

Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem

Investiture

January 21, 2012

What do we really know of Mr. Windigate the proprietor of the Alpha Inn from “The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle”?

We can deduce him to be gregarious. His personality must have been one of a cheery, warm nature or the Alpha Inn would not have been inviting since there were many such public houses to choose from in Victoria’s England.

Mr. Windigate must have been smart. His management of the Goose Club at the Alpha Inn brought together a variety of people with a single objective...having a fat goose on the Christmas Dinner table. We know this when Dr. Watson shares his memory:

'Well,' replied Mr. Henry Baker, 'a goose is very expensive, you know. And a goose club is a way of saving money to buy a goose club. We paid Mr. Windigate a few pence every week and he collected the money week by week. By Christmas, there was enough money to buy a goose for everybody in the club. Mr. Windigate bought the geese so each member of the club had a goose to eat on Christmas Day.'

So I suggest that Mr. Windigate must also have been a compassionate, altruistic man since through this Goose Club, he provided an avenue for men of little means to save enough money to provide a wonderful goose as the centerpiece for their holiday table.

Derek Martin is much like Mr. Windigate. He too is gregarious as he has opened his home to the Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem with food and drink as well as entertainment the like of which our group has never seen.

As a collector, Derek Martin also brings together people with a common interest. His collectables draw people from far and near to gaze at the assembled treasures.

So today, the Nashville Scholars of the Three Pipe Problem offered membership to Derek Martin as Mr. Windigate of the Alpha Inn. Our hope is his time with us will continue to be filled with laughter and joy tempered with surprise and wonder.