

The Adventure of the Bookseller's Clerk - Book
Praed Street Papers, August, 1963
Praed Street Dossier, 1965

Date

Copper/January, 1920

Quotes

- Parker: *You look like a private enquiry agent dressed up to resemble a businessman.*
- Pons: *That is close enough. Let us be off.*

The Case

Jason Brompton, a dealer in second-hand books, visits Praed Street. He is suspicious of his clerk, Dennis Golders, who seems to be living beyond his means. Pons agrees to visit the shop and look into the matter. He disguises himself as a businessman and, with Parker, goes to Brompton's to delve into the affair. Pons purchases two autographed books that allow him to solve the case.

Comments

- This is the only case in *Dr. Parker's Notebooks* that is separately listed with its own heading. It is included as an entry for January 14, 1920, with a follow-up mention on January 23 of the same year.
- Dennis Golders applies for a position at Brompton's, even though he is over qualified, with the intention of learning the business. This is reminiscent of John Clay in the Sherlock Holmes case, *The Adventure of the Red Headed League*, though Clay was willing to work for half-wages in that instance.

However, like Clay, Golders secures the position because it allows him to engage in an illegal activity with a monetary payoff.

- Golders' handiwork resurfaces in *The Adventure of the Unique Dickensians*. Pons reveals that Golders created the forged book at the heart of the case. He adds that the former clerk at Brompton's bookshop is beyond the reach of the law because he is working for the government. That case takes place in the Christmas season following *The Adventure of the Bookseller's Clerk*.
- Pons makes a comment at the end of this case that is reinforced in *The Unique Dickensians*. Regarding the unwitting purchasers of Golders' forgeries, "their lack of knowledge does not in any way affect their happiness in its possession." Certainly Ebenezer Snawley and Micah Auber certainly valued the disputed book, not knowing that it was a fake.

- One of Golders' forged references is Sir William Joynson-Hicks. Pons gives an unflattering description of him:

“That fellow Joynson-Hicks is quite possibly the most jingoistic, egoistic ass who ever brayed in the halls of any government in the world.”

The Conservative Joynson-Hicks defeated Winston Churchill for a House of Commons seat in 1908. He lost the seat in 1910 but was elected to the Twickenham House of Commons seat in 1911 and served until 1929.

Over the years, he served as Paymaster General, Postmaster General, Financial Secretary to the Treasury, Minister of Health and finally, Home Secretary. He was also president of the Automobile Association from 1908 to 1923.

- Chronologically, this is the first case that mentions Bancroft Holmes, who is already working in the Foreign Office.