

## Changes to the Chronology published June 2014

The purpose of this document is to explain the major changes I have made to my Chronology since it was first published in June 2014. I don't remember when I created the website **david.beckwith.net.au**, but one of the major reasons for doing so was to provide updates to my Chronology as new stories emerged and new facts discovered. Obviously when I published Volume III of Chronicles of Sherlock Holmes the chronology in Volume II was superceded by the addition of the new stories. But equally there were both spelling errors and typographic errors in the published version of the chronology, and of course as time passed my dating of events was refined to take into account unknown or overlooked aspects of the Canon. This document largely deals only with changes to dates to stories of the Canon, if I move the date of a Canonical story, then any unpublished cases that are referred to in the story may also have their dates changed: these changes are not recorded here.

When I published the first version of my Chronology in June 2014 it had already been developing and maturing for about 5 years. I had started by quickly putting the 60 stories into some form of order. This was not done very well, many errors were made. I then sought guidance on the Internet from others who had tried a similar task. One was William S. Baring-Gould, but initially he was only one of several, and to a large extent he was the one who I did not agree with for many events of the period 1884 to 1887 inclusive. It was only after I

had purchased the “Annotated Sherlock Holmes” by Baring-Gould that I saw why. He postulated that Watson had gone to the U.S.A. in that period and had a wife prior to Mary Marston. I found this thesis impossible to believe, and I still hold this to be true. However, I will admit I have now found a single case where his concept has some merit. Another great chronicler, Leslie S. Klinger, of whom I also now have his three volumes of “New Annotated Sherlock Holmes” appears to agree with Baring-Gould, but makes no great play to endorse Baring-Gould’s events of January 1884 to December 1887.

I never intended to play the ‘Great Game’ which is one the names given to the task of attempting a cohesive definitive ordering of the stories of the Canon. Any attempt to do so will result in only a partial success, Conan Doyle clearly never checked with what he had already written about Holmes and Watson, and so he contradicts himself repeatedly. If your source reference is in error, it logically follows that you cannot make inferences as absolutes. There are too many incidences of this in the Canon and a single example will suffice to prove the logic. “Wisteria Lodge” is set in 1892 in London, but this cannot be since Holmes was not in London in 1892, but the Wisteria Lodge incident *did happen* sometime according to the Canon.

I set out to create a chronology that would be a solid background against which to set my stories, and to be able to refer authoritatively about both actual historic events and events of the fictional world of Holmes and Watson. Regretably, I made mistakes, two major ones, both involving my own stories which I shall explain briefly

here. The first is that I took Baring-Gould's date for the "Noble Bachelor" and consequently the derived date for the "Tidewaiter". That date is based on Watson's supposed marriage to Constance Adams, to correct this to make the dates relative to Watson's marriage to Mary Marston I must move "Copper Beeches", "Noble Bachelor", "Tidewaiter", and the untold case of the "Fish Monger". The second error is the "Delicate Mission", I had the historic facts for the setting of this story, but misread the associated details of the canonical story of the similar where Watson is not present.

So, to repeat, I set out to create a chronology that would be a solid background against which to set my stories. What that meant was that I could not introduce any elements into Holmes's or Watson's lives that went against the grain of the Canon. That includes imaginary wives, imaginary siblings, and homosexuality. However, it did allow for my explanations of Holmes's thespian past, his American references, Watson being in Australia, Watson's income and cessation of a pension, and of course this major problem: if one uses drugs when one is bored, why does one retire to keep bees?

My chronology also takes into account the most serious fact that as a reader of the Holmes Canon, and in my case since my childhood, what I read was as true as any fiction can be, and if one never read about a Constance Adams (and certainly the Canon contains no such person) then why should one believe any analyses of this fiction that seeks to obtain such a coherency that required her creation?

I believe that even if my Chronology can never be accepted as being comparable to that of Baring-Gould, it still has significant merit, for it introduces no major events that are not mentioned in the Canon in order to produce a plausible chronology. I am surprised that no one playing the 'Great Game' has yet produced a comprehensive list of errors that Conan Doyle made.

