

The Terror of Blue John Gap.

7300 words

The following narrative was found among the papers of Dr. James Hardenath who died of phthisis upon the 14th of February 1908 at 36 Upper Coventry Place, South Kensington. Those who know him best, while refusing to express an opinion upon this particular statement, are unanimous in asserting that he was a man of a sober & scientific turn of mind, absolutely devoid of imagination, and most unlikely to invent any abnormal ^{series} ~~series~~ of ^{events} ~~circumstances~~. The paper was contained in an envelope which was docketed 'a short account of the circumstances which occurred ^{near} at Miss Allerton's Farm and ~~related general~~ ~~circumstances~~ in North West Derbyshire in the spring of last year'. The envelope was sealed, and on the other side was written in pencil 'Dear Sceton. It may not be ^{incredibly} ~~incredibly~~ with which ^{over opening} ~~over opening~~ my ^{death} ~~death~~ death, a ^{more confidence} ~~more confidence~~ in me than my ^{inquiry now found to exist who this} ~~inquiry now found to exist who this~~ Sceton may have been. I may add that the ^{visit} ~~visit~~ of the deceased to Allerton's Farm, and the general nature of the alarm there, apart from his particular explanation, ^{have} ~~has~~ been absolutely established. With this fore word I append his account exactly as he left it. It is in the form of a diary, some entries in which have been expanded while ^{a few} ~~some~~ have been erased.

April 17th. Already I feel the benefit of this wonderful upland air. The Farm of the Allerton's lies fourteen hundred and twenty feet above sea level so it may well be a bracing climate. Beyond the usual morning cough I have very little discomfort, and what with the fresh milk & the home grown mutton I have every chance of putting on weight. I think Sanderson will be pleased.

The two Miss Allerton's are charmingly quaint and kind, two dear little hard working old maids who are ready to lavish all the heart which might have gone out to husband and to children, upon

For a sharper version of this image, please visit the website of "The Terror of Blue John Gap" Project at www.acdsociety.com/bjg/a/bjga.html.

"THE TERROR OF BLUE JOHN GAP" PROJECT DEBUTS ONLINE

As the Arthur Conan Doyle Society debuts The Blue John Gap Project website (<http://acdsociety.com/bjg/a/bjga.html>), featuring extended commentary on the "Front Matter" and the first page of the manuscript, here we offer page one of Doyle's stirring tale, framed as a "found manuscript" delivered to the narrator after the untimely death of its author.

Doyleans can classify two of his own works as "lost and found manuscripts." In search of a stable writing career, 23-year-old Doyle decided to try his hand at novels. He wrote *The Narrative of John Smith* in 1882. It was lost in the mail, and never found. Happily for Doyle devotees, his unfinished rewrite (sometime between 1884 and 1893) of *John Smith ... (continued on other side)*

A COMMON NEWSLETTER

— with a nod to Micah Clarke —

BRINGING TIDINGS FROM THE ACD SOCIETY

— a community dedicated to studying and enjoying the works of Arthur Conan Doyle —

via Ross Davies (editor pro tem, and publisher)

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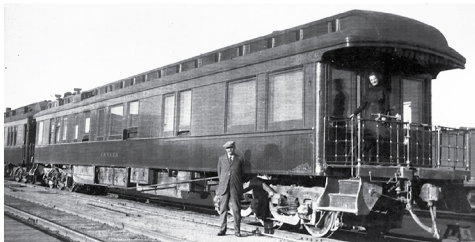
EDITOR'S NOTES

Our big news is the inaugural Doylean Honors ceremony. Held on Jan. 13 at The Mysterious Bookshop in NYC (and streamed by Mark Jones of *Doings of Doyle*), it featured awards presented to: Gretchen Altabef, Stephen Carver, Stephen Gallagher, Daniel Henocq, Douglas Kerr, Bonnie MacBird, Peggy Perdue, Christopher Roden, Shawna Ross, and Barbara Rusch. Congrats to all!

Next year, the Honors will return to The Mysterious Bookshop (thank you Otto Penzler!) at 11:30 a.m. on Jan. 5, 2023. Please join us!

THE PAST

If you missed the “A Study in Sherlock & His Creator: 50 Years of the Arthur Conan Doyle Collection” exhibition in Toronto — including this photo of ACD in front of the private car provided by the Grand Trunk Railway for his 1914 tour of Canada — worry not. You can see it



STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL. Please read the Instructions and Examples (over on the back) and then:

NAME AND RESIDENCE	AGE	SEX	EDUCATION	PROFESSION AND EMPLOYMENT	PERSONAL INFORMATION
Arthur Conan Doyle 4	62-1	M	university	Scotland Scotland	107 Doyle 874/5
Stuart Conan Doyle	40-4	F	university	Blackheath London EC	Doyle 874/5
David Conan Doyle	12-3	M	school	London London	
Francis Conan Doyle	10-7	M	school		
Stuart Conan Doyle junior	8-4	F	school		

online, with a tour by curator Jessie Amaolo, at www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/programs-and-classes/exhibits/a-study-in-sherlock.jsp.

With the release in January of England’s 1921 census records, we learned that ACD and his family really, truly, officially lived in Crowborough then. There are interesting details (excerpt above). See for yourself at www.findmypast.co.uk.

We hope you saw “Sherlock Holmes in 221 Objects From the Collection of Glen S. Miranker” at the Grolier Club. Whether you made it to that awesome exhibition or not, you should get the correspondingly awesome catalog (from the University of Chicago Press). Turn to page 75. It features facsimiles of pages 1, 2, 4, and 5 of the eight handwritten pages of a speech ACD delivered in 1896. Then look at your 2021 ACD Society membership card. Yes, that is a facsimile excerpt of page 7 of the same speech. So, thanks to Glen, you can enjoy a tantalizing extra morsel of that extraordinary and mysterious document.

THE FUTURE

On Sept. 23-25, The Friends of the ACD Collection at the Toronto Public Library and The Bootmakers of Toronto will host Jubilee@221B — a conference to celebrate the 50th anniversaries of

the ACD Collection and of the Bootmakers, with a full program, including papers, panels, a banquet, and a guided walk of ACD’s Toronto. Details at www.acdfriends.org/events.html.

(continued from other side)

... was found among the family papers. It was later purchased and published by the British Museum, and is available on Amazon.

Doyle’s second lost and found manuscript was also never published in his lifetime. He sent “The Haunted Grange of Gresthorpe — A True Ghost Story” off to *Blackwood’s Magazine* in the late 1870’s, probably when he was 18. The magazine kept hold of it, and it now resides in the National Library of Scotland. Christopher Roden, secretary of a previous Arthur Conan Doyle Society, published it in a limited edition.

Imagine the thrill of holding the pages of a manuscript written by Doyle himself. Thanks to the generosity of Dartmouth College, we can come in a close second with a digitized display of each page of “The Terror.” What of the output of new writers working exclusively in the digital age? Will scholars still feel that sense of wonder at stumbling upon the “original” manuscript of a beloved author if it resides in clouds and databanks? Fortunately, this is not a question that Team Terror has to answer.

For more thoughts on the subject and additional commentary on “The Terror,” we welcome you to visit the website. The debut includes commentary by Paul Chapman, Derrick Belanger, Mattias Böstrom, Charles Prepolec, Bob Coghill, and your editors.

Ever Mining the Gap,
Margie Deck and Nancy Holder

