morning drove past. "Rather a singular interest they evinced in our shattered rooms," my friend chuckled. "It would have been a pity to disappoint them after all the trouble to which they had gone in our behalf."

"They certainly appear extremely anxious to do away with us," I remarked as we left the now-uninhabitable sitting-room for the warmth of Holmes's bed-chamber. "A good deal of importance must be attached to this whole affair."

"I'm sure of it, Watson. Our riddle is of the utmost consequence, and certain persons are very much afraid we will find the answer. For the present I think we are safe from them, although it might be wise to make use of the rear exit in the future. And now to return to our cryptogram."

It was not until late evening that my friend rose from his chair and informed me that he had finally broken the code. "A most ingenious cipher, Watson. One of the most difficult I have ever encountered. The variation on the *Vigenère Tableau* that was employed is worthy of a monograph, I think."

"And the message, Holmes?"

"Here is the result of my labor," he said with a wry smile, handing me a sheet of paper. "See what you make of it, old chap."

"INTERIOR DECORATORS MEET IN THREE DAYS," I read. "I'm afraid I fail to see the significance."

"I'm afraid we both fail in that respect, Watson. I have no doubt that it is of the greatest significance—we have only to put our finger on it. But we have another piece for our puzzle; the problem now is to fit the pieces together." Then, settling down with his pipe, my friend advised me to retire. "I may be up most of the night, Watson. This, I think, is a *four-pipe* problem."

When I arose the next morning, I found Holmes exactly as I had left him. The carpet around his chair was littered with ashes, and it was evident that he had not slept at all. "No light in the darkness yet, old fellow," he said wearily. "The answer is there, but it still eludes me."

"You really haven't a lot to go on," I said, taking a seat facing my friend. "Only the sentence in Mycroft's speech, that apparently meaningless code message, and the name 'Phillip Phot' which, I take it, means nothing to you."

"Absolutely nothing, Watson. The name is not familiar to me, and, as far as I know, Mycroft had no such acquaintance. I must confess it has me baffled."

"It's an odd name, Holmes," I remarked, "Phillip Phot."

"Very odd, Watson. Not common at all. It's one you'd remember—yet it fails to strike a responsive chord in my memory."

"I can't say that I've heard it before. Phillip Phot . . . Phil . . . Phot. Most perplexing."

Holmes suddenly sprang to his feet. His eyes were alive, and he crossed swiftly to my chair and took me by the shoulder. "What did you say, Watson?" he cried. "What did you say?"

"Only the name, Holmes: Phil Phot."

"Phil Phot! By George, Watson, I believe you've hit on it! Of course, that's it! The last line in the speech . . . and the name! It all fits! What a fool I've been! What an unbelievable fool! Now if only it's not too late!"

Holmes took volume "M" of his index down from the shelf and leafed impatiently through the pages. "Mitchell . . . Mitek . . . yes, here we are!" But after reading for a moment, he cast the book aside with a gesture of disappointment. "I have been out of touch with events in London for too long. I imagine, however, that Langdale Pike will have the information I require." And with that he was gone, leaving me as completely confused as before.

My friend was back shortly with a triumphant look in his

eyes that he could not conceal. "I have spent a most educational quarter hour, Watson."

"Then Pike was still at his post in the bow window of the St. James's Street club?"

"Still there, and as well-informed as ever. And now, a quick change of identity and I shall be off for a bit of house-breaking." A few minutes later Holmes, wearing a goatce and clad in coveralls, paused in the doorway to light his clay pipe. "It's Escott the plumber again, Watson," he chuckled. "Let us hope he serves to as good advantage as he did in the Milverton affair—without finding it necessary to play the role of lover. In any case, with a little luck he should find considerably more than a clogged drain."

It was close to six o'clock when Holmes returned, and I could tell by his manner as he placed his tool kit in the corner and began to remove his disguise that he was hot upon the scent. "Our mystery is solved, Watson," he declared. "The picture is complete at last. If all goes well, tonight should see the apprehension of our big game."

"You found something more, Holmes?"

"I found something *again*, old fellow—a clipping from the three-day-old *Times*.

"The secret message!"

"Exactly. And in view of *where* I found it, the wording becomes quite suggestive. Everything makes sense, Watson. Now it is time to act. And there is not a moment to be lost."