That is not to say that I have not introduced events that occurred before "Musgrave Ritual" or after "Creeping Man" (the two of Holmes's cases "Lion's Mane" and "His Last Bow" clearly fall outside the main sequence of events). An example of an explained event is that we know Watson was in Australia because he says so, while he never says he was in the U.S.A. as Baring-Gould and his followers assert.

As to my introduction of details of both Holmes's and Watson's pasts, and events from roughly that of the setting of the "Creeping Man" in 1903 onwards, these events have no impact on the Canon (even including "Lion's Mane" and "His Last Bow"). With regard to Holmes's involvement with MO3, Watson simply could not publish anything he knew of this, and I found it impossible to believe that a mind that resorted to cocaine to relieve boredom would be content to simply look after bees. As to Watson's children, I needed the Watson lineage to continue so that the untold cases could plausibly be published after more than 100 years had passed.

My Chronology is not frozen. I made errors in the published version of 2014, and have corrected them on

my webpage, but in this document I explain the changing of dates. Other changes I have made are simply embellishments on what I wrote in 2014, new events discovered, new cases inserted (my stories), and spelling and typographic corrections.

One serious error on my part was discovered when I wrote the “Tide Waiter” and that was the dating of “Noble Bachelor”, correcting the date of “Noble Bachelor” went unnoticed when I then wrote “Delicate Affair”, and this error was compounded by my not realising that more details of that case were in the Canon, and I was contradicting them. My stance now is that my story of the “Delicate Mission for the Reigning Family of Holland” of 22 – 24 April 1887 is not the case of a similar name that occurred sometime between January and March of 1890 and that this second case is the one referred to in “Scandal in Bohemia” (7 July March 1889) and “Case of Identity” (16 Apr 1890), in this second case Holmes’s reward is different and Watson did not accompany him. To correct this error on my part, my story is now named “Delicate Mission” in my Chronology, although the published name will have to await a reprint to have this error corrected, Baring-Gould gave this case the title “Delicate Affair of the Reigning House of Holland”, I choose to name it a “Matter” since that is how the Canon refers to it.

Apart from Baring-Gould’s conviction that Watson was in the U.S.A. from January 1884 to August 1886, and was married to Constance Adams from November 1886 to December 1887 it must be noted that there are obvious dating errors in his chronology. A single example

is sufficient, he gives no explanation for the date of “Silver Blaze” and sets it as 25 September 1890. The case commences with Watson eating breakfast at 221B Baker Street, clearly unmarried and free to travel with Holmes. At that date Baring-Gould has Watson firmly married to Mary Marston. Having said that, there are revisions detailed here that bring my dating of events closer to those of Baring-Gould, where no precise dating is available and no reason can be found for not agreeing, then I now use his date, he is after all perhaps the greatest chronicler of Holmes and Watson.

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Collected here are details of the changing of dates in my Chronology from the version published in 2014. Also are other corrections that have not as yet appeared in the Webpage version. There are several canonical cases where contradictory dating evidence is given, I explain the reasoning for my decision of what is the most probable date for these case, the “Red-Headed League” is a good example where Conan Doyle has a daily newspaper apparently printed on a Sunday (British dailies are Monday to Saturday), and has the forming of the League as 27 April 1890 and its dissolution *two months later* on 9 October 1890. If Conan Doyle’s inconsistencies were not enough, Baring-Gould ignores the two precise dates completely and moves the date to 29<sup>th</sup> October 1887.

The order of presenting the changes is in ascending date order of the latest date assigned to an event.

## Holmes and Watson Meet

20 Feb 1881 → 30 Jan 1881

Baring-Gould does not assign a date to this event. The only clue in the Canon is that there were no students in the chemistry laboratory at St. Bart's which has been interpreted to imply that the date was before the start of term (the last week of January). Clearly my original date of 20<sup>th</sup> February is too late. I place the event on a Sunday to explain why Holmes and Watson could not inspect 221B Baker Street that day, this also accounts for why only one student was present. I wished to maximise the time between Watson landing at Portsmouth (26<sup>th</sup> November 1880) and meeting Holmes. Watson spent some time in Portsmouth before *gravitating* to London, he probably did not initially stay at the hotel in the Strand, and needed time to decide to acquire a bull-pup. 30<sup>th</sup> January fits admirably and allows time for the seven or more cases that Watson notes Holmes dealt with between moving to 221B Baker Street and "A Study in Scarlet".

Incidentally, the troopship Orontes did exist, but the voyage dates of its journeys do not agree with Watson's recollections, the ship he arrived back in England in 1888 was not the Orontes of historical fact.

## Study in Scarlet

1 June 1881 → 4 March 1881

I had overlooked the dating cited in the Canon of 4<sup>th</sup> March and now follow Morley's reasoning that Holmes was reading about the inauguration of President Garfield.

### The Reigate Squires

26 Apr 1887 → 14 Apr 1887

The reason for the date change is quite simple. Throughout the Chronology the date I assign to a case is the date the case commences. In this story, while the real story is 26<sup>th</sup> April 1887, the case actually begins on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1887.

### Silver Blaze

25 Oct 1889 → 25 Oct 1887

There are no dating clues in this story. The old date cannot be correct, since Watson is married at that date. Baring-Gould sets the date as 25 Sep 1890, but this is also wrong for the same reason. Watson is clearly living at 221B Baker St, therefore unmarried. Thus, I have moved the event to the new date.

### The Case of the Cardboard Box

28 Aug 1889 → 25 Aug 1888

The setting of the date of this case poses insurmountable problems. Baring-Gould sets the date as 31<sup>st</sup> August 1889, but the Canon specifies August but no day or year, he sets the day as Saturday, and the last



Saturday in August 1888 was the 25<sup>th</sup> (so either it was not a Saturday, or not the 31<sup>st</sup>).

The facts are these: the case occurred in August, Watson was living at 221B Baker Street, the case refers back in time to the “Sign of the Four”. The dating of the “Sign of the Four” is September 1888, so logically the year must be 1889, but for the fact that in August 1889 Watson was married and living in Praed Street. If the day was a Saturday or not is thus irrelevant, and the publishing date of January 1893 offers no assistance.

My original date was my own error, that date solved the reference to the “Sign of the Four” but not that Watson was living at 221B when this case occurred.

My latest solution is use the last Saturday in August of 1888, and to note that the reference to the “Sign of the Four” is an error made by Conan Doyle.

### The Hound of the Baskervilles

3 Oct 1888 → 25 Sep 1888

The reason for the date change is quite simple. Throughout the Chronology the date I assign to a case is the date the case commences. In this story, while the real story continues to 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1888, the case actually begins on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1888.

### Sign of the Four

25 Oct 1888 → 18 Sep 1888

I have moved the date back by five weeks to align the date with that of Baring-Gould.

## The Adventure of the Copper Beeches

5 Apr 1889 → 15 Mar 1889

In my personal copy of *Chronicles of Sherlock Holmes Volume II* I find evidence of the start of the problem of dating of four events immediately before Watson's marriage to Mary Marston. My marginal annotations have date corrections for "The Noble Bachelor", "The Fishmonger", and "The Tide Waiter". All are to be moved from 1887 to 1889, the annotation for "Tide Waiter" reads "Apr 1889". Inserted after "Copper Beeches" for 5<sup>th</sup> April 1889 is a crossed out annotation reading "Tide Waiter 13 Apr". These annotations were made when I was attempting to set the date of "The Tidewater", and in the writing of that case the tale grew to encompass 6 days. The problems arose because I had used Baring-Gould's date for the "Noble Bachelor" that being 6<sup>th</sup> October 1887. Read on for more details.

## The Adventure of the Noble Bachelor

6 Oct 1887 → 5 Apr 1889

The Canon states 'It was a few weeks before my own marriage' so Baring-Gould interprets this to his marriage to Constance Adams on 1<sup>st</sup> November 1887, and so he sets the date as Friday 8<sup>th</sup> October 1887. Watson also comments on the rain and the "autumnal rains". I originally adopted Baring-Gould's date, but since I reject the idea of Constance Adams, the date must be before 1<sup>st</sup> May 1889. The question is the interpretation of *a few*

weeks, a 'few' is more than a 'couple' and probably less than four which would be termed 'a month', somewhere in the region of 19 to 29 days. The problem is that I had also followed Baring-Gould in the setting of the date of "Copper Beeches" to be 5<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> April 1889, and must now find space to accomodate "The Noble Bachelor", "The Fishmonger", "The Tide Waiter", and "Copper Beeches" before Watson's marriage date of 1<sup>st</sup> May 1889. Setting the date of "Nobel Bachelor" to 5<sup>th</sup> October 1887 is the only evidence I have found to support Watson having a wife before Mary Marston. Similarly, the setting of "Copper Beeches" would appear to imply Watson is not married but there is no evidence to an actual date. I distinctly remember when writing "Tidewaiter" that it was to be set during the high tides of April.