While he spoke, Holmes had been swiftly altering his appearance in front of the mirror, and when he turned away and began to don a worn brown suit, I found it difficult to believe that this was indeed my companion of so many years. A bushy mustache and skillfully applied putty and cosmetics had changed his features beyond all recognition. "Your astonishment is heartening, Watson," he chuckled, "for I shall doubtless have to pass muster for some most discerning critics." Then, pocketing his revolver and urging me to do the same, he led the way down to the street, where he slid behind the wheel of a small sedan which he had evidently hired that afternoon. After a short drive, my friend pulled to the kerb in the middle of a residential block and switched off the lights and motor. The fog lent an air of mystery to the deserted street, which served to enhance my own mood of anticipation as I noted

that Holmes's eyes were fixed on a lighted dwelling just back of us.

"You're waiting for someone, Holmes?" I ventured.

"Yes, old fellow. For the person who is unwittingly going to lead us to the meeting place of the *interior decorators*—and to our quarry. It was *her* rooms here that I searched this afternoon."

"Then it is a woman?"

"Decidedly so, Watson. And a woman who has figured as prominently in the international situation as THE woman, I should say. You possibly remember her return to this country some five years ago from . . . wait! A cab has stopped in front. And here she comes down the steps."

I could make out the slim figure as it entered the waiting taxi, which, after passing us almost unseen in the fog, Holmes began cautiously to pursue. "The ride of Valkyrie commences," he said softly, and so intent was his gaze through the windshield that I did not question his puzzling remark. After traveling what seemed an aimless and circuitous route for some time, I saw that we had progressed into the Soho, and, shortly after passing the warehouse in the basement of which the Amateur Mendicant Society had located its luxurious club, Holmes pulled to an abrupt stop. "We have evidently reached our destination," he said, climbing out. "Wait here, Watson, and I shall be back presently." In a minute he returned, and his voice was tense as he told me: "She's gone into a back room of the deserted pub just ahead, Watson. There's no time to explain. From now on the success of our venture depends on you. Go to Scotland Yard immediately and find Inspector Baynes—he's the best of the lot at present. You may recall his father in connection with the affair at Wisteria Lodge. If you mention my name you should have no difficulty in bringing him and his men back here with you. I should have the situation in hand by the time you arrive, and if you will have Baynes surround the establishment and force entry in the rear, he will bag the biggest German agents at large in the country." And giving me a reassuring slap on the shoulder, Holmes vanished into the mist.

I lost no time in obeying his directions, and it was not long before Inspector Baynes, several constables, and myself were breaking in the pub's alley door and entering with guns drawn. The small room in which we found ourselves, however, was empty.

The only furnishings were a wooden table and two chairs which stood near the wall to our right. We stopped short at this unexpected turn of events, but only for a moment—Holmes's voice sounded through the wall on the left: "In here, Watson, in here!"

Crossing the room, we passed through a door into the front part of the building, from where another doorway on our left opened into a second room at the rear. It was here we found Holmes with his revolver carefully trained on nine shabbily-dressed, sullen-looking men who sat in two rows of chairs before him. "Good work, Watson," he said, and then to Baynes: "If you will be good enough to take these gentlemen into custody, I believe you will put an end to the remnants of organized German espionage in England."

"Yes, I seem to recognize one or two of them," the Inspector replied, and added with a smile, "which is more than I can say about you with that mustache and all. You are to be congratulated on your accomplishment, Mr. Holmes."

"To the contrary, Baynes. I have failed miserably. Due to my bungling the biggest fish has escaped the net."

"But you saw her come in here, Holmes," I said. "Where did she go?"

"She was here, Watson, but she made good her escape. However, it is not her to whom I refer."

"Then there is a woman in this?" asked Baynes.

"There was," my friend replied. "However, she is not of much consequence."

"Then who. . . ?" I began.

"The most sought-after man in Europe, I should say, Watson. I had him . . . and he slipped through my fingers."

"But you took the rest. How were he and the woman alone able to get away?"

"Because of my own colossal stupidity, Watson. You see, the rear part of this building was all one room when I arrived." And as we watched in astonishment Holmes pushed upon the wall which separated us from the room into which we had originally entered, and it swung rapidly upward to lie flat against the ceiling. "It has been cleverly hinged and attached to a spring arrangement. They were sitting at the table, apart from the rest of us; and when I was called upon to properly identify myself and complied by drawing

my revolver, one of them released a catch, the wall fell into place between us, and they made off through the alley door."