The key phrases causing problems is "It was a few weeks before my own marriage, during the days when I was still sharing rooms with Holmes in Baker Street", and "the weather had taken a sudden turn to rain, with high autumnal winds".

My best solution is take the first key phrase literally, but for second phrase to change "autumnal" to read "spring". Now there is insufficient time in April of 1889 to accommodate "The Noble Bachelor", "The Fishmonger", "The Tide Waiter", and "Copper Beeches". "Copper Beeches" has no rigid dating constraints, so I will move it back in time to commence 15<sup>th</sup> March 1889 and ending on Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> March. Thus, to keep day names the same, "The Noble Bachelor" starts Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April, and "Tidewaiter" on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April.

A major disaster on my part.

### The Case of the Tidewater

10 Oct 1887 → 9 Apr 1889

See the previous entry for details. The consequence of this change is that my published Chronicles of Sherlock Holmes volume IV now requires a reprint.

### Scandal in Bohemia

20 Mar 1888 → 7 June 1889

When I first learned of Baring-Gould's assertion that Watson had a wife prior to Mary Marston, I thought that this particular case was clear evidence that he could be right. The Canon states the exact date as being 20<sup>th</sup> March 1888, but Watson is married, and his wife cannot be Mary Marston for he has not yet met her. When I published my chronology in Chronicles Volume II I left this problem unresolved, and with no explanation of the dichotomy.

The Canon states the precise date of Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> March 1888, yet the day is a Friday, so we know the date is in error. Baring-Gould sets the date as Friday 20<sup>th</sup> May 1887 which implies that Watson's wife was Constance Adams, but since I reject the notion of a marriage prior to that with Mary Marston, the date must be after 1<sup>st</sup> May 1889. I can see no evidence for Baring-Gould setting the month as May.

The only dating clues in the Canon are that Watson has gained weight by seven (or a little more) since his marriage (1<sup>st</sup> May 1889), and that there have been no cases involving Watson in that time. I have set the “Stockbroker’s Clerk” to occur Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> June 1889, thus I have chosen Friday 7<sup>th</sup> June as the starting date for a ‘Scandal in Bohemia’, this gives 32 days for Watson to gain weight, a modest gain of about 3 ounces per day.

Baring-Gould cites that the described weather fits with the actual weather in London on his chosen to date 20<sup>th</sup> May 1887, this date duly fitting his hypothesis of Watson being married to Constance Adams at the time. I find this all too convenient, I have no access to historical weather conditions, and I find it extraordinary to resort to this precision of detail. I cannot believe that Baring-Gould performed the same amount of diligence for other date and weather correlations for the other 59 stories of the Canon.

The Canon also states that Watson says “I was now returned to civil practice” which is also a curious problem. For Watson to “return” to civil practice, he must have previously *been* in civil practice. We know Watson went straight from medical school to the Army, and after returning from Afghanistan he was not in civil practice when he moved to 221B Baker Street. I assert Watson meant “I was now returned to *full-time employment in civil practice, and that being my own practice*”, for certainly he must have worked between the ceasing of his pension in July 1881 and his marriage in May 1889, but in this period he did not *own* a practice, and worked for others or as a *locum*.

There are other concerns in the case of a “Scandal in Bohemia”. It is tempting to presume *Mrs. Turner* is a mis-named Mrs. Hudson, but I explain that there is no reason to prohibit a married woman (or widow) being a servant.

The second concern is the identity of the King. I assert that Conan Doyle made changes to the manuscripts he received from Watson for publication, in particular to obfuscate facts. This case is a prime candidate for this treatment. Many have considered Albert Edward future King Edward VII as a candidate for being represented as the King of Bohemia, but this cannot be, his age and marital status do not fit. The German connections are dubious, Bohemia was not part of newly unified Germany, but was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the majority of its people did not speak German. I believe there is much in “Scandal in Bohemia” that is part of Conan Doyle’s obfuscation, and no attempt to correlate with actual historic persons or events should be made, this was Conan Doyle’s intent. Baring-Gould however, offers candidates for the King of Bohemia as Grand Duke Rudolf and Archduke Franz Ferdinand, both of Austria and born 1858 and 1859 respectfully. I feel it is safe to say an Archduke of the Austro-Hungarian Empire is not to be considered, and Rudolf can be discounted since he committed suicide in 1889. I propose Oscar Gustaf Adolf of Sweden and Norway, born 1858, reigning as Gustaf V, but Conan Doyle never intended a correlation to a real person to be made.

### The Stockbroker’s Clerk

5 Jun 1889 → 15 Jun 1889

I have simply moved this date by 10 days to make it align with that of Baring-Gould.

### The Second Stain

15 Jul 1889 → 16 Jul 1889

I originally had three cases named “Second Stain” following Baring-Gould (one in December 1887, one 25<sup>th</sup> June 1888 [mistyped as 1886], and one in July 1889). Baring-Gould dates these three as one on 12<sup>th</sup> Oct 1886 (the actual story), one referenced in “Naval Treaty” as being in the July immediately succeeding Watson’s marriage, and one set sometime between March 1881 and December 1889 (a somewhat implausible date range). Baring-Gould set the event as July 1889 (implying Watson’s marriage to Mary Marston). The actual story is written long after the event where Watson declines to name the year or even decade. I can only find one reference in the Canon to the dating of the case in “Naval Treaty” dating the case to July 1889. There is not a reference in ‘Yellow Face’ as Baring Gould implies. I Have therefore assumed there was only one instance of the “Second Stain” and that being July 1889. I have also adjusted my original date for the July event, so the day number agrees with the day being a Tuesday.

### Boscombe Valley

3 June 1903 → 3 Sep 1889

I can no longer explain why I placed this case in 1903, nor find any notes whatsoever to explain why I had the month wrong, and the year wrong (for 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1903 was a Wednesday). The Canon specifies the month and day number and day name (September 3, Tuesday), and Watson is married. There are only three years possible for 3 September to be a Tuesday between 1885 and 1905, these are 1889, 1895, and 1901. By my dating of Watson's marriages, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1889 is the only possible date.

### The Crooked Man

29 Aug 1888 → 28 Aug 1889 → 11 Sep 1889

Again, I can no longer find the reasoning behind my changes. The Canon states 'A summer night a few months after marriage', so I cannot explain the published version in Chronicles Volume II stating 1888. The change to August 1889 was clearly to reflect Watson's marital status, the number from 29 to 28 to preserve my perceived weekday name. Other chroniclers postulated 1887 or 1888 for the year, no doubt not having fixed a date for Watson's marriage. Baring-Gould has 11<sup>th</sup> September 1889, and I see no reason to not agree with him. There is no indication why Holmes should choose to spend the night in Paddington.

### Case of Identity

18 Apr 1888 → 16 Apr 1890



When I realised that I had made an error regarding the 'Delicate Affair/Mission', I also noticed that my original setting of this story was in error since Watson is visiting Holmes at 221B Baker Street (and therefore he is married). Three other chroniclers had set the year as 1888 although almost everyone agrees that Watson marries Mary Marston in 1889, Baring-Gould had set it as October 1887, so he was presuming Watson was married to Constance Adams. A simple mistake where a casual reading of the case one can read 'our lodgings' when the text reads 'his (Holmes's) lodgings. I have thus moved the date to corresponding day 2 years later, the Canon states only the day of the week.