"Nonetheless, I should say you have done a magnificent piece of work, Mr. Holmes," Baynes said warmly. "My men will remove your captives now; and I am sure Scotland Yard will remain forever indebted to you."

"It's not good enough, Baynes. By rights our king-fish should now be in your custody; instead, I am afraid he is beyond our grasp."

"He is still to be had, Sherlock," said Mycroft Holmes from the alley doorway.

My friend stood in shocked surprise for a moment and then, swiftly crossing the room, he took his brother's hand. "Where have you been?" he asked, his voice clearly evidencing the immense relief he felt.

"All in good time, Sherlock. If the *chief decorator* is to be apprehended, we must hurry."

"You know where he is?"

"Precisely. On his way down the Thames on the freighter *Gladstone*."

"We can take a police boat at Westminster wharf," suggested Baynes.

"Capital!" Holmes exclaimed. "Let us be off!"

As Baynes' car sped us to the wharf, Holmes related to his brother his evening's adventures, and then inquired of him with a puzzled frown: "How did you pick up the trail after his escape?"

Mycroft smiled. "I drove him to the boat."

"You drove him to the boat?" Holmes repeated incredulously.

"Exactly. You see, when the attentions of our German friends forced my hasty retreat from the Diogenes Club and subsequent disappearance, I decided that I might yet serve to advantage in the rôle of cab-driver. You must agree, in view of my experience in that vocation in connection with *The Final Problem*, that the part was a natural one. It may also surprise you to learn that it was I who drove the *woman* to the meeting place. That was how I happened to be waiting nearby when the two of them ran out of the alley. She headed off in the opposite direction, but he jumped into my conveyance. I reached the docks just as the *Gladstone* was

about to sail, and once I had seen him safely aboard I came back after you. Ah! but here we are!"

We had arrived at our destination. The Inspector, Mycroft, Sherlock, and myself boarded the police launch, the lines were cast off, and we headed out into the current. We roared under the long series of bridges which span the Thames, past the West India docks, and around the Isle of Dogs—just as Holmes and I, together with Athelney Jones, had in 1887 pursued the launch *Aurora*, bearing Jonathan Small and the Agra treasure. My reminiscences were cut short as Baynes announced that we had overtaken the *Gladstone*, which hove to on our signal, and a few minutes later the four of us, along with two stalwart constables, were climbing over her rail.

"Where is the passenger you took on just before sailing?" Baynes demanded of the Captain, who came forward to meet us.

"He just passed me heading for the stern," was the reply. "What's he done?"

"Quite a good deal," Holmes tossed back over his shoulder as he led the way to the after deck. There, struggling with the ropes that secured a lifeboat, was a small man with his overcoat collar turned up about his ears, who backed fearfully to the rail at our approach.

"It's he, all right!" cried Holmes triumphantly. "All together, now! Take him!"

We closed quickly in on the cringing figure, and in the glare of Baynes' pocket torch I caught a fleeting glimpse of the ferocious dark countenance of the man who, during the last decade, had brought to the world misery and devastation without historical precedent. The familiar mustache was gone, but there was no mistaking the face which had come to be so hated and feared by countless millions. But as we were almost upon him he turned and, climbing upon the rail, with a defiant laugh hurled himself down into the murky Thames.

For a moment a violent splashing reached our ears from below, which gradually subsided until it was no longer discernible. At Baynes' direction, the police launch conducted a thorough but fruitless search of the surrounding waters, after which there could be little doubt that a richly-deserved fate had at last been meted

out. "That, Watson," said Sherlock Holmes, "marks an end to the most terrible man in the world."

Back at Baker Street somewhat later, Baynes and I were an attentive audience as Holmes and his brother discussed the fast-moving events of the past several days.

"Evidently," my friend said, "my arrival in London was noticed—and was considered too opportune to be a coincidence."

"So I should judge, Sherlock. Then, too, they couldn't be sure just how much you knew—or didn't know. And I imagine it was sending you the message here that occasioned *my* tribulations."

"It was quite imperative," Mycroft continued, "that nothing interfere with their meeting. Not only was their late chief to be assisted safely on his way to the Argentine, but, having shown his fanatical associates that he still lived, he was to outline a comprehensive program of increased subversive activity."

"You caught wind of their plans through the notice in the *Times*?" Holmes inquired.

"Word had reached me through several Continental channels," Mycroft answered, "so I had long known that something of the sort was in the offing, but that told me the date. Luckily, after working for months, Intelligence had just recently cracked the top diplomatic code which was employed."

"Really?" chuckled Holmes. "I solved it in a day."

"But how did you learn of the message?" Mycroft asked.

"The ashes in your grate."

"That was fortunate. I hadn't counted on your finding them, and I didn't dare attempt to contact you. As it was, I knew when I saw plumber Escott in the vicinity of the *woman's* rooms this afternoon that the two clues I left you had been sufficient and that she would lead you to the rendezvous. And I felt certain that the situation was safe in your hands from that point on."

"You perhaps put too much faith in me, Mycroft. But for you, the situation would be far from satisfactory at this moment. In any case," Holmes continued, "the course of action I adopted would doubtless have had more favorable results than the best that Scotland Yard could have done working from without. At times a simple and bold procedure is the most effective."

I could contain my patience no longer. "But how did Mycroft's clues bear on this matter?" I demanded. "Who is Phillip Phot?"

What did that sentence in the speech and the code message mean? And who is the woman who escaped?"

"One at a time, Watson," my friend laughed. "One at a time." And as Baynes and I listened eagerly, Holmes began his explanation.

"A great deal of credit for the solution belongs to you, Watson. It was your timely remark this morning that shed the first light upon this dark business. You recall what it was?"

"Only 'Phil Phot,' Holmes."

"That was it, old fellow. Spelled differently, it held the key to the entire mystery. You are familiar with the word *f-y-l-f-o-t*?"

I shook my head, but Baynes had the answer. "It means *swastika*, Mr. Holmes!" he exclaimed.

"Exactly, Baynes. And with that knowledge, Mycroft's worthy sentiment, *Our first thought must be perfect unity*, became clear. That was the woman, Watson—*Unity*, the perfect Nordic beauty. Appropriately enough, in view of her past international connections, her second name is *Valkyrie*. She is still at large, but I think there is little cause for concern. Our friend Langdale Pike supplied her address, which my index lacked. And *her* interest in the *Times* notice suggested a singular interpretation of its wording."

"The *interior decorators* you mean, Holmes?"

"Precisely, Watson. When I considered that an interior decorator could well be a *paper-hanger*, I had little difficulty in guessing the identity of the *big game* to which Mycroft had referred.

"And now," said Holmes, reaching for the gasogene, "the *second* east wind has about subsided. *We* need hardly worry, but God grant there may never be another."



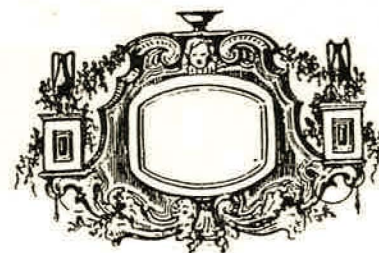
The Greek Interpreters of East Lansing

Correspondence: Donald A. Yates, Melas, 324 Morrill Hall,
Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich.

The Greek Interpreters of East Lansing are, indeed, back from Reichenbach. Originally formed in 1944 by Page Hel-denbrand as the first of the college Scions, the group subsequently disbanded in the natural sequence of events. Only within the past few months has the Scion been reformed and restored to its place in the scheme of things.

The Melas represented the group at the B. S. I. dinner at Cavanagh's in January - an occasional memorable for many good and lasting reasons, not the least of which was that appropriate contacts led to the discovery of two members-in-hiding within the limits of East Lansing. The Interpreters now include Salem, Selma, Lames and Melsa - a membership to which it would be agreeable to add should there be qualified, unattached Sherlockians in the area.

Inauguration festivities are planned for spring.



The Baker Street Journal
Volume 11, Number 1 (New Series)
March, 1961
Pages 55-56



The Greek Interpreters of East Lansing
Correspondence: Donald A. Yates, Melas,
324 Morrill Hall, Michigan State U., East Lansing, Mich.