### Five Orange Pips

16 Sep 1887 → 26 Sep 1890

The implication from the Canon is that this case occurs between 1882 and 1890, and that the year 1887 provided a long series of cases, the implication being that this case is set in 1887. Most chroniclers agree and set the year as 1887, although some say 1888 or 1889. It appears that Watson is living at 221B Baker Street, but he is not, he is there as a guest, his wife has gone to visit her aunt (first edition reads mother – corrected by Conan Doyle). No doubt Baring-Gould, having invented Constance Adams found the dating of September 1887 appealing, proving that Watson was married at that date. However, Conan Doyle made errors, and in this instance when the case was first published, he wrote that Watson's wife was visiting her mother, an impossibility as

he had already asserted that Mary Marston was an orphan. Conan Doyle admitted his error, his correction to the Canon was to change “mother” to “aunt”, and this is strong evidence that the wife in question is Mary Marston, not Constance Adams’s whose Mother or Aunt were most likely to be in the U.S.A. and thus not likely to visited for a short period (given three weeks to cross the Atlantic, and than another three back). I am surprised that Baring-Gould quotes from the revised text, it is difficult to believe that he did not know of this admitted correction by Conan Doyle. Thus, the year cannot be 1887, and this also makes the one and only firm date to confirm a marriage prior to 1<sup>st</sup> May 1889 to be wrong. By direct implication Conan Doyle’s correction *proves* Baring-Gould’s assertion of Watson’s trip to U.S.A. and of marrying Constance Adams to groundless.

So I deduce the year to be in the inclusive range stated and to be 1890, I move the date to the corresponding day name in the *latter part of* the same month.

### Red Headed League

11 Oct 1887 → 9 Oct 1890

Watson is married, Baring-Gould sets this case as being Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> October 1887 when he asserts Watson was married to Constance Adams, and he ignores the two dates given in 1890. Since Constance Adams is a fiction of Baring-Gould I assert the case must be after 1<sup>st</sup> May 1889, an oversight on my part to miss that Watson was married, and to follow the dates of

Baring-Gould and not what was written. Watson visits Holmes in Autumn, the newspaper notice for the formation of the Red-Headed League is 27<sup>th</sup> April 1890, and the League is dissolved 9<sup>th</sup> October 1890. When Jabez Wilson visits Holmes he states it is two months after 27<sup>th</sup> April, and he has spent 8 weeks copying the Encyclopædia Britannica. These dates do not agree, and 27<sup>th</sup> April is the dubious one. First it is a Sunday, a Saturday would be more appropriate, if we subtract 61 days (2 months) from 9<sup>th</sup> October we get Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> August which accords perfectly.

### Dying Detective

8 Nov 1890 → 15 Nov 1890

Baring-Gould sets the date as Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November 1887 when Watson is married to Constance Adams, a fictional character of Baring-Gould. I set the date to the corresponding Saturday 3 years later when Watson is married to Mary Marston.

### The Final Problem

24 Apr 1891 → 14 Apr 1891

Baring-Gould gives the date as the 21<sup>st</sup> but internal references to dates and events show that the commencement date in the Canon of 24<sup>th</sup> April 1891 is incorrect. The Canon states a '*charming week*' elapsed between being in Strasbourg and being in Geneva, and the amount of time to travel from Dieppe to Strasbourg via Brussels and Luxembourg is not accounted for. If we

assume that one on the most critical dates in the Canon is correct, that is the apparent death of Holmes at the Reichenbach Falls, then we must work back from this date and allow time for the journeys at recorded from start of the story.

In the timetable below, the numbers in parentheses are the dates derived from the Canon by assuming 24 April is correct, as can be seen these have impossible distances being covered in the deduced number of days, and a 'charming week' reduces to 2 days.

In the table below, the first column is the corrected date starting 14<sup>th</sup> April, and the second column in parentheses is the asserted date from the "Final Problem" assuming the case started 24<sup>th</sup> April.

14	(24)	Holmes visits Watson.	
14	(24)	221B Baker St. is burnt.	
15	(25)	H & W depart England	
16	(26)	Canterbury - Newhaven - Dieppe	
17	(26)	Dieppe to 'un-named'	
18	(??)	'un-named' to Brussels	
19	(27)	in Brussels	
20	(28)	in Brussels	
21	(29)	Brussels to Luxembourg	
22	(30)	Luxembourg to Strasbourg	
23	(??)	in Strasbourg	
24	(??)	Strasbourg to Basle	
25	(01)	Basle to Beaune	
26	(??)	Beaune to Lyon	
		"a charming week"	day 1 on river Rhône
27	(??)	depart Lyon	day 2

28 (??) un-named	day 3
29 (??) un-named	day 4
30 (??) in Geneva	day 5
01 (??) Geneva/Lausanne	day 6
02 (02) Lausanne to Leuk	day 7
03 (03) in Meiringen	
04 (04) Reichenbach Falls incident	
06 (06) Col. Moriarty publishes his letters	

### Empty House

3 Apr 1894 → 5 Apr 1894

I have moved the date by two days to agree with that asserted by Baring-Gould.

### The Norwood Builder

1 Aug 1894 → 20 Aug 1894

It is August, and “some months” after Holmes’s return. I see no reason to not align my date with that of Baring-Gould.

### Golden Pince Nez

14 Nov 1894 → 15 Nov 1894

I have moved this date by one day to agree with that of Baring-Gould.

### Sussex Vampire

19 Nov 1901 → 19 Nov 1896

The Canon offers only day name and number, Baring-Gould has the year as 1896. I can no longer recall why I considered 1901 to be the year, perhaps I was influenced by the publication year. I have chosen to follow Baring-Gould and move the event to 1896.

### Veiled Lodger

22 Sep 1896 → 22 Sep 1902

This change is exceedingly difficult to explain. The Canon clearly states the year is 1896, and it states Holmes has been working as a consulting detective for 23 years of which 17 were chronicled by Watson. This is the first problem, it is generally agreed that Holmes commenced as a consulting detective in 1878, and ceased at the end of 1903, a period of 26 years. Subtracting 3 years for when Holmes was presumed to be dead gives 23, but the case in question is set in 1896, not in 1904. Conveniently there are about 3 years of cases before Holmes and Watson met, and 3 years following Reichenbach Falls incident, and subtracting 6 from 23 gives 17 years. However, this is double counting the 3 years when Holmes was away.

This is my calculation, Holmes commenced as a consulting detective in 1878, 3 full years before he meets Watson. Then February 1881 to April 1891 is a little over 11 years, then May 1894 to December 1903 is nearly 8 years: thus  $3 + 11.2 + 7.8 = 22$  years. Perhaps we can assume Conan Doyle's arithmetic was dubious, 22 and 23 and close enough. However, the stated 17 years of

Watson's chronicling is still a problem, if we discount the years before meeting Holmes, that is still 19 years. Now if we consider a setting of late 1896, as stated in the Canon, all the previous numbers are meaningless.

Can Baring-Gould offer a solution? No, he sets the case to be in October 1896 and makes no comment about the introductory 23 and 17 year statement. Furthermore, Baring-Gould does not have Watson as being married in 1896, so why is he not living at 221B Baker Street?

What can be salvaged from this debacle of errors made by Conan Doyle? Clearly he meant to establish that Holmes had been a consulting detective for many years, and that for the majority of those years, his cases had been chronicled by Watson. Setting the year as 1896 implies that although Watson was not living at 221B Baker Street, he was not married to Mary Marston.

Watson moved to Queen Anne Street in July of 1902 (refer "Illustrious Client"), I say he did not marry Elizabeth Reeth until October of that year. So I place the "Case of the Veiled Lodger" to be Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> of September 1902, at this date we can deduce that Holmes had been a consulting detective for almost 26 years, and if we subtract the 3 years after the Reichenbach Falls incident we get the stated number of 23! Alas, however, Watson chronicled 20 (not 17) of those years.

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When I commenced this analysis, I was hoping that my memory was serving me well and that though several crucial events had been changed in date, that most of my reasoning (or simple guessing) for the 2014 publication of

the Chronology was sound. I was thus a little staggered to find that in 8 years I had been steadily 'adjusting', and some date changes were definitely significant. I am only counting the dating of canonical stories, and so the dating of unpublished, but mentioned, cases are not included. Also, I have made no changes to events prior to early 1881, and none after September 1903 (save to add my own stories). My basis for creating the Chronology has remained firm, and the assertion that Watson had no prior wife to Mary Marston remains adamant, as can be seen by examination of my chronology. It is also clear Baring-Gould made 10 errors, of which only 2 can be attributed to his imaginary Constance Adams.