On December 14th the Greek Interpreters gathered for the second time this year at Brauer's 1861 House to pay respects to Baker Street. The pleasures and erudition of our April inauguration dinner were revived and redoubled during this memorable *soirée*. The Interpreters were joined on this occasion by their wives who, far from fading with awe at the show of wit and knowledge, joined in and contributed to the evening's discussion. (Consequences: how to keep them away next time?)

The evening's text was the Hound, which virtually all the membership had studied most diligently. Only one challenge went unanswered: "What were the words leading up to the expression 'the Baker Street collection'?" While the Interpreters were not impaled in the manner of Stapleton, they did pale a bit and were similarly stuck.

Salem George Hough, author of a valuable monograph on "The Journalistic Holmes", delivered at our April meeting, startled the 1861 clientele and dazzled the Interpreters by arriving crowned with a handsome fore-and-aft. Thereafter the membership could not be restrained.

The Baker Street Journal
Volume 12, Number 2 (New Series)
June, 1962
and
Volume 17, Number 3 (New Series)
September, 1967

The Scion Societies

THE GREEK INTERPRETERS OF EAST LANSING
Correspondence: Donald A. Yates, Melas,
324 Morrill Hall, Michigan State U., East Lansing, Mich.

The Interpreters gathered together once more on a Wednesday—February 21, this one—in the Jeff Davis Room of Brauer's 1861 House to pay homage to Baker Street. Attendance was cut down by a bad snowstorm, but the atmosphere was genial as ever and uncommonly cozy. Around our prized holograph MS. of "221B" and an excellent photograph of its author, Vincent Starrett, the Interpreters chatted into the evening and eventually closed the place. The next meeting, to be held in late May, should be well-attended. We are planning to give it wide publicity in the hopes of routing out the dozens of Sherlockians in hiding in the vicinity of central Michigan. Readers of this page are invited to join in the search.

THE GREEK INTERPRETERS OF EAST LANSING
Correspondence: James Stokeley, Selma,
Dept. of Journalism, Michigan State Univ., E. Lansing.

On 24 May the Interpreters gathered for the second time this year at the accustomed private room of Brauer's 1861 House in Lansing. Attendance was augmented by the presence of the members' spouses and another female, Miss Susan Ohlson, graduate student at Michigan State University. Miss Ohlson presented a succinct monograph entitled "Who Was Sherlock Holmes?" which was well received by her audience, despite certain recurring inaccuracies centering on the person of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

The Melas, as usual, insulted the intelligence of the membership with a quiz—this time entitled "The Adverbial Holmes," a Canonical caper inspired by the "Tom Swifities" of a few seasons back. Honours in this department went to quick-witted Salem George Hough.

The Baker Street Journal
Volume 17, Number 2 (New Series)
June, 1967



THE GREEK INTERPRETERS OF EAST LANSING

Correspondence: Donald A. Yates, *Melas*,
154 Owen Hall, Michigan State Univ., East Lansing, Mich.

The Interpreters gathered auspiciously on Friday the thirteenth of January at Brauer's 1861 House in Lansing. A diabolical quiz fashioned by the *Melas* frustrated and angered all present (including the two new distaff visitors to the group—a pair of MSU coeds) during the pre-prandial period. An appropriate award for top performance on this test, "The Titular Holmes," went to Dr. James Stokeley of the MSU Department of Journalism, who barely nosed out Dr. George A. Hough III of the same department.

Miss Susan Ohlson rendered homage to Holmes by presenting her own English translation of a Holmes pastiche written in French by Paul Rebout and Charles Muller and published in their book, *A la manière de . . .*

The *Melas* led a discussion of the peculiar significance of the number 13 in the Canon, especially in the *Return*, which is, of course, the only volume which contains thirteen stories. Aspiring Interpreter Ohlson has promised a properly studious and documented report on the subject for the next meeting of the group.

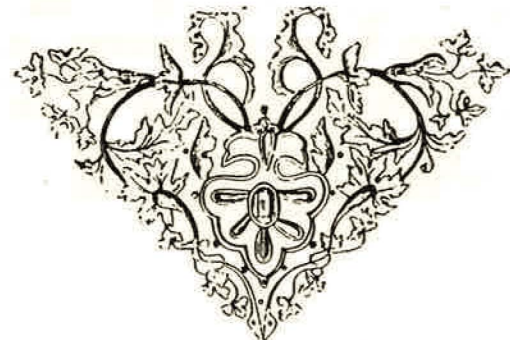
Festivities ended when Interpreter Hough donned his deerstalker and stalked home. At any rate, he drove off with the two coeds.

The Baker Street Journal
Volume 25, Number 1 (New Series)
March, 1975

THE GREEK INTERPRETERS of East Lansing

Correspondence: Dr. Donald A. Yates, *Melas*
537 Wells Hall, Michigan State University
East Lansing, Michigan 48824

On 23 October the Interpreters hosted an unprecedented midwest regional meeting of Sherlockian societies. The *Melas* carried the colours of the formerly most active Amateur Mendicant Society of Detroit; four emissaries of Hugo's Companions and the Criterion Club journeyed to East Lansing from Chicago; seven representatives of the newly formed group tentatively called the Arcadia Mixture made the trip from Ann Arbor; and local Interpreters and guests raised the total attendance to a record of forty souls. The program centered on the controversial account of the Musgrave Ritual, on which four after-dinner speakers based their illuminating remarks. The promising future of the new Ann Arbor society was manifested to all when both top prizes for performance on a Musgrave quiz went to Arcadians. The Greek Interpreters will celebrate their thirtieth anniversary in April of next year.



Membership Cards for the
Greek Interpreters
designed by Donald A. Yates

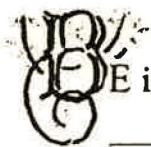


The Greek Interpreters
of East Lansing

It is known by these presents that
_____ having demonstrated commendable proficiency in matters related to the Holmesian Canon, has been elected and duly inscribed as a member in good standing of the Sherlockian academic scion — οι Ἑλληνικοὶ ἐρμηνεῖς.

Anno Holmesii

Melas



The Greek Interpreters
of East Lansing

It is known by these presents that
_____ is to be recognized, when in the environs of East Lansing, as the Unidentified Correspondent from Buda-Pesth, and, in consequence thereof, is to enjoy all of the rights and privileges of the noble fellowship of οι Ἑλληνικοὶ ἐρμηνεῖς.

Anno Holmesii

Melas

The Baker Street Journal
Volume 34, Number 2 (New Series)
June, 1984

THE GREEK INTERPRETERS of East Lansing, Michigan

Correspondence: Erik Beckman, Life Preserver
School of Criminal Justice
560 Baker Hall
Michigan State University
East Lansing, MI 48824

With the aid more of brandy than of ammonia, The Greek Interpreters were resuscitated on 17 January 1984 from the long period of quiescence occasioned by the

departure of their "Melas," Donald Yates, to relocate in California. Twenty-seven members gathered at the Village Market to hear guest speaker Jay Siegel, of the

Michigan State University School of Criminal Justice, discuss "Forensic Science from Holmes to the Present." He concluded that the current practice of divorcing the procedures of forensic science from on-the-scene crime investigation has worked to the detriment of detection. Holmes, as scientist and investigator rolled into one, possessed some distinct advantages. Ralph Turner reported succinctly on the B.S.I. dinner in New York, and a fiendish crossword puzzle on *The Abbey Grange*, concocted by Thorneycroft Huxtable (for whose true

identity the world is not yet prepared), was won by Etta Abrahams.

This meeting also saw the installment of new officers. It was agreed that only Don Yates could ever be "Melas," and that the title would have to be retired with his departure. Erik Beckman, who took the leading rôle in organising this rejuvenation meeting, was dubbed the "Life Preserver," and Howard Brody, who had failed to organise a meeting for over a year, was appropriately named "Foulest Antecedent."



Donald A. Yates received the investiture "Mr. Melas" from the Baker Street Irregulars of New York in 1972. His investiture was changed to "The Greek Interpreter" in 1981. Originally the B.S.I. were restricted to 60 members, one named for each Canonical tale. Hence, an investiture which is also the name of a tale represents a higher honor within the organization.



Greek Interpreters
currently investitured in the
Baker Street Irregulars

Erik Beckman ("Stapleton," 1986)

Howard Brody ("Anstruther," 1981)

Jeffrey Montgomery ("Inspector
Montgomery," 1979)

Ralph Turner ("Colonel Carruthers," 1983)